



**RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE
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RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM IN EUROPEAN CULTURE

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Abstract: *Religious fundamentalism represents a highly contentious and evolving topic within contemporary European culture. This research examines the phenomenon through its historical, political, and cultural dimensions, encompassing various religious traditions including Catholicism, Protestantism, Orthodoxy, and Islam. Fundamentalism is viewed as a response to modernisation, secularisation, and globalisation, while also serving as an ideological mechanism for maintaining identity and tradition. Particular emphasis is placed on its interplay with national identity, pluralism, and democracy, as well as the resulting cultural conflicts. Migrations, the influence of media and emerging technologies, and the institutional response of the European Union are identified as pivotal elements shaping the current dynamics of religious fundamentalism. The ultimate determination is that fundamentalism should not be perceived merely as an external threat, but rather as an intrinsic component of European cultural and political reality, which concurrently challenges and redefines the continent's future.*

Keywords: *Religious fundamentalism, Europe, culture, democracy, identity, globalisation, migrations.*

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Introduction

Religious fundamentalism stands as a prominent and contentious phenomenon within contemporary European culture and society. Over recent decades, its influence has progressively escalated, manifesting not merely as a religious expression but also as a significant political and cultural determinant. The pertinence of this subject arises from the direct impact religious fundamentalist movements exert on current societal discourse, political determinations, and matters of identity, thereby positioning them as a pivotal element in the shaping of European culture. Investigating fundamentalism is crucial as it elucidates the complex interplay between tradition and modernity, religion and secularism, and national identity and globalisation. This paper aims to provide a systematic analysis of this phenomenon across various dimensions — historical, political, and cultural — and to illustrate how religious fundamentalism is integrated within the European context.

A brief historical overview reveals that religious fundamentalism is not a novel occurrence in Europe. Its origins can be traced to the Reformation, the religious conflicts, and the responses to the Enlightenment, periods when tradition and modernity initially diverged. In the 20th and 21st centuries, this phenomenon has evolved, influenced by increasing secularisation, societal liberalisation, and intensified global processes. Concurrently, migration and cultural diversity have introduced new challenges, positioning fundamentalism as a central topic in European discussions concerning identity, values, and the future of democracy. This introductory section establishes the context for the subsequent in-depth analysis, which seeks to comprehend fundamentalism not solely as a religious phenomenon but also as a pivotal social and cultural determinant influencing contemporary European society.

1. Etymology and history of the term “fundamentalism”

The term “fundamentalism” originated in the English-speaking world during the early 20th century. It initially characterised conservative Protestant groups in the United States who advocated for a return to the foundational tenets of their faith, as articulated in a series of publications titled *The Fundamentals* (1910–1915), and who opposed modernist and liberal theological trends. Academically, the term was initially strongly linked to this movement. However, by the mid-to-late 20th century, its application broadened to encompass similar trends across various religions. Karen Armstrong posits that the term has evolved into a generalised descriptor, covering not only Christian but also Judaic and Islamic movements, underscoring its nature as a socio-cultural phenomenon necessitating meticulous contextual interpretation.

While the etymological origin of the term is American, its application within the European context is intricate and frequently contentious. Pre-modern European roots can be traced to reactions against religious and cultural innovations, resistance to religious reforms, and state secularisation. Nevertheless, the contemporary understanding of fundamentalism gained significant traction in the 20th century, amidst modernisation, scientific advancements, and societal shifts. As intercultural interactions and transnational religious networks expanded, fundamentalist movements began to coalesce through media, migration, and political affiliations, thereby generating novel dynamics of reception. In this regard, Russian researcher Alexei Malashenko highlights that the term should be understood not merely as a descriptor of dogmatic ambition, but also as an elucidation of the political and cultural dynamics shaping the contemporary religious sphere. This perspective enables an analytical consideration of the term — as a synthesis of ideological, social, and cultural practices that endeavor to revert to foundational beliefs, while concurrently leveraging modern methods of mobilisation and engagement.

1.1. The main characteristics of religious fundamentalism

Fundamentalism, as a religious and societal phenomenon, exhibits distinct characteristics that differentiate it from other manifestations of religious conservatism. A primary characteristic is the literal interpretation of sacred texts. For fundamentalists, the Holy Scriptures or other canonical sources are regarded as absolute and immutable truths, to be adhered to without deviation, rather than as symbolic or metaphorical narratives. A second characteristic is a resistance to modernisation and secularisation. Fundamentalist movements frequently emerge in response to societal shifts, new scientific discoveries, or cultural trends perceived as threats to established traditions. In this context, they position themselves as guardians of authentic faith and communal moral integrity. The third characteristic involves the absolutisation of identity. Fundamentalist communities often delineate the world into “sacred” and “profane,” or “us” and “them,” viewing diversity as a threat that necessitates strict discipline and cultural homogenisation.

