FAMILY, RELIGION, PEDAGOGY AND EVERYDAY EDUCATION PRACTICE

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DIMENSIONS OF RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM IN THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE[1]

ABSTRACT:

The study contains an overview of selected research positions that make up the theory of religious fundamentalism: religious studies researchers, sociologists, political scientists and philosophers, representatives of Western and Polish academic centres. The author sees as assets the differences and divergences between their positions. This gives us a multifold, deepened and advanced understanding of the phenomenon, as well as an insight into which dimensions of this phenomenon is discussed and negotiated in the theory of fundamentalism. Such understanding of fundamentalism can be useful for the pedagogy of religion and general pedagogy, as referred to in the study's conclusions.

KEYWORDS:

religious fundamentalism, ideology, social movements, theory of fundamentalism

Researchers link the emergence of fundamentalism with the theological reaction dating back to the end of the 19th century to modernist

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1 Originally published: Rafał Włodarczyk, "Wymiary fundamentalizmu religijnego w perspektywie teoretycznej", [in:] *Między ekskluzją a inkluzją w edukacji religijnej*, ed. M. Humeniuk, I. Paszenda, Instytut Pedagogiki Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 2017, p. 15–36.

tendencies in Christianity of some US Protestants, mainly Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists, which over time took the form of a religious movement[2]. The term was originally used in the title of a series of 12 brochures with essays by over sixty authors, published in the United States between 1910 and 1915: *The Fundamentals. A Testimony to the Truth*. Five years later it was taken over by Curtis L. Laws at a meeting of the Northern Baptist Convention to name believers willing "to do battle royal for the fundamentals of the faith"[3]. It was also used in the name of the World's Christian Fundamentals Association, established in 1919, which was to gather believers of a number of denominations dedicated to the cause. Over time, the term has expanded, as indicated by the term religious fundamentalism, and like the category of ideology or utopia, it has been dominated, especially in journalistic circles, by its valorising, pejorative tinge. Nevertheless, discussions and controversies concerning its proper scope, definition and understanding of the phenomenon are still alive. In the extreme, as Malise Ruthven notes,

> Fundamentalism, according to its critics, is just a dirty 14-letter word. It is a term of abuse levelled by liberals and Enlightenment rationalists against any group, religious or otherwise, that dares to challenge the absolutism of the post-Enlightenment outlook. Other scholars argue that fundamentalism is a caricature or mirror-image of the same post-Enlightenment outlook it professes to oppose: by adopting the same rational style of argument used by the secular enemy, fundamentalists repress or bleach out the multifaceted, polysemic ways in which myth and religions appeal to all aspects of the human psyche, not just to the rational mind, with fundamentalists exposing what one anthropologist calls 'the hubris of reason's pretence in trying to take over religion's role[4].

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[2] See K. Armstrong, *The Battle for God. Fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, 2011, p. 135-195; E. Pace, P. Stefani, *Współczesny fundamentalizm religijny*, Kraków 2002, p. 31-55; G. Kepel, *The Revenge of God. The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World*, University Park 1994, p. 100-139; D. Motak, *Nowoczesność i fundamentalizm. Ruchy antymodernistyczne w chrześcijaństwie*, Kraków 2002, p. 67-119; "Fundamentalizm", [in:] K. Dziubka, B. Szlachta, L. M. Nijakowski, *Idee i ideologie we współczesnym świecie*, Warszawa 2008, p. 89-92.

[3] After: K. Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, op. cit., p. 171.

[4] M. Ruthven, *Fundamentalism. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford, New York 2007, p. 5.

However, far more interesting are those positions in the relevant literature which focus on testing the ways of theoretical reflection on this phenomenon, separating it from other social phenomena and arriving at its operational and broad definition.

According to Dominika Motak, the author of *Nowoczesność i fundamentalizm. Ruchy antymodernistyczne w chrześcijaństwie*, who opposes the manifold abuses of the term, "Its usefulness for the religious sciences could increase once it is cleared of its negative and polemical connotations. To this end, it would be necessary to limit the scope of its application to phenomena of exclusively or primarily religious character and, as it were, to 'withdraw' it from the field of political science"[5]. The religious scholar assumes that the term describes

> religious movements of protest and opposition to the cultural foundations of modernization processes, critical of modern theological currents and the transformation of religious institutions and aimed at defending and restoring traditional dogmatic foundations and forms of faith. As a rule, these movements take action to abolish the autonomy of the secular and religious spheres and to give religion a dominant position in societies[6].

According to Motak, such organisations highlight the decay of the modern world, evoking apocalyptic images of imminent events. Their members demonstrate "elitist self-awareness and the conviction that they cultivate the only proper form of religiosity", and show

> dogmatism, authoritarianism, moralism, proselytism, anti-ecumenism, soteriological exclusivism and axiological dualism, emphasising the radical antagonism between the forces of Good and Evil, which is expressed at the level of religious imagination (satanology, etc.) and in the polarisation of the social world (the construction of icons of the enemy, arousing a sense of threat, and their demonisation)[7].

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[5] D. Motak, *Nowoczesność i fundamentalizm*, op. cit., p. 13.

[6] Ibidem, p. 63.

[7] Ibidem, p. 63-64. Motak's study provides an overview and classification of selected definitions of fundamentalism (see ibidem, 41-50).

In principle, according to the researcher, the term should be app-
lied to certain forms of Protestantism and Catholicism, while its appli-
cation to

re-Islamisation movements is unfortunate, as they rather meet the charac-
teristics of nativism. For the ideology of Islamism arose in a postcolonial
situation as a reaction to a clash of cultures, and not in the environment
of developed modernity by virtue of its internal dynamics[8].

In other words, Motak links fundamentalism to modernity and its
impact in the western world and a reaction of traditional religious com-
munities to its disenchantment, pluralisation and secularisation[9]. There-
fore the author does not see the use of this category outside this area,
which is not tantamount to saying that it applies solely to the afore-
mentioned Christian denominations.

However, the current interest in the issue of fundamentalism seems
to be motivated more by research into radical movements within the
Islamic world than by the fate of Moral Majority and Opus Dei and the
sense of threat posed by acts of terror[10]. This shift in meaning is already

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[8] Ibidem, p. 64-65.

