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Samuel Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Touchstone, 1996.

The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order by Samuel Huntington provides a major interpretation of emerging international relations in the post Cold War era. Within this framework, Huntington (1996) identifies civilizations as a major prospective source of identity and conflict in the twenty-first century.

Huntington's perspective has been criticized on multiple, not necessarily consistent, grounds, including: 1) an underemphasis of the role of the state as an actor, 2) an underestimation of the extent to which contemporary cultures are mutually permeable, and thus asymptotically global, and 3) the culturally incoherent nature of Huntington's non-Western cultural grouping, suggested in his phrase "the West and the Rest." Nevertheless, empirical cases such as China's assertion of distinct "Asian values" in the area of human rights (Information Office of the State Council 1991), persistent religious fault lines in the Balkans (Partos 1997) and the Middle East, and recent tensions in the "Near Russian Abroad" (Laitin 1998), all can be interpreted as reinforcing the plausibility of Huntington's civilizational perspective.

The present discussion seeks to address the seeming incoherence of "the Rest," those multiple civilizations that putatively demur from Western cultural values, and any anticipated new world order or global civilization emerging therefrom. Although the various civilizations comprising the Rest are culturally diverse, one key to the emerging pattern articulated by Huntington may be found in the global growth of religious innovation, including the emergence of religiously diverse forms of fundamentalism.

RELIGIOUS INNOVATION

The second half of the twentieth century has been a period of religious ferment, reinvigoration, and redefinition. One example is found in the movement of mature religions to novel cultural

contexts. As examples, while various currents of Buddhism have migrated to the West (Fields 1992), the growth of Christianity (to approximately 30% of the population) has transformed the religious climate of Korea (Nahm 1988). Evangelical Christianity has increasingly permeated Latin America, resulting in cultural consequences that, although not entirely predictable, are likely to be significant.

The importance of such trends is increased by the pivotal role that religions play in the demarcation of civilizations. Huntington (1996, p. 47) describes religion as “a central, defining characteristic” of civilizations. Although theories of modernity tend to deprecate religion as a declining force, late twentieth century cultural trends call that judgment into question. As Appadurai (1996, p. 7) observes, “There is vast evidence in new religiosities of every sort that religion is not only not dead but that it may be more consequential than ever in today’s highly mobile and interconnected global politics.”

Nevertheless, the forms and flows of organized spirituality are in flux. In addition to the migration of historic religions to novel cultural contexts, innovative religious movements arise within civilizations as well. A major example is the found in the “New Age” movement.

Although the New Age movement has many diverse currents and forms, ranging from healing to channeling to paganism, Heelas (1996) suggests that all share in common an emphasis upon self-spirituality. The New Age, he writes “... has come to be used to designate those who maintain that inner spirituality—embedded within the self and the natural order as a whole — serves as *the* key for moving from all that is wrong with life to all that is right. (P. 16) While the New Age movement has taken many forms in many parts of the globe (Heelas 1996, p. 120.), opposition to modernism and technology are common themes (Klandermans and Tarrow 1988).

As previously New Age currents come to be viewed (and to view themselves) as autonomous movements, there is frequently a fluid, recombinant aspect to their belief systems. Some draw

upon and fuse with traditional religions migrating from other civilizations (Heelas 1996, p. 55). New, unconventional religions in one setting may moderate their practices and migrate to another, as Soka Gakkai has begun to recruit in the U.S. Other examples, such as the emergence of ecofeminist spirituality (Adams 1993), highlight and interleave several compatible themes. Such permutations further document a religious ferment that is prevalent in the modern era.

The tension between modernity and resurgent religious belief has taken many forms. Since World War II, Africa has witnessed repeated periods in which the finding and scapegoating of witches and other putative predators has experienced a revival (Comoroff and Comoroff 1993).

Noting that upsurges in witch hunting are correlated with the economic growth (and disruption) caused by the globalization of the cocoa and oil economies, Apter (1993, pp. 123-124) describes the anti-witchcraft Atinga movement as "...a turning inward against hidden enemies to confront the dislocations of socio-economic change." Similarly, Schmoll (1993, p. 216) indicates that a resurgence of "soul-eating" symbols and practices in Niger "... can be viewed as addressing the threat posed by uncontrolled desire and jealousy in society," where these vices are exacerbated by market forces that are simultaneously global and invisible.

GLOBAL FUNDAMENTALISM

Perhaps the ultimate example, however, of how religious resurgence has challenged the assumptions of modernity is found in the way fundamentalist movements have emerged in religions throughout the world. In Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism, uncompromising religious movements have reinvigorated the traditions from which they emerge, and confronted the modernist worldview (Marty and Appleby 1991; 1992; Nielsen 1993).