Furthermore, fundamentalism is marked by an unyielding rigidity and an intolerance of pluralism. While fundamentalists may leverage democratic institutions to expand their influence, their ultimate objective often involves the imposition of unified values and the rejection of diverse interpretations and lifestyles. Furthermore, it is crucial to underscore that fundamentalism is not a static phenomenon. Conversely, it actively employs modern media and technologies to disseminate its influence, thereby creating a paradox. Despite advocating for a return to “traditional ways,” fundamentalism demonstrates significant adaptability and skillfully utilises the tools of contemporary society. These characteristics facilitate the understanding of fundamentalism not solely as a religious expression, but as a broader sociocultural and political phenomenon. Acknowledging these aspects enables a comprehensive analysis of its impact on European culture and society.

1.2. Comparison between traditionalism and conservatism

A comparison of fundamentalism with traditionalism and conservatism reveals distinct differences among these closely related concepts, particularly within the European context. Traditionalism centers on the preservation of cultural and religious customs passed down through generations. It emphasises maintaining established practices and values deemed legitimate and proven, rather than advocating for a radical return to foundational religious tenets. In this framework, the past serves as a bedrock for stability and continuity, while still allowing for some degree of adaptation to modern developments. Conservatism, conversely, represents a political and social philosophy focused on safeguarding existing societal structures and institutions. It is intrinsically linked to state frameworks and social elites, aiming to avert radical transformations that could destabilise society. Consequently, conservatism is not invariably tied to religious doctrines but rather to institutional and cultural stability.

Fundamentalism, in contrast to the aforementioned categories, is characterised by a radical orientation and a pursuit of returning to the foundational tenets of faith, frequently manifesting through resistance to modernisation and pluralism. For fundamentalists, merely preserving traditions or defending institutions is insufficient; their objective is the complete societal transformation in alignment with their specific interpretation of faith. These distinctions are clearly evident throughout European history. Nineteenth-century Catholic traditionalism centered on liturgical and cultural continuity. Conservatism was intrinsically linked to monarchical and state institutions, whereas fundamentalism emerged in the 20th century as a response to secularisation, modernist theology, and cultural pluralism. Differentiating these concepts is paramount for an accurate analysis of religious fundamentalism, as it enables a precise understanding of its unique role and influence within the European cultural and social landscape.

1.3. European context

Religious fundamentalism within the European context presents a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. While the term originated in America, its application in Europe highlights unique specificities rooted in the continent's historical, cultural, and political landscape. European culture is characterised by a robust tradition of secularisation and rationalism, particularly since the Enlightenment, which can create points of contention with religious groups advocating for a return to absolute spiritual values. Fundamentalism frequently emerges as a response to perceived aggressive secularism and the erosion of traditional forms of religious practice. Across Europe's diverse religious traditions—Catholicism, Protestantism, Orthodoxy, and Islam—fundamentalist tendencies are present, yet they manifest in distinct ways. Catholic fundamentalism is often linked to liturgical and doctrinal concerns, Protestantism to biblical literalism, Orthodoxy to the preservation of national identity, and Islamic fundamentalism to resistance against integration into secular societies.

European fundamentalism is intricately linked to migration and multiculturalism, particularly as Islamic fundamentalism has gained prominence in political and security discourse in recent decades. The relevance of this issue is underscored by instances of radicalisation, terrorist activities, and cultural disagreements concerning attire such as the hijab or burqa. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge the substantial presence of Christian fundamentalist movements within Europe. These movements typically coalesce around bioethical concerns, including abortion, euthanasia, and family policies, as well as cultural discussions pertaining to European identity. The European landscape exhibits a dual dynamic. While secularisation and liberal values tend to counteract fundamentalism, these very processes paradoxically foster its emergence as a reactive force and a form of cultural mobilisation. This dialectical interplay between modernity and religious fundamentalism is a pivotal factor in comprehending contemporary European culture.

