



The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling (Critical Perspectives on Women and Gender)

Nilufer Gole

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This book by prominent Turkish scholar Nilüfer Göle examines the complex relationships among modernity, religion, and gender relations in the Middle East. Her focus is on the factors that influence young women pursuing university educations in Turkey to adopt seemingly fundamentalist Islamist traditions, such as veiling, and the complex web of meanings attributed to these gender-separating practices. Veiling, a politicized practice that conceptually forces people to choose between the "modern" and the "backward," provides an insightful way of looking at the contemporary Islam-West conflict, shedding light on the recent rise of Islamist fundamentalism in many countries and providing insight into what is a more complex phenomenon than is commonly portrayed in accounts by Western journalists.

Göle's sociological approach, employing a number of personal interviews, allows for both a detailed case study of these young Turkish women who are turning to the tenets of fundamental Islamist gender codes, and for a broader critique of Eurocentrism and the academic literature regarding the construction of meaning. Both perspectives serve as a springboard for the launching of theoretical innovations into feminist, religious, cultural, and area studies.

"A timely book, whose publication in English will contribute to a variety of scholarly debates. It promises to be provocative and widely read among scholars interested in issues of modernism and identity, women's social movements, the status of women in Islamic societies, and the broader issues of public versus private spheres." --Nilüfer Isvan, State University of New York, Stony Brook

The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling was originally published as *Modern Mahrem* by the Turkish publisher Metis and has been translated into French, German, and Spanish. Nilüfer Göle is Professor of Sociology, Bogaziçi University.

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