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## Introduction

'Another book on Islamic fundamentalism?'. I can hear the question echoing among friends, colleagues and readers. Since 2001, more than 100 books and 5,600 articles have been published on Islamic fundamentalism. Broadening the research to agnate labels – such as Islamism (about 200 books and 243 articles), political Islam (345 books and 4,670 articles) and Islamic extremism (only 16 books and 1610 articles)<sup>1</sup> – we can appreciate the amount of scholarly publication pressed into the past seven years. The reasons behind such abundance are multiple. Surely, after September 11 the demand for books and academic articles on religious fundamentalism increased, reinforcing a pre-existing market focused on the Middle East. Two military campaigns (in Afghanistan and Iraq) under the banner of 'the war on terror', as well as terrorist attacks in different parts of Europe and in non-Western countries such as Bali and Saudi Arabia, have further increased the number of publications, both academic and popular, to an unprecedented level. Said (1978, 1981) and Said and Viswanathan (2001) may have even suggested that Western writers and publishers exploited the morbid Western orientalist curiosity about the violent Oriental man combining the divine with the political, and the political with holy violence.

Nonetheless, money and latent or manifest orientalist aims, though they may have an important part, are not the only reasons, or the main reasons, behind such a high level of academic – and sometimes pseudo-academic – publications. Since the 1960s (see, for instance, Hiskett 1962, Berger 1964), and particularly after the 1979 Iranian revolution, the study of political, sometimes radical, extreme or violent, actions of some Muslim groups – more rarely of individuals – has offered a fertile, both theoretically and empirically, vivid discussion. As you may expect, disagreements and diatribes mark any academic discussion; but in this

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case, the very labels used to describe the ‘phenomenon’ remain highly contentious. Nonetheless, in the past ten years, we can observe that academic discussion about what has been labelled as ‘fundamentalism’ – and Islamic fundamentalism in particular – has enjoyed a great degree of homogeneity (see Chapter 2, and more specifically Chapter 3, in this book). Among various reasons for this, we can acknowledge that Appleby’s monumental work *The Fundamentalism Project* (1991–5) has made a significant contribution. Appleby’s main argument emphasises that all religious fundamentalisms possess certain characteristics as part of a ‘family resemblance’. Appleby’s volumes are interdisciplinary, with contributors offering analysis from perspectives such as political science, history, religious studies, sociology, psychology and anthropology, just to mention a few. Despite this diversity in disciplines and approaches, the conclusions of the project suggest that all ‘fundamentalisms’ are the consequence of conservative religious groups and leaders who reject modernism and secularism, which are seen as ‘sons’ and ‘daughters’ of the Enlightenment, in a desperate attempt to preserve traditional ways of life and religious beliefs through *scripturalism*.

In the first two chapters of the present book, we shall observe that the antithesis between what have been described as the products of Enlightenment – such as secularism, modernism, democracy and liberal freedoms – and the products of religious tradition – such as support for theocratic models of society and human life – does not represent a neutral analysis of the respective positions. Rather, certain academic analyses show an etic struggle between representation and condemnation; between science, as a quest, and politics, as a plan for action; between endorsement and rejection; between essentialism and relativism; between accusation and absolution; between ideology and Utopia.

Despite the few attempts to explain it from, for instance, psychological (for example Hoffman 1985, Hood et al. 2005) and anthropological (for example Gellner 1981, 1992, Antoun 2001, Nagata 2001) viewpoints, Islamic fundamentalism has been analysed and understood mainly through ‘Culture Talk’ (Mamdani 2004). In extreme forms of ‘Culture Talk’ analysis, not only do the holy texts, through its symbols, provide the blueprint behind the actions of Islamic movements and individuals, but it also dictates them. In other words, the ‘fundamentalist’ becomes the embodied tradition (Bruce 2000). We can say that, from a ‘Culture Talk’ viewpoint, culture shapes a person’s identity as a bottle shapes the water it contains.<sup>2</sup> In our case, the bottle was often described as the sacred text or a religious tradition from which the ideology and worldviews of fundamentalists (all of them!) derive.<sup>3</sup>

To understand this phenomenon as a cultural and symbolic discourse is surely a powerful, and apparently convincing, way of explaining it. Yet this kind of approach has raised legitimate questions when not open criticism. Mamdani is surely among the most critical. In his renowned book *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim* (2004), he has observed, 'Culture Talk assumes that every culture has a tangible essence that defines it, and it then explains politics as a consequence of the essence. Culture Talk after 9/11, for example, qualified and explained the practice of "terrorism" as "Islamic". "Islamic terrorism" is thus offered as both description and explanation of the events of 9/11' (2004: 18). Mamdani has pointed out how the practice of 'Culture Talk' has divided the world between moderns and pre-moderns, with the latter being only able to conduit rather than make culture. He has particularly criticised the essentialist approach that much of 'Culture Talk' has shown towards Muslims and Islam in the aftermath of September 11. According to him, the 'Culture Talk' reasoning argues that Islam and Muslims 'made' culture at beginning of their history, but in the contemporary world they merely conform to culture.<sup>4</sup> Mamdani, therefore, has concluded,

According to some, our [Muslim] culture seems to have no history, no politics, and no debates, so that *all* Muslims are just plain bad. According to others, there is a history, a politics, even debates, and there *are* good Muslims and bad Muslims. In both versions, history seems to have petrified into a lifeless custom of an antique people who inhabit antique lands. Or could it be that culture here stands for habit, for some kind of instinctive activity with rules that are inscribed in early founding texts, usually religious, and mummified in early artefacts?

(2004: 18, italics in the original)

Mamdani has rightly expressed his concerns about the political and social consequences of understanding Muslims, and their religion, as merely a product of culture because it reduces religion not just to politics, but to a political category. This process, in the best of the cases, facilitates a Manichean sociological and political division between good and bad Muslims.

Mamdani has no problem in telling us why such a division, which is a soft version of the more radical stance of 'Islam is the problem', has been emphasised in the aftermath of September 11. He has argued that this reasoning has helped to justify the belief in a clash between modern and pre-modern people, or, in other words, civilised versus

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civilisable, which was very much a part of the history of colonialism; Mamdani has so observed that ‘this history stigmatizes those shut out of modernity as antimodern because they resist being shut out’ (2004: 19). He has further argued for the epistemological fallacy of ‘Culture Talk’. He has rejected the idea that political behaviours and ideologies can derive solely from cultural (religious or traditional) habits and customs, and rhetorically asked, ‘could it be that a person who takes his or her religion literally is a potential terrorist? And that someone who thinks of a religious text as metaphorical or figurative is better suited to civic life and the tolerance it calls for? How, one may ask, does the literal reading of sacred texts translate into hijacking, murder and terrorism?’ (2004: 20). Mamdani has stated that what we witness today and we call terrorism is born not from religious extremist views, but from a ‘modern political movement at the service of a modern power’ (2004: 62).

