UNDERSTANDING ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM

Nazar Ul Islam WANI   ORCID: 0000-0002-6641-6784
*Department of Islamic Studies, Government PG College, Bhaderwah Jammu; Department of Higher Education, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir
waninazar13@gmail.com*

The term "religious fundamentalism" has attracted attention all over the world because of its adherents being involved in conflicts and violence. The phenomenon has been perceived twofold: one is returning to the core teachings of religion without accepting any modern changes and second is the palpable desire to establish a cosmic order (religious law) on canonic law in order to establish a just system which fundamentalists believe secular law has failed to establish. This paper endeavors to understand the nature, dimensions, and prospects of Islamic Fundamentalism under these two dimensions. It also aims at understanding the contestations and clashes it has with secular law, which makes it pass through the clout of clash of civilizations. It is a descriptive/exploratory research and the data has been collected through content analysis of secondary sources to reach the objective.

KEYWORDS: Islam and politics, revivalism, reformation, resurgence, clash of civilizations, secularism, Islamism.

1. INTRODUCTION

It occurs to us now a widely accepted phenomenon about the religions' involvement in the conflict. Religious conviction has remained a source of conflict within and between communities. Throughout the world, people consider religion as a motivating factor during the Crusades, Spanish Inquisition, Global Jihad, and September 11, and for recently limited attacks, like the Paris attack.[1] People also believe in the religious potential to peace-making. The involvement of people with religion is immense, and to perceive their actions outside the paradigm of religion seems difficult. This may be one of the reasons why religion has become a powerful tool of binding[2] and conflict. Religious Fundamentalism, however, is more often related to the religious involvement in conflict. Fundamentalism started with a conviction to return to the religious fundamentals as in Christianity but since 1990's in the Western scholarship it is more distinctly and extensively referred to Islamic Fundamentalism.[3]

Religious Fundamentalism, with so many connotations and definitions, in our times, is more often related in the Western academic scholarship through various operational terms, master frameworks, meta-concepts and discourses[4] on which the foundation of this concept is built:

1. 'Rigid adherence to the text', to the extent that such adherence may cause conflict and violence or "otherness" in the behavior of a believer.[5]
2. Fundamentalism is also perceived in theology as a 'return to the roots' or 'going back to religious text/scripture', like the slogan of Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) "back to well-springs" or the slogan of Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb (1703-1792) "return to pure Islam".[6]
3. Fundamentalism as a phenomenon also started as a reaction against secularization and modernization. This is the

general prerogative in the "Fundamentalism scholarship" as reflected from work the "Fundamentalist Project" by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby. Much of the Fundamentalist scholarship is either influenced by secularization and modernization or previewed as a reaction to these two phenomena.

4. Fundamentalism as perceived through the clout of *clash of civilizations*. Most of the social identities in the post-Cold War world are blurring and people are deeply searching for identities in great traditions of the world, and for that matter, religion is often seen as the most important identity, something which led to the 'de-secularization of the world', which has been a dominant social factor in the 20th century.[7] The religious identity gives meaning to life, hence a 'strict observance of religious texts' is seen among the believers. The opinion of the Western academia is that any challenge to this identity is responded to immediately with violence and fear, like the *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie by the Iranian religious cleric Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.[8] These reactions in the western academia are documented as 'Muslim Intolerance' and largely perceived as Fundamentalism too. Western scholarship is well aware of the differences between Sunni and Shiʿa theology. It has, however, not differentiated Shiʿa and Sunni Fundamentalism. Since the Iranian Revolution was against the Western secular model, it was an easy measuring rod of defining fundamentalism. This paper aims to understand whether the Western interpretation of Fundamentalism and the abovementioned operational terms synchronize with the movement of Islamic Fundamentalism.

The reflection of Islamic Fundamentalism in the Western literature is perceived as, first, the return to the original text, and second, an opposition to the infiltration of secular and western-

izing influences, while seeking to establish Islamic law. Islamic fundamentalist movements in this context are perceived through two ways: One, the return to source/text (Qur'an and Sunnah) and second, the returning to political power through Islamic Law, which has initiated a dialogue in our times for the rise of political Islam as a separate ideology because of the disillusionment with other ideologies like secularism and liberalism.[9] Muslim scholars have also defined Islamic Fundamentalism as a revivalist, and a reform movement with the aim of returning to the founding scriptures. The return to foundation endeavors to reinterpret the texts with the changing times.[10] But Revival (*tajdīd*) and Reform (*iṣlāḥ*) is seen pejoratively as Islamic Fundamentalism by the Western literature on the subject. Islamic Fundamentalism was perceived as revivalism and reformation of Islam in the doctrine (*uṣūl*) and jurisprudence. It became a political, social, and economic resurgence in our times. There is an alternative vocabulary which has developed alongside Islamic Fundamentalism, which is 'Islamism,' 'political Islam,' 'Islamic Resurgence,' and few other controversial terms like 'radicalism' and 'Salafism'[11] which are mostly pejorative terms. There is, however, no agreement among scholars with regard to the use of the label – 'fundamentalist' in the Islamic context. While some challenge that the term is less descriptive than it is accusatory, others argue that every Muslim believes in the fundamentals of Islam and thus is a fundamentalist in the positive sense of the term.[12]

