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Abstract

This paper analyses what the two main monotheist religious fundamentalisms – Islam and Christianity - have had to say about the international system, and in particular their attitudes towards, and visions of, ‘globalization’. The paper concentrate upon the fundamentalist position in respect to the two religious doctrines discussed while fully recognizing that the non-fundamentalists and mainstream traditions in each case do not necessarily share the sentiments announced by - or pursued by - their fundamentalist co-religionists. But it is the fundamentalist variants of the two doctrines that are having the greatest impact on the international situation, so the emphasis is upon these (though there are also some shorter reflections on Jewish religious fundamentalism). In addition, the paper concentrates upon the attitudes of these positions towards the idea of ‘territory’ since this is one of those categories that is more widely at stake in the general discussion of globalization and its consequences. Finally, the paper assesses the impact of these doctrines on the conduct of international relations, the likely success or otherwise of their impact, and the nature of the international system that is being forged in the wake of the re-emergence of fundamentalist activity in the domestic and international spheres.

Key words: fundamentalisms, globalization, religions, territories, international conflict, liberalism.

1. Introduction

This paper investigates what the fundamentalist variants of the two main monotheist religions - Islam and Christianity - have to say about modern day ‘globalization’ broadly conceived. I say broadly conceived because the ‘world view’ of these fundamentalisms does not always directly address the idea of globalization directly. Indeed, for the most part these fundamentalisms do not address globalization at all. But they have much to say about the proposed ‘global reach’ of their messages, programmes and actions. What is done, therefore, is to mine their public pronouncements and popular writings to ‘reconstruct’ their view of the global process and what their place within it might be. For the most part what has been written about Islam - and to a lesser extent Christianity – in relation to globalization is to ask the question, ‘What has been the reaction of these religious movements to the process of globalization?’ (Marty & Appleby 1993, Mohammadi 2002, Dunning 2003, Tétreault & Denmark 2004). Thus this form of analysis seeks to explore how these religions have *reacted to* ‘globalization’. The following remarks seek to redress this a little by asking not so much what their reaction has been to this process but what their conception of it is. It is argued that these religious ideologies are not just the passive recipients of the globalization process, but are active agents in shaping that process and its discourses. Although the paper cannot fully explore all the complex reciprocal relationship between the religious ideologies and globalization, what it seeks to uncover as a first encounter is the nature of their own ‘analyses’ and views in respect to their place in the contemporary global system. And this is further limited in that it concentrates upon the fundamentalist position in respect to these religions, while fully recognizing that mainstream Christianity and Islam express a quite different position to the ones outlined in the paper. But it concentrates upon theses fundamentalist variants in the first instance because these are the ones that are most extreme, and probably the ones having the most direct and immediate impact on the current politics of

the international system. Near the end, there are also some shorter reflections on Jewish religious fundamentalisms and their importance.

A second preliminary point is that the paper takes the pronouncements of the individuals, groups and organizations involved in fundamentalist activity very much at their face value. Here the attempt is to be as honest as possible, letting the groups and organizations 'speak for themselves' without necessarily questioning the logic or realism of their pronouncements. At least that is what is done for the most part and in the first instance. Towards the end of the 'honest exposition' in each case a commentary is provided to clarify, and sometimes to be more judgemental of the positions announced by the fundamentalists. And this approach of letting the fundamentalist speak for themselves has extended to the definition of what fundamentalisms might be. The groups, individuals and organizations self-define this by advancing their own *claims to be* fundamentalist, or them being recognized as such by close observers or their co-religionists. In most part, of course, this claim is based upon their demand to take the word of their God entirely literally.

A final introductory remark concerns the idea of 'territory' that appears in the title. This paper is part of a larger investigation into the fate of borders, territories and frontiers in current discourses of globalization and the international system, and the consequences of these conceptions for the future of a broadly liberal domestic environment and international order. Thus the paper pays particular attention to the way territory operates in the pronouncements and writings investigated below, though at times these conceptions have had to be reconstructed as the analysis goes along from the fragments offered in the writings and pronouncements of fundamentalist organizations.

2. *Al-'Awlama* (Globalization) According to Muslim Fundamentalists¹

In early April 2005, a few weeks after the Madrid bombings by Islamic extremists (which happened on 11 March 2005) a key ideologist of al-Qa'ida, Lewis 'Atiyyatullah, published an article in the Global Islamic Media Internet forum in which he outlined al-Qa'ida's perception of the international situation at that time and into the future. In this 'Atiyyatullah suggested that:

the balance of power will change; the international system built-up by the West since the Treaty of Westphalia will collapse; and a new international system will rise under the leadership of a mighty Islamic state.

(This appears under the heading 'Al-Qa'ida: Islamic state will control the World' posted by an Israeli news bureau - http://www.themedialine.org/news/print_news_detail.asp?NewsID=5420)

In fact, Lewis 'Atiyyatulla is a pseudonym for a rather mysterious Saudi dissident who, it seems, actually lives in exile in London. The article appeared as a letter to Ruven Paz ('So Said Al-Qa'ida: A Letter to Reuven Paz'), an independent Israeli scholar heading a think-tank called the Project for Research of Islamic Movements – PRISM (www.e-prism.org).² According to Paz, 'Atiyyatullah is probably the most renowned of a number of 'interpreters' of Osama bin Laden and his global Jihad. These interpreters and ideologues emerged in the early 2000s and are very popular among the younger generation of al-Qa'ida supporters. (Of course, they may also be part of a disinformation programme designed to confuse the West). But a number of 'Atiyyatullah's relatives are active in the al-Qa'ida movement. He began advocating Jihadi doctrines in the 1990s, and fled the Saudi authorities following his alleged involvement in the Riyadh bombings of May 2003. In September 2003 he escaped to London, where he joined the Saudi Islamist oppositionist in exile there.³

In his letter 'Atiyyatullah explains that he wrote it to Paz because he was:

one of the first of those who showed interest in Osama Bin Laden's old article entitled 'The New International Regime'.... and you advocated that those in the U.S. and Europe interested in al-Qa'ida must read the article seriously...

In fact, this article is called 'The New World Order as written by Usama bin Ladin' and was originally published in November 2002 on 'Atiyyatullah's web-site (at the time <www.yalewis.com>) and subsequently appeared on several others. This web-site is no longer operating and it has not been possible to trace the original article. The following account relies heavily upon the discussion in Paz (2003). This 'New World Order' article is important since it lays out the change in strategy that al-Qa'ida adopted in the second half of the 1990s, namely to switch from attacking Islamic 'near neighbours' to targeting the USA and its allies and the West in general⁴. Bin Laden says that his thinking on this developed from 1992 onwards. It contained two key aspects:

a) There is no chance to change the situation of the Islamic world unless the role of the United States is singled out, b) The United States could not be defeated by an army or by any traditional military confrontation

(or at least not yet – see below, GFT).

Here, then, was the origin of the so called global Jihad.

According to bin Laden this Jihad would have four stages: The *first stage* was the current offensive by Jihadists and suicide bombers on the home ground of the enemy. The *second stage* - and a first priority for the near future - was to defeat Arab governments. This would be done by:

Imposing upon the American administration direct cooperation with us. The United States itself will remove the legitimacy of the [Arab] cartoon states. The American direct involvement in the affairs of the Muslim world, by limiting the power of their rulers or by encouraging them to behave according to the American dictates, is the ideal situation that we have wished for a long time. When the direct confrontation between the Americans and us comes, the agent Arab and Islamic governments will be of no importance.

The *third stage*, called the stage of isolation, would involve the Islamists isolating the American administration from its own people on the one hand and from its allies on the other. The *final stage* would be the direct confrontation with the United States, the defeat of its global power by destroying it and the rest of the West on their own soil. This would shift the centre of gravity back to the Islamic world and create the conditions for a new global Islamic *ummah*.⁵

This 'vision' is important, bin Laden emphasises, because it differentiates the al-Qa'ida group from other Islamic movements which have been paralysed by their twin obsessions with, first, a limited *regional* perception to their activities and, second, with the purely *national-statist* dimension to political reconstruction. As argued strongly by Olivier Roy (2004) contemporary Islamic projects – both pietistic and radical - are becoming increasingly disconnected from particular territories. These are creating, in their eyes, the conditions for a new global de-territorialized *ummah* (though, perhaps this would be better describes as a *differently-territorialized* or *re-territorialized ummah* – see below).

But there is an issue as to exactly what the political form of a post-Western Islamic *ummah* would take for the likes of al-Qa'ida. In the missive from bin Laden about his 'New World Order', this is left un-specified and generally remains vague. Although in the letter to Paz 'Atiyyatullah speaks of a mighty global Islamic *state*, this is contentious since in general bin Laden and the other leaders of al-Qa'ida eschew the explicit idea of a state in the commonly

understood meaning of that term, since their religious ideology is genuinely trans-territorial. Perhaps it is worth recalling at this point Max Weber's classic modernist definition of the nation-state as: 'the legitimate monopoly over the use of violence within a recognized and bounded territory.'⁶ Thus modern statehood is based upon the coupling together of the principles of *territoriality*, *jurisdictional or administrative capacity* and *military monopoly*, including the use of violence, and the *legitimacy* to do so. By contrast the Islamic fundamentalists often speak in terms of a global 'community' or (less often) a global 'nation' rather than a state. We return to the implications of these differences later.

Getting back to the change in strategy that occurred in the mid-1990s, this is forcefully indicated by what bin Laden himself had to say in his two most important *fatwas* issues around that time. The following two direct quotes illustrate the tone of this change in direction:

My Muslim Brothers of The World:

Your brothers in Palestine and in the land of the two Holy Places are calling upon your help and asking you to take part in fighting against the enemy -your enemy and their enemy- the Americans and the Israelis. They are asking you to do whatever you can, with [your] own means and ability, to expel the enemy, humiliated and defeated, out of the sanctities of Islam.

