

3.1 Fundamentalism

When looking at a controversial issues there is often very two extreme attitudes. Many movements start as a reaction to the opposite extreme. Fundamentalists believe that there is a truth that all people must adhere to. They follow the truth literally. The word tends to be associated with religious fundamentalists that believe their scripture is the direct word of God and apply it strictly. They do not accept any other principles. They wish to return to a previous ideal which people have strayed from and are often intolerant to opposing views. The term is often used derogatorily in today's world.

Buddhist Fundamentalism

Burma is a Buddhist majority state. It recognises 134 ethnic groups but they refuse to recognise the 1.3 million Muslims in Burma, mainly Rohingya Muslims. The minority has suffered persecution for 70 years. They are denied citizenship if they can't prove their ancestors lived in Burma before 1823 British occupation. They are not get married without permission, own land and were excluded from the latest census. The UN describes them as one of the most persecuted minorities in the world.

Fundamentalist anti-Islam extremist Buddhist groups that seek to protect their religion against the emergence of an Islamic State have emerged in Burma. Ashin Wirathu is the leader of the radical anti-Muslim 969 movement in Myanmar who claims 'if we are weak our land will

become Muslim'. The movement is currently drafting a law proposal that would ban interfaith marriage.

Wirathu accused a Muslim man of raping a Buddhist woman on his Facebook page, sparking the 2012 Rakhine State Riots. Fundamental Buddhists took 10 Muslim men off a bus and slaughtered them. More took to the streets and began burning Mosques and Muslim businesses. After the initial riots, a series of more attacks took place and ultimately 200 people were left dead and an estimated 250,000 Rohingya Muslims were displaced. Human Rights Watch has called the Buddhist fundamentalism 'ethnic cleansing'.

300,000 are living along the Bangladeshi border in displacement camps but are refused citizenship here also. Over one million have been displaced overall. Authorities bar Muslims from leaving because of international calls to stop immigrants fleeing on boats. These boats often capsize when they do flee and many die at sea and led to the 2015 Rohingya Refugee crisis of 'boat people' stranded at sea. Earlier this month Barrack Obama called on the Myanmar government and extremist groups to stop persecuting the Muslim minority.

Jewish Fundamentalism

Baruch Goldstein was an American-Israeli Jewish fundamentalist member of the far-right Kach movement that carried out the Hebron Massacre on the 25th of February 1995. Goldstein opened fire on Palestinian Muslims that gathered in the Mosque of Abraham to pray during the Holy month of Ramadan that overlapped with the Jewish Purim. The attack left 29 people dead and 125 wounded. Goldstein was only stopped after he was overpowered and beaten to

death by survivors. Some Jewish settlers in Hebron laud him as a hero and view his attack and subsequent death as an act of martyrdom. 10 Palestinians were killed by the IDF in protests that erupted as a result of the massacre.