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FUNDAMENTALISM IN CHRISTIANITY: PROBLEMS AND TRENDS
THE PROBLEM OF DEFINITION

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I have become increasingly convinced that the label "fundamentalist" is used too casually and uncritically, both on the popular and the scientific levels--that the connotations the word generally carries are often not accurate in terms of the actual historical and theological dynamics that motivate such movements. This problem is accentuated when the Christian experience with "fundamentalism" is used as the source of categories that are then by analogy applied to the other major religious traditions. This paper, therefore, is primarily an effort to explore the preliminary questions of "definition" and less about "problems and trends" in the usual sense. Full exploration of the latter is obviously dependent on clarification of the antecedent questions, and I hope that you will agree with me that my effort to gain more precision in definition does in fact provide some desciption of "problems and trends" and reveals some of the the actual motivating forces that lie behind many of the groups often encompassed by the label "fundamentalist."

Especially when used on the popular level the word is not well defined and tends to be a term of opprobrium applied to religious phenomena that the user has a distaste for. Thus·

(1) within the religious mainstream it tends to be used for all those who dissent from the culturally dominant, tolerant, critical ethos no matter what the basis of dissent, whether it comes from the right or the left, whether rooted in a stance of reaction or progressivism, etc., and

(2) within the subculture usually identified by the label it is often used with opposite meanings, as, for example, the tendency of those in the doctrinally confessional and conservative traditions to use it to apply to those who are legalistic with regard to behavior (against theatre, dancing,

smoking, drinking, etc.) while those committed to a behavioral definition of Christian faith tend often use it to apply to those who defend traditional doctrinal formulations they feel no compulsion to preserve.

On a more scientific level, there are several problems in the usage of the word. One of the first questions is whether to use the word in a narrow and more precise way or whether to use it in a broader and more general way in which the word looses it powers of discrimination.

(A) There is a strand in American Protestantism especially, largely in the Baptist and Presbyterian traditions, that adopted the label for itself to express its commitment to "fundamentals" that seemed to be eroded by the rise in the nineteenth century of new sciences (geology and astronomy with new theories of the age of the earth but especially Darwinian theories of evolution) that seemed to challenge traditional understandings of creation, a new critical and historical consciousness that led often to a revised understanding of Scripture that challenged traditional doctrines about the "inerrancy" of Scripture, and perhaps more generally the rise of the social sciences with their insights into the psychology and sociology of knowledge that led to a new appreciation of the relativity of all human knowledge that seemed to challenge the traditional claims of offering "absolute" and historically unconditioned guidance on issues of doctrine and morals.

(B) But the term has also been applied to a variety of other traditions that stood outside the mainstream for a variety of reasons other than those of the fundamentalists strictly understood. One key question is thus whether the term should be applied to other movements such as:

(1) The Pentecostal tradition and its new intrusion into the mainstream via the Charismatic movement. This movement emerged at the turn of the century among the lower classes and is often lumped with fundamentalism because of its tendency (as with other groups like the Black Church) toward a precritical reading of Scripture. But the rise of the charismatic movement suggests that the Pentecostal "pre-critical" stance may be more accident than essence unless one identifies any form of supernaturalism as inherently precritical. This strand, the major carrier of emphasis on healing and spiritual gifts, is especially important because it dominates the electronic church and related use of media in such a way as to be a major influence in the contemporary scene, and as a result it is often this group that many have in mind when they use the label "fundamentalist."

(2) The churches, movements, campmeetings, mission agencies and schools produced by the antebellum "holiness revival" in the wake of the second great awakening. These churches pulled off from the underside of Methodism (taking many from other denominations with them) in the nineteenth century largely in protest against the embourgeoisement of Methodism. Because this process involved an appeal to the authority of early Methodism

and often manifested itself in a precritical stance, the holiness churches have often been lumped with fundamentalism even when they have not shared the commitments to the inerrancy of Scripture or to the preservation of the classical structures of theology in protestant orthodoxy. Now that these churches have had seminaries for a generation it is not at all clear that they will evolve in the fundamentalist direction. One sees rather a pattern of sect to church development with some affinities to the fundamentalist experience but one in which this was probably a stage rather than a permanent style. I am not sure whether it was accidental that the nineteenth century saw both massive sect formation and the fundamentalist/modernist controversy, but the dynamics seem sufficiently different that distinctions should be made, especially when the Pentecostal and Holiness churches dominate the National Association of Evangelicals that is often used as a paradigm of fundamentalism and interpreted in categories that don't always apply.

