

RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM AND ITS APPROACH TO MONOTHEISMMURILO LOPES DA SILVA¹**SUMMARY**

This research seeks to understand the approach between fundamentalism and monotheism. Fundamentalism emerged as a rescue of Christian tradition amidst sociocultural transformations. Modernity arising from the Enlightenment caused a split within fundamentalists that converged in the formation of two theological strands. A liberal aspect that was associated with humanists and social sciences, becoming a liberal theology. The other aspect remained linked to the conservatism and traditions of the early church. Fundamentalism lost its way when it encountered a cyclical society that was advancing at a rapid pace. This provoked severe reactions and criticism of modern society. The advances led to the emergence of a media Pentecostalism that led fundamentalism to bankruptcy. In the Arab spring, the expansion of Islam brought fundamentalism to the surface, but in an extremist reinterpretation. This extremism revealed to the world all the violence and persecution of people and nations that occurred to preserve Morals and defend the name of God.

Key words: Monotheism; fundamentalism; religion.

ABSTRACT

This research seeks to understand the approximation of fundamentalism to monotheism. Fundamentalism emerged as a rescue of the Christian tradition in the midst of sociocultural transformations. The modernity arising from the Enlightenment causes division between fundamentalists that converged the formation of two theological strands. A liberal aspect that was associated with the humanists and the social sciences, becoming a liberal theology. The other strand remained linked to conservatism and traditions of the early church. Fundamentalism lost its way when it came across a cyclical society that was moving forward by leaps and bounds. This provoked severe and critical reactions to modern society. The advances led to the emergence of a media Pentecostalism that led fundamentalism to bankruptcy. In the Arab spring, the expansion of Islamism brought fundamentalism to the fore, but in an extremist way. This extremism revealed to the world all the violence and persecution of people and nations that took place as preservation of Morals and the defense of the name of God.

Keywords: Monotheism; fundamentalism; religion.

INTRODUCTION

This article brings to the discussion Religious Fundamentalism and its association with monotheism. Monotheism is the religious basis of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and this favored the political-religious installation of fundamentalists.

The three monotheistic religions of the West have some similarities arising from their religious basis such as the Pentateuch, obedience to the revealed Commandments, pilgrimage and faith such as asceticism and transcendence.

These similarities are symbols and exercises in the practice of religious life. For example, the Commandments guide the moral experience, the pilgrimage remembers the struggle for food and freedom, faith guides followers to believe in God as an uncreated Being and the Pentateuch narrates the creation of the world and brings examples of human stories that they found in God the practice of love, kindness, compassion, justice, equity and righteousness.

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Reading the Holy Scriptures teaches humanity to polish their character, seek righteousness in God and practice the Commandments are exercises of virtues that connect them to God.

Monotheism represents the force of enduring temporality, as it adapted to the Historical Period. It probably appeared in the Bronze Period around 1800 BC. However, upon entering the 20th century, an event marked strong changes in sociocultural construction. To paraphrase Nietzsche, monotheism received a disastrous guest during this period who appropriated

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of all virtue to consolidate themselves as a traditionalist group, called Fundamentalists.

The emergence of Religious Fundamentalism occurred in the United States among Protestant Christians at the beginning of the 20th century. This period was marked by several sociocultural and economic changes. Science was in full expansion, the process of modernization and industrialization resulting from the Enlightenment was taking place.

Some more traditional members of Christianity had difficulty accepting the advancement of modern society and as a result of the struggle to set back the basis of the nascent church, these adherents caused a rift in the theological basis of monotheism, dividing it into two strands.

A strand called liberal assumed the humanist dialogue that supported theological changes based on the approach to human and social sciences, opening up a new liberal theology. The other aspect, extremely conservative, reacted to social transformations and sought a return to traditional religiousism.

As a result of the split, the conservative Calvinist Reverend Reuben Archer Torrey released between the years 1910 and 1915 a collection of 12 books entitled *The fundamentals: attestation to the truth*. This collection aimed to preserve religious traditionalism, preserving biblical texts in defense of their inerrancy. Along with these texts, he expresses a criticism against liberal theology and Roman Catholicism.

