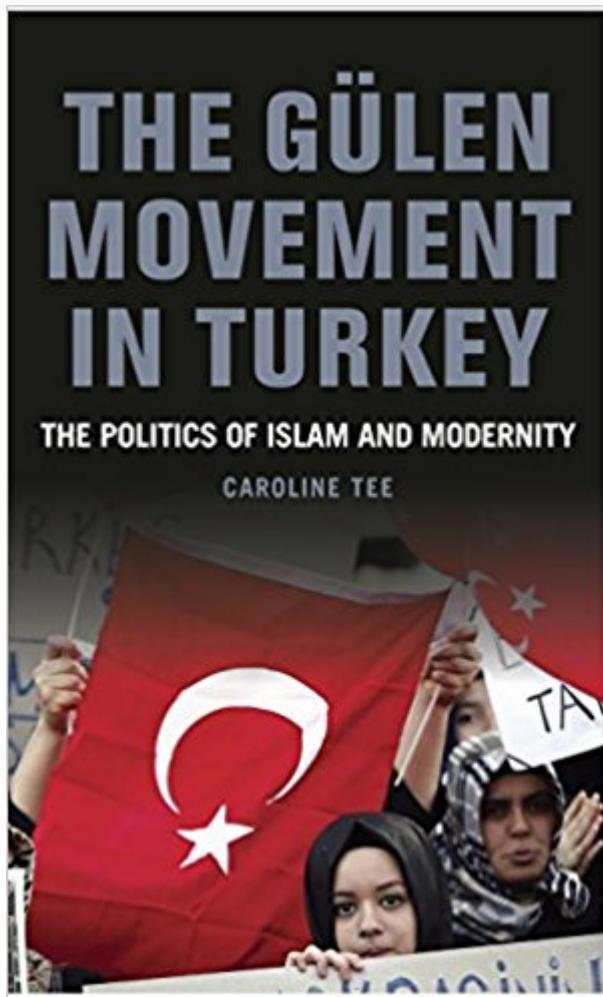


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The Gülen Movement In Turkey: The Politics Of Islam, Science And Modernity



Synopsis

The Gülen, or Hizmet, movement in Turkey is the country's most powerful and affluent religious organisation. Its central tenet, advanced by its founder, the charismatic Sunni preacher Fethullah Gülen (b. 1941), is that Muslims should engage positively with modernity. A prime means of advancing this philosophy has been education: at hundreds of Gülen-run schools and universities, not only in Turkey but also worldwide, instructors aim to cultivate the next generation of Muslim bankers, biologists, software engineers and entrepreneurs. But how does the Gülen movement resolve the sometimes conflicting positions of Sunni Islam and contemporary science – for example, on evolutionary theory? Drawing on sustained ethnographic research conducted among Gülen communities in Turkey, Caroline Tee analyses their complex attitudes towards secular modernity. She focuses on education, science research and industry to explore how pious Muslim practitioners engage in science at high levels, arguing that the Gülen movement's success in this critical area of modernity has facilitated its rise to prominence in recent decades. Considered against the backdrop of Turkish politics, and particularly the acrimonious power-struggle between the Gülen movement and its erstwhile ally, Turkey's ruling AK Party, Gülenist engagement with modern science is revealed as a key source of its influence and success.

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