Nonetheless, Mamdani’s final conclusions do not explain why, if ‘fundamentalism’ or ‘Islamic extremism’ is the expression of a modern political movement, serving the Machiavellian needs of ‘modern power’, people who are not interested in politics are, however, strongly attracted to what scholars have defined as fundamentalists’ ideas and ideologies. Mamdani (2004), like, for instance, Piscatori (1983), Esposito (1991, 1999), Nazih (1991), Hafez (2003) and more recently Adamson (2005) and Devji (2005), has not noticed that, similarly to those authors who relied upon ‘Culture Talk’, they have described ‘Islamic fundamentalism’, and other Islamic-isms, as a ‘real thing’. They have reduced the phenomenon to a utilitarian political talk, manipulative and uniform in its religious rhetoric. Religion, they tell us, does not really matter (Tibi 1998, Ruthven 2004, Milton-Edwards 2005); or if it matters, it is because ‘evil’ opportunistic Muslims (Halliday 1994, Choueri 2002, Kepel 2002) have hijacked it. When studying those phenomena that today are being identified as ‘Islamic fundamentalism’, or ‘Islamic radicalism’, scholars seem forced towards two analytical deadlocks: on the one hand, the phenomena can be interpreted as the product of culture, or the misreading – or even the correct reading, as Bruce (2000) would argue – of the holy text. On the other, it can be interpreted as a Machiavellian use of religion for power, political opportunism within a larger power struggle between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic views of society. However, should we really settle for choosing the lesser of the two evils?

As I discuss in the next two chapters of this book, some other scholars have tried to avoid the trap of both ‘Culture Talk’ and political essentialism. They suggest that the phenomenon is deeply rooted in the dynamics of social identity. Of course, culture matters and religion too,

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but they are not the essential ingredients. The final answer, Herriot has recently argued (2007), could be found in the 'us versus them' attitude that underlies the conflict between religious values and secularism. Identity (role identity) theory, directly or indirectly, has shaped the discussion of 'fundamentalism'. Indeed, social identity theory simplifies the explanations of group conflict into an uncomplicated, often transformed into a simplistic, dualistic dynamic. Much of what has been said in social science about Islamic fundamentalism (and the other Islamic-isms) has been based upon manifest or latent forms – and sometimes drastically simplified versions – of it. Starting from the mutual interdependence between society and the personal self (Strauss 1959, Blumer 1969), which Goffman would systematically theorise in his masterpiece *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), McCall and Simmons (1978) have developed what they have called 'role-identity theory'. The core theory argues that 'the character and the role that an individual devises for himself as *occupant of a particular position*' (1978: 65, emphasis added) within society, forms what we call identity. From this viewpoint, personal identities are the product of society and identities cannot exist beyond the social role.

McCall and Simmons' theory, however, left a question open that required an answer to avoid that thesis remaining extremely vague. Role-identity theory indissolubly links the individual to the social group. However, the same individual needs the social group to express his or her own individuality; this is clearly a tautological position. Stryker (Stryker and Serpe 1994) noticed it and tried to correct the tautology by arguing that because societies are complex and ruled by difference, though organised, in the same way the human self must be equally complex and ruled by differences, though organised. People, according to Stryker, have complex and differentiated selves that are expressed through different identities according to the social context in which people find themselves (Stryker and Serpe 1994). Individuals, according to him, select their personal identities to satisfy their personal interests, so that among the different identities that individuals can form, the one that in a certain context better fulfils his or her interests would be the most likely to be activated. Hence, 'interest' is what prevents people rejecting the identity that the social context has imposed upon their personal self. Instead of Stryker resolving a weakness of role-identity theory, he ended in an even worse tautology. Indeed, somebody may ask the fatidic question: who controls whom here? Is it the individual that, through his identity selection, based on his interest, controls the social group or actually the opposite – the social group in

which the individual takes part controls him because it controls his desires? Stryker has no answer. He resorted to the postulation of a continuum in which self, society and personal identity should shape each other in an endless process.

Tajfel's 'social-identity theory' has attempted to resolve such a tautology. Tajfel has observed two important facts: first, that self-esteem, as James (1890) had suggested, has a paramount relevance for identity formation; second, that people categorise social and non-social stimuli in order to self-identify with others and to form 'in-groups', which differentiate themselves from 'out-groups'. Differentiation allows groups to form a group identity (for example in-group A feels itself to be A because it is not part of the out-group B). Tajfel has therefore suggested that personal self-esteem can only be achieved through in-group membership (Tajfel 1979). In other words, personal identities depend upon the social identity of the in-group, and the self-esteem of each member of the group depends upon the self-esteem of the others involved within such an in-group.

If now we observe, as we shall do in the next two chapters, the available theories, and more often theorems, of 'fundamentalism' (and particularly Islamic fundamentalism), we can easily recognise the influence that Tajfel's understanding of social identity – and individual identity as the result of social group dynamics – has had upon them. The 'family resemblance' that defines fundamentalism has an epicentre: Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic radicalism, Islamic extremism, political Islamism and Islamism are the result of a defensive, or for some scholars aggressive, rejection of modernism and the consequent secularism. They reject, in other words, the essence of what the scholar understands as modern civilisation (see Chapter 6 in this book). Here is where 'Culture Talk' meets 'social identity' theory. Indeed, many of the theories we shall discuss see 'fundamentalists' – in reality, as Varisco (2007) has argued an epithet for radical, fanatical and extremist Muslims – as individuals who wish to enhance their self-esteem. To achieve this, they undertake a process of depersonalisation in order to become part of a group, in this case the fundamentalist group, which provides prototypes through the stereotype of the other, which in this instance is the modern and secular, in other words the West. This would explain, according to some of the theories we shall review, why fundamentalist groups decide to adopt the most anti-modern tool available: a strong belief in an inerrant and divine scripture (Hood et al. 2005).

