|  |
| --- |
| **The Egypt of Naguib Mahfouz** |

1911  Mahfouz was born in the Gamaliyya district of Cairo.

1919  On March 9, what many Egyptians called "the first revolution" broke out in Egypt. Protest demonstrations erupted in Cairo and quickly spread throughout the country. Egyptians were infuriated at the British expulsion of Wafd Party nationalist leader Saad Zaglul and three others who had been exiled to Malta. The toll after three weeks of rioting was 800 Egyptians killed. The British finally backed down and Saad was freed on April 7.  On April 11, the Wafd delegation finally reached Paris and presented its case for independence at the Allies Peace Conference. They were bitterly disappointed by the United States which ended up backing the British Protectorate.

1920  The San Remo (Italy) Agreement was signed. France assumed authority over Syria and Lebanon under a League of Nations mandate. Britain took control of Palestine and Iraq under the same mandate.  Arab hopes for independence were dashed.

1922  The British protectorate in Egypt ended, subject to four "reserved points:"

                1. Security of imperial communications within Egypt;

                2. Defense of Egypt against foreign attack;

                3. Protection of foreign interests and personnel;

                4. Britain was to continue to rule the Sudan.

Egypt was at this point legally independent. Fuad I, descendant of Muhammad Ali, the Albanian who ruled Egypt from 1805 to 1848, became king.

1925  [Al-Azhar](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/fatimid_mamluk_architecture_cairo.php#azhar), the Muslim world's preeminent center of learning, condemned the separation of religion and state as alien to Islamic tradition.  This decree was prompted in part by the publication the same year of a new book by Ali Abd al-Raziq, *Islam wa usul al-Hukm* (Islam and the Foundations of Government) in which he argued that the Prophet Muhammad had not come to establish a particular form of government but only to establish a new religion.  The Muslim world had been agitated since Mustapha Kemal ("Ataturk") abolished the caliphate on March 3 of the previous year.  Abd al-Raziq's book met with intense criticism.

1926  Taha Husain provoked an uproar with the publication of a new book, *Fi'l Shi'r al-Jahili* (Pre-Islamic Poetry). Husain questioned whether the poetry had been written in pre-Islamic times at all thereby casting doubt on the veracity of Islamic religious texts as well.  He was savagely criticized and was forced to withdraw the book.

1928   In March, *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimoon*, "the Muslim Brotherhood," was founded in Ismailia, Egypt by Hasan al-Banna, a schoolteacher. The Brotherhood  was a fundamentalist Islamic group seeking the return of the Islamic caliphate and government according to the *sharia*, the Quranic inspired law code. Tensions grew between nationalist Egyptians and Islamic revivalists.

1936  King Fuad died and was succeeded by his son, Farouk.

1940  Italy launched an offensive against Egypt. Germany captured the Netherlands and France.

1941  Rommel's *Afrikacorps*, victorious in North Africa, advanced on Egypt. The Italians were expelled from Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia.

1942 The Germans were defeated at the Battle of al-Alamein in Egypt.

The British forced King Farouk to appoint a pro-Allies cabinet. On February 4, British tanks moved into position in front of Abdin Palace, and, British officials forcibly installed a Wafd ministry presumed to be pro-Allies (the British had regarded many in the Egyptian government up to that point, including the king, as pro-Axis).   The Egyptian government was reduced to puppet status subordinate to the British.  Egyptians felt humiliated.  This event severely damaged the moral prestige of the Wafd, the party that had spearheaded the constitutional and nationalistic movement in Egypt, and, it laid the ground work for the July revolution ten years later.

1947  The British abandoned their "mandate" rule of Palestine, and, the United Nations voted to partition Palestine into Jewish and Arab states with Jerusalem reserved as an international zone. Jews accepted the plan, which awarded them a disproportionately larger amount of land than the Arabs. Arabs rejected the plan for the same reason.

1948  The [First Arab-Israeli War](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/1948_arab.php) broke out in Palestine.  Combined Arab forces were defeated.  An area of the West Bank (of the Jordan River) including the holy sites in Jerusalem fell under Jordanian control.

[Gamal Abd al-Nasser](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/arabisraeliwars.php#nasser_table) was wounded in the fighting in Palestine.  He and other Egyptian officers later charged Egyptian King Farouk with sending to the frontline troops bad guns and ammunition purchased on the cheap to cover debts created in the wake of  Farouk's corruption.

