

Fundamentalist mindset

Sverre Varvin, MD, Dr. Philos
Norwegian psychoanalytic society
Department of Health Sciences
Oslo and Akershus University of Applied Sciences

Corresponding author:

Sverre Varvin, MD, Dr. Philos
Department of Health Sciences
Oslo and Akershus University of Applied Sciences
PB. 4 St. Olavs Plass
N-0130 Oslo, Norway
E-mail: sverre.varvin@hioa.no

Bio:

Sverre Varvin, MD. DPhil is a training and supervising analyst of the Norwegian Psychoanalytic Society. He is professor at Akershus and Oslo University College. He has been working clinically and with research on traumatization and the treatment of traumatized patients, especially in the refugee field. He has done process and outcome research on psychoanalytic therapy, research on traumatic dreams, and on psychoanalytic training. He has twice been president of the Norwegian psychoanalytic Society and he has had several positions in IPA, among others as vice-president and board member. He is presently chair of IPA China Committee. He has published several articles and books.

Abstract

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Fundamentalism has increasingly become a part of the political discourse in western countries and is to a large degree associated Islamic Jihadism. Fundamentalism has, however, been a concern in all religions, especially in Christianity where the term has its origin more than 100 years ago. Fundamentalism is also a concern in professional organisations and this paper starts with a discussion of the relation between fundamentals and fundamentalist tendencies in psychoanalysis. This is then related to fundamentalism on a larger scale in religious and political contexts. A central question is how adherence to fundamentals, understood as basic principles for a profession or a religious-political movement, may develop into fundamentalism and how this again may develop into more violent forms. It is argued that fundamentalism develops in historical and societal contexts that involve oppression, atrocities and suffering that can set in motion unconscious processes and that these can attain expression and form in religious-political ideologies. These ideologies can give solutions by among others strengthening societal division and splitting and by identifying scapegoats. Psychoanalytic understanding of mass psychology and unconscious processes at group levels are developed to understand present Islamic and other forms of fundamentalist movements in the European context.

Keywords: Fundamentalism, Psychoanalysis, Collective Fantasies, Islam

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Introduction

Fundamentalism has increasingly become a part of the political discourse in western countries and is to a large degree associated Islamic Jihadism. Fundamentalism has, however, been a concern in all religions, especially in Christianity where the term has its origin more than 100 years ago. Then, the concern was how not to lose hold of the fundamentals without which there could not be a proper belief system.

That adherence to fundamentals may develop into fundamentalism, understood as rigid adherence to basic principles, has, however, seldom been on the agenda in professional and scientific contexts. It is therefore of interest when this was set on the agenda in a psychoanalytic congress, The Nordic Psychoanalytic congress, in 2016. A certain worry must have been present when the congress committee invited to reflect on fundamentals and in connection with this, fundamentalism. Fundamentals are, according to Oxford Thesaurus synonym to *basic* and describe “principles, understanding, research and rights. Something described as basic is seen as a necessary minimum, to which further elaboration may or may not be added. Something that is fundamental to something else is essential to it” (OUP, 2017).

Every profession and science consider what may be the fundamentals characterising their approach and this has been an ongoing discussion in psychoanalysis as well.

Concern with fundamentals has appeared several times in the history of psychoanalysis: Franz Alexander’s “Fundamentals of Psychoanalysis” (Alexander, 1963 (1948)), Lacan’s seminar on the four fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis (Lacan, 2004) and several works on the fundamentals of psychoanalytic technique, among others Etchegoyen’s seminal book on technique (Etchegoyen, 2006). In these works, fundamentals are discussed and understood as more or less evident, even if controversies appear on which concepts or technique should be chosen. From clinical practice and supervision, one learns, however, that tendencies toward a more absolute

understanding of this or that school's recommendations appear from time to time implying a certain resistance toward change and flexible adaptation and clinging to what has once been taught as the true or correct way. It is interesting that this dilemma between sticking to tradition, that is, fundamentalism, and renewal was formulated already in 1941 by the then president of the American psychological Association in a presidential address with the evocative title "Fundamentals and fundamentalism in the preparation of applied psychologists". He gave a tentative, but in our context quite precise definition of fundamentalism or fundamentalist attitude, namely as...: "the attitude, namely, that the tried is the true, that the old and the established, the traditional, is of superior worth just because it is old. It is essentially an emotion of horror when doubt is expressed of the ancient and sanctified—and an emotion of anger towards the doubter. If you want to be called a sound man, you must never call in question the fundamentals." (English, 1941) page 4).

