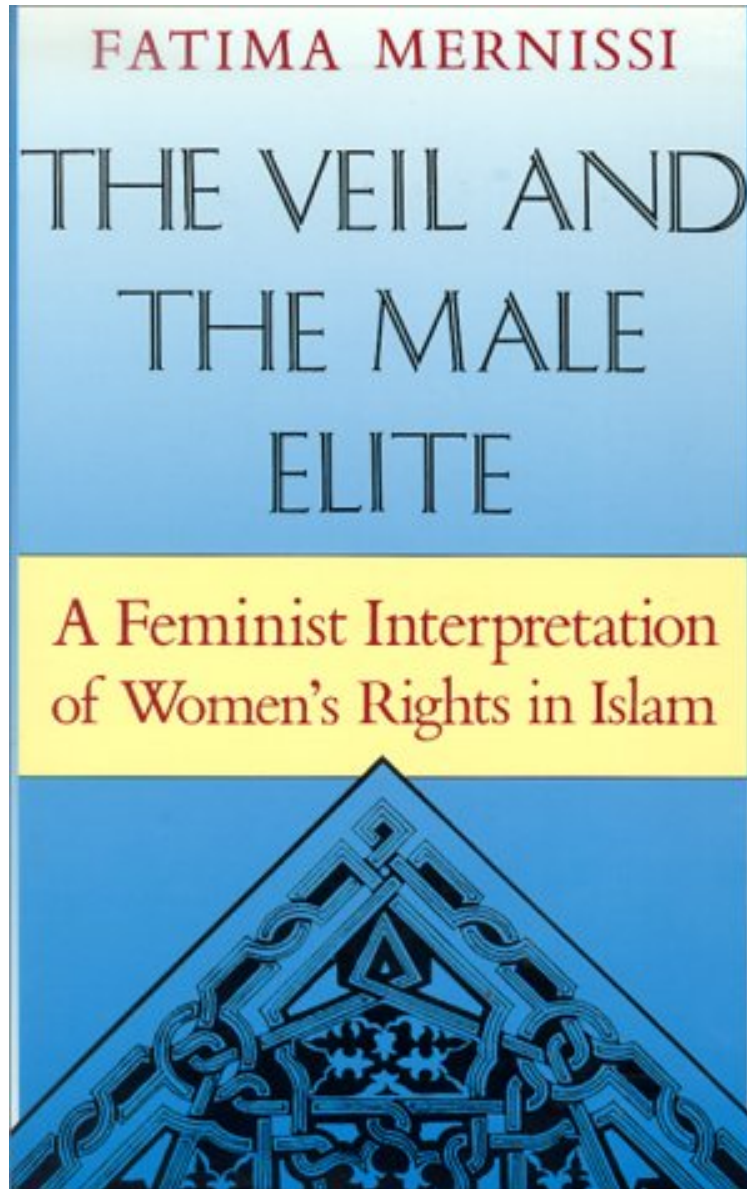


[Free] The Veil And The Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation Of Women's Rights In Islam

The Veil And The Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation Of Women's Rights In Islam

Fatima Mernissi

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spokesperson, even if she doesn't mean it.

Convinced that the veil is a symbol of unjust male authority over women, in *The Veil and the Male Elite*, Moroccan
feminist Fatima Mernissi aims to investigate the origins of the practice in the first Islamic community.

From Publishers Weekly
Muhammad was a chief of state who publicly acknowledged the importance of affection and
sexuality. He was a polygynous husband whose wives were not just background figures but often shared decision-
making with him. According to Moroccan sociologist Mernissi (*Beyond the Veil*), the founder of Islam asserted the
equality of women, rejected slavery and envisioned an egalitarian society. Mernissi further claims that successive
Muslim priests manipulated and distorted sacred texts, from the seventh century onward, in an effort to maintain male
privileges. Her close textual analyses of the Hadith , or stories of words and deeds attributed to the Prophet, support
her far-reaching reinterpretation of the historic roots of Islam and its modern tendency to reduce woman to a
"submissive, marginal creature." Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library Journal
Mernissi, an internationally known Moroccan sociologist, endeavors to show that discrimination against women, so common in the
Muslim world today, is not a fundamental tenet of Islam as many contemporary male Muslims would like us to
believe. Her basic premise is that Islam is inherently egalitarian and, using extensive documentation from the Koran,
the Hadith, and other Islamic historical commentary, Mernissi successfully proves her hypothesis. While doing so, she
teaches the reader a great deal about Mohammed (the man as well as the prophet), his wives, his companions, and
early Islamic society. Like Mernissi's other books (*Beyond the Veil* , Indiana Univ. Pr., 1987; *Doing Daily Battle* ,
Rutgers Univ. Pr., 1989; *Women in Emergent Morocco* , Flame Internat., 1982), this fascinating, well-written, and
well-documented work is an excellent addition to scholarship on Muslim women. Recommended for academic
libraries and others with women's studies or Middle East collections.- Ruth K. Baacke, Bellingham P.L., Wash
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