[9] See ibidem, p. 19-36. A similar conclusion can be found in Karen Armstrong's book on
fundamentalism. She observes in the "Introduction": "The West has developed an enti-
rely unprecedented and wholly different type of civilization, so the religious response
to it has been unique" (K. Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, op. cit., p. xiii). The difficulty
of maintaining narrowly drawn boundaries can be seen in the scope of Armstrong's
research: " The movements I have chosen are American Protestant fundamentalism,
Jewish fundamentalism in Israel, and Muslim fundamentalism in Egypt, which is a Sun-
ni country, and Iran, which is Shii" (Ibidem). In her book the scholar does not address
the questions of Catholic fundamentalism.

[10] See e.g. G. Kepel, *The Revenge of God*, op. cit., p. 1-12; E. Gellner, "Religious Fundamen-
talism", [in:] E. Gellner, *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion*, London, New York 1992,
p. 2-22; A. Giddens, "Religious Fundamentalism", [in:] A. Giddnes, *Sociology*, Cambridge,
Malden 2009, p. 709-716; M. Szulakiewicz, Z. Karpus, "Od redaktorów", [in:] *Fundamenta-
lizm i kultury*, ed. M. Szulakiewicz, Z. Karpus, Toruń 2005, p. 9-10. A renaissance of rese-
archers' interest in religious fundamentalism dates back to the late 1980s and early 1990s.
Of particular importance in its dynamics and orientation was the Iranian revolution, as
a result of which a respected member of the Shi'ite 'clergy', Khomeini, took power in that
country and transformed Iran into an Islamic republic. This event should, of course, be
seen in the much broader context of an Islamic revival (see E. Pace, P. Stefani, *Współcze-
sny fundamentalizm religijny*, op. cit., p. 57-93; B. Tibi, *Fundamentalizm religijny*, War-
szawa 1997, p. 33-98; G. Kepel, *The Revenge of God*, op. cit., p. 13-46). The settlement and

so pronounced in the 1990s that Bassam Tibi, a political scientist known for his research and ideas on the condition of contemporary Muslim communities in the Western world, decides to write *Der Religiöse Fundamentalismus im Übergang zum 21. Jahrhundert*; he was motivated, among other things, by opposition to the identification of this phenomenon with Islam[11]. Tibi's text is rooted in the sweeping international and interdisciplinary research project of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Launched in the late 1980s, it produced within a short time five voluminous books of articles edited by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, showing different examples and aspects of religious fundamentalisms[12]. In the concluding chapter of the first volume of the series, published in 1991, its editors point to the validity of adopting a broad definition that makes it possible to identify the phenomenon in Catholicism, Islam, Judaism, Confucianism, Sikhism, Hinduism, etc. In their view, it appears as

> a tendency, a habit of mind, found within religious communities and paradigmatically embodied in certain representative individuals and movements, which manifests itself as a strategy, or set of strategies, by which beleaguered believers attempt to preserve their distinctive identity as a people or groups. Feeling this identity to be at risk in the contemporary era, they fortify it by selective retrieval of doctrines, beliefs, and practices from a sacred past[13].

According to Grace Davie, a British sociologist of religion, the *Fundamentalism Project* corresponds to what Marty discussed on another

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activity in Israel of ultra-Orthodox Jewish groups and organizations after World War II also contributed to the shifting of the meaning of the term (see K. Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, op. cit., p. 199-211; 255-366; E. Pace, P. Stefani, *Współczesny fundamentalizm religijny*, op. cit., p. 95-112; G. Kepel, *The Revenge of God*, op. cit., p. 140-190).

[11] See B. Tibi, *Fundamentalizm religijny*, op. cit., p. 17, 19, 25, 27.

[12] Published in succession were: *Fundamentalisms Observed* (1991), *Fundamentalisms and Society: Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education* (1993), *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Polities, Economies, and Militance* (1993), *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements* (1994), *Fundamentalisms Comprehended* (1995). The volumes edited by Marty and Appleby were published by the University of Chicago Press. The seminar articles and materials collected there have become one of the main reference points and sources of knowledge on religious fundamentalism.

[13] M. E. Marty, R. S. Appleby, "Conclusion. An Interim Report on a Hypothetical Family", [in:] *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. M. E. Marty, R. S. Appleby, Chicago 1991, p. 835.

occasion as an ideal type of a phenomenon or rather a set of characteristics determining possible family resemblance between its variants[14]. That is to say, the set of features established by the researcher is never fully represented, while their various incomplete configurations can be observed in the analysed cases of movements, which makes it possible to indicate the convergence between them which distinguishes them from other phenomena.

In Marty's view it may be assumed that the majority of such movements grow out of the stable and isolated development of traditional cultures as a reaction against a threat that disturbs the state of equilibrium, which is directed by their leaders to innovate, defend, seek resistance or retaliate. According to the American scholar of religion, these movements are characterised by a selective recourse to the resources of the past, which helps them to base their activities on an unequivocally understood authority, and by the creation of an oppositional, separative 'us versus them' mentality. As Marty observes,

> Fundamentalists resent being left out, deprived, displaced, scorned, marginalized. They feel their cultures penetrated. They must take action against the infidel. There is almost always a polity implication, whether constitutional, revolutionary, or designed to stabilize a hegemony of fundamentalists[15].

Noteworthy here is also the evaluation of one's current activities from such a time perspective when all the assumed pursuits are finally achieved. This is part of a unique temporal order, which offers the movement followers motivation and orientation points: "The future is assured, the past was grand, the present may be cloudy[16].

Furthermore, in another article published four years earlier, Marty pointed out such characteristics of fundamentalists[17], as a tendency

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[14] See G. Davie, "Demanding Attention. Fundamentalisms in the Modern World", [in:] G. Davie, *The Sociology of Religion*, Los Angeles, Singapore 2007, p. 184-186; M. E. Marty, "The Fundamentals of Fundamentalism", [in:] *Fundamentalism in a Comparative Perspective*, ed. L. Kaplan, Amherst, Massachusetts 1992, p. 18-23; M. E. Marty, "Fundamentalism as a Social Phenomenon", *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 1988, no. 42, p. 17-23. See also: M. Ruthven, *Fundamentalism*, op. cit., p. 6-7, 22.

[15] M. E. Marty, "The Fundamentals of Fundamentalism", op. cit., p. 22.

[16] Ibidem.