(3) The "restorationist" movements that arose in the nineteenth century in an effort to "restore" the "original church of God" in such a way as to transcend the denominationalism that dominated the American scene. Such movements might include the varieties of Plymouth Brethren that came from England, aspects of the Campbellite tradition (especially the more sectarian Churches of Christ that pulled out of this tradition in the later nineteenth century over a variety of concerns about the incorporation of the movement into the manifest destiny of Americanism and the evolution of various denominational structures not obviously endorsed by the Scriptures), and the scores of such groups founded at the turn of the century. The biblicism of these groups often leads to their confusion with fundamentalism, but they do not share many of the same commitments and often find themselves uncomfortable in the circles of "evangelicalism" and "fundamentalism." And again it is not at all clear that their trajectory places them in alignment with fundamentalism.

(4) The various "Adventist" movements that arose in the wake of the eschatological speculations of William Miller in the 1840s in North America. The continuing influence of this tradition is felt around the world through the aggressive missionary work of the major church, the Seventh-Day Adventists. But again, this group has often been ostracized by the fundamentalists and evangelicals for its following the diet and worship laws of Judaism and because of the place of Ellen White as a prophet that supplements the Scriptures. The Jehovah's Witnesses are a more extreme variation in this tradition and much more distanced from the fundamentalist and evangelical traditions.

(5) The "Anabaptist" traditions (Mennonite, Amish, etc.) with their roots in the radical reformation of the sixteenth century. Again, one often finds here a form of biblicism but not the defense of the anti-critical structures of fundamentalist theology. And their structures of life emerge from traditions of family and community structure and distinctive visions of the

role of religion in the society that set them apart from the fundamentalists. These groups show sectarian tendencies but in the manner of a "continuing" sect rather than an "accommodating" sect in which these characteristics both antedate and postdate the rise of the "modernity" against which the fundamentalists are protesting.

(6) The Confessional traditions in Protestantism that wish to continue the classical structures of Protestant Orthodoxy but are distinctly uncomfortable with "fundamentalists" as they are usually understood. Illustrative of this would be the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, which has always maintained an intellectual tradition of theology and shares with many fundamentalists a commitment to "orthodoxy" but repudiates the revivalist traditions of conversionism, etc. Where it is present the leadership of the Missouri Synod has seen fundamentalism as an intrusion of a foreign ethos from the outside, in spite of common commitments to the inerrancy, etc.

(7) The varieties of Pietistically oriented groups that have come primarily through the various traditions of Scandinavian piety. Some of these groups have gravitated toward some doctrines of fundamentalism (such as inerrancy), but have often taken self-consciously anti-creedal stances and often explicitly opposed doctrines of fundamentalism (such as the penal substitutionary atonement, etc.). Also the Lutheran roots of these movements have often brought them liturgically and theologically more in line with the American mainstream.

Does it make sense to use a single term to cover this widely diverse mosaic of groups, each with its own history, sociology, and theology? I frankly doubt it, and am becoming increasing convinced that the tendency to do this cannot be sustained and that it blocks understanding more than it leads to it. The danger of using the word "fundamentalist" to describe these groups is not only that it obscures the many ways in which they diverge from the fundamentalists more strictly so labelled, but that it carries the possibility of imprisoning these various groups in a conceptuality that actually prevents them from following out their own trajectories of development. On the other hand one may well need a category to describe the variety of movements described above. One is inclined to speak of the varieties of "conservative Protestantism" but that has many problems because many of the above movements have little interest in preserving the structures of classical Protestantism. A decade ago William G. McLoughlin proposed that those groups produced by the massive sect formation of the nineteenth century be understood as a form of "third force" that should be understood as a distinct alternative to both Catholicism and Protestantism within the Christian tradition. I agree basically with this proposal, but understand that McLoughlin has largely abandoned it precisely because the cluster was too diverse to be encompassed within a single term.