(Osama bin Laden's first 'Ruling' - 'Declaration of War against the American Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places', first published in the London-based newspaper Al-Sharq al-Awsat in August 1996. www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html) See also Lawrence 2005, p.30)

The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies - civilians and military - is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim.

(Bin Laden's second 'Ruling', his declaration on the establishment of the 'World Islamic Front for the Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders' originally published in London by Al-Quds al-Arabi on February 23rd 1998. www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1998.html) See also Lawrence 2005, p.61).

Apart from confirming the nature of the proposed Jihad, these quotes are notable for what they say about the key objective of that Jihad: to rid the soil in the Islamic world – and particularly the 'Holy Places' – of foreign control and influence. On the other hand, and in addition to this primary objective, there is the waging of the genuinely global Jihad against the infidels and their eventual outright defeat. The post-1990s period is typified by an uneasy oscillation between these two objectives, possibly deliberately fostered by al-Qa'ida in its efforts to keep the West unsettled and the Middle-East focussed on its main grievance.

Two further reports from - or about - bin Laden add to the evidence on the nature of al-Qa'ida's strategy. The first, from the late 1990s testifies to the siege mentality surrounding bin Laden's outlook, his messianic message, and the need for an 'Islamic state'.

Since the fall of the Islamic Caliphate state, regimes that do not rule according to the Koran have arisen. If truth be told, these regimes are fighting against the law of Allah. Despite the proliferation of universities, schools, books, preachers, imams, mosques,

and [people who recite the] Koran, Islam is in retreat, unfortunately, because the people are not walking in the path of Muhammad...

In order to establish the Islamic state and spread the religion, there must be [five conditions], a group, hearing, obedience, a Hijra, and a Jihad. Those who wish to elevate Islam without Hijra and without Jihad sacrifices for the sake of Allah have not understood the path of Muhammad...

(‘Directions Regarding Methodology’ *From a speech by Shaykh Usaamah bin Laden* <<http://online.wehostfree.net/articlea89d.html?id=1011>>)

Finally, in 2003 bin Laden made a further speech in which he addressed the state of the Muslim world since the fall of the Caliphate, which was reported on another Israeli web-site, managed by the International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT). In this he again stresses that Islam is currently under siege. The Muslim nations are subjected to ‘occupation, discrimination and aggression’ perpetrated by ‘Israeli and U.S. forces,’ and the territories under the influence of Islam are steadily shrinking. Thus, ‘a powerless Islam will be confined to its own backyard’ and will be unable to fulfil Allah’s mission of spreading throughout the world as the one true religion. Islam will conquer the world, says bin Laden, only when it is purified of flawed modern Western values, such as ‘materialism’ and ‘secularism.’ He then calls on young Muslim everywhere to adopt what he calls Islam’s original message, updated in line with his own interpretation. The young generation is urged to enlist in Jihad for the purpose of establishing an Islamic state that will bolster Islam’s prestige, thus fulfilling Allah’s mission. (‘Osama bin Ladin as the New Prophet of Islam’, Y.Kahati & Y.Figheh, July 2003, <www.ict.org.il/> See also Lawrence 2005, pp.187 -232 where similar sentiments are expressed by bin Laden).

The lack of an entirely consistent message from these various pronouncements should not be unexpected. They are not meant to be part of an academic debate conducted at a seminar in a liberal arts college. They are written by activists and clerics, directed both at a home grown audience and a Western audience, probably in an attempt to unsettle Western observers and politicians. But it is clear that for al-Qa’ida at least the Jihad is not *just* about ridding the Americans from the Arabian peninsular and Jerusalem, but does have a grander objective in mind. Thus those who insist that a Western withdraw for the Muslim heartland would satisfy extreme Islamic fundamentalism are most probably badly mistaken. These pronouncements also say something important about all religious fundamentalisms: they each seek to prevail in matters of salvation.

But what of the political form that the post-Western global system would take from the point of view of this Islamic fundamentalist position? Clearly, there is at least a gesture towards the Caliphate, and the Ottoman Empire remains something of a model (see Mattera 2005 for background to the geo-political history of Islamic expansion and retreat, also Ruthven & Nanji 2004). On the Caliphate, the tone of the message can be judged from something written as early as 1994 by Omar Abu Omar (alias Abu Qutadah) a Palestinian, also residing in London under political asylum, and another of the main ideologues of the global Jihad. In his collection called ‘*Articles between two Doctrines*’ he writes:

When we talk about the Jihad movements in the Islamic world we mean those groups and organizations that were established in order to eliminate the evil (*Taghutiyyah*) heretic (*Kafirah*) regimes in the apostate countries (*Bilad al-Riddah*), and to revive the Islamic government that will gather the nation under the Islamic Caliphate.

(From an article titled ‘The comprehension of the civilizational view and the duty of Jihad’ Omar Abu Omar ‘Abu Qatada al-Filastini’, ‘Shumuliyyat al-Ru’ya al-Hadhariyyah wa-Fardiyyat al-Jihad’, *Maqalat Bayn Minhajayn -* ‘Articles between two Doctrines’. Originally on-line but now lost - quoted directly in Paz 2002, p.2).

But both the Islamic Caliphate and the Ottoman Empire were overtly political institutions rather than religious ones. And hereby lies the problem. As stressed by the most astute of the 'political Islam' commentators such as Roy (1994, 2004) and Kepel (2004a, 2004b), this division between the political aspects of radical Islam and its religious expression creates a tension which is not easily resolved, if resolvable at all. Broadly however, they both argue that this 'resolves' itself in a political formation, to some extent at the expense of religious purity, even for extreme fundamentalism.

In connection to this Paz suggests that this indicates to the beginning of a new general Islamist trend and doctrine, that of 'The non-Territorial Islamic State' – a kind of super-state perhaps.

In this framework of doctrine, Muslim communities in the West should be perceived as a kind of Islamic State without territorial dimensions and the ideal and religious mission of Islam to establish the one Islamic state and rule

(Paz 2001, p.1)

The origins of this doctrine were developed by Islamic scholars, again in the UK. It puts the emphasis on the socio-cultural, economic, and political levels of the consolidation of the Muslim communities, particularly those in the West, but also uniting them with those in the Middle-East, Africa and Asia. In theory, this also gives freedom to the principle of Islamic pluralism and the activity of a variety of organizations, groups, and institutions, from all kind of trends of Islamic modern thought. The democratic and liberal environment of Western countries mostly influenced this pluralism, but it also served to carry the fundamentalist message from the Islamic homelands to this newly emergent *ummah*. One of the main supportive elements of this doctrine is the interaction between different Muslim populations from various Muslim countries, nationalities, regions, cultures and different theocratic trends (e.g. on Sufism see Ernst, 2005). It involves Egyptians, Palestinians, Pakistanis, Turks, Algerians, Malaysians, Indonesians and others. But in addition, this interaction assists in the mutual influence, cooperation, solidarity, and the developing sense of a global threat to Islam and the Muslims.

In part this would account for Kepel's belief that the struggle for Muslim minds may hinge most of all on European Muslims. In countries such as France, Britain and Germany, large Muslim populations are living in secular, democratic societies. All the tensions and contradictions of the larger Muslim world are compressed into the lives of these European Muslims, but they are free to let the struggle play out in open debate. Thus, it is in Europe that Islam may finally find its accommodation with modern life. And this would emphasize a conservative Islamic *dawah* (preaching and propaganda) as against the radical extremist *jihad*.

But the globalization of the reaction to this threat has also led to the doctrine of a global Jihad. Clearly, the al-Qa'ida movement is an attempt to capitalize on these developments by presenting itself as the vanguard in the fight for Muslim self-esteem. To some extent, this it does by encouraging what Paz calls 'Social Terrorism': terrorism that is primarily motivated by social elements, such as the hatred of foreigners, growing unemployment, poor economic circumstances, difficulties in coping with Western modernization, the change and dismantling of traditional values and of family ties, etc. This, of course, is different to 'Religious Terrorism' which would seem to be its main motivation, but al-Qa'ida has been able to neatly marry these two forms of terrorism together, particularly in Europe (Paz 2002).

An important point about extreme Islamic fundamentalism, however, is how its operatives tend *not* to be closely – or very closely – embedded in some local Muslim community. Of course, they mix there, but they tend to be loners out of joint with any such mainstream (perhaps better termed 'traditional') community. As Roy (2004) has shown their main points of contact are fostered within a 'virtual community' based upon the Internet, which is devoid

of local place. Indeed, Khatib (2003) describes the Internet as a ‘portable homeland’ for fundamentalists – a ‘space’ where they can strengthen their global ties and communicate not just with each other, but also engage with the wider world at large (for her it is described as a ‘glocal force of citizenship’ – but surely a rather perverse form of citizenship, it might be added). Alternatively, it is increasingly a temporary local place such as a prison where they meet and recruit. In addition, they are often found moving regularly between their ‘homes’ in Western countries and training and spiritual camps and places in the traditional Muslim homelands. And what is true of the militants is also to some extent true of their spiritual leaders, the radical Imams. These act as a kind of roving internationally itinerant ‘spiritual Club Class’, preaching in and moving between friendly Mosques, often from one country to another.