[17] See M. E. Marty, "Fundamentalism as a Social Phenomenon", op. cit., p. 17-23.

towards absolutism, anti-hermeneutism, or a focus on action and effectiveness. In his view, fundamentalists are not, as another respected scholar of the issue, Gilles Kepel, also emphasises, representatives of only one, chosen social stratum or class, and their involvement is not the result of impoverishment, lack of education or deviant needs[18]. They remain hostile to relativism, pluralism and ambiguity, ally themselves only rarely and briefly with movements of the same kind within other religions, and clearly distinguish themselves from currents of orthodoxy, conservative or traditionalist factions within their own religion[19]. According to the researcher, these movements display an ambivalent attitude towards modernity. Being themselves the result of a clash with it, they oppose its manifestations, assumptions and tendencies, with the exception of the achievements of civilization, which they try to use in an optimal way to achieve their own goals. Fundamentalists, Marty notes, "are seldom opposed to technology as such, or to many of its specific artifacts. Technology, one might say, helped make fundamentalism possible"[20].

Unlike Marty or Kepel, Steve Bruce, whose opinion about the phenomenon corresponds in many respects to the theoretical framework of the *Fundamentalism Project*, believes that such movements appeal to specific social strata, i.e. marginalized groups[21]. The British sociologist of religion credits fundamentalism with being equally broad in scope, but also more clearly emphasises the radical nature of its manifestations. He argues:

[18] See ibidem, p. 20; G. Kepel, *The Revenge of God*, op. cit., p. 4.

[19] Analysts of the phenomenon draw attention to the separateness of these currents, particularly the differences between fundamentalism and traditionalism and orthodoxy (see np. M. Marczewska-Rytko, "Fundamentalizm religijny: dylematy terminologiczno-metodologiczne", [in:] *Fundamentalizm i kultury*, op. cit., p. 45-59; D. Motak, *Nowoczesność i fundamentalizm*, op. cit., p. 50-63). Armstrong, in turn, believes that it is inner tension within a religious community that contribute to the emergence of such a radical variant. "Fundamentalism - whether Jewish, Christian, or Muslim - rarely arises as a battle with an external enemy [...]; it usually begins, instead, as an internal struggle in which traditionalists fight their own coreligionists who, they believe, are making too many concessions to the secular world" (K. Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, op. cit., p. 108).

[20] M. E. Marty, "Fundamentalism as a Social Phenomenon", op. cit., p. 18.

[21] See S. Bruce, *Fundamentalism*, Polity Press, Cambridge, Malden 2008, p. 14. Importantly, Bruce too took part in seminars held as of 1988 within the *Chicago Fundamentalism Project*.

We might expect fanaticism to be common in Christianity, Islam and Judaism, where there is a single god, rather than in religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism, where the variety of gods (or the varieties of forms that the divine can take) should create a climate of tolerance. [...] Nonetheless, there are aggressive Hindu and Buddhist movements that have been described as fundamentalist[22].

According to Bruce, the important differences should not be glossed over, but instead we should indicate the reasons "why some religions are more likely to produce fundamentalist movements than others"[23]. Such movements attract attention mostly via their "desire to reshape the world at large, and that often involves violence"[24].

Like Motak, Bruce pays equally much attention to a list of processes and changes that occurred in modernity and which are now the principal point of reference for the emergence of religious fundamentalist movements[25]. He points to the fragmentation of social space, which increases people's isolation from each other, the breakdown of everyday life into separate, secularised spheres guided by their own specific logic, with their increasingly far-reaching specialisation of institutions and complex division of labour, intensified by the incremental acceleration of change. According to the researcher, the rationalisation and development of science and technology under modernism have the effect

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[22] Ibidem, p. 5. Moreover, according to Bruce "fundamentalism may derive its character not just from arguments within some body of believers about what God requires but also from largely secular nationalist struggles" (Ibidem, p. 8).

[23] Ibidem, p. 96. Examining the difference between religions as for the potential to stir fundamentalist movements, Bruce indicates monotheism and dogmatism as its preconditions (see ibidem, p. 97-101). Hence, contrary to earlier declarations about the scope of the concept, he is inclined to recognise that, alongside Protestantism and Islam, other such movements only resemble fundamentalism to a certain extent, but in their respective cultures they have never been so powerful and have not gained comparable influence.

[24] Ibidem, p. 7. In the context of the question of the relationship between fundamentalism and violence, it is worth confronting Bruce's position with Kepel's observation: "There is one fundamental difference between the movements of re-Christianisation 'from above' and the Islamist or Gush Emunim: the former have never had recourse to political violence – either in Western Europe and the United States, or under the communist regimes which persecuted them" (G. Kepel, *The Revenge of God*, op. cit., p. 196).

[25] See S. Bruce, *Fundamentalism*, op. cit., p. 15-39. See also: D. Motak, *Nowoczesność i fundamentalizm*, op. cit., p. 19-36; G. Davie, *The Sociology of Religion*, op. cit., p. 46-66, 89-110.

of weakening the tendency of the faithful to trust in traditional forms of knowledge, just as the advances of egalitarianism and individualism motivated by the Enlightenment lead to the corrosion of the hierarchical structures of religious organisations, the decomposition of their communal character focused on the primacy of the collective over the individual, and the disintegration of the patriarchal model of family and interpersonal relations.

Bruce notes the fundamentalists' negative perception of last century's characteristic involvement of Western Christian churches and their members in the modernisation of society and in making compromises with the secular state. Nevertheless, according to the sociologist, the scope of the phenomenon is not limited by history. He argues that "In the broad sweep of human history, fundamentalists are normal", "a rational response of traditionally religious peoples to social, political and economic changes that downgrade and constrain the role of religion in the public world"[26].

Discussing the theoretical profile of the *Fundamentalism Project*, Davie points to the particular value of the work of yet another scholar involved in its implementation who, like Marty and Bruce, prefers to operate with a broader concept. Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, writes Davie, "places the study of fundamentalism in a long-term historical perspective. Modern fundamentalisms are preceded by proto fundamentalist movements which themselves arose in the 'Axial Civilizations' of pre--modern times"[27]. The 'Axial Age' category was borrowed by the Israeli sociologist from the classic of continental philosophy, Karl Jaspers. It is

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[26] S. Bruce, *Fundamentalism*, op. cit., p. 120. Seeing the issue in a broad time perspective is expressed by Bruce at the very beginning of the study. He declares there: "This book is about the modern zealots" (Ibidem, p. 2), the figure of the zealots (from Greek: *zelotes*, Hebrew: *kanai*), staunch members of a religious-political group active, according to Josephus Flavius, in first-century Palestine and striving by means of terror to liberate the Jewish people from Roman rule, is a significant reference point in discussions of contemporary fundamentalism.

