

Embroiderers of Actuality

BIOGRAPHY OF WOMEN



1. AÏCHA TAYMOUR (1840 – 1902)

Aïcha Taymour was a notable Egyptian social activist, as well a poet and novelist. She was active in the field of women's rights. Aisha wrote poetry in Arabic, Turkish and Persian.



2. AISHA ABD AL-RAHMAN (1913 – 1998)

Aisha Abd Al-Rahman was an Egyptian author and professor of literature who published under the pen name Bint al-Shati («Daughter of the Riverbank»). In 1942, Aisha began work as an Inspector for teaching of Arabic literature for the Egyptian Ministry of Education. She earned her Ph.D. with distinction in 1950 and was appointed Professor of Arabic Literature at the University College for Women of the Ain Shams University.

She wrote fiction and biographies of early Muslim women, including the mother, wives and daughters of the Prophet Muhammad, as well as literary criticism. She was the second modern woman to undertake a critical explanation or interpretation of the Koran, and though she did not consider herself to be a feminist, her works reflect feminist themes.

She began producing her popular books in 1959, the same year that Naguib Mahfouz published his allegorical and feminist version of the life of the Prophet Muhammad.

“The Egyptian Countryside” (1936), “The Problem of the Peasant” (1938), “Secret of the Beach and Master of the Estate: The Story of a Sinful Woman” (1942), “New Values in Arabic Literature” (1961), “Contemporary Arab Women Poets” (1963)



3. AMINAH AL SA'ID (1914-1995)

Amīnah al-Sa'īd was an Egyptian journalist and writer and was one of Egypt's leading feminist, she was a founder (1954) and editor (1954–69) of Ḥawwa' (“Eve”), the first women's magazine to be published in Egypt.

At a young age, Sa'īd joined the youth section of the Egyptian Feminist Union, and in 1931 she became one of the first women to attend the Egyptian University (now Cairo University). After graduating in 1935, she joined the staff of the journal Al-Muṣawwar and began writing columns, work that she continued until shortly before her death. In 1973 she became that publication's editor, and three years later she became chair of the publishing group that produced it, a position she held until 1985.

Sa'īd also served in such capacities as secretary-general of the Pan-Arab League Women's Union (1958–69) and vice president of the Egyptian Union of Journalists (1959–70). She also was Egypt's representative at a number of international conferences. Among the awards she received were the First Order of the Republic (1975), the Universal Star (1979), and the National Arts Award (1982).



4. BOTHAINA KAMEL (born 1962)

Egypt's first female presidential candidate has a warm, engaging manner and the talent for interacting with the public you might expect from a TV-personality-turned-activist.

She is passionate about her politics, wearing her beliefs, quite literally, on her sleeve. She sports a cross-and-crescent necklace (to signify solidarity between Muslims and Christians—Kamal herself is Muslim), a Make Poverty History bracelet and a pin that reads “Egyptians Against Corruption.”

She, like women across the country, was an enthusiastic participant in the January 25 Revolution.

“Women are always at the front of revolutions,” she says. “But then men want to take all the results.”

But, she insists, “I’m not just women’s candidate. I am a candidate for all of Egypt.” She is running for “the peasants, the workers, the women, the handicapped, the Copts, the Nubians, the Bedouin”—all of whom are marginalized, all of whom have been denied their rights. To change women’s status requires changing all of Egyptian society, she says, learning to “accept others and accept criticism.”

5. CLEOPATRA (Late 69 BC -30 B.C.)



Cleopatra was the last pharaoh of Ancient Egypt. She was a member of the Ptolemaic dynasty, a family of Greek origin that ruled Ptolemaic Egypt after Alexander the Great’s death during the Hellenistic period. The Ptolemies, throughout their dynasty, spoke Greek and refused to speak Egyptian. By contrast, Cleopatra did learn to speak Egyptian and represented herself as the reincarnation of an Egyptian goddess, Isis.

6. DORIA SHAFIK (1908 -1975)



Doria Shafik was one of the women who led the women’s liberation movement in Egypt in the early 1950s. As a result of her activities, Egyptian women now have the right to elect and nominate in the Egyptian constitution.