The rest of this paper will attempt to give some precision to these hints by discussing several of the interpretations that have emerged to describe this "third force" often encompassed under the label "fundamentalism." We will look at four major alternative explanations of the fundamentalist experience, attempting to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each.

FUNDAMENTALISM AS A MOVEMENT IN PROTEST AGAINST MODERNITY

The usual interpretation of "fundamentalism" is that it is some sort of militant movement against various features of "modernity." One finds this understanding both within and without the movement. Thus the recent manifesto of Jerry Falwell's movement, The Fundamentalist Phenomenon: The Resurgence of Conservative Christianity (2nd edition; Baker Book House, 1986) approvingly quotes George Marsden (author of the important study Fundamentalism and American Culture, Oxford University Press, 1981) to the effect that fundamentalism is a "twentieth-century movement closely tied to the revivalist tradition of mainstream evangelical Protestantism that militantly opposed modernist theology and the cultural change associated with it." (p. 3) This is the meaning assumed in most interpretations of fundamentalism, and I gather is the source of the term as it has by analogy been applied to other religious groups outside the Christian tradition.

The authors of The Fundamentalist Phenomenon are clear that they are using the narrow definition of fundamentalism suggested above and again notice that Marsden "while admitting that Fundamentalism shares certain traits common with other movements, such as Pietism, Evangelicalism, Revivalism, Millenarianism, and even Holiness and Pentecostalism, he points out that it must be clearly distinguished from these movements by its militant opposition of Liberalism" (p. 3) This is, I think, the most appropriate move and keeps that word tied to its most appropriate referent, though, as we shall see, there are major problems about the adequacy of this move even within its own logic.

The sorts of problems that one gets into by extending the word to the broader constituency described above are well illustrated in a new book by James Davison Hunter, Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation (University of Chicago Press, 1987). Hunter is emerging as perhaps the most important sociological interpreter of the subculture usually encompassed by the word Fundamentalism, though he prefers the label "evangelical" which for him encompasses "a wide variety of religious and denominational traditions--from the Pietistic traditions to the Confessional traditions and from the Baptist traditions to the Anabaptist traditions." For him "evangelicalism" is "synonymous with Protestant orthodoxy and conservative Protestantism" and includes Fundamentalism as a subcategory. In doing so, Hunter maintains the self-

understanding of fundamentalism (carried into evangelicalism by the neo-evangelical party of fundamentalists who attempted to bring a more progressive wing of the fundamentalists more into the mainstream intellectually, socially, and ecclesiastically) that they stood for nothing else but the preservation of traditional or orthodox Christianity over against the inroads of liberalism and modernity. The basic question is whether it is appropriate to understand either fundamentalism strictly understood or the broader movement in terms of "orthodoxy" or the defense of "traditional Christianity."

For Hunter there is no doubt about this question. It is the most fundamental assumption of his book, one for which there is no argument. And the data has to be forced into the grid provided by this grid. This is not the place for an extended analysis of the problems generated for his data by this assumption--a couple of illustrations will have to suffice. Hunter's data is derived from a study of seven colleges and several seminaries. The Colleges include one Quaker, one Anabaptist, one Scandinavian Baptist. Two sectarian Methodist bodies identified with the Holiness Movement, one independent Methodist school produced by the holiness movement, and baptist and congregationalist colleges founded in the revivalist tradition of Finney, closely associated with the holiness movement. It is very difficult to encompass these movements within classical fundamentalism or even to see them products of an effort to sustain "orthodoxy" in the modern world. They are almost all in protest against classical protestantism for a variety of reasons on both theological and cultural levels. The issue is perhaps most clearly seen in the fact that most of these schools are products of movements that supported the ministry of women and were often distinctly feminist in orientation. Indeed if this dominant paradigm of these groups as "conservative" is accurate, then one would expect the churches of the National Association of Evangelicals (with which these schools are largely associated) to be the centers of the resistance to the ordination of women supposedly advocated by the more liberal churches associated with the mainstream National Council of Churches. Actually the very opposite is the case historically. The churches of the NAE advocated and practiced the ordination of women a century before the churches of the NCCC and have done it in numbers as yet unimagined by the churches of the NCCC. This leads one quickly to hypothesize that these movements and churches are a distinctly modern phenomenon. They are in many ways the newer movements that have pulled out and away from a more traditional protestantism. One can illustrate this on other levels as well--theological, distance from traditional sacramental understandings, etc. From such an angle of vision it is the mainstream churches that are more "traditional" and "conservative." We shall have the occasion to probe this angle of vision more fully in the next session of this paper.

