



Fundamentalism: Prophecy and Protest in an Age of Globalization

By Torkel Brekke

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This book investigates the origins of fundamentalism, outlining its characteristics and the history of key fundamentalist movements around the world, considering examples from Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. The book argues that fundamentalism develops when modern lay religious leaders challenge the authority of secular states and traditional religious establishments. These new leaders and their followers seek to infuse religious values and practices into all spheres, especially law, politics, education, and science. The patterns of religious authority and leadership that characterize fundamentalism have their roots in a Christian context but were globalized through intense intercultural contacts after the mid-nineteenth century. Fundamentalism is a thoroughly modern and global phenomenon because it presupposes the globalization of ideas and practices concerning religious leadership and organization, as well as universal changes in the relationship of religion to modern societies and states.

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Review

"A lucid, accessible, and sophisticated account of fundamentalism as a global phenomenon, this book provides us with both a context and a language to understand some of the most important religious movements of our time. Having been neglected by scholars and languished in the hands of polemicists for more than a decade now, Torkel Brekke has rescued fundamentalism as an analytical concept."

Faisal Devji, University of Oxford

"I highly recommend Torkel Brekke's study of fundamentalism. In particular, his analysis of the global import of processes associated with social differentiation in relation to changing notions of authority allows for a detailed display of features common to fundamentalism in a variety of contexts. A fine contribution to the literature on this very important subject."

John Kelsay, Florida State University

"[This] is a compelling read that will make an excellent methodological tool for any scholars interested in world religions, comparative religious ethics, social-protest movements, globalization, modernity, and method and theory in the study of religion."

Travis Warren Cooper, Religion

About the Author

Torkel Brekke is a Professor of the History of Religions and South Asian Studies at the University of Oslo. Before being appointed to his current position, he completed his DPhil at Oxford and served as advisor in the Norwegian Ministry of Defence. Besides his university position he works for the think tank Civita. He has written and edited several books, including *Makers of Modern Indian Religion* and *The Ethics of War in Asian Civilizations*, and his articles have appeared in numerous journals.

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