As I have mentioned, I agree with Mamdani and others that the phenomenon labelled as 'Islamic fundamentalism' has strong political

connotations and that activists aim for social change. Yet I also think that people become involved in those activities for reasons beyond politics. Nonetheless, the way in which social identity theory has been applied to Islamic fundamentalism has, in my opinion, confused rather than clarified the dynamics behind it. Surely social identity theory may appeal in this case because it reflects a certain common sense; but in reality it reduces the individual to a cultural-social object and the group to a cultural tool of social conformity. I recognise that society and culture have an important function; but they cannot constitute the whole explanation of human actions and behaviours (see Marranci 2008b). Social identity theory, despite its supporters having provided adjustments to its original version, is flawed by tautology: individuals form their identity through groups, which however are formed by the very individuals to whom groups should provide the identity needed to join the group in first instance. In other words, your identity is not exactly yours; yet the identity of the group is derived from yours! Without any sarcasm, we may say that social identity theory has yet to answer the 'chicken and the egg' riddle.

As an anthropologist, I have met individuals (my friends and respondents) in the flesh, and as Rapport has argued (Rapport 2003), for them individuality was a physical and psychological reality, whereas 'society' and 'groups' were the abstraction (Marranci 2006, 2008b). While spending time with them, living with them, speaking to them and following their lives, I could clearly see that their selves, their identities and feelings did not conform to the above pictures of passive cultural processes. While answering the question of what religious fundamentalism might be, social scientists – like their colleagues in the agnate disciplines of religious studies and political sciences – by over focusing on society and culture, have left behind an essential third: nature.

However, before we move towards this point, it is extremely relevant to address another 'hot potato': terminology.

### **When the term 'fundamentalism' became like a car**

My feeling is that academics protest too much about language. If in our ordinary lives we manage to deal with the complex meanings of terms such as 'car', I do not see why we should not be able to find words that allow us to say something useful about a range of religious political movements.

(Bruce 2000: 13)

Although I can see how my grandfather while attempting, as usual, to repair his old Fiat 500 did find in his ordinary life the term ‘car’ to carry a meaningful complexity, the above attempt to justify the term ‘fundamentalism’ wins both a trophy for its originality and a ‘wooden spoon’ for its misleading simplicity. Steve Bruce here is doing nothing more than dismissing as irrelevant the heated academic discussion about the term ‘fundamentalism’. Yet the debate around the use of this fourteen-letter word has implications not only for an understanding of the phenomenon, but also for the ethical and political features involved. Ruthven has noticed, “Fundamentalism”, according to its critics, is just a dirty fourteen-letter word. It is a term of abuse levelled by liberals and Enlightenment rationalists against any group, religious or otherwise, which dares to challenge the “absolutism” of the post-Enlightenment outlook it professes to oppose’ (Ruthven 2004: 6–7). Indeed, some scholars have argued that it cannot be extended beyond evangelical Christian movements or even, in a very restrictive view, beyond its historical use (Varisco 2007). Others, who privilege a strict emic position, consider any etic analytical imposition of the ‘F-word’ (Ruthven 2004) to non-Christian movements as ethnocentrism (cf. Appleby 2000: 79–83). In the case ‘Islamic fundamentalism’, it is not so much the accusation of ‘ethnocentrism’ that resonates but rather that of a more or less latent ‘Orientalism’ (Said 1978).

Varisco has noticed that ‘fundamentalism’ has a clear Christian legacy, which makes it unsuitable to explain Muslim movements. Then, he has also observed, “Fundamentalism” as a term should be of interest to scholars who study the phenomenon not only because of what it is said to represent, but also because it is “our” term – a word coined almost a century ago within American Protestantism’ (2007: 209). Finally, he has suggested that alternatives, such as Islamism, have gained more popularity than ‘fundamentalism’, ‘which is now commonly bracketed to the dubious terminological limbo of quotation marks’ (2007: 211). Nonetheless, Varisco has recognised that ‘Islamism’ in reality adds ‘insult to injury by implying that Islam itself is readily transformable into an extremist religion’. He provides a vivid example of such ‘insult’ by asking his readers to ‘imagine the neologic shock among historians of Christianity if someone suggested we replace Fundamentalism with “Christianism”, even while retaining it as a capital idea’ (2007: 211). Varisco has therefore concluded that the term ‘fundamentalism’ is not so different from other terms, such as orientalism, which today fail to denote what they might have before. Varisco also agrees with Muslim scholars, such as El Guindi (1999) and Ahmed (1999).

Both anthropologists, the former rejects the term because it is 'an imposed notion deriving mainly from Western Christianity that is conceptually inappropriate, ethnographically inaccurate, and ethnocentric' (El Guindi 1999: xiv); the latter has suggested that the term 'fundamentalism', though useful in the context of Christianity because emic, becomes meaningless if applied to Islam because 'by definition every Muslim believes in the fundamentals of Islam' (Ahmed 1999: 9).

Nonetheless, some influential scholars have defended the practice of extending the term 'fundamentalism' to non-Christian religious movements. Lawrence (1990), a prominent student of religion, has strongly criticised the above stands as nonsensical. He has named 'originists' those scholars who reduce the function of the term 'fundamentalism' to its origin – the twentieth-century traditionalist American Protestants; by contrast, he has defined 'nominalists' those who believe that the term fundamentalism should be used only emically instead of etically. Lawrence has deconstructed both the arguments through a hyperbolic reasoning. Against the 'originists', he has observed, '[...] by the same argument, one may not speak of nationalism in the Middle East since most Arabs and many Iranians reject the European experience as an authentic antecedent mediating their own entrance into the twentieth century as nation states.' On the other hand, about the nominalists he has argued, 'by that "logic" the only humanists are those who claim to be humanists; there are no teachers but those who teach in classrooms, clowns only are found in circuses' (Lawrence 1990: 92). Lawrence's support of the term derives from his conviction that fundamentalism can only be studied and understood within a comparative perspective. Description is essential to the process and, according to him, fundamentalism (as an umbrella category) makes more sense than other terms when the similarities among the different movements are clustered together. Lawrence has concluded, 'The labelling "fundamentalism" helps us to see what these groups have in common' (1990: 230).

Almond et al. (2003: 16) have ultimately agreed with Lawrence and used the term 'fundamentalism' because '[...] many, if not all, of the disparate religious movements studied for this volume do share certain resemblances that come from belonging to a particular time in world history.' Nonetheless, they have shown a stronger awareness than Lawrence about the limits that this label may carry. Almond et al. (2003) have acknowledged that the term 'fundamentalism', when applied to any other than the original Christian movement that adopted it, could mislead some to project that form of fundamentalism and its characteristics, such as scriptural inerrancy, to other non-Christian movements.

They also have recognised that the unclear boundaries and the lack of agreement on fundamentalism's definition can induce some to equate fundamentalism to terrorism and violent extremisms. Thus, Almond et al. (2003) have argued that mainstream religious people, in particular from the three Abrahamic religions, may resent the term because many imply that the 'true believers' are actually the 'fundamentalists', whereas most believers consider them as radicals and deviants. Finally, these authors have highlighted how the use of the label may encourage non-specialists, in particular those working within the mass media, to dangerous and erroneous generalisations.