She was among the first female students sent by the Egyptian Ministry of Education to study at Sorbonne University in Paris at the government’s expense. She also studied for a PhD in philosophy at the Sorbonne; her thesis subject was woman in Islam in which she argued that Islam allows equality for women.

On her return from France accompanied by her husband, the dean of the faculty of arts in Cairo University rejected hiring her in the university because «she is a woman». Princess Shuvekar (the first wife of King Fuad I of Egypt), offered her the position of chief manager of the new women’s magazine. It was the first magazine, written in Arabic and directed to teach and educate the Egyptian woman. It was founded in the late 1940s, in order to write about topics regarding liberation of Egyptian women. In 1951, she prepared a paramilitary Task of Egyptian women to resist the British army units in the Suez Canal, indicating a willingness to fight and send trained nurses to the field. She also led a demonstration for women, in which she surrounded the British Barclays Bank in Cairo in 1951 and called for a Boycott.

She founded a movement to eradicate ignorance and illiteracy among girls and women in many populated regions in Cairo and founded a school in Boulaq for the same purpose.

7. ESTHER FANOUS (1895 – 1990)

Ester Akhnoukh Fanous or Esther Fanous, also known as Ester was an Egyptian Christian feminist.

The national and religious atmosphere dominating her parents' house had a great influence on her personality; she accordingly knew the freedom through the ideas and opinions raised within her family and through the valuable books existing in her father's library.

Ester travelled to Cairo to meet with Safia Zaghloul who proposed the signature of three women on the message dedicated to President Wilson. Hundred women were gathered to sign this message and submit their objections; then they went in a feminist demonstration raising their flags and chanting slogans.

Together with Hoda Shaarawi, Ester Fanous decided to establish a committee representing the women of Egypt acting jointly with the delegation. In St Mark Church, the women held a meeting where Hoda Shaarawi was nominated chair and Fekria Hosny, Ehsan Al-Qoussy and Ester Fanous were nominated as secretaries. They subsequently held a political meeting in a mosque where they delivered their speeches for the first time with men.

In March 1923, Ester Fanous established with other women the Egyptian Feminist Union to improve women's level in literature and social aspect and to promote them to be treated on equal footing with men in rights and obligations. She was involved in other associations such as the Young Women's Christian Association and the Labour Association of Egypt as well as other charitable associations.



8. FATEM HAMAMA (born 1931)

Fatem Hamama is an Egyptian producer and an acclaimed actress of film, and television. She is regarded for her performances in a range of film genres, from melodramas to historical films and occasional comedies, though her chief successes were romantic dramas. Noted for her willingness to play serious characters, she has also acted in some controversial films in the history of Egyptian cinema.

Revered as an icon in Egyptian and Middle Eastern cinema, Hamama has substantially helped in improving the cinema industry in Egypt and emphasizing the importance of women in cinema and Egyptian society.



9. HATSHEPSUT (1508–1458 BC)

Hatshepsut also Hatchepsut (meaning Foremost of Noble Ladies) was the fifth pharaoh of the Eighteenth dynasty of Ancient Egypt. She is generally regarded by Egyptologists as one of the most successful pharaohs, reigning longer than any other woman of an indigenous Egyptian dynasty. According to Egyptologist James Henry Breasted she is also known as «the first great woman in history of whom we are informed».

In comparison with other female pharaohs, Hatshepsut's reign was much longer and prosperous. She was successful in warfare early in her reign, but generally is considered to be a pharaoh who inaugurated a long peaceful era. She re-established international trading relationships lost during a foreign occupation and brought great wealth to Egypt. She managed to rule for about 20 years.



10. HIKMAT ABOU ZAID (1922 -2011)



Hikmat Abou Zaid was an Egyptian politician and academic. She became the first female cabinet minister in Egypt in 1962. Her tenure as minister of social affairs set a precedent. Afterwards, it became common for women to head that ministry. An avowed advocate of Nasserism, Hikmat Abu Zayd has had a major impact on Egyptian law and policy in the areas of social affairs and insurance. Due to her opposition to Sadat's peace overture to Israel, Abu Zayd was accused of high treason, terrorism and spying, and was consequently deprived of her Egyptian nationality. This turned her into a stateless political refugee. A long legal battle ensued, which was finally resolved in late 1991 when a judge ruled that Abu Zayd and her husband were entitled to their Egyptian passports. She was also acquitted of the charges of high treason and terrorism.

