[5] Note

700 CE. The influx of Arab saw the invasion of the Moors across North Africa and into the Iberian peninsula, and the spreading of Islam, originally from Saudi Arabia, gradually extended well past the Middle East reaching the western end of the North African continent. The presence of Islam, was consolidated by the later dominance of the African continent by the Ottoman Empire.

In 1453 The Ottoman Empire invaded the Byzantine Empire (the Greek empire and former Eastern part of the Roman Empire) and its capital Konstantinople. For over 1000 years the city acted as the gateway of European civilisation. Greece as well as the Balkans was occupied by the Turks for 400 years. The 19th century (1821) saw the rise of Greek resistance against the Ottoman Empire's weakening military forces. The successful rebellion against the Turkish occupation in South East Europe and subsequent defeat of the Ottoman Empire's army in Asia Minor flagged the birth of modern Greece . Early in the 1900's, Greek nationals and other Christian people, in particular Armenians, living in Turkey for many generations, were forced to flee in fear of the lives, thousands of refugees (some sources claim millions) having been slaughtered by Turks in retaliation before they were able to escape by boat to safety. Many of these Asia Minor refugees eventually finding refuge in the recently liberated Greek nation and also other parts of the Middle East and Egypt.

1800's The thriving potential for trade and commerce in the 1800's and early 1900's witnessed the steady influx of Greek and other southern European settlers in Alexandria, the Egyptian capital Cairo as well as other major and rural Egyptian townships.

1900's Trade conditions in Egypt during the early 1900's allowed the kind of prosperity and affluence experienced by European settlers and in particular entrepreneurs taking advantage of the ample resources which presented excellent opportunities for business and a wide range of economic activities. France and England, also controlled and operated the Suez Canal since 1869, the waterway being a substantial source of revenue for these two Colonial Powers.

1940's & WWII Egypt's strategic geographic location, enticed the presence of European great powers at the time, in particular England and France. The European attention around North Africa was enhanced particularly during the 2nd World War. Europe's influence in Egypt and the North Africa colonial presence was evident, so prominent was the influence during the early 1900's the ruling class of that era adopted French as the official language for trade and commerce. From 10 June 1940 to 13 May 1943, the Allies during that time, fought and eventually after a prolonged campaign def eated the Nazis. The German army's attack, was skilfully planned and executed by Hitler's most respected and capable Field Marshal, Erwin Rommel, known as the "Desert Fox". Had Hitler been able to replenish Rommel's depleted ammunition supplies, history would have taken a very different turn. Nazi Germany's advancement towards Egypt via the township of Alamein was a desperate campaign and proved very costly for Hitler's ambition to conquer the North African front. Whilst most of Europe suffered famine and hardship during the 2nd World war, because of the abundant supplies and provisions by the Allies, life in Egypt proved much more leisurely and comfortable for European settlers. It was part of an effort by the Allies to resist the advancement of Nazi Germany across North Eastern Africa, by pouring generous quantities of military and ancillary supplies.

In 1952 Egypt's King Farouk was overthrown. The coup was originally initiated by military leader Muhammad Naguib who short lived as Egypt's (1st) president and placed under house arrest by his successor President Gamal Abdel Nasser.

In 1954 president Nasser took over the operation of the Suez Canal from the joint French-British control. The Canal was built by Frenchman engineer Ferdinand De Lesseps but its construction involved mainly labour consisting of Egyptian nationals. France and Britain had control since the Canal's completion in 1869. The combined French and British powers were persuaded by American president Eisenhower to abandon their retaliation plans to attack Egyptian forces so as to regain control of the Canal. It was a significant turning point for the then European euphoria in Egypt that had lasted for decades. The political situation started to take a significant turn for the worse for the European communities. The political arena showed definite signs of abrupt calamity for Europeans in Egypt. Because Europeans looked physically different and therefore considered "Foreigners" were no longer treated favourably by the locals. With the exception of a small percentage of Egyptian nationals who worked for Europeans and who had shown loyalty to their employers appreciating their generosity, there were the majority of Egyptian nationals who lived under ordinary socio-economic conditions. Most of the local

population consisted of this ordinary class of laymen and evidently envied foreign settlers for their entrepreneurial success. This social class formed the local majority during Egypt's changing political climate, and it became dubious for the European minority to continue living in such an "apparent hostile" environment.

In 1961, Nasser's revolutionary government introduced radical legislation which saw the nationalisation of European assets and "foreign" industries in general. This event was a historical turning point for the region. Foreigners suddenly lost the ownership of their industrial operations, some of whom had built enterprises established over a few generations. It was an audacious plan but also signalled the beginning of mass exodus for Foreigners from Egypt. Hundreds of thousands of Greek, Italian, Armenian, Maltese, French, and other European settlers left Egypt, their adopted home, during the early and mid 1960's.