[27] G. Davie, "Demanding Attention", op. cit., p. 189. See S. N. Eisenstadt, "Heterodoxies, Sectarianism, and Utopianism in the Constitution of Proto-fundamentalist Movements", [in:] S. N. Eisenstadt, *Fundamentalism, Sectarianism, and Revolution. The Jacobin Dimension of Modernity*, Cambridge 1999, p. 1-38; S. N. Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities in an Age of Globalization" and "The Jacobin Component of Fundamentalist Movements", [in:] S. N. Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations and Multiple Modernities*, Part II, Leiden, Boston 2003, p. 519-533, 937-951.

the period of the first millennium B.C.E., when there emerged and became institutionalized in some of the major civilizations – namely in Ancient Israel, later on in Christianity; in Ancient Greece; China in the early Imperial period; Hinduism and Buddhism, and last of all and later on in Islam – a conception of a basic tension between the transcendental and the mundane orders – a conception which differed greatly from that of a close parallelism between these two orders or their mutual embedment which was prevalent in so-called pagan religions, in those very societies and religions from which these post-Axial Age civilizations emerged[28].

The most crucial change of this period, according to Eisenstadt, is the constitution of 'cultural' or 'religious' collectives, as opposed to the previously dominant ethnic ones or those built on the subordination of a given collective to strong centres of sovereign power, a change that gave rise to a politics practiced with and in relation to ideology, and thus also created space for the emergence of proto-fundamentalist movements[29]. Rooted in utopian heresies, they sought, in reaction to the decay of religion, to renew it, to restore its authentic version and to rebuild the existing social order according to a clear organisational pattern, while placing emphasis in their activities on the construction of their own clear symbolic and institutional boundaries. Other characteristic features common to proto- and fundamentalist movements, according to Eisenstadt, are a refusal to interpret and oppose innovations of tradition while using it selectively, a low threshold of tolerance for ambiguity and opposition to the attitudes of the current religious establishment; in this sense they are also anti-traditionalist and anti-orthodox.

[28] S. N. Eisenstadt, "Cultural Traditions and Political Dynamics: The Origins and Modes of Ideological Politics", [in:] S. N. Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations and Multiple Modernities*, Part I, Leiden, Boston 2003, p. 221. See S. E. Eisenstadt, "Heterodoxies, Sectarianism, and Utopianism in the Constitution of Proto-fundamentalist Movements", op. cit., p. 3-6.

[29] See S. N. Eisenstadt, "Cultural Traditions and Political Dynamics", op. cit., p. 219-247; S. N. Eisenstadt, "The Jacobin Component of Fundamentalist Movements", op. cit., p. 938-944; S. N. Eisenstadt, "Heterodoxies, Sectarianism, and Utopianism in the Constitution of Proto-fundamentalist Movements", op. cit., p. 25-38. Armstrong, too, considers present-day fundamentalism in a longer time perspective, by pointing out the importance of the period from 700 to 200 BC and by describing in more detail the situation of the three religions in the context of the formation of modernity (see K. Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, op. cit., p. xiv-xvi, 3-130).

The context of modernity changes the meaning of the set of features indicated by the sociologist that tie the activities of the analysed sects, and with it the potential of fundamentalisms is significantly transformed. They have become clearly anti-modern, or more precisely anti--Enlightenment. Nevertheless they are distinguished by what Eisenstadt considers a decisive factor: a strong Jacobin component inherent in the totalitarian components of the political programme of modernity. According to his findings, "Jacobin orientations emphasize the belief in the primacy of politics and of the ability of politics to reconstitute society according to a totalistic vision and through highly mobilized political action"[30]. They share such features as

> a desire to create a new social order by political action originating in re-volutionary universalist, ideological beliefs, usually beyond all national and ethnic units, based on primordial ties, and beyond new socio-politi-cal communities. They moreover see politicians as great transformers of societies[31].

In other words, the modern state, modernist in its assumptions, possesses a number of instruments attractive to fundamentalists in terms of potenitally total impact on the reality of all human relations. Their 'utopian-sectarian critique of modernity', their compactness, their discipline, their conviction that they are right and that they have the right model for the organisation of communal life, make these movements feel predisposed in almost every case to use these tools immediately with the intention of carrying out radical transformations of the public and private orders. Furthermore, Eisenstadt sees that "some very interesting parallels emerge between fundamentalists and the secular Jacobin

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[30] S. N. Eisenstadt, "The Jacobin Component of Fundamentalist Movements", op. cit., p. 940.

[31] S. N. Eisenstadt, *Utopia i nowoczesność. Porównawcza analiza cywilizacji*, Warszawa 2009, p. 575-576. See S. E. Eisenstadt, "Fundamentalism as a Modern Jacobin Anti-modern Utopia and Heterodoxy – the Totalistic Reconstruction of Tradition", [in:] S. E. Eisenstadt, *Fundamentalism, Sectarianism, and Revolution*, op. cit., p. 94-97. It is also worth noting in this context Kepel's remark arising from his analysis: "Thus, despite their similarities, the re-Islamization, re-Judaization and re-Christianization movements 'from above' differ significantly in their attitudes to the state, the law and the constraint of democracy, and these differences have their origin in their respective religious doctrines" (G. Kepel, *The Revenge of God*, op. cit., p. 198).

totalitarian regimes of the left"[32], which should be taken seriously, even though the latter have, according to the researcher, a different approach to Enlightenment. At the same time, he narrows the scope of the concept in another dimension, pointing out that contemporary movements present in large numbers in Hinduism or Buddhism only resemble fundamentalisms. Their orientations are mainly particularistic in nature, which links them to fascist movements, and therefore do not give rise to strong Jacobin aspirations[33].

Eisenstadt's observation of the far-reaching similarities and convergences between the various types of political movements of modernity, as well as his indication of the constant presence of radical ideological politics in the axial civilizations, raises the question of whether contemporary religious fundamentalism is not a glaring example of a much broader phenomenon? The popularisation of the term in the form of this very pair of words, the convention of specifying which type of fundamentalism is meant, seems to confirm the intuition of an Israeli researcher, which is clearly expressed in the early 1990s by Andrew Heywood. According to the British political scientist, "Fundamentalism is a style of thought in which certain principles are recognized as essential 'truths' that have unchallengeable and overriding authority, regardless of their content. Substantive fundamentalisms therefore have little or nothing in common, except that their supporters tend to evince an earnestness or fervour born out of doctrinal certainly". According to this scholar,

> Although it is usually associated with religion and the literal truth of sacred texts, fundamentalism can also be found in political creeds. Even liberal scepticism can be said to incorporate the fundamental belief that all theories should be doubted (apart from its own). Although the term is often used pejoratively to imply inflexibility, dogmatism and authoritarianism, fundamentalism may also give expression to selflessness and a devotion to principle[34].