The belief that that the tried is the true, the traditional, is of superior worth, may still more or less conscious, be working in psychoanalytic institutes and their training programs. What English formulate is an anxiety for change that is common for all professions, and when this anxiety is not faced and worked through, fundamentalism can develop as defence.

Reflection on the relation between fundaments and fundamentalism may thus give insight into possible basic problems within psychoanalysis as a scientific and clinical profession. Such reflections may, however, also open for general considerations on the relation between fundaments and fundamentalism.

In the following I will first discuss the problem of fundamentalist mindset, a psychological attitude that work as defence against change. Then I will discuss the problems of fundaments and fundamentalism within psychoanalysis. I will then reflect on the developments of fundamentalism in religion and politics and look at some historical roots of fundamentalism in Europe and the orient as defence against modernisation. I will argue that psychoanalytic understanding of collective fantasies may be of great help in comprehending "collective" fundamentalism that may lay ground for developing strategies for counteracting malignant fundamentalism.

Fundamentalism and fundamentalist mindset

Fundamentalism as a discourse represents rigid adherence to basic principles in line with the origin of the fundamentalism among British and American Protestants in late 19th and early 20 centuries. This Protestant movement was peaceful and was based on

fears of deleterious changes within the Christian community (Strozier et al., 2010).

Fundamentalism is now, however, mostly connected with a special interpretation of Islam and the relation to religious inspired violence is often fore fronted.

The concept mindset denotes a set of assumptions held by individuals and groups that create a powerful incentive for choices and behaviours. They are changing slowly and are bound up with identities and subject to a kind of mental inertia. This mindset is first and foremost related to group thinking, that is a shared thinking, and can be aligned with a “Weltanschauung”. Fundamentalist mindset is characterised by dualistic thinking, paranoia and rage in a group context, an apocalyptic orientation that implies a distinct view on time, death and violence. As a rule there is dependence on charismatic leaders and often accompanied by an idea that a totalised conversion is necessary (Strozier & Boyd, 2010).

Fundamentalism understood as rigid adherence to basic principles, exists in all religions, in political movements, in institutions of different kinds and is possible to discern in scientific and professional debates. Fundamentalist mindset is something that usually develops within the context of a fundamentalist movement, political, religious or otherwise, where the ideological aspect may be underdeveloped and the psychological side have become more dominant.

When Strozier and Boyd associate fundamentalist mindset with paranoia and rage and an apocalyptic orientation, they underline the inherent or latent danger of violence in fundamentalism. Fundamentalism does not, however, necessarily imply violence. In fact, most people we call fundamentalists today are not violent and tries to pursue their goals by peaceful means, be it the wish to create a state ruled by Sharia or a Christian community. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is an example.

Discussing Islam one must therefore differentiate between Islamic fundamentalists who pursue goals by persuasion and preaching from what is called “*Jihadists*” who believe that violence is the most important way to change matters. Among Jihadists one must again distinguish between nationalist or patriotic jihadists and what may be called global or transnational Jihadists. The former appears in local contexts with an aim of liberating their group from oppression. Some Palestinian and Chechen groups belongs here as well as several other groups in the Middle East and Asian region (Khosrokhavar, 2010). The latter, the global Jihadists, are organised more or less as transnational organisations that are extremely violent, are totally occupied by a purist version of their

belief and are indiscriminate in their violent attacks against people they deem as non-believers and outsiders.

There are thus a variety of groups and types of organisation with different aims and motives and different means to achieve their aims that is connected with what we call fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is thus not something bad in itself. Many have found peace in a fundamentalist conviction or belief, salvage from their inner torments and conflicts, which made it possible for them to lead a more harmonious life.

The question is, however, whether adherence to fundamentals and what we today see as fundamentalism has any necessary or logical connection?

Or to put it another way: does fundamentalism basically concern the fundamentals of a religion, a political ideology, a scientific discourse? And in connection with this: is there a logical connection between fundamentalism and Jihadism or other extremely violent and mass killing politico-religious movements? Is fundamentalism the problem or do we need to contextualise this and look at multiple determinations and for example study the influence of historical, societal and unconscious processes in groups and individuals?

First, it may be appropriate to look at our own profession. It would be unconvincing to use psychoanalysis to analyse and understand for example present day fundamentalist attitudes and movements, without having analysed our own backyard and hopefully understood that we as professional subjects and psychoanalysis as a scientific organisation basically are not very different from others and equally susceptible to influences from the external world and its tensions, conflicts and real problems.