Our definition of understanding the phenomena of Fundamentalism as a textualist movement and as a reaction against the secular culture creates two opinions. One is that Fundamentalism, as viewed by the secularists as a return to pure texts or pure religion, is perceived optimistic and good for their religion, society and culture. Second is that Fundamentalism as a social phenomenon manifests as a reaction to the secular state. The religious people who are named as fundamentalists in the Western literature, like by Mark Juergensmeyer fall in the second category, where for

Mark and scholars like Huntington Fundamentalism can turn into religious nationalism, and the fundamentalists, as named so in this category, are involved in violence and conflict.[13]

Muslims are often imagined in two types of fundamentalism: the textualist/literalist approach and a socio-political-economic-religious revival that aims to establish an Islamic state in contrast to the Western secular democratic state, a movement also referred to as Islamism. This can be perceived earliest by defining the terminology and technicalities involved, being thoughtful about the history, and then in the course of its relationship with the ambition of Islamic state, and finally its passing through the clout of clash of civilizations. The objective is to find whether the definition of fundamentalism applied on Muslims is suggestive/ apt or it is an academic exercise to create a grotesque Muslim image as is reflected in the other genres of western literature, like Orientalism.[14]

2. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design has been employed for the present study. The data was collected through secondary sources of information, and the method of data collection adopted was content analysis. For the present study, books, research papers, and a selection of newspapers were reviewed to achieve the objective. Moreover, the return of Fundamentalism as a potent political power has immense challenges for the reason that it motivates the younger generation towards the dethroning of secular government, which may create a misadventure, contestation, and clash. The connotations of that misadventure have led to the outpouring of academic terms like 'Islamophobia,' 'Terrorism,' and different hermeneutical paradigms in the Western academia, leaving us in this part of the world confused with the terminologies and meanings. The method adopted thus cannot be easy to discern the

goal of what precisely are the meanings to be extracted from the semantics of Fundamentalism in this paper. We have, however, maintained two methods in this paper: one is that Fundamentalism means returning to the original sources found in all religions, and second the relationship of Fundamentalism with the aim of establishing an Islamic state, makes it as a subject of International Relations.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Fundamentalism is a reaction against Western secular culture according to Gabriel A. Almond. It has numerous factors responsible like political, social and economic structures, and environments governing the several movements like Islamic Hamas and Hezbollah, the Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, radical Sikh and Hindu movements.[15]

R. Scott Appleby, who writes on Fundamentalist movements, explores the concept of religious conflict through the process of Fundamentalism. The Fundamentalism of the late 1970's according to the western literature played an important role in the rise of conflicts, as fundamentalists started startling secularist hegemony and began to bring the religion back to the center stage.

R. Scott Appleby and Martin E. Marty explored the concept of Fundamentalism in their monumental work *Fundamentalisms Observed.* According to them, the fundamentalists are engaged in conflict with those people whose policies are anti-religious. They see the policies of secular regimes against religion as ungodly and evaluate them as the battle between good and evil. They do things which are antigovernment and at times resort to violence to defend their religion. They fight back to bring back their religion to sacralize the world.[16]

For Yusuf M. Choueiri, Islamic Fundamentalism is understood in the West during our times as an aspiration to go back to the

'spring wells' to discover the blueprint[17] of the first generation of Muslims and its ideological principles combined with political action. It is here to understand that this rekindling of principles of religion, shapes the hypothetical framework of many academic works, historical processes, and social contexts in Islam. But the ideology that springs out of the Western theoretical framework, which labels all those groups or people as Fundamentalists who want to return to the foundations of Islam, is logically incorrect, because anyone returning to the Islamic source/texts/scripture is a Muslim, and by this definition every Muslim is a fundamentalist.

Samia Ahmad's PhD thesis *Tracing Islamic Fundamentalism* looks into one of the challenges that Islamic Fundamentalism cannot only advocate a call to return to the Qur'an and Sunnah, theoretically. It is the revival of pristine Islam and affirmation and application (which demands political action).[18]

In the *Historical Dictionary of Fundamentalism*, underlying motivation of the Muslim fundamentalists is seen as "earthly power and success of the first generation of Muslim" was possible due to their strict following of fundamentals of Islam.[19] It is a general perception among the Muslims that prosperity belongs to those who look past to the actions and character of the ʿ*ṣalaf* ([pious] predecessors).[20] In this context Fundamentalist is the one who aims for that earthly power motivated by the first generation of Muslims.

Mumtaz Ahmad's *Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia* discusses about the restitution of a socio-religious system that Muslims feel nostalgic about exists only under the guidance of Prophet Muhammad and his first four caliphs. This is one of the core ideas which strengthen the conceptual framework of Islamic Fundamentalism in Western scholarship.[21]

4. HISTORICAL ROOTS

The historical beginning of Fundamentalism, which plays a part in shaping the religious conflict, is actually a Christian concept coined during the 1895 Bible conference at Niagara, in reaction to the liberal movements inside the Protestant churches. This conference came up with the "five points of Fundamentalism" such as (1) inerrancy of the Bible; (2) the virgin birth of Christ; (3) Christ's Substitutional Atonement; (4) Christ's Physical Resurrection and the Physical Return of Christ; and (5) the authenticity of miracles. The term was also made popular and familiar by the work *The Fundamentals* which is a collection of twelve books published in 1910. By 1920s a movement came into being in the name of Fundamentalism, which developed in churches and within the culture, particularly in America. Bible Conferences, institutes and missions were established to reclaim the lost vision of religious doctrines among the masses and to protest against the existing theological changes.[22] The academic initiative called the "Fundamentalism Project" was launched in the 1990s as an interdisciplinary study designed to analyze the anti-modernist, anti-secular militant religious movements on the five continents and within seven world traditions.[23]

