

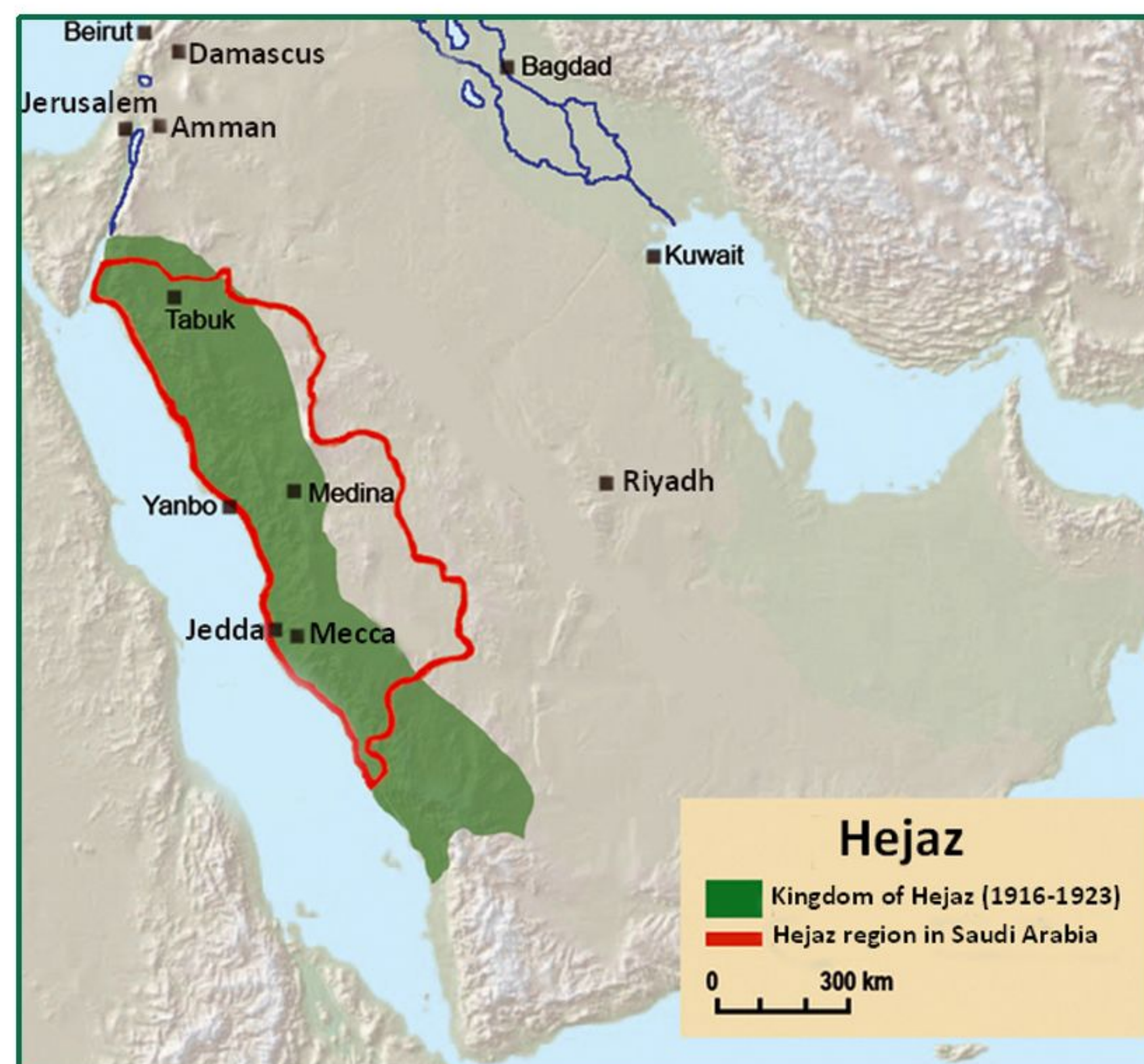


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The Hejaz

In 1916 the Grand Sherif of Mecca declared the Sanjak of Hejaz independent of Turkish rule. In 1925, Ibn Saud, then Sultan of the Nejd, captured the Hejaz after a prolonged siege of Jedda, the last Hejaz stronghold. The resulting Kingdom of the Hejaz and Nejd was renamed Saudi Arabia in 1932.



The Hejaz, also Al-Hijaz (Arabic: **الْحِجَاز**, al-ḥiǧāz, literally "the Barrier"), is a region in the west of present-day Saudi Arabia. The region is so called as it separates the land of the Najd in the east from the land of Tihamah in the west. It is also known as the "Western Province." It is bordered on the west by the Red Sea, on the north by Jordan, on the east by the Najd, and on the south by Asir. Its main city is Jeddah, but it is probably better known for the Islamic holy cities of Mecca and Medina. As the site of Islam's holiest places, the Hejaz has significance in the Arab and Islamic historical and political landscape. Historically, the Hejaz has always seen itself as separate from the rest of Saudi Arabia.

The Hejaz is the most populated region in Saudi Arabia. 35% of all Saudis live in Hejaz. Hejazi Arabic is the most widely spoken dialect in the region. Saudi Hejazis are of ethnically diverse origins. The Hejaz is the most cosmopolitan region in the Arabian Peninsula. People of Hejaz have the most strongly articulated identity of any regional grouping in Saudi Arabia. Their place of origin alienates them from the Saudi state, which invokes different narratives of the history of the Arabian Peninsula. Thus, Hejazis experienced tensions with people of Najd.





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