11. HILANA SIRADOUS (1904-1998)



Hilana Sidarous qualified as a doctor in 1930 in London and returned to Egypt to work in Kitchener hospital in Cairo to become the first female Egyptian doctor ever. She opened a private clinic specialize in obstetric and gynaecology, and she carried her surgical procedures at the Coptic hospital in Cairo. She continued to work till she reached 70 years old. She retired and turned to writing and translating stories for children.

12. HUDA SHAARAWI (1879 – 1947)



Huda or Hoda Shaarawi was a pioneering Egyptian feminist leader and nationalist.

At the time, women in Egypt were confined to the house or harem. When in public, women were expected to show modesty by wearing the hijab over their hair and faces. Sha`arawi resented such restrictions on women's dress and movements, and started organizing lectures for women on topics of interest to them. This brought many women out of their homes and into public places for the first time. Sha`arawi even convinced them to help her establish a women's welfare society to raise money for the poor women of Egypt. In 1910, Sha`arawi opened a school for girls where she focused on teaching academic subjects rather than practical skills such as midwifery.

After World War I, many women took part in political actions against the British rule. In 1919, Sha`arawi helped organize the largest women's anti-British demonstration. In defiance of British orders to disperse, the women remained still for three hours in the hot sun.

Sha`arawi made a decision to stop wearing her veil in public after her husband's death in 1922. In 1923, Sha`arawi founded and became the first president of the Egyptian Feminist Union, after returning from the International Woman Suffrage Alliance Congress in Rome she removed her face veil in public for the first time, a signal event in the history of Egyptian feminism. Women who came to greet her were shocked at first then broke into applause and some of them removed their veils.

She advocated peace and disarmament. Even if only some of her demands were met during her lifetime, she laid the groundwork for later gains by Egyptian women and remains the symbolic standard-bearer for their liberation movement.

Her book, *The Harem Years*, published in English in 1987 under the title *Ha-*

rem Years: The Memoirs of an Egyptian Feminist, 1879-1924, is a firsthand account of the private world of a harem in colonial Cairo, Sha`arawi recalls her childhood and early adult life in the seclusion of an upper-class Egyptian household, including her marriage at age thirteen. Her subsequent separation from her husband gave her time for an extended formal education, as well as an unexpected taste of independence.

Sha`arawi was involved in philanthropic projects throughout her life. In 1908, she created the first philanthropic society run by Egyptian women, offering social services for poor women and children. She argued that women-run social service projects were important for two reasons. First, by engaging in such projects, women would widen their horizons, acquire practical knowledge and direct their focus outward. Second, such projects would challenge the view that all women are creatures of pleasure and beings in need of protection. To Sha`arawi, problems of the poor were to be resolved through charitable activities of the rich, particularly through donations to education programs. Holding a somewhat romanticized view of poor women's lives, she viewed them as passive recipients of social services, not to be consulted about priorities or goals. The rich, in turn, were the «guardians and protectors of the nation.»

13. IMANE MERSAL (born 1966)



Imane Mersal is an Egyptian poet. She graduated from Mansoura University, and received her MA and PhD from Cairo University. She co-founded Bint al-Ard (Daughter of the Earth), which she co-edited from 1986 to 1992. She immigrated to Boston, in 1998, and then to Edmonton, Alberta with her family in 1999. Mersal serves as Associate Professor of Arabic literature and Middle Eastern and African Studies at the University of Alberta.

Her work has appeared in Blackbird, The American Poetry Review, «Parnassus», and Paris Review. She has read at numerous poetry festivals, including the London Poetry Parnassus, billed as the biggest gathering of poets in world history, where she represented Egypt.

Selected poems from Mersal's oeuvre have been translated into numerous languages, including English, French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Macedonian, Hindi, and Italian.

14. INES ABDEL-DAYEM



Ines Abdel-Dayem occupied (from 2012 until 2013) the direction of the Cairo Opera House and was the first woman culture minister. Abdel-Dayem replaced the late Abdel-Moneim Kamel as Cairo Opera House boss in February 2012 and was dismissed on 28 May 2013 by former culture minister Alaa Abdel-Aziz.