We do not find any Fundamentalist movement within Muslims. We, however, find revivalist and reformist movements. These movements were pejoratively named as fundamentalist movements. There are several forms of Fundamentalism attached to revivalist movements in Islam[24] in the Western 'Fundamentalist literature', like textual/scriptural Fundamentalism, which has its roots with Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdul-Wahhāb (1703-92), an Islamic scholar from Najd in Central Arabia. His movement is popularly known in the West as *Wahhabism*, a term which is more derogatively used. He stood for the revival of pure Islam, sloganeering to restore "pure monotheism".[25] Some of his works like *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* sets the *uṣūl* fundamentals of returning back to

puritan Islam cascading from the source in the 18th century CE. Only if the Christian Fundamentalists were so called because of their mention of their basic beliefs in the tracts called *The Fundamentals*, then Wahhāb's use of fundamentals finds a place in the Fundamentalists' category.

'Abdul-Wahhāb was very much influenced by Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328) and Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855 CE). Ibn Hanbal preached un-createdness of the Qur'an and believed that only the *salaf* – the previous and pious ancestors – were worthy of imitation and emulation. The Hanbali School (*madhhab*) has been blamed for scriptural fundamentalism and Ibn Taymiyyah is often perceived as an archetype of literalism and scriptural fundamentalism.[26] He believed that the solution to the problems of his times lies in going back to the pious predecessors (*ṣalaf al-ṣāliḥīn*) of the Muslims' first three generations. His followers see Muḥammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhāb, however, as someone who saw the moral degradation and innovation in his society and tried to reform it.[27] He would see mysticism or *taṣawwuf* as the worst malady of the contemporary Muslim world.[28] He discouraged grave worship, and believed it as one of the reasons for the decline of Muslims, and for which he propagated his version of Islam, a homecoming to pure monotheism.[29] The Fundamentalism in this context was perceived as a stereotyping of *juris corpus* of Muslims, shrinking it to literalism. Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhāb collaborated with Muḥammad ibn Sa'ūd to expedite his ideas,[30] thus inciting political involvement. As a religious revivalist movement, it has influenced *Ahl al-ḥadīth* and *Ṣalafiyyah* movement, two major revivalist movements that fall under the category of scriptural/literalist/textualist Fundamentalism in the Western literature.[31]

Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā latter on became the admirer of 'Abdul-Wahhāb and Ibn Tamiyyah. He zealously started campaigning against the Western influences, like writing against the rising currents of secularism and nationalism and theorizing the modern state. Rāshīd Rida essentially marks its transition to

another phase of Islamic Fundamentalism. His principal contributions to the fundamentalist cause was the religious journal *Al-Manār* (*The Minaret*) he founded and edited for thirty-five years and the pioneering political ideal of the Islamic state he formulated in the aftermath of War World I and the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate.[32]

The next phase in Islamic Fundamentalism was the reaction to modern secular law, which forms the second part of our definition. The ideological boost of which is taken from Maulana Maududi and from his various works like *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyyat*, and *Al-Jīhad fī'l-Islām* by creating a theological framework of an Islamic state, which was an anti-thesis of modern secular Western democracy. This is also a core idea or a seminal argument in Western scholarship while conceptualizing the idea of Islamic Fundamentalism, which is that "Fundamentalists" are violent against modernization and secularization process.[33] The writings of Muslim Brotherhood like *Maʿālim fī'tTarīq* by Sayyid Quṭb have provided substantive impressions in becoming the manifesto for the revival of Muslim unity and glory.

The final phase of Fundamentalism passes though the clout of 'clash of civilizations' theory, which determines conflict and violence as an ultimate result of such Fundamentalism.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Islamic Fundamentalism as a Reaction to Western Secular State

The story of Islamic Fundamentalism correlates with the establishment of an Islamic state,[34] and as a reaction to Western secular state. In Western literature, fundamentalist as a phenomenon is studied through this strain, and referred to the one who believes Islam should be at the center, not only in politics but in econom-

ics, in the development of philosophy, morality, ethics, sciences, and technology. In this context, the reformism (*iṣlāḥ*) of any sort is also calculated as a manifestation of Fundamentalism. This belief in the centrality of Islam in the 19th century begins with the mention of Jamāluddīn al-Afghānī (b. 1838).[35] He extensively wrote about the Islamic unity, brotherhood, Islamic nationalism, and against western conquest,[36] which influenced the generation of Muslims scholars involved in major political movements in Egypt. Al-Afghānī was not against the Western culture rather his resistance was against colonialism. The revival of Islamic culture, however, was found in his writings in Paris, for which he was named as a chief architect of Pan-Islamism.[37] But the question that can be raised here is the Western representations of the term Fundamentalism. Can anyone who talks about the centrality of Islam or revivalism be called a Fundamentalist? Does Islam need no revival?

