“Realist Constructivism”
Samuel P. Huntington (1993)

Summary

Arguments & Evidence

• **Conflicts have evolved and are reaching a new phase:** Huntington argues that we are reaching a phase of conflict called the conflict of civilizations. The international system began with the Treaty of Westphalia and the conflict between monarchies in the effort to gain more armies, territory, money, etc. Then the system began to shift towards nation states with the French Revolution. This made conflicts between nation states instead of monarchs. Next was the conflict of ideologies following the Russian Revolution. This included communism v. fascism v. liberal democracy and eventually the two superpowers post WWII the U.S. vs. the U.S.S.R. Now that the Cold War is over, the focus has to non-Western civilizations relations.

• **The kin-country syndrome will determine alliances and change relations:** Huntington states that alliances during times of war or crisis will begin to focus more on a ‘kin’ relationship. States will begin to rally support among other states that are of the same civilization as them. The kin-country syndrome will allow nations to pull on emotional ties to gain assistance. This will replace political ideology and change the theory of balance of power when a state considers their priorities. This can be seen in the Middle East now. The Arab nations have seemed to band together against the one state in the area that does not share the same civilization as they do, Israel. At the same time, the same can be said for the U.S.’s support of Israel. Many believe that the main reason that the U.S. backs Israel is because they identify with them more than the Arab states in the area. They view themselves as coming from the same civilization. Huntington also cites that with this new “syndrome” will inevitably come a “world of double standards.” States will begin to treat their kin countries differently than those that are not. For example, the U.S. will treat states such as Great Britain and Israel differently than Iraq or Cambodia. This double standard will eventually lead to more conflicts between civilizations.

• **“The conflicts of the future will occur along the cultural fault lines separating civilization.”** Huntington describes six reasons why future conflicts will occur among Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic- Orthodox, Latin American and African civilizations. He first explains that the difference among these different civilizations is both real and basic, meaning simple characteristics like language culture or tradition. These basic differences give rise to the civilizations most basic principles; such as “the relations between God and man,
the individual and the group, the citizen and the state…” He also gives notice to that fact that instead of growing, the world is actually becoming smaller. By this he means, that although citizens from different countries are interacting it is increasing the awareness of their identity and ultimately creating animosity between the two identities. Thirdly, religion is being rejuvenated and is creating an identity that surpasses the identity proved locally or by a nation state. Religious identities are thus, stronger because they are able to unite citizens of different civilizations. Next, Huntington says that, “the growth of civilization-consciousness is enhanced by the dual role of the West.” He means that in the past the elite in a non-Western country had tried to adopt Western cultures, however, now the elite seems to be returning to indigenous cultures and traditions in an attempt to de-Westernize, while the mass still look to Western ways of society. Fifth, economic and political differences are easy to change and adapt while cultural differences cannot be conciliated. As Huntington so clearly points out a Communist can become a Democrat but a Russian cannot become an American or a person can be half-Russian and half-American but cannot be half-Catholic and half-Buddhist. Lastly, “economic regionalism is increasing”. This is illustrated by the NAFTA between Mexico, the United States and Canada, the European Community, comprised of the member countries of the EU, and the Economic Cooperation Organization, comprised of ten non-Arab Muslim states. As a result of these six explanations of the clash of civilizations, conflicts will arise on the micro (“adjacent groups along the fault lines”) and macro (“states from different civilizations…”). These conflicts occur because of an “us” vs. “them” attitude that is divided among different religion, ethnical, ideology, and geographical closeness. By looking at this explanation by Huntington, one can look at the war in Iraq and see that it is a war along these cultural lines and not one based on economics or politics. The United States is trying to spread its Western ideal of democracy to Iraq in an attempt to have more in common, which would produce less animosity between the two countries (a democracy is least likely to fight another democracy). The United States is not fighting Iraq; instead it is fighting terrorists, whose principles are based in the Muslim religion, charismatic leaders turn this peaceful religion into a fanatical ideology. Thus, the terrorists see themselves as following what Allah desires, which is a destruction of American Christian society. The Arab terrorists see America as a bully trying to police the globe they feel degraded by the United States and humiliation is a feelings that cannot be cured with words; therefore, they retaliate with force to regain their dignity.

