

Reforms and Social Changes / Women

In 19th-century Europe, women fought hard to gain the right to receive an education, to work and to vote. Women's right to use public spaces triggered impassioned debate in Europe and in the Arab and Ottoman world, particularly in Egypt, where reformers such as Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi (1801–73) and Qasim Amin (1865–1908) advocated education for women as a means to advance Arab-Islamic society. The first schools for Muslim girls were established in Egypt, Tunisia and Lebanon. At the dawn of the 20th century, women began to emerge and occupy pioneering positions in teaching, the labour force and protest movements against colonial powers.



Working Number: FR 171
Name: Trips to Morocco. Oujda via Lalla Marnia. Hôtel Figari [...] car service every day [...] links to the Tlemcen stagecoach and trains to Western Algeria.
Holding Museum:
Date: National Library of France
Materials: 1895
Curator Justification: -

Western travellers in the Arab and Ottoman world often sought out scenes of daily life involving women. The way Europeans imagined the position of women in Arab and Ottoman society, deduced not least from the way they dressed, was fed by often fanciful, romanticised and inaccurate accounts from travellers or the photographs they brought back.



Working Number: TN 067
Name: L'École de la Rue du Pacha (classroom exit)
Holding Museum: Institut Supérieur d'Histoire Contemporaine de la Tunisie
Date: 1907
Materials: Paper
Curator Justification: Access to modern education was essential for women in the Arab world at the dawn of the early 20th century. In countries such as Tunisia the struggle for independence enabled women to participate in political rallies from which they had previously been excluded.



Working Number: TN 069
Name: Women going about their daily life
Holding Museum: Institut Supérieur d'Histoire Contemporaine de la Tunisie
Date: Early 20th century
Materials: Paper
Curator Justification: Western travellers in the Arab and Ottoman world often sought out scenes of daily life involving women. The way Europeans imagined the position of women in Arab and Ottoman society, deduced not least from the way they dressed, was fed by often fanciful, romanticised and inaccurate accounts from travellers or the photographs they brought back.



Working Number: TR2 164
Name: The Artist Girl and Her Studio
Holding Museum: Sabanc# University, Sak#p Sabanc# Museum
Date: 19th century
Materials: Oil on canvas
Curator Justification: It was difficult for women to access certain artistic professions both in Europe and in the Arab and Ottoman world. In the late 19th century, women slowly began to come into their own in the world of painters, sculptors and writers.



Working Number: UK 145
Name: Votes for Women
Holding Museum: Victoria and Albert Museum
Date: 1910 (designed and printed)
Materials: Paper, lithographic ink; colour lithograph on paper, planographic printing
Curator Justification: In Europe, women's access to political life ignited impassioned debates throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. The right to vote was one of the major battles in the fight for male/female equality.



Working Number: ET1 017
Name: Women in the Revolution of 1919
Holding Museum: Bibliotheca Alexandrina
Date: March 1919
Materials: -
Curator Justification: In the Arab and Ottoman world, the struggle for independence enabled women to participate in political rallies from which they had previously been excluded.