The “fundamentals” presented by Reverend Reuben were consolidated as a reaction to the values of Enlightenment and humanist modernity, placing Christianity at the center of the discussion. By reacting against the values of modernity he opened the process of secularization as a consequence of the retaliation carried out.

This seed called Fundamentalism, sown by Reverend Reuben, germinated and produced several problems for current society.

NORTH AMERICAN FUNDAMENTALISM

Fundamentalism, arising from the sharing of exhausted thoughts from Reuben's Collection, implicitly brought traces of North American culture. The North American cultural dominance reflected within the Christian religious sphere as the true adherents who maintained the traditionalism of Christianity.

This idea of true followers of Christ remained within all evangelical denominations until the 1930s, with active and conservative activists. It is worth mentioning that Roman Catholics did not participate in this first phase of Evangelical Fundamentalism.

After the 1930s and in parallel with the period of the Second World War, there was a significant loss of traditionalist evangelicals to the Ecumenical Movement that sought unity in diversity.

In the Post-War period, around the 1960s, fundamentalists began to be called “separatists” and began to separate themselves from conservative churches and join the Pentecostal movement. This period also saw the expansion of American capitalism, which became the new scope of battle for the few fundamentalists who remained active.

Now the battle is to reconquer America, preserve families for Christian values, because in the expansion secular humanism entered America presenting families with some ideological currents. Among these currents were communism, feminism and homosexuality.

These ideological currents spread very quickly among Americans, in addition to the ideological dissemination, the North American Government declared War against Vietnam. It was a period in which fundamentalism went bankrupt. Some more conservative theologians have aligned themselves with patriotic politics and imbued speeches with anti-communism.

Until the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, the most conservative evangelicals completely lost their strength in the struggle to keep the customs and principles of nascent Christianity alive, giving way to Pentecostalism. Liberal theologians aligned themselves with the Marxist current and expanded a new theology throughout America that favored the popular struggle in favor of a fair policy, housing and the eradication of hunger.

FUNDAMENTALISM AFTER THE VIETNAM WAR

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By the end of the 1970s, North American fundamentalism was completely unstructured and Pentecostalism had gained strength and followers in American commercial expansion. Parallel to this event, the popularization of Islam began in the Arab World, mainly in Iran.

In some Arab countries, militants fighting against United States hegemony turned a part of Islam into the justification for guaranteeing the divinization of an armed struggle.

At the dawn of the 21st century, the fundamentalist name was used by the North American press to characterize the Islamic extremists who committed the attack on September 11, 2001. The attack on the Twin Towers was classified as one of the most violent actions carried out by radical Islamic extremists.

This act carried out by extremists created a negative image of Islam and the media characterized them as fundamentalists, radicals, practitioners of intolerance and authoritarian religiosity. Islam, as a result of extremist groups such as Hezbollah, the Islamic State and Islamic governments such as Afghanistan, has built a religion adapted to an extremely conservative monotheism that is open to fanaticism, intransigence, femicide, the refusal of inter-religious dialogue and denial of the transformation of customs and morals in the current society.

The new fundamentalists who emerged from the Arab Spring are politicians and regulators of society. They control laws, kill in the name of morality and trade natural resources such as oil. They express an extremely sexist religiosity and do not accept among them people who identify with the LGBTQIA+ movement.

The resumption of North American fundamentalism

North American fundamentalism returned to action around the mid-1980s, allying itself with the Republican Party, forming a political pressure group called the New Christian Right.

It was led by Baptist pastor Jerry Falwell and its purpose was to fight against abortion (legalized in the United States in 1973) and the resumption of family construction based on religious conservatism.

Falwell realized the possibility of getting more fans using massive marketing using television stations. There was quickly the rise of the New Christian Right and Pentecostalism. The expansion of Falwell's ideology crossed borders, gaining new followers who aimed for the moral reorganization of society.

On the agenda of Falwell's political-religious speech were the resumption of the teaching of creationism in public schools, the practice of prayer, the fight against homosexuality, communism and the obligation of patriotism.