2. The historical development of religious fundamentalism in Europe

2.1. Catholicism

The historical origins of Catholic fundamentalism in Europe are deeply embedded, stemming from the reactions to the 16th-century Reformation. While the term “fundamentalism” is a more recent construct, its core tenets—dogmatic purity, a rejection of relativism, and resistance to modernism—have been integral to Catholic tradition for centuries. The 19th century presented significant challenges to the Catholic Church, including the French Revolution, the rise of liberalism, and increasing secularisation. The Vatican's response was decidedly anti-liberal, culminating in Pope Pius IX's 1864 encyclical, *Syllabus Errorum*, which condemned modern concepts such as freedom of conscience, the secular state, and pluralism. This stance is widely regarded as an early manifestation of modern Catholic fundamentalism. Subsequently, in the early 20th century, the Vatican initiated a robust campaign against “modernism”, a theological movement that aimed to harmonise Catholic doctrine with contemporary scientific and philosophical advancements. In the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (1907), Pope Pius X denounced modernism as “the sum of all heresies,” which resulted in the reinforcement of traditional dogmas and the establishment of a distinct boundary between “true faith” and “dangerous innovations”.

The latter half of the 20th century introduced a transformative period with the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), which initiated significant reforms within the Catholic Church concerning liturgy, ecumenism, and interfaith relations, thereby engaging with the contemporary world. Nevertheless, these reforms encountered opposition from traditionalist and fundamentalist factions, notably

the movement led by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and his “Society of Saint Pius X,” who rejected the conciliar modifications and advocated for the preservation of the Tridentine Mass and pre-conciliar theological doctrines. In present-day Europe, Catholic fundamentalism frequently manifests as staunch opposition to bioethical matters such as abortion, euthanasia, and LGBT rights. These positions are often framed as the “defense of life” and the “traditional family” and frequently gain political traction through their influence on Christian-oriented parties and movements. Despite operating within a strongly secularised environment, Catholic fundamentalism continues to be a notable influence in European cultural and political discourse, linking religious heritage with the current complexities of European society.

2.2. Protestantism

Protestant fundamentalism has a particularly important place in the history of religious movements, given that it was precisely from the Protestant environment in the United States at the beginning of the 20th century that the term “fundamentalism” itself emerged. However, its roots in Europe are much older and are connected with the development of the Reformation in the 16th century. The basic principle of the Reformation – *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone) – is an essential basis for later fundamentalist tendencies. The insistence on the Bible as the sole and infallible source of truth led to the creation of a strong tradition of literalist interpretation, which has been maintained throughout the centuries. In this sense, Protestant culture has built the possibility of fundamentalist interpretations into its foundations. In the 19th century, the development of biblical criticism and the emergence of Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution caused a serious crisis among Protestant communities. A significant number of adherents held the conviction that novel scientific and hermeneutical methodologies jeopardised the bedrock of their faith. Consequently, movements emerged advocating for a reinstatement of “unadulterated biblical truth” and a repudiation of liberal theological perspectives.

Within Europe, Protestant fundamentalism exhibits particular strength within conservative evangelical communities. These communities underscore literal interpretations, the imperative of personal conversion, and proactive evangelisation. Across numerous nations, they have exerted considerable influence on cultural and political discourse, particularly concerning bioethical and familial matters. During the 20th century, European Protestant fundamentalism also developed associations with charismatic and Pentecostal movements. While not all such movements can be categorised as fundamentalist, certain factions within them adopt a radical stance toward contemporary society and stress the necessity of reverting to apostolic faith. This has fostered the development of vibrant and dynamic communities, characterised by both conservative tenets and modern organisational structures. In present-day Europe, Protestant fundamentalist groups are most frequently observed participating in discussions surrounding abortion, LGBTQ+ rights, and matters pertaining to religious education. Their frequent divergence from secular values and European Union policies renders their role both contentious and pivotal within the broader context of European religiosity.

2.3. Orthodoxy

Orthodox fundamentalism in Europe presents unique characteristics, shaped by the historical trajectory of the Eastern Church and its intricate relationship with state and national identity. While the term “fundamentalism” originates from a Western context, the Orthodox sphere exhibits forms of resistance to modernisation and secularisation that bear resemblance to fundamentalist tendencies. A defining feature of Orthodox fundamentalism is the profound intertwining of religious faith with national identity. In numerous European nations with an Orthodox heritage (e.g., Greece, Russia, Serbia, Bulgaria), the Church has historically played a pivotal role in safeguarding cultural and national iden-

tity, particularly during periods such as Ottoman dominion or totalitarian rule. This historical context fostered a strong connection between Orthodoxy and nationalism. Orthodox fundamentalist groups frequently advocate for a return to “pure faith” and a rejection of Western influences, encompassing theological, cultural, and political aspects. Western liberal democracy, individualism, and secularism are often viewed as detrimental to traditional Orthodox spirituality.

