

THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF POLITICAL FUNCTION OF RELIGION: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This article clarifies some of the political functions of religion that have been used by various institutions, groups and politicians. Religion as one of the social system's structures has some social functions including political one, whether positive or negative. By studying the previous works on religions and the writer's new evidence, here from a political point of view, these eufunctions (positive functions) will be extracted. The writer believes that, unlike the sociologists, political scientists haven't considered the functions of religion in the political arena. So, this article tries to clarify some of these functions to answer the following questions: what are the positive political functions of religion especially in new age? Has religion shifted to new functions? With respect to these questions, from functionalism approach, and after defining religion, the author tries to explain some of these functions such as the effect of integrity and cohesion, Influence in domestic policies and public polices, voting behaviors, nationalism, international relationships and so on.

KEYWORDS: Religion, Political Function of Religion, Political Participation, Mobilization, Ideology, Political Order, Religious Nationalism, Religious Politics