Fundamentalism in psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis developed in the last century into a diverse field with several schools and traditions, all with their own language or dialect and often with quite diverse and at times idiosyncratic understanding of central concepts. In a conceptual research on two psychoanalytic concepts, enactment and unconscious phantasy, it was at times difficult to discern similarities and common ground across different schools (Bohleber et al., 2013; Bohleber et al., 2015). It was also amazing to observe to what degree different schools did *not* cite each other, confirming an impression of tribalism, a core mark of fundamentalism.

Controversies have sometimes led to splitting of psychoanalytic groups. These splits have certainly been multi-determined, where personal animosity, institutional rivalry,

ideological forces and societal conditions, have played a role alongside theoretical controversies. Having observed some of them close up have increased my respect for unconscious forces that develop on a group level. Primitive defences like splitting and projective identifications, idealisation and mere denial has prevailed in spite of the protagonists' presumably solid psychoanalytic training and thorough personal analysis. In the heat of the battles, the ability for rational argument and mentalisation tend to get lost – and this condition may prevail for such a long time that the history of the original conflict and split may almost be forgotten.

Heated debates and severe antagonisms are of course not particular for psychoanalysis and can be seen in any profession. During my time in psychoanalysis and in my work for IPA there has been a marked improvement of the intellectual debate, but still arguments flourish that deem other positions as dangerous or damaging to psychoanalysis; a “we-them” discourse typical for fundamentalist movements.

Research is a case of matter here. There has, as is known, been a long struggle to get acceptance for formal research in psychoanalysis and there are regional and other differences regarding the value or even the potential damage ascribed to research.

One example: there is quite solid research showing that transference interpretations are important and useful for patients with more severe personality pathologies, but less important for neurotic disturbances. Interpretations should be used with caution also for personality disturbances and some researchers came up with the advice that not more than 1-4 interpretations per session is to be recommended (Høglend, 2014). Clinicians may dismiss this finding as it is expressed in a mechanistic, formal scientific language that certainly will not fit with psychoanalytic approaches focusing on the here-and-now and the indeterminism of the analysand-analyst relationship. The clinician's difficulties with empirical research, in addition to troubles inherent in understanding the logic of arguments in other disciplines, are, however, related to a problem of language or rather dialect; clinical psychoanalysis and empirical research are expressed in quite different languages even if they concern similar clinical problems. There are also reciprocal difficulties and even unwillingness to learn the other group's language. Shahar makes in this connection a heuristic distinction calling the language of psychoanalysis *the language of poetics* and holds that research represents a *schematic language* (Shahar, 2010). Either language, or dialect, is useful in relation to their respective domains and valid in relations to their objects of study. They do not, however, communicate very well. Concrete reception of such research findings (“this is senseless”), expressed in the

other's language, (e.g. counting of interpretations in sessions), may easily lead to stricter adherence to "psychoanalytic fundamentals" and has as a consequence an impediment to reciprocal understanding and also to the development in each fields' of inquiry.

It represents an example of shielding oneself from being influenced by "the other" or from something outside, one of the salient figures in fundamentalism to which I will return later.

The question in the background may then be to what degree psychoanalytic societies and institutions as well as its members are prone to be caught in the lures of such fundamentalist attitudes, maybe better called fundamentalist states of mind or fundamentalist mindset. These are states of mind that avoids ambiguity, deplors diversity with a more or less prominent tendency to manichaeistic thinking (a dualistic cosmology describing the struggle between a good, spiritual world of light, and an evil, material world of darkness).

It can be argued that such states of mind tend to develop within basic-assumption groups (Bion, 1961) and as such are a danger in every group formation and group process. Fundamentalism becomes then a symptom of an underlying anxiety for the group's cohesion and functions as defense against change. If psychoanalysis develops an ideology that advocates adherence to fundamentals, this will then represent an illusory way to safeguard the group's cohesion.

In general, this may count for all kinds of fundamentalist tendencies in groups.

Fundamentalism understood in this way is a question of degrees and may be related to certain critical phases or crisis in a groups' developmental process, and the group may, when this has been worked through, return to more normal business of rational argumentation.

I will argue, however, that there are situations that we may call the *fundamentalist trap*. This is not always easy to identify and may have devastating influences on a group or an organization's development. Such a trap may develop in any group – also psychoanalytic. In other words, when keeping the fundamentals in mind, the danger is that this may develop into a *belief* in fundamentals, and as any belief, an atmosphere may develop where fundamentals should not be questioned.