Before moving on, however, we must refer briefly to the fact that not only does this understanding of fundamentalism fail to explain many of the phenomena that it is marshalled to explain, but that it is not very helpful ecumenically. Its use is demeaning and often helps to create a social reality and understanding that prevents mutual understanding and interaction. The term fundamentalist, as suggested above, carries so much negative freight that it blocks wholesome discussion. When used by the cultural and ecclesiastical mainstream, it carries the connotation of "benighted" and "backward" and implies that to genuinely enter the modern world must one move beyond this position to one of enlightenment. This is a very strange absolutizing of a certain style of modernity in a world whose universities are filled with innumerable post-modern proposals in all sorts of disciplines. It is this dynamic that has led some to suggest, most especially J. Rifkin and T. Howard in The Emerging Order (1979), that these currents may play a key role in the evolution into the next stage of western civilization. But the use of this (otherwise less than adequate) label also tends to lock these groups into a relationship of antipathy to the rest of the world. If they understand themselves as the carrier of orthodoxy, then they have little alternative but to position themselves over against the "other" in terms of a call back to orthodoxy. Other more appropriate categories enable these movements to move back toward the mainstream and in a sense toward "orthodoxy" (the direction in which I see them moving) with insights and innovations found on the margins of the Christian tradition. With another conceptuality they and others many understand such newer movements as "parties" within a larger circle rather than the center from which the others have departed in adaptation to modernity. While the facts of the case demand a different conceptuality than that usually assumed, it is worth noting that the dominant patterns of interpretation are ecumenically counter-productive.

FUNDAMENTALISM AS A DISTINCTLY MODERN PHENOMENON

Martin Marty of the University of Chicago has argued in a number of places (most recently in the magazine America, September 27, 1986, under the title "Modern Fundamentalism") that fundamentalism is a "truly modern movement . . . it is not conservative . . . it is not simply 'biblical religion,' 'the simple gospel,' 'classic Christian orthodoxy' or anything like these." To make his case Marty points to its distance from the sacramental themes of the classical churches, its location in "modern revivalism," its commitment to the (in many ways) distinctly modern doctrine of the "inerrancy of Scripture," its commitment to "premillennial eschatology" (more about this in the next section), its modern "eclecticism," the ease with which it adopts modern technology (the electronic church, for example), its manifestation of a "multiplex consciousness," and so forth.

As will be gathered by the comments made in the previous section, I think that this reading has as much to commend it as the dominant understanding of fundamentalism as fundamentally anti-modern. Again Hunter's book illustrates the sort of problems that one gets into attempting to understand this modern movements in terms of the categories of classical protestantism. Hunter's book surveys the theology, family structure, view of work, and political orientation of modern "evangelical" students. In each case he begins the interpretation of his data with a survey of early protestant and often sixteenth century themes and then attributes them to the movements he is considering often with very strange results--as when he interprets the students in the holiness schools in terms of a tradition in which the boundaries are maintained by theological themes when in fact these movements are nineteenth century products self-consciously in protest against classical reformation themes and are maintaining their boundaries by ethical and behavioral norms rather than theology. This is very strange in a book that claims by its sociological orientation to be empirical rather then apologetic or theological. I am convinced that an analysis of the phenomenon itself will lead persons more in the direction of Marty--that fundamentalism (and the broader evangelical movements) are as much or more modern than they are anti-modern.

But there is a problem with attempting to lock these movements into either set of categories. Neither scheme of analysis is helpful on a number of issues. A number of issues are better explained by another hypothesis that has been proposed but has been, I believe, consistently undervalued by the interpreters of fundamentalism--and it is to this that we must now turn.