Abdel-Dayem graduated from the flute department of the Cairo Conservatory and continued her studies in France, where she obtained a PhD from the Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris.

In 1982, she won first prizes from the Federation Nationale des Unions des Conservatoires Municipaux and the Concours General de Musique et d'Art Dramatique in France – in addition top awards in chamber music and solo flute performances. She toured extensively in the US, Italy, Germany, Spain, Greece and the Czech Republic – as well as African and Middle Eastern countries including Morocco, Tunisia, Syria and the UAE.

In Japan, she received a certificate of merit in the Kobe International Flute Competition; in South Korea, the Festival of Arts prize for the best flautist. She also received the Creative Prize from the Academy of Arts operating

under Egypt's Ministry of Culture.

In the early 2000s, she was awarded a prize for being one of the most creative Egyptian women of the century and in 2001 she received Egypt's State Prize in Arts. She became the director of the Cairo Symphony Orchestra in 2003, dean of the Cairo Conservatoire in 2005 and soon after vice-president of the Academy of Arts.

15. INJI AFLATOUN (1924–1989)

Inji Aflatoun was an Egyptian painter and activist in the women's movement. She was a «leading spokesman for the Marxist-progressive-nationalist-feminist spokeswoman in the late 1940s and 1950s», as well as a «pioneer of modern Egyptian art» and «one of the important Egyptian visual artists». Aflatoun was born in Cairo into a traditional Moslem family she described as «semi-feudal and bourgeois».

She discovered Marxism at the Lycée Français du Caire . In 1942, she joined Iskra, a Communist youth party. After graduating from the Fuad I University in Cairo, she was, with Latifa al-Zayyat, a founding member in 1945 of the Rabitat Fatayat al jami'a wa al ma' ahid (League of University and Institutes' Young Women). The same year she represented the League at the first conference of Women's International Democratic Federation in Paris.

She wrote "Thamanun milyun imraa ma'ana" (Eighty Million Women with Us) in 1948 and "Nahnu al-nisa al-misriyyat" (We Egyptian Women) in 1949. These popular political pamphlets linked class and gender oppression, connecting both to imperialist oppression. In 1949, she became a founding member of the First Congress of the First Peace Council of Egypt. She joined Harakat ansar al salam (Movement of the Friends of Peace) in 1950. She was arrested and secretly imprisoned during Nasser's roundup of communists in 1959. After her release in 1963, Egypt's Communist party having been dissolved, she devoted most of her time to painting.

During school, Aflatoun liked to paint and her parents encouraged her. Her paintings of that period are influenced by surrealism. She later recalled that people were astonished by her paintings and wondered «why a girl from a rich family was so tormented». She stopped painting from 1946 to 1948, considering that what she was painting no longer corresponded to her feelings. Her interest was later renewed after visiting Luxor, Nubia, and the Egyptian oases. During these trips, she had the opportunity to «penetrate the houses and sketch men and women at work». She studied for a year with the Egyptian-born Swiss artist Margo Veillon. During this period, she made individual exhibits in Cairo and Alexandria and showed at the Venice Biennale in 1952 and the São Paulo Art Biennial in 1956. In 1956 she became friend with and was later influenced by the Mexican painter David Alfaro Siqueiros. She was able to continue painting during her imprisonment. Her early prison paintings are portraits, while the later are landscapes. In the years after her liberation, she exhibited in Rome and Paris in 1967, Dresden, East Berlin, Warsaw and Moscow in 1970, Sofia in 1974, Prague in 1975, New Delhi in 1979. Her paintings are filled with «lively brushstrokes of intense colour» reminding some observers of Van Gogh or Bonnard. Her art of later years is characterised by an increasing use of large white spaces around her forms. A collection of her works is displayed at the Amir Taz Palace in Cairo.





16. IPAZIA (born c. AD 350–370; died 415)

Ipazia was an Alexandrine Neoplatonist philosopher in Egypt who was the first well-documented woman in mathematics. As head of the Platonist school at Alexandria, she also taught philosophy and astronomy.

As a Neoplatonist philosopher, she belonged to the mathematic tradition of the Academy of Athens, as represented by Eudoxus of Cnidus; she was of the intellectual school of the 3rd century thinker Plotinus, which encouraged logic and mathematical study in place of empirical enquiry and strongly encouraged law in place of nature.

