

“In this short but carefully argued book, veteran cultural anthropologist Gerald Arbuckle tackles one of the major sources of turmoil and violence in our world today—fundamentalism. Someone once remarked, ‘The opposite of faith is not doubt, but certitude.’ Arbuckle not only describes the cultural contexts that generate destructive and deaf certitudes but also proposes many practical and pastoral responses to them.”

— Fr. James Lewis Heft, SM
Alton M. Brooks Professor of Religion
University of Southern California

“There is probably no one who has more closely studied human behavior in our Church, in many of our ministries, and in our society in general than Gerry Arbuckle. He is an incredible anthropologist who excels at this complex science but also has the ability to make it useful to those of us who do not excel at it. He has worked closely with so many groups and contributed so much to making us more effective in our ministries. At this time in our world, understanding the many facets and motivations of fundamentalism will be an incredible help in responding well to it. No one can help us better than Gerry Arbuckle.”

— Sister Carol Keehan, DC
President/CEO
Catholic Health Association

“This timely book is the work of a theologian and anthropologist who brings decades of experience and reflection to bear on a problem that is tearing apart both the Christian church and the entire world. Gerald Arbuckle traces the origins of fundamentalism to cultural trauma and the dangerous quest for certainty, and he provides a helpful survey of various contemporary fundamentalisms in both church and society. In addition, he proposes sixteen practical pastoral responses to this phenomenon that might help reconcile Christians among themselves and people of all faiths and political persuasions.”

— Stephen Bevans, SVD
Professor Emeritus
Catholic Theological Union

“Fundamentalism at Home and Abroad should be a great resource for courses in political theology, social ethics, and ecclesiology. It addresses complex questions without becoming complicated. For both theology classrooms and adult study groups, *Fundamentalism* offers a clear and engaging analysis of those forces and events that are shaping the political and religious climate of our time. It moves in the same direction that Pope Francis is guiding the hope and imagination of so many of us.”

— William Reiser, SJ
Holy Cross College

Fundamentalism at Home and Abroad

Analysis and Pastoral Responses

Gerald A. Arbuckle, SM



A Michael Glazier Book

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For

Pope Francis—

A challenger of fundamentalism

By the Same Author

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(Wellington: Hicks Smith, 1971)

Strategies for Growth in Religious Life (Alba House / St Pauls Publications, 1987)

Out of Chaos: Refounding Religious Congregations
(Paulist Press / Geoffrey Chapman, 1988) (USA Catholic Press Award)

Earthing the Gospel: An Inculturation Handbook for Pastoral Workers
(Geoffrey Chapman / Orbis Books / St Pauls Publications, 1990)
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Grieving for Change: A Spirituality for Refounding Gospel Communities
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Refounding the Church: Dissent for Leadership
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(USA Catholic Press Award)

From Chaos to Mission: Refounding Religious Life Formation
(Geoffrey Chapman / Liturgical Press, 1996)

Healthcare Ministry: Refounding the Mission in Tumultuous Times
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Acknowledgments

This book is a sequel to *Violence, Society, and the Church: A Cultural Approach* (Liturgical Press, 2004) in which I briefly referred to fundamentalist movements. Since then I have spoken to many people about fundamentalism in our modern world and their comments have been of significant help in shaping this book. In particular, I wish to thank Hans Christoffersen, editorial director at Liturgical Press, Anthony Maher, Brian Cummings, SM, and Jan Snijders, SM, but I alone am responsible for the book's shortcomings. My thanks to Robert Ellsberg, Orbis Books, for permission to use and adapt material from chapter 6 of my book *The Francis Factor and the People of God* (2015). The community of Campion Hall, Oxford University, once more provided a hospitable atmosphere in which to plan and commence the research for this book.

Introduction

Fundamentalism is a sickness that is in all religions. . . . Religious fundamentalism is not religious, because it lacks God. It is idolatry, like idolatry of money.¹

—Pope Francis

A person who thinks only about building walls, wherever they may be, and not building bridges, is not Christian. This is not the gospel.²

—Pope Francis

Fundamentalism in its multiple different expressions is a global reality. It is today vigorously alive at home and abroad and Pope Francis is right: “Fundamentalism is a sickness that is in all religions.” Fundamentalists are people who are outraged when they see the world around them abandoning the religious values they hold dear. They are fighting back in the cause of what they consider truth. They are reacting to threats to their identity in militant ways, whether in the use of words and ideas or ballots or, in extreme cases, bullets and bombs. The responses to these threats are simplistic and those who question them are branded intolerantly as enemies of the truth.

¹ Pope Francis, comments to journalists on the plane returning from Africa, November 30, 2015. www.lifesitenews.com/news/pope-francis-attacks-fundamentalist-catholics-dismisses-condom-ban-as-unimp (accessed March 26, 2016).

² Pope Francis reacting to presidential candidate Donald Trump’s declaration that a wall must be built to keep Mexicans from entering the United States. www.edition.cnn.com/2016/02/18/politics/pope-francis-trump-christian-wall (accessed July 28, 2016).

This book is intended to assist people in all walks of life who are increasingly puzzled and concerned about contemporary fundamentalist attitudes and movements and who wish to understand their nature: why they arise and how they themselves can constructively respond to them.

The disturbing fact is that every individual and culture is capable of fundamentalist attitudes and actions. Christ once used an incident to help his disciples understand how they themselves had unconsciously become trapped in fundamentalist thinking. The disciple John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he was not following us" (Mark 9:38). John, like a good fundamentalist, thought that only the disciples could have such noble power, but Jesus is quick to respond: "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us" (Mark 9:39-40).

Fundamentalism: Response to Cultural Trauma

Fundamentalist movements are most active and culturally apparent whenever there are periods in which radical political, social, or economic changes cause cultural trauma in a nation as a whole or in smaller institutions or communities.³ These changes threaten to destroy cherished personal and cultural identities and esteemed moral values. Widespread feelings of bewilderment and frustration result. People then desperately search for quick explanations of what is happening and ways out of their overwhelming confusion. The atmosphere is ripe for the unsophisticated solutions offered by fundamentalist populist and charismatic leaders.

For most people fundamentalism in the modern world has become synonymous with a radical form of Islam. Islamic fundamentalism has supplanted communism as the ghost haunting the Western consciousness—a ghost that looms ever larger following the terrorist

³ See Nancy T. Ammerman, "North American Protestant Fundamentalism," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 56.

attacks on New York and Washington, DC, on September 11, 2001;⁴ the recent appalling terrorist assaults in London, Paris, Brussels, Orlando, Istanbul, Baghdad, Dhaka, Nice, and Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray; and the ostensible incapacity of the Western powers to destroy the shadowy, furtive, and murderous al-Qaeda network and the public butchering cruelty of the Islamic State (ISIS). In the Middle East, Islamic extremists are slaughtering fellow Muslims and persecuting, even murdering, Christians and other minorities. The West, however, has yet to realize that the military response may provide interim solutions to terrorism but in the long term they intensify religious anger and inspire more fanaticism. We first need to understand the multifaceted political, economic, and social causes of Islamic fundamentalism.

Yet Islamic fundamentalist movements have received a disproportionate amount of media attention in recent times due to the physically violent nature of their actions.⁵ This is unfortunate because fundamentalism in many shapes and forms is very much present in our Western societies though most often less observably physically violent. Yes, fundamentalist economic, political, nationalistic, religious movements are aplenty in the West. Right-wing, populist, anti-immigrant movements are on the rise in Europe, the United States, Australia, and elsewhere. We in the West have to stop thinking of ourselves as “angelic and that Islam is the Devil incarnate.”⁶ After all, the Western world has significantly contributed to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism.

Fundamentalism and Religion

Religion has resurfaced as a global social force in the rise of fundamentalist movements. Since religion is an important basis of moral certainty, people frequently and passionately turn to it as a motivating

⁴ See Stuart Sim, *Fundamentalist World: The New Dark Age of Dogma* (Cambridge: Icon Books, 2004), 3–12.

⁵ See David C. Rapoport, “Comparing Militant Fundamentalist Movements,” in *Fundamentalisms and the State*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 445–46.