The forms of these challenges differ by culture and tradition. Not all fundamental movements emphasize the inerrancy of sacred texts. While the Confucian revival appears to lack the

dogmatism frequently attributed to fundamentalism, it does represent a reappropriation of cultural roots as an alternative to 'modern Western categories' (Tu 1991, p.774). Requiring state power to achieve their intended social transformation, Islamic revivals tend to be highly political (Marty and Appleby 1991, p. 825).

Doctrinal divergences notwithstanding, however, fundamentalist movements generally share: 1) an identification with the core values of their respective religious traditions, and 2) an unsympathetic assessment of secularism and its putative symptoms. As Marty and Appleby (1991, p. 818) write:

Common to most [fundamentalist] movements ... are beliefs and behaviors that violate the canons of the post-Enlightenment secular rationality that has characterized Western thought over the course of the last three centuries.

Most fundamentalist movements draw upon precursors and parallels in the past. However, as Nielsen (1993, p. 4) summarizes, "What is intensified, if not entirely new, is the revolt against modernity." An identification with theological doctrines that appear extreme to the secular world provides a litmus test by which believers are separated from outsiders. Thus inerrancy, when it plays a major role in the identity of a fundamentalist group, is not just an assertion of truth, an attribution of a privileged epistemological position to a sacred text. Rather, it preserves purity by setting a boundary; it requires a break from secular rationality (*cf.*, Marty and Appleby 1991). Some fundamentalist groups use techniques other than inerrancy of texts, but the (selective) revival of tradition in the face of modern secularity is a focus that fundamentalist and revivalist movements share in common, irrespective of religious tradition.

CULTURAL DYNAMICS

The growth of fundamentalism might appear as only one anomalous pattern among many. However, Sorokin's theory of cultural dynamics (1937; 1941) provides a framework with the

potential to integrate the fundamentalist reaction against modernism (include the parallel reactions *within* Western civilization) with Huntington's identification of resurgent civilizational identities.

Huntington, who refers to the general trend as "la revanche de Dieu," remarks:

The fundamentalist movements are dramatic and can have significant political impact. They are, however, only the surface waves of the much broader and more fundamental religious tide that is giving a different cast to human life at the end of the twentieth century" (1996:96).

This view appears consistent with Sorokin's depiction of a slow cultural cycle comprised of irregular fluctuations between sensate and ideational (spiritual or religious) culture.

In *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, Sorokin (1937; 1941) differentiates two cultural gestalts, the ideational and the sensate, based primarily upon epistemological criteria. The ideational mentality emphasizes inner, supersensory, spiritual experience; the sensate mentality emphasizes the external world of objects and events as perceived by the senses. Sorokin does not maintain that ideational and sensate cultural mentalities exist in pure form but, rather, that they constitute systems of thought and action in terms of which empirical cultures are more or less integrated, and relative to which they fluctuate.

For Sorokin, the two cultural gestalts form a polar system. Insofar as a culture is sensate, it relies exclusively on the evidence of the senses, emphasizes relative rather than absolute values, and primarily seeks to satisfy material needs, through practical activities. The advancement of technology, sometimes including the emergence of science, is emphasized in historically specific ways.

Ideational culture gives greatest credence to "supersensory" evidence (dreams, visions, intuitive inspiration, meditative insight, extrasensory perception, mystical experience, divine revelation, etc.), seeks to identify and conform to eternal values, and

focuses upon the fulfillment of spiritual rather than sensual needs. In a prototypical ideational civilization, religion comprises a central institution.

Regarding cultural change, while Sorokin rejects a cyclical view as simplistic, he observes that cultural systems tend to trendlessly fluctuate from one cultural gestalt to another.¹ A cultural process reaches its "point of saturation" and then reverses its movements (Sorokin 1937a, p. 170). The source of this cultural variation, in Sorokin's view, is primarily the "principle of immanent change" rather than external causation. Incessant change is an inherent consequence of the existence and activities of a cultural system: "[i]t cannot help changing, even if all of its external conditions are held constant" (Sorokin 1941, p. 590). A more causal description clarifies Sorokin's understanding of the dynamic:

Suppressing the other systems of truth, and the aspects of reality they give, the dominant system of partial truth begins, under the disguise of truth, to lead the society more and more toward ignorance, error, hollowness of values, aridity of creativeness and discovery of the aspects of reality, and poverty of social and cultural life. Adaptation becomes less and less possible. (Sorokin 1941, p. 764)

Thus, for Sorokin, inadequacies within each mentality eventually result in a cultural "law of diminishing returns," a one-sidedness that chokes off creative responses to the challenges that emerge from the natural and social environment. Other systems of truth, other mentalities provide a natural corrective for the impasse of an overextended culture.