FUNDAMENTALISM AS THE RISE OF PREMILLENNIAL ESCHATOLOGY

Before his death a few years ago Ernest Sandeen argued in a number of places but especially in his *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930* (University of Chicago Press, 1970) that fundamentalism should be interpreted primarily in terms of a distinct theological tradition with its roots in the early nineteenth century--the tradition of millenarianism or premillennial eschatology--and that the twentieth century phenomenon should be seen as the flowering of this movement. Though undervalued, this hypothesis has much more explanatory power than many others.

The great problem that other analyses of Fundamentalism fail to explain is sometimes called the "great reversal." Most of the groups sketched (for example, the colleges at the base of Hunter's data) above have their roots in the second great awakening and the revivalist tradition of evangelist Charles Grandison Finney. One of the most significant features of Finney's revivalism in the Antebellum era was its commitment to

social reform--from women's rights through abolitionism to the temperance movements. The great problem is to explain the transition from this style to the late nineteenth century anti-social gospel stance of fundamentalism--the "great reversal." If fundamentalism were essentially conservative in orientation, then these themes should be preserved more integrally within its tradition. But one of the most significant features of at least early twentieth century fundamentalism was its repudiation of a "social gospel" in favor of a "gospel of personal salvation." The most useful explanation that I have found for this phenomenon is the rise of the premillennial tradition that Sandeen traces.

The predominant eschatology of antebellum America was "postmillennialism." Drawing on puritan themes heightened by the "great awakenings" of the eighteenth century, this vision looked forward to a millennium of Christ's kingly reign on earth that was being ushering in by God's providence through the "gospel agencies" (missions, bible societies, etc.). This vision was rooted in the biblical prophetic tradition and presupposed a subtle interplay of human and divine effort that would result in the millennium. This was to be followed by Christ's return, which was thus to be "postmillennial" in character. It is clear how this vision could support social transformation in the name of Christian faith.

But in the years after the civil war there was imported (primarily) from England a new eschatology that had been around but not very influential. This "premillennialism" was advocated in a series of prophecy conferences, bible conferences, bible institutes, etc. into the twentieth century. This powerful eschatological tradition drew on the apocalyptic tradition within the bible, gave up on this world, and despaired about any vision of human progress. (In many ways this was prompted by the emerging pluralism of American society and the developing secularism of the culture that was eroding the hopes of the Christian America that had been cultivated by the dominant revivalistic ethos of the period--and here we see many of the themes of resistance to these developments that have been interpreted as "orthodox" by many interpreters of the fundamentalist experience.) This eschatological vision still expected a millennium but not in continuity with this world. It moved the return of Christ to before the millennium (thus "premillennial"), making it an imminent expectation that could occur at any moment and the cataclysmic event that would transform this world of despair into the expected millennial experience. From the Sandeen hypothesis the fundamentalist subculture is essentially those movements and currents that adopted this new eschatology and thus checked out of the dominant culture in the late nineteenth century.

This is the only explanation that I have found that can satisfactorily explain the "great reversal." It is also one of

the few themes held in common by most of the traditions grouped in the National Association of Evangelicals. It also grows in power as it is applied to other questions. It helps explain the ecclesiology of most fundamentalists and its associated separatism. Postmillennialism looked forward to the conversion of the world to Christianity; premillennialism gave up on this and adopted a "faithful remnant" vision that looked forward to a rescuing from this world. This led to a sectarian ecclesiology at odds with the culture and the churches more broadly rooted in that culture. It helps to explain the divergent missiological visions that have developed in the modern world between mainline and fundamentalist subculture churches and movements. It helps to understand many of the issues of culture. Postmillennial evangelists in the nineteenth century tended to found liberal arts colleges, but premillennial evangelists founded bible institutes that rejected broader cultural and humanistic studies for the minimal bible knowledge required to preach the gospel to as many as possible before the imminent return of Christ.