We do not find a particular movement of reviving the politico-religious aspect in Al-Afghānī; rather, he can be widely seen across a range of genres in the Muslim Revivalist Literature. He influenced Muḥammad ʿAbduh and they wrote together while in Paris against European colonialism in an Islamic revolutionary journal titled *Al-ʿUrwat al-Wuthqā* (*the Firmest Bond*), arguing that Muslims were trying their best to come out of the socio-political and philosophical decline.[38] But we do not find Muḥammad ʿAbduh as a Fundamentalist in the Western literature. His focus was on *iṣlāḥ* (Reform), and he also had a mixed opinion (both love and hate) about Westernization (*taghrīb*). Al-Afghānī's Pan-Islamism project influenced Sayyid Rashīd Rīḍā in writing his famous treatise *Al-Khilāfah aw al-Imāmah al-ʿUẓmā* (*Caliphate or the Supreme Leadership*), in which the conceptualization of Islamic State took place.[39] The other dimensions of Afghani, however, scarcely permit us to distinguish him from the Fundamentalist (religo-political) standpoint only. The reason why few scholars in the West deny the possibility that these thinkers, viz., Al-Afghānī,

Rashīd Rīda and ʿAbduh were reformists, modernist and liberal is because of sheer incompetence in differentiating between the definitions of modernism, reformism, and fundamentalism.[40]

Abul Ala Maududi and Sayyid Quṭb necessitated an Islamic state which gave them a master/key status on the subject. They qualify the operational terms related to Fundamentalism in the Western literature. They refuted the Western secular and democratic values to the extent of being in the clash with them. They also struggled for the restoration of a perfect past, except for a principle vital at a time: the viceregency of man under God's sovereignty. The fundamentalist movement started by Maududi and Sayyid Quṭb[41] was to overthrow the non-Islamic political system with an Islamic-political system. This can be where these fundamentalist movements differ from each other within Islam.[42] Abul Ala Maududi was fundamentally antagonistic to the Western secular model and he perceived Western culture as a threat and has also said, thus:

> …It leads mankind in a direction contra Islam. Western Civilization strikes at the roots of that concept of ethics and culture which is the base of Islamic Civilization…. In other words, Islam and Western Civilizations are like two boats sailing in two opposite directions. Any attempt to sail in both the boats shall split the adventurer into two pieces.[43]

Abul Ala Maududi saw the disintegration within Islam and threat from Communism and Western values as a challenge to the identity of Muslims. He strived to shape the identity of the Muslim world, particularly the youth – the return of Islam as a central force in all fields (social, economic, and political) which was possible through jihad, and for Maududi, jihad means striving for justice. In his book *Al-Jihād fī'l-Islām*[44] he debated jihad as a tool to end injustice, which modern secular regimes have not

been able to do, and therefore the precedence of that jihad is to safeguard and respect human life.

Ḥasan al-Banna, the founder of *Ikhwān al-Muslimīn* (Muslim Brotherhood), believed that the problems of Muslims can be solved by going back to the Qur'an and Sunnah. Ḥasan al-Banna was discontented with the Western thought on this rationale that it teaches immorality, and his acolyte, Sayyid Quṭb (1906-1966), considered Western thought to be based on *jāhiliyyah* (ignorance).[45] But this immorality/ignorance cannot be uprooted without a major social movement or state. Both Ḥasan al-Banna and Sayyid Quṭb dared to change the status quo. Together, they challenged a narrative that was deeply perceived as based on socio-political and economic injustice.

The interesting part in this story was the Iranian Revolution (IR) in 1979 which shaped a lot of literature on Fundamentalism in Islam, and gave Islamists and Fundamentalists a hope.[46] This could not help the Muslim world in regaining what was emotionally seen as an outcome of the Revolution. At the international level, however, such a movement got religion back as a discourse in International Relations. In the field of Fundamentalism scholarship, the American evangelical movement began to weaken, and the concept of Fundamentalism became increasingly more synonymous with Islamic Fundamentalism.[47] IR, undoubtedly, became a seminal moment in the conceptual framework of the term "Islamic Fundamentalism".[48] However, one does find the traces of conceptualization of Fundamentalism in Islam as a long and continuous trend in the intellectual history of Islam as a process of engagement in religious reform.[49] The IR succeeded in procuring what was needed for that ideal Islamic state which 18th, 19th, and 20th century reform movements in the Muslim world were struggling for. The IR, hence, became a benchmark for the rest of the restive fundamentalist movements in Islam. The revival of religious identity, the idea of defending the cause of Palestine, strong resistance to the colonial powers, etc., with an idea of framing

an Islamic Government were the most important achievements of the Islamic Revolution of Iran. Ayatollah Khomeini became a symbol of resistance in many parts of the world for defending against colonial powers and a ray of hope for the establishment of a state.[50] In Kashmir, the IR was seen as a hope to overthrow the Indian aggression in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. The first batch of young people who rebelled against the Indian regime was influenced by IR.[51]

The Fundamentalism that is seen through the interrelation of religion and state in modern politics is deeply flawed. Religion and state relation has been discussed by the classical scholars like Al-Ghazālī and Al-Mawardī before the subject reached Ḥasan al-Banna, Maududi, and Sayyid Quṭb. Prophet Muhammad did not separate the religion and state. In this category any scholar who revisits this indivisible bond of religion and state cannot be Fundamentalist. What has been aimed through religio-political struggle already existed in Muslim history; it was the missing dimension of Muslim statecraft that blurred during the colonialism and during the formation of modern nation states. But when modern nation-state failed to do socio-economic, socio-religious and socio-political justice, the powerful mood of return to religion, and revivalism was felt among all the religions.[52]