According to the only contemporary source, Hypatia was murdered by a Christian mob after being accused of exacerbating a conflict between two prominent figures in Alexandria: the governor Orestes and the Bishop of Alexandria.

17. ISIS (ancient Egypt)

Isis was a goddess of fertility and maternity in Ancient Egyptian religious beliefs, whose cult spread throughout the Greco-Roman world. She was cult as the ideal mother and wife as well as the patroness of nature and magic. She was the friend of slaves, sinners, artisans, the oppressed, but she also listened to the prayers of the rich, aristocrats, and governor. Isis is also known as protector of the dead and goddess of children. The name Isis means «Throne». Her headdress is a throne.



Text taken from the Papyrus Oxyrhynchus n.1380, 1. 214-216, dating from the second century B.C.:

[...] Goddess of many faculty, honor of the female sex.

[...] Lovely, who let the sweetness reigns in the assemblies,

[...] Enemy of hate [...] You reign in the Sublime and Infinite. You easily triumphs over despots with your loyal advice.

[...] It's you who, alone, have you found your brother (Osiris), who had well governed the boat, and you gave him a tomb worthy of him [...] You want that women (on childbearing age) join men. [...] Are you the Lady of the Earth! You have made the power of women equal to men! [...]

18. LATIFA AL-ZAYYAT (1923-1996)

Latifa al-Zayyat was an Egyptian activist and writer, most famous for her novel *The Open Door*, which won the inaugural Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature.

She earned her Bachelors degree in English in 1946 from Cairo University and earned her PhD at the same university in 1957. She was, with Inji Efflatoun, a founding member in 1945 of the Rabitat Fatayat at jami'a wa al ma' ahid (The League of University and Institutes' Young Women).

Two of al-Zayyat's novels are translated to English, *The Owner of the House* and *The Open Door*. The latter, published in 1960, was strikingly modern for its time, both for its use of colloquial Egyptian Arabic and for its depiction of the main character's political and sexual awakening. The novel begins in 1946 and ends in 1956, with the Suez Crisis. It was also turned into a popular film. Al-ZaAyyat also wrote many essays on women and critiques as well as reviews of novels and political happenings.





19. LOTFIA ELNADI (1907 - 2002)

Lotifa El-Nadi was an Egyptian aviatrix (Female pilot).

At the age of 26, Lotfia El-Nadi became the first Egyptian female to fly a plane from Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt.

In order to achieve her dream - in a time when Egyptian women were fighting to obtain equal rights - Lotfia informed her father that she was attending a study group, when in fact she was attending flying lessons twice a week.

When her mother discovered her secret desire to learn to fly, she decided to help her daughter achieve that goal.

She has been decorated with medals from a number of Presidents and notaries around the world. Her respect, determination, and ambition gained her the status as a Women's Equal Rights Advocate in the Middle East and an inspiration to the rest of women around the world.

20. MALIK HAFNA NASIF (1886 – 1918)



Malak Hifni Nassif (pseudonym, Bahithat al-Badiya), Egyptian Muslim, publicly advocated women's advancement in the early twentieth century during the al-nahda al-nisa'iyya (women's awakening). This was a period in which women were increasingly able to publish essays, stories, and letters in the nascent women's press and also in the general press. The women's press and the writers who contributed to it played an important role in the development of feminism and the reform of social institutions in a number of Middle Eastern countries. Nassif, along with other prominent figures such as May Ziadeh, were active in literary and social groups through which they contributed to the intellectual and public debate about nationalism and how to define Egyptian and Arab political and cultural identity under the British colonial government.

Nassif articulated one of the founding discourses of feminism that emerged in Egypt during the first third of the twentieth century. Her strain of feminism remained secondary to that embodied in the work of Huda al-Sha'rawi (1882 - 1947) until the final decades of the twentieth century. In contrast to Sha'rawi's secular and Western-oriented feminism, Nassif's feminism, expressed in her collection of talks and essays, Al-nisa'iyyat (Women's affairs, 1910), de-emphasized Western values as it attempted to affirm and improve women's lives and experience through increased educational and work opportunities within a reformed Islamic context.

