

# The Fatimids | Royal Women: Granddaughters of Fatima al-Zahra'

'Fatimid princesses endowed palaces and religious institutions throughout the realm.'

Fatimid princesses endowed palaces and religious institutions throughout the realm. In Cairo we know that a hall in the Western Palace was designated to Sitt al-Mulk, the sister of Caliph al-Hakim, and that it was lined with carved wooden panelling embellished with scenes of court life and hunting. Sayyida Umm al-Ameriyya, the wife of the caliph, al-Amir bi-Ahkam Allah (r. 495–524 / 1101–30) constructed an ornamental shrine for the venerated Sayyida Ruqayya, daughter of the Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the fourth Righteously Guided Caliph (Rashidun). It was decorated with kufic calligraphy commemorating her patronage. The shrine was furnished with a magnificent wooden pulpit constructed out of qaru and Indian teak.



**Name:**

Mihrab

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 6th century / AD 12th century Fatimid

**Details:**

Museum of Islamic Art

Cairo, Egypt

**Justification:**

A mihrab (prayer niche) given to the shrine of Sayyida Ruqayya, by Umm al-Ameriyya, the wife of the caliph, al-Amir bi-Ahkam Allah.



**Name:**

Shrine (Mausoleum) of Sayyida Ruqayya

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 527 / AD 1133 Fatimid

**Details:**

Cairo, Egypt

**Justification:**

Built by Umm al-Ameriyya, the wife of the caliph, al-Amir bi-Ahkam Allah, this shrine is famous for its exquisite architecture, lavish decoration and carved wooden furniture.



**Name:**

Rectangular piece of wood

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 5th century / AD 11th century Fatimid

**Details:**

Museum of Islamic Art

Cairo, Egypt

**Justification:**

Found among the ruins of the Mamluk sultan al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun's bimaristan (hospital) in Cairo, this panel once furnished the hall, designated to Sitt al-Mulk, in the Western Palace.