⁶ Chris Barker, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice* (London: Sage, 2012), 274.

force in shaping identity, values, and movements. Religion has commonly been defined as “the belief in Spiritual Beings,”⁷ but we must broaden our understanding of religion.⁸ Thomas Luckmann defines religion *functionally* as “the capacity of the human organism to transcend its biological nature through the construction of objective, morally binding and all-embracing universes of meaning.”⁹ Thus religion offers people a means of interpreting the world in which they live. Understood in this sense, people can change any belief into a religion.¹⁰ “For where your treasure is, there your heart is also” (Matt 6:21). For example, people can become so attached to free market economics, that is, markets unrestrained by government interference, or to nationalism that they turn them into religions. They become idolatrous, a substitute for God, as Pope Francis has said. In a number of countries, where traditional institutional religions are weakly present, civil religions powerfully influence the development and maintenance of fundamentalist groupings, as we can see, for example, in the United States (see chapter 3).

The Wisdom of “Not-Knowing”

Fundamentalists have an exaggerated and haunting desire for absolute certainties in areas of life where this may not be immediately possible. Pope Francis warns Christians against this fundamentalist thinking: “If the Christian . . . [wants] everything clear and safe, they will find nothing. . . . Those who today always look for disciplinarian solutions, those who long for an exaggerated doctrinal ‘security,’ those who stubbornly try to recover a past that no longer exists—they

⁷ Edward B. Tylor, “Notes on the Modern Survival of Ancient Amulets against the Evil Eye,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, no. 19 (1890): 54.

⁸ See Andre Droogers, “Defining Religion: A Social Science Approach,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Peter B. Clarke (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 263–79.

⁹ Thomas Luckmann, cited by Arthur L. Greil and Lynn Davidman, “Religion and Identity,” in *Sociology and Religion*, ed. James A. Beckford and N. J. Demerath (London: Sage, 2007), 554.

¹⁰ See Bhikhu Parekh, *A New Politics of Identity: Political Principles for an Interdependent World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 140.

have a static and inward-directed view of things.”¹¹ In fact, in the mystery of God’s plan, the way to true wisdom is also through submitting to the darkness of “not-knowing.” For example, let us reflect on the story of Job. His secure world suddenly disintegrated when he lost everything: wealth, health, and family. He confesses the chaos and his inability to understand the reasons for his afflictions: “so I am allotted months of emptiness, and nights of misery are apportioned to me” (Job 7:3). He refuses to accept the simplistic answers his friends give for his afflictions. Yet while sitting in the gloom of the “not-knowing,” Job discovers an energizing hope beyond human imagination: “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at last he will stand upon the earth” (Job 19:25).

Likewise, Jesus in his agony in Gethsemane acknowledges his own “not-knowing” in the midst of an incredible darkness of soul. What is the Father asking of him? Why do his chosen disciples not understand his agony of darkness and offer him consolation? Jesus rests in the chaos of desolation and discovers newness and confidence in response to his prayer: “The hour has come. . . . Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand” (Mark 14:41-42). Not surprisingly, therefore, the advice of the fourteenth-century author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* remains just as relevant for today’s Christian when we are tempted to find simplistic solutions to the world’s present turmoils: “So set yourself to rest in this darkness as long as you can, always crying out after him whom you love. For if you are to experience him or to see him at all, insofar as it is possible here, it must be in this cloud.”¹²

Structure and Overview

There are six chapters in this book. Chapter 1, “Defining Fundamentalism in Our Contemporary World,” offers several definitions of fundamentalism and describes the various characteristics of

¹¹ Pope Francis, www.americamagazine.org/pope-interview (accessed October 1, 2013).

¹² Anonymous, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, ed. James Walsh (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 121.

fundamentalist movements; examples of different types of fundamentalism are reviewed and explained. Chapter 2, "Understanding the Cultures of Fundamentalism," evaluates the critical role of mythologies in the development of identities in fundamentalist movements. For example, although the two major branches of Islam, Sunni and Shia, accept the Prophet Muhammad as the founder of Islam, they developed different founding mythologies that significantly affect how they relate to each other, often in a conflicted manner. Thus, second-generation Muslim immigrants to Western countries frequently find themselves in a mythological no-man's-land, making them susceptible to the voices of radical leaders.

The third chapter, "From Cultural Trauma to Fundamentalism: The Role of Religion," explains how cultural crises and their resulting trauma can be catalysts for the rise of fundamentalist movements. When people feel they do not control their lives or share in the benefits of globalization, they strike out, often in fundamentalist ways. The power of religion as a motivating and justifying force in these movements is analyzed with examples from different parts of the world: Japan, Iran, Australia, and the United States. One section of the chapter is devoted to the history and role of civil religion in fundamentalist groups in the United States.

Chapter 4, "Catholic Fundamentalism: An Analysis," highlights the factors that led to the cultural trauma following Vatican II. Once the secure mythology of any culture is questioned or undermined, cultural trauma with all its de-energizing and confusing emotions commonly results. The culture of the Catholic Church is no exception, as Pope Francis has pointed out: "We Catholics have some [fundamentalists]—and not some, many—who believe in the absolute truth and go ahead dirtying the other with calumny, with disinformation, and doing evil."¹³ Particular Catholic fundamentalist movements are listed and examined.

Chapter 5, "Islamic Fundamentalism: Responding to Cultural Trauma," offers an overview of the historical rise of schisms within the Islamic faith. Contemporary Islamic fundamentalist movements like Wahhabism, Muslim Brotherhood, Al-Qaeda, Taliban, and ISIS are examined in their political and social contexts. There is also a

¹³ Pope Francis (November 30, 2015).

focus on the recent development of the suicide-martyrdom phenomenon among Islamic fundamentalists. Chapter 6, “Fundamentalism: Pastoral Responses,” explains various ways we can respond constructively and pastorally to fundamentalism at home and abroad.

Anthropological Lens

Pope Francis frequently reminds us that as evangelizers we must be aware of the complexities of contemporary cultures. We need, he writes, the professional insights of social scientists.¹⁴ Hence, while I draw on the multidisciplinary research of many authors, this book looks at fundamentalism through the particular lens of cultural anthropology. No previous knowledge of this academic discipline is required. The major mission and contribution of anthropology has long been, and continues to be, to enhance our awareness of the power and reality of culture in people’s lives. Fundamentalist movements are cultures and the study of cultures is the special task of cultural anthropology. The unique task of anthropologists is to unearth what is hidden from the consciousness of people about how they culturally interact with one another.¹⁵ Sociologists mainly concentrate on the present, while anthropologists recognize that an understanding of the past is necessary to better grasp what is happening in the present: “Remember the days of old, consider the years long past; ask your father, and he will inform you; your elders, and they will tell you” (Deut 32:7).

To be an anthropologist one needs to be “humbly curious, ready to question, criticize, explore, and challenge ideas, the status quo, to look at the world with fresh eyes and think about the classification systems and cultural patterns that we take for granted.”¹⁶ Cultural anthropology has been called by anthropologist Raymond Firth “an inquisitive, challenging, uncomfortable discipline, questioning established positions . . . peering into underlying interests, if not

¹⁴ See Pope Francis, Encyclical *The Joy of the Gospel (Evangelii Gaudium)* (Strathfield, Australia: St. Pauls, 2013), par. 40.

¹⁵ See Gerald A. Arbuckle, *Earthing the Gospel: An Inculturation Handbook for Pastoral Workers* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990), 1.

¹⁶ Gillian Tett, *The Silo Effect* (London: Little Brown, 2015), 48.

destroying fictions and empty phrases . . . at least exposing them.”¹⁷ Anthropologists are preoccupied with the gap between rhetoric and reality; they “can never take anything entirely at face value, but are compelled to constantly ask: *why*.”¹⁸ Hopefully readers may find that the following pages testify to the accuracy of this description.

¹⁷ Raymond Firth, “Engagement and Detachment: Reflections on Applying Social Anthropology to Social Affairs,” *Human Organization* 40 (1981): 200. Anthropologist Richard T. Antoun writes that anthropologists should aim for empathy rather than sympathy in their research, that is, to feel with the people they are studying but all the time trying to avoid “judging their ‘truth’ or ‘falsity;’” but this “does not imply that one has to surrender one’s own beliefs, but it does imply that one has to appreciate other perspectives.” *Understanding Fundamentalism: Christian, Islamic, and Jewish Movements* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008), vii.

¹⁸ Tett, *The Silo Effect*, 251, 50.

Chapter 1

Defining Fundamentalism in Our Contemporary World

[Fundamentalists fear that their identity is threatened in a world that is] stifling, chaotic and dangerously out of control.¹

—Oliver McTernan

Fundamentalism has become a religion of rage.²

—Karen Armstrong

Key Points

- Change in the meaning of “fundamentalism”
- Definitions of contemporary fundamentalism
- General characteristics of fundamentalist movements
- Types of fundamentalist movements
- The aims and strategies of contemporary terrorism

¹ Oliver McTernan, *Violence in God's Name: Religion in an Age of Conflict* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2003), 35.

² Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God: Fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 216.

Since the word “fundamentalism” evokes strong global and local emotional reactions the purpose of this introductory chapter is simply to summarize the ways in which significant authors define the term. We will see that despite the differences in the definitions there are nonetheless a number of strikingly similar emphases, which will be explained. Subsequent chapters, for example, those that describe Catholic and Islamic fundamentalist movements, build on the clarifications and insights of this foundational chapter.

The word “fundamentalist” was first used in 1920 to describe supporters of *The Fundamentalists*, a version of essential beliefs published and distributed by two devout Christian brothers, Lyman and Milton Stewart, who were also Californian oil millionaires.³ Protestant theologians were deeply concerned that liberalism would undermine religious faith, so they detailed five principals, or “fundamentals” of faith, that must be adhered to: “1. the inerrancy of Scripture, 2. the Virgin Birth of Christ, 3. his substitutionary atonement, 4. his bodily resurrection, and 5. the authenticity of his miracles.”⁴ For adherents, the Scriptures were held to be literally true, “the absolute transcript of God’s mind.”⁵ Those who accepted these principles were called fundamentalists.

The term “fundamentalist” did not originally have a pejorative connotation, but this has radically changed. It now has a disparaging quality. It has been extended to define people who adhere to fundamentalism, that is, an historically recurring negative tendency particularly within Judeo-Christian-Muslim traditions, which occurs as an authoritarian religious reaction particularly to the fears of anomie or chaos evoked by postmodernism and globalization. But the term has also become the metaphor of choice to describe radical forms of nationalism and other forms of ideological expression, for example, market economics. Fundamentalism today, however, “is not a single monolithic phenomenon or movement,”⁶ and individuals will have

³ See George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism, 1870–1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 118–19.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁵ James M. Gray, cited by Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 122.

⁶ Jack D. Eller, *Introducing Anthropology of Religion*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2015), 285.

different levels of commitment to the goals of a particular movement.⁷ Moreover, because no one definition satisfies all authors, it is preferable to list a number of definitions. Readers will notice that while the authors stress some common themes they also differ in their emphasis on specific points.

[Fundamentalists fear their identity is threatened in a world that is] stifling, chaotic and dangerously out of control.⁸

An aggressive and marginalized religious movement which, in reaction to the perceived threat of modernity seeks to return its home religion and nation to traditional orthodox principles, values, and texts through the co-option of the central executive and legislative power of both the religion itself and the modern national state.⁹

[Fundamentalisms] are embattled forms of spirituality, which have emerged as a response to a perceived crisis. They are engaged in a conflict with enemies whose secularist policies and beliefs seem inimical to religion itself.¹⁰

Movements of religiously inspired reaction to aspects of global processes of modernization and secularization . . . the struggle to assert or reassert the norms and beliefs of "traditional religion" in the public order.¹¹

[Fundamentalism is] a specifiable pattern of religious militancy by which self-styled true believers attempt to arrest the erosion of religious identity, fortify the borders of the religious community, and create viable alternatives to secular structures and processes.¹²

⁷ See Rhys H. Williams, "Movements Dynamics and Social Change: Transforming Fundamentalist Ideology and Organizations," in *Accounting for Fundamentalisms*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 824.

⁸ McTernan, *Violence in God's Name*, 35.

⁹ Patrick Arnold, "The Rise of Catholic Fundamentalism," *America* (April 11, 1987): 298.

¹⁰ Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, xi.

¹¹ Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalisms and the State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 2, 5.

¹² R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 86.

[Fundamentalism is] a proclamation of reclaimed authority over a sacred tradition which is to be reinstated as an antidote for a society perceived to have strayed from its cultural moorings.¹³

[Fundamentalism argues] that society has become degenerate because it has lost its moral moorings, that this is caused by the corrosive climate of secularism and scepticism brought about by globalization and rationalist influences, and that it can only be regenerated by reconstituting it on religious foundations.¹⁴

[Fundamentalisms] are radical revisions of the past provoked by changes that threaten the continuity of the tradition. . . . The goal of resistance is to re-create the excitement and commitment of the original believing community.¹⁵

Fundamentalism is best understood as both a religious response to the marginalization of religion and an accompanying pattern of religious activism with certain specifiable characteristics.¹⁶

Fundamentalism . . . is a distinct phenomenon whose various components hang together well enough to give it a clear identity. It arises in a society with a deep and pervasive sense of disorientation and degeneration, and consists in using the institutions of the state to reconstitute it on a religious basis.¹⁷

Broadly understood, fundamentalism includes a literalized doctrine, religious or political, enclosed upon itself by the immutable words of the holy books. The doctrine is rendered both sacred in the name of a past of perfect harmony that never was, and the center of a quest for collective revitalization . . . a reaction to the fear of chaos.¹⁸

James Hunter calls fundamentalism a form of “organized anger” and says that all fundamentalist groups “share the deep and worri-

¹³ Anson Shupe, “Religious Fundamentalism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of The Sociology of Religion*, ed. Peter B. Clarke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 481.

¹⁴ Bhikhu Parekh, *A New Politics of Identity: Political Principles for an Interdependent World* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 142.

¹⁵ Steve Bruce, *Fundamentalism* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000), 14.

¹⁶ Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 101.

¹⁷ Bhikhu Parekh, *A New Politics of Identity: Political Principles for an Interdependent World* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 148.

¹⁸ Robert Jay Lifton, *The Protean Self: Human Resilience in an Age of Fragmentation* (New York: BasicBooks, 1993), 10–11.

some sense that history has gone awry,"¹⁹ the consequence of modernity and postmodernity. Perhaps a more relevant word than anger is rage. Richard Antoun also emphasizes the emotional aspect of fundamentalism: it is "an orientation to the world, both cognitive and affective. The affective, or emotional, orientation indicates outrage and protest against (and also fear of) change and against a certain ideological orientation, the orientation of modernism."²⁰

Al-Qaeda and Rage

Islamic fundamentalism is ultimately motivated by outrage at the past and present impact of Western political and military domination, as well as cultural and economic dominance, which has come as the consequence of Western imperialism.²¹ The present head of al-Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri (see chapter 5), following the appalling London bombings of July 7, 2005, has said, "You made rivers of blood in our countries, so we blew up volcanoes of rage in yours."²²

Fundamentalist movements are *for* something, that is they are concerned to advocate what are perceived to be crucial elements of their belief, "the worldview *and the truth* for practitioners."²³ Evangelicals insist that the Bible must be taken literally: it is a totally truthful manuscript and the source of knowledge for daily living, and Christians who deny this have been seduced by secular values. Islam makes similar claims for the Koran just as Marxists rely on the texts of Marx and Lenin; and Scientologists focus uncritically on the writings of their founder L. Ron Hubbard.²⁴ Fundamentalism is also *against* something, that is, fundamentalists believe they are fighting

¹⁹ James Hunter, cited in *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, ed. Norman J. Cohen (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 46.

²⁰ Richard T. Antoun, *Understanding Fundamentalism: Christian, Islamic, and Jewish Movements* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2001), 3.

²¹ See *ibid.*, 18.

²² Ayman al-Zawahiri, cited by John Kelsay, *Arguing the Just War in Islam* (London: Harvard University Press, 2007), 204.

²³ Jack D. Eller, *Introducing Anthropology*, 281.

²⁴ See Lawrence Wright, *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, and the Prison of Belief* (New York: Knopf, 2012).

in the cause of what they consider truth. Fundamentalists react to threats to their identity in aggressive ways, whether in the use of words and ideas or ballots or, in extreme incidents, bullets and bombs.²⁵

Fundamentalist Movements: General Qualities

In light of these various descriptions of fundamentalism we are now able to list and briefly explain the qualities that are commonly found in fundamentalist movements. Since not all movements give the same degree of emphasis to individual qualities, subsequent chapters will further explain the significance of these characteristics.²⁶

Religion: The Driving Force

There is a global religious resurgence and it is very significantly influencing the rise of contemporary fundamentalism.²⁷ For example, devotees of the Islamic religious rebirth vehemently demand that Islamic law and morality be forcefully followed. Without doubt, fundamentalists of all kinds are passionately committed to their religious beliefs. In fact, the ardent concern to preserve their religious heritage is *the* driving force motivating fundamentalists. The dramatic development of present-day, religiously inspired fundamentalist movements, however, indicate stressful changes in culture and society. In times of cultural trauma religion “in particular becomes the core set of values around which resentments cluster. Nationalism becomes a frequent accessory after the fact.”²⁸ Judith Nagata correctly

²⁵ Fundamentalism is not the same as conservatism. The latter fulfils a necessary and constructive purpose because it is concerned with preserving a community’s historical legacy, especially in times of cultural change. It encourages a cautious approach to change in order to preserve important values for society. See Patrick Arnold, *America* (April 11, 1987).