21. MARIAM FAKHR EDDINE (born 1933)



Mariam Fakhr Eddine is an Egyptian actress from a Circassian origin.

She was born in the city of Fayoum in Egypt, to an Egyptian Muslim father and a Christian Hungarian mother. Actor Youssef Fakhr Eddine is her brother.

22. MUNIRA THABIT (1902-1967)



The law was contested by the young rebel Mounira Thabet (تباتث قري نم) , who publicly criticized national leaders for excluding women from their right to vote.

Munira Thabit is an Egyptian journalist and political activist born and raised in Alexandria. She learned English, Italian, and Arabic and moved to Cairo to work in journalism in 1925. She published the French-language Le Poire newspaper, a political and literary weekly.

Thabet established a weekly magazine called “Al-Amal” (Hope), advocating women’s suffrage and speaking loudly for modify the personal status laws that impose restrictions on marriage and divorce.

She published a series of articles in Al-AIram entitled Khawatir tha’ira (Reflections of a Revolutionary), all signed «M.T.»

Her non-fiction literary works include “The Cause of Palestine: Egyptian Woman’s Opinion on Britain’s White Paper”, 1039.

23. NABAWEY MOUSSA (1886–1951)



was an activist hailed from a middle-class background. She was one of the main figures who advocated education for women. She was also the first female headmaster in the country.

Nabaweya Moussa was born on December 17, 1886. She was the first Egyptian girl to have a high-school education in 1907 and for 21 years later she was the only Egyptian girl to have this degree. Her name is imprinted on the history of education in Egypt. For many reasons she was said to be the pioneer of women’s education in the country.

For nearly forty years (1904-1946), women’s education was her main cause. Thanks to her, women were able to go through all the posts of the education process. Earlier, Egyptian women working in this field were allowed only to teach while foreigners worked as managers and supervisors. Her efforts paid off and she was the first headmistress, the first supervisor and the first manager.

She wrote a very important book called «Fruits of Life in Girl’s Education» which, in 1908, was adopted as a curriculum by the then Ministry of Education. A year later, the governor of Al-Fayoum convinced her to be the headmistress of Al-Mohammadia school for girls. In a four-year period the number of the students doubled. Her achievements in Al- Fayoum, Al-Mansoura and Cairo proved her to be a real pioneer of women’s education. Moussa died in 1951.

24. NAHLA RAMADAN (born 1985)



Nahla Ramadan is an Egyptian weightlifter. She competed for Egypt at the 2004 Summer Olympics and 2012 Summer Olympics.



25. NAWAL EL SAADAWI (born 1931)

Nawal El Saadawi is an Egyptian feminist writer, activist, physician and psychiatrist. She has written many books on the subject of women in Islam, paying particular attention to the practice of female genital cutting in her society.

She is founder and president of the Arab Women's Solidarity Association and co-founder of the Arab Association for Human Rights.

Saadawi began writing early in her career. Her earliest writings include a selection of short stories entitled *I Learned Love* (1957) and her first novel, *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor* (1958). She has since written numerous novels and short stories and a personal memoir, *Memoir from the Women's Prison* (1986). Saadawi has been published in a number of anthologies, and her work has been translated into over 20 languages.

In 1972, she published her first work of non-fiction, *Women and Sex*, which evoked the antagonism of highly placed political and theological authorities and led to a dismissal at the Ministry of Health. Other works include *The Hidden Face of Eve*, *God Dies by the Nile*, *The Circling Song*, *Searching*, *The Fall of the Imam* and *Woman at Point Zero*.

At a young age, Saadawi underwent the process of female genital mutilation. As an adult she has written about and criticized this practice. She responded to the death of a 12-year old girl, Bedour Shaker, during a genital circumcision operation in 2007 by writing: «Bedour, did you have to die for some light to shine in the dark minds? Did you have to pay with your dear life a price ... for doctors and clerics to learn that the right religion doesn't cut children's organs.» As a doctor and human rights activist, Saadawi is also opposed to male genital mutilation (circumcision). She believes that both male and female children deserve protection from genital mutilation.