• “The world community” is really only a cover that the powerful Western states use to serve their own interests: Due to the absences of any group of states to challenge them, the Western states have made up one of the most powerful groups in the history of the world. And while they are very popular within their own circle, the rest of the world does not like being pushed around and resents the superpowers. The feeling among these states is that the West is only serving
their interests, but doing so using “the world community” as it cover. As author Huntington writes “The West in effect is using international institutions, military power and economic resources to run the world in ways that will maintain Western predominance protect Western interests and promote Western political and economic values” (Huntington 19). The IMF is a perfect example of this. In Latin America, many states worked with the IMF to work towards their economic goals and improve the condition of their state. However in the end, many of these states were worse off and ended up being even more in debt, but this time to the intuition that swore it was their to help. How are these states supposed to feel, when an IGO set up and run by the Western states ends up putting them in more debt than before, while generating more money for the West. It seems IGOs like the IMF and the U.N. Security Council are serving the Western world while only pretending to help the other states interests. The author feels like this is where conflict will start: The differing cultures and beliefs between “the West and the Rest”. Since these cultures differ in so many ways, it seems inevitable that their will be a major conflict stemming from these two “sets” of ideas and beliefs.

• The idea of “torn countries” and what impact they will have on the future in international relations: Torn countries are countries that have tried to “westernize” themselves but have failed on the complete transformation because the core of the society is based on non-Western values. Countries such as Mexico, Turkey, and Russia, who have left behind their traditions and tried to re-identify themselves and become a member of the powerful West, are still struggling with parts of the conversion and where they will fall. The author writes that there are three things that must happen for a country to convert: “First, their political and economic elite have to be generally supportive of and enthusiastic about this move. Second, its public has to be willing to acquiesce in the redefinition. Third, the dominant groups in the recipient civilization have to be willing to embrace the convert” (23). These three steps are all about shifting the identities of the state, disregarding, to an extent, the state’s history, and also switching alliances. For Mexico, it is a shift away from pan-Latin Americanism, and for Turkey it is a shift away from pan-Arabism. This can cause problems for a state if the states surrounding it believe it to be a slap in the face that own of their own is leaving for “the enemy”. For Mexico, with the US directly to its north, this should not be a big problem. However, it could be a major issue in Turkey and a reason their conversion might not be successful. These states, if they do convert to the Western side, are indicator to what states in their region might do. They also can be a reason for states in their region to completely disregard to West and begin a norm of anti-Westernism that could spread to other cultures who do not want to be westernized.

• “A Confucian-Islamic connection has emerged to challenge Western interests, values, and power.” Many countries face many obstacles while attempting to join the West. Such countries include those that are Muslim, Confucian, Hindu, and
Buddhist. These obstacles are motivating factors for these countries to develop their own military and political power. They join together and cooperate to challenge the interests of the west. This cooperation is referred to as the Confucian-Islamic connection. These non-western nations are acquiring weapons that they feel are necessary for their own security. China, North Korea, and many Middle Eastern countries are greatly increasing their military capabilities. Confucian-Islamic states have been focusing predominately on attaining and developing nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. Huntington expresses his concern of the development of Chinese military power. He explains that due to China’s great economic development, it has been able to allocate more funds for military spending. Such development and military buildup has caused an arms race in East Asia. In addition, it has worked with other states in selling and buying nuclear technology, advanced missiles, and missile technology to other countries. Huntington explains that Western states are trying to reduce military power, which is the result of the redefinition of arms control, which is a Western goal. “In the post-Cold War world the primary objective of arms control is to prevent the development by non-Western societies of military capabilities that could threaten Western interests” (46). The West is simply to reduce the number of arms and weapons technologies. Huntington expresses his concern for the cooperation among Confucian-Islamic states because they are collaborating to counter the military power of the West. In the past, each side developed its own military capabilities to balance the other. Today, however the situation is much different, as the Confucian-Islamic states are building their military power, while the West is trying to limit and reduce military capabilities.

- The West possess a "universal civilization" conception of norms and imposes their norms of democracy and human rights on non-Western countries.

