

## 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.

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.

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.

---