

## A SOCIO PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF HUNTINGTON’S THESIS ON ETHNIC MINORITIES AND THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS



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### ABSTRACT

*The subject of Samuel Huntington’s “Clash of Civilizations” has sparked much discussion. Huntington argues that post-Cold War conflicts are primarily about civilization. This article uses a data set from an at-risk minority group to bring a quantitative element to the civilization debate, which until now has largely relied on anecdotal claims. This article focuses on the question of whether both the number and intensity of ethnic conflicts between groups belonging to different civilizations have increased since the end of the Cold War. Overall, the analysis identifies several problems with Huntington’s argument. First, Huntington’s classification of civilizations is difficult to implement. Second, civilizational conflict is a minority of ethnic conflict. Third, the conflict between the West and China/Confucianism and Islamic civilization, which Huntington predicted would be the most important conflict of the post-Cold War era, constitutes a minority of civilizational conflicts. Finally, there is no statistically significant evidence that the intensity of inter-civilizational ethnic conflicts has increased relative to other types of ethnic conflicts since the end of the Cold War.*

**Key words:** Civilization, civilizational consciousness, social consciousness, culture, religion, lingua franca, paradigm

### ХАНТИНГТОННИНГ ЭТНИК ОЗЧИЛИКЛАР ВА СИВИЛИЗАТСИЯЛАР ТЎҚНАШУВИ ҲАҚИДАГИ ТЕЗИСНИНГ ИЖТИМОЙ ФАЛСАФИЙ ТАҲЛИЛИ

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## АННОТАЦИЯ

*Сэмюэл Хантингтоннинг "сivilзациялар тўқнашуви" мавзуси кўп мунозараларга сабаб бўлди. Хантингтоннинг таъкидлашича, совуқ урушдан кейинги можаролар биринчи навбатда цивилизация билан боғлиқ. Ушбу мақола ҳозирги кунга қадар асосан даъволарига таяниб келган цивилизация мунозарасига миқдорий элементни олиб келиш учун озчилик гуруҳининг маълумотларидан фойдаланади. Ушбу мақола совуқ уруш тугаганидан бэри турли цивилизацияларга мансуб гуруҳлар ўртасидаги этник низоларнинг сони ҳам, интенсивлиги ҳам ошганми дэган саволга қаратилган. Умуман олганда, таҳлил Хантингтоннинг аргументи билан боғлиқ бир нечта муаммоларни аниқлайди. Биринчидан, Хантингтоннинг цивилизациялар таснифини амалга ошириш қийин. Иккинчидан, цивилизация можароси этник можаронинг озчилигидир. Учинчидан, Ғарб ва Хитой ўртасидаги зиддият ва Ислom цивилизацияси, Хантингтон совуқ урушдан кейинги даврнинг энг муҳим можароси бўлишини башорат қилган. Ва ниҳоят, цивилизацияларaro этник можароларнинг интенсивлиги совуқ уруш тугаганидан бэри бошқа этник можароларга нисбатан ошганлиги тўғрисида статистик аҳамиятга эга.*

**Калит сўзлар:** цивилизация, цивилизация онги, ижтимоий онг, маданият, дин, *lingua franca*, парадигма

## СОЦИАЛЬНО-ФИЛОСОФСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ ДИССЕРТАЦИИ ХАНТИНГТОНА ОБ ЭТНИЧЕСКИХ МЕНЬШИНСТВАХ И СТОЛКНОВЕНИИ ЦИВИЛИЗАЦИЙ

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## АННОТАЦИЯ

*Тема «Столкновения цивилизаций» Сэмюэля Хантингтона вызвала много дискуссий. Хантингтон утверждает, что конфликты после «холодной войны» связаны прежде всего с цивилизацией. В этой статье используется набор данных из группы меньшинств, находящихся в зоне риска, чтобы привести количественный элемент в дебаты о цивилизации, которые до сих пор в основном опирались на анекдотические утверждения. В данной статье рассматривается вопрос о том, увеличились ли количество и интенсивность этнических конфликтов между группами, принадлежащими к разным*

цивилизациям, после окончания Холодной войны. В целом анализ выявляет несколько проблем с аргументами Хантингтона. Во-первых, классификацию цивилизаций Хантингтона трудно реализовать. Во-вторых, цивилизационный конфликт является меньшинством этнического конфликта. В-третьих, конфликт между Западом и Китаем/конфуцианством и исламской цивилизацией, который, по предсказанию Хантингтона, станет самым важным конфликтом эпохи после холодной войны, составляет меньшинство цивилизационных конфликтов. Наконец, нет статистически значимых доказательств того, что интенсивность межцивилизационных этнических конфликтов возросла по сравнению с другими типами этнических конфликтов после окончания «холодной войны».

**Ключевые слова:** Цивилизация, цивилизационное сознание, общественное сознание, культура, религия, лингва франка, парадигма.