Huntington explains the power structure of the international community as the West dominating the entire world through the use of institutions, advanced military power, and economic dominance to protect the dominance of the Western world. He explains that this is a perception that non-Westerners view the Western world. He believes this is a norm that creates much discontent and distain for non-Westerners. This is one way to view how there is a conflict between the West and non-Western civilizations. However, this is not the only view to explain how there is a conflict. Huntington asserts that a second form of conflict is developed through the differences in values, ideas, and beliefs. V.S. Naipul argues that the West is a “universal civilization that fits all men.” This notion perpetuates the conflict between the West and the non-West because in reality, most non-Westerns posses a distinctly different conception of values, beliefs, and ideas. Huntington states, “Western idea of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, the separation of church and state, often have little resonance in Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist, or Orthodox cultures.” The West holds that there is a “universal civilization” but this idea is radically different from
Asian states because they firmly believe cultures are different and civilizations explain how people are different from another. On an international political level, the idea that the West holds creates much conflict with non-Western civilizations. This occurs because the United States and Western power attempt to force the norms of democracy and human rights onto other civilizations. This norm has succeeded in adoption throughout non-Western states. The evidence that supports this is that almost every democracy in a non-Western society has “been the product of Western colonialism or imposition.” The West essentially forces other non-Western societies to adopt the norm of democracy. However, there are examples of countries who do not accept the imposition of Western norms. Burma and North Korea are an example of nations that do not accept this norm imposition. The author explains that “the costs of this course, however, are high, and few states have pursued it exclusively.” The way in which these states follow this approach is by developing isolation from the Western world. They believe this will protect their countries from “corruption” and do not participate in the “Western-dominated global community.” The second explanation of adoption of Western norms is “band-wagoning” in which countries accept the norms of the West and join their international institutions. The third is better explained by a traditional approach of international relations theory in which countries “attempt to ‘balance' the West by developing economic and military power and cooperating with other non-Western societies against the West, while preserving indigenous values and institutions; in short, to modernize but not to Westernize.” All of these explanations help explain how ideas and norm shape the global community, and are significant in international politics. Regardless if countries accept these Western norms, it is evident that the Western norms significantly affect almost every aspect of the world.

Strengths

- *Huntington was right: regional economic blocs are increasing.* In his article, Huntington argues that “the importance of regional blocs is likely to continue to increase in the future.” When he wrote this article in 1993, although regional integration existed it was not nearly as important as it is today, so Huntington’s prediction that regional economic alliances would become more significant was accurate. An example of increased regional economic alliance is the EU. Back in 1993 the EU had 12 member states, a number that has grown to 27. By 1999 the EU established a common currency, the euro, a significant step toward regional economic integration. The EU’s economic integration efforts have superceded all previous attempts of regional economic integration. Another example is Mercosur, the regional trade agreement between Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Paraguay. It was established in 1991 and it recent year it has grown in size and influence. Venezuela is expected to obtain full membership within the next few years and Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia are now associated members. Also in Latin America the “Banco del Sur” (translated Bank of the
South), has the potential of becoming a significant economic regional institution. The Bank would be a lending institution, such as the World Bank and the IMF, but completely detached from the US and Europe, and it would only lend money to Latin American countries. Regional economic integration in Latin America is likely to continue, as it is in other parts of the world, just as Huntington predicted it would happen.

Weaknesses

- **How did Huntington actually classified the seven civilizations?** In his article Huntington explains how there are seven different civilizations: Western, Latin America, Muslim, Orthodox, Hindu, Sinic, Japanese, and Buddhist. He argues that civilizations are the “highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species.” According to Huntington, these civilizations share history, religion, language, costumes, and institutions. But although his argument is insightful and much can be learned from it, Huntington fails to elaborate on how he classified the world into seven different civilizations. What characteristics make a country or countries particular enough to receive Huntington’s level of “civilization”? How can the Muslims be just one civilization, even though people within this civilization are often at odds with each other? And how could there be a clash of civilizations between the Muslim countries and another civilization when they are actually at war with each other? The differences within the supposed Muslim civilization are too distinct to ignore: Shia, Sunni, Kurds, Turks, etc., have not only different customs and identities but they also see each other as enemies. The likelihood that the Islamic world will unite seems hard to believe right now, unless they do it due to an external threat, which would still not support Huntington’s argument because the alliance could break as soon as the threat disappears and also because the true cause of the unity would be security and self-interest and not identity and culture. Finally, if Japan is considered its own civilization and is not grouped to China, as it could be, then the Muslim world should not be categorized as just one civilization.

