

Islam and democracy in egypt analytical essay

[Politics](#), [Democracy](#)



This paper is aimed at discussing the status of Sharia under the regime of Hosni Mubarak. This question is closely related with the Islamization of Egypt. Moreover, much attention should be paid to the role played by the organizations which stated that the functioning of the state should not be separated from religion. Among these organizations, one can distinguish the Muslim Brotherhood.

These are the main issues that should be taken into consideration. These questions are vital for understanding the development of the political system of the country. Overall, it is possible to argue that Mubarak resisted the growing role of Sharia in the legislative system of this country, but he had to recognize the importance of Islam for the culture of the Egyptian society.

Moreover, he had to make concessions with Islamist organizations. To a great extent, he perceived Islamization as one of the factors that could eventually undermine his authority, but it was impossible for him to create a completely secular state that could be completely isolated from religion. This is one of the main points that can be made.

It should be mentioned that for approximately two decades after Mubarak's ascension to power, the supporters of political and legal Islam did not play an important role in the social life of Egypt. The opposition to this regime was represented mostly by nationalist and leftist movements (Naguib 103). In turn, Islamist political parties could not significantly affect the decisions of Mubarak regime (Naguib 103).

This is one of the trends that could be observed in the eighties. Furthermore, Mubarak perceived the growing importance of religion as a potential danger

to his government. There were two reasons for this policy. First of all, one can speak about the growing number of militant Islamist organizations that could use force against the state (Sullivan and Abeb-Kotob 11).

Secondly, it is important to remember that Muslim culture does not tolerate the authority of civil dictators. In turn, Mubarak policies were aimed at suppressing various Islamic organizations that could be both peaceful and militant (Sullivan and Abeb-Kotob 11). This information should be taken into account because it can explain the role of Sharia in the Egyptian society during Mubarak regime.

One can argue that the norms of Sharia were not strictly enforced by the administration of Mubarak. The only exception was family law which regulates such aspects as the inheritance of property, marriage, divorce, and so forth (Forsythe 112).

Admittedly, Mubarak enabled some of Islamic political parties to participate in the legislative discussions, but they could not shape the constitution of the country or other regulations. This is one of the main issues that should be kept in mind. Overall, it is possible to say that the Quran was not the main source of legislative norms in this country.

Religion could not significantly influence the life of people. This is one of the main arguments that can be put forward. Nevertheless, Mubarak could not completely disregard the role of political Islam. For instance, Mubarak claimed to be a civil or even democratic leader, but his government failed to

empower women by enabling them to occupy the positions of authority (Forsythe 112).

Their role in the family or society was significantly lower in comparison with the Western countries. This attitude of the government can be partly explained by its compromise with Islamist organizations.

Thus, it is possible to say that Hosni Mubarak resisted the idea of Islamic state, but he could not completely reject the influence of religion. This is one of the aspects that can be identified. This detail is critical for understanding the policies of the Mubarak regime.

Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the role of political and legal Islam began to increase in the nineties. Moreover, much attention should be paid to the elections of 2005 when the Muslim Brotherhood won approximately 20 percent of seats in the Egyptian Parliament (Naguib 103). Since that time, they attempted to introduce Sharia as the basis of the legal, political, or economic policies of Egypt.

After this event, the role of Islam began to increase. Their strategies were aimed at transforming secular state into an Islamic one. To a great, the increasing role of the Muslim Brotherhood contributed to the downfall of Mubarak regime and current period of struggle.

At this point, Egypt passes through a period of political instability, and one cannot determine its future political development. The most important question is related to the role of Islam in the political life of the country. In the future, Sharia can permeate almost every area of life in this country. This

is one of the options that cannot be dismissed. Nevertheless, it is also possible that its application will be limited.

For instance, Sharia may be relevant to the criminal and penal codes of the country. Thus, Islam can play different roles in the life of this state. It should be taken into account that in Egypt there are many Islamist organizations that are by no means radical (Naguib 108). Therefore, they may not necessarily use religion as a means of oppressing their enemies.

Currently, political scientists cannot say for certain whether Egypt can effectively combine political Islam with the principles of civic society and democracy. Furthermore, legal professionals want to determine whether Sharia law will be the basis of the legislative system. These are the main issues that should be considered.

There is another question that should not be overlooked. The collapse of the Mubarak regime gave rise to the intense political struggle in this country. In the course of this competition of the country, another authoritarian leader may come to power.

Thus, the collapse of Mubarak regime may not produce significant changes. Nevertheless, it is also possible that the country will gradually become more democratic. At present, it is not easy to make any accurate estimation about the future of this country, its state, and culture. This is another issue that should be disregarded.

On the whole, these examples suggest that the regime of Hosni Mubarak resisted the increasing importance of Islam in this country. Sharia was not

widely applied to different areas of human activity. Nevertheless, Mubarak was not able to create a state that could be separated from the principles of Islam.

The growing political role of the Muslim Brotherhood was one of the factors that lead to the downfall of this regime. Nevertheless, at present the legal and political development of Egypt cannot be easily predicted since Islamist organizations are represented by various groups that have different values and priorities. These are the main arguments that can be made.

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