The legitimacy of Huntington's "clash of civilizations" argument has been hotly contested ever since it was first put forth.[1;15] Since Huntington expanded on this idea in his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*, the discussion has only gotten more heated.[2;43] Huntington's thesis contains a number of arguments, the most well-known and contentious of which is that the nature of international conflict changed after the Cold War ended, with post-Cold War conflicts primarily defined by religion and based more on culture than those that took place during the Cold War. He contends that most conflicts in the world currently will be between civilizations, namely the West and non-West, rather than between Western ideologies, as was the case during the Cold War (the conflict between democracy and communism). Instead of suppressing religion as many had claimed, modernization often fosters a fresh dedication to native cultures. These civilizations will make their mark on the global scene and engage in conflict if the Cold War doesn't stand in their way. In particular, Huntington believes there will be more conflicts between the West and the Islamic and Sinic /Confucian civilizations.[3;52]

Huntington divides these conflicts between civilizations into three categories: fault-line conflicts between neighboring states of different civilizations; conflicts between core states, which are between the dominant states of different civilizations; and conflicts within states that contain groups of different civilizations. This study focuses on the latter kind of conflicts and makes an effort to determine whether Huntington's claims about a rise in conflicts among civilizations are supported by quantitative methodologies. In particular, this study examines whether, relative to other ethnic conflicts, the number and intensity of conflicts that may be classified as

civilizational have increased since the end of the Cold War using data from the Minorities at Risk dataset.

There is much discussion surrounding Huntington's argument, too much to cover here. Nonetheless, there are a few very pertinent aspects of this discussion. Several criticisms of his thesis are included in them. First, a lot of people argue that realpolitik and nation-states will continue to be the fundamental factors dividing wars.[4;32] An alternative take on this line of reasoning holds that the civilizations that Huntington writes about are not cohesive and that most conflicts arise between individuals within the same civilizations. Secondly, many counter that the globe is becoming more united as a result of post-Cold War economics, communications, and environmental concerns, which is impeding all conflict. Thirdly, some combine the first two points and assert that conflicts will occur at scales smaller and larger than civilizations.. Fourth, some merely state that the conflicts of today are not indicative of a civilization without evaluating whether or whether these conflicts occur at a more micro or global level.[5;10] Fifth, a lot of people contend that Huntington's theory isn't useful because he overlooked many significant phenomena that have an effect on conflict. Improved methods for managing conflicts, global secularism trends, information technology, the idea that long-term discrimination rather than cultural roots is the primary cause of most ethnopolitical conflicts, the relative importance of culture and economics, and non-Western civilizations' aspirations to emulate the West are some of these phenomena.

The sixth argument is that Huntington's facts are incorrect. A few merely contend that the evidence does not align with Huntington's theory. Pfaff charges Huntington with disregarded facts.[6;33] Some even accuse Huntington of manipulating the facts to support his argument, such as Hassner.[7;43]

The notion that post-Cold War battles will not be particularly civilizational is a recurrent topic among the critics of Huntington's thesis that are not all included above, many of which obviously contradict one another. This issue is particularly relevant to our study. The best way to summarize Huntington's response to the majority of these criticisms is to ask, "got a better idea?"[8;12] Kuhn's seminal work on scientific paradigms, which argues, among other things, that a paradigm need only be superior to its competitors and should not explain everything, is cited by the author.[9;43] According to Huntington, neither the Cold War paradigm nor the paradigm of civilizations was flawless. Unusual occurrences occurred that ran counter to every paradigm. Both paradigms, however, have a considerable explanatory capacity for the historical period they describe; more significantly, this capacity is greater than that of any rival paradigm. Although useful, the few studies that do employ quantitative methodologies to examine the clash of civilizations argument are unable to

conclusively determine whether ethnic civilizational conflict has increased in the post-Cold War era. Studies on international conflict are conducted. Thus, Huntington's claims that conflicts with other civilizations are more common and that civilizational differences have no bearing on international armed disputes are directly refuted by Russett, Oneal, and Cox.[10;22] Henderson does an indirect test of Huntington's theory and concludes that although religious differences contribute to international conflict, culture also has an impact on conflict.[11;21] Indirectly testing Huntington's claims, Davis, Jagers, and Moore also discover that while cross-border ethnic ties by themselves cannot influence international conflict or foreign policy decisions, they can have an impact when paired with other variables.[12;9] Some discuss different facets of Huntington's theory. In Midlarsky's analysis, for example, Islam is associated with autocracy on two of the three metrics, while Price finds that Islam neither threatens nor upholds democracy or human rights. Others deal with internal disputes. Henderson and Singer discover that ethnic and cultural diversity has no bearing on family conflict. Nonetheless, the majority of their findings relate to the Cold War era because their sample is based on Correlates of War data from 1946 to 1992. Gurr finds no evidence that civilizational cleavages are growing more significant, based on a sample of the most violent conflicts from an earlier version of the Minorities at Risk dataset, the data used in this study. In contrast to the analysis described here, which uses data current through 1998 on a larger number of instances, Gurr's study is based on a smaller sample and is only current until mid-1994.

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