26. OM KALTOUM (1898 – 1975)

Om Kaltoum or Umm Kulthum, was an internationally famous Egyptian singer, songwriter, and film actress of the 1930s to the 1970s. She is known as *Kawkab al-Sharq* («Star of the East») in Arabic. More than three decades after her death in 1975, she is still widely regarded as the greatest female Arabic singer in history.



27. PRINCESS FATIMAH ISMAIL OF EGYPT (1853 - ?)

Princess Fatimah was the daughter of Khedive Ismail, the famous ruler of Egypt who tried to make from Cairo another Paris despite our financial capabilities could not afford then. She was the elder sister of the Sultan Hussein Kamel and King Fouad I; also she was the aunt of King Farouk.

It seems that Khedive Ismail raised his daughter on the love of culture, education and arts. She married from her relative prince Tusun Mohamed Sa'id in 1871 but their marriage didn't continue as her groom died after 7 years only leaving her. Seeing the life of the mother nobody won't be surprised that her son was one of the most active princes in the Mohamed Royal who contributed a lot in the social and scientific life of his country. Princess Fatimah married again from Prince Mahmoud Sari.

Princess Fatimah was the one who founded the Islamic Charity society that built many schools and hospitals for the poor throughout her life from her own money and you can see how large the projects of that society represented in the Agouza charity Hospital which follows the society till this day.





28. RATIBA EL-HAFNY (1931 – 2013)

Ratiba E-Hafni was an Egyptian and an international Opera singer (Soprano) who has performed in more than 500 opera performances. She was the dean of the Higher Institute of Arabic Music in Cairo. She became the director of the Cairo Opera House in 1988.

She grew up in a musical family, her father Mohamed Ahmed El-Hefny has written more than 45 books on music, and her grandmother to her mother was of a German origin, who also was a German opera singer. Ratiba started playing the piano at the age of five.



29. ROSE AL-YÜSUF (1898-1957)

Rose al-Yūsuf or Rose al-Yousef (فيسويلا زور) is the founder of the Egyptian weekly magazine founded on 1925. It is a pro-government publication published by «Rose Al-Yusuf Establishment» (فيسويلا زور قسسؤم).

The magazine started as a cultural and literary publication by Rose al Yusuf, but became a political magazine by 1928. It had since lost its independence, functioning as a mouthpiece for the Hosni Mubarak regime prior to Mubarak's ouster from the presidency. Like other government propaganda sources, the magazine is now adopting a tone more in line with the general anti-Mubarak sentiment.

In 1935, the publisher added a daily newspaper with the same name.

Both the weekly magazine and daily newspaper are published in Arabic.



30. SAFIYA ZAGHLOUL (1876–1946)

Safiya Zaghloul was an Egyptian political activist. She was among the early leaders of the Wafd Party.

She was the daughter of Mustafa Fahmi Pasha, former prime minister and she married to Saad Zaghloul, the Egyptian revolutionary and Prime Minister of Egypt in 1924.

After the exile of her spouse in 1919, she became a central figure of the Wafd Party, and her home a center for the party. She organized a demonstration of 500 women. After the death of her spouse in 1927, she was central in the appointment of a new party leader. In fact, she was the leader of the Women's Wafd. She retired from political life after the party split of 1937.

She was known as Umm al-Misriyyin (The Mother of the Egyptians) and her home in Cairo was called s Bayt al-Umma (the House of the Nation).



31. SAHAR EL HAWARI

Sahar El Hawari is a promoter of Women's football in Egypt. Sahar El Hawari is the first female member of the Egyptian Football Federation, the first women's referee in Africa, and a member of FIFA.



32. SAMEERA MOUSSA (1917-1952)

Sameera Moussa (Arabic: ايسوم قريمس) was an Egyptian nuclear scientist who held a doctorate in atomic radiation and worked to make the medical use of nuclear technology affordable to all. She organized the Atomic Energy for Peace Conference and sponsored a call for setting an international conference under the banner «Atoms for Peace».



33. SHAJAR AL-DURR (?-1257)

Shajar al-Durr , Chajar ad-Durr or Chagarat al-Durr, « forêt de perles » was the widow of the Ayyubid Sultan As-Salih Ayyub who played a crucial role after his death during the Seventh Crusade against Egypt (1249–1250). She was regarded by Muslim historians and chroniclers of the Mamluk time as being of Turkic origin. She became the Sultana of Egypt on 1250, marking the end of the Ayyubid reign and the starting of the Mamluk era. She was killed in 1257.