- **Civilizations should not be considered “broad.” They are complex and this oversight has caused part of the conflict:** Huntington argues that a civilization is defined by both “common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people.” (24) This, however, does not take into account the vast amount of differences within a civilization. As seen in current conflicts in Darfur, Rwanda, and the ethnic groups of the Middle East (Jews and Arabs, Shia’s, Kurds, and Sunnis), we have created problems by considering civilizations as broad and have overlooked deeply rooted differences between ethnic groups. A major problem emerging is not the differences between civilizations but rather the problems within. To categorize a civilization as all-inclusive is a major oversight which has created the ignorance.
that feeds civilization conflicts. Although Huntington says “civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition and, most important, religion,” (25) he does not argue the blatant problem we have created by ignoring the differences between ethnic groups of the Middle East. There are numerous traditional and religious implications that were not considered when the civilization of Islam was added to the major contemporary civilizations list, nor were they addressed in Huntington’s article. How can we say a civilization is differentiated by religion and yet by-pass the differences of religion within a civilization we create? As mentioned in the previous topic (How did Huntington actually classify the seven civilizations?), civilizations cannot be seen as broad because there are distinct differences we are ignoring.

• **Should Africa be considered a civilization?** If we are going to identify Japan and China as civilizations, why does Huntington say an African civilization is “possibly” one of the seven or eight major contemporary civilizations? If we considered an African civilization, would we be creating similar conflicts as seen in the Islam civilization? For example, in Darfur and Rwanda, there are severe ethnic conflicts (ethnic cleansings and vicious murders between neighboring ethnic groups). To say that there is only one African civilization would only spur extreme animosity and a “micro-level” clash would occur at the fault line between the civilization’s members. Perhaps this continent has not yet left the stage of ethnic and nationalistic conflicts. Huntington says that the fault line between civilizations causes struggles over “the control of territory and each other” (29). This is seen within African civilization. Huntington does not have enough evidence to support the argument of why civilizations should be created as one broad entity. Essentially, in the case of the African civilization (or any of the conflicting civilizations), Huntington does not support a resolution to the violence within civilizations. Further, Africa is "possibly" one of the civilizations but this would mean we are creating the same problems as seen in the Middle East.

• **Author seems to ignore Non-Western history and undermines its historical importance to world politics:** Perhaps one of the most obvious examples of western-minded philosophy is found within the first few pages of this text. Huntington paints a picture in which conflicts in the past occurred only through western mediums, ignoring conflicts and wars elsewhere in the world. He claims that only now and in the future will non-western nations play a role in world politics, eventhough non-western nations have played several roles in international politics in the past - though we may ignore their importance because their effects on our societies were limited, oftentimes not noticeable at all. With many of these conflicts taking place not too long ago, it seems arrogant from a western perspective to assume that until now, western civilization has seen the most significant spouts of conflict, as Huntington seems to point out. These mainly European conflicts may in fact be more significant for our own society, but
explain that to a chinese individual, or a Japanese person, an Arab, etc. With rising degrees of globalization, these interactions are bound to become more common, as the author noted. For this reason, from a western perspective we may conclude that non-western countries will now have significantly more leverage over the affairs of western states while at the same time, other parts of the world may feel the exact same way as a result of a rising western influence. Thus, non-western states are affected just the same as western states, only difference is these non-western states call the western states the new participants in their world politics.

• **Author fails to adequately acknowledge failed attempts to develop organized groups on cultural/ethnic/religious lines and fails to provide appropriate estimates of violence within civilizations:** Huntington's main argument is that in the future, wars and conflict will be fought by between distinct civilizations. This assumption requires member states to form coalitions based on historical backgrounds. Several times in the past, however, nations have attempted to fuse on those lines with no success, suggesting that any future attempt at such a group-formation would encounter similar obstacles that may be impossible to overcome. Take for instance, Pan-Arabism: the movement grew in strength for some time and collapsed due to diverging interests amongst member states. The Pan-Americanism in Latin America in the early 19th century also collapsed and gave way to national interests that culminated in several wars among Latin American nations. Perhaps one of the most important and significant, more general observations, are all the civil wars fought between peoples of the same countries. Countless civil wars, the American Civil War, the Russia Civil War, the Chinese Civil War, etc., indicate that often, nations have trouble coping with themselves, making it even more difficult to cooperate with others. This leads us into another of Huntington's ideas, suggesting that the bloody wars in history have been fought on cultural divides. Though this may sometimes be the case, at least as many wars and conflicts have been fought along far different "fault lines," such as nationalism, political, and even the more shallow hereditary lines. World War I, to some extent World War II, The Russian Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, the "African World War," The French Wars of Religion, etc., were fought not by civilization fault lines but much more narrow conflicts of interest. Essentially, given past histories and national behavior, there is insufficient evidence to suggest, as Huntington proposes, that the future will be marked by clashes of civilization because as it stands to today, civilizations cannot get along any better with themselves than they can with others.