When fundamentalist traps become a characteristic of a group, a conviction may develop that someone has deviated from the essentials, that they are absolutely wrong, that the influences from them will shake the fundamentals and harm the cohesion of the

group, accompanied by a predominance of dualistic thinking and lack of rational argumentation.

Having thus stated that fundamentalism is an inherent possibility also on the psychoanalytic scene, I will in the following discuss fundamentalism on a quite different scene, a scene where the basic problems of fundamentalism may be seen through a magnifying glass. This concerns fundamentalism as it appears in political and religious movements, especially in present Islamist movements. On this basis, one may get a clearer view on the relation between fundamentals and fundamentalism.

Islamism and xenophobia; suitable partners?

Fundamentalism is not only seen in religious movements and fundamentalism leading to violence has a long history. Nazism and Stalinism being prime examples in the last century. The genocides of the last century were much more violent and deadly than today's Jihadism: the genocide on the Armenians, on Jews and Roma people, the Kampuchean genocide, the genocide on the Maya Indians in Guatemala, the Rwandan genocide and the genocide on Bosnians, to mention the most important. It is interesting that present Jihadist violence has created more public attention, more analysis and political concerns in the west than most of the genocides in the last century with the exception of the Holocaust. This is certainly connected with the global aspiration of one fraction of the Jihadist movement, a global ambition quite similar to the Nazis' dream of the third Reich.

The meaning of Jihad as it appears in the west is also worth noticing. In Islam Jihad has several meanings, the most important being the internal fight to free oneself from bad thoughts/feelings, a sort of inner purification (Vogt, 1993). There has been a kind of co-production between western anti-Islamism and the radicalisation in Islam that resulted in designating the outward, violent Jihad as practically the only known meaning of Jihad in the west. The concept of inner religious struggle, quite similar to the same in Christianity and other religions, has come in the background in western reception of Jihad.

The radical version of Jihad may serve purposes on both sides. It inspires maximization of differences; a dualistic thinking that makes the other the bad other and lay ground for a reciprocal need to demonise the other. This has historical background in western relation to the orient, to which I will return. One part of this picture is the fright-inspired

movement in Europe that is stirring group anxieties of being invaded by something bad. Different consequences follow from this among others the extreme dehumanising practices relating to refugees that we can observe at Europe's borders and also in the growing xenophobia in Europe.

Xenophobia refers to a phobic attitude towards strangers or the unknown, that is; psychological attitudes, often embedded in a more loosely organised network of ideas, about groups of persons that are constructed as alien and representing something that may be dangerous for the cohesion of one's group. It arises especially when people feel that other groups, for example foreigners/refugees, may threaten their entitlement to benefits they feel are exclusive for them.

Islamism or Islamic fundamentalism, on the other hand, refers to a more structured set of political ideologies based on religious fundamentalist Islam. It represents an ideological-religious view of the world and how one should live and organize society and entails clear ideation of "them and us".

Common to both phenomena are a hostile attitude towards those who are outside, the strangers, and a concomitant fear of being negatively influenced. Both are organised as social movements that can result in hostility and also violence against those defined as "others", "strangers" (in the case of Islamism, "non-believers"). Both are fundamentalist, but xenophobia often with less clear structure of their ideation.

Especially the Jihadist version of Islamic fundamentalism includes an expansionistic view; the different other should change or else be driven away, extinguished or cleansed. It is noteworthy that similar ideas also appear in the European xenophobic context (Borchrevink, 2012).

These are typically group ideologies and when they appear and dominate the groups ideation, strong underlying large group processes seem to be at work and when strong enough, a potential for violence appear. The underlying large-group processes are characterised by collective fantasies that have deep roots in the way groups functions. These "them-us" ideologies connected with Islamic fundamentalism and xenophobia seem thus to appeal to primitive fantasy levels shared by members of a group. These fantasy constructions are often related to certain developmental phases, especially adolescence (Bohleber, 2010) to which I will return.

The mental functioning involved is characterized by primitive and undifferentiated explanations of relations between self, group and the other, as formulated in the theory of mindset (Strozier et al., 2010). The ideologies and the underlying collective fantasies

imply solutions to, or modifications of, individual's and group's frustrations and material problems, thus their appeal.

Xenophobic and Islamist ideologies function as containers for these fantasies that basically are formulated on a private, primitive level, and the ideologies give them shape and a place in the social order. The implicit, and often, explicit content of these extreme ideologies have moreover a fantasy-like form that is appealing exactly because they "touch" the individuals' and group's feelings (longings, aggressions etc.) contained in the shared fantasies. The promise of ideal solutions in these ideologies, such as the ideal future society, meets the regressive pull in these fantasies and makes it easier for disenfranchised individuals to join.