Almond et al. (2003), however, have rejected, as Lawrence did, that the term 'fundamentalism' has an ethnocentric and 'imperialistic' connotation. And despite the listed risks, they have defended its use. They have also highlighted the issue of the limited use of fundamentalism to denote non-religious movements and ideologies, such as communism, fascism and, for instance, certain forms of secularism itself. Indeed, critics of the term 'fundamentalism' have suggested that the resistance to extend the label to similar non-religious phenomena is an act of hypocrisy, or even an overt agenda of the main secular establishment to discredit anti-secular, religious, antagonist movements. Almond as well as Ruthven refute these criticisms by arguing that secular and political movements are 'pseudo-religious' in their character, because secular nationalist ideologies do not guarantee eternal reward to their followers, indirectly suggesting that it is the quality of the 'reward' for the personal sacrifice that defines fundamentalism itself. In other words, if the reward is not aimed at eternal divine enjoyment, but rather at historical remembrance, we cannot identify the ideology as fundamentalism. Hence, according to many scholars, fundamentalism can only be an expression of religious beliefs.

Other scholars, such as Ruthven (2004), have adopted a pragmatic approach to the 'labelling affair'. Ruthven, after reminding his readers about the genesis of the term 'fundamentalism', and recognising that 'the term may be less than wholly satisfactory', has decided that 'rather than quibbling about the usefulness of "fundamentalism" as an analytic term', he would try to explore its ambiguities 'to unpack some of its meanings' (2004: 9). He, as the other scholars cited above, has argued that they exhibit a 'family resemblance' – though at least admitting that fundamentalist movements are not all the same. Ruthven has argued that the family resemblance can justify those studies that try to 'unpack' the phenomenon and offer a universal framework for its understanding. In this case, the issue of the label becomes secondary, or

better instrumental, to the primary effort to categorise and describe the phenomenon itself as a real entity, and thus an essence.

Most scholars, when either criticising the use of the term 'fundamentalism' or justifying it, have shown a clear understanding of the issues surrounding its labelling. An exception, as we have seen at the beginning of this section, is Bruce, who has criticised not the use of the word but rather the scholarly effort in debating it and, overwhelmed by an irresistible commonsensical radicalism, has equated the complexity of the word 'fundamentalism' to that of 'car'. Nonetheless, there are two other reasons for which Bruce has supported the term 'fundamentalism'. The first argues that 'fundamentalism' as a term has such a widely accepted use within the public domain (for example the mass media), that it is here to stay. Then he has told us – finally abandoning the commonsensical domain – that he fully agrees with Marty's<sup>5</sup> position stating that various forms of fundamentalism have so many common features that it 'justif[ies] pressing on it' (2000: 13).

### What went wrong?

In the attempt to summarise the different positions about the use of 'fundamentalism', as well as other Islamic-isms, we may wonder whether Bruce may have been right in classifying the semiotic efforts as a diatribe among scholars used to protesting much about language. Contrary to what Bruce may imply, language in academia matters; often it provides the conceptualisation for future political analysis and actions. We can agree or disagree with Bourdieu's post-modernism, but we have to recognise, as he did, that labelling is not just a neutral process of classification that social scientists perform, but an act of power, often politically connoted, towards the studied minorities and 'others'. This means that we, as scholars, and in particular social scientists, cannot just accept a label only because it is widespread in its everyday use. This would mean to reject social science's ability of providing analytical tools in favour of popular shorthand. Many of the criticisms advanced towards the use of 'fundamentalism' as an analytic term are certainly correct in their fight against its essentialist misuse.

There has never been an agreement on each of these terminologies, and very much as in the case of other analytical categories (for example identity and self) authors have used it depending upon circumstances or personal preferences, and out of necessity. I am not surprised that the 'taxonomy' of this 'phenomenon' remains one of the most debatable and unresolved issues. The question is, why? I think that both the scholarly

effort to provide a universal definition<sup>6</sup> or, by contrast, surrendering to the popular – often populist – use<sup>7</sup> may be the answer. Hence, the main question that we need to ask is not whether ‘fundamentalism’ is a useful conceptual tool or not; but rather whether we are studying ‘a thing’ or actually a process that may resemble a ‘thing’ (that is, a cultural object) because we have labelled it so. In other words, it has become a form of cognitive map, which with few visible points (that is, the family resemblance) may provide the illusion of an entire picture. To explain this illusion, I often use in my classroom a simple experiment. Try to follow these instructions:

Take a piece of paper and make a dot and follow it with another dot parallel to the first at about a centimetre’s distance. Now identify the centre between the two and draw a perpendicular line of about one centimetre. Then, half a centimetre below the perpendicular line, draw an upward small semicircle.

If you are looking at the piece of paper, you may think that my instructions aimed to create the ‘smiley face’ you can see in front of you. Yet I never asked you to draw a smiley face. Indeed, I asked you to follow a process, a kind of Kandinsky abstract dots and lines performance. What you are observing is not a real, purposely drawn, smiling face. Rather it is, and it remains until you label it by transforming the dots, line and semicircle into a ‘thing’ (or, if you want, a ‘symbol’), an ensemble of unrelated lines and dots. Nonetheless, now that you have the dots and the lines in the right position, it is impossible for you to avoid seeing ‘the thing’, in this case the smiling face rather than the single elements or the spaces between them. To do so, you require a certain effort, because you are trapped into seeing what actually your brain, for evolutionary reasons, wants you to see, and the label we have imposed forces you even to name it. Indeed, I could have even asked you to draw only the two dots and the semicircle, and still the face would be there; a ghost of your cognitive illusion.

