

## **The Role of Religion**

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The view of Muslim and Christian women on the role of religion in politics and public life are explored. The show featured a vox-pop in which interviewees were asked whether they preferred an Islamic or a secular political system. Some said they preferred the former because it would preserve moral values in society, while others opted for the latter arguing that it protected the rights of ethnic and religious groups and prevented one from dominating the others.

In this episode, a feature from Omer al-Mansouri in Baghdad looked at the influence of religious parties on universities and educational institutions. Highlighted were their attempts to impose religious strictures on female students. Women interviewed in the piece included Asifa Abbas who complained that Islamic leaders manipulated Islamic laws while Hanaa al-Sagban criticised them for attempting to force girls to be veiled.

Christian women were also invited to comment on their religion. In a report by Asma al-Amery from the Christian district of Ainkawa in Erbil city, in Kurdistan, a member of the Kurdish parliament said she thought Christianity protected the rights of women while a Catholic civil society activist protested that Catholicism deprived a woman of one of her basic rights - divorce.

**Location:** [Iraqi Kurdistan](#)

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