

**Fundamental Religious Violence as a Minority Strategy
To Form a Communal Existence as a non Assimilated Counter Culture**

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While one possible course of action taken by religious minorities is expressed by their attempt to assimilate in their surrounding majority societies (may it be in their own country or in exile) another alternative (either because the religious minority was rejected, or because it itself refused to assimilate) is to strengthen their religious identity by using violence against the majority whom they define as their enemy.

This trend intensified since the mid 70's of the 20th century in all major fundamental monotheistic movements, such as *Gush Emunim* (the block of the faithful) in Israel, *the Moral Majority* in America, and in the case of fundamental Sunni and Shiite movements such as *The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood*, *The - Taliban* and in post revolutionary Iran. Actions of terrorist groups such as the *Jewish Underground*, *The Christian Army of God*, *Al Qaeda*, *Hamas*, and *Hezbollah* attest to this trend. After analyzing the writings of religious leaders such as Yehuda Ezion (the former leader of the Jewish underground) Abdallah Yusuf Azam (the forefather of Global Jihad and bin Laden's mentor) Ayatollah Khomeini (fundamental Shiism) and Mike Bray from the *Army of God*, one can see how "the minority versus the oppressing majority complex" advocates the use of force by manipulating certain religious texts in order to justify violent policies. It is also very important to note that a 'minority complex' can evolve in a certain group of Jews, Christians, or Muslims who dwell in their own majority societies, yet due to their unique religious interpretations and politics, they still feel and act as a minority.

This paper is based on a broader research project of mine which is still in process titled: ***"A Comparative Analysis on Fundamental Religious Violence: The Concept of Holy War in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – Past and Present"***.

While many scholars tend to understand fundamental religious violence by analyzing strategies and tactics, not enough pay attention to the linkage between religious text interpretation, modern political ideology, and the execution of violent policies

accordingly. My presentation will shed some light on this complex issue by examining the interpretation of certain religious texts in a political context, addressing all three monotheistic religions.

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