The media expansion of this new Christian fundamentalism gave rise to a new meaning and the term fundamentalism expanded its use. The term became a landmark in the dissemination of the return of thought in allegories and epics, the return of colossal wars and enemies of faith.

There was a boring propaganda of fundamentalist idealism that defended the infallibility of the scriptures and the expansion of religious proselytism.

The peak of the New Christian Right was in the 1990s with the Republican victory for the Presidency of the United States. They elected Ronald Reagan, George Bush. With Bush's departure, they did not lose their motivation to persist religious fundamentalism guided by morals and good customs. At the turn of the millennium, they once again returned to the highest office in the American nation, electing George Bush Filho.

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The perversity of fundamentalism

It seems that with the end of the Second World War there was a feeling of continuing the spread of the evil of other people's pain.

This feeling is narrated by the philosopher Hannah Arendt in her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. In this collection of her articles she narrates the feeling of the banality of evil when Eichmann was not blamed for the Holocaust. He characterized himself simply as a bureaucrat who followed orders. The true guilt presented at his trial would be solely and exclusively that of the Nazi party.



From this perspective, a question arises: who legitimizes the barbarities produced by religious extremism?

All religious extremism is justified in God, as every act carried out has always been motivated by the desire for everyone to turn their respect towards the supreme and creator God.

Religious fundamentalism was born from a desire to keep respect for God and the continuation of the family alive, however, it went beyond the limits of what is moral and became a matrix for propagating the evil of perversity.

Of the groups that take fundamentalism (extremism) as justification for their actions (Hezbollah and the Islamic State), the possibility of characterizing them as religious or political groups is lost. What is the cause they defend? How do they spread God's mercy to those most in need? Is it legitimate to kill in the name of God?

These doubts clarify the ideology propagated by these groups. They persuade society to establish new frontiers and fight against pseudo-enemies. And as a political group, they are completely separatist and deny the possibility of building a democratic and welcoming dialogue.

Thus, they are characterized as perverse because they take pleasure in using force and violence. Hence to the weakest. In this use of force and violence, there is the denaturalization of what is sacred, the preservation of life.

CONCLUSION

Our time is rich in information. We have technology in our favor that makes it possible to shorten distances with so many platforms and social networks.

We are able to send a message from one hemisphere to another in a matter of seconds. We break down barriers of distance, of understanding another language. We create bonds of multiculturalism.

The world is globalized, or rather, technology is globalized, because human beings have not yet been able to overturn their beliefs and concepts in favor of expanding life.

Proof of this is the lack of interreligious dialogue. There is no peaceful coexistence of certain religious groups, especially when the issue at hand is the acceptance of the modernization of customs and the new family model.

These extremist groups are part of the three monotheistic Western religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). They are intolerant, disseminators of violence against religious and social groups. They justify their actions in defense of good custom and, above all, in defense of God.

Throughout the history of monotheism, many wars took place in the name of God, such as the period of the inquisition imposed by Christianity. But the 20th century began a period of religious wars that have in their essence the practice of perversity, that is, the practice of pleasure caused by other people's pain. The 20th century witnessed the perversity and evil committed in the Holocaust and the 21st century saw the attack of September 11, 2001.

Fundamentalism born in the 20th century is characterized in our time as political actions aimed at domination. It disguises itself as a religious struggle so that practitioners can free themselves from all guilt by transferring it to God. The new political-religious matrix denaturalized the attempts at alliances that God sought to build with humanity. There is a distance from God and an approach to what is inherent in humans, the desire for power. In the beginning Adam disobeyed God and experienced the fruit of knowledge. Today humanity discards knowledge, moves away from God and experiences the fruit of other people's pain.

The most extreme in defense of the faith declare that their enemies are all those who share modernity. The most fought enemies are those that align with moves.

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ment, activists, intellectuals, teachers, leaders and religions that promote life in the current society.

In this way, Abrahamic monotheism that propagated man as the image and seed of The faith of God became the foundation of religious fundamentalism that began in the late 19th century. But monotheism cannot be condemned, as fundamentalist ideology only used it as justification. All perversity of the 20th century was constituted as a doctrine and not as a religious dogma. God still seeks a home in the human heart.



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