

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS (PRACTICE)

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

ACTIVITIES. READ THE TEXTS 1 AND 2. DISCUSS WITH YOUR PARTNERS (WORK IN GROUP) AND REPLY THE QUESTIONS AT THE END.

TEXT 1

"Islamic Fundamentalism, diverse political and social movements in Muslim countries of North Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, which have as their goal national government based on the principles and values of Islam. Although these movements all seek to restore social justice based on *sharia* (Islamic law), they differ in the form of government they seek and in how strictly they believe the government should interpret the law.

For many people in the West, the term "Islamic fundamentalism" evokes images of hostage crises, embassies under siege, hijackings, and suicide bombers. But these images hardly present a comprehensive picture. The ranks of Islamic fundamentalists include Muslims who provide much-needed services to the poor through Islamic schools, medical clinics, social welfare agencies, and other institutions. While some Islamic militants try to reach their goals through violence, the majority of Islamic activists work through political parties within the electoral process. At the fringes are those like Saudi-born millionaire Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda network that engage in a global war of terrorism.

The reassertion of Islam and Islamic values in Muslim politics and society over the past 30 years is often referred to in the West as the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. However, the word *fundamentalism*, which originated in Christianity, can be misleading when it is used to describe Islam or Muslim countries. The conservative monarchy of Saudi Arabia, the radical socialist state of Libya, and clerically governed Iran have all been described as "fundamentalist," but this description fails to take into account vast differences in their governments and policies. Political analysts prefer to use the expressions "political Islam" or "Islamism" when discussing Islam's many-faceted roles in current social and political movements".

By John L. Esposito (2005): "Islamic Fundamentalism". *Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia*. In http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_701505583/Fundamentalism_Islamic.html

TEXT 2

The spread of Fundamentalism in the 1920s began in rural areas, although it is certainly not limited to rural areas now. At the time, Fundamentalists were very skeptical and even afraid of scientific theories, such as evolution. They resented it that others didn't accept the inerrancy of the Bible as they did. The controversy in these rural (and mostly Southern) areas grew. When state laws began to forbid the teaching of evolution in public schools under the pressure of the Fundamentalists, others began to react. The [Scopes Trial](#) of 1925 is the most famous example of this. And although the Evolutionists lost the case, this trial marked the beginning of a loss of momentum for the Fundamentalists.

The 1930s was not a great decade for the Fundamentalists. Most people were beginning to accept the scientific theories above the Biblical ones promoted by Fundamentalism. Many other people accepted more liberal religious doctrines, rather than the strictly Scriptural Fundamentalist ones. There was also a great lack of leadership among the Fundamentalists themselves. There was no national organization to unite the Fundamentalists across the United States.

In the 1940s and 1950s, however, the movement revived. (The main reason for this was the [reaction against Modernism](#).) A lot of money has been spent on radio and television broadcasts (often known as TV Evangelists). The American Council of Christian Churches was established in 1941 - a conservative counterpart to the National Council of Churches. The International Council of Christian Churches was founded by Fundamentalists in 1948 and its center was placed in Amsterdam. Over 45 denominations in 18 countries are members of it.

Today, there are over 30 million Fundamentalists across the United States. The current population of the United States is about 281 million. That means that about 10.6% of our population are Fundamentalists.

Rally, C.: "The fundamentalist movement". In <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/~edgoodwi/fundamentalistmovement.html>

QUESTIONS FOR THE DISCUSSION:

1. What kind of social movement is?
2. In which context is placed? Make differences between "text 1" and "text 2".
3. What are their main objectives?
4. What kinds of actors participate in it?
5. How is the internal organization of these movements? Can you imagine it?
6. And their external (public) ways of expression?