THE TOPOLOGY OF CULTURAL DYNAMICS

Sorokin's analysis of this pattern, however, was almost entirely in the context of Western civilization, and potential spatial dimensions were left unexamined. In other contexts, though, Sorokin was highly interested in the topology of social patterns; his work in rural-urban sociology, for example, was an early sociological classic (Sorokin and Zimmerman 1929). Recently this

spatial emphasis has been highlighted by Talbutt, who notes that the greatest share of the conflicts emphasized by Sorokin "can be seen as polarized by the radial contrariety between power centers and their inner and outer peripheries, hinterlands and outlands" (1998:3).

It is at this point that the patterns identified by Huntington, Sorokin and Talbutt converge to form an integrated interpretation of cultural dynamics of late modernity. As is widely recognized, electronic communication has effectively shrunk the world and created the preconditions for a possible global culture (*cf.*, Morely and Robins 1995). For Sorokin's theory, this development means that the irregular fluctuations now occur within an increasingly closed cultural system. However, Sorokin (d. 1968) had already concluded that Western culture was in a late sensate period, and showing indications of reversion to ideational forms. Thus, the late sensate culture of the West can be seen as comprising the political and technological center of a (closed) global system.

In these circumstances, Sorokin's theory, as amended by Talbutt, seems to anticipate that: 1) the reversion to ideational cultural forms is likely to emanate from the peripheries (the Rest), and 2) these "outland" civilizations will share a similar opposition to Western secularism (currently manifested in the growth of fundamentalism), the diversities of their cultures notwithstanding. In the face of a putative global civilization, however, each such movement can only define that opposition in terms provided by its own cultural framework.

Thus are generated the forms identified by both Huntington and his critics: the resurgence of disparate civilizations, with the potential to clash but, notwithstanding, relatively united against the incipient global culture. The focus of this opposition is not primarily upon the technological, economic, military and political power of the Western states which is, frequently enough, appreciated, envied and emulated. Their focus, rather, is primarily upon the late sensate culture of the West, with all of its evident pathologies. Sorokin's cultural dynamics underlies and drives the

form taken by Huntington's clash of civilizations. Also consistent with Sorokin's expectations, the pathologies of late sensate culture are a focus of growing concern within Western Civilization as well (Berger, Berger and Kellner 1974; Levy 1987).

TECHNOLOGY AND CULTURAL DYNAMICS

Given recent patterns of religious innovation, it is of interest to ask: what is the effect of technological innovation upon the corrective movement toward ideational culture that Sorokin anticipated? It may be hypothesized that continued scientific innovation has made this transition slower and more erratic. More specifically, insofar as scientific innovation is a source of legitimacy for a predominantly sensate institution, ideational institutions are more likely to accommodate their insights.

To the extent that such hypotheses seem credible, one may also ask what effect this pattern may have upon the ideational movements themselves, i.e., upon the way in which ideational worldviews become culturally instantiated. Insofar as technical gains prop up sensate culture, and in view of the currents reviewed above, recent ideational currents appear to have taken two primary forms: anti-technological spiritualism and religious revivals that challenge sensate rationality. Both currents appear to be manifestations, as yet embryonic, of a global revival of ideational culture, as Sorokin predicted.

CONCLUSION

Although Huntington views civilizations as highly salient in defining cultural groupings, and providing a basis for personal identity, there appears to be a conflict in his overall theory. If civilization provides the basis for common identity and action, why should non-Western civilizations have the potential to form a more or less unified bloc? What is the cultural 'glue' that allows grouping to cohere?

To argue that "the Rest" is based upon a simple quest for power seems to lack force. In the first place, given the dozens of perduring local and regional rivalries, it is simplistic to assume

that civilizational differences can be lightly and opportunistically put aside. Second, national wealth and, yes, power can result from economic success. This type of success need not take the form of a civilizational challenge and is, in fact, the type of rational action being pursued in most areas of the world. No, the cohesion of "the Rest", if it is to exist, must reside on considerations other than simple pursuit of power.

Placing Huntington's theory in the context of Sorokin's theory of cultural dynamics allows this conundrum to be addressed. The relativism of late sensate culture abounds with pathologies that call forth a search for values that are fundamental and enduring.

Globalization means that cultural dynamics acquires a core-periphery dynamic. However, as the religious movements of North America reveal, the search for enduring values is not found only in the periphery. If technological innovation has helped preserve sensate culture beyond its productive time, and this is an hypothesis that warrants further exploration, the "ignorance, error, hollowness of values and aridity of creativeness" of the latter is yet likely fuel its supersession in civilizations throughout the world.

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I. Sorokin admits the possibility of intermediate cultural mentalities. In particular, an "idealistic" or "integral" system of knowledge is recognized as a potentially desirable form that balances between ideational and sensate cultural complexes (cf. Johnston 1995: 145-147).