The Islamic state has a moral, ethical, and theological character better than its Jewish and Christian counterparts.[53] Islam never divorced state and church. However, this separate political understanding of a state was perceived as an exclusivist and unfashionable ideology, and at the same time, those who believed in it or propounded it were named as doing inclusive politics.[54]

In the beginning of the 18th and 19th century we witnessed the Islamic Reformation[55] movements of this perception in Libya (*Sanūsiyyah* Movement), Egypt (*Ikhwān al-Muslimīn*), and India (*Jamāʿat-i Islāmī*). All these movements were suppressed. Italy crushed the Sanūsī movement and the US-led Gamal Abdel Nas-

ser along with other dictators receded the role of *Ikhwān*. Ḥasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qūtb were both killed in Egypt.

This idea of religo-political aspiration was determined by the *Sharī'ah* and was envisioned through the clout of "clash of civilizations" in the early 1990s.[56] It is the hope of implementation of the *Sharī'ah* which was assumed as one of the reasons for Islamic Fundamentalism. However, due to the controversial nature of the continuing debate concerning the Islamic state, scholars have continued to differ on the nature and attributes of this proposition. But the envisioning of the state as a logical extension of Islam was found by many as an instrument of implementation of the *Sharī'ah*. The logic of the Islamic state or the centerpiece of the whole argument, according to Hashim Kamali, lies in the establishment of the legal system; the *Sharī'ah* that Islam proposes a government to enforce.[57] There is a commitment to enforcing *Sharī'ah* with a strong intent to replace secular law, which is seen as anti-*Sharī'ah*. Those advocating for this are often pejoratively labeled as fundamentalists and are frequently referred to as Islamists.

The reason why aspiration of Islamic State or even the phenomena of Reform and Revival was perceived or blamed as Fundamentalism is because both these movements clashed with the Western values, which in our post-Cold War world was represented by the theory of clash of civilizations.[58]

5.2 Fundamentalism through the Clout of Clash of Civilizations

The final phase of fundamentalism that was supposed in Western academics during the last 30 years was of Sayyid Quṭb and Maulana Maudidi. The 9/11 and the rise of Al-Qaida added a dimension to it and ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) made it multifaceted. The 9/11 generated a response that brings us back to the clout of the clash of civilizations.[59] These historical and, besides, some social

elements both contributed to the galvanization of the Middle East. It drove America into the 'war on terror' reluctantly or not but people did feel American exceptionalism a part of long historical contestations between Muslims and Christians. George W. Bush had a Freudian slip when he said that war on terror is a crusade.[60] The rise of Islamic Fundamentalism from the American Middle East policy got embossed on the literature of Fundamentalism. This kind of fundamentalism is based on the theory of victim-hood, which justifies both the Crusades of yesterday and the ISIS of today.[61] In Iran, the defeat of America indicated the defeat of colonialism in Muslim lands. Muslims believed that it is possible to defeat America and establish an Islamic state. Al-Qaida and its clash/contestation with the West and the clash with other modern Muslims gave a violent representation to Fundamentalism. The Islamic scriptural principles, *uṣūl,* and its hermeneutical extension, which is contextual, defined Fundamentalism as a phenomenon from the 1970s to 2020.[62]

The 9/11 resulted, if believed to be true, as a reaction to the American presence in the Middle East. The reaction which Al-Qaida produced is perceived as exclusive fundamentalism in the Western literature. The more exclusivism came from ISIS. ISIS consists of a band of violent men, evolving to threaten the world with a new message of savagery. The utopia of ISIS, to establish a state or that perfect past took Fundamentalism to the next level of violence.[63] The revival of old doctrine and its implementation on the ground felt desecration of the text earlier held with high esteem as *uṣūl.* Media was an agent used for the global popularity of jihad. These new games were mostly played on the media, through Twitter hashtags, Facebook, and Telegram. The recent Paris attacks and the attack in New Zealand over the Muslim community have proved it that things are not over yet. Fundamentalists are continuously clashing. It may seem that ISIS is looking for rehabilitation on the borders of Syria and Turkey but the ideology of 'caliphate reborn' stands.[64] This struck a blow

to the image of fundamentals of Islam. A deep literature survey will tell us that the Fundamentals and Fundamentalism were considered synonymous and inseparable.

There is an ideological contradiction other than political which has led to the rise of Fundamentalism vis-à-vis the West. Western literature on Fundamentalism had a strong conviction that ISIS has a conceptual contradiction with the secular state.[65]

However, this is where extremism, fundamentalism, and similar terms have been pejoratively introduced in the academe. The defying moment of conceptualization of Islamic Fundamentalism in the Western literature does not only lie in the strong will to establish an Islamic State but its roots exist in the belief of overthrowing the Western secular model. This belief has created a contestation between the secular and the Islamists.[66]