Fantasies are collective in the sense that many individuals in the same group share them. Political narratives, exegeses of religious myths or other ideological myths contain narratives that appeal to and are congruent with such collective fantasies. When they are implicit they function as a non-conscious force that to a lesser degree is available for reflection and change, and may appear as given truths.

The relational scenarios embedded in these fantasies are often related to the group's historical experiences, especially centred around present and past traumatisations, and may give meaning to actual and recent problematic experiences for the group and their members. An example was the myth of the battle of Kosovo Polje in 1392 where the Ottomans supposedly killed King Lazar and conquered Balkan territories, which was used by Milosevic as justifications for attacks on Bosnian Muslims (Volkan, 1997). In certain Islamic fundamentalist theory, the fall of the Caliphate plays a similar role.

The versions of history given need not cohere with the facts and there are often displacements of affectionate cathexis from other historical times. The effects of massive intergroup violence and traumatisations during Second World War in the Balkans probably found expression in the ancient historical myth on Kosovo Polje as it in that context were possible to identify Muslims as a suitable enemy. One may then see a mixture of myths and historical facts in such situations where the lack of working through on a societal level of these groups' traumatisations has laid the ground for the later emergence of tensions and conflict between groups.

In conflicts with high tensions on both sides, interpersonal and inter-group processes may emerge that are determined by unconscious motivation that are expressed as strong interpersonal and inter-group psychological forces. The parties in a conflict may, as a consequence, act irrationally and against conscious intentions. By being demonised by

the other party, members of the group may act in the image of the projected demons and behave in ways alien to their own ethical and political standards.

In conflicts opponents are thus cast in roles and positions that not necessarily are part of their own world-view or maybe only partly so. They feel and often act in terms of the others view of them and the other's agenda. The opponents may in such situations be highly dependent on each other in order to have their worldview confirmed. The religious inspired dialogue between President Bush and Osama bin Laden after 9/11 was an example where both cast the other in the position as representing evil forces thus confirming each other's' religious position: "this is a conflict between the bad and the good". This again prepared for escalation of conflict and violence.

The development of fundamentalist mindset in its violent form is thus also a result of inter-group processes, a co-creation, rather than only a disposition of one or the other group and its members.

Psychoanalysis and groups

Conflicts involving groups are arenas for primitive mental forces; reciprocal projections and massive projective identifications, that is, the party who projects makes a pressure (interpersonal, inter-group) to get the other to act in accordance with a fantasized scenario, which often involves distribution of roles as the good or the bad, victim or perpetrator (Klein, 1946).

The following picture emerges:

1. Political, religious and other intergroup conflicts with violent tendencies are to a large extent determined by underlying unconscious mental forces acting both on an individual and a group level.
2. The unconscious motivational forces are organised on primitive mental levels (undifferentiated and not well structured) and involve fantasies that may be shared by many people in a group or community.
3. The content of these fantasies is often related to common life-themes such as sibling rivalry, struggle to distinguish between what is good and bad or themes related to separation and individuation. That is; life themes that under normal circumstances are worked through and more or less overcome, may be magnified and made part of the group's collective consciousness (Bohleber, 2010). Related to sibling rivalry one may see different themes become a preconscious or unconscious part of a group's mentality: "the other got more than I, he was treated favourably or he even

cheated in order to get advantages”. When these common fantasy themes are organised by a political-religious ideology, they can develop into an emotional force supporting these ideologies. An example is the xenophobic ideation on how the foreigners “steal our jobs and fuck our women”.

4. The collective memory of groups and nations of past traumatisations and humiliations may also determine fantasies of a more violent kind concerned with revenge and rectification of wrongdoings. This may add a more severe and destructive character to these fantasies.

5. Cultural, political and religious ideologies and discourses may inspire individual and collective fantasies by giving form and content to pains and frustrations for example in defining the guilty, the enemy etc. The ideologies and political rhetoric may, however, also be projection screens for the individual's and the groups fantasies which then in turn take on a more violent character marked by primitive mechanisms such as splitting and projections, scapegoating, dehumanisation of the others and so forth. Such ideologies may thus organise a group's identity and supply identity themes for the individual in regressed mass-psychological situations.

5. The collective fantasies represent in themselves strong emotional/psychological forces. When they are organised within a context of political-religious ideologies, they may become social forces determining the way conflicts are solved or not solved and have influence on whether the crisis escalates or not.

I will relate these propositions shortly to Islamic fundamentalism and xenophobia in the European context.