²⁶ Malise Ruthven speaks of “family resemblances” in fundamentalist movements despite their differences. *Fundamentalism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 6.

²⁷ See Monica D. Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy S. Shah, *God’s Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (New York: Norton, 2009), 1–19.

²⁸ Shupe, “Religious Fundamentalism,” 487.

noted, however, that fundamentalism, which originally referred to institutional religion but is now a “metaphor of choice” being applied “to an everwidening range of ideas and behaviors,”²⁹ including nationalism, ethnicity, language, politics, and even the market and environment. Thus, as will be clarified in chapter 3, it is necessary to broaden the traditional notion of religion. For example, nationalism, dogmatic commitment to a particular type of economics or politics—these can become functionally religions for their adherents.

Crisis of Identity

Fundamentalists achieve power in times of actual or perceived cultural trauma: “The sense of danger may be keyed to oppressive and threatening social, economic, or political conditions, but the ensuing crisis is perceived as a *crisis of identity* by those who fear extinction as a people or absorption into an overarching syncretistic culture to such a degree that their distinctiveness is undermined in the rush to homogeneity.”³⁰ They see “themselves as lacking, or barely hanging on to, cultural hegemony, underdogs in a constantly threatening secularist world that wishes them at worst destroyed and at best rendered irrelevant.”³¹ They feel their identity is under siege.

Decontextualized Scripture

Indian sociologist, T. K. Oommen, defined fundamentalism as “text without context.”³² This means that religious writings, which were always composed “in a particular historical, cultural context, are decontextualized and held to be applicable without consideration

²⁹ Judith Nagata, “Beyond Theology: Toward an Anthropology of ‘Fundamentalism,’” *American Anthropologist* 103, no. 2 (2001): 481. See also Stuart Sim, *Fundamentalist World: The New Dark Age of Dogma* (Cambridge: Icon Books, 2004), 12.

³⁰ Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby, “Conclusion: An Interim Report on a Hypothetical Family,” in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 822–23.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 486.

³² Cited by Kevin J. Christiano, William H. Swatos, and Peter Kivisto, *Sociology of Religion: Contemporary Developments* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 2002), 249.

to local circumstances; all other competing texts are rejected as having any corresponding claim to truth."³³ Fundamentalists, unlike the average conservative believers aiming to retain the whole of tradition, choose instead only those texts and events in history that support their belief of a "divine" command to act in a prejudiced manner.³⁴

That is, fundamentalists actively cling to a particular faith that defines it in an absolutist and literalist fashion.³⁵ They choose particular statements from the sacred texts of their religion or tradition to legitimate their actions³⁶ and ignore other important points; they "treat the religious tradition as a resource to be retrieved selectively, and applied situationally, in competition with secularism."³⁷ Islamic fundamentalists selectively choose and interpret passages from the Koran to legitimate their violent actions (see chapter 5). Among Catholic fundamentalists there is also a highly selective approach to what fundamentalists think pertains to the Church's teaching (see chapter 4). Statements on ecclesiastical authority, private sexuality, or incidental issues are obsessively emphasized, but the papal or episcopal pronouncements on social questions are ignored or considered matters for debate only. After the publication of St. John Paul II's encyclical letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* in 1987, and in the 1986 Catholic Bishops' (USA) Pastoral Letter on the US economy, which criticized liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism, fundamentalists like Richard Neuhaus and Michael Novak denounced these documents for containing, they asserted, a swing toward, or acceptance of, leftist/Marxist thinking. These critics believe that the capitalist system must be defended as the only authentic method to protect the freedom of the people.³⁸

³³ Christiano, Swatos, and Kivisto, *Sociology of Religion*, 250.

³⁴ See McTernan, *Violence in God's Name*, 34.

³⁵ See John O. Voll, "Fundamentalism," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World Vol. II*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 32–34.

³⁶ See Parekh, *A New Politics of Identity*, 149.

³⁷ Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 90.

³⁸ See Gregory Baum, "Neo-Conservative Critics of the Churches," in *Neo-Conservatism: Social and Religious Phenomenon*, ed. Gregory Baum (New York: Seabury Press, 1981), 43–50. See also Gerald A. Arbuckle, *Violence, Society, and the Church: A Cultural Approach* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004), 208–9.

Simplistic Solutions

Fundamentalism is a reaction to uncertainty, to the “excess of openness and choice” that accompanies modern life; it is a way of setting boundaries, an ‘anti-hermeneutic’³⁹ that claims to end uncertainty by definitively terminating all arguments over interpretation. Their interpretation of the problems of the world and their solutions admit of no ambiguity. For example, Donald Trump, when seeking the presidential nomination, repeatedly gave simplistic solutions to complex political and economic problems facing the United States. His naïve responses reassured his audiences that he could quickly resolve their anxieties. Trump scoffed at anyone who dared to question him. How different Trump’s behavior has been from that Abraham Lincoln! At President Lincoln’s Second Inauguration in 1865, and as victory for the Union was close at hand, he refused in his short speech to be trapped in the current Evangelical fundamentalist discourse. Many of his listeners wanted him to declare that God was surely on the side of the Union. They believed that weighty political issues could be simplistically construed into good or evil: the Union is good and the Confederates are evil. Lincoln, recognizing the complexity of the tragic civil war, did not agree: “let us judge not that we be not judged.”⁴⁰

Symbolic Identities

Fundamentalists are boundary-setters. They are adept in symbolically marking themselves off from others by distinctive dress, customs, and conduct,⁴¹ for example, earlocks, which are locks of hair worn in front of each ear by Hasidic and Yemenite Jewish males in accordance with the biblical prohibition against clipping the hair at the temples (Lev 19:27), and beards for orthodox Muslims. The symbols indicate rigid purity/impurity divisions between insiders and outsiders (see chapter 2).

³⁹ Nagata, “Beyond Theology,” 481.

⁴⁰ Abraham Lincoln, cited by David Goldfield, *America Aflame: How the Civil War Created a Nation* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2011), 357.

⁴¹ See Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, “Introduction,” in *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economics, and Militance*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 4.

Militant Intolerance of Dissent

The fundamentalist pattern of militancy starts as a reaction to what is thought to be the infiltration of the religious community by secular or religious outsiders.⁴² Fundamentalists believe their task is to make history accord with the orthodox principles of their traditional or civic religion. They are absolutely and intolerably certain they are right, demanding submission to “a totalitarian mindset which brooks of no opposition. . . . an uncritical adherence to the creed.”⁴³

Their ideological intolerance of dissent⁴⁴ is expressed in various forms of physical, verbal, or political violence. For example, verbal violence is particularly evident in the Donald Trump campaign; his supporters feel so deeply threatened by dissenting voices that they encourage Trump to speak harshly of his opponents.⁴⁵ Violence “is the tool of consolidation in the name of reinstating a sacred regime. . . . It has become a highly probable, not just optional, strategy of choice.”⁴⁶ George Marsden concludes that fundamentalist militancy typically happens when supporters of a formerly dominant religious culture feel endangered by cultural changes in society.⁴⁷ Not all fundamentalist movements are violent, but because they are intolerant of dissent, they have the potential to be violent. Terrorism is the worst form of violence; terrorists feel the need to express their violence through killing to “prove” their authentic commitment to the values they stand for.⁴⁸ We see this tragically evident today among the followers of al-Qaeda and ISIS.

Political Aims

Fundamentalists seek to dominate the central executive and legislative power either through democratic processes, for example, the Tea Party in the United States, *or* recourse to extreme violence, for

⁴² See Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 87.

⁴³ Sim, *Fundamentalist World*, 12.

⁴⁴ See discussion by Henry Olsen and Dante J. Scala, *The Four Faces of the Republican Party* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 22–28.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 134–42.

⁴⁶ Sim, *Fundamentalist World*, 486.

⁴⁷ See Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, 240–41.

⁴⁸ See Stuart W. Twemlow, Frank C. Sacco, and George Hough, “A Socio-Psychoanalytic Perspective on Group Dynamics, Cults and Terrorism,” *Socio-Analysis* 5 (2003): 57–78.

example, the Islamic revolution in Iran and the United States' intervention in Nicaragua in the 1980s. The US-backed coup in Chile in 1973 that resulted in the ascent of General Augusto Pinochet is also an example of intervening in the political process.⁴⁹ In Afghanistan, as in many other parts of the Islamic world, Islamists believe that "a truly Islamic society could be established only through an 'Islamic State,' which presupposes a revolution . . . to implement Sharia."⁵⁰ Fundamentalists frequently refuse to separate politics and religion; thus they seek political power to confront, capture, and use the state. They reject the authority of interpretive tradition, but nonetheless read sacred text in light of political objectives, seeking in the process to challenge and reconstruct the planet. Fundamentalist movements tend to draw their following from professional and working classes, although disproportionate numbers tend to come from among the young, educated, un-, or underemployed males.⁵¹

Conspiracy-Oriented

It is not unusual for fundamentalists to develop paranoid fantasies about the dangers their movements face. They see enemies where there are no enemies. For example, when Sunni fundamentalists occupied the sacred Kabah in Mecca, Khomeini in Iran denounced the sacrilege and blamed Israel and the United States.⁵² Following Vatican II, Catholic fundamentalists alleged that a number of high-ranking bishops were closet Freemasons committed to destroying the Catholic Church.⁵³ Timothy McVeigh, the convicted bomber of the Oklahoma City federal building, firmly believed that the government was conspiring to undermine people's liberty.⁵⁴ Islamic fundamentalists commonly scapegoat activities, individuals, or groups of

⁴⁹ See Noam Chomsky, *September 11* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 2001), 23–26, 43–54, and *Who Rules the World* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2016), 75. Pinochet proceeded to execute some three thousand people. See Kenneth Roth, "A Case Against America," *The New York Review of Books* (June 9, 2016): 4.

⁵⁰ Oliver Roy, "Has Islamism a Future in Afghanistan?" in *Fundamentalism Reborn? Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (London: Hurst, 2001), 199.

⁵¹ See Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 87–88.

⁵² See Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, 322.

⁵³ See William D. Dinges, "Roman Catholic Traditionalism in the United States," in *Fundamentalists Observed*, ed. Marty and Appleby, 89–91.

⁵⁴ See Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 167–68.

people for the breakdown of so-called orthodoxy, for example, card playing, video machines, Hollywood, and feminists demanding equality. Modernity and postmodernity in their many forms are the “Great Satan.” In a reaction to the modernization and secularization that the mullahs believe have corrupted the purity of Islam, Ayatollah Khomeini outlawed as “satanic” modern and postmodern activities that symbolized corruption in Iran.

The Trump technique involved confiding in angry followers that they are victims of a plot to be resolved through Trump’s leadership. In his narrative, conspiring foreign governments have outsmarted a self-interested political elite in Washington that preys on the generosity of Americans. He enlivened a long tradition of conspiracy thinking in America like, for example, the anti-Catholic, racist Know-Nothing Party in the mid-nineteenth century.⁵⁵ Similarly, in 1849 a fundamentalist anti-Catholic new group, the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner, was formed in New York to promote nativist candidates for elected positions. Among other things, they wanted to restrict the political rights of foreigners and their sons unless they had been educated in American schools. One order editor wrote, “We can have no peace in this country until the Catholics are exterminated.”⁵⁶

Nostalgia for a Utopian Past

Nostalgia for an unreal utopian past is often a powerful factor in fundamentalist movements. People from “America to Austria” yearn for “a return to some hazily-remembered golden era before globalisation, offering jobs for life, upward mobility, and shared traditional values.”⁵⁷ For Americans the golden era is the mid-twentieth century. For Republicans, this meant a world of secure marriages, deference for authority, and economic innovation; for Democrats, it was a period in history when a young person could leave school and go immediately into well-paid employment, assured of a pension and health-care benefits. Forgotten in this nostalgia is that America and the world at large lived in fear of a nuclear disaster and a vast number of citizens

⁵⁵ See *The Economist* (July 25, 2016): 31; see also David Goldfield, *America Aflame: How the Civil War Created a Nation* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2011), 90.

⁵⁶ Quoted by Goldfield, *America Aflame*, 90.

⁵⁷ *The Economist* (July 16, 2016): 31.

lacked civil rights.⁵⁸ For older Catholic fundamentalists there is nostalgia for the security and power structures of the 1950s, and many vocations to religious life and the priesthood. Overlooked in this pre-Vatican II period is *inter alia* the inward-looking nature of the church's theology, its neglect of its calling of mission to a world in flux.

Skilled Use of the Media

Ironically fundamentalists often combine a commitment to a selectively imagined utopian past with a ready ability to use modern technology to propagate their beliefs. Fundamentalists, while rejecting modernity and postmodernity, can engage the most sophisticated Western methods of communication and force to spread their message, for example, the "Islamic State (i.e., ISIS) has been able to consolidate its ideological catchment with unprecedented stealth and efficiency. . . . By clever use of social media and digital film making it has eclipsed the counterweight mainstream media to broadcast its bloody deeds, its triumphs and its caliphate."⁵⁹ Following the tragic bombing in Brussels on March 22, 2016, ISIS effectively seized control of the world's media to circulate their admission of responsibility.⁶⁰

Millenarian

Some fundamentalist movements are millenarian, for example, Islamic State followers expect the imminent and miraculous transformation of this world by supernatural means. Millenarianism is also an integral part of Western history. The Jewish religion centers on the hope of a future golden age and, of course, Christianity has reinforced this expectation with its teaching about Christ's second coming. The Christian hope of the age of perfect justice and love has

⁵⁸ See *ibid.*, 66; Yuval Levin, *The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism* (New York: Basic Books, 2016).

⁵⁹ Abdel Bari Atwan, *Islamic State: The Digital Caliphate* (London: Saqi Books, 2015), 212.

⁶⁰ See Charlie Winter, "ISIS is Using the Media Against Itself," www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/03/isis-propaganda-brussels/47 (accessed March 3, 2016).

over the centuries undergone many fundamentalist aberrations, especially in times of profound cultural and political trauma.⁶¹ Marx and Lenin evolved the most powerful such aberration in recent centuries, with its emphasis on the utopian age of the classless society. Some Christians are called premillennialists, which means they believe the Day of Judgement will divide the saved from the damned *before* the expected thousand-year reign of the righteous; likewise it is common for Islamic fundamentalists to believe that the destruction of the world, the Armageddon, will precede the Day of Judgement. Others are postmillennialists, they believe Judgement Day will follow the millennium. In times of economic or social crisis the more pessimistic premillennialist view tends to prevail.

Great Britain: Brexit

A small but significant group of evangelical Protestants rejoiced when Britain voted to leave the European Union. For them the European Union was the evil empire of Babylon. They quoted from the Revelation to John: "Then I heard another voice from heaven saying: 'Come out of her, my people, so that you do not take part in her sins, and so that you do not share in her plagues'" (18:4). For them the Union represented the Antichrist, an "imposter whose appearance is a harbinger of the final battle before all earthly things come to an end."⁶²

Most millenarian movements are also messianic. That is, salvation is to be directed by a human agent of the divine and the followers must commit themselves totally to this person and their teachings. For example, the Rastafarian fundamentalist movement, which was possibly the fastest-growing millenarian sect of the 1970s and 1980s, is a mixture of African and Christian concepts, drawing support from

⁶¹ See Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974); Malcolm Bull, ed., *Apocalypse Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).

⁶² "For Hard-line Protestants, Leaving Europe is a Matter of Eschatology," www.economist.com/blogs/erasmus/2016/06/ulster-evangelicals-brexit (accessed July 5, 2016).

dispossessed blacks yearning for a sense of self-pride and identity.⁶³ Its followers dream of a black messiah who will lead them back to Africa and a fullness of identity. It first appeared among people who are poor in Jamaica in the early 1930s and spread among black people in Britain, parts of Europe, Australasia, and North America. Many campaigning politicians also messianically promise their followers the return to an utopian past.

