

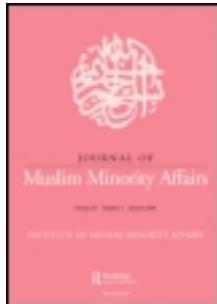
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# On the End of History and the Clash of Civilization: A Dissenter's View

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SEIFUDEIN ADEM HUSSIEN

## Introduction

At the end of the Cold War, many leading analysts of international politics began in earnest the task of 'theorizing' where we were headed. Outstanding among such endeavors, especially in relation to attempts to develop a new and more comprehensive understanding of the future of world affairs, are two well-known works, Francis Fukuyama's 'The End of History?'<sup>1</sup> and Samuel Huntington's 'The Clash of Civilizations?'<sup>2</sup> It is the attention these analysts attracted as well as the grandiose nature of the subject they tackle that motivated us to take a closer look at the epistemological foundation of their theses, their general implications and the extent to which they stood the test of time. Taken together, these two views are in a sense mutually contradictory in their prophecy of what was lying ahead in the post-Cold War era. For Fukuyama, world politics becomes less anarchic, whereas Huntington believes inter-civilizational conflicts would replace the traditional inter-state conflicts, engendering a new and more dangerous type of international anarchy.

Both Fukuyama and Huntington raise a number of interesting and thought-provoking issues and deserve credit for their contribution to the scholarship in this respect. In a sense intended neither to disparage them nor belittle their contribution, our task in this paper is to put their ideas under a brief theoretical, philosophical as well as empirical scrutiny and point out what appears to be some of the most outstanding weaknesses in their theses. We shall start with a brief assessment of the whole idea of the end of history. Similarly, an appraisal will then be made of Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilizations'. The essay employs critical method to single out the flaws in the analyses of the aforementioned scholars. Toward the end of the essay, we shall attempt to offer an alternative view and informed speculations. And yet our main concern will be to clear out errors, confusion and false assumptions in relation to the two theses.

It is worthwhile noting from the outset that the clash of civilizations and the end of history theses represent hypotheses that are poles apart in spite of their tacit commitment to a dualist and objectivist epistemology and 'realistic' ontology. The question that may hence arise is whether it is justifiable to deal with such mutually deviating hypotheses in a single research note.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, this essay does not attempt to strictly compare the two but not so much because they are not comparable. Instead the reason is simply because our preferred focus is different. In theory, the fact that two theories are logically incompatible does not make them *ipso facto* incomparable.<sup>4</sup>

## The End of History

Francis Fukuyama's main thesis was that the collapse of communism affirms 'the unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism'.<sup>5</sup> Fukuyama did qualify his

assertion by saying: '[t]his is not to say that there will no longer be events to fill the pages of Foreign Affairs' yearly summaries of international relations, for the victory of liberalism has occurred primarily in the realm of ideas or consciousness and is as yet incomplete in the real or material world'.<sup>6</sup> Our major interest here is in the main issues that radiate from the aforementioned proposition.

True, communism has collapsed. Fukuyama was on a less solid ground, however, when he assertively implied, just because of the collapse of communism, liberalism has proved its superiority over the other ideologies and that with the collapse of communism the world is increasingly moving toward the ideology of economic and political liberalism. He was implying the superiority of the liberal values when he wrote:

What we may be witnessing is the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.<sup>7</sup>

Before advancing further, it is important to note that one can identify at least two major flaws with the aforementioned conjecture and line of reasoning: one analytic and the other empirical. Not only does Fukuyama allude to the 'superiority' of liberal values but also he seemed to have taken the truth of this hