

Book Review

Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order

Samuel P. Huntington

Reviewed by

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Overview

Civilization according to Huntington is the cultural grouping of people. He defined civilization which can adjust with changing situation, evolves and also be mortal. The most important elements of civilizations are religion and language. Flags of nation states symbolize the civilizations of that states. He divided the civilizations of the world into two parts, one is western and another one is non western civilization. Western civilizations include European countries and American countries. Non western civilizations are Chinese, Hindus, Japanese, Latin American, Africans and Islam. The western civilization is dominated by the Christian religion. Though western civilization gave birth to the idea of civilization but most of other civilizations denied the idea of modernization as westernization. Some non western leaders took modernization as the way of westernization. The existence of the whole western civilization depends on the leadership of United States. Western civilization is threatened by some internal and some external challenges. Internal challenges are steady economic growth, savings and investment rates, increase in crimes, violence and drugs, low birth rate and family decay. External challenges are migration of people from foreign countries especially from Muslim countries. The number of Muslims and mosque is increasing in western countries especially in USA, France, and Russia. Once Russia itself banned visit of Mecca and Madina (hajj) from their country to Saudi Arab, now thousands of Muslims are coming from Russia to Mecca to perform Hajj.

On the other hand, from the non western civilizations china and India are emerging as political, economic and military power in the world and play mandatory role in global politics. Islam has a dominant role in global politics too. According to Huntington, in Islamic states violence is seen because there is no core state to lead the Islamic civilizations, population increasing in the Muslim countries specially youth causes unemployment and also poverty. People in the Islamic states have strong religious and cultural ideologies as they claimed. Increasing number of population in Islamic states is considered as strength when they make resource for the country.

In the global politics, Countries are of similar culture, and ideologies make alliance among them such as Muslims make alliance with Muslims and western country with western country. In global politics, friendship may occur with the enemy of enemy. For example, Islam and other non western civilizations have a common enemy that is western. So, in some cases, Islamic states and other nonwestern countries make alliance to defend western. In the global politics, conflicts are seen among various ethnicities within a civilization. Fault line conflicts occur among religious, ethnic communities. These types of conflicts generally become bloody because these are related with the matter of identity. In the global politics, fault line conflicts occur among western and Islamic civilization.

Criticism:

Samuel P. Huntington tried to establish a relationship between militancy and violence and Islam. He did not mention the background of militancy in Islamic states. If we see the history, we can see that western civilization like USA provoked or helped by arms or other amenities Muslim countries against Soviet Union after Second World War. USA attacked Iraq showing the issue that there was atomic energy or harmful chemical arms that can destroy the world but after finishing the war, USA's motive has been clear to world that was oil of Iraq. On the other hand, USA is helping the Israel against Palestine to wipe out the Palestinians from their own land. Palestinians are foreigners in their own country because of only USA or western countries. Islam is not the religion of terrorism and Muslims are not militant and violent but they are forced to regain their freedom and sovereignty.

. Samuel P. Huntington mentioned in his book that Democracy is prevented from where Islamic culture is prevailing. But in reality we see that in many Muslim countries Islamic culture and democracy are walking in the same path. For example, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, Malaysia etc are burning example where due to Islamic culture democracy is not prevented or is not facing any obstacles. Huntington said that there is mutual cooperation among the democratic countries but unfortunately, even Iran is Democratic country, there is no cooperation between USA and Iran rather hostility is prevailing. There is no opposite relationship between Islam and democracy.

Huntington, in his book, used the word fundamentalism to refer as the characteristic of Islam and Muslim. But he avoided that fundamentalism may be found in every religion, ethnicity and community not only in Islam. He tried to show that every conflict and war is occurring based on only religion or religious fundamentalism; he ignored other reasons of conflicts.

Huntington, in his book, showed that Saudi Arab is cooperating Muslims who are fighting in the name of jihad against western but he did not mentioned that there is a close relationship between the Government of Saudi Arab. Not only Saudi Arab but also most of the Middle Eastern countries have good/positive linkages with western countries.

Huntington, in his book, did not mention the role of communist ideology that play in the global politics. Though he mentioned the growth of china as a non western country which can be a threat to western civilization, he very cautiously avoided the role of Latin American countries as a different ideology in the global politics.