Sects and Cults⁶⁴

Fundamentalists tend to form themselves into sects and/or cults (see chapter 2). They believe that people in an established religious or political group have lost their original truth and zeal, so their task is to purify the group. If resistance is too great, fundamentalists may form a schismatic assembly. Fundamentalism in the Western world has generally tended to be confined to the middle class, whereas in India and Israel its mix of nationalism and religion has attracted people from all sections of society. In Islamic countries fundamentalism has appeared as the mouthpiece for the oppressed and marginalized and as the scourge of the decadent and materialist West.⁶⁵ Bruce Lawrence points out that contemporary Islamic fundamentalists sects represent “a delayed reaction to the psychological hegemony of European rule.” Hence, they have tended to arise in the majority of Muslim countries only “after they had become independent nation-states, that is, in most instances, after World War II.”⁶⁶

Charismatic Leaders

A typical fundamentalist leader is a populist, homophobic, charismatic, authoritarian man who likes to bully.⁶⁷ The charismatic leader

⁶³ See Gary D. Bouma and Rod Ling, “Religious Diversity,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Clarke, 511.

⁶⁴ The distinction between a sect and a cult is explained in chapter 2.

⁶⁵ See Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001), 154.

⁶⁶ Bruce B. Lawrence, *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989), 100–101.

⁶⁷ See Marty and Appleby, “Conclusion,” in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, 830. Mark Juergensmeyer notes that “Virtually all radical religious movements of the

is considered to be a prophet who must be faithfully obeyed *without question* for the common good, like, for example, Winston Churchill during World War II, or Hitler, Stalin, and the Ayatollah Khomeini. Followers see in their leaders all the qualities for which they yearn.⁶⁸ The fundamentalist leader browbeats followers into submission without permitting dialogue like a schoolyard bully.⁶⁹ Further, most fundamentalists need a trustworthy person to interpret sacred texts and traditions in view of his or her political aims. Moreover, fundamentalist movements generally have a low level of political institutionalisation in which the resulting vacuum is filled by a cult of personality. For example, in communist systems cults of personality usually emerge when the party is weakly institutionalised: Mao Zedong in China, Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam, and Kim Il-Sung in North Korea.⁷⁰ Personality cults are also found in the Muslim world, with the most obvious example being the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran.⁷¹

America: McCarthyism

During the late 1940s and early 1950s the identity of the American nation was under severe threat. People had become fearful of communism, thanks to the Soviet Union's acquisition of the atomic bomb, the Communist Party's ascendancy in China, the outbreak of the Korean war with the supporting involvement of China and Russia, while the alleged Soviet spy Alger Hiss had been convicted of perjury. "Midwesterners, long suspicious of the East Coast's foreign-policy class, and Catholics, bitter over Moscow's domination of their co-religionists in Eastern Europe, were particularly receptive to claims that Washing-

final decades of the twentieth century have had a homophobic twist." *The Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 202. The pattern is the same in contemporary Islamic fundamentalist movements.

⁶⁸ See Archie Brown, *The Myth of the Strong Leader: Political Leadership in the Modern Age* (London: Bodley Head, 2014), 6–7.

⁶⁹ See Gerald A. Arbuckle, *Confronting the Demon: A Gospel Response to Adult Bullying* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 17–38.

⁷⁰ See Graeme Gill, "Personality Cult, Political Culture and Party Structure," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 17, no. 2 (1984): 111–21.

⁷¹ See William Maley, "Interpreting the Taliban," *Fundamentalism Reborn?*, 18.

ton had sold out America to the Soviet Union.”⁷² This provided an apt environment for the rise of the charismatic and demagogic anti-communist Republican senator Joseph McCarthy (1908–1957). On February 9, 1950, in an address to the Women’s club of Wheeling, West Virginia, he claimed without proof that 205 members of the Communist Party were working in the State Department, Washington, DC: “I have in my hand a list of 205 that were known to the secretary of state as being members of the Communist Party and are still making and shaping the policy of the State Department.” This began a national political witch-hunt that lasted almost five years during which many innocent people suffered as scapegoats. He described a war between “two diametrically opposed ideologies . . . our Christian world and the atheistic Communist world” in which “our only powerful potential enemy has sent men to invade our shores . . . because of the traitorous actions of those who have been treated so well by this nation.”⁷³

It is true that there already existed a fear of domestic subversion cultivated by the FBI Director, J. Edgar Hoover, and the established House of Representatives Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). But McCarthy’s “skill” was his charismatic and bullying ability to take advantage of the existing low morale of the American people and ruthlessly hound mainly innocent citizens.⁷⁴ Six and a half million Americans were checked for loyalty. Hundreds lost their jobs and thousands more their reputations during the anti-communist witch-hunt. Accused officials benefited from neither judge nor jury—they were without legal recourse.⁷⁵ Finally the Senate voted in late 1954 to censure him for conduct unbecoming a senator.

⁷² Peter Beinart, “The New McCarthyism of Donald Trump,” *The Atlantic*, www.theatlantic.com/politics/archives/2015/07/donald-trump-joseph-mccarthy/399056/ (accessed March 3, 2016).

⁷³ Joseph McCarthy, “Address at Wheeling” (February 9, 1950), www.history.matters.gmu.edu/d/6456 (accessed January 1, 2016).

⁷⁴ For a critical analysis McCarthyism, see Ted Morgan, *Reds: McCarthyism in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Random House, 2003); and Mark S. Massa, *Catholics and American Culture* (New York: Crossroad, 1999), 57–81, 226–27.

⁷⁵ See Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and The Sixties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 3–20.

China: The Cultural Revolution

Mao Zedong, Chairman of the Communist Party of China, initiated this socio-political movement in 1966 and sought to end it three years later. He alleged that bourgeois elements had subverted the government and society at large with the aim of restoring capitalism. Millions of people died in the Cultural Revolution. One of his motives was a “utopian one. He appeared to believe that people power, no matter how bloody, could turn China into a socialist paradise.”⁷⁶

Neocapitalism⁷⁷

Economic rationalism (or market capitalism, market economics, neoclassical capitalism, market liberalism) as a quasi-religious faith has become a powerful mythology in the emerging New Right political culture. Its proponents, like Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, permit no dissent. Profit is the sole measure of value and the economic profession serves as its priesthood.⁷⁸ It exalts unabashed greed, conspicuous consumption, and the widespread abandonment of civic virtue. It is based on the premise that anti-environmentalism, sustained economic growth, free markets, and economic globalization will benefit all. Neocapitalism wants lower taxation and reduced government spending and privatized government services.⁷⁹ Businesses employ this mythology to oppose taxes, regulations, and other government measures that constrain their activities, while they simultaneously lobby for government hand-outs as they did, for example, during the financial crisis. Social and religious conservatives are reassured by its absolutism and emphasis on individual autonomy.⁸⁰ Contained in the fundamentalist mythology of the economic rationalist culture (its operational wing is called the “new managerialism”) is the Social Darwinist

⁷⁶ *The Economist* (May 14, 2016): 69; see also Frank Dikotter, *The Cultural Revolution: A People's History 1962-1976* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016).

⁷⁷ See Arbuckle, *Violence, Society*, 170–71.

⁷⁸ See David C. Korten, *When Corporations Rule the World* (London: Earthscan, 1996), 103.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ See www.longviewinstitute.org/projects/marketfundamentalism (accessed March 1, 2016).

assumption that the poor are poor through their own fault and that welfare services worsen poverty so they must be reduced. Economic rationalists also aim to change public institutions into pseudo-businesses,⁸¹ for example healthcare is considered an economic commodity and must be subject to the principles of supply and demand of the marketplace. They tragically have, as Pope Francis says, “a blind confidence in technical changes.”⁸²

The dramatic rise of for-profit hospitals in the United States and Australia in recent years is an example of this economic ideology: financial return to shareholders, not the quality of services to patients, is the primary aim of healthcare services. The planners of healthcare reforms in many countries such as Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, are now more commonly economists or accountants, not people with a background in healthcare delivery.⁸³ Pope Francis describes the impact that economic rationalists have on the environment: They “doggedly uphold the myth of progress and tell us that ecological problems will solve themselves simply with the application of new technology and without any need for ethical considerations or deep change.”⁸⁴ Economic fundamentalists have conspiracy theories too, for example, they believe that people like President Obama who advocate government assistance for those without private insurance are conspiring to undermine effective economic rationalist policies. Like other fundamentalists, economic rationalists distrust history.⁸⁵ As John Saul comments in the 1995 Canadian Massey Lectures, “we have come to so forget our own history that we are now compliantly acting in a suicidal manner, believing that economics can lead—where in the past it has

⁸¹ See Cris Shore and Susan Wright, “Coercive Accountability,” in *Audit Cultures*, ed. Marilyn Strathern (London: Routledge, 2000), 63–85.

⁸² Pope Francis, *Encyclical On Care for Our Common Home* (Laudato si’) (London: St Pauls Publications, 2015), par.14.