I wonder whether this diatribe on the label ‘fundamentalism’ may derive from the same human compulsion to categorise – so that lines, semicircles, dots and the empty space connecting them, are forced into a hardly avoidable generalisation. Despite the fact that I understand the reason, and the process, for which we still academically use the Islamicism terms (such as Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic extremism, Islamic radicalism, and so on), I strongly reject that we should accept them uncritically and joyfully exercise our academic privilege of labelling

movements, groups or single individuals with them (Bourdieu 1982). I also have the impression that the authors who have used, often in interchangeable ways, Islamic-ism labels have fallen into a sort of Batesonian mistake of logical types.<sup>8</sup>

Hence, I argue that the characteristic of the ‘family resemblance’, which most authors have enthusiastically endorsed, is rather the more salient mistake affecting the social, political, and unfortunately in some cases anthropological (cf. Antoun 2001), study of this complex series of phenomena. Let me provide you with a simple analogy to the argument of ‘family resemblances’. The fact that bacterial meningitis has a ‘family resemblance’ with ordinary influenza because of their symptoms, such as high fever, vomiting, severe muscle pain and photophobia, does not mean that they share the same category: indeed, one, the most pernicious form of meningitis, is caused by a bacterial infection (for instance *Haemophilus influenzae*) whereas ordinary influenza is caused by a virus (often of the Orthomyxoviridae family). In other words, authors supporting the idea that the ‘family resemblance’ explains in itself, and makes ‘fundamentalism’ a real ‘object’ of study, possessing universal characteristics, have actually classified the name (that is, fundamentalism) with the thing named (in this case the elements forming the ‘family resemblance’). The confusion of the two categories and their hierarchy has thus affected most analyses.

However, behind both the terminology and certain academic analyses there are some, more or less overt, ‘political’ agendas. Islamic-ism labels, as we have seen, are not ‘real things’ and remain far from being universal in their synecdochal uses. They do not provide taxonomies, as some authors seem to suggest, but rather they ascribe. I am not surprised, therefore, that in the past 20 years of scholarly debate over the alleged relationship between signifier and signified among the various Islamic-isms, many authors have ended in treating them as real ‘things’ that are part of a single, identifiable phenomenon, for which reasons and causes had to be identified, solutions provided and then the phenomenon itself eradicated. ‘Eradicated?’, some may ask. ‘Eradicated’, because we cannot say that the academic study of these Islamic-isms has been exempt from powerful two-way political dynamics. On the one hand, these studies have received, consciously or unconsciously, agendas from the ‘political episteme’; on the other, these studies have provided the same ‘political episteme’ with ‘the grey matter’ through which those agendas were transformed into policies, or, after September 11, even wars.

I have suggested that what has been called fundamentalism is not a ‘real thing’. Rather, it is the result of particular processes, many of

which, this book argues, have been overlooked in the past 20 years of academic discussion. That the different phenomena labelled under the various Islamic-isms have been studied mainly either from political or culturalist hermeneutical viewpoints explains this essentialist, and rather homogeneous, understanding of them as a conflict between what we may see as two *modi vivendi*: on the one hand, from a popular 'Western' perspective, the superior, because modern, secular cognition of social life; and on the other, the inferior, because pre-modern, religious cognition of social life. There are clear *omissions* in these simplified versions of the social identity theory. First, where is the human being? We have to reconsider the phenomenon, starting from the individual. This means, among the other aspects, to take into consideration the relationships between the environment<sup>9</sup> and the individual, as well as the formation of identity and self. Only when we have a certain idea of the processes involved in such relationships can we ask how an individual forms an idea of Islam, which brings them to form groups, and on what basis. Emotions, the most overlooked aspect of studies on both Islamic and other forms of 'fundamentalism', are essential to understanding the phenomenon beyond the label, which I reject, and provide a new, process-focused explanation of it.

### **Emotions, self and identity: Ecce Homo!**

It is essential for understanding what follows (particularly Chapters 4, 5 and 6) that I briefly discuss my conclusions about human emotions, self and identity. For identity, I shall only summarise the essential points of the theory that I have developed in *Jihad beyond Islam* (2006). Yet for emotions, and in particular 'empathy', we need to discuss Milton's (2007) and Damasio's views (2004) more in detail. Hence, allow me to start from emotions.

### **Learning through ecological emotions**

The role that emotions play in religious practices and performances has been well documented within all fields of academic research since the eighteenth century (Emmons and Paloutzian 2003: 384–90), such as religious studies, sociology, psychology, psychoanalysis and anthropology (Hamilton 1994). Indeed, as Fuller has noticed,

There is no such thing as emotion-free religiosity; our brains and nervous systems are wired in such a way that we always bring vital needs and interests to our evaluation of, and response to, the

surrounding environment. [...] it is not a question of *whether* emotions influence our religious thinking, but rather a matter of *which* emotions most strongly mobilize the subprograms that collectively constitute our perception and cognition.

(2007: 45; emphasis in the original)

Yet 'emotion', likewise 'identity' and 'self', is one of those words that needs to be clarified in usage (Plutchik 2003: 62–7, Fuller 2007: 32) because many others are used in both everyday as well as scientific language (for example, moods, feelings). Therefore, what do we mean when we say that 'fear' is an emotion? Surely, all of us have had more than one instance in which we have experienced something akin to what we commonly refer to as 'fear'. Yet we will observe that beyond the actual bodily changes such as tachycardia, sweating and hyper-attention, to describe fear in words is not a simple matter.

Western scholars<sup>10</sup> have observed that emotions possess at least two meanings: one affecting the body, and the other belonging to the social and cultural domain. In the discussion of emotions, the polarisation between constructionists and biological determinists was apparently inevitable. The former would argue that emotions are just bodily reactions to which, however, we provide a meaning according to the context, whereas the latter would argue that, though they recognise that the biological contributes to the alchemy of cultural construction, emotions remain in the domain of ideas. To avoid such a device, other scholars have attempted to provide a social explanation of emotions. They have suggested that emotions are mainly a social phenomenon, and because human beings are able to communicate and interact among themselves, emotions provide valuable feedback (Wentworth and Yardley 1994). Hence, Parkinson has suggested, 'Emotion as an idea is socially and culturally manufactured, as also is emotion as a reality [...] The idea is that emotion is private and internal; the reality is that it is intrinsically interpersonal and communicative or performative' (Parkinson 1995: 25).

Kay Milton, though, may agree with Abu-Lughod and Lutz (1990) that social discourse constitutes and shapes emotions, emphasising that people can perceive emotions from non-social objects. Consequently, Milton has argued that emotions 'in order to operate in and be shaped by social situations, [...] must have a presocial origin' (2007: 63). Furthermore, she has suggested that a sole focus on the social context of emotions certainly does not confute or provide a different model between the biological reductionism and culturalism; rather, while

leaving the former unchallenged, it reinforces the latter. Is there any other solution for a correct understanding of emotion which avoids the two unrealistic essentialisms (that is, emotions are mere biological products versus emotions are culturally and socially constructed)? Her innovative alternative solution, which I fully support, is that emotions are 'ecological', 'rather than social phenomena, in that they are mechanisms through which an individual human being is connected to and learns from their environment' (Milton and Svašek 2005: 35). In doing so, though, Kay Milton does not reject the empirical, and commonsensical evidence that social interactions provoke emotions; rather, she is pointing to the fact that we should not stop our observation and understanding of emotions at the social.