In his discussion of ‘globalized Islam’ Roy (2004) identifies two types of globalization processes. On the one hand there is the migration of Muslims from their countries of origin to the West, and then there is the process – the one mainly discussed so far here - of a Jihadist movement of expulsion and conquest. Roy suggests both of these processes are undermining the idea of community at the same time as they celebrate it. Both are devoid of a real sense of a *cultural community* of belonging. Their only common link is to a *religious one* of faith and struggle. Thus from his perspective there is little point in trying to re-activate the idea of an embedded community at the local level, into which the disaffected young potential Islamic activists could be re-connected and re-embedded (broadly, the conception behind a liberal strategy of ‘multiculturalism’)⁷. This does not exist from the militant’s point of view. Rather their perspective is one of a radicalized essentially itinerant and de-territorialized ‘warrior politics’ aimed at establishing a religious *ummah* on a global scale. Their ‘new frontier’ is a fluid one: first the re-conquest of the ‘taken’ Islamic lands, then the push to extend Islamic rule and *sharia* law to the rest. They face an open, ever moving frontier of struggle and conquest; their ‘politics’ is de-territorialized and abundantly unconstrained. Small, roving bands of militants are the iconic (if not necessarily the actual) organizational form, loosely linked by a global network. The traditional nation-state is redundant to this conception, hence the end of the Westphalian system as announced by ‘Atiyyatullah.

But is this *ummah* little more than an *imaginary* community? Roy (2004) strongly suggests that it is not. His point is that the current movement of fundamentalists is not based on any actual community or territory; their only resort is to an imagined *ummah*, which is everywhere and nowhere at the same time. But perhaps it is also more than this. It may be a fanciful dream but there is a real dynamic of conquest, conversion and (new) territory building in the ideology of fundamentalist Islam. It is not quite the extra-territorial movement it is often made out to be. The operatives of al-Qa’ida, for instance, do genuinely want (though perhaps also ambivalently) to construct an ‘Islamic (super)State’ in the image of the Caliphate despite the deterritorialized nature of their immediate struggle. And this is a sentiment shared by other Islamic fundamentalist groups⁸.

In her recent analysis of the nature of space, the geographical theorist Doreen Massey calls for a multiplicity of conceptions of ‘globalization’ and the different spatial imaginations and relationships they construct (Massey 2005, chapter 8). I would suggest that the Jihadist conception just outlined at least partially meets that request. But at the same time it is perhaps surprisingly similar to quite conventional conceptions of what globalization means and implies, particularly those that emerge from a culturalist reading of globalization⁹. Also, there is a more general dismissal of the continued pertinence of the nation-state from wider political economy and cosmopolitan positions on globalization. In this sense, then, the Islamic fundamentalist ideology outlined here has much in common with a wider anti-globalization movement of the West, something stressed by Roy (2004) in particular. It shows that Islamic fundamentalism is a thoroughly ‘modern’ movement – one emerging from and directly engaging with Western modernization – despite its own disavowal of this and a continual emphasis on its Muslim historical roots and the restoration of past glories¹⁰.

There is also a similarity in spatial imagination over the question of 'difference'. Fundamentalists work against the disavowal of sameness and the displacement of difference on to others. They represent a retreat, or a withdrawal, from difference in the name of sameness. They want us to all be the same – the same as them - and some of them are prepared to die to achieve this.¹¹ Indeed, as has been often stressed, socially, the suicide bombers of al-Qa'ida have been rather like 'us' – mainly from the West, educated, urban, linguistically polyglot, not particularly 'religious' in the actual practice of their day to day way of lives, originally from caring and largely intact families (Sageman 2004). And in a somewhat different register, this disavowal of difference is a view shared by neo-liberal economic fundamentalist in their view of globalization: there should be no spatial obstacles to the operation of the market, the *same* undifferentiated conditions of competition should be faced by all.

Of course, there are other Islamic conceptions of globalization to the extreme one presented here (see Kuru 2005 for responses in case of the Turkish example). Indeed, there are very different ones even within the radical Muslim world. Take the cases of Hamas and Hezbollah (the 'Party of God'). Despite their differences, these two movements share a common commitment to an essentially 'national struggle': they are fighting for a Palestinian national state above all else. Thus despite the often extreme nature of their operational practices, these two movements remain part of a rather older tradition of 'national liberation struggles', something they even share with the mainstream PLO. The PLO is not a fundamentalist but a secularist organization and many of its leaders have been Christians¹². These organizations also hark back to an Arab Nationalist past – something, perhaps in retrospect, sorely missed under present conditions (which also had many Christian leaders). What is more, it could be argued that the current struggle in Iraq owes as much, if not more so, to a nationalist agenda than to the global Jihad, though here things remain confusingly complicated. But this is the main general point made by Kepel, Roy and Tibi (2002); that radical Islam cannot avoid eventually taking a political path or form.¹³

This also accounts for Al-Qa'ida's at best ambivalent attitude towards the Palestinian cause. Of course, bin Laden and his fundamentalist allies always include a concern for this centrally in their public pronouncements, but its overt nationalism does not altogether suit their purpose. The PLO, on the other hand, takes a view on globalization that would continue to strongly stress the importance and role of the nation-state, in distinction to the global Jihadist, political economists and cosmopolitans alike. The PLO has a very clear idea of the importance of a specific territory with boundaries around it, even if it may condemn other alleged and real pernicious aspects of globalization.

And this might also enable us to re-think a response to the global Jihadism. One of the key motifs of the conventional reaction is to worry about the 'identity' issues associated with disaffected Muslim youth, Jihadists, fundamentalists, and their like. In principle, identity can be attached to a number of aspects of individual or cultural features: race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, colour, religion, nationality, language, etc. Thus there exists a 'menu' of possibilities to which identity could be attached; individually or collectively, to one or other of these dimension or to a combination of them. In a perceptive little book Amin Maalouf (2000) suggests that primary personal identity is dependent upon that feature or dimension of social existence that is considered to be under the fiercest threat or attack. Clearly, for Muslim youth – those thought to be the most vulnerable to the attractions of fundamentalism – it is religion that has captured their primary identification¹⁴. What should be the response to this? Maalouf suggests that only 'universal values' of humanity and tolerance can hope to provide an alternative in a globalized world. This, then mirrors, the calls of others like the influential British commentator George Monbiot who also sees the need for a response like this at the 'global level' to what is in effect a truly global threat (to 'us'), one that would stress universal and enlightened values

<http://www.monbiot.com/archives/2005/08/09/the-new-chauvinism/>>. But is this possible, feasible or realistic?

An alternative – much despised by the globalists of almost whatever kind – is to re-emphasize the need to re-territorialize much international activity, to re-emphasize the advantages of the national state as the primary site for identification and focus of loyalty, to stress the nature of citizenship and civic virtue in this context, to focus on the law as a mechanism for dealing with religious strife, and so on¹⁵. From a globalist point of view of course, this particular response is pointless: it speaks to a Westphalian world that has now passed.

But has it? Clearly, the analysis above suggests the opposite, something that ‘political Islam’ has also (often only implicitly) stressed. A programme of re-territorializing the international in various ways and to various degrees, in the face of supposed ‘globalization’, is not beyond conception or feasibility (see Thompson 2004, Benhabib 2002) and it has distinct advantages over either an idealistic global cosmopolitanism on the one hand (whether secular or religious) or a tendency towards interventionary repression on the other. These are both equally dangerous responses to the present international predicament.

Finally, what about the specific case of the global Jihad? Clearly this has little hope of being successful. Not only does it come up against the obstacle of politics and ‘nationalism’ within the Muslim world, or the deep unattractiveness of a ‘mighty Islamic state’ for the rest of those in the West, but it also ignores the real changing actuality of global power. The new powers in the global system are China and India (who between them have 2.3bn population), soon to be followed by the likes of Russia, Brazil, and East-Asia more generally. The idea that these countries are going to bow down before the followers of global Jihad, and roll over in front of them, is almost as preposterous as thinking that al-Qa’ida could actually defeat the US militarily on a global scale.

3. The ‘Emerging Global System’ according to Christian Fundamentalist

I once asked [Binyamin Netanyahu](#) why he accepted the support of the Christian fundamentalists, since they believe that at Armageddon all the Jews will be destroyed or converted? He said that he tells them that he welcomes their support and that when they get to Armageddon, they can argue about it then.

(Jacqueline Rose: *Nation as trauma, Zionism as question: Jacqueline Rose interviewed*, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/conflict-debate_97/zionism_2766.jsp>)

The rather unexpected ‘rapprochement’ between Zionism and Christianity currently observed in the international system, and hinted at by Binyamin Netanyahu’s¹⁶ response to Jacqueline Rose’s¹⁷ question in the quote above, provides the context for the following discussion of the Christian fundamentalist understanding of the present and future of the ‘global system’, broadly conceived¹⁸. Whilst it might be thought that Christianity and Judaism, for instance, were incompatible religious doctrines (after all, it is the Jews who are traditionally argued to have been responsible for the death of Christ within the Christian tradition – see below), under the auspices of the ‘born again’ movement with its fundamentalist re-interpretation of the Christian message there is opened up the possibility of a reconciliation between these two religious traditions. And this reconciliation is most acutely posed by the newly invigorated ‘Christian Zionist’ movement in the USA.

In fact, ‘Christian Zionism’ (CZ) is just that, a reconciliation between Christianity and Zionism rather than between Christianity and Judaism, though it does strongly implicate the religious aspect to Zionism and its particular political project. But strictly speaking Zionism is a secular political project. That political project is, of course the establishment and securing of the State of Israel in the land of Palestine, and CZ in the USA strongly endorses this project,

even with its Jewish religious overtones and its sometimes extremist Judaic organizational thrust. Additionally, there is the complicated relationship between Zionism and ultra Orthodox Judaism discussed below, but this is left aside for the moment.

However, the 'reconciliation' between Zionism and Christianity is also somewhat ambivalent since – as Netanyahu indicates – the final 'final solution' is promised as Armageddon approaches: Jewish assimilation or its annihilation! In the meantime, political pragmatism prevails. But, for obvious reasons, it remains a rather uneasy pragmatism, as indicated below.