⁸³ See Michael Pusey, *Economic Rationalism in Canberra: A Nation Building State Changes Its Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 59–75; and Robert Blank, *New Zealand Health Policy: A Comparative Study* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1994), 134; Gerald A. Arbuckle, *Humanizing Healthcare Reforms* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2013), 90–101.

⁸⁴ Pope Francis, *On Care*, par. 60.

⁸⁵ For a critique of market economics see David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 152–206.

always failed to do so. . . . We have fallen in love with an old ideology that has never paid off in the past.”⁸⁶

“Siloism” in Healthcare

“Siloism” is a fundamentalist attitude to be found in some organizations that occurs when departments or groups of people refuse to share information with other departments or groups.⁸⁷ The medical profession is very divided, with minimal corporate identity and little feeling of belonging to the healthcare systems they serve, like, for example, the National Health Service in Britain. Different specialities have their own colleges: in Britain there are the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Physicians. These subcultures are “medical silos,”⁸⁸ that is, groups of specialists who keep to themselves, are overly sensitive to the importance of hierarchical status, and discourage the sharing of information with other professional silos that they distrust.⁸⁹ This is fundamentalism: their jealously guarded individualism is inimical to the development of teamwork⁹⁰ across the silo barriers, between themselves and nurses, and between themselves and managers. Because of this individualism, the degree of mutual support among medical clinicians is poor. Little wonder that many experience high levels of unaddressed stress and “seem to deny the effect of stress and fatigue on performance,”⁹¹ further discouraging them from openly acknowledging and discussing their medical errors with their colleagues. For this reason, the Garling Report into the acute care services of the public hospitals in New South Wales, Australia, concluded that a “new model of teamwork will be

⁸⁶ John R. Saul, *The Unconscious Civilization* (Toronto: Penguin, 1997), 123.

⁸⁷ See Gillian Tett, *The Silo Effect* (London: Little Brown, 2015); Arbuckle, *Humanizing*, 112.

⁸⁸ See Peter Garling, *Final Report of Inquiry: Acute Care Services in NSW Public Hospitals— Overview* (Sydney: NSW Government, 2008), 4.

⁸⁹ See Henry Mintzberg, *Managing* (Harlow: Pearson, 2009), 169–70.

⁹⁰ See J. Bryan Sexton, Eric J. Thomas, and Robert L. Helmreich, “Error, Stress, and Teamwork in Medicine and Aviation: Cross Sectional Surveys,” *British Medical Journal* 320 (March 18, 2000): 745–49.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 745.

required to replace the old individual and independent 'silos' of professional care."⁹²

Types of Fundamentalism

Separatists

Some fundamentalist groups, for example, Mennonites, Amish, and Hutterites in the United States, Hijra wa Takfir in Egypt, and Hasidic Jews in Israel and the United States, aim to separate from the wider society to greater or lesser degrees for fear that their traditions will be undermined. The Amish people, whose religious roots go back to the Anabaptists, must obey the regulations of their church, the rules that embrace most aspects of daily life, including dress styles and bans or restrictions on the use of power-line electricity, telephones, automobiles. In their lifestyle and religion they see themselves as the authentic heirs of Christianity. The Amish, however, "have lived with industrialized America for centuries, [and] they have moderated its influence on their personal lives, their families, their communities, and their values."⁹³

Activists

As noted above, active fundamentalists seek to infiltrate and use the executive and legislative power of a political authority either through democratic processes or recourse to extreme violence. Two types of activists, therefore, can be identified: democratic and violent fundamentalists.

*"Democratic" Fundamentalists*⁹⁴

"Democratic" fundamentalists, for example, the Moral Majority or Tea Party in the United States, are prepared to work through democratic political and legislative processes to achieve their goals. However, many American fundamentalists who romanticize their

⁹² See Garland, *Overview*, 4.

⁹³ See John A. Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 4th ed. (Johns Hopkins Press, 1993), 3.

⁹⁴ See Arbuckle, *Violence, Society*, 197–98.

republic's democratically minded founders often vigorously support foreign wars and even terrorism in order to impose or protect American values of democracy, for example, the American covert and overt interventions in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

In the United States, fundamentalist Evangelicals were traditionally seen as "anti-political soul-savers who waited for the second coming of Christ, wanted to live decent lives and be left alone except when they would convert others."⁹⁵ This dramatically changed in 1979 when Evangelical fundamentalist Jerry Falwell recognized that "in spite of everything we are going to turn the nation back to God . . . the national crisis [is] growing quickly out of hand."⁹⁶ The cultural traumas that catalysed Falwell and his followers into action during the 1960s and 1970s were:

1. The Expressive Revolution in the 1960s radically challenged traditional American values, and the conventional understanding of family and society: the rise of feminists, "hippies," anti-institutional behaviour of students in universities, anti-war activists, secular humanism,⁹⁷ even gays and atheists.⁹⁸
2. In 1962 the US Supreme Court declared school-sponsored prayer unconstitutional. Public outrage was immediate and widespread. For millions of Americans, the Court had "kicked God out of the schools" to use a phrase common at the time.⁹⁹
3. The US Supreme Court decision in 1973 to legalize abortion rights.
4. The struggle over the Equal Rights Amendment beginning in the late 1970s.
5. The military defeat in Vietnam.

⁹⁵ Martin E. Marty, "The New Christian Right," *The Tablet* (April 23, 1988): 462. The theme of fundamentalism in the United States is more fully explained in chapter 3.

⁹⁶ Jerry Falwell, *Strength for the Journey* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 358.

⁹⁷ Timothy L. Haye, a virulent anti-Catholic evangelical preacher and writer, detailed these issues in his book, *The Battle for the Mind: A Subtle Warfare* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1980).

⁹⁸ See Eller, *Introducing Anthropology*, 289.

⁹⁹ See Steven K. Green, *The Bible, the School, and the Constitution: The Clash that Shaped Modern Church-State Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

As political theorist William E. Connolly writes, these events helped to consolidate the Southern Baptist Church during the 1960s “through a common feeling of betrayal and resentment.”¹⁰⁰ Falwell believed that “the moral degeneration of America had gone so far as to demand an active response.”¹⁰¹ Organized political action was seen as the only way to achieve the traditional aims of fundamentalist Evangelicals. Thus Falwell formed the Moral Majority dominated by traditional Protestant fundamentalists, but at the same time the movement attracted Protestants of all kinds, Jews, and Roman Catholics. Its platform was sharply focused: pro-life, pro-traditional family/morality, pro-American, pro-national defense, and pro-Israel. Falwell believed that God entered actively in history. Events such as the AIDS scourge were God’s judgement against America’s sexual immorality, and that America’s choice as a Christian nation, and indeed its very existence as a Christian nation, depended on Christian political activism.

Christians such as these understand history as a struggle between Christ and anti-Christ, through which the latter seeks the erosion of American sovereignty particularly through international financial regimes, leading to a violent struggle in which they will be called upon to bear witness and from whose horrible devastation they will be delivered. America’s power, they contend, depends on the Christianization of the nation-state.¹⁰²

Other fundamentalist movements followed. Christian Reconstructionism, a radical Calvinist Presbyterian movement, aimed to institute a religious society and religious government in the United States: it advocated “ultra-conservative economic theory and calls for a theocracy that would include a reinstatement of Old Testament civil

¹⁰⁰ William E. Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 110.

¹⁰¹ Steve Bruce, *The Rise and Fall of the New Christian Right: Conservative Protestant Politics in America 1978–1988* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 17.

¹⁰² Roger Friedland, “The Constitution of Religious Political Violence: Institution, Culture, and Power,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, ed. Jeffrey C. Alexander, Ronald N. Jacobs, and Philip Smith (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 451.

law."¹⁰³ One of the founders of the movement, Rousas J. Rushdoony (1916–2001), declared: "The law is therefore the law for Christian man and Christian society. Nothing is more deadly or more derelict than the notion that the Christian is at liberty with respect to the kind of law he can have."¹⁰⁴ By "law," Rushdoony meant the ancient Hebrew law. Reconstructionists, despite their radical economic and theological roots, helped to develop early critiques of secular humanism that deeply influenced the emergence of the Christian Right.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, the New Right,¹⁰⁶ emerged in the political scene as an ideological political movement with distinctive values, a strong emphasis on maintaining the American way of life and America as the world's capitalist superpower, and with clear-cut answers to contemporary social and economic challenges. The Moral Majority supported the New Right, giving it religious legitimation; the revitalized conservative ideology was pronounced to be God's will for America. It became a religious and patriotic duty to support laissez-faire market capitalism and decreasing aid to the poor.