**Author to Author**

**Other Analyses**

*The Clash of Civilizations: A self-fulfilling prophecy?*
Many scholars have criticized Samuel Huntington, calling his “Clash of Civilizations” a self-fulfilling prophecy. When he wrote his article in 1993, he neatly organized the complexities of the world’s people into seven or eight categories. Included in these categories, called civilizations, were the Islamic and Western civilizations. Huntington explained the “kin-country” syndrome, which would replace “political ideology and traditional balance of power considerations as the principal basis for cooperation and coalitions.” Basically, he was saying that nations would no longer be guided principally by material self-interest, but instead would rally with their “brothers” against whomever they considered a common foe, in this case: the West. He quoted Safar Al-Hawali saying the Desert Storm was not “the world against Iraq. It is the West against Islam.” The validity of that statement is debatable, but in sitting back and dividing up the world into civilizations, Huntington’s words seemed the materialization of a formative idea that there is a “them” and an “us.”

The argument of many in the wake of terrorist attacks like September 11th is that misinformation and misimpressions have fed misunderstandings. Many of the people of the West feel suspicion against all Arabs and all Muslims, not just extremists. Similarly, many Arabs and Muslims generalize against all American and form unfair stereotypes and prejudices. The feelings go both ways. The words of Al-Hawali illustrate the point. It was not the whole world coming against an unfair dictator in Iraq; that would have been okay. The problem was the prevailing idea that it was the West coming against Islam. Where before it might have been a conflict between two independent states, by lopping states together into civilizations, it turned the inter-state conflict into a conflict between civilizations. There could have been no clash of civilizations until we had distinguished and labeled who was “us” and who was “them.” Huntington did that. For all of those looking for a group to blame or an explanation for the feeling of difference, Huntington’s Clash of Civilizations offered itself as a legitimizer. As such, the Clash of Civilizations was a self-fulfilling prophecy. It made certain suggestions about what would happen and most of the prophecies have proven fairly accurate. The question, though, would they have happened anyway or were they allowed to materialize because we enumerated our differences and clearly laid out that we thought there were insurmountable differences between us and them.

But whether or not “The Clash of Civilizations” was a self-fulfilling prophecy, the acceptance of the idea has become a norm. How many times have we heard political and diplomatic leaders make reference to a clash of civilizations or a clash of cultures in our time? Whether or not states can actually be grouped together into seven or eight civilizations that ostensibly share common culture, history, ideas, or some other non-material bond, the truth is that the idea that they do has become a norm. “We,” the West, have accepted that we share a bond with each other and we acknowledge for the most past that “they,” Muslims, also share a common bond. The prevailing idea of a common bond makes us a little more suspicious of those who are not bonded with us and promises more tension in the future.