She had extremely wisdom and politic intelligence.

34. TAHANI AMER



Tahani Amer discovered her natural passion and inclination for engineering while watching her father fixing his car's engine as she sat inside her small Egyptian apartment. While her love of math created a clear path for a mechanical and aerospace engineering future, it was great teachers and her father that encouraged and guided Dr. Amer. In return, she spends a great deal of her time to inspire and challenge young women to reach their potential. Dr. Amer started working at NASA in the Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) Branch. By working in this branch, she gained valuable experience and fulfilled her dream to work with scientists and researchers in solving real-life problems.

Dr. Amer has invented and patented a system to measure the thermal conductivity of a thin film. This measurement is used in the thermal modelling of several techniques for determining boundary layer transition location on models being tested in wind tunnels. Dr. Amer holds a bachelor's in mechanical engineering, a master's in aerospace engineering, and a doctoral of engineering from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.

35. MIRAL AL TAHAWI



Miral al-Tahawy also known as Miral Mahgoub, is an award-winning Egyptian novelist and short story writer. She comes from a conservative Bedouin background and is regarded as a pioneering literary figure. The Washington Post has described her as «the first novelist to present Egyptian Bedouin life beyond stereotypes and to illustrate the crises of Bedouin women and their urge to break free.

Her first novel "Al-Khibaa" (The Tent) came out in 1996, followed by "Al-Bad-hingana al-zarqa" (The Blue Aubergine) and "Naquarat al-Zibae" (Gazelle Tracks).

36. ZAYNAB AL-GHAZALI (1917-2005)



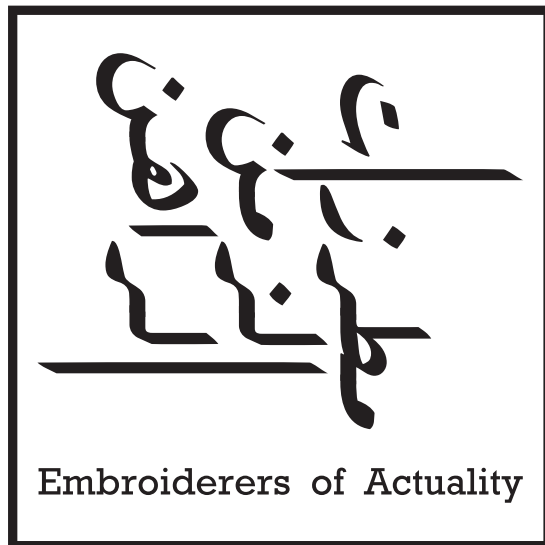
(Arabic: **أيلا زغلا بن يوز**) was an Egyptian activist. She was the founder of the Muslim Women's Association (Jamaa'at al-Sayyidaat al-Muslimaat), and was closely associated with the Muslim Brotherhood.

Zainab Al-Ghazali was a figure who rose to prominence in the debates. She was once a member of Sha'rawi's EFU but could not be convinced of its Eurocentric orientation and sympathies towards secularism. Al-Ghazali then went on to establish Jamiat al-Sayyidat al-Muslimeen, or the Muslim Ladies Association (henceforth the MLA) in 1936, which called for a return to Islam as a source of moral progress for women.

This antagonism made the Brotherhood and its allies the specific target of persecution by Nasserist regime when they became suspects of a failed assassination attempt against him. Zainab Al-Ghazali was among those captured, and eventually tortured, by the authorities.

As was mentioned earlier, in order for us to properly understand Zainab Al-Ghazali's feminism, we must begin by noting that it cannot be simplified as just another replication of the crude traditional Islamic take on women. The Islamic inspiration underlying her writings and activism is evident but we must understand that in light of Al-Ghazali's broader attempts to fuse a complex and creative feminist vision in light of the realities of Egyptian women at the time.

This should not be read to mean, however, that she was a mere "moderate". As we shall soon see, Al-Ghazali's feminism maintained a radical and confrontational edge. She was imprisoned and tortured for her activism and her philosophical convictions enabled her to stay resilient throughout.



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