Europe and Islam

Islam has for centuries been part of the European religious and cultural context. The specific xenophobia characteristic of European's relation to Islam, Islamophobia, is thus to a large degree a matter of relations within the European community. The tension between western culture and Islam or Islamism does not, according to this line of argument, represent a clash between civilisations but rather social and historical conflicts in Europe as well as internal conflicts and contradictions within Islam (also in Europe).

Meddeb, an Arabic intellectual and Muslim, describes the present Islamic fundamentalism, as a result of “The malady of Islam”, that is; an overall intellectual deterioration within Islam, where ideologies alien to the intentions within the Quran and

the corpus of texts that represents these intentions, are used for political purposes that has more to do with the cohesion of the group, the Umma, than with developmental possibilities within Islam. According to this view, we are dealing with tensions, not between them and us, Islam and the west, but the basic question concerns rather a contradiction between modernism and traditionalism, a theme that has been important in the west especially in relation to National Socialism and earlier in relation to “anti-enlightenment and anti-modernistic movements (Burama & Margolit, 2004).

Europe’s relation to Islam has a long history of scepticism and fear reaching back in medieval times. There has been an attitude towards Islam marked by projections of aggression and mysticism. “For a very long time the Christian West perceived the Muslims as a danger before they became a problem”, remarked the historian Maxine Rodinson (cited in (Geisser, 2004) p. 38). In mediaeval times Europe needed, according to this line of reasoning, a common enemy in the process of achieving its religious and ideological unity. An image of this medieval enemy picture was reinvented and achieved special political force during the ethnic cleansing and genocide in the Balkan war in the nineties (Glenny, 1999).

After a period of enlightened interest in Islam in the 17th and 18th century where the picture of Islam emerged as exemplary of tolerance, moderation and open-mindedness, a fearful image of Islam again emerged in the 19th century that involved danger and threat to western values. The traditional theological consideration (Jihad vs. Crusaders) and the need to protect and unify Christian identity prevailed though as a trend through the centuries. In the last century, a more “modern” and maybe stronger Islamophobia emerged in different parts of Europe especially with the increase of Muslim communities in Europe. According to the European Monitoring centre on Racism and Xenophobia this new Islamophobia is characterised by increased physical and other forms of violence, anxiety and hostility with some right wing parties using the fear of Islam for populist purposes (Crickley, 2006).

There is an obvious confusion regarding differences and nuances in Islam and vulnerable refugee groups easily become prey to prejudices and unnecessary restrictions in this context¹.

¹ Concomitantly there is also desire for dialogue. The European Monitoring Centre notice marked differences regarding manifest xenophobia, violence against minorities in different countries. The Netherlands and Denmark are earmarked as countries where the conditions have deteriorated the last years. It is interesting to note that more radical violent versions of Islam are present in Denmark but not too

European Islamophobia has gained strength from the development of Islamic fundamentalism. In its extreme forms, as for example advocated in the writings of Qutb of The Muslim Brotherhood, the west, especially the city-culture, is portrayed as a sinful place with corrupt people only hungering for wealth and pleasure (Heine, 2002; Laqueur, 2001; Serauky, 2000). The Islamic state governed by Sharia is, on the other hand, portrayed as the ideal way of organising society, a place where all needs are satisfied. Based on a fundamentalist reading of the Qur'an, this rhetoric claims that Islamic law shall "triumph on the scale of all humanity for such law is considered the ultimate expression of divine truth", (Meddeb 2003, p. 157). Taken in its extreme, which some Islamist groups do (especially IS), this implies the horrifying possibility of wiping out all those who will not accept this "divine truth".

Antimodernism and Europe

The present conflict with Islam in the European context masks a conflict or tension between modernism and anti-modernism or traditionalism. Bohleber argues that antimodernism has long roots in European culture and he describes similarities between basic ideological claims and fantasies in the Nazi ideology and Jihadist ideology: a myth of an ideal past, an utopian dream of the perfect society, defence against threat from without (from modernism and western influence) and a death cult (Bohleber, 2002). There is further in both ideologies a preoccupation with purity and blood, the development of a sense of entitlement and a concomitant glorification of victimhood and martyrdom (Buruma & Margalit, 2004; Volkan, 2003).

For Islamic fundamentalism as well as for the Nazi ideology, although in a different shape, one could add the subordination of women (and the distaste for women liberation) and the total rejection of homosexuality (Varvin, 2003).

