Longing For The End: A History Of Millennialism In Western Civilization

Frederic J Baumgartner

Frederic Baumgartner explores the long, often violent, history of millennialism as it has affected Western civilization. From ancient Zoroastrians to Concerned Christians of 1998, a belief in the imminent end of the world and the coming of the new age has motivated hundreds of sects and cults, some of which have burned out in an orgy of violence to become a permanent part of Western history.

In some cases, civilizations simply fade out of existence—becoming the stuff of history not with a bang but a whimper. The British Empire has been on this path since 1918, Randers says, and other Western nations might go this route as well. Western civilization is not a lost cause, however. Using reason and science to guide decisions, paired with extraordinary leadership and exceptional goodwill, human society can progress to higher and higher levels of well-being and development, Homer-Dixon says.
Longing for the End is restricted to Christian groups and those heavily influenced by Christianity. Baumgartner's blueprint for millennial groups is a messianic cult within Judaism: Jesus and his disciples and apostles. His explanatory model for the recurrence of millennial groups interprets stress or deprivation (of nearly any sort: economic, political, religious, and even personal) as the catalyst between a susceptible person or group and the millennial traditions captured in biblical texts. This book is designed for the non-specialist. It includes a glossary of terms, a helpful index, endnotes for some of the quotations in the text, a list of sources not cited in the endnotes, and several Internet-accessible resources. Longing for the End: A History of Millennialism in Western Civilization, New York: Palgrave, pp 1-6. ^ Gould, Stephen Jay. 1997. Questioning the millennium: a rationalist's guide to a precisely arbitrary countdown. New York: Harmony Books, p. 112 (note). Section: Movements[edit]. This has, perhaps over time, become a very long list indeed. Is there any merit in using subsections, or dividing it by chronology? Even just separating into 20th century movements and pre-20th century? Longing for the End is restricted to Christian groups and those heavily influenced by Christianity. Baumgartner's blueprint for millennial groups is a messianic cult within Judaism: Jesus and his disciples and apostles. His explanatory model for the recurrence of millennial groups interprets stress or deprivation (of nearly any sort: economic, political, religious, and even personal) as the catalyst between a susceptible person or group and the millennial traditions captured in biblical texts. Personal or group aspirations or frustrations can spiral upward in this context and ultimately l...Â In what ways can Paulâ€™s writings be used as a key to understanding Western civilization? In this book I seek to re-read Paulâ€™s epistles using a critical