In Russia, particularly following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a significant symbiosis has emerged between the state and the Russian Orthodox Church. This dynamic has fostered the development of fundamentalist perspectives that underscore Russia’s perceived role as the “custodian of authentic Christianity” and an adversary of Western secularism. Analogous trends are observable in the Balkans, where Orthodox churches are actively engaged in political and cultural discourse. Within contemporary Europe, Orthodox fundamentalism frequently manifests as opposition to ecumenism, a rejection of societal liberal reforms, and a struggle against the legitimisation of emerging cultural paradigms, such as LGBTQ+ rights and gender equality. These stances are often rationalised by invoking the “eternal truth” of Orthodox tradition. While Orthodox fundamentalism may not always operate as a centralised movement, its impact on the cultural and political landscape is substantial, as it integrates religious, national, and geopolitical elements into a cohesive ideology of resistance to modern developments.

2.4. Islamic fundamentalism in Europe

Islamic fundamentalism in Europe has garnered significant attention during the latter half of the 20th century and the early 21st century. This phenomenon is largely attributed to the influx of migrants and the subsequent establishment of substantial Muslim communities across Western European nations. The initial significant Islamic communities emerged post-World War II, as migrant workers from Turkey, North Africa, and South Asia settled in countries such as Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. While the majority of Muslims in Europe are integrated into society, certain communities have developed fundamentalist perspectives, often as a response to perceived marginalisation and cultural assimilation. The nature of Islamic fundamentalism in Europe is multifaceted, encompassing a range of movements from peaceful, conservative communities advocating for stringent religious observance to radical factions linked with global jihadist organisations. In some cases, young Muslims born in Europe develop a fundamentalist identity as a form of resistance to discrimination and a lack of a sense of belonging. Recent terrorist attacks in major European cities such as London, Madrid, Paris, Brussels, and Moscow have brought Islamic fundamentalism to the forefront of political and security discussions. This has exacerbated the polarisation between Muslim communities and broader society, leading to increased tensions and the implementation of new state control measures.

However, it should not be forgotten that Islamic fundamentalism in Europe is not homogeneous. It encompasses movements influenced by Salafism and Wahhabism, as well as localised efforts to revert to “pure faith.” In certain instances, these movements also exhibit political dimensions, connected to aspirations for increased autonomy or influence within the public domain. European nations are addressing this challenge through a blend of integrative and repressive strategies, ranging from advocating multiculturalism and dialogue to implementing restrictive measures such as prohibiting the burqa and curtailing foreign financial support for Islamic organisations. This dual approach illustrates the complexity of the relationship between the secular state and religious fundamentalism in the European context. While Islamic fundamentalism constitutes a minority phenomenon within the broader Muslim communities, its substantial influence on cultural, political, and security discussions renders it a pivotal element in comprehending contemporary European culture and identity.

3. Political and Cultural Aspects

3.1. *Fundamentalism and National Identity*

In Europe, religious fundamentalism is intricately tied to national identity, with religious tradition frequently viewed as a cultural and national cornerstone, beyond its spiritual significance. This link is especially evident in nations with Orthodox and Catholic heritage, where faith underpins national identity. In Orthodox countries like Russia, Serbia, and Greece, religious fundamentalism is often framed as safeguarding the “holy nation,” and the Church acts as a custodian of national history and identity. Fundamentalist ideologies assert that any departure from established traditions constitutes a betrayal of the national mission. Within the Catholic sphere, particularly in Poland and Ireland, Catholicism has historically been intertwined with national identity and the pursuit of independence. Contemporary fundamentalist movements frequently leverage this historical association to validate their opposition to liberal reforms, such as those pertaining to abortion or same-sex marriage.

In Europe, Islamic fundamentalism exhibits a distinct dynamic, often intertwined with the identity of migrant communities who may experience marginalisation and seek alternatives to cultural integration. For numerous young Muslims born in Europe, adopting fundamentalist perspectives can serve as a form of cultural resistance and a method for constructing their collective identity. Across these scenarios, fundamentalism operates as an ideological instrument for defining and safeguarding national or cultural identity, gaining significant influence by merging religious legitimacy with national sentiment, thereby establishing a platform capable of mobilising substantial segments of the populace.

