

# Groups—religious, ideological, or otherwise—that exhibit cult-like behaviors within political contexts

## Statement by Cowdrey

### 1. Defining Political Cults

A political cult is a group or movement that:

- Demands absolute loyalty to a leader, ideology, or cause.
- Uses manipulative tactics to control members' beliefs, behaviors, and social networks.
- Promotes a sense of “us vs. them,” often demonizing outsiders.
- Prioritizes group survival and power over ethical considerations.

These characteristics can appear in both religious and secular movements.

### 2. Religious Political Cults

Religious political cults blend faith with political goals, often framing loyalty to a leader as a moral or divine duty. Examples include:

- Leaders claiming divine authority to justify policy positions.
- Members pressured to donate, vote, or act in ways that benefit the group's political agenda.
- Use of shaming, fear, or spiritual threats to enforce obedience.
- Examples:
  - Fundamentalist sects with voting blocs tied to a specific party.
  - Extremist religious groups advocating legislation aligned solely with their theology.

*Key risk:* Policy and lawmaking influenced by narrow religious dogma rather than public interest.

### 3. Ideological Political Cults

These are secular but operate with the same intensity as religious cults. Characteristics include:

- A rigid worldview interpreting all events as proof of the ideology.
- Conspiracy narratives that justify extreme actions or mistrust of institutions.
- Social isolation of dissenters or “heretics” within the movement.
- Examples:
  - Ultra-partisan factions prioritizing ideology over governance.

- Extremist activist movements promoting radical social or economic changes.

*Key risk:* They can undermine democratic processes, prioritizing ideology over civic responsibility.

#### 4. Hybrid Cults

Some groups combine religious and ideological cult traits:

- Religious principles legitimize political action.
- Ideology reinforces religious loyalty.
- Members are taught that dissent is immoral or treasonous.
- Example: Groups claiming moral superiority to dictate personal behavior and public policy, merging spiritual salvation with political dominance.

#### 5. Common Tactics

- **Information control:** Propaganda, selective media, discouraging critical thinking.
- **Emotional manipulation:** Fear, guilt, or promises of spiritual/political reward.
- **Isolation:** Social pressure to disconnect from non-members.
- **Us-vs-them framing:** Demonizing critics, labeling outsiders as enemies of the faith or ideology.

#### 6. Why It Matters

- **Threat to democracy:** Leaders may consolidate power by controlling followers' political actions.
- **Social harm:** Members may experience psychological trauma, ostracism, or financial exploitation.
- **Policy distortion:** Laws may reflect narrow group interests rather than society-wide needs.
- **Polarization:** Cult-like dynamics amplify division, reducing compromise and civic discourse.

#### 7. Recognizing and Responding

- Watch for charismatic leaders claiming absolute authority.
  - Look for pressure to conform politically in ways that violate personal values.
  - Identify recurring discrediting of outsiders or dissenters.
  - Support free-thinking, grounded individuals promoting education, critical thinking, and ethical leadership.
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## Does the organization have OZIRAH?

*Probably not at this time.*

***“Sensitive to the blurred line.”***

It is important to recognize that most organizations, regardless of size, mission, or structure, often experience internal challenges. These may include infiltrators, moles, conspiratorial behavior, unethical conduct, toxic dynamics, internal drama, or individuals acting in bad faith.

We have witnessed widespread systemic corruption in recent years. Still, we must remember that organizations are made up of people, and where people exist, vulnerabilities do also. Vigilance, strong ethical values, and clear accountability structures are essential safeguards. At this time, much of this is lacking. Achieving perfect ethics and harmony is a continual struggle, a victorious triumph when it occurs.

Society consumes factory-farmed animals. Society participates in emotional abuses. When unchecked, emotional abuses can lead to physical abuses. There is a blurring and manipulation of truth, a lack of accountability, and a normalization of harm. Clear vision and living in light of the truth are crucial for navigating such abuses.

Consuming animals carries moral implications. Killing innocent animals is normalized, and for vegans, it is not meat with a side of potatoes, but a side of torture. This is where monastery work comes into play, we are a “traveling monastery,” like a monastery in our pockets, moving wherever we go. It embodies nondiscrimination, laws of faith, and spoken boundaries. This is where paths meet at a fork in the road, pun intended.

I am vegan in heart, soul, and faith. My cookware has never had meat or dairy on it, my plates, mugs, glasses, and pans are fully plant-based. I do not purchase leather, silk, or other animal products. I am sensitive to the blurred lines. I live in light of the truth and bear witness to it. There are Jehovah’s Witnesses; there are also US witnesses, or Ozirah’s witnesses. I am a witness for the animals, of human virtues, and of Ozirah, God.

I also carry beacons of Christianity within my heart and spirit, as well as the American spirit, ancient and modern alike. I see where our culture has been influenced by other societies, where mistakes were made, and I stand firmly on the side of God. I recognize oppression where it lands. I see souls as they are. I see competition, the catastrophic wrongs committed, and the corporate machine driven purely by profit.

With Ozirah, I see clearly, the torturers, tormenters, abusers, violent criminals, cruel enslavers, and unchallenged predators. I also see political conspirators and actors leveraging power. It is one thing to support a shining star, and another to shoot and degrade ~ours. Our American star is being targeted, sabotaged and replaced so others may shine.

And so, where do we draw the line, Americans? Let’s recognize “the blurring,” for what it is. May OZIRAH guide Our American Star, and may truly free-thinking, grounded, ethical and American-spirited individuals rise to these positions — showing the world what it means for a true and valued [\*American to shine\*](#).

*Virtuous Americans deserve these political positions, **it is their country after all.***

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