This is one of the most useful discriminators to discern the limits of the fundamentalist subculture, though it does not always work. Jerry Falwell, for example, the paradigmatic fundamentalist in America today, clearly is out of this tradition (as evidenced, for example, by his involvement with the state of Israel which for him has a distinct role to be played out in the last days that we understands us to be in.). But this view of Sandeen leads us to expect Jerry Falwell to be apolitical when actually he is best known for his call for political engagement from the right. In a indirect sort of way, however, Sandeen's hypothesis does help us to understand what is going on. Like the neo-evangelicals of a generation or so ago who moved out of strict fundamentalism to a new cultural engagement, this generation of fundamentalists is in the process of emerging from the otherworldly eschatology of premillennialism to a new social involvement. These people have been around for a century but they were politically and socially passive and are now claiming a role in the culture for their values and vision. The phenomenon that we are witnessing is not the turn of a major part of the culture to a new conservatism or anti-modernism but the awakening of a giant to a new political consciousness that marks the breaking of the premillennial vision, though that has not yet been consistently worked out--as it is now being done in the second and third generation of the neo-evangelicals who moved out of the fundamentalist world view about the time of World War II.

This analysis of Sandeen gets us closer to the dynamic of what we are experiencing, I believe, than much other interpretation of the phenomenon. But It still leaves certain questions unanswered, and I would like to propose yet another variation on this theme.

THE CURRENT PHENOMENON AS THE CHURCHLY FLOWERING OF NINETEENTH CENTURY SECTARIANISM

I have avoided using the word "fundamentalist" in this heading because I wish to describe a phenomenon that is characteristic of the broader range of movements than fundamentalism in the strict sense. Much of my own work has been on the history of Pentecostalism and the Holiness Movement of the nineteenth century. In this I have become more and more convinced that the categories that one must develop to understand these movements have broader applicability for the analysis of fundamentalism and evangelicalism. My own work dissents from the usual interpretations of the American experience by emphasizing the role of Methodism in the nineteenth century as the determinative experience and seeing the rise of modern revivalism, the holiness movement, and eventually Pentecostalism as unthinkable apart from the tone set my Methodism in the United States. This work makes clear that before the fundamentalist/modernist controversy or the rise of premillennial traditions the "third force" movements were already taking shape and developing an identity over against classical protestantism over a different set of issues. The antebellum period was the period of the embourgeoisement of Methodism--the product of its desire to become a middle class church like the Presbyterians that was so strong that it was willing to shuck off the lower classes that had given it birth. A parallel movement can be seen in Presbyterianism under the influence of Finney's revivalism which had a special relationship to the lower middle and upper lower classes. In this one can discern a fragmentation of American Protestantism along class lines and a massive period of new sect formation among these classes that found expression especially in the holiness revival but also in various related more "evangelically" oriented movements and finally in twentieth century Pentecostalism. The eschatology of premillennialism was more functional in these countercultural movements that the cultured postmillennialism of the more privileged classes. And so on.

This analysis leads to a different interpretation of the current resurgence of churches and movements outside the mainstream. Rather than a cultural turn to the right in a more formal sense, we are experiencing the emergence from cultural isolation of a variety of sectarian movements spawned in the nineteenth century but only now moving into the middle classes, demanding a role in determining their own future, dissenting from an established culture rooted in an earlier and different era, founding seminaries, articulating their own theologies according to their own experience, and so forth. There is a real sense in which we are experiencing a movement of these currents to the "left" into the mainstream and a form of cultural engagement that has not been characteristic of their life before. The "third force" currents of the nineteenth century are flowering

intellectually and culturally but the mainstream doesn't understand these movements, finds them frightening and alien, attempts to interpret them out of its own experience and can't find the categories to do so.

Something of what is at issue can be seen I think in the patterns of the founding of seminaries in these movements. It is only within the last decade that the Pentecostals have had the freedom and the vision to establish their own seminaries. The Holiness Movement founded its seminaries in the fifty year period before that decade, reflecting rather accurately the half-century or so head-start that it had chronologically. Once this pattern has been discerned it is possible to put the various evangelical and fundamentalist movements into the same pattern. This is the period of their founding of seminaries--and in many cases these institutions are better understood as a similar sort of sectarian flowering (even where they are the product of subcultures within mainline denominations rather than separate denominations). This is very important because the existence of seminaries tells us much about the development of these cultures. They are now demanding for the first time educated ministers, they are beginning to cultivate their own histories (historical archives are being founded right and left), and often for the first time are reaching toward the articulation of their own traditions of theology more in dialogue with the theological mainstream. What we are seeing is the embourgeoisement of movements that were born in the opposition to this movement a century or so earlier. While the efforts at theological construction often seem primitive and precritical we must remember that in many cases we are seeing the first and second generation efforts at such that cannot be compared to traditions that have centuries of theological articulation behind them. It appears to me that what we have in many cases in precisely the movement toward a critical articulation of these dissenting theological subcultures--one that needs to be encouraged, cultivated, and supported rather than being disparaged, feared, and misunderstood. It is own view that these dynamics are a major source of renewal and change within the Christian tradition even though they are at the same time a challenge to the older and more established traditions of Christianity. This is already clear with regard to the development of the Pentecostal tradition, and I believe that it will be true of others of these "third force" currents.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