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[32] S. N. Eisenstadt, "The Jacobin Component of Fundamentalist Movements", op. cit., p. 944. See S. E. Eisenstadt, "Fundamentalism as a Modern Jacobin Anti-modern Utopia and Heterodoxy – the Totalistic Reconstruction of Tradition", op. cit., p. 106-112.

[33] See S. N. Eisenstadt, *Utopia i nowoczesność*, op. cit., p. 513, 522-523, 579-580; S. E. Eisenstadt, "Fundamentalism as a Modern Jacobin Anti-modern Utopia and Heterodoxy – the Totalistic Reconstruction of Tradition", op. cit., p. 113-114.

[34] A. Heywood, "Religious Fundamentalism", [in:] A. Heywood, *Political Ideologies. An Introduction*, Basingstoke, New York 2014, p. 289. Andrzej Szahaj follows suit: "No traditionally

Like many other researchers of the phenomenon, Heywood focuses on religious fundamentalism in his study and recognises that its emergence occurs in societies in a profound crisis. He mentions secularisation, postcolonialism and globalisation among the factors that have played a particularly important role in the emergence of the current imbalance. The replacement of traditional religious or spiritual values with materialistic and rationalistic ones, together with the weakened the moral fabric of society, in time triggered a fundamentalist backlash against decadence and hypocrisy. The identity crisis of the indigenous cultures previously oppressed by colonial rule, for which regaining independence did not bring social emancipation, a sense of cohesion and self-esteem, meant that the most violent manifestations of fundamentalism can now be observed precisely in developing countries. On the other hand, the ever-increasing interdependence and mobility in the world has undermined the autonomy and ability of individual societies to create stable and secure political identities, to which ethnic and religious mobilisation is a reaction. Heywood points to such features of religious fundamentalism[35] as: rejecting the separation of politics and religion, public and private and revisionism, advocating objective axio--normative standards and adopting a Manichaean worldview, offering a secure identity and perspective on order in circumstances of prevailing uncertainty, defining oneself by the division into 'them' and 'us', advocating 'activist' readings of texts, i.e. those that help reduce their complexity and quantity to a theopolitical project, following a charismatic leader, the ability to arouse political commitment and mobilise the faithful, the readiness to use extra-legal means, pointing to simple, practical and absolute solutions, militancy, taking radical or revolutionary action. Moreover, according to the political scientist, religious

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separated part of the political and ideological spectrum has a monopoly on fundamentalism. Any idea can be professed in a fundamentalist manner. We can therefore have fundamentalism on the left and on the right" (A. Szahaj, "Co to jest fundamentalizm? Fundamentalizm a paternalism", [in:] A. Szahaj, *Jednostka czy wspólnota? Spór liberałów z komunitarystami a „sprawa polska"*, Warszawa 2000, p. 214). See also: A. Pawłowski, "Czym jest fundamentalizm?", [in:] *Fundamentalizm współczesny*, ed. A. Pawłowski, Zielona Góra 1994, p. 7-11; A. Bronk, "'Fundamentalizm': sensy i dziedziny użycia", [in:] *Fundamentalizm i kultury*, op. cit., p. 19-23; J. Sielski, "Fanatyzm i fundamentalizm w polityce", [in:] *Fundamentalizm i kultury*, op. cit., p. 321-328.

[35] See A. Heywood, "Religious Fundamentalism", op. cit., p. 284-293.

fundamentalists are selectively traditional and modern, violently anti-modern and enthusiastic about mass communication techniques or the machinery of the modern state.

Fundamentalism read as a response to the influences of globalisation, whose significance for this phenomenon was also noted by Heywood, is not in Edmund Wnuk-Lipiński's opinion its commonly accepted interpretation[36]. However, acknowledging its validity, the sociologist refers to the view of Anthony Giddens, for whom fundamentalism is clearly a "child of globalisation" and a phenomenon peculiar to the current era, "It is tradition defended in a traditional way – by reference to ritual truth – in a globalising world that ask for reasons"[37]. Like Heywood, Giddens too, followed by the Polish sociologist, does not see it in religion only. He believes that "Fundamentalism can develop on the soil of traditions of all sorts". What is important in it is not what people believe, but "how the truth of beliefs is defended or asserted [...], why they believe it and how they justify it"[38]. However, Wnuk-Lipiński finds Giddens' position too general and reaches for the characteristics of the phenomenon proposed by Gabriel A. Almond, Emmanuel Silvan and Appleby in the last volume of the *Fundamentalism Project*[39].

In keeping with their findings,[40] fundamentalists, like orthodox of conservative members of a given religion, attempt to defend tradition against the threat of erosion by secularisation and modernisation, but they do not believe that the measures they have taken are sufficient to preserve it. They do, however, reject the suggestion that they innovated

[36] See E. Wnuk-Lipiński, "Fundamentalizm jako reakcja na globalną zmianę", [in:] E. Wnuk-Lipiński, Świat międzyepoki. Globalizacja, demokracja, państwo narodowe, Kraków 2004, p. 272-274.

[37] A. Giddens, "Tradition", [in:] A. Giddens, *Runaway World. How Globalisation is Reshaping our Lives*, New York 1999, p. 49.

[38] Ibidem. See also: Ibidem, p. 48-50; A. Giddens, "Religious Fundamentalism", op. cit., p. 709-710. In another of his works, returning to the issue of the determinants of tradition in a post-traditional society, he similarly states: "We can speak in this sense not only of religious fundamentalism but of fundamentalisms of nationalism, ethnicity, the family and gender - among others" (A. Giddens, "Risk, Trust, Reflexivity", [in:] U. Beck, A. Giddens, S. Lash, *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, Stanford 1994, p. 190).

[39] See E. Wnuk-Lipiński, "Fundamentalizm jako reakcja na globalną zmianę", op. cit., p. 278-280.

