

# Islam and Democratization in Contemporary Kuwait

——Political Participation of Women and Formation of the Civil Society——

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Research Area : State of Kuwait

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## Background and objective of my research

The purpose of my research is to clarify the relationship between Islam and the parliamentarism in Contemporary Kuwait. Kuwait is the one of the most democratic countries in the Middle East, since all male and female citizens have suffrage and the National Assembly has the legislative power. The relationship between Islam and the democratization in Kuwait is very interesting and has plentiful implications. The Islamic movements in Kuwait have legally constituted the largest force in the National Assembly whose system is very democratic. Moreover, owing to that Kuwaiti government has not violently oppressed the Islamic movement like Egypt or other countries in which the government has secular attribute.

The women in Kuwait was endowed their full political rights in 2005 in Kuwait. In the previous studies on Kuwaiti politics, Islamic groups were regarded as a main opposition to the women's political participation. However, in fact, there the Islamic groups that have agreed with women's suffrage. This study focuses on the women's political participation and the attitudes of women toward their own political rights, especially, the members of a women's Islamic group.

The theoretical perspective on which this study based is the theory of the "Islamic Civil Society". The basic idea of this theory lays in the discipline of the Islamic Law. Therefore, what "civil society" means is different between the theory of the "Islamic Civil Society" and the conventional theory of the civil society. In the "Islamic Civil Society", the civil society indicates the sphere and the activities aiming to construct ideal society according to the Islamic principles. The merit of using this theory is that we can analyze the real shape of the Kuwaiti politics, with avoiding to misunderstand it owing to examine the Kuwaiti politics and society with the measure of the

conventional modern science which developed in the modern western societies.

## Pictures



Picture 1:

### Arabian sea from the Kuwait Tower

Kuwait is at the bottom of the Arabian Gulf, whose northern border neighbors Iraq and the southern and western border neighbors Saudi Arabia. The weather is very hot, with around 50 degrees in the hottest time on July and August.



Picture 2:

### The Grand Mosque; the Biggest Mosque in Kuwait

Kuwait has many mosque; the temple in Islam. The Grand Mosque is the biggest one in Kuwait. We can enter whether we are Muslim or not.



Picture 3:

### The Dialogue among the Civilization between Islamic World and Japan, 7<sup>th</sup> conference in Kuwait

The 7<sup>th</sup> conference was held in Kuwait City from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> March 2009. The central topics were dialogue between two countries and the issues on environment. There are many female observers from Kuwait.