Burma and Margalit further argue that the image of Islam in Europe is heavily coloured by antimodernism as it appeared historically in the European context. One may say that the European image of Islam is coloured by Europe's "repressed" antimodernism. This

any significant extent in Norway, possibly as a result of a longstanding, officially sponsored dialogues between Muslim and Christian organisations.

is then taken over by fundamentalist Islam and finds its representation there²³. The antimodernism in Islamist movements has thus inspiration and roots in ideologies of European origin and this “Islamic antimodernism” may, from the European perspective, be seen as the uncanny return of the collectively repressed.

Embedded in the ideological claims of fundamentalist Islam and National Socialism are collective fantasies concerned with cohesion of the group, with purification and cleansing of the unwanted, dirty, of sacrifice and identification of scapegoats. Women are in fundamentalist Islam seen as both sexually provocative and dirty and must accordingly be controlled. In Nazi ideology, women were to a certain degree idealised but nonetheless controlled, which is the other side of the same coin. Furthermore, there are fantasies of melting together with the almighty as an aim for the whole group and, in the case of sacrifice and martyrdom, unification with God in paradise. Ruth Stein, in her analysis of Atta, one of the terrorists of 9/11, called this vertical desire for God, a homoerotic bond to the almighty (Stein, 2006).

Adolescence and fundamentalism

Bohleber claim that these fundamentalist fantasies are concordant with mental processes in late adolescence (Bohleber, 2002). Identity seeking and identity problems and a tendency to regressively adhere to group norms are characteristic for this period in life. The need to find representatives for ego ideals other than those of the parents together with the need to split-off unwanted, shameful aspects of the self, may ease adherence to totalitarian groups with charismatic leaders.

In traditional Islamic societies the group, clan and family plays a more important role than in western culture. Man belongs to the Umma, comprising all Muslim or rather all “humanity”. The late adolescence process may therefore be different in this context in that belonging to the greater family of Muslims, rather than a drive towards

² Historically antimodernism was represented in German romanticism in opposition to French cultural and political dominance, which defined modernism at the time. These views were accepted by antimodernist movements in Russia and in Slavic countries and was later embraced by central fundamentalist Muslim ideologists.

³ The influence was also direct. In Qutb, one of the founders of fundamentalist Islam, was much influenced by the French Nobel Prize winner in medicine Alexis Carrel who wrote notoriously on racism and euthanasia. Qutb cited Carrel frequently and his ideas on modern barbarism (Jaahiliyyah) was similar to Carrel’s conception of the barbarism of modern Europe (Walther, 2003).

individualism, may become the aim of becoming grown-up. The main task for boys or young men in the Islamic context is the transition from being a son in the family to being head of one's own family. For women, this often means transition from subordination under father to the same under the husband. For this transition to happen certain societal condition must be present first and foremost the ability to bring income to the family.

The very high unemployment rate in Muslim countries and among Muslims in the European context makes the transition to manhood/womanhood difficult and sometimes filled with impossible dilemmas for young Muslims (Herzinger et al., 2002). The material conditions to fulfil the cultural tasks are not available and one can see a prolonged late adolescence full of material and instinctual frustrations. In addition, there are the wars with atrocities towards the civilian population, injustice and persecution which affects many and also represent possibilities for identification with the oppressed for those not directly affected.

This situation represents fertile ground for ideologies that have "secure" explanations and promises solutions to frustrations. At present, fundamentalist ideologies with their tendency to place the guilt on others and thus support a passive-aggressive attitude, seem to be a tempting alternative for many young Muslims and maybe especially for the more disenfranchised who have been living on the margins with no secure identity as has been the case with many IS-terrorists in Europe.

There are striking similarities between ideologies of Islamist groups and right-wing vigilante groups and it is also significant that Islamophobia and xenophobia is highly represented in the younger generations in Europe and markedly in groups marginal to the labour market. A study of German youth during the nineties showed furthermore that xenophobic attitudes in these marginalised groups were often established in early adolescence and did not change significantly in the next ten years or so (Boehnke, 1998).

How to become a killer?

Religious-political ideologies offer solutions to frustrations on individual and group level. They not only organise the group's way of thinking but they also organise the inner mental space of the individual and influence unconscious processes on a group level. That is; they contribute to the formation of the group's and the individual's identity and give motivation for action and also long-term strategies. Collective

fantasies and ideologies are structured as relational scenarios; there are agonists and protagonist in a drama involving projective processes. At this primitive level, an important aim is to avoid unwanted aspects of self, get rid of guilt and a need to portray the other as dirty, sinful and so forth.

