

THE RISE OF POLITICAL ISLAM CAN THE TURKISH MODEL BE APPLIED SUCCESSFULLY IN EGYPT?

TAHA KASSEM

Assistant Professor of International Economics and International Politics, The College of Management and Technology (CMT), The Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport, Alexandria, Egypt

ABSTRACT

Although the parliamentary elections run in Egypt in December 2011-January 2012 indicated that Egypt is witnessing an era of political or democratic transformation, they signified the rise of political Islam to authority; the rise which created a lot of debates and posed a lot of questions about the political and economic future of Egypt. The core of these debates circles around these questions: Would Egypt adopt, literally, a rigid pro-Islamic type of rule based on the Islamic Sharia (Islamic Code) or would it adopt a moderate model, like that in Turkey, in its political and economic transformation? Pessimists think that Egypt will become another model of Iraq where national strife causes a lot of bloodshed or another model of Iran which gained a global antagonism. Optimists, on the other hand, aspire that Egypt will adopt a moderate pro-Islamic model as Islam itself is called the religion of moderateness (Din al Aetedal wa al Wasatiya) and they suggest and appreciate that Egypt follows the steps taken by the Turkish party AKP (Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi), The Justice and Development Party in Turkey. They base their argument on the political and economic development witnessed by Turkey under the rule of the AKP. Moreover, they consider Turkey to be a Muslim but pro-Western and laiciest state, a “model” or “inspiration” for other Muslim countries. Though the author supports the optimists’ view, he thinks that Egypt faces a lot of barriers that could hinder the achievement of these objectives or at least preclude their realization on the short run. The author divides this paper into five parts: Introduction. The first part sheds some light on the nature of Islamic parties in Egypt and Turkey, their ideologies and their position in the political map in both countries. The second part deals with the political and economic programs of these parties. The third part concentrates on some of political and economic conditions in both countries. The fourth part is concerned with the recommendations and conclusion.

KEYWORDS: Crisis Theory, Conflict of Civilizations, Demonstrative Effects, Economic Transformation, Islamic Sharia, Muslim Brotherhood, Political Islam, Political Transformation, Resurgence Theory, State Culture Theory, Textual Theory, The Development and Justice Party in Turkey (AKP), The Freedom and Justice Party in Egypt (FJP)