I am led by the above analysis to a set of conclusions contrary to those of many interpreters of the phenomenon that we have been describing. Among these would be:

(1) My reserve about the use of the word "fundamentalist." I think we would be better to abandon the word altogether because it carries with it so much negative freight and connotations that do not illumine the movements to which it is often applied. It

can be used in a narrow and precise way to apply to the particular strand that cultivated the name and identified with it--though even there one must be somewhat skeptical about the adequacy of the self-understanding that it promotes. In the tradition of Sandeen it can be applied to a larger phenomenon, but I doubt that it should be used to describe the whole subculture to which it is usually applied. To do so confuses the matter at hand and sets up unnecessary barriers to both understanding and dialogue.

(2) That the larger sub-culture is a very rich and variegated phenomenon that deserves a more precise and careful analysis and interpretation than it usually receives. Basically I think that we must move to more refined schemes of analyis that treat different facets of the "third force" in terms of their own historical and theological dynamics rather than attempting to use a single lable like "fundamentalist." But even when the label is to be used precisely there are problems with the usual categories of analyis. I have developed above four paradigms of analysis, each with its strengths and weaknesses. Each paradigm has its own values and insights and the phenomenon requires a complex and multi-dimensional analysis. The movement is both modern and anti-modern, and the data that one is interpreting gain new significance and the movements new coherence when one interprets it through such theological traditions as premillennialism or in terms of such sociological dynamics and the evolution of sectarian movements of renewal rooted in the lower classes. Most analyses of the phenomenon are reductionistic and move along a single mode of interpretation--and to that extent misunderstand the object of study.

(3) That the basic thrust of the above argument is to push toward a level of particularity and specificity that is acutely at odds with the usual analyses offered. This may be seen in several ways:

(A) I have concentrated on the Protestant experience in which the term arose, but to understand the movement have been forced toward theological themes that are distinctly a part of that tradition in such a way as to call into question of whether one might appropriately speak even of a Christian fundamentalism that would encompass even both Catholic and Protestant phenomena let alone the broader traditions in Christianity. There are parallels across these lines but I do not believe they are finally the same phenomenon.

(B) I have concentrated on the experience outside the mainstream of American Protestantism. There is also a current of reaction within the mainline churches. In some cases these share dynamics with those outside, but more often they do not. Thus I do not view the rise of, for example, the neo-conservative Institute for Religion and Democracy (largely rooted in reaction within Catholic, Lutheran and other mainline churches) as the same phenomenon as the cultural readjustment being required by the emerging from cultural isolation of movements born in the nineteenth century, though there are obviously dimensions of

interaction and mutual feeding on each other at some points. But my experience of teaching in institutions attempting to serve some of both lead me to understand them as quite different phenomena. I assume that Michael Novak and Richard John Neuhaus of the IRD, for example, would not in any way identify themselves as "fundamentalists" and therefore fall outside of my assignment.

(C) I have emphasized the particularity of the American experience in such a way as to call into question the usefulness of speaking of an international phenomenon crossing boundaries of the various religious and cultures. The phenomenon that I have described above has spread around the world and has great impact in all parts of the world, but I am less sure that one should draw immediately parallels with Islam, Judaism. etc.

(D) I have emphasized the extent to which the current phenomenon can only be understood in terms of dynamics rooted in the nineteenth century in such a way as to draw attention away from the particularities of the twentieth century or of the 1980s as the context that offers the explanation of the movements in question. This is not to deny that the present context provides contributing factors in all of this, but that they are in many ways marginal to longer historical developments that can only be understood in a longer historical view that diverts attention from the particularities of the present scene.