- The Arab Civilization and that of the West are certainly clashing. As proposed by Samuel P. Huntington, this can be attributed to specific features of each
civilization which will not soon be altered and will not easily be compromised. As the United States and its allies in the West execute the War on Terror they must realize that those who we seek to eliminate share a common culture with a significant portion of the world population and that we must clearly distinguish between friend and foe if we are to one day call this campaign a success. Islamic terrorism, the aim of our eradication efforts in this War on Terror, consists of two elements. The terrorists already converted and accepting an ideology of hate, as well as the conditions responsible for that conversion must each be address if the West is to win the War on Terror and prevent further civilization conflict. To crush the threat posed by the converted terrorists, whether they are acting, training, or plotting, is not entirely effective. Policies that fail to address each of the two elements of Islamic terrorism will be forever doomed to fail. The Israelis have failed to address the underlying causes of their conflict with the Palestinians, and though their will and ability to eradicate the converted is unmatched, their struggle continues. If political leaders are to construct and enact policies that will lead to success in the Middle East they must understand that the bonds created in a shared common culture and identity will not soon be broken and in many instances can be made stronger. Entering Afghanistan the United States had the support of the entire free world, as this was a response to a truly eminent threat. And when we should have been seeking to acquire allies, especially within the Muslim world, the United States instead invaded Iraq thereby uniting the Muslim world under one anti-American banner. The use of force in a country posing a quasi-threat and the subsequent prolonged involvement provided the material illustration of our policy in practice at which the attention and eventually arising hatred of potential allies could be directed. If the clash of civilizations is inevitable then the countries comprising the West would be best served to remain united and should avoid policies that unite the nations of Arab civilization in opposition. Not only restrained but clearly defined should be our policies aimed at those of a different civilization. Intentions can be easily misconstrued without definition and if we are to win the war between moderates and extremists within Islamic civilization there is no room for ambiguity. Such an aggressive policy accompanied by such aggressive rhetoric has not garnered much support from the Middle East. With the percentage of the force in Iraq so heavily American a clever leader would have been careful to describe the threat of radical Islam as posed by only a small portion of Arab civilization harmful to all, and certain in emphasizing the support of the world community, though it may never have been with the United States. If we could simply attract moderates within the Muslim world to our side, their support would reside with us and would deny their radical leaders the backing that emboldens them enough to sponsor death. If we refuse to seek a commonality of interest, as found in the Afghanistan offensive, and engage in endeavors beyond the scope of that common interest, we may alienate our allies and our cause. An indefinite stance on so important an issue can be twisted into an unwillingness to cooperate or even a holistically negative outlook toward the entire Arab world. Confucian-Islamic states arguably pose a
great threat to the United States and the West. To reduce such a threat, the United States should consider arms control negotiations with China, which could potentially result in the reduction of dangerous weapons. If the United States were to partake in such talks with China, they possibly might be able to come to arms control agreements and could implement various protocols. We must understand, however that China might be deceptive because they do not want us to know much about the strengths and weaknesses of their nuclear capabilities, just as the Soviets did not during the 1980s. Many might be not supportive of arms control negotiations because they fear that China will cheat. I argue that arms control with China is not a particularly bad idea and we must not compare our experience with the Soviet Union to the potential experience that we could have with China. Our relationship with China is much different than that of the Soviet Union. The United States did not have an economic relationship with the Soviet Union as it does with China today. The relationship that existed between the United States and the Soviet Union was purely a competitive one that vied for superpower status. Relations today between the United States and China are based much around economics. We are the biggest consumers of China and hold great importance to their economy. Much of what drives China’s economy is the supply and demand from the United States. The United States could motivate China to follow through with arms control negotiations by explaining that it would put economic sanctions on China if it failed to comply. If the United States were to engage in arms control negotiations, it could potentially reduce the flow of weapons and weapons technology from East Asia to the Middle East. Such dialogue between China and the United States could potentially hinder the Confucian-Islamic military connection that has come into being. If China took the United States’ rhetoric seriously, it would fear an economic downfall and might reconsider selling and buying nuclear technologies from other Confucius-Islam states.

• What is identity? Huntington utilizes identity as a prominent point in his explanation of civilizations clashing. Obviously, Huntington has applied the concepts of ideas, norms, and identity to the emerging conflict of civilizations (an application far ahead of his time in the early 1990s) but, has he defined identity clearly? Identity is a difficult concept to explain. Say a person was born in India, raised in America, but works in China. How is this person supposed to accurately define their identity? Huntington does not support how one is to determine identity. Further, differences in identity constitute differences in culture. Therefore, defining one’s identity becomes a very complex matter when combining the various factors of civilizations. If a person is from multiple civilizations, how would they choose their civilization? Do we have to be from only one civilization? I feel Huntington does not recognize this problem when creating his theory of civilizations. It seems as though people would eventually become world citizens of a world civilization rather than being limited to the confines of one civilization. Another example of this problem is Europe as the
“Western Civilization.” This combines all Europeans and Americans as one civilization. However, a Londoner does not consider themselves the same as a Spaniard. Here identity is once again compromised by the nature of a civilizations identity. There are core differences between the identities within these different fractions of the civilization.

