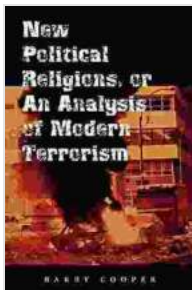


# New Political Religions: An Analysis of Modern Terrorism by Eric Voegelin

Eric Voegelin was a prominent political philosopher and historian who lived during the 20th century. He was known for his work on the history of political ideas, and particularly for his examination of the relationship between religion and politics. In his book *The New Science of Politics*, Voegelin argues that modern terrorism is a new form of political religion.

According to Voegelin, political religion is a form of idolatry in which the state or a political leader is worshipped as a god. This can take many different forms, but it is always characterized by a belief in the absolute authority of the state or leader and a willingness to use violence to achieve political goals.



## New Political Religions, or an Analysis of Modern Terrorism (The Eric Voegelin Institute Series in Political Philosophy Book 1) by Barry Cooper

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 898 KB  
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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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Voegelin argues that modern terrorism is a particularly virulent form of political religion. This is because terrorists believe that they are fighting a holy war against their enemies and that they are justified in using any means necessary to achieve their goals.

Terrorists are often motivated by a desire to create a perfect society, as in the case of communism, or a desire to restore a lost golden age, as in the case of Islamic fundamentalism. They believe that their cause is just and that they are justified in using violence to achieve their goals.

The problem with political religion, according to Voegelin, is that it is always based on a lie. The state or leader is not a god and cannot provide salvation. The only way to achieve true salvation is through a relationship with God.

Voegelin argues that the best way to combat terrorism is to promote a genuine understanding of religion and to expose the lies of political religion. This can be done through education, dialogue, and the promotion of religious tolerance and understanding.

## **The Rise of Political Religion**

The rise of political religion is a relatively recent phenomenon. In the past, religion was largely separate from politics. However, in the 19th and 20th centuries, religion began to be used more and more frequently for political purposes. This was due in part to the rise of nationalism and the decline of traditional religious authority.

Nationalism is a form of political ideology that emphasizes the importance of the nation-state. Nationalists believe that the nation is the highest form of

human community and that it is the duty of all citizens to serve the nation. Nationalism often leads to a form of political religion in which the state is worshipped as a god and the nation is seen as a sacred entity.

The decline of traditional religious authority also contributed to the rise of political religion. In the past, religion was a source of moral authority for most people. However, in the 19th and 20th centuries, the authority of traditional religious institutions began to decline. This created a vacuum that was filled by political ideologies, which offered people a new source of moral authority and a sense of purpose.

### **The Characteristics of Political Religion**

According to Voegelin, political religion has a number of characteristic features:

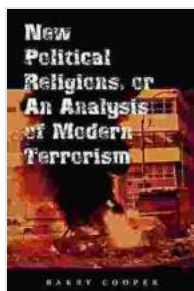
\* It is based on a belief in the absolute authority of the state or leader. \* It is characterized by a willingness to use violence to achieve political goals. \* It is often motivated by a desire to create a perfect society or to restore a lost golden age. \* It is based on a lie, as the state or leader is not a god and cannot provide salvation.

### **The Dangers of Political Religion**

Political religion is a dangerous phenomenon because it can lead to violence, oppression, and the destruction of human rights. This is because political religion is based on a lie, as the state or leader is not a god and cannot provide salvation. When people believe that they are fighting a holy war, they are more likely to use violence to achieve their goals.

Terrorism is one of the most extreme forms of political religion. Terrorists believe that they are fighting a holy war against their enemies and that they are justified in using any means necessary to achieve their goals. This can lead to the death of innocent people and the destruction of property.

Political religion is a dangerous phenomenon that has the potential to cause great harm. It is important to be aware of the characteristics of political religion and to be able to recognize the lies that it is based on. The best way to combat political religion is to promote a genuine understanding of religion and to expose the lies of political religion. This can be done through education, dialogue, and the promotion of religious tolerance and understanding.



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