

IS RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM A PHENOMENON THAT PRIMARILY OCCURRED IN THE PAST OR ONE THAT PERSISTS IN THE PRESENT

1. **Sundas Malik**
sundasmalik92@gmail.com

Ph.D Scholar at Department of History and Pakistan Studies, International Islamic University, Islamabad.

2. **Bareera Nazir**
Bareeraqau@gmail.com

Ph.D Scholar at National Institute of Pakistan Studies, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad.

3. **Dr.Saad Jaffar**
saadjaffar@aust.edu.pk
corresponding author

lecturer Islamic Studies Abbottabad University of Science and Technology.

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been a significant emphasis on the topic of religious fanaticism. This phenomenon is sometimes depicted as a pressing global issue with potentially extensive consequences. While it is widely acknowledged that extremism can be observed among various religious communities, the matter regarding its extent, impact, and its classification as a worldwide catastrophe is a complex subject. Within the scope of this study, our objective is to examine the phenomenon of religious extremism, scrutinize its defining characteristics, and assess its veracity as a genuine reality, while also considering the possibility of exaggeration and sensationalism. To achieve this objective, we will analyze case studies, delve into historical context, and evaluate relevant statistics, all while considering the broader sociopolitical factors that shape this story.

Keywords: extremism, media, ideological differences, fanaticism, religious, exaggeration.

INTRODUCTION

The notion of religious extremism to facilitate a fruitful discourse on this subject matter, it is imperative to possess a comprehensive understanding of the precise parameters that define religious extremism. The phenomenon of extremism, encompassing religious extremism as well, is distinguished by the presence of rigid and inflexible ideals, often coupled by a readiness to employ violent or radical means in

pursuit of religious or ideological objectives. Extremism can manifest itself in several religious traditions, encompassing Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and other belief systems. The underlying tragedy of religious fundamentalism

HISTORICAL PRECEDENTS

In order to substantiate the existence of religious extremism as a genuine phenomenon, it is imperative to initially recognize the historical parallels associated with this problem. Throughout the annals of history, a plethora of instances can be found when acts of extremism have been driven by religious motivations. Instances of religious extremism resulting in severe violence and persecution can be observed in historical events such as the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, and the Salem witch trials, among others.

CONTEMPORARY ILLUSTRATIONS

The contemporary era witnesses an ongoing perpetuation of religious fanaticism. The emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) in the early 21st century and its violent activities throughout the Middle East serve as a significant illustration of the tangible existence of religious extremism. In a comparable manner, instances of far-right Christian extremists engaging in acts, such as the bombing incident that occurred in Oklahoma City in 1995, serve as a stark reminder that religious extremism can manifest within any religious belief system.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

Religious fanaticism exerts a pervasive influence on various aspects of society. The phenomenon under consideration possesses the capacity to induce regional destabilization, incite acts of violence, and result in the loss of innocent lives. Moreover, this phenomenon possesses the capacity to generate polarization within communities, exacerbate animosity and prejudice, and engender deep-seated differences that prove arduous to reconcile.

THE PHENOMENON OF RADICALIZATION AND THE PROCESS OF RECRUITING POTENTIAL MEMBERS

The internet and social media have facilitated the recruitment and radicalization of individuals into extremist groups. The aforementioned phenomenon has resulted in the rise of individuals commonly referred to as "lone wolf" terrorists. These individuals, while not affiliated with organized networks, carry out acts of violence that are motivated by extremist ideology. The individuals in question are commonly known as "lone wolf" terrorists.

THE EMERGENCE AND EVOLUTION OF EXTREMIST RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGIES

The topic of religious fanaticism is a complex and dynamic subject that may be traced back to ancient times. Gaining knowledge about the historical background of a subject might yield valuable perspectives on its present-day expressions.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORY IN THE EVOLUTION OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM

The Arian controversy within Christianity and the Kharijite movement in Islam serve as notable instances of early religious conflicts that may be employed as a foundational framework for examining the origins of religious fanaticism. The historical instances provided serve as illustrative evidence of how divergent ideological

perspectives within a religious group might potentially give rise to extremist tendencies.

THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

During the late 19th century and early 20th century, there was a notable emergence and proliferation of radical ideas inside religious frameworks. Two illustrative instances of this phenomenon include the Zionism movement and Hindu nationalism. The predecessors of contemporary religious fanaticism established the foundational framework for its subsequent evolution.

THE PHENOMENON OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East has emerged as a significant area of concern regarding religious intolerance due to the rise of extremist organizations such as Al Qaeda and ISIS. The occurrence of sectarian conflicts in this particular location has served as a catalyst for the narratives propagated by extremist groups.