To develop her new approach to emotions, Milton has drawn upon William James's understanding of emotions (1890) as comprising two stages, the physical response (that is, the actual physiological changes), and the subjective experience of it (the feelings produced by the changes). As Milton has explained (2007: 64) James, and more recently Damasio (1999), has suggested that the physical responses precede the feelings that follow, because they are the cause rather than the effect. Damasio referred to emotion, as James does, as the organism's reaction to external or internal stimuli, and he has referred to feelings as *mental representations* of the body-state; they are the *private experience of emotions*, inaccessible to observation, and consequently to other fellow humans. Damasio has observed that emotions pertain to the bodily domain, whereas feelings pertain to the mind. Consequently, we first have emotions and then the feelings that are caused by them. Although emotions do not become part of our mind, because they are only reactions to external stimuli, feelings become a consistent part of the mind as the lasting memory of emotions. In other words, happiness, sadness, joy, love and other more complex 'sentiments' are not (as common sense understands them) emotions but rather, in Damasio's terms, feelings. Milton has argued that this is neither a biologically determined model of emotions (the environment, which includes also the social surroundings, matters) nor a social one (the feelings are mental representations of the body-state) but rather an 'ecological' one. Indeed, she has concluded that an ecological approach to emotion 'locates it in the relationship between an individual and their environment, *whatever* that environment may consist of; it does not privilege the social environment over the nonsocial' (2007: 67).

An ecological approach to emotions has greater consequences because it affects, as we shall see, how we may understand concepts such as

identity and self. Yet another essential aspect that the new model forces us to reconsider is learning. As we shall observe in Chapters 5 and 6, learning and emotions are an essential part of how I explain what has been labelled as 'Islamic fundamentalism'. Milton, starting from what we have discussed so far, has also suggested that emotions are part of 'a general learning capacity that enables us to learn from any particular part of our environment, human or nonhuman' (2007: 67). Learning is how we form knowledge, but knowledge comes from different sources, social and non-social, which in any case are external to the organism. The human being needs to receive information from the environment. Some may argue that the individual can learn from social interaction, and receive information through such interaction. Yet, as Milton has rightly observed, without being able, in the first instance, to select information independently, through the dynamic of emotions and feelings, 'how would we learn from social interaction itself? How would we receive information from our fellow human beings, if we were unable to receive it from our environment in general?' (Milton and Svašek 2005: 32). Therefore, we can see that what we have defined as 'ecological emotions' are deeply involved in our process of learning. However, they also influence the way in which we learn and make sense of our environment, and, as we shall see, ourselves.

### Consciousness, identity and self

Culturalist theories of identities have been strongly predominant within the social sciences, in particular within anthropology (see Marranci 2008b). After the 1960s and 1970s, an increasing amount of research and scholarly work has referred to a crisis of identity (Hetherington 1998: 21ff.), alienation of identity and identity resistance. Today we find that identities, within a post-modern celebration of them, may be hyphenated, multiple and fluid.<sup>11</sup> As I have observed before (Marranci 2006), the influence that social constructivism has had on anthropology has promoted anthropological analyses of identity and self (often discussed as if they were interchangeable terms) as inconsistent entities. So inconsistent, 'fleeting, fragmentary, and buffeted', to use Holland's words, that 'from the extreme ephemeralist position, daily life, especially in the post-modern era, is a movement from self to self' (Holland 1997: 170).

So, Sökefeld has observed that in anthropology, culture has been seen 'not as something ephemeral but [...] as a "power" constituted by a system of shared meaning that is effective in shaping social reality' (1999: 427). This, according to him, has prevented some anthropologists recognising the existence of a *stable and individualistic self*. Indeed,

many anthropologists have accepted the idea that self and identity are as unstable and fluid as the cultures that allegedly create them. Sökefeld has suggested that a solution could be achieved by conceiving of 'the self (used here as generic term including "individual", "individuality", "person", etc.) as [a] relatively stable point' (1999: 427). Yet, if in sociology the understanding of 'individual' and 'individuality' has been sacrificed to the needs of explaining society as the interaction of groups, in anthropology identity has been essentialised into the form of a cultural object, ever changing and adapting to the social-cultural context. The results, as we have seen above, are theories, like social identity theory, which often end in tautologies of difficult solution. The study of fundamentalism and the other Islamic-isms has been highly affected by both these essentialisms. Hetherington, however, has noticed,

To speak of identity at all in non-essentialist terms, while not impossible, is somewhat problematic. If it is not a quality that derives from our human being or from fixed social structures and relations, then it can only 'exist' in a space between, in relation to something else, across an uncertain gap between identity and non-identity and in the recognition of that gap. This can take the simple 'us and them' form, defining identity in relation to its (often marginal and oppressed) 'other' [...] or between positions of identity and non-identity with an identity. In this case identity is performed through bricolage.

(1998: 25)

Again, the solution seems a confusing melange of symbols and cultural objects in a sort of minestrone of the self. I wonder how many of us, including the above-mentioned writer, feel we are a 'bricolage' when we say 'I'.

What we have discussed about ecological emotions can help us to avoid the 'difficult' essentialism that Hetherington has recognised. However, it can also resolve that 'fleeting, fragmentary, and buffeted' representation of human identity which brought Welsch to say, 'to be healthy today is truly only possible in the form of schizophrenia – if not polyphrenia' (1990: 171). Indeed, at this point, I can argue that what we call 'self' and 'identity' may not be (as most social scientific theories claim) the sole product of social interaction, though social interaction could provoke changes in them. Yet it is important to recognise that 'self' and 'identity' are not the same. If the self (which we could better refer to as the 'autobiographical self') is a real entity in our neuro-cognitive system, identity is not. Indeed, Damasio (1999: 225) has suggested that

identity 'is a delicately shaped machinery of our imagination [which] stakes the probabilities of selection toward the same, historically continuous self.'

In my theory of identity, which I have developed in *Jihad beyond Islam*, I have explained that identity is a process with two functions. On the one hand, it allows human beings to make sense of their autobiographical self; on the other, it allows them to express the autobiographical self through symbols. These symbols communicate the personal feelings that, otherwise, could not be externally communicated. Hence, I have concluded that it is *what we feel to be* that determines our personal identity. So the statement 'I am Muslim' of a hypothetical Mr Hussein is nothing other than the *symbolic communication* of his emotional commitment through which he experiences his autobiographical self. In other words, Mr Hussein has an autobiographical self of which he makes sense through that delicately shaped machinery of his imagination called identity, and which he communicates with the symbolic expression 'I am Muslim'. Finally, Mr Hussein is what he feels to be, regardless of how others, engaged in countless public discourses around the use of cultural markers, might perceive him.