The development of a jihadist or terrorist fundamentalist mindset where one is prepared to kill for the sake of the “good”, goes somewhat beyond these theorizations. There are certain processes that make the ordinary man a killer that happens outside the ideological level and even beyond most known mental processes. Browning’s study of the ordinary men of the Hamburg police battalion who willingly engaged in savage murdering of Jews in the eastern part of Europe during Nazi occupation testifies to this (Browning, 1998). Most of them were not active politically, but they had learned, of course, that Jews were bad through year-long propaganda. In Rwanda, the Tutsis were called cockroaches, and effective way of dehumanising them in a “milk-drinking country where everyone knew that cockroaches in the milk made it undrinkable.

The Norwegian mass murderer Breivik’s testimony on the difficulties he had with the first murder, and how it became “easier” afterwards, testifies to an inherent primitive process in the mere act of killing (Varvin, 2013). Reports from killings in concentrations camps during the Balkan war revealed how killing could be an escape from remorse and guilt in that the suffering victim became the representative of primitive guilt, which thus, magically, could be removed by exterminating him or her (Varvin, 2001). The willingness to kill or the act of killing contains complex dynamics that cannot be subsumed only under a theory of the fundamentalist mindset. Space does not allow discussing this further.

Conclusion

I started with some questions: do fundamentalism basically concerns the fundamentals of a religion, a political ideology, a scientific discourse? And: is there a logical connection between fundamentalism and Jihadism or other extremely violent and mass killing politico-religious movements?

A question discussed in this paper was whether fundamentalism in its more malignant form necessarily have to do with adherence to the fundamentals or basics and whether fundamentalism in itself prepared for extremism and violence. It became obvious that it was necessary to look at societal and historical contexts and seek multiple determinations and also study unconscious processes in individuals and groups.

The analysis has brought indications that fundamentalism is more a symptom than a cause or reason for the highly dichotomous tendencies one can see in groups and societies in times of crisis. There is a complicated reciprocal relation between real-life frustrations and problems on individual and group levels, unconscious forces, and the fundamentalist religious-political ideologies that flourish in regressive group processes. The forces at all these levels seem to reinforce each other. The experienced suffering and frustrations are in many ways real, based in historical and societal processes where atrocities on a grand scale have happened, where large groups have been molested or killed and where underprivileged have been subjected to structural violence, a sort of violence where the societal organisation and political processes give the poor and underprivileged even worse conditions (Galtung, 1969).

Fundamentalist movements are in this line of reasoning an answer to but also a symptom of socio-political conditions that have a long history and that have produced, and produces wars and inhuman conditions that mostly affect the underprivileged. Even if Europe is seen as the source of modern humanism, the practices, both historically and actual, against the others on the margins of Europe or in countries close by (Middle-East, Maghreb etc.) are to a large degree characterised by Social Darwinism (survivor of the fittest and the idea that bad things happen to bad people). How refugees are treated today, testifies to this.

There seem to be a deep need in every society to define the stranger and to select others or groups as scapegoats or as the roots to societies problems. It may be that what binds people together is what they agree to hate. If so, humanity implies constant work to counteract this inherently violent tendency in individuals and groups. The need to curb these aggressive and destructive forces was also central in Einstein and Freud's dialogue on war. Einstein asked Freud whether it is: "... possible to control man's mental evolution so as to make him proof against the psychoses of hate and destructiveness?" Freud's answer was simple. While affirming, "an instinct for hatred and destruction", he held that the best way to counteract war and violent aggression is supporting "emotional ties between (a group of people's) members" (Freud, 1933), page 201).

We live in a time where fundamentalism and thereby antagonism between groups, is growing. This is especially evident in the precarious balance in Europe today regarding relations to Muslim groups. While the vast majority of Muslims live a peaceful and adjusted life, the general public's image of Muslims is more and more characterised by solid prejudices (Islam cannot adapt, Muslims support terror, Islam is a violent political

ideology etc.). Restrictions and increasingly harsh conditions for refugees (often identified as potentially violent Muslims) prevail. Under the cover of the war against terrorism, refugees and immigrants are rejected at borders and surveillance and other law-enforcement measures are directed against these aliens.

In short – fright of the alien and thus xenophobia, is increasing and resulting in what Liz Fekete calls xeno-racism; a hostile and discriminating attitude towards foreigners (Fekete, 2009). This again, support fundamentalism on all sides in what can be called a spiral of reciprocal interdependent fundamentalisms. “Emotional ties” then weakens. The arguments presented in this paper call for work on many levels to counteract this development and underlines the need to take into consideration unconscious processes in their societal and historical contexts.

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