THE PHENOMENON OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM IN ASIA

The Asian region exhibits a notable presence of religious extremism, shown in several instances such as the conflicts between Buddhists and Muslims in Myanmar, as well as the tensions between Hindus and Muslims in India. The examination of these occurrences leads to the broadening of our viewpoint.

THE PHENOMENON OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM IN WESTERN CULTURES

Religious extremism is a pervasive phenomenon that transcends geographical boundaries, manifesting itself in various regions across the globe. Extremist actions have been observed in Western nations, exemplified by the tragic incidents that occurred at a mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand, and a church in Charleston, South Carolina. Consequently, it is pertinent to undertake a comparative analysis of extremism and radicalism. To adequately assess the extent of the matter under consideration, it is imperative to differentiate between religious extremism and religious radicalism.

THE CONTINUUM OF RADICAL IDEOLOGIES

Within the realm of radicalism, a spectrum of beliefs exists, encompassing varying degrees of intensity, spanning from mild to extreme. It is imperative to differentiate between radicalism and extremism, as there are radicals who abstain from participating in violent activities.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF POLITICAL EXTREMISM IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

The phenomenon of extremism within religious groups should not be equated across different religions, as well as with political radicalism that may manifest within religious contexts. Rather than focusing on altering religious doctrines, the emphasis is placed on reconfiguring political frameworks. The Fallacy of Extremism in Religious Beliefs is a topic of concern within academic discourse.

A COMPREHENSIVE VIEWPOINT

There exist individuals who hold the viewpoint that the extent of religious fanaticism is often exaggerated. Despite the extensive media coverage of high-profile incidents, the vast majority of individuals who engage in religious practices do not turn to violent methods. Categorizing all believers as radicals can lead to inaccuracies and

the perpetuating of stereotypes. The phenomenon of selectively focusing one's attention has been widely studied in the field of cognitive psychology. This cognitive process involves the ability to There exists a perception among certain individuals that the media and governmental entities tend to disproportionately focus on extremism within the Islamic faith, while comparatively neglecting instances of extremism within other religious traditions. The perception of the issue among the general population may be distorted due to the presence of a biased emphasis.

THE MANIPULATION OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

The utilization of religious extremism by politicians for personal gain is an often-observed phenomenon. Governments and interest groups may manipulate the perception of extremism by either exaggerating or downplaying its potential threat in order to advance their own objectives. The implementation of this alteration has the potential to generate a distorted representation of the matter at hand. The concept of indistinct boundaries refers to the lack of clear demarcations or divisions between different entities or categories. Determining the precise parameters of religious fanaticism can pose a challenging undertaking. The existence of a continuum of extremism poses difficulties in discerning between conventional religious practices and extreme ideologies within a particular religious framework. The inherent ambiguity of this uncertainty possesses the capacity to be harnessed for the purposes of political or ideological pursuits.

THE FUNDAMENTAL FACTORS

It is imperative to examine the fundamental causes of extremism, encompassing socio-economic challenges, attitudes of marginalization, and political volatility. Focusing just on the external manifestations of extremism, rather than addressing the underlying issues, may yield limited productivity. The ultimate conclusion Numerous instances from historical records as well as contemporary observations offer substantial evidence of the existence of religious fanaticism, a phenomenon that is undeniably manifested. The impact on society is significant, and the potential for violent conduct is a matter that warrants attention. Conversely, it is as imperative to acknowledge the potential for sensationalizing and exaggerating religious fanaticism. The production of a more intricate visual representation arises from a confluence of various elements, encompassing the application of selective attention, political manipulation, and the deliberate obfuscation of boundaries between extremism and religious dedication. Employing a refined methodology is crucial in effectively countering religious fanaticism.

This proposed plan aims to effectively tackle the fundamental causes of extremism, while concurrently promoting religious tolerance, expanding educational access, and fostering social integration. Acknowledging the fact that religious extremism is not a singular, cohesive menace, but rather a multifaceted problem, will enable the development of more efficacious strategies for addressing this intricate challenge. By adopting this approach, there is a possibility of achieving a state of equilibrium in acknowledging the existence of religious extremism while dispelling the notion that it represents a global existential catastrophe.

SOME OF THE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM

A. Socio-economic Variables and Influences

Disparities in socioeconomic status are one of the variables that contribute to the phenomenon of religious fanaticism. Extremist ideologies frequently provide individuals who are marginalized and disenfranchised with solace and a feeling of purpose. These ideologies typically offer either transformation or a sense of belonging. These situations can be made worse by factors such as poverty, a lack of education, and limited economic possibilities.