The reason why CZ is of current interest – and positively reeks of political pragmatism – is because of its connection to the American Presidency of George W. Bush. There is good evidence that CZ and the neo-conservatism of the Bush administration are linked (Paul Rogers: *Endless War: The global war on terror and the new Bush Administration*, Oxford Research Group, Briefing Papers, March 2005, p5-6, and 'A Heavenly Match: Bush and the Christian Zionists', Donald Wagner *Daily Star*, 10/12/03 - <<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article4960.htm>>). The neo-conservatives – of whom Dick Cheney (the US Vice President) Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz (the US Defense secretary and his deputy respectively) are probably the best known, but which include such influential commentators as William Kristol, Robert Kagan and John Bolton¹⁹— have taken the US into its various ventures in the Middle-East on a basically unilateralist, interventionary and militaristic ideology.

How seriously, then, should we take the CZ and neo-conservative adventure? Clearly their unconditional support for Israel is real, the influence of fundamentalist Christianity on their approach well documented and the fact that they believe what they say, and in the literal interpretation of the Bible's message that is expressed by those fundamentalist, should not be underestimated. Whilst one might have some reservations about the direct relationship between religious ideology and political strategy, this does not mean that there is no connection. The nature of these reservations is picked up again later.

The main doctrinal basis for the CZ reconciliation is what is known as 'Dispensational Theology' (DT) and without enquiring into the nuances of this doctrinal position the new 'global play' of its implications will remain obscure. Thus the next section lays this out in a little more detail.

4. Dispensational Theology and Christian Fundamentalism²⁰

Dispensation Theology is that system of theology that attempts to develop the Bible's philosophy of history on the basis of the sovereign rule of God. This philosophy is particularly concerned with the ultimate purpose or goal for history towards the fulfilment of which all history moves. It presents the whole of Scripture as being covered by several (seven in all) dispensations of God's rule.

The 'dispensations' concern the divine administration or conduct of the world. The word 'dispensation' has its etymological roots in the Greek terms for household administration and the proper dispensing of tasks through the operation of stewardship (i.e. a responsible office or ministry entrusted to care by a higher authority). Thus these dispensations are the particular and distinct ways that God administers his rule over the world. But failure is built into these dispensations because mankind continually refuses to obey the dictates of the dispensation, thereby requiring divine judgement. DT is thus ideologically pessimistic and cataclysmic.

From the point of view of earthly governance and its relationship to the international system and CZ, it is the later five dispensations that are the most relevant ones, so we begin with the third of these.

The third dispensation inaugurates human governmental agency. When Cain, (the first murderer) was spared, God ordained capital punishment for murderers (*Genesis*). This required a human government to investigate murder and then to apprehend and try the murderer, and administer the sentence. The primary role of government was thus to administer the restraint against lawlessness and rebellion of humankind²¹. This third dispensation was also accompanied by a special revelation: God commanded mankind to multiply and populate the earth.

Of course, mankind failed the test of living by this third dispensation. Two important points emerged from this failure. First, Noah's son Ham disobeyed and rejected his father, which led Noah to pronounce a curse on Ham's own son Canaan. This condemned the Canaanites to a life of servitude, which was in part fulfilled when God commanded the people of Israel to conquer the land of Canaan (in part, the Biblical origin of the move to establish an Israeli nation-state – see below).

Secondly, although Noah's descendants initially rebelled against God's command to settle the whole earth – the basis of a further failure of mankind—God brought his judgement to bear by confusing their language. Up to this point all humans had spoken the same language. But their dispersal to different areas of the earth began the population of those areas, with their inhabitants speaking different languages. This was the basis of the development of the different nation states. Thus, different languages and nations began as a result of mankind's rebellion against God's rule and God's judgement of that rebellion.²²

The fourth dispensation concerns God's promises to Abraham. This involved a crucial *national promise* concerning Israel. God would bring Israel into existence as a nation, give Israel the land of Canaan forever, and establish the Abrahamic Covenant with that nation as an everlasting covenant.²³ This in turn meant that mankind's Messiah-Redeemer would necessarily come through Israel.

It is when we reach the fifth dispensation that we learn how the people of Israel failed to live up to their obligations as commanded by God, and how this formed the basis of the schism with Christianity. Abraham and his descendants disobeyed God on several accounts; they lied and deceived him and others. In particular, the Jewish people did not return to Canaan from exile in Egypt; they ignored that their destiny was related to the promised land of Canaan rather than to Egypt (*Exodus*).

Once again these failures brought divine judgement. In particular the Jewish people were subject to slavery and threatened with extinction in Egypt. To the fourth dispensation the fifth dispensation added Mosaic Law as a ruling factor. Mosaic Law, first revealed by Moses on Mount Sinai, involved the famous ten commandments as written on tablets of stone. The central core of the ten commandments were extended to 613, outlining the detail of God's moral, civil and ceremonial administration of Israel's life²⁴.

But the people of Israel failed the test of this fifth dispensation. They disobeyed God's will and repeatedly broke the Mosaic Law. During this dispensation Israel also rejected the Messiah and, of course, was responsible for his crucifixion. This dispensation thus lasted until the death of Jesus, when the Mosaic Law (and the fifth dispensation) was terminated. God's judgement for these misdemeanours was cataclysmic for the Jewish people: the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, Greek and Roman oppressions, and their temporary removal from 'the place of blessing' with their world-wide dispersion.

The sixth dispensation extends from the death of Jesus Christ to his Second Coming. The early history of Israel clearly demonstrated man's inability to obey God. Thus, God began a sixth dispensation in which the organized Church was to maintain a pure membership, discipline unruly members, to prevent false teaching from existing within it, and to contend earnestly for the true faith. Individual believers were to live sensible, godly lives, to be

associated with a local church, to evangelize and make disciples, and to use spiritual gifts properly.

Once again, mankind fails the test of the sixth dispensation. The majority of unsaved Jews and Gentiles did not fulfill their obligations and by the end of this dispensation, the unsaved would stage a major revolt against God's rule. This failure during the present dispensation brings God's judgment and chastisement, even premature physical death to some believers for disobedience. Towards the end of the dispensation, the prophecy goes, God will remove the Holy Spirit's restraint on evil and apostate organized Christendom will be destroyed. God will pour out divine judgments upon the world and he will crush the revolt of the unsaved²⁵.

The seventh dispensation will begin after the Second Coming of Christ and will end immediately before the release of Satan from the abyss and his final revolt (*Revelations*). The most significant ruling factor of the seventh dispensation will be the rule of Christ over the entire earth (*Isaiah*). The world will have a truly *theocratic government* in which the rule of God will be administered worldwide through his representative, Jesus Christ. This, then is the particular Christian fundamentalist conception of 'globalization', I would suggest. It reduces human government to the dictates and requirements of Christian divine rule, as well as casting this over the entire globe. At one level, of course, this conception is fairly rudimentary and obvious. And is it not particularly novel or developed. Again, we have the idea of an extra-territorial global 'politico-confessional community' driven exclusively by religious commitment.

Of course, Man will fail the test of the last dispensation. Some unsaved individuals will rebel outwardly against Christ's rule during his reign. Others will not rebel outwardly, but they will struggle inwardly against it. When the seventh dispensation ends and Satan is released from the abyss, these people will follow Satan in his last revolt against God's rule and Armageddon will ensue.

The failure of large numbers of people to follow this dispensation will demonstrate that the ultimate cause of man's undoing and rebellion throughout history is not his external environment and circumstances but his own inward, sinful nature which rejects the rule of God and asserts self-rule²⁶. Thus Christian fundamentalism and its Islamic counterpart are thoroughly 'individualistic' in their doctrines. They both involve practices of individual conversion and redemption. They are not 'social' movements.

Mankind's failure in conjunction with the seventh dispensation will bring God's vengeance - Armageddon. Those people who rebel outwardly during Christ's reign will be executed. In addition, God will crush the huge revolt which will take place immediately after the seventh dispensation by casting Satan (the Anti-Christ) into the lake of fire for everlasting torment. Thus God will finally glorify himself by crushing Satan and his kingdom, restoring His Kingdom and rule to the earth through Jesus Christ and reversing the tragic consequences of man's rebellion.

A controversial aspect of DT within the born again tradition is that it maintains a strict differentiation between the Church and Israel. The dispensationalist believes that throughout the ages God is pursuing two distinct purposes: one related to the earth with earthly people and earthly objectives involved, which is Judaism; while the other is related to heaven with heavenly people and heavenly objectives involved, which is Christianity. In an apparent attempt to keep law and grace distinctly separated, DT has divided the nation of Israel from any connection with the Church of Jesus Christ. The physical race of Jewish people is regarded as God's 'earthly people' while Christians are regarded as God's 'heavenly people.' Dispensational theology indicates that separate promises are given to Jewish people and to Christians, and differing destinies await them. In particular it seems, the earthly people (the Jews) are likely to experience Armageddon somewhat more severely than are their heavenly

counterparts (the Christians). In particular, those ‘saved Christians’ who follow the fundamentalist DT line will be the overall beneficiaries, since they will be exempt from the punishments and tribulation associated with Armageddon. The saved will ascend to heaven (through the ‘Rapture’) whilst the battle goes on at ground level, and stay there until Jesus finally returns triumphant.