The so-called fundamentalists' claim for the state has created a united opposition against them throughout the world. But then these fundamentalist movements have successfully exposed the flaws of secular regimes and modern Muslim state structures. By opening schools and doing social activities, they are trying to create a counter-culture that fulfills the demands of the modern state system.[67] The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt achieved state power in 2012 but only to get dethroned within 12 months. The reason for their coming to power was the corruption or the socio-economic injustice the previous regime committed. The Muslim Brotherhood chose a democratic way to come to power but still, the US and Israel were afraid of them because of ideological differences. The rise of Muslim Brotherhood was seen with a little positive opinion in Israel. It is mainly because Israel and its lackeys in the West perceive the rise of Islamists from a greater framework of "clash of civilizations".[68] This threat came from Huntington's clashing civilizations two decades before ISIS, which is perhaps best illustrated by the renewed conflict between Islam and the West. This perception has been reinforced by consistent Western support for Israel (a Western-made state amid the lands of Islam),

international demands for Iran to cease its nuclear program (led by nations that already possess nuclear technology), and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as part of a global war on terrorism that focuses virtually exclusively on Islamic fundamentalists. Huntington quotes Bill Clinton's statement that the West has no problem with Islam but only with violent Islamist extremists. This statement is against the fourteen hundred years history which says otherwise. The "two communities have always competed and locked at times in deadly combat."[69] During the attack on the Byzantine Empire and the siege of Vienna in 1529, Europe was under constant threat from Islamic civilization. As noted, "Islam is the only civilization that has twice put the survival of the West in doubt."[70] However, this threat is more historical than theological.[71]

Theoretically, the fundamentalist claim of replacing the modern state structure may reveal its destructive side. This is because secularization historically involved separating religion from state control. In essence, the process of Western colonization has led to the secularization of the entire world.[72] This is where the rejection of secular nationalism by traditional and religious societies began. The backlash from the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and other regions stemmed primarily from the perception that secular nationalism was a tool for introducing a new ideology, complete with distinct ideals, living standards, leadership styles, moral values, and economic models originating in the West. This prompted a reaction from religious communities.[73]

Secularism and the West faced significant challenges in Iran, the Middle East, Palestine, Libya, Algeria, Pakistan, and India. While the West succeeded in establishing secular leadership in many regions, the clash between secular nationalism and traditional societies profoundly altered the course of secularism's history.[74] This encounter raised serious questions about secularism, viewing it as impious, immoral, promoting nudity and obscenity, and being an unjust and corrupt system. In the post-Cold War world, the relationship between secularism and the Islamic state

represents a significant potential for conflict between religious (Islamic) and secular communities. This divide has emerged as a major fault line, making it a central point of contention and the nerve of this ongoing conflict.[75]

The Fundamentalists over the years have a rationale of victimization, that they are the victims of a secular state.[76] In the Muslim world some prominent voices felt that modern nation-state is deeply associated with the production of violence.[77]

5.3 Fundamentalism and Misrepresentations

An unbiased academic study into the nature of religious scholarship will enlighten us that the Fundamentalism trend is case-oriented and conditional and driven by certain motivations, events, and media reporting.[78] Some misrepresentations are driven by such conditions. For example, consider the liberal and neoconservative views of Islamic fundamentalism. A closer look at the dominant representations by liberal intellectuals reveals their reliance on key rhetorical terms and phrases when describing Wahhabism as a form of Islamic fundamentalism, such as gender apartheid, gender discrimination, sexism, misogyny, and women-hating. According to this perspective, the opposite of a fundamentalist is a "liberal," characterized by individualism, freedom, secularism, and liberty. Liberals view Islamic fundamentalism as a threat to these core beliefs.[79] This threat to their beliefs makes them represent Fundamentalism and Fundamentalists in a particular way: backward, unevolved, anti-modern, and regressive. The key elements that shape the thinking of liberal intellectuals are freedom, secularism, and progress, and one dominant master theme is Individualism, which is pertinent to how liberals make sense of Fundamentalism.[80] Lastly, the neoconservative lobby employs phrases like "evil and savages," "violent," and "backward" to represent Fundamentalism. Neocon intellectuals often see themselves as part of the

Judeo-Christian tradition and view fundamentalists as enemies of the United States, Israel, and the Western democratic world. Their representations of Fundamentalism are frequently characterized by unwavering support for the State of Israel. They also perceive Saudi Arabia and the Fundamentalists as adversaries of the Jewish state.[81]

6. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we delve into the Western perception of Islamic fundamentalism, often framed within the political paradigm of Islam. This perception stems from the perceived threat that the religio-political perspective of Islam poses to the modern secular state. This apprehensive portrayal of Islam is evident in various genres and subgenres of Western Orientalist literature, notably influenced by figures like Bernard Lewis and Huntington.

It is important to note that the narrative of the "clash of civilizations" is not the sole avenue through which Muslims are labeled as fundamentalists. Criticism of modern Islamic political thought also emanates from within Muslim scholarly circles. Scholars like Maulana Wahidudin Khan criticize it as an innovation and cite it as a catalyst for radicalism and violence. Khan has particularly criticized Maududi's vision of theocratic state vehemently.[82] Such voices also substantiate the Western perception on Islamic Fundamentalism.

In an idealized Islamic state, the governance of society is guided by *wahy* (God's revealed law). However, one of the significant challenges to returning to the political ideals of Islam arises from Muslims, particularly liberal Muslims, who prefer to distance themselves from fundamental interpretations of religion and prioritize personal freedom.[83] Therefore, a serious ideological contestation occurs to be within Muslims. The so-called liberal Muslims are not contented with the Shari'ah and label others as

Fundamentalists, and they are still a part of capitalist division of labor, and continue living and function in the same international order.[84] Even after the victory in Afghanistan and other Muslim countries, the challenge of creating an Islamic economic global order seems still a distant dream. In this context Western-liberal democracy still has an upper hand when it comes to dominating the global order because Muslim countries are predominantly living in state systems which seem to be a great limitation.[85] As long as this world order and *weltanschauung* survive, we have to come across with the terms like Fundamentalism, Islamism, Radicalizations, and Terrorism.