Now we can observe that human beings live in a sort of tautological circuit: (1) the environment produces stimuli; (2) which produce emotions (the bodily reactions); (3) which human beings perceive and rationalise as feelings; (4) which affect their autobiographical self; (5) which is experienced through the delicately shaped machinery of their imagination (identities); (6) which is affected by the feelings induced by the emotions. What I have described until now is a circuit of causalities based on information both internal and external to the individual; in other words, an ecological system of identity. This system aims at maintaining equilibrium between the individual's internal milieu and their external environments. Psychological as well as psychoanalytic studies tell us that equilibrium between self and identity is essential for a healthy life. Yet this tautological equilibrium could be disrupted by changes in the surrounding environment, which Bateson has called *schismogenesis* (see Chapter 5); a form of progressive escalation.

By affecting the relationship between the elements of the circuit, in this case the relationship between environment, identity and autobiographical-self, schismogenesis has the power to break down the system, producing a deep crisis. I will suggest in the following chapters that schismogenetic processes that affect the relationship between the autobiographical self and identity are often the result of a 'circle of panic'. Bhabha (1994: 200) has suggested that circles of panic are caused by

'the indeterminate circulation of meaning as rumour or conspiracy, with its perverse, physical affects of panic'. As we have seen, emotions provoke feelings that then lead to action; the circle of panic leads to a self-correcting mechanism, so that the person can again experience his or her autobiographical self as meaningful. This self-correcting mechanism is what I call an *act of identity*. Because it is derived from strong emotional reactions to the schismogenetic events, acts of identity tend to be extreme in their essence. Although they are most often expressed through rhetoric, sometimes the rhetoric can become desperate action.

### **Emotional Islam?**

Perhaps my readers may understand why I have decided to add another book to the many available on this long-debated topic. I believe that within the social sciences, political sciences and religious studies, the word 'Islamic fundamentalism' has actually dictated the agenda for understanding a phenomenon that is not, as we have started discussing, a 'thing': a unitary, recognisable, cultural object or psychological process. In Chapters 2 and 3, we shall observe how scholars from the different disciplines have mainly applied culturalist and social interactionist models to obtain a clear and readable 'map'. So powerful is such discourse that even an anthropologist (Antoun 2001), despite the experience of fieldwork, has missed the individualities, the emotions, the identities and the relationships between individuals, environment and learning, which mediate between the 'the feeling of being' and 'the feeling of being part of'. In Chapter 2, Lawrence (1990), who offered the first attempt at explaining the rhetoric (and often violent actions) of people and groups claiming the authority of their lifestyle through God, has, however, imposed a framework in which the sacred text becomes a Durkheimian totem. Yet Lawrence, and after him Marty and Appleby's colossal work (1991–5), ends in forming his argument through *comparative reductionism*, in which extremely diverse cultures, divided even among themselves, are compared and contrasted. The aim is to obtain a 'macro-picture', an easy 'object' to test against parameters of a Western, or rather, 'enlightened', civilisation. Without probably noticing, the authors discussed in Chapter 2 often present modernism, secularism and liberalism through the fallacy of a *Eurocentric historical evolutionarism*.

In Chapter 3, we shall observe that, particularly after September 11, the label fundamentalism is accompanied by others, such as Islamic terrorism, Islamic extremism and Islamic radicalism, which I have shorthanded as

'Islamic-isms'. Although some scholars have used Islamic fundamentalism as merely one among many examples, most have taken care to inform the reader that among the fundamentalisms, the Islamic one is the most pernicious. The scholarly debate on the role of religion, and the sacred text, in the formation of Islamic fundamentalism, or other Islamic-isms, has shown three main different positions: Islam, as religion, is more prone to violence and fundamentalism (Bruce 2000); fundamentalists are Muslims with political aims who manipulate Islam for their own ideological purposes (Esposito 2002, Hafez 2003, Milton-Edwards 2005); and finally, the representation of Islamic fundamentalism as a historical process was started by charismatic Islamic ideologues (such as Mawdudi, Al-Banna and Qutb). More recently, some scholars, such as Wiktorowicz (2005), have attempted to restart from the individual and have provided an interesting analysis and theory of why people, from different ethnic, national, economic and Islamic backgrounds, decide to join extremist movements.

Again, some of the theories offered do not end in what Mamdani has called 'Culture Talk', or in radical forms of identity theory, but rather in new forms of essentialism, though, this time, anti-orientalist. These scholars have argued that Muslim activists of extreme movements are just manipulating Islam. They made a clear distinction between what is Islam (as an abstract theological category) and the behaviour of Muslims, some of whom may contradict the expected – by the scholars, of course – orthodoxy. Yet this argument, although noble in its intent to contrast orientalist views of Islam, is also very weak because it forces the domain of social scientific research to embrace particular stands of Islamic theology fully, condemning others as 'evil' or blandly 'fake'. This argument, therefore, is fallacious because it may answer the infamous question 'what went wrong with Islam' in a positive way, but fails to analyse the dynamics through which the 'bad Muslims' become 'bad Muslims' by simply informing us that they are so because they are 'bad'. These authors have forgotten that we, as social scientists, psychologists and political scientists, cannot decide the 'correct' form of Islam, especially because there is no single authority recognised in Islam; and it is not our place to claim that Islamic fundamentalists are impostors, because, as we have seen above, Muslims feel Muslim despite how people may see them (Marranci 2006: 10). Paraphrasing the analyses of fundamentalisms, we can say that all the theories discussed show a 'family resemblance'. What scholars tend to disagree about is more the weight that each element characterising fundamentalism may have in it rather than the reason for the existence of the phenomenon itself.

We shall see, when in Chapter 3 I discuss the case of *Hizb ut-Tahrir*, that other analysis of the phenomenon may be possible. One recent example is Wiktorowicz's work on a group derived from *Hizb ut-Tahrir*, *Al-Muhajiroun* (2005). He has offered one of the few and most interesting studies exploring the reasons behind the decision of some Muslims in the West to join radical Islamic movements. Rare in the studies of Islamic-isms, his book is the result of in depth research he conducted in 2002 – methodologically rooted in anthropological participant observation – on Omar Bakri Mohammed's radical group. Unsurprisingly, because of the extended fieldwork, Wiktorowicz avoids the fallacies that have affected the previous studies. Starting from the individual, he has advanced the idea that those who join extremist groups experience a sort of 'cognitive opening' that challenges their previous beliefs and prepares them for new ideas. It is from these cognitive openings, Wiktorowicz would suggest, that radical ideas of Islam find their way into the lives of young Muslims. Wiktorowicz's argument is a good one, but it still leaves many questions unanswered, because for the purpose of his book, he did not need to answer them.