What this all amounts to is the belief that God has given a series of dispensations to the Jewish people to prepare the way for the Second Coming (though they will suffer, in particular, in both the run up to and after this Second Coming). In particular it is necessary for the Jews to first return to Palestine and then establish a Jewish-Israeli state there to fulfil the Biblical prophecy and hasten the Second Coming (since Jesus will of necessity appear through Israel). *And this is the basis for the reconciliation of Christianity and Zionism, since it is Zionism that has brought the modern Israeli state into existence.* But any build up of armies on its borders ready to attack it is seen as a sign that the final battle is imminent. The anti-Christ will appear and the final climactic Battle of Armageddon commence²⁷. In the mean time, the CZs are absolutely opposed to the creation of a Palestinian State, in favour of the unity of Jerusalem under direct Israeli control, and vehemently hostile to Muslims who they see as worshipping a false God.

However, as just indicated, there is a rather profound ambiguity operating here, since the object of all of this is to see Jesus return as soon as possible so as to put his heavenly people out of their misery. But, by bolstering the state of Israel and supporting the Jewish people against their enemies, the consequence would seem to be to put off this final coming! As far as I can judge, this ambiguity has not been fully resolved within dispensationalist teaching.

Before we proceed to assess the importance of this ‘turn towards fundamentalisms’ amongst the Islamic and Christian traditions, there follows a short section on Jewish religious fundamentalism, which, whilst not unimportant, is less significant in its consequences for the future of the international system. What it shows however, is why the reconciliation with Christianity is so ambiguous.

5. Jewish Religious Fundamentalism

Judaic religious extremist fundamentalism, rather like its Christian and Islamic counterparts, is a highly complex formation. First there are the ultra-orthodox Jews in Israel itself. These could amount to as much as 11% of the residents there (<http://www.opendemocracy.net/conflict-debate_97/democracy_sharon_3172.jsp>). At its extreme, this ultra-Orthodoxy consists of groups such as the Hasidic Neturei Karta (‘the Guardians of the City’), a small fringe group of anti-Zionist fundamentalists who reject Israel and view it as a heretical entity. They want nothing to do with the state and live in enclaves where they shut out the secular modern world as much as possible. But amongst the ultra-Orthodox can also be included some of the adherents to the Agudat Israel Party who accept the state of Israel, although not its messianic pretensions, and work within many of its institutions. The Agudists’ primary mission was to rebuild the seats of rabbinic learning that the Nazis had extinguished, and they concentrated on such things as securing state aid for their school system or exemption from army service for their Talmudic students (all orthodox Jews are exempt from military service). They have had ministers in various Israeli governments. Such compromises are anathema to the Neturei Karta, who regard themselves as the sacred remnant, while others have sipped with the devil. The sect does not recognize the state of Israel. It considers it blasphemous to create a Jewish state in the Holy Land before the coming of the Messiah (see ‘In a State over Israel’ by Simon Roker, *The Guardian*, November 25, 2003). In addition, there is the ultra-Orthodox Jewish political party Shas, which champions the cause of Sephardic Jews of Middle Eastern origin. This has had several

members in the Knesset (the Israeli parliament), and although generally supportive of the left has entered into coalition with the right-wing Likud party.

The traditional role of these groups however has been 'isolationist'. They have sought to isolate themselves from an engagement with the outside world (especially international matters), and live quite 'contemplative lives'. Since early Talmudic times, the rabbis mandated passive waiting for supernatural redemption and firmly condemned any political attempts to hasten the redemption (known as *dehikat ha-ketz*, literally 'pushing the end') as a heretical usurpation of the Messiah's role. They see the Zionist movement as presumptuously trying to pre-empt the hand of providence by wanting to cast off 'the yoke of exile' before the divinely appointed time of redemption. In particular, the rabbis cited a Talmudic passage referring to 'three oaths' governing the children of Israel in exile. The Jews had undertaken not to return to the land of Israel en masse, or to 'rebel against the nations' who hosted them; while the nations had agreed not to oppress the Jews too severely in return.

Then there are a significant number of religious Zionists who view Jewish rule over the entire territory of biblical Israel (the *Eretz Yisrael Ha-Shleyma*) in apocalyptic terms. They depart from the essentially quietist and passive posture of traditional Jewish messianism. These groups are often referred to as 'Orthodox Zionists'. They have been represented historically by a number of political parties or coalitions, and have been the driving force behind many of the extra-parliamentary social, political, and Jewish terrorist movements that have characterized Israeli society since the June 1967 War (<<http://countrystudies.us/israel/41.htm>>). Most Orthodox Zionists have been 'ultra-hawkish' and irredentist in orientation; the settlers of Gush Emunim ('the Bloc of the Faithful'), is the most prominent of these groups. But amongst the religious Zionist zealots have been small explicit terrorist groups like Kach ('thus') and Kahane Chai ('Kahane lives') (<<http://cfrterrorism.org/groups/kkc.html>>). These operated since in the 1980s to attack Arabs and Muslim holy sites in an attempt to expel the Palestinians and extend Israeli settlement control over the entire West Bank.

The founder of the Kahane Chai terrorist group was an American, Rabbi Meir Kahane, who emigrated to Israel in 1971. And it is the American connection to ultra Jewish Orthodoxy that adds another dimension to its fundamentalism. Many of the groups and movements discussed above have their counterparts amongst the US Jewish community. But there are two related others that are worth drawing attention to since they exemplify the complexity of the Jewish fundamentalist movement. The first of these are the 'True Torah Jews' who live to promulgate the teaching of the Torah (the sacred book of Jewish law). They want to inform the American public and politicians in particular that all Jews do not support the ideology of the Zionist state of 'Israel' which in their eyes is diametrically opposite to the teachings of traditional Judaism. Their website opens with the following statement, which neatly summarizes the reasons for opposition to Zionism prevalent amongst these groups

... Torah-true Jewry has steadfastly opposed the Zionist ideology. This struggle is rooted in two convictions:

1] Zionism, by advocating a political and military end to the Jewish exile, denies the very essence of our Diaspora existence. We are in exile by Divine Decree and may emerge from exile solely via Divine Redemption. All human efforts to alter a metaphysical reality are doomed to end in failure and bloodshed. History has clearly borne out this teaching.

2] Zionism has not only denied our fundamental belief in Heavenly Redemption it has also created a pseudo-Judaism which views the essence of our identity to be a secular nationalism. Accordingly, Zionism and the Israeli state have consistently

endeavoured, via persuasion and coercion, to replace a Divine and Torah centred understanding of our people-hood with an armed materialism.

(‘True Torah Jews Against Zionism - Our Mission’
<<http://www.jewsagainstzionism.com/>>)

What this quote demonstrates is that ultra Orthodox Jewry also has an implicit vision of ‘globalization’ written into its basic precepts. The Jews live a divine existence by being in exile. Their diasporic existence confirms this. Thus the Jewish people are already trans-territorial. But they must rely upon the ‘hospitality of the nations’ (as mentioned above) not to oppress them rather than return en masse to Israel. This, then, looks suspiciously like a form of ‘religious cosmopolitanism’ reliant upon a kind of covenant to ensure compliance. However, like all covenants of this kind – and forms of trans-territoriality - it is open to abuse, something the Jewish people have experienced at first hand and on a terrifyingly large scale.

The other main American inspired ultra orthodox grouping discussed here is the modern Chabad-Lubavitch movement (which has its historical origins in what is now Belarus). This is important because it is typified by two controversial aspects: the explicit belief in a Messianic return of a saviour/messiah, and the need to proselytize and convert non-Orthodox Jews and others to the ‘true faith’; thus it demonstrates an ‘evangelical’ streak.

Messianism - the belief that God will choose a person to redeem the world - has been a central element of Jewish belief for 2,500 years. Among liberal Jews today, however, the idea has become muted or transformed into the belief that Jews collectively should work to repair the world’s ills. However, among traditional believers, the imminent coming of the Messiah remains a powerful hope. And this is strongly endorsed by the Chabad-Lubavitch sect. But such beliefs are controversial. There remains a theological dispute within Judaism over its importance. The Jewish rejection of the concept of a messiah who dies without having fulfilled the biblical prophecies of redemption but is reincarnated to save those who accept him into their hearts, lies at the centre of the historic Jewish-Christian theological dispute. The grand exception to the rabbinic principle that retains the Jewishness of non-observant members of the community (captured in the Talmudic dictum, ‘An Israelite, though he has sinned, remains an Israelite’) is a Jew who voluntarily accepted the belief in a *false* messiah. In a religion that is otherwise relatively unconcerned with doctrinal heresy, the idea of Christ as messiah reborn and God incarnate defined idolatry for Judaism in the post-pagan world. This is at the heart of the dispute with the Chabad-Lubavitch sect since they believe that their recent leader - Rabbi Menahem Mendel Schneerson - was such a messiah who lived here on earth, and they await his return. For other Jews this is a heresy, and few of them retain the traditional, passive belief in miraculous messianic redemption. In part this is because Jews are living in a de facto post-messianic era because supernatural redemption is not nearly so sorely needed as it was in the pre-modern era of Jewish powerlessness and incessant suffering, something Zionism has been instrumental in securing

Secondly, the Chabad-Lubavitch are aggressively outward looking and evangelical, and with some success. This goes against the tradition ultra-orthodox sentiment of isolation and quietism in the hope of an eventual mystical final redemption. The Chabad-Lubavitch are accused of extremist fundamentalism as a result. One of the interesting features of this sect is that it has had the greatest success in the US, which itself has a long tradition of fundamentalist evangelicalism amongst Christian communities. The national-cultural cross-over involved here is probably not unconnected to the modern Chabad-Lubavitch history as a US phenomenon. And this mutation is further illustrated by the proselytizing ‘Jews for Jesus’ movement in the US.