- **The progression of conflict and the move from realism to realist-constructivism:** Huntington creates a timeline of the progression of conflict and offers a prediction for coming conflict in world politics in his opening paragraphs of *The Clash of Civilizations?*. Huntington predicts that future conflict will not be primarily ideological or economic but instead will be cultural. Huntington writes, “The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future. Conflict between civilizations will be the latest phase in the evolution of conflict in the modern world.” This points to the normative influence in world politics. Though conflict is seen as a strongly realist aspect of world politics/ international relations, Huntington is eluding early on in his writing that conflict can take on constructivist traits by predicting that future conflict will stem from culture. This is an interesting concept, realist-constructivism. Is it possible that constructivist elements can exist and even lead to such realist results as conflict? Huntington describes the patterns/ progression of conflict throughout history as such: Following the “emergence of the modern international system with the peace of Westphalia, the conflicts of the Western world were largely among princes—emperors, absolute monarchs and constitutional monarchs attempting to expand their bureaucracies, their armies, their mercantilist economic strength and, most important, the territory they ruled.” This is a clearly realist system. Leaders were concerned with relative gains. Conflict was for material reasons such as expansion of territory and increased military numbers/ strength. There is no constructivist influence to be seen in the motives of the rulers within this early international system. As time went on and leaders expanded their territories, nation states were created. Huntington uses a quote from R.R. Palmer saying, “The wars of kings were over; the wars of peoples had begun.” This was still mainly realist-based conflict over territories and power. Then, with the end of World War I and the reaction against the Russian Revolution, “the conflict of nations yielded to the conflict of ideologies, first among communism, facism-Naziism and liberal democracy, and then between communism and liberal democracy. Clearly, over time, conflict has become less influenced by material factors like territory and more influenced by less tangible, ideological factors. However, though the motives have changed, conflict has continued to exist. Thus, realist-constructivism is created. It is only natural that Huntington would predict a further move towards constructivist motives like culture to be the
foundation of future conflict when one takes the natural progression of conflict throughout history into consideration. Something that started out as purely realist has over time become more constructivist. Conflict is not so much about territorial possession and material wealth any more as it is about cultural/ideological differences. Huntington also points out that for the most part, conflict has been Western based. But in its next phase, these will be a progression into the non-Western areas. Cultural conflict will not occur between Western nations but between Western and non-Western nations.

* The Clashing of Cultures – Hunnington’s examination of civilizations and how identity plays into their behavior is a good look into the future for the date in which this article was written. Suggesting that the problems will not be based on economics, but on how you identify with your home base. I think that both are important in order to survive. When you think of these civilizations that Hunnington talks about what first comes to mind are the identities held by Western and Non-Western states. These identities are then separated based on the culture that you belong which is significant for where you live, what your nationality is, your religion or the belief you hold based on your position in society. But separating these civilizations is difficult today because the clashes within the civilizations themselves are quite evident. A country that may be ninety-five percent Muslim is only thirty percent together because the Muslim people within the country don’t get along with each other because they belong to a different group of Muslims. You can not simply just have a “clash of civilizations” when the civilizations are not at peace within themselves. Another clash that I find interesting is the one in the Caribbean. Many people think of the islands in that area to be of one and the same, sharing the same accent, the island life, the food, etc. I have never heard so many people from the islands telling me about how most people there do not like Haitians. The island of Hispaniola, shared by the Dominican Republic and Haiti, has so much conflict between the boarders because one is much more desperate than the other. Perhaps, if Dominicans weren’t so angry with Haitians it would be much easier to help them bring up their economy. Hunnington names Africa as just one civilization, when in fact it is many more. You must then also realize how all the different cultures were put together as one civilization. Groups of the same culture were separated and put together with other cultures and thrown into an already war torn government which has caused their instabilities to last for generations. Then the same Western powers who made them like that want to tell them how to behave, and its no wonder it’s so hard to get along with someone different from your own views. There are not many countries that exist with a single identity that can be the reason for an action that it takes. Many people coexist with others who hold different cultural beliefs, which then in turn are different political and economic beliefs. The country then finds itself in a bind to please its people. Hunnington says that the primary source of conflict will not be “primarily economic…the dominating source of conflict will be cultural.” Today, it seems like it is an economic and political conflict caused by the cultural differences between BOTH the civilizations and within their own civilization as well.