However, the rise in unemployment, corruption, environmental challenges, and human rights are the serious challenges to be faced by the secular regimes and there will be challenges which they have to face from the socio-economic and socio-political order of Islam.[86] Western academia has to integrate the discourse of 'Revivalism and Reform' as part of contribution for providing solutions to the challenges rather than blaming them for the nuisance.[87]

NOTES

1. Omar Atalia et al. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding* (Oxford University Press, London, 2015).

2. Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1915), 47.

3. Youssef M. Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Boston: Twayne, 1990), 10-16.

4. Zaheer Kazmi, *Radical Islam in the Western Academy: Review of International Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1-23.

5. Abdulaziz A. Sachedina, "Activist Schism in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. by Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 405.

6. Michael Crawford, *Ibn Abdul Wahab* (London: One World Publications, 2014).

7. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, Touchstone, 1997).

8. "Ayatollah sentences author to death," *BBC.* February 14, 1989. Retrieved December 17, 2019.

9. Bernard Lewis, "Islamic Fundamentalism," *The Washington Quarterly* 8:3 (1985): 46-49, DOI: 10.1080/01636608509450288.

10. Said Amir Arjomand, "The Search for Fundamentals and Islamic Fundamentalism," in *The Search for Fundamentals: The Process of Modernisation and the Quest for Meaning*, edited by L. van Vucht Tijssen, J. Berting, and F. Lechner: 27-39 (Dordrecht: Springer, 1995). Retrieved from: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-015-8500-2_2.

11. S.M. Farid Mirbagheri, *War and Peace in Islam: A Critique of Islamist Political Discourse* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 15.

12. John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 8.

13. Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: Religious Nationalism Confronts Secularism* (London: University of California Press, 2000), 14.

14. Sophia Rose Arjana, *Muslims in Western Imagination* (London: Oxford University Press), 140-158.

15. Almond, Appleby, and Sivan: *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms around the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). doi:10.1017/S1537592704620974.

16. R Scott Appleby, *Fundamentalisms Observed* (The Fundamentalism Project) by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

17. Youssef M. Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism: The Story of Islamist Movements* (London: Continuum International Publications, 2010), 13.

18. Samia Ahmad, *Tracing Islamic Fundamentalism: A Challenge to Modern Conceptions of Religious Fundamentalism*, (PhD Thesis), McGill University, 2017, 41.

19. "Returning to the original" is a unanimous concept we find in almost all texts on Fundamentalism. See Mathieu Guidere, *Historical Dictionary of Islamic Fundamentalism* (London: The Scarecrow Press, 2012.

20. Ibid.

21. Mumtaz Ahmad, "Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia: The Jamat-i-Islami and Tablighi Jamaat," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, edited by Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991) 457-524.

22. George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and the American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). See also George Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1990).

23. Marian Gheorghe Simion, *Religion in Political Conflict: A Constructivist Theoretical Model for Public Policy Analysis, Design and Implementation*, Public and International Affairs Dissertations, Paper 10 (Boston, Massachusetts: Northeastern University, 2012).

24. Martin E. Marty, "The Fundamentals of Fundamentalism," in *Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Lawrence Kaplan (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992).

25. Hamid Algar, *Wahabism: A Critical Essay* (New York: Islamic Publications International, 2002).

26. O. Sen Nag, "What Is Religious Fundamentalism?" *World Atlas*, 2017. Retrieved from https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-is-religious-fundamentalism.html.

27. R. Hrair Dekmejian, *Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1994), 131.

28. There is also a type of Fundamentalism witnessed against Sufism of which Ibn Tamiyyah and ʿAbdul-Wahhāb were the campaigners. See Itzchak Weismann, "Modernity from Within: Islamic Fundamentalism and Sufism," *Der Islam* 86 (2011). DOI: 10.1515/islam.2011.018.

29. Mai Yamani, *Cradle of Islam: Hijaz and the Quest for an Arabic Identity* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 4.

30. M. M. Sherriff, *History of Muslim Philosophy Volume II* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1966), 1446.

31. See Steve Bruce, *Fundamentalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000) 10-19.

32. Albert H. Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 222–244; Enayat, 69-83.

33. Samia Ahmad, *Tracing Islamic Fundamentalism: A Challenge to Modern Conceptions of Religious Fundamentalism*, PhD Thesis, McGill University, 2017, 41.

34. D. Dustin Berna, "Islamic Fundamentalism: A Quantitative Analysis," *Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies*, vol. 19, no. 1, Article 5, Nova Southeastern University, 2012. Available at https:/nsuworks.nova.edu/pcs/vol19/iss1/5.

35. Johannes J.G. Jansen, *The Dual Nature of Islamic Fundamentalism* (Bloomsbury, London: C. Hurst and Co. Publishers, Ltd., 1997).

36. Nikki Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism: Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 120-122.

37. Nikki Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal al-Din Afghani: A Political Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 63.