Perhaps all this would be unimportant were it not for the rise of Jewish Ultra-Orthodoxy and the political impact it is having particularly in Israel. This is mainly ‘domestic’ in

consequence however; to do with who controls which political districts and funds, who can be a citizen, the kind of Law that should rule everyday practices, etc. For secular Jews in particular the escalating power of ultra-Orthodox values over those of modern Orthodoxy and thereby on the totality of Jewish life is unsettling. The far right in Israel has effected a quantification of piety that steadily ups the religious ante for all Jews. Thus any observer of the Jewish culture can attest to ever more products at Passover with special certification; ever higher *mehitzas* separating men and women in the synagogue; the growing demand of candidates for conversion to observe every single commandment of Judaism; religious authority measured by years of study rather than quality of thought; the infallibility of policy decisions rendered by a council of Torah sages (the twentieth century innovation of *daas Torah*), and the triumph of *glatt kosher* in America since World War II (an animal with no adhesions on the lung). As yet, though, any effect on the international system of a purely Jewish religious ultra Orthodox revival have still to emerge, which is obviously not the same as saying that the effects of Zionism on the international arena have not yet been felt.

6. Why is this important?

The Christian evangelical movement is the fastest growing sector of the American Christian churches. In 2004, estimates of their number were at 75 million (26% of the population - <<http://pewforum.org/publications/surveys/green.pdf>>). Of course, not all of these are Christian Zionists – in the Pew survey just mentioned, only half described themselves as ‘Traditional evangelical’ which is the nearest equivalent. In a previous Pew survey, 60% of these said they believe in The Battle of Armageddon. They are formidably efficient in terms of activism in the service of Israel, and equally important electorally.

However, the relationship between this Christian Right movement and the political programme of the Bush Presidency is a fiendishly complicated, controversial and difficult one. Do we really find the following?

... a Christian President of a secular Republic using the apocalyptic language of a crusade, sacred charge, universal good and axis of evil, to prosecute a pre-emptive military campaign without territorial limit against a predominantly Islamic enemy in defence of Enlightenment notions of freedom.

(Northcott 2004, p.80)

Perhaps not quite. As one commentator has argued:

Ironically for a man who once famously named Jesus as his favourite political philosopher during a campaign debate, it is remarkably difficult to pinpoint a single instance wherein Christian teaching has won out over partisan politics in the Bush White House. Though Bush easily weaves Christian language and themes into his political communication, empty religious jargon is no substitute for a bedrock faith...

George W. Bush is neither born again nor evangelical.[...] the president has been careful never to use either term to describe his faith. Unlike millions of evangelicals, Bush did not have a single born-again experience; instead, he slowly came to Christianity over the course of several years And there is virtually no evidence that Bush places any emphasis on evangelizing - or spreading the gospel - in either his personal or professional life. Contrast this to Carter, who notoriously told every foreign dignitary he encountered about the good news of Jesus Christ

(Ayelish McGarvey, ‘As God Is His Witness’, *The American Prospect Online*, Oct 19, 2004.

<<http://www.prospect.org/web/page.wv?section=root&name=ViewWeb&articleId=8790>>

On the other hand, the influence of the neo-conservative 'Project for the New American Century' (PNAC) on US political policy – particularly military and defence policy - is clear, and this strongly endorses the CZ message, even if it would be pragmatically adapted or applied as circumstances change. The PNAC was established in 1997. Its major 'founding document' on defence policy was issued in 2000 - *Rebuilding America's Defences: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century* (<<http://www.newamericancentury.org/RebuildingAmericasDefenses.pdf>>). This suggested that the 'Core Mission' of the US in the international arena was to 'fight and decisively win multiple, simultaneous major theatre wars' and 'perform "constabulary" duties associated with shaping the security environment in critical regions'. This analysis is argued to have heavily influenced the Bush administration's 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (<<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf>>), which in many places matched the PNAC document word for word (see William Rivers Pitt, 'The Project for a New American Century' - <<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article1665.htm>>).

Here the point is to establish that CZ has provided *one* of the main intellectual foundations for the PNAC and the neo-conservative turn in the US, but not the exclusive one. Its 'theological' character has been supplemented by other conservative intellectual currents, particularly that of the 'realist' Straussian trend (named after the political philosopher Leo Strauss (1899-1973) see <http://www.opendemocracy.net/faith-iraqwarphilosophy/article_1542.jsp>)²⁸. In addition, these intellectual trends do not directly translate into clear political policies or military strategy. That change in strategy, however, suits the CZ position, confirming the support for Israel almost at any cost and strongly advancing the Christian message at a global level (amongst other messages, of course –those of democracy and freedom come to mind in particular). Thus the advantage for the Christian fundamentalist right in the US is that they already have a formidable fighting force with a global reach to advance their purpose. By contrast, Islamic fundamentalism is in a totally different situation which, in part at least, must account for its different tactics and strategy.

But this general change in strategy by the US inaugurated with the Bush administrations has led many commentators to suggest that it amounts to a radical attempt by the USA to establish a new global Empire under its imperial rule (e.g. Northcott 2004, amongst many others). Indeed, the idea of a new imperial age under US dominance has become a very popular academic motif since the mid-1990s. In the light of the above remarks, what can be made of such an argument? The final paragraphs that follow briefly address this issue by outlining several ways that an international system could be organized.

7. A New Imperial System?

Clearly, it is possible to run an international system as an imperial project. But this is only one of the 'logics' by which the international arena can be organized. Such a logic of an imperial system is typified by several emblematic features: the use of coercive power on the part of the imperialist, its deployment of direct administrative action in the imperial territories, and the mobilization of local elites as allies in those locations as crucial supports for the imperial effort. An issue is whether the USA does – or, indeed, could ever – resort to these features in the modern world. Two obvious major constraints on any return to imperial rule are the rise of 'nationalism' on the one hand and 'democracy' on the other. Both of these political ideologies and movements effectively destroyed the imperialisms of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, confining them to being failed political movements of a past age. Unless these ideologies can be completely displaced under present circumstances it is very unlikely that 'imperialism' could return. In addition, the USA has been unable to seriously mobilize local

supporters for its efforts at direct rule in any but a very few parts of the world, notably in the Middle East, and even here such support is weak and highly unstable. Thus, on this account at least, it is impossible for the US to be described as a new imperialist or for it to become one. Thus it might be wise to quickly forget all those many books and articles that combine 'Imperialism' with 'the USA' in their titles?

So what is the nature of the emerging international system if not an imperial one? Three other possible formations or logics present themselves.

The first of these is as a *Hegemonic Project*. Under this formulation the hegemon provides 'leadership' but does not coercively rule directly. The hegemon organizes 'consent' through negotiation and compromise with the other parties in the system, and must also compromise itself as a result. In so doing it often finds itself providing the major 'public goods' for that system – such as a security and defence umbrella, or the main international currency for trade and investment. Clearly, historically, this form of organizing the international system has proved very expensive for the hegemon (as well as for any Imperial power, of course²⁹). It more or less bankrupted the USA in the Post-War period up until the mid-1970s (before the next system kicked in, which is described in a moment). Such that a hegemonic project in the military sense exists at the moment, it is probably best described as the formation of 'coalitions of the willing'. But as the US has found these are difficult to stabilize under present circumstances, backed as they are by its insistence on a basically unilateralist military stance.

A second possible logic is provided in the form of a *Multilateralism*. This involves the formal equality of partners in any arrangement (if not always their actual equality, of course). These partners then negotiate and bargain between themselves to generate collective agreement as outcomes. It often involves self-policing by the partners to secure and monitor the implementation of these outcomes. Despite its somewhat discredited nature amongst current US neo-conservatives, this system has the great advantage that it is cheap to run. Because of this – and despite the neo-conservative distaste for it – countries will not give up their commitment to multilateralism easily, including, one suspects, the USA itself in the longer run.

Along with *Imperialism* then, *Hegemonic Projects* and *Multilateralism* amount to the three conventional approaches to running an international system that are recognized by contemporary scholarship. Whilst I have emphasised their different 'logics' above, they, of course, overlap in the actual conduct of international organization and rule.

But there is another third contender to *Imperialism* per se, which I would argue is possible as at least a semi-permanent logic of running an international system, and that is as a *Durable Disorder*. This involves a patchwork of overlapping often competitive jurisdictions and territories, where there are few public goods provided and only minimal collective endeavours. It is typified by the prevalence of unruly 'warrior' politics and ad-hoc interventions. It leads to the 'enclavization' of public and private life. This would also see the emergence of a 'leopard spot' economy – where small, isolated patches of prosperity and wealth are set amongst a more generalized inequality and economic failure³⁰.

In the light of both Muslim and Christian fundamentalisms, how does this 'durable disorder' shape up as an imaginary for the global system? Despite some superficial similarities, not very well is my verdict. Both MF and CF are clearly hopelessly unrealistic and politically naive in any modern world. However, that does not prevent them offering a simple and attractive vision for many millions of religious zealots. In a period when religious ideologies and movement are once again - perhaps rather unexpectedly - emerging as powerful forces challenging the continued possibility of liberal domestic systems and international orders, to ignore the characteristics of the most extreme versions of these religious ideologies is to

ignore a genuine and ubiquitous challenge, if not direct threat. Such an attitude of dismissal or simple condemnation could prove perilous for the future.

8. Conclusions

I wish to emphasize several points in conclusion

First there is the issue of what these religious fundamentalisms amount to politically. Clearly, although their default position is one of ‘a return to the sacred texts’ they are largely shaped by contemporary political issues. Thus they are quintessentially a response to modernity and its vicissitudes. They are as much part of ‘liberalism’ and ‘globalization’ as a desperate critique of it. Despite impressionistic appearances to the contrary, their radical populism contains its own very political projects and agenda.

But secondly, Christian and Islamic fundamentalisms are not quite on a direct par in this regard. CZ has the edge here since its ideology runs parallel to that of the global ‘lonely super-power’. Quite what the precise relationship is here, however, remains the topic for further research and reflection. On the other hand, whilst Islamic extremism clearly sees itself on the defensive, its overt trans-nationalism is continually usurped by a stubborn attachment to particular territories and nationalisms with an eye to its operatives taking power in their home territories in the first instance. Here while their tactics may be to take the fight to the enemy, strategically they cannot seriously expect to defeat it there.