3.2. *Attitude towards democracy and pluralism*

The stance of religious fundamentalism regarding democracy and pluralism is intricate and frequently paradoxical. While fundamentalist movements often leverage democratic processes to legitimise their viewpoints, engaging in elections and utilising freedom of expression to disseminate their ideology, their core tenets are frequently at odds with the principles of liberal democracy. This is primarily due to their pursuit of establishing a singular, “true” value system. Within the European landscape, this inherent ambivalence is particularly evident in Orthodox and Catholic fundamentalist currents. These groups actively engage in political processes, advocate for legislative amendments, and frequently establish politically oriented Christian parties. However, their objective is not to bolster pluralism but rather to curtail it, often under the guise of upholding “moral order” and “traditional values.” Islamic fundamentalism in Europe presents an ambivalent stance toward democratic principles. While some Islamic organisations actively participate in democratic institutions, leveraging the pluralistic framework to safeguard their communities’ rights, radical fundamentalist factions often repudiate democracy as a Western construct, advocating instead for the implementation of Islamic Sharia norms. This inherent dichotomy generates friction between Muslim communities and European secular states.

It is noteworthy that despite frequent critiques of democracy by fundamentalist movements, they often strategically utilise democratic processes for mobilisation and legitimisation, thereby creating a paradox. Democratic institutions facilitate their existence, yet their objectives frequently involve curtailing the very freedoms that democracy upholds. Furthermore, fundamentalism and pluralism are inherently antithetical, as a pluralistic society embraces diverse worldviews and lifestyles, whereas fundamentalism seeks a singular, absolute truth. Consequently, the conflict between these two concepts is unavoidable and typically manifests in cultural and political discourse.

3.3. *Cultural conflicts and integration*

A prominent outcome of religious fundamentalism in Europe is the emergence of cultural conflicts. Fundamentalist movements frequently challenge prevailing liberal values within European societies, resulting in overt disagreements concerning topics such as women's rights, freedom of expression, education, and the function of religion in public life. For instance, discussions surrounding the wearing of the Islamic hijab or burqa in public have become symbolic of the wider conflict between religious identity and the secular tenets of the state. Prohibitions implemented in France, Belgium, and other nations have elicited strong responses, with fundamentalist organisations perceiving them as an assault on their beliefs and heritage. Concurrently, Christian fundamentalist movements in Europe are engaging in cultural disputes regarding abortion, same-sex marriage, and gender equality curricula. These movements view liberal culture as a menace to traditional values and organise through demonstrations, lobbying efforts, and media campaigns.

The integration of migrant communities presents an additional layer of complexity. Fundamentalist tendencies within Islamic communities are frequently linked to insufficient integration and marginalisation, rendering young Muslims who perceive a lack of belonging in European society more susceptible to radical ideologies. European nations are employing diverse approaches, with some implementing stringent assimilation policies while others champion multiculturalism and dialogue. Nevertheless, cultural conflicts persist and often serve as a catalyst for populist and nationalist political movements. By radicalising cultural differences, fundamentalism exacerbates integration challenges and intensifies feelings of division, posing a significant hurdle for contemporary Europe, which must reconcile its liberal values with increasing religious and cultural diversity.

4. Globalisation and the European Perspective

4.1. *Fundamentalism and Migration*

Fundamentalism and migration are intrinsically linked in the current European landscape. Globalisation has spurred significant population movements, fostering multicultural societies across Europe. While this has undoubtedly enriched European culture, it has also generated new tensions, frequently serving as a catalyst for the emergence and consolidation of religious fundamentalism. Migratory patterns from the Islamic world to Europe are particularly salient in this regard. In nations such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, Muslim communities navigate challenges related to integration, economic marginalisation, and cultural disparities. Consequently, a segment of young Muslims may adopt a fundamentalist identity as a means of resisting assimilation and discrimination. However, religious fundamentalism associated with migration is not exclusively tied to Islam. Within certain Orthodox and Catholic diaspora communities, a pronounced inclination exists to uphold "pure tradition" as a response to perceived cultural threats in their new surroundings. This often culminates in conservative and fundamentalist interpretations of faith. Furthermore, migration can also contribute to reactive fundamentalism among indigenous populations. The emergence of significant Muslim communities and cultural changes are fueling the growth of right-wing and Christian fundamentalist movements, which claim to defend "European culture" from "foreign influences." This two-way process creates a vicious circle of mutual radicalisation.