Senator Barry Goldwater, an early leader of the New Right, confidently declared that "extremism in defense of liberty is no vice."¹⁰⁷ The presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush were deeply influenced by this political philosophy, for example, in their secret weapon sales to Iran and their undeclared war on the Nicaraguan government. President Bush, when he pardoned officials for their involvement in these activities, claimed that they had been inspired by patriotism that made their deeds pure.¹⁰⁸ Niccolo

¹⁰³ See Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 248. Reconstructionists demanded that women return to their ancient inferior status; the banning of any religion that refuses to accept Mosaic law; the criminalization of abortion, punishable by death. The movement has almost ceased to exist.

¹⁰⁴ Rousas J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1973), 8–9. The movement has declined.

¹⁰⁵ See Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 248.

¹⁰⁶ See Bruce, *The Rise and Fall*, 25–49; Pippa Norris, *Radical Right: Voters and Parties in the Electoral Market* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 72–73.

¹⁰⁷ Barry Goldwater, cited by Theodore White, *The Making of the President 1964* (Toronto: Signet Books, 1965), 261.

¹⁰⁸ See S. L. Sutherland, "Retrospection and Democracy," in *Cruelty and Deception: The Controversy over Dirty Hands in Politics*, ed. Paul Rynard and David P. Shugarman (Orchard Park: Broadway Press, 2000), 218–20.

Machiavelli, the fifteenth-century political philosopher, would have agreed with this political fundamentalism: "You should adopt wholeheartedly the policy most likely to save your homeland's life and preserve her liberty."¹⁰⁹

*Violent Fundamentalists*¹¹⁰

Violence can range from manipulating facts and truth to physical assault on people and property. Fundamentalists who commit themselves to physical violence believe they are living in exceptional times that threaten their beliefs, and this permits them to suspend normal requirements of their religion, such as respect for human rights.

Christian Identity Movement¹¹¹

The Christian Identity Movement is a loose association of diverse groups including: Anglo-Israelites, white supremacists, John Birch Society, some militia movements, and the Ku Klux Klan.¹¹² Its membership claims that Caucasian people are the spiritual and literal descendants of the ten lost tribes of ancient Israel; for some members blacks and Jews are the greatest threats to white Christian civilization.¹¹³ These virulent racist groups, which are prone to physical violence, have in common the belief that the end of the world is to be preceded by a cleansing war, during which all non-whites will be killed. Predictions differ about the signs of Christ's second coming and Armageddon. They include race war or a Jewish-supported United Nations takeover of the United States. Many followers advocate physical struggle against what they describe as the forces of evil, for example, Timothy McVeigh, the convicted bomber of the

¹⁰⁹ Niccollo Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings*, ed. David Wooton (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 215.

¹¹⁰ See Arbuckle, *Violence, Society*, 198–200.

¹¹¹ See Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind*, 30–35.

¹¹² See Keller, *Introducing Anthropology*, 291–92.

¹¹³ See Nancy T. Ammerman, "North American Protestant Fundamentalism," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. Marty and Appleby, 35.

Oklahoma City federal building in 1995, was influenced by Christianity Identity thinking.¹¹⁴

Toward the end of his life, Ayatollah Khomeini explained why Islamic fundamentalists are able to use terrorism even though this is normally against Shia beliefs. He claimed that since the very survival of the Islamic Republic of Iran was threatened, parts of the Islamic law were to be bypassed in favor of the supreme jurist's (i.e., Khomeini's) decisions.¹¹⁵ In this way he justified the establishment of state terrorism in Iran and his support of Islamic terrorists in other parts of the world. Likewise, the fundamentalist Taliban in Afghanistan, and "pro-lifers" who kill abortionists or blow-up medical buildings, all claim that exceptional times demand ruthless responses. White supremacists in the United States, who destroy property and kill, assert that the laws of the land no longer apply to them, for governments are corrupt and evil. God is calling them to be his special prophets and all previous laws are suspended.

Fundamentalist sects, impassioned by desires for apocalyptic redemption, either turn their violence on themselves, for example, when nine hundred died in a mass suicide-murder spree in Jonestown, Guyana, in 1978; or they turn their violence on the innocent. The examples of the latter are many: Aum Shinriko in his subway attack in Tokyo in 1995,¹¹⁶ the terrorist bomb attack in downtown Oklahoma City in the same year by Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, and the terrorist assaults in New York and Washington, DC, and the 2016 terrorist offensives in London, Paris, and Brussels.

Terrorism is "criminal behavior designed primarily to generate fear in the community, or a substantial segment of it, for political purposes."¹¹⁷ In addition to the political purpose the motivation of terrorist organizations may be nationalist (e.g., Basque Nationalism,

¹¹⁴ See Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind*, 31. Religious terrorists are obsessed with an apocalyptic vision and claim that they are fighting in the final battle against evil: "a cosmic conflict, which allows for no compromise as [they] are dealing with demonic forces, and which permits [them] to dispense with everyday moral norms." McTernan, *Violence in God's Name*, 34.

¹¹⁵ See Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 89.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 104.

¹¹⁷ Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982), 154.

the Irish Republican Army), ideological (e.g., the Red Brigade in Italy in the 1970s and early 1980s), or religious (e.g., the Taliban, Hamas, Hezbollah—the Lebanese Shia movement). All of these movements have one thing in common, namely, to create enough fear in the population to force governments to make desired political changes.¹¹⁸ Terrorists see themselves as the victims for they fear that their identity is endangered in a world that is “stifling, chaotic and dangerously out of control.”¹¹⁹ Terrorist movements have existed for centuries sometimes involving thousands of members, but in recent times, there has been a radical change in their character. Now, given the increasing availability of sophisticated technology, a small group or individuals, difficult to infiltrate or detect, can terrorize thousands and even millions of people.¹²⁰

Political terrorists aim at instrumental and primary targets. For example, in the case of the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon, the primary target was the people of the United States, while the instrumental target was the people trapped in the planes and buildings. Today terrorism has become a ritual filled with powerful symbolism for local and global audiences. It has at least three strategic objectives:

1. To gain publicity for the terrorists’ cause;
2. To show that a government cannot protect the people;
3. To force the government to overreact by turning the situation into a military one with the aim of so restricting a population’s freedom so that people will eventually turn against their government and impel it to submit to the terrorists’ demands.¹²¹

With the availability of weapons of mass destruction and advanced technology, terrorists can now imagine a further aim, namely to paralyze and undermine a nation’s economic infra-structure, even the global economy itself. The dramatic terrorist attacks in the United

¹¹⁸ See Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 43.

¹¹⁹ Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind*, 190.

¹²⁰ See Laqueur, *The New Terrorism*, 4–6; Jason Burke, *The New Threat: The Past, Present, and Future of Islamic Militancy* (New York: The New Press, 2015), 25–16, 233–34.

¹²¹ See Johnson, *Revolutionary Change*, 156–68.

States, France, England, Belgium and elsewhere illustrate that this aim is now a real possibility.

Summary Points

- We are seeing something akin to a global epidemic of fundamentalism both religious and political.¹²²
- All individuals, cultures, and religions have a capacity for fundamentalism.
- Fundamentalism is a form of organized institutional or civic religious anger in reaction to secularization, political changes, and globalization; it often intimidates or coerces people to achieve its ends.
- There are two broad categories of fundamentalist movements: separatist—they aim to separate from the wider society; activist—they seek to co-opt the executive and legislative power either through democratic processes or recourse to extreme violence.
- Violent fundamentalists, for example, Islamic extremists, use terrorism for their purposes. They claim that the killing of innocent people is justified because there is no other way to protect their sacred heritage, which they believe is in danger of annihilation.

Discussion Questions

1. What points in this chapter do you feel relate to your experience? Why?
2. Pope Francis writes, “Where profits alone count, there can be no thinking about the rhythms of nature, its phases of decay and regeneration, or the complexity of ecosystems which may be gravely upset by human intervention.”¹²³ What form of funda-

¹²² See Lifton, *The Protean Self*, 11, 160–89.

¹²³ Pope Francis, *On Care*, par. 139.

mentalism do you think he is speaking about? Do you identify signs of it in your country?

3. Many millions of innocent people are being displaced through violent fundamentalist movements, becoming unskilled migrants and refugees. What can you do to make these injustices better known in your community?
4. Often fundamentalist movements are generated because Christians have not welcomed the stranger into their midst. What are you, your school, and/or parish doing to make strangers welcome?