Third, there is the fraught issue of ‘culture’. The above analysis has emphasised that religions have to be treated positively – as historical phenomena to be described and analysed in their own terms and not as derivative effects of some more fundamental (cultural) structures or forces. Thus religious fundamentalisms are not cultural movements in the normally understood sense of those terms.

Finally, we may well be seeing the emergence of a radical ‘pluriverse’ rather than a single ‘universe’ making up the international system. This means there is no already existing common sphere into which we can tap. There is no single ‘cosmos’ to which cosmopolitanism, for instance, would be the politically possible answer – the ‘globe’ of globalization does not exist. If this is so, we are facing several ‘cosmoses’ driven by different gods, which in turn drive humans. So, it is not so much men who make war but gods. The question becomes: ‘can there be a dialogue of the gods?’

Under such circumstances, peace must be composed anew. Peace is an undertaking; it must be fabricated and constructed between the parties. And the gods must be taken into the peace-making chamber. It is difficult to see them being ‘hung up outside’, as it were (though this is not impossible perhaps?). Such peace-making anew is likely to take a long-time, and to some extent the longer the better because it means all parties learning to live in a different world (Thompson 2004/2006a). And here the different politico-historical trajectories of Christianity and Islam, and the lessons to be learned from them, come sharply into focus. Can the traditional separation of church from state so carefully crafted in the West - which is in many ways the defining characteristic of liberal pluralism and its measure of peaceful coexistence between what were at one time fratricidally rivalrous religious communities – survive the renewed onslaught from religious fundamentalisms?

¹ There are of course several variants of ‘Muslim fundamentalism’. These range from what Roy (2004) has called Islamists (those concerned directly with politics) to the ‘neo-fundamentalist’ who eschew

politics in the name of a devout adherence only to the word of Allah, through to violent, often nihilistic terrorist activity of al-Qa'ida and its like. In my view these are not quite as separate as Roy would like to make them out to be, certainly not at the discursive level. For the most part in what follows I take the al-Qa'ida group as emblematic of 'Muslim fundamentalism' more generally because it is its most extreme version, it conducts its activity very much in the name of Islam (even though it does not necessarily always practice what it preaches), and it represents the most visible expression in the international arena. The sources of this fundamentalism within Islam is often traced to the Sufi mystic Ibn Taymiyya (1268-1328 AD) who presented a radical reading of the Quran in which for the first time jihad against heretics or apostates who implemented 'man made laws' was not only allowed, but seen to be obligatory (see - <<http://www.pwhce.org/taymiyyah.html>>).

² Paz may have close links to the Israeli security services. Whilst this might make one cautious about what he says, the standard of his writing quoted below looks very careful and fair as far as I can judge. But there remains the possibility that what Raz says is self-serving, so I try to provide supplementary back up evidence later by quoting bin Laden, and others, directly.

³ 'Atiyyatullah published another missive during the Iraqi constitutional process of mid-2005, arguing that to participate in the voting on this was not necessarily a traitorous act of fraternization with the enemy ('A Greeting and an Advice to the Mujahideen in Iraq Concerning the Constitution Referendum' <<http://www.siteinstitute.org/>> accessed on 08/30/05). In this he contradicted bin Laden's explicit position ('Bin Laden acknowledges Zarqawi's leadership and calls for a boycott of elections in Iraq' <<http://siteinstitute.org/bin/articles.cgi?ID=publications14204&Category=publications&Subcategory=0>>)

⁴ This change in strategy is often attributed to Ayman al'Zawahiri, the Egyptian doctor who became the al-Qa'ida 'second-in-command' and it's key strategist after the assassination of Abdallah Azzam in November 1989. In a long pamphlet entitled '*Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*', published in December 2001, al'Zawahiri urged jihadists to attack the 'faraway enemy' in the United States because that would help mobilize the Muslim masses to overthrow their rulers in the 'nearby enemy'. (<http://www.liberalsagainstterrorism.com/wiki/index.php/Knights_Under_the_Prophet's_Banner#Title:_Al-Sharq_Al-Awsat_Publishes_Extracts_from_Al-Jihad_Leader_Al-Zawahiri.27s_New_Book>). Until his death Azzam (a Palestinian militant ideologist of al-Qa'ida) had advocated the concentration of al-Qa'ida's activity on the countries around Afghanistan - Russian controlled central-Asia at the time, Kashmir and particularly Pakistan, and then going on to take Saudi Arabia to be followed by attacking the USA. al'Zawahiri opposed this as a 'localist' position, describing it as 'cat's piss politics'. By some reports he was thought to have been directly involved in Azzam's death (<<http://www.benadorassociates.com/article/598>>), while others attribute this to the ISI (the Pakistani intelligence services - Roy 2004, p.297). On this episode see also Lawrence 2005, pp.76-78 and the footnotes therein.

⁵ A number of respected commentators on Islamic fundamentalism and of al-Qa'ida in particular have argued that the organization has no proper 'strategy' (e.g. Roy 2004 p.55, p.294, Devji 2005). These commentators argue that al-Qa'ida is fundamentally messianic and reactive. The discussion here indicates that this is not quite so. And it can be further demonstrated by the document outlining it's role in putting pressure on Spain and other countries in Europe over the Iraq war ('Jihadi Iraq: Hopes and Dangers' - <<http://www.mil.no/felles/ffi/start/article.jhtml?articleID=71589>>). This shows quite a sophisticated understanding of strategic issues and was produced well before the Madrid bombings. What the al-Qa'ida movement seems to lack, however, is a seriously strategic view of the real balance of forces it faces, with whom it might strike alliances, how to advance its territorial claims, what compromises it might have to make, etc. With respect to Muslim fundamentalism more widely, however, this may have changed recently in that it is pragmatically viewing the western anti-globalization movement as a potential ally (Roy 2004, p.332-3). This might be further reinforced by al-Qa'ida's second in command, al-Zawahiri's call for a common coalition against the tools of the West that are being used to fight Islam. These include a litany of institutions and organizations, many (though not all) of which are also condemned by the anti-globalization movement: '(1)The United Nations, (2)The friendly rulers of the Muslim peoples, (3) The multinational corporations,(4) The international communications and data exchange systems, (5) The international news agencies and satellite media channels, (6) The international relief agencies, which are being used as a cover for

espionage, proselytizing, coup planning, and the transfer of weapons.’ (*Knights under the Prophet’s Banner*, Part 11).

⁶ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 2 (1978), pp. 904-905. Here Weber adds: ‘However, the monopolization of legitimate violence by the political-territorial association and its rational consociations into an institutional order is nothing primordial, but a product of evolution.’ This clearly differentiates Weber from the celebration of the nation state to be found in the work of Leo Strauss and contemporary American Neo-conservatives. Strauss believed the political state to be ‘rooted both in human nature and humanities place in nature’ (from ‘Correspondence Concerning Modernity’ (1946) *Independent Journal of Philosophy* 4., pp 107-8, 1983).

⁷ Both Kepel and Roy are hostile towards multiculturalism Kepel has argued it allows ‘local strongmen’ to dominate and reinforces a narrow world view which disenfranchises the young. Roy says Islam should be treated simply as a religion like any other and not linked directly to ethnic or cultural minority groups. Of course, these reactions may have a lot to do with the way France has tried to deal with immigration and Islamic activity (Kepel and Roy are both French). The riots throughout France in November 2005 focussed attention on these attitudes, and could perhaps lead to a reassessment of the virtues of multiculturalism.

⁸ For instance, in the UK, the Islamicist group *Hizb ut-Tahrir* argue for this explicitly as their main political objective:

‘ [Our] aim is to resume the Islamic way of life and to convey the Islamic *da’wah* to the world. This objective means bringing the Muslims back to living an Islamic way of life in *Dar al-Islam* and in an Islamic society such that all of life’s affairs in society are administered according to the Shari’ah rules, and the viewpoint in it is the *halal* and the *haram* under the shade of the Islamic State, which is the Khilafah State. That state is the one in which Muslims appoint a Khaleefah and give him the *bay’ah* to listen and obey on condition that he rules according to the Book of Allah (*swt*) and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (*saw*) and on condition that he conveys Islam as a message to the world through *da’wah* and jihad.’ (<<http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org/english/english.html>>)

⁹ *Hizb ut-Tahrir*, for instance, discusses ‘globalization’ in quite conventional terms. It is seen as one of five dangerous concepts (the others are Terrorism, Interfaith Dialogue, Compromise and Fundamentalism) deployed to mislead the true faithful (*Dangerous Concepts to Attack and Consolidate the Western Culture*, Al-Khilafah Publications, London, 1997). But the discussion of it is surprisingly similar to most critical and leftist analyses made by the anti-globalization movement (that it is led by multinational companies, driven by global financial flows and the communication industries, a disguise for American imperialism, etc.), and is compared to the missionary invasion of the nineteenth century (though this time it is more dangerous to Islam because it is not carried out under the cover of religion).

¹⁰ This point has been well made by many others of course, e.g Zubaida (2003)

¹¹ This is the site of a more general theoretical issue, to do with the relationship between difference and sameness. What divides ‘us’ are the things we share. What divides us are thus not so much differences as such as our similarities. We are ambivalently different and alike simultaneously. Thus fundamentalists represent an *idealized version of ourselves*, they are like us. In some ways they are more like ourselves than we are, even better than ourselves (see Thompson 2006b for a development of these themes). National borders (something shared) are an obstacle to sameness, hence their unimportance from the point of view of the *ummah* (and, indeed, neo-liberal conventional economics).