1951 Egypt renounced its 1936 treaty with Britain.

In December, British troops in Egypt bulldozed fifty Egyptian mud brick houses to make way for a new road to a water supply for British military installations.

1952 On January 25, British troops attacked the Egyptian police barracks in Ismailia after the police refuse to surrender. Fifty Egyptian police officers were killed and one hundred were wounded.

The next day, January 26 ("Black Saturday"), what many Egyptians called "[the second revolution](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/egyptian_revolution.php)" broke out (the first having occurred in the [spring of 1919](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mahfouz%20egypt.php#first_rev)). An Egyptian "mob" burned Cairo targeting British interests in particular (such as Shepheard's Hotel, BOAC offices, and the British Turf Club).  Foreign observers who witnessed the burning of Cairo said it looked less like an unruly mob and more like a well-planned and disciplined operation.

On July 23, a military coup occurred orchestrated by a group calling themselves "The Free Officers."  These officers were led by General Muhammad Neguib and included [Gamal Abd-al Nasser](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/arabisraeliwars.php#nasser_table) and Anwar al-Sadat.  King Farouk sought the intervention of the United States, but to no avail. By the 25th, the army had occupied Alexandria, where Farouk was in residence at  Muntazah Palace. Now plainly terrified, Farouk abandoned Muntazah, and moved to Ras al-Tin Palace on the waterfront. Neguib had ordered the captain of Farouk's sea-going yacht, "al-Mahrusa," not to sail without orders from the army. The order for Farouk to abdicate and depart into exile finally arrived on Saturday, the 26th, and at 6 o'clock that evening, the king set sail for Italy.

1956   [Gamal Abd al-Nasser](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/arabisraeliwars.php#nasser_table) became president of Egypt.  The [Second Arab-Israeli War](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/arabisraeliwars.php#1956 war) broke out on October 28 after [Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/arabisraeliwars.php#suez_nationalized).   Great Britain, France, and Israel coordinated attacks on the canal zone.  In December, a UN Emergency Force was stationed in the area.  A UN Resolution condemned Great Britain, France, and Israel, and, the canal zone was returned to Egyptian sovereignty.

1961  Nasser nationalized [al-Azhar University](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/fatimid_mamluk_architecture_cairo.php#azhar).  This infuriated many Muslims, especially in the Muslim Brotherhood.

1964  The [Palestine Liberation Organization](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/arabisraeliwars.php#plo_founded64) (PLO) was founded in Cairo.

1967  The [Third Arab-Israeli war](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/1967_third_arab.php) broke out in June when Israel, responding to Egyptian military mobilization, launched a lightning raid on Egypt's main air base in Heliopolis and on air bases in the Sinai destroying nearly the entire Egyptian air force before it could get off the ground.  Six days later, hostilities ceased after Israel captured and occupied the West Bank, Jordanian East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights of Syria, as well as  the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza.  Both Gaza and the Sinai had been under Egyptian control..  [UN Security Council Resolution 242](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/1967_third_arab.php#un 242) was passed the following November demanding that Israel withdraw from all lands occupied during this war.

1970  [Gamal Abd-al Nasser](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/arabisraeliwars.php#nasser_table) died in office and was succeeded by his co-revolutionary and fellow "Free Officer" Anwar al-Sadat.

1973  In October, the [Fourth Arab-Israeli War](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/1973_fourth_arab.php) broke out when Egypt and Syria launched a two front attack on Israeli positions.  The war ended three weeks later with a ceasefire coordinated by the UN.  The UN issued Resolution 338 which called for the start of negotiations aimed at the implementation of [Resolution 242 (1967)](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/1967_third_arab.php#un 242).

1979  An [Israeli-Egyptian peace accord](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/mehistorydatabase/war_in_lebanon.php#camp_david_talks_begin1978) sponsored by the United States was signed at Camp David, Maryland.  This agreement led to the return of the Sinai to Egypt in 1982.

1981  President Sadat of Egypt [was assassinated](http://www.nmhtthornton.com/assassination_of_anwar_al.php) by Muslim extremists for making peace with Israel and for repressive treatment of Muslim revivalists in Egypt.  He was succeeded by his Vice President, Hosni Mubarak, who had commanded Egypt's air force during the war of 1973.

1994  Naguib Mahfouz was seriously injured when he was stabbed in a Cairo street. Throughout the 1990s, Egypt fought Islamist militants whose aim was to depose what they called a corrupt and sacrilegious government and convert Egypt into a pure Islamic state.

2006, August 30 Mahfouz (b. 1911) passed away in Cairo.