38. Ali Rehnuma (ed.), *Pioneers of Islamic Revivalism*, translated by M Yahya Khan (Lahore, 1999), 39.

39. Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–193*, 222-244.

40. In order to see how Al-Afghānī and other reformists and modernists are treated as fundamentalists, see Johannes J.G. Jansen, *The Dual Nature of Islamic Fundamentalism* (Bloomsbury, London: C. Hurst and Co. Publishers, Ltd., 1997).

41. See Sayyid Qutb, *Ma'ālim fī't-Tarīq* (Cairo: Maktabah Nahdah, 1964).

42. Maulana Wahiddudin Khan, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 1996), 32.

43. Abul Ala Maududi, "Intellectual Subjugation Why?" in S.A.A. Maududi, *West versus Islam*, 1934, 13-14.

44. Abul Ala Maududi, *Al-Jihād fī'l-Islām* (New Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami, 1996), 19.

45. Barry Rubin, *Islamic Fundamentalism in Egyptian Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 41-61.

46. See Mohammad Mohaddessian, *Islamic Fundamentalism: The New Global Threat* (Santa Ana, CO: Seven Locks Press, 1993).

47. Martin Riesebrodt, *Pious Passion: The Emergence of Modern Fundamentalism in the United States and Iran*, tr. Don Renau (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

48. Ibid., 9. See also Luca Ozzano, "Religious Fundamentalism," 157.

49. Nurcolish Madjid, "Ibn Taymiyyah on Kalam and Falsafa: A Problem of Reason and Revelation in Islam" (PhD Thesis), University of Chicago, 1984.

50. Davidson Lawrence, *Islamic Fundamentalism: An Introduction* (Westport, Ct: Greenwood, 2003).

51. David Devadas, *In Search of Future: A Story of Kashmir* (New Delhi: Penguin, 2009).

52. See John L Esposito, *Islam and Politics* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1987).

53. Gabriel Ben-Dor, "The Uniqueness of Islamic Fundamentalism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 8 (2) (December 2007):239-252. DOI: 10.1080/09546559608427356.

54. Mark L. Haas and David W. Leach (eds.), *The Arab Spring: The Hope and Reality of the Uprisings* (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press), 212.

55. Nasr Abu Zayd, *Reformation of Islamic Thought: A Critical Historical Analysis* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006).

56. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1997), 123-125.

57. Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Characteristics of Islamic State," *Islamic Studies* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, 2001).

58. Howard Brasted et al. "Revisiting S.P. Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' Thesis," in *Routledge Handbook of Political Islam* edited by Shahram Akbarzadeh, 2nd ed. (London: Taylor and Francis Group, 2021), 393.

59. Ibid., 398.

60. Ray S., "A Crusade Gone Wrong: George W. Bush and the War on Terror in Asia," *International Studies* 52 (1-4) (2015):12-26. DOI:10.1177/0020881717718018.

61. Ibid.

62. Beverly Milton-Edwards, *Islam and Violence in Modern Era* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

63. Charles Glass, *Syria Burning: ISIS and the Death of Arab Spring* (New York: OR Books, 2015), 10.

64. William McCants, *The ISIS Apocalypse* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015), 250.

65. Jessica Stern and J.M Berger, *ISIS: The State of Terror* (London: Thomas Press India, Ltd., William Collins, 2015), 33.

66. Youssef M. Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism: The Story of Islamist Movements* (London: Continuum International Publications, 2010).

67. Beverly Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Fundamentalism Since 1945* (London: Routledge, 2005), 137.

68. Ibid.

69. Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic*, September 1990. Retrieved online: https://www.theatlantic.com.

70. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 209.

71. Jonathan Fox, "Two Civilizations and Ethnic Conflict: Islam and The West," *Journal of Peace Research* 38 (2001), 459.

72. Fawaz Gerges, *America, and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 35.

73. Ibid., 40.

74. A. Rashid Omar, "*Religious* Violence and State Violence" in *Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

75. Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (London: University of California Press, 2000).

76. John Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path* (London: Oxford University Press, 1988), 166.

77. J. Galtung, "Violence, Peace and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6 (3) (1969): 167-191.

78. Marian Gheorghe Simion, *Religion in Political Conflict: A Constructivist Theoretical Modal for Public Policy Analysis, Design and Implementation*, Public and International Affairs Dissertations, Paper 10, 2012.

79. Rohan Davis, *Western Imaginings: The Intellectual Contest to Define Wahabism* (New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2018), 121-138.

80. Ibid., 127.

81. See Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide Analyses and Case Studies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990). See also Herbert C. Kelman, "Violence without Restraint: Reflections on the Dehumanization of Victims and Victimizers," in *Varieties of Psychohistory,* edited by G. M Kren and L.H Rappoport, 282-314 (New York: Springer, 1976).

82. Wahiduddin Khan, *The Political Interpretation of Islam* (New Delhi: CPS International, 2015), 14-26.

83. Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: Islam, the USA and the Global War against Terror* (Delhi: Permanent Black Publishers, 2004).

84. Anoushiravan Ehtishami, "Islam as a Political Force in International Politics," in *Islam in World Politics*, edited by Nelly Lahoud and Anthony H. Jhons (London: Routledge, 2005), 45.

85. Ibid., 50.

86. Mark L. ass ad David W. Leach (Eds.), *The Arab Spring: The Hope and Reality of the Uprisings*, Boulder, CO. (Westview Press,).