¹² For instance, one of the constituent elements of the PLO, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), was founded by the Christian George Habash.

¹³ Strictly speaking, however, from the fundamentalist position, engaging with political activity is akin to collaboration with the enemy which will result in punishment in the hereafter. If, for instance, a vote is cast in a *kufir* election, that commits the mortal sin of *shirk*—which is to associate other gods or rulers with Allah. Only God can be so endorsed. (Sayyid Qutb, ‘A Muslim has no nationality except his belief’ in *Milestones*, 1964). *Kufir* is disbelief; *kuffar* are unbelievers or infidels. ‘It is a fact of life that we must, to some extent, keep close company with the *kuffar*. This is almost unavoidable given that we work, study, and unfortunately play with them’, Amir Abdullah wrote in an article entitled ‘Preserving

the Islamic Identity in the West: Threats and Solutions,' published in the magazine *Nida'ul Islam*, in the spring of 1997. 'The likeness of Islam and *kuffar* is like that of fresh clear spring water and water brought up from the bottom of a suburban sewer. If even a drop of the filthy water enters the clear water, the clarity diminishes. Likewise it takes only a drop of the filth of disbelief to contaminate Islam in the West.'

¹⁴ For instance, Mohammad Sidique Khan, the presumed ring-leader of the July 7th 2005 bombing in London, was a devout Deobandi Muslim. The Deobandi are a large Sunni revivalist sect with their World headquarters, outside their Northern Indian base, located in Dewsbury, Yorkshire. They preach a puritanical and literalist form of Islam, including segregation of the sexes and abstention from any form of participation in politics. The basic rationale for these beliefs is that legislative authority belongs only to God; thus, for men to sanction their own governance even in the smallest way would be anti-Islamic. So the Deobandi interpretation holds that a Muslim's first loyalty is to his religion and only then to the country of which he or she is a citizen or a resident. Their preferred method of interacting with the rest of society is through propagation, and they are segregationist in attitude. In addition, the Deobandi sect stresses that Muslims recognize only the religious frontiers of their *ummah* and not the national frontiers. Finally, it preaches that the Deobandi have a sacred right and obligation to go to any country to wage jihad to protect the Muslims of that country (<<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-deobandi.htm>>. See also E. Masood 'A Muslim Journey' *Prospect* No. 113, August 2005, pp.42-47; and Lawrence 2005, p.95). According to reports after the bombing, Khan's family and friends had no idea he was involved in suicidal religious activity (<<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,22989-1693428,00.html>>). And this sect is not unique or unusual amongst Muslim migrants (<http://www.opendemocracy.net/conflict-terrorism/london_bomb_2682.jsp>).

¹⁵ On the questions of whether Muslims can be loyal citizens to European governments, the influential radical Islamists Tariq Ramadan has argued that when Muslim immigrants sign a work contract or accept a visa, they also recognize 'the binding character of the constitution or the laws of the country they enter into and then live in'. Unless a government specifically contradicts Islamic ways, Muslims are obliged to be loyal citizens and to influence the polity in constructive ways. 'We have to make it clear that this is not the reality. They have to accept that Islam is part of Europe. We are European citizens with a Muslim background.' (Report on interview in Brussels with Tariq Ramadan Iranian New Agency - <<http://www.payvand.com/news/02/sep/1077.html>>).

¹⁶ Binyamin Netanyahu was Finance Minister in Ariel Sharon's Likud government until he resigned in August 2005 over Sharon's policy of withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. He is a former Prime Minister of Israel and a fierce critic of the pullout plan championed by Sharon, and remained his rival for Prime Minister. During his time as Prime Minister in the late-1990s Netanyahu carefully and successfully cultivated very close links between his administration and Christian Zionism in the US ('The Interregnum: Christian Zionism in the Clinton Years' - Donald Wagner, *Daily Star*, 10/11/03 - <<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article4951.htm>>)

¹⁷ Jacqueline Rose is Professor at Queen Mary College, University of London, where she teaches in the School of English and Drama. The discussion from which the quote above is taken was mainly about her book *The Question of Zion* (Princeton University Press, 2005).

¹⁸ Of course, this is not simply a modern reconciliation: there is a long history of radical Christian support for Zionism, going back to as early as the 17th Century, and the Earl of Shaftsbury's support for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine in 1839, and the Balfour Declaration in 1917 (Wagner 2003, 'Christians and Zion: British Stirrings', <<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article4959.htm>>, and Northcott 2004, ch.2).

¹⁹ These commentators are closely associated with the neo-conservatives 'New American Century' project (<<http://www.newamericancentury.org/>>). John Bolton was made the US Ambassador to the UN in 2005. Kagan's best known books are *Warrior Politics: Why Leadership requires a Pagan Ethos* (2001) and *Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (2003) in which he argues: 'Europe is moving beyond power into a self contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation... Meanwhile, the United States remains mired in history, exercising power in an anarchic Hobbesian world where international laws and rules are unreliable, and where true security and the defence and promotion of a liberal order still depend on the possession and use of military might' (p.3)

²⁰ This section relies heavily on the exposition by Renald E. Showers ‘An Introduction to Dispensational Theology’ (<www.ankerberg.com/articles.html>) and the references therein.

²¹ Thus here is a difference between Muslim fundamentalism and Christian Zionism. As we have seen, Muslim fundamentalism does not sanction human earthly governance as such, but only sees it as a direct expression of Allah’s rule.

²² Here Dispensational Theology (DT) begins to part company with Covenant Theology. Covenant Theology is the main rival of DT within the ‘born-again’ Christian movement. Broadly speaking, it’s philosophy of history posits three overarching covenants; of Redemption, of Works and of Grace. The main ideological differences between the two is that CT is not fundamentalist, and CT stresses the role of ‘Law’ in securing the operation of the covenants (sometimes in distinction to the stress on ‘Grace’ attributed to DP). The stress on the role of ‘Law’ in CT – albeit a law solely attributed by God’s injunctions – lends itself rather more easily to current secular concerns of cosmopolitanism with international law and with covenants between nations and peoples – see Held 2004 in particular, (but also Jackson 2000 and Sacks 2003) who deploy the language of covenants and the rule of law to forward an agenda for better global governance.

²³ The ancient land of Canaan roughly corresponded to present day Israel.

²⁴ It is these 613 commandments that motivate the Jewish fundamentalist movement’s approach to religious (and social and political) life. See section 5 below for an elaboration of this point.

²⁵ Traditionally, DTs have called the seventh dispensation the ‘Dispensation of the Millennium’ – hence ‘millenarianism’. Since Dispensational Theologians normally name each new dispensation after its new ruling factor or factors, it usual to call the last dispensation the ‘Dispensation of the Righteous Reign of Christ’.

²⁶ Here, also, is signalled another difference between Muslim and Christian fundamentalisms. For Christians there is a history, if an entirely teleological one. This is not the case for radical Islam, however, since its religion is an expression of a universal truth only; the necessity to wage a permanent and endless jihad that is blind to different cultures. And it is very important to establish that fundamentalisms are not cultural movements. They do not care much or at all about culture or ‘cultures’. They are deeply ‘de-culturalized’ (in distinction to Turner 2002). They are idealized religious movements which transcend cultures in their single-minded devotion to the word of God. The Taliban, for instance, banned Afghan music, dancing, local festivals, it destroyed the Bamiyan Buddhist effigies (since Islam does not allow any representation of Allah or any other God). It was also indifferent to any particular cuisine; as long as it served Halal meat. Particular territories do not matter, nor particular cultural, ethnic or linguistic groups. As long as individuals commit themselves absolutely to the word of God, anyone can be a member coming from anywhere and from any community. They demonstrate a genuine radical universalism in this respect.

²⁷ President Ronald Regan expressed belief in the Battle of Armageddon in 1971 after Gaddafi’s coup in Libya: ‘That’s a sign that the day of Armageddon isn’t far off. Everything is falling into place. It can’t be long now..... fire and brimstone will rain upon the enemies of God’s people. That means that they’ll be destroyed by nuclear weapons’ (quoted in Northcott, 2004, p.66) and again in 1984: ‘You know, I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament and the signs foretelling Armageddon, and I find myself wondering if we’re the generation that is going to see that come about’ (in a conversation with Tom Dine, Director of American-Israel Public Affairs Committee) <<http://www.rotten.com/library/bio/presidents/ronald-regan/>>. See also Wojcik 1997.

²⁸ Infact, in the 1920s Strauss was an explicit Zionist (Zank 2002). Indeed, he struggled with political Zionism and Judaic religiosity for some time, before committing himself to a more philosophical politics of ultra-conservatism and ‘noble lies’, but he never quite fully renounced the importance of religion for moral purposes. Thus there is a certain continuity between CZ and the neoconservatives via Strauss.

²⁹ This point is well recognized by al-Qa’ida. The following remarks are to be found in bin Laden’s video address to the US in October 2004: ‘.....having experience in using guerrilla warfare and the war of attrition to fight tyrannical superpowers, as we, alongside the mujahidin, bled Russia for 10 years, until it went bankrupt and was forced to withdraw in defeat. All Praise is due to Allah. So we are continuing this policy in bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy. Allah willing, and nothing is too

great for Allah.' (<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/79C6AF22-98FB-4A1C-B21F-2BC36E87F61F.htm>). This also reinforces the point made earlier about al Qa'ida having at least a rudimentary strategic view.

³⁰ Tibi (2002) has drawn attention to the global disordering consequences of the rise of political Islam which he rather equates with fundamentalism: for him political Islam is a religious fundamentalism. The analysis here, however, keeps these two positions - political Islam and religious fundamentalism – apart, with the emphasis on the disordering consequences of the latter.

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