B. Factors Involved in Politics Instability

In political institutions and widespread corruption can foster the growth of religious fundamentalism. It's possible that extremist groups may take advantage of this instability in order to promote radical reform and present themselves as a solution to existing political issues.

C. The Explication of Religious Beliefs

The ways in which religious texts are interpreted are a significant contributor to the development of extremism. Some people or organizations read the teachings of their religion in a way that gives them permission to commit acts of violence against other people. The nature of the relationship between these interpretations and the religious beliefs held by the majority is complicated and open to discussion.

D. Developments in Newer Technologies

Through social media and other online channels, the advent of the digital era has made it possible for extreme views to rapidly propagate. This has made it easier for people to join extremist groups and become radicalized, as well as given them access to a global audience.

VARIETIES OF EXTREMISM WITHIN RELIGION

There are many various manifestations of religious extremism, and one can find examples of it in a variety of religious traditions. Several well-known examples are as follows:

1. **Radicalization of Islam:** Through their acts of terrorism, organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS have earned international recognition. These organizations' ultimate goal is to build an Islamic state that is governed according to their own interpretation of Islam. Nevertheless, it is of the utmost importance to acknowledge that a substantial number of Muslims do not subscribe to their extremist ideas.
2. **The Extremism of the Christian Faith:** In a variety of settings, including anti-abortion violence in the United States and the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, violent Christian fundamentalism has been linked to acts of violence. This view of a major religion indicates a sort of extremism that is on the periphery, similar to other forms of extremism.
3. **The Extremism of Hinduism:** Concerns have been raised in India over Hindu extremism, which frequently takes the form of violent acts directed towards members of religious minorities, most notably Muslims and Christians. These organizations support the creation of a Hindu nation within India, which goes against the secular ideals of that nation.
4. **Extremism within the Buddhist Faith:** In Myanmar (also known as Burma), there is a Muslim minority called the Rohingya who are being persecuted, and some extreme Buddhist monks have been accused of aiding in this persecution. The values of nonviolence and compassion, which are central

to Buddhism, are undermined by their deeds.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S REACTION TO VIOLENT RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM

The international community has implemented a number of different countermeasures to combat religious extremism, including the following:

A. Countermeasures Against Terrorism: *A number of countries' governments have instituted counterterrorism measures as a means of combating religious extremism. These measures frequently involve surveillance, the exchange of intelligence, and activities carried out by law enforcement in order to both prevent and respond to dangers posed by extremists.*

B. Participation in the Community: *The prevention of religious extremism can be helped along by actively engaging local populations. It involves encouraging tolerance and understanding between communities and law enforcement organizations, as well as building trust between the two groups.*

C. Programs for the Deradicalization: *Several nations throughout the world have instituted deradicalization programs, which are intended at providing individuals who have become involved in extremist activities with the opportunity to rehabilitate themselves. These programs help individuals reintegrate into society by providing them with education, counselling, and other forms of support.*

D. Participation in Multilateral Organizations: *The problem of religious extremism has been addressed by a wide variety of international organizations, one of which being the United Nations. On a global basis, these organizations support activities aimed at countering extremism, allow the sharing of information, and coordinate and coordinate actions.*

CONCLUSION

Religious extremism has a long history and is a complicated, multifaceted problem. Although it exists in many regions of the world, it is crucial to keep in mind that extremism is not associated with any particular faith. Instead, it is the outcome of a confluence of economic, political, and religious elements that are frequently made worse by technical improvements. The international reaction to religion counterterrorism initiatives, community involvement, deradicalization initiatives, and international cooperation are all used to combat extremism. It is crucial to carry on the conversation and work together on solutions to tackle this important issue while respecting people's rights and their freedom of religion. Whether religious fanaticism is real or just a myth needs to be continually investigated and analyzed.

Religious extremism is undeniably a reality, with historical and contemporary examples providing ample evidence of its existence. The impact on society is significant, and the potential for violence is a cause for concern. However, it is equally important to acknowledge the potential exaggeration and denationalization of religious extremism. The selective focus, political manipulation, and the blurred lines between extremism and religious devotion all contribute to a more complex picture. To effectively combat religious extremism, a nuanced approach is necessary. This approach should address the root causes of extremism while promoting religious tolerance, education, and social cohesion. Recognizing that religious extremism is not a monolithic threat but a multifaceted issue will allow for more effective strategies in addressing this complex

challenge. In doing so, we can hope to strike a balance between acknowledging the reality of religious extremism and dispelling the myth that it represents an existential global crisis.



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