We can understand 'cognitive opening' as the product of a 'moral emotion' (that is, in Damasio's terminology, moral feeling), which Fuller (2006, 2007) calls 'wonder'. Indeed, starting from Chapter 4, I shall offer my reading of what, by rejecting the different Islamic-ism labels, I prefer to call Emotional Islam'. Why Emotional Islam? Islam can be perceived or experienced as 'emotional' in many ways by both Muslims and non-Muslims. For instance, Muslims may cry while asking for forgiveness during Ramadan, as I have seen many times; or non-Muslims may feel uncomfortable with some aspects of Islam, or even fear Islam itself.<sup>12</sup> Yet it is not in this sense that I am using here the term 'Emotional Islam'. Rather, I use it in relation to the theories of emotions, identity and self described above. As we shall see in Chapters 4 and 5, although, as in the case of Qutb, certain Islamic language may be used, it is the result of the dynamics of environment, autobiographical self, emotions and identity that really matters. Here Islam is emotional because it developed, as in some of the ethnographic examples I have provided, through such dynamics.

Hence, in Chapter 4, I shall discuss how the idea of justice and dignity are charged, through the emotional process, with new values, which, though expressed in terms of religious rhetoric, are the expression of the relationship between identity, feelings and the environment, real or imagined, where the individual situates himself or herself. The idea of justice, which defines what it means to be a human being, becomes

through such a process an ethos of justice. In certain circumstances, affected by schismogenesis, the ethos of justice can shift to an ideology of justice. In Chapter 5, I shall observe how this 'ideology of justice' is linked to another ideology derived from an emotional understanding of one of the pillars of Islam, the 'ideology of tawhid'. Muslims declare *tawhid* in the *Shahada* (declaration of faith), affirming the oneness of God. Islamic theologians and philosophers have written an ocean's worth of ink about tawhid. However, the tawhid we will discuss in this chapter has only a resemblance to the theological one, as its essence is emotional and linked to individuals' 'acts of identity'. As in the case of the concepts of justice and dignity, tawhid is reduced to a rhetorical device used to express a narrative of rebellion and a discourse of charisma, provoked, in some cases, by feelings of shame and anger. In this chapter, I shall explain how the individual formation of emotional Islam becomes part of the group or movement. Scholars have explained the relationship between the activists and the group through the power derived from the charismatic figure of the leader. Instead, I shall suggest a different model.

Following Hetherington's study (1998), I will advocate the re-establishment of the centrality of feelings and emotions in the process of identification and community formation. Hetherington, re-enhancing Schmalenbach's definition of Bund (communion), has suggested that charisma, in certain groups, tends to be defused instead of being, as other scholars have suggested following Weber, concentrated within an individual. Charisma is rather a collective ideologisation of certain emotions (feelings in Damasio's terminology). Although some people can become influential within this space, which Hetherington refers to as Bund, they do not become objects of adoration. Within the Bund, a set of beliefs induce feelings of enthusiasm, and this process tends to 'generalise the condition of charisma', so that charisma is not within one person or place, but tends to be diffused within the Bund (1998: 93). I shall suggest that Hetherington's Bund describes very well how individuals who experience Islam as an emotional process may become then part of a group in which the leader is more the 'official' speaker than the ideologue per se, or the charismatic figure inducing religious reverence.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I shall argue that groups and movements that are the product of the processes we have called 'Emotional Islam' are not struggling against European Enlightenment values, or modernist lifestyles because of their adherence, and deference to an anachronistic scripturalism – as the authors we will review in the first two

chapters have strongly suggested. Rejecting the abstract idea of a clash of civilisations, I have instead suggested that there is a clash of ethos and values in the form of an epistemological relationship: the ‘civilised’ and the ‘civilisable’. Therefore, what matters is how to be human, not what it means to be human. Of course, in this dynamic it is easy to see how the schismogenic process affects groups in a complementary competition for a hegemonic definition of how to be human. Although the argument can be used for other processes of emotional religion, in this chapter I will focus on those Muslims who have developed such a rhetoric and worldview. At the centre of this cybernetic relationship between the ‘civilised’ and ‘civilisable’ there is the idea of teaching others how to be human, the ‘civilizing’ act. This act, which in some cases may lead to violent actions, is a process to re-establish a sense of dignity – based upon an ethos of justice – of being human.

### Notes

1. This is not a proper survey because I have used the ‘advanced research’ options of Google Books and Google Scholar to obtain the numbers. Yet it remains a good indication of the amazing amount of publication on the topic over the last seven years!
2. For more discussion on the idea of identity and self as a mainly cultural or universal phenomenon, read Holland (1997).
3. See, for instance, Geertz (1968), Gellner (1981), Lawrence (1990), Tibi (1998), Bruce (2000), Antoun (2001), Choueri (2002) and Lewis (2003).
4. See for example Bernard Lewis’s argument (2003), and Huntington (1996) as well as Pipes (2003).
5. Bruce is referring to the US church historian Martin Marty who, with other members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, has organised the publication of five thematic volumes (Marty and Appleby 1991–5), which remain one of the most exhaustive references in the study of fundamentalism.
6. Among many we can mention, Lawrence (1990), Marty and Appleby’s Fundamentalism Project (1991–5), Tibi (1998), Antoun (2001) and Choueri (2002).
7. Among the others see, for instance, Bruce (2000) and Ruthven (2004).
8. For instance, mistakes analogous to the error of classifying the name with the thing named (see Bateson 2002: 106–19).
9. I use throughout this book the term ‘environment’ to indicate the social, cultural and natural surroundings in which we move during our everyday life (see also Milton 2002, 2007 and Milton and Svašek 2005).
10. How emotions are understood and explained changes dramatically among different traditions and cultures.

11. For an example of the authors who have discussed identities from a post-modern perspective, see Foucault (1977), Hall (1990, 1992, 1996) Rutherford (1990), Bhabha (1994), Sarup (1996) and Werbner and Modood (1997).
12. Think about this hypothetical situation. In an airport, people hear a loud 'Allahu Akbar!'. Although some of my non-Muslim friends have kindly admitted that in such circumstances they would fear for their lives because of being induced to believe that a terrorist attack may be imminent, some of my Muslim friends have noted that the first thing they would think of would be, for instance, that a Muslim brother may have caught the plane for which he was late.

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