

NATIONAL BESTSELLER

THE  
CLASH of  
CIVILIZATIONS



AND THE

REMAKING of  
WORLD ORDER

**SAMUEL P. HUNTINGTON**

"The book is dazzling in its scope and grasp of the intricacies of contemporary global politics." —FRANCIS FUKUYAMA, *THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

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A TOUCHSTONE BOOK

*Published by Simon & Schuster*



TOUCHSTONE  
Rockefeller Center  
1230 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, NY 10020

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First Touchstone Edition 1997

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Designed by Karolina Harris

Manufactured in the United States of America

3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data  
Huntington, Samuel P.  
*The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order /*  
Samuel P. Huntington.

p. cm.

Includes index.

1. World politics—1989—
2. Post-communism.
3. Civilization, Modern—1950— I. Title.

D860.H86 1996

909.82'9—dc20

96-31492

CIP

ISBN 0-684-81164-2

0-684-84441-9 (pbk)

*To Nancy,  
who has endured “the clash” with a smile*

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# Preface



In the summer of 1993 the journal *Foreign Affairs* published an article of mine titled “The Clash of Civilizations?”. That article, according to the *Foreign Affairs* editors, stirred up more discussion in three years than any other article they had published since the 1940s. It certainly stirred up more debate in three years than anything else I have written. The responses and comments on it have come from every continent and scores of countries. People were variously impressed, intrigued, outraged, frightened, and perplexed by my argument that the central and most dangerous dimension of the emerging global politics would be conflict between groups from differing civilizations. Whatever else it did, the article struck a nerve in people of every civilization.

Given the interest in, misrepresentation of, and controversy over the article, it seemed desirable for me to explore further the issues it raised. One constructive way of posing a question is to state an hypothesis. The article, which had a generally ignored question mark in its title, was an effort to do that. This book is intended to provide a fuller, deeper, and more thoroughly documented answer to the article’s question. I here attempt to elaborate, refine, supplement, and, on occasion, qualify the themes set forth in the article and to develop many ideas and cover many topics not dealt with or touched on only in passing in the article. These include: the concept of civilizations; the question of a universal civilization; the relation between power and culture; the shifting balance of power among civilizations; cultural indigenization in non-Western societies; the political structure of civilizations; conflicts generated by Western universalism, Muslim militancy, and Chinese assertion; balancing and bandwagoning responses to the rise of Chinese power; the causes and dynamics of fault line wars; and the futures of the West and of a world of civilizations. One major theme absent from the article concerns the crucial impact of population growth on instability and the balance of power. A second important theme absent from the article is summarized in the book’s title and final sentence: “clashes of civilizations are the greatest threat to world peace, and an international order based on civilizations is the surest safeguard against world war.”

This book is not intended to be a work of social science. It is instead meant to be an interpretation of the evolution of global politics after the Cold War. It aspires to present a framework, a paradigm, for viewing global politics that will be meaningful to scholars and useful to policymakers. The test of its

meaningfulness and usefulness is not whether it accounts for everything that is happening in global politics. Obviously it does not. The test is whether it provides a more meaningful and useful lens through which to view international developments than any alternative paradigm. In addition, no paradigm is eternally valid. While a civilizational approach may be helpful to understanding global politics in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, this does not mean that it would have been equally helpful in the mid-twentieth century or that it will be helpful in the mid-twenty-first century.

The ideas that eventually became the article and this book were first publicly expressed in a Bradley Lecture at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington in October 1992 and then set forth in an Occasional Paper prepared for the Olin Institute's project on "The Changing Security Environment and American National Interests," made possible by the Smith Richardson Foundation. Following publication of the article, I became involved in innumerable seminars and meetings focused on "the clash" with academic, government, business, and other groups across the United States. In addition, I was fortunate to be able to participate in discussions of the article and its thesis in many other countries, including Argentina, Belgium, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Korea, Japan, Luxembourg, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Taiwan. These discussions exposed me to all the major civilizations except Hinduism, and I benefitted immensely from the insights and perspectives of the participants in these discussions. In 1994 and 1995 I taught a seminar at Harvard on the nature of the post-Cold War world, and the always vigorous and at times quite critical comments of the seminar students were an additional stimulus. My work on this book also benefitted greatly from the collegial and supportive environment of Harvard's John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies and Center for International Affairs.

The manuscript was read in its entirety by Michael C. Desch, Robert O. Keohane, Fareed Zakaria, and R. Scott Zimmerman, and their comments led to significant improvements in both its substance and organization. Throughout the writing of this book, Scott Zimmerman also provided indispensable research assistance; without his energetic, expert, and devoted help, this book would never have been completed when it was. Our undergraduate assistants, Peter Jun and Christiana Briggs, also pitched in constructively. Grace de Magistris typed early portions of the manuscript, and Carol Edwards with great commitment and superb efficiency redid the manuscript so many times that she must know large portions of it almost by heart. Denise Shannon and Lynn Cox at Georges Borchardt and Robert Asahina, Robert Bender, and Johanna Li at Simon & Schuster have cheerfully and professionally guided the manuscript through the publication process. I am immensely grateful to all these individuals for their help in bringing this book into being. They have made it much better than it would have been otherwise, and the remaining deficiencies are my responsibility.



My work on this book was made possible by the financial support of the John M. Olin Foundation and the Smith Richardson Foundation. Without their assistance, completion of the book would have been delayed for years, and I greatly appreciate their generous backing of this effort. While other foundations have increasingly focused on domestic issues, Olin and Smith Richardson deserve accolades for maintaining their interest in and support for work on war, peace, and national and international security.

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First Touchstone Edition 1997

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Designed by Karolina Harris

Manufactured in the United States of America

3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data  
Huntington, Samuel P.  
The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order /  
Samuel P. Huntington.  
p. cm.  
Includes index.

1. World politics — 1989—
2. Post-communism.
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D860.H86 1996

909.82'9 — dc20

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