[40] See G. A. Almond, E. Silvan, R. S. Appleby, "Fundamentalism: Genus and Species", [in:] *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*, ed. M. E. Marty, R. S. Appleby, Chicago 1995, p. 399-424.

significantly by their actions and choices, pointing to the essential link between their programme and teaching and the authoritative foundations of tradition, cleansed of the thicket of deviations. In a broader perspective, the fundamentalism of the second half of the 20th century is, according to Almond, Silvan and Appleby, a counter-attack by a religion, on the defensive during the century of industrial revolution, on the triumph of a secular 'culture of progress', and a reaction to the weaknesses of the modernisation process (social costs, environmental devastation, moral decay and other side-effects).

Of course, in the Western world and its colonies, the impact of modernity was not the same and produced different outcomes. These differences can be seen in the different fundamentalist formations. Similarly, according to researchers, there are differences between the Buddhist, Sikh and Hindu fundamentalist movements and those of Protestants, Catholics, Sunnis, Shiites and Judaists, linked by elements such as monotheism, messianism and the sacralisation and codification of doctrine and law. Moreover, in seeking to identify the characteristics common to the many variants of such movements, it is necessary to take account of the differences arising from the specific cultural background of the region in which they occur.

Despite the indicated complications and ambivalences, researchers manage to distinguish nine essential characteristics of fundamentalist movements[41]. Scholars point to a militant opposition to secularization and modernization, leading to the erosion of community and the marginalization of religion as well as to moral Manichaeism, which makes a clear distinction between the contaminated world outside the movement and the ideal purity maintained within it. They moreover mention a selective approach both to the resources of tradition (emphasising especially those elements and aspects of it that clearly distinguish them from the mainstream) and to the manifestations and achievements of modernity (some of which are accepted, such as advanced technologies or social media, while others are firmly rejected), as well as to the consequences and processes of modernity, which clearly distinguish them from the mainstream. Moreover, there is hermeneutics inspired by secular philosophies and historical criticism is contrasted with the

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[41] See ibidem, p. 405-408.

strategies of correct, error-free readings that enable them to maintain their conviction in the infallibility of the recognised solutions and the absolutist character of the texts or traditions they hold sacred.

Another feature, also of an ideological nature, is, according to a group of scholars, the adoption by a given movement of some kind of messianic or millenarian aspect, a vision of a time of triumph of goodness, justice, morality, faith, the culmination of history ending the history of suffering and waiting, the final liberation of the world from evil and wickedness. The other four characteristics identified by Almond, Sivan and Appleby relate, in their view, to the organisational aspects of the fundamentalist movement. It is distinguished by the manner in which members are recruited, emphasising vocation, a sense of uniqueness, choice and commitment, by the strategy of drawing sharp physical and visual, linguistic boundaries between the world of the survivors and the lost remnant, by the methodical designation and elaboration of appropriate spheres of activity, appropriate behaviour and conduct, and by an authoritarian structure, an internal division into equal representatives of a voluntary movement voluntarily subordinating themselves to a charismatic leader who has no official powers of authority, but who enjoys trust among those disciplined to embody his decisions and the authority of a correct interpreter of sacred texts or traditions.

According to Wnuk-Lipiński, for the fundamentalist who drifts in a world of illusion, the present is a threat, because he does not recognise the absolute truth of which a given movement is a depositary, and his expectation of its triumph in the future differs from the traditionalist, who places the 'golden age' in times gone by[42]. Although each of such movements absolutises its own truth and its own recognitions of the risks, which, according to the sociologist, rules out alliances between them, four common enemies can be identified: an illegitimate religious establishment, a secular state, a secular civil society and countries belonging to the core of globalisation, such as the United States[43]. This clearly reactionary, defensive character of fundamentalisms is the starting point for several types of explanations of the formation of the phenomenon, focused on indicating the fundamental factor determining

[42] See E. Wnuk-Lipiński, "Fundamentalizm jako reakcja na globalną zmianę", op. cit., p. 274.
[43] See ibidem, p. 280-281.

their emergence, but in the eyes of Wnuk-Lipiński interpretations are always inadequate[44].

The economic hypothesis, which holds that fundamentalism is a strategy of defence against exclusion and marginalisation, as it promises greater equality and lowers consumption aspirations, thus relieving some of the frustrations and tensions, is deemed to be more of an explanation for the dynamics and success of populist movements. Similarly, he finds only partially plausible the hypothesis he calls cultural and civilisational, which assumes an inferiority complex towards Western societies as the cause of the reaction, as the fundamentalists' defence against westernization contains many of its components. The strong disruption of the sense of security associated with the processes of globalisation as a result of rapid changes in culture and society, the answer to which would be a return to a familiar world, which is at the heart of the modernisation hypothesis, does not quite correspond to the circumstances of fundamentalist movements in states where modernity has long been their contributor. Furthermore, the communitarian hypothesis, according to which fundamentalists in urban agglomerations create strongly integrated local communities by means of the bond of religion as a way of eliminating the phenomenon of social uprooting, does not explain their expansion, use of violence or resort to terrorist actions, either.

In order to explain the reasons for the emergence of such movements, Wnuk-Lipiński believes yet another hypothesis is in order, a sociopsychological one, focusing on the phenomenon of 'fundamentalist conversion' motivated by an identity crisis, "i.e. a relatively deep transformation, or rather a re-evaluation of an individual's perception of social reality, the mechanisms that govern it, as well as the criteria of its evaluation"[45]. According to the sociologist, this crisis is closely linked to the impact on local contexts of three processes characteristic of globalisation: fragmentation of social reality, detraditionalization and relativization of norms, values and ways of life. The above produce a sense of chaos, unpredictability and arbitrariness, which for many exceeds the limits of their tolerance[46]. Ultimately, according to this researcher, it

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[44] See ibidem, p. 286-292.

[45] Ibidem, p. 292.

[46] Jerzy Sielski, referring to the five hypotheses distinguished by Wnuk-Lipiński, also sees the necessity of supplementing them. He adds two more: an ethnic (national) one,

should be assumed that fundamentalist movements appear most often in the space of civil society, despite the fact that they themselves are anti-democratic and exert organised pressure against the nation-state. Moreover, their common denominator is reference to a selected set of religious or secular values, constituting the 'absolute truth'. It helps to reduce the negative effects of the identity crisis and, thanks to the accepted founding dogmas, to create a new identity of its members, drawing a clear dichotomy of 'us' versus 'them'[47].

The approach of Wnuk-Lipinski or Giddens and Heywood's view that "All ideologies, however, contain elements of fundamentalism"[48], seem to converge with the opinions of Davie, who indicated the currently unique position of "the secular certainties, the former competitors of religious truth" and their equal status. A British sociologist of religion has noted that in postmodernity,

> those ideologies which have threatened (and to some extent continue to threaten) the traditional certainties of a whole range of religious groups, become, at least potentially, the victims rather than the perpetrators of economic and cultural change. No longer are they seen as the confident alternatives, but become instead - like the religious certainties they once sought to undermine – the threatened tradition, themselves requiring justification and, at times, aggressive rehabilitation[49].

