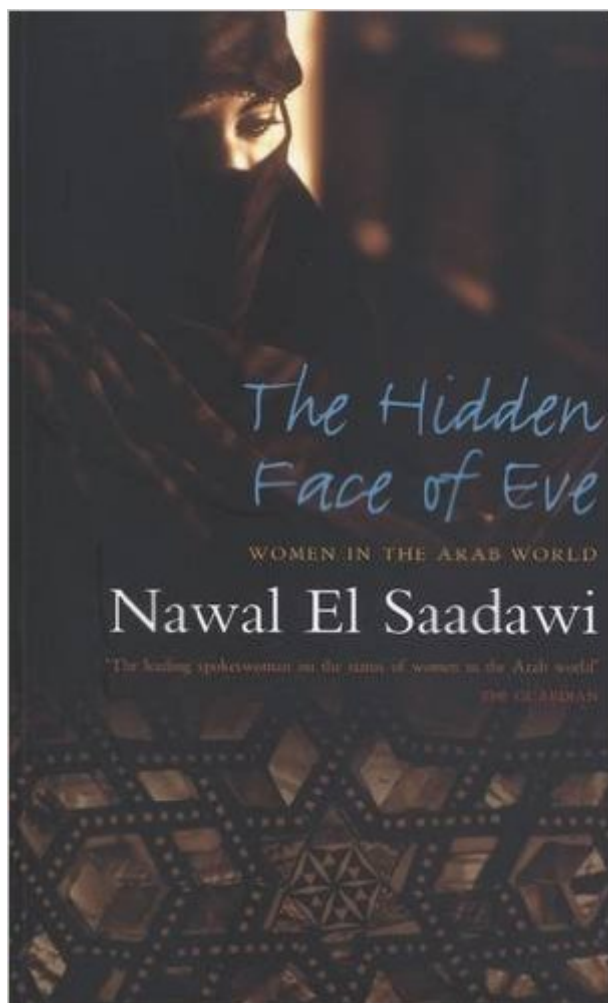


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# The Hidden Face Of Eve: Women In The Arab World



## Synopsis

This powerful account of brutality against women in the Muslim world remains as shocking today as when it was first published, more than a quarter of a century ago. It was the horrific female genital mutilation that she suffered aged only six, which first awakened Nawal el Saadawi's sense of the violence and injustice which permeated her society. Her experiences working as a doctor in villages around Egypt, witnessing prostitution, honour killings and sexual abuse, inspired her to write in order to give voice to this suffering. She goes on to explore the causes of the situation through a discussion of the historical role of Arab women in religion and literature. Saadawi argues that the veil, polygamy and legal inequality are incompatible with the just and peaceful Islam which she envisages.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

classic material. i was most interested in the strange and untrue ideas held by this scholar regarding western, christian, and jewish ideology. a true window into what is accepted as truth in the middle east. the idea that the chastity belt was widely used throughout europe for centuries in order to insure that christian women would remain unavailable while their husbands were away is clearly a misunderstanding by the author. this is her understanding, and therefore it must be true. the most important inclusion is the material on fgm.....so rarely admitted to, and still in use in egypt and throughout the islamic world, in spite of the fact that the tradition is not dictated by the koran.....

It appears that most of Saadawi's books were written and published during the early 1980s, with nothing really new thereafter, besides reprints. She had her own website in 2009, in which she noted her displeasure with U.S. President Obama's speech to Muslims in Cairo, Egypt. In *HIDDEN FACE OF EVE* she reveals that she is anti-capitalistic, and supports some form of a socialist economy. In *HIDDEN FACE OF EVE* she clearly establishes herself as Egypt's most outspoken feminist. She opposes any genital mutilation of girls, and rails against fundamentalist Arab governments that curtail educational opportunities for women, and rebukes the Muslim cultural norms whereby men prevent women from having the same 'human rights' that men have: easy divorce, owning property, voting, dating, etc. She was imprisoned for a month in 1981 for opposing Egyptian Pres. Sadat's recognizing the existence of the Jewish state of Israel. Rather than recognizing the stronger fighting spirit of Israeli soldiers during the 1967 Six Day War, or the lack of battle stamina of the Arab soldiers, Saadawi offered a novel idea as to why the Israeli military routed the Palestinians from Palestine: because the Palestinian males were so afraid that the Israeli soldiers might abuse captured Palestinian women, instead of defending their homeland, "one of the factors that forced the Arabs to leave the West Bank of Jordan during the 1967 war was their desire to protect the 'honour' of their womenfolk" (p. 2); flee, instead of fighting! Heroism, indeed! The author faults the psychologist Freud in misunderstanding women (p. 152). She writes a lot of detailed analysis in explaining why the male-dominated Muslim culture so oppresses women. She rebukes the Islamic idea that women are Satan's handmaidens. She refers very frequently to the Quran/Koran and the ahadith to either support her feminist beliefs or to rebuke Muslim male malevolence. Nonetheless, she still concludes that Islam is the solution rather than the problem for women -- if only the male imams would recognize Eve's sexual enlightenment that is hidden beneath her veil.

Women in the Arab world and many parts of the world throughout human history have been abused beyond belief! We cannot turn a blind eye toward how male dominance, religious control, ridiculous myths have been created and continue while the female gender is brutally treated. Educate a woman, change the world! Nawal El Saadawi's books should be read by the world!

The *Hidden Face of Eve* is a collection of short essays on female suppression in Egypt including female circumcision and the importance of the hymen in society. Saadawi is a female doctor in that region. She begins by describing her own circumcision which was forced and traumatic and done when she was a very young girl. She goes on to describe many cruel things that she saw as a

doctor including botched circumcisions and mutilations done to brides to get a good bleed on the wedding day and prove that the woman had a hymen. Each chapter is kind of a mini-essay on some topic off of these themes. The chapters feel as if they are meant to stand alone. There is a lot of overlap from one chapter to the next, and the book feels more like parts than a whole. If the subject matter is what you are looking for then you will get a lot of it here. Much of what Saadawi is saying is anecdotal and based on what she saw or had heard of as a doctor rather than gathered statistical data. This makes sense in that this isn't the type of information that lends itself to surveys. Much of it deals with really private and painful experiences. It might be good to temper this with a more mathematical approach so that this would bring the feeling for the people involved but there would be big picture objectivity from elsewhere.

needed this for school. loved that it came fast and in great condition. i would recommend to any student to buy here if they need this.

It was hard to get past her lambasting of Western Civilization. I'm not interested in her opinion on socialism. Not relevant.

loved it!

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