4.2. *Role of media and technology*

Contemporary media and technology are pivotal in the dissemination and evolution of religious fundamentalism across Europe. The digital era has facilitated the dissemination of fundamentalist ideologies at an unparalleled pace, reaching previously inaccessible audiences, particularly younger demographics who are prominent users of internet and social media platforms. The internet and new media have created platforms where fundamentalist groups can build their own narratives, recruit followers and strengthen a sense of community. This is most often manifested through online forums, YouTube channels, blogs and especially through social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Telegram. Islamic extremist organisations adeptly leverage technology for propaganda dissemination, recruitment, and mobilisation. Through professionally produced videos and interactive platforms, they cultivate an appealing narrative for young Muslims in Europe, portraying fundamentalism as an authentic and defiant identity. Christian fundamentalist movements utilise diverse media platforms, including television channels, radio, and online portals, to promote their viewpoints. This strategic deployment of media serves to propagate messages against abortion, same-sex marriage, and the secular policies of the European Union, thereby transforming media into a contested arena for the cultural conflict between liberal and conservative perspectives in Europe.

Technology also facilitates the transnational connectivity of fundamentalist groups, allowing ideas and strategies from the United States, the Middle East, or other regions to be readily adapted and implemented within the European context. This fosters a new form of globalised fundamentalism that possesses both local and global characteristics. However, media and technology are not solely instrumenting for radicalisation; they also present opportunities for resistance and critical discourse. Civil society organisations, academic institutions, and state authorities leverage these channels to promote dialogue, tolerance, and extremism prevention. Consequently, the digital sphere represents an ongoing struggle between fundamentalist and democratic forces.

4.3. *European institutional response*

European institutions have encountered a growing challenge in recent decades concerning religious fundamentalism, stemming from migration, globalisation, and the emergence of radical ideologies. The institutional response has alternated between two primary strategies: prioritising security and fostering multiculturalism and integration. The European Union has formulated a comprehensive set of policies designed to prevent radicalisation and enhance social cohesion. Through initiatives like the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), it facilitates the exchange of best practices among Member States, encompassing education, local programs, and de-radicalisation efforts. The Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights play a crucial role in reconciling security measures with the safeguarding of fundamental rights. Ongoing legal and political discourse persists regarding matters such as the prohibition of the burqa, limitations on religious symbols in public institutions, and oversight of religious organisation funding.

In the realm of security, Europol and national intelligence agencies collaborate extensively to preempt terrorist acts and dismantle radical networks. However, these initiatives frequently face criticism for potentially infringing upon privacy rights and discriminating against religious communities, occasionally exacerbating distrust. Conversely, European institutions endeavor to bolster cultural and religious tolerance through intercultural dialogue projects, research funding, and support for civil society organisations dedicated to migrant integration. This strategy is predicated on the understanding that preventing fundamentalism is a protracted process necessitating education, social justice, and economic parity. Despite recurring critiques regarding the perceived inadequacy or

contradictory nature of the European institutional response, it nonetheless exemplifies an effort to reconcile security imperatives with liberal values across the continent.

Conclusion

Research into religious fundamentalism in European culture reveals that it is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, deeply rooted in the historical, political and cultural processes of the continent. Although often perceived as a modern reaction to globalisation and secularisation, fundamentalism has deep roots in European history, including reformist, nationalist, and conservative movements. Its emergence in Catholicism, Protestantism, Orthodoxy, and Islam suggests that it always develops in conditions of cultural and social crises, functioning as a response to the perceived threat of loss of identity and values, but also as a reaction against modernisation and liberal ideas.

Within the political landscape, fundamentalism is frequently linked to national identity and the preservation of traditional values. The inherent tension between fundamentalism and democratic pluralism is perpetual, as fundamentalism often asserts absolute truths, whereas pluralism advocates for the coexistence of diverse societal perspectives. The cultural conflicts arising from fundamentalism underscore Europe's ongoing challenge in reconciling liberal values with religious traditions. While European nations endeavor to foster tolerance and multiculturalism, they simultaneously confront radical movements that advocate for the reinstatement of "pure faith" and the rejection of secular principles.

Globalisation has amplified this dynamic, facilitating the accelerated dissemination of fundamentalist ideologies via migration, media, and technological advancements. The internet has established novel platforms for mobilisation, while migration has introduced new considerations regarding integration and cultural cohesion. European institutions have endeavored to address these challenges through security and integration policies; however, their methodology has frequently been critiqued as lacking sufficient efficacy. Future outlooks are contingent upon Europe's capacity to reconcile its liberal tenets with the imperative to safeguard cultural diversity. This necessitates strategic investments in education, fostering dialogue, and implementing robust integration policies, alongside the unequivocal protection of democratic principles against radical threats.

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