To illustrate her observation on secular ideologies in their fundamentalist variant, she uses the examples of situations following the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and the collapse of the Marxist worldview in the Soviet Union or the Balkans, as well as radical factions of the animal rights movement or feminist movement factions. According to Davie,

according to which fundamentalism is a reaction to the pacifying actions of the state against the separatist aspirations of ethnic and national minorities stimulated by its weakness, and a political one, indicating that it is a reaction of some political elites to the activism of the opposition motivated by failures such as the economic crisis, wanting to solve the problem of dissent in a decisive manner (see J. Sielski, "Fanatyzm i fundamentalizm w polityce", op. cit., p. 326-328).

47 See E. Wnuk-Lipiński, "Fundamentalizm jako reakcja na globalną zmianę", op. cit., p. 300-301.
48 A. Heywood, "Religious Fundamentalism", op. cit., p. 287.
49 G. Davie, "Demanding Attention", op. cit., p. 196. See also A. Pawłowski, "Czym jest fundamentalizm?", op. cit., p. 9-10; M. Ruthven, *Fundamentalism*, op. cit., p. 21-22.

it should be assumed that "religious movements are not the only ones that succumb to fundamentalist tendencies"[50], and the rivalry between them should be seen as normal rather than a peculiar feature of the social landscape of late modernity.

CONCLUSIONS

From the positive self-definition of the supra-denominational religious movement of the Protestant denominations in the first decades of the 20th c. to the contemporary approaches, one can observe interesting proposals of shifting understandings of particular dimensions of the phenomenon of fundamentalism.

Motak points to the late 1970s and early 1980s as a time when, under the influence of numerous independent events such as the Iranian revolution, the revival of the re-Islamisation movements or the involvement of the Moral Majority in Ronald Reagan's presidential campaign, "the scope of the concept was extended to include a number of religious phenomena of an anti-modern character"[51] and became a category of sociological research, acquiring a negative significance in popular parlance. The following decade, which is reflected in the discussion in this study, brings efforts to consolidate this change on the one hand, and preparations for a new addition on the other. The inclusion of movements within both Islam and Buddhism in the category we are

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[50] G. Davie, "Demanding Attention", op. cit., p. 199.

[51] D. Motak, *Nowoczesność i fundamentalizm*, op. cit., p. 39. In the context of the study of the scope of meaning, the religious scholar also draws attention to the emergence of the term in the field of philosophy in the 1960s (see ibidem, p. 38-39). According to Andrzej Bronk, it refers to the discussion conducted in Anglo-Saxon epistemology and German methodology (see A. Bronk, "'Fundamentalizm': sensy i dziedziny użycia", op. cit., p. 20-21, 28-30). According to him, "The best-known contemporary form of philosophical fundamentalism is epistemological fundamentalism, which conceives of knowledge as a deductively ordered structure based on definite and final elements. [...] epistemological foundationalism aims to refute scepticism and to positively reconstruct the edifice of knowledge" (ibidem, p. 29). However, this usage is rarely connected with the phenomenon of fundamentalist movements, perhaps due to the fact that the indicated cases in English and German are expressed by different sounding names: *foudationalism* and *Fundamentalphilosophie*. Also Polish philosophers and authors of translations are not consistent here and often use other terms, such as: *fundacjonalizm, fundacjonizm, fundamentyzm*.

interested in here is accompanied by an awareness of the significant difference in dynamics between fundamentalisms born on the basis of two different types of confessions, which is reflected in the observation shared by some scholars that "

Although all religions have spawned fundamentalist or fundamentalist-type movements, certain religions may be 1nore prone than others to fundamentalist developments, or place fewer obstacles in the way of emerging fundamentalism. In this respect,

Heywood continues,

Islam and Protestant Christianity have been seen as most likely to throw up fundamentalist movements, as both are based on a single sacred text and hold that believers have direct access to spiritual wisdom, rather than this being concentrated in the hands of accredited representatives[52].

Another characteristic that would assign a religious movement to one of the two types is its reliance on monotheistic traditions. On the other hand, the conviction that fundamentalism can develop on the basis of any ideology, although presumably not with the same intensity, does not obliterate the division between religious and secular fundamentalism. This division becomes clear when a researcher declares a broad understanding of the concept and, proceeding to explain it, grounds his or her theoretical model on examples of confessional movements, and then, using the characteristics created on this basis points to identical elements present in secular ideologies. Religious fundamentalisms seem not only better described in the literature and more easily observable, they also arouse more interest. Consequently, we get a field of observation divided between two types of religious fundamentalism and one of secular ideologies. Therefore, the negotiations between researchers in this dimension concern the expansion of the scope of the concept of fundamentalism by dismantling two successive borders.

On the other hand, in the historical dimension, the basic caesura is the early 20th century and the crisis of modernity. In this sense,

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[52] A. Heywood, "Religious Fundamentalism", op. cit., p. 293.

fundamentalism is a typically contemporary phenomenon, for which the context is provided by the diagnosis of social anomie and secularisation on the one hand, and the development of advanced technologies, communications and the mechanics of the state on the other. Nevertheless, this dimension is also negotiable and expandable. For example, Eisenstadt sees in the period of the French Revolution the time of the initiation of faith in the possibility of a comprehensive reconstruction of the social order by means of political action, a context which, in his view, creates the conditions for the possibility of the formation of modern fundamentalist movements, and in the 'Axis Age' and the emergence of ideological politics he sees the source of the emergence of proto-fundamentalist movements. In this context, an important role in the discussion of the dimensions of fundamentalism is played by the findings on the historical consequences of modernity, colonialism and globalisation, which have created and continue to create different conditions in different geographical areas, which translates into the way in which individual movements of this type are formed and operate. These disparities are aptly signalled by Kepel's succinct remark on the effects of the crisis of modernity, which he observed in the 1980s; it exposed "the emptiness of liberal and Marxist secular utopias, which have led to selfish consumerism in the West, and, in the socialist countries and the Third World, to repression, poverty and a dehumanized society"[53].

