

Elections: Between Reality and Pretense

(Translated)

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In every election cycle, voices from within what are called official religious institutions in Egypt reappear, promoting the idea of national duty, integrity, and accountability before Allah at the ballot box, as if the electoral process were a Shariah platform and a genuine conduit for change. This discourse, which is repeated every year and in different forms with each election, contradicts both religious truth and the existing political reality in a country governed by secular constitutions and systems that do not rule by Islam, nor do they permit the establishment of Islamic rule in the first place.

Elections in Egypt are not a genuine political exercise, but rather a mere facade managed by the state's security apparatus, media, and bureaucracy. The candidates are predetermined, the outcome is a foregone conclusion, competition is nonexistent, and the entire process serves as a stamp of approval, both domestically and internationally for a political reality that has remained unchanged for decades. Furthermore, the public participation touted by the media and the authorities is not evidence of integrity, but rather of the state's ability to mobilize through coercion, economic blackmail, and the manipulation of manufactured religious institutions.

Therefore, saying that "elections are an embodiment of the will of the people" is contrary to the truth because the true will of the people cannot be created in the absence of political freedom, the presence of security agencies that persecute any real change project, the criminalization of independent political action, and the prevention of any serious competitor from emerging or organizing.

Voting is promoted as a "testimony, a trust, and a religious duty." This is a grave error, as the concept of "national duty" is not a Shariah obligation. Shariah obligations are imposed by divine revelation, not by secular systems or ministries of religious endowments. There is no such thing as "national duty" in Islamic law.

Furthermore, elections under secular systems are not sanctioned by Islamic law because they are based on man-made constitutions and the principle of democracy, which grants sovereignty to the people, not to Islamic law. Allah (swt) says, **﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ**

﴿بَيْنَهُمْ﴾ **"But no, by your Lord, they will not [truly] believe until they make you, O Muhammad], judge between them concerning that over which they dispute."** [TMQ Surah An-Nisaa: 65]. These constitutions negate the very foundation of belief in Islamic Shariah Law.

Participating in democratic elections is an endorsement of the system, and endorsing what is wrong is forbidden by Islamic law. So, what if what is wrong is the foundation of the political system that disables the Shariah Law of Allah (swt)?

A Muslim is not held accountable before Allah (swt) for abstaining from secular elections, and what angers Allah (swt) cannot be a Shariah obligation, nor can what the secular system enshrines be a Shariah trust.

Islam does not reject elections as a mechanism, but Islam rejects the secular framework within which the current elections are conducted. Elections are a Shariah style when one condition is met which is that their foundation be Islamic.

The Prophet (saw) clearly practiced this at the Second Pledge of Aqabah, when he said to the Ansar, **« أخرجوا لي من بينكم اثني عشر نقيباً »** **"Select twelve leaders (naqibs) from among you."** The Companions (ra) also practiced it at the Pledge of Abu Bakr (ra) at Saqifah, and then again at the Pledge of Uthman (ra). It was a free selection based on Islam. Therefore, the problem is not with the election itself, but with the principle upon which it is based. If Islam is its foundation, then it is legitimate in Shariah. However, if democracy is the foundation of elections, then it is forbidden, because democracy is a man-made system that makes man a legislator instead of Allah (swt), and this contradicts a fundamental principle of Iman.

There is a political truth, borne out by reality and experience: no state changes its system through the ballot box. There is a deep state that guarantees the continuation of the regime regardless of the people's wishes. And there are the security apparatuses of the regime, which control every detail of the political landscape. This is in addition to the secular constitutions

themselves, pre-designed to solidify the regime, and to prevent any genuine Islamic reform project from emerging. Therefore, any attempt to change the system through elections is doomed from the outset to be either prevented or eliminated. Elections are part of the system. They cannot be a means of dismantling the system. A tool created by the authorities cannot be a means of overthrowing them.

The Shariah method of change is a comprehensive revolutionary change, not a patching up of the democratic system. The Islamic methodology to change is clear in the Seerah of the Prophet (saw); it begins with culturing the Ummah about the culture of Islam and entrusting it with the project of its state, which it implements, passing through interaction and what it includes of intellectual conflict and political struggle with existing systems in conjunction with seeking the support of the people of power and strength to establish the state as the Prophet (saw) did until the Ansar responded to him.

This Shariah method is based on uprooting the system entirely, not reforming it, patching it up, or joining its institutions.

Therefore, the call to participate in secular elections is not from Islam, nor is it the methodology prescribed by the Prophet Muhammad (saw).

What did Islamic Shariah Law forbid regarding participation in elections in secular regimes?

1- Elections in secular regimes legitimize man-made constitutions, and Islamic Shariah Law categorically rejects such constitutions.

2- Secular elections enshrine an unlawful political system that grants legislation to humans, not to Allah (swt).

3- Secular elections obstruct genuine change and transforms the Ummah into a public that is summoned when needed to embellish the image of the regime.

4- Secular elections mislead people in the name of Deen when they are told, "You will be held accountable before Allah (swt) for your vote."

Testimony can only be given regarding truth. Making voting in a secular system is a form of testimony that conflates Shariah concepts with deviant political practices.

Trustworthiness lies in what Allah (swt) has commanded. So how can participating in a legislative system that contradicts the legislation of Allah (swt) be considered trustworthiness?! Allah (swt) says, ﴿وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾ **"And whoever does not judge by what Allah (swt) has revealed - then it is those who are the disbelievers."** [TMQ Surah Al-Maidah: 44]. So, can this system be granted legitimacy in the name of testimony?!

Statements that describe elections in a secular system as a "Shariah obligation, testimony, or trust" are not based on legitimate evidence, nor on a correct understanding of reality. Instead, they are part of an official campaign aimed at mobilizing people to legitimize the regime and its empty political process.

Elections are a permissible mechanism under the Islamic law if based on Islam, but forbidden if based on secular democracy. Participating in elections in Egypt today is tantamount to endorsing a regime that does not rule according to the Shariah Law of Allah (swt). A Muslim is not held accountable for abstaining from voting in a secular system because it is not a Shariah obligation. True change will not come through these ballot boxes, but instead through a Shariah political action that uproots the regime and establishes a government based on the Noble Quran and Prophetic Sunnah, restoring the Ummah's authority, the rightful place of the Shariah Law, and Islam's Khilafah Rashidah (Rightly-Guided Caliphate) on the Method of Prophethood. This is the path, and this is the truth that cannot be concealed, altered, or disguised with baseless religious slogans or phrases. Allah (swt) said, ﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾ **"But no, by your Lord, they will not truly believe until they make you, O Muhammad, judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have decided and submit in full submission."** [TMQ Surah An-Nisaa 4:65].

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