A significant part of the discussions among researchers of the phenomenon concerning the dimensions of fundamentalism focuses on its origins. It seems to be a widely shared conviction, as evidenced by the collected material, that it is a reaction connected with a sense of threat, while what is considered threatened by fundamentalist movements and what constitutes the source of this threat is negotiable. In the first case, researchers point primarily to a particular tradition and belief system, but also to social order, identity and status, self-esteem and confidence, stability and security. In the second case, we can distinguish positions which see the source of the threat in one or a limited number of factors, such as the crisis of modernity, globalisation, rapid changes in society and culture, anomie, marginalisation, secularisation, etc. The difficulty in grasping this dimension of fundamentalism lies to

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[53] G. Kepel, *The Revenge of God*, op. cit., p. 5.

some extent in the fact that a single factor, such as 'the acids of moder-nity', to use Walter Lippman's term, may be considered variously; Motak, for example, singles out the processes of rationalisation, pluralisation and secularisation as fundamental to an understanding of modernity, while Bruce explains its nature by also pointing to other phenomena – the fragmentation of social space, atomisation, acceleration of change or individualism.

Moreover, the singularity of a given factor is only conventional. Usu-ally, as can be seen in the above example, it is broken down into a number of components, which often include processes or phenomena treated separately by other researchers. However, the multiplication of causes, making fundamentalism the resultant of a too numerous series of con-ditions, introduces another difficulty - that of making credible the fact that it may appear in different parts of the world and in a different envi-ronment. In this aspect, another quantity occupies a significant place since fundamentalist movements, as researchers indicate, do not exhaust themselves in reaction to a threat; they are a counter-reaction, striving to transform social reality according to a reconstructed plan. Hence, they can be seen as "movements that preach a contemporary religious utopia"[54] or "a modern mode of certain types of utopian heterodoxies"[55].

It should be added here that it is also questionable whether funda-mentalism is exclusively a type of socio-political movement. Perhaps the frequent narrowing of the scope of the term has been due to the fact that, as Albert Pawłowski notes, "as long as fundamentalism is not a movement, it does not arouse interest as a phenomenon"[56]. The poli-tical scientist charts the successive stages in the development of funda-mentalism, from the stage of thought, followed by group consciousness and doctrine, to the stage of movement and finally totalizing power[57]. According to him, therefore,

fundamentalism is a set of ideas that dominate the political agenda (thoughts, positions, ideologies, doctrine, programme, social movement, or way of go-vernance in all or some of the above fields of activity). Its core is a system

[54] E. Pace, P. Stefani, *Współczesny fundamentalizm religijny*, op. cit., p. 14.
[55] S. E. Eisenstadt, "The Jacobin Component of Fundamentalist Movements", op. cit., p. 938.
[56] A. Pawłowski, "Czym jest fundamentalizm?", op. cit., p. 7.
[57] See ibidem, p. 8.

of values that aspire to be unquestionably universal, only right and proper and indispensable for the pursuit of happiness in some definable timespace, containing a self-realisation directive, regardless of the circumstances and at all costs[58].

We will find relatively few cases of lack of interest in the issues of attitude or style of thinking in the conceptions of fundamentalism, but due to the fact that it is considered a social phenomenon, the focus is on its representative mode of occurrence in the form of a socio-political movement. Nevertheless, in addition to its characteristics, the properties of the fundamentalist attitude and the very relationship between the specificity of the movement and the personality of its members are frequent objects of attention in the dimension under discussion. In this context, the scale ranges from dogmatism to fanaticism with an internalised propensity to use violence[59]. In order to explain the characteristics of the fundamentalist attitude as a form of prejudice and to demonstrate the complementarity of the individual and social aspects in this type of movement, researchers also draw on coherent and holistic concepts, such as the authoritarian or protean personality[60]. At the same time, it seems reasonable to accept the view that the members of a given fundamentalist movement differ from one another in the combination and intensity of certain traits, and thus that these movements are internally relatively diverse.

Finally, it is crucial to address the question of a distinguishable set of characteristic practices of fundamentalist movements, such as a specific way of reading sacred texts and traditions or the absorption of the latest technologies. The discrepancies between the approaches in this dimension largely depend, on the one hand, on the material scope of the notion adopted by a given researcher; the broader the spectrum, for example, combining Protestant and feminist fundamentalism, the fewer similar practices recurring and forming a common set; on the other hand, the shape and type of practices emphasised in a given fundamentalist

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58 Ibidem.
59 See E. Pace, P. Stefani, *Współczesny fundamentalizm religijny*, op. cit., p. 21-22.
60 See D. Motak, *Nowoczesność i fundamentalizm*, op. cit., p. 42-43, 179-191; *Idee i ideologie we współczesnym świecie*, op. cit., p. 95-97; J. Sielski, "Fanatyzm i fundamentalizm w polityce", op. cit., p. 328-332.

movement are very strongly related to the characteristics and distinctiveness of the ideology of which it is a variant. It seems that theoretical negotiations in this aspect should be accompanied by Giddens' suggestion according to which it is not so much a particular ritual or a particular way of acting in a given situation that is associated with fundamentalism, but rather "how the truth of beliefs is defended or asserted" using a set of practices proper to the ideology of which the movement in question is a radical variant.

To sum up, in its essential part the study presented a review of selected positions of researchers involved in creating the theory of religious fundamentalism. These were religious scholars, sociologists, political scientists and philosophers, representatives of both Western and Polish academic centres. The indicated and catalogued differences and divergences between their proposed approaches to the issue do not have to be seen here as a shortcoming, as they give us a multilateral, profound and advanced understanding of this phenomenon and an orientation as to which dimensions and why of the object of the theory of fundamentalism are discussed and negotiated between the researchers. Such an understanding of fundamentalism may make the concept useful for the pedagogy of religion and general pedagogy. This usefulness can, as it seems, concern two levels. One is formed by the research on religious education in fundamentalist movements. Due to their largely hermetic and exclusive character, it should be assumed that the specificity of this education is manifested both in the plan of assumptions, content, means, organization, effects, as well as the shape and influence of the pedagogical and educational environment. Moreover, the production of knowledge about such movements within a critically oriented pedagogy of religion can help to answer the question of education leading to fundamentalism. The second plane is formed by the possibilities of applying the concept of fundamentalism to educational theory. If we assume that every ideology is a breeding ground for its fundamentalist variant, then general pedagogy may be interested in studying the issue of fundamentalism in educational ideologies. To achieve this goal, it seems necessary to develop and use the knowledge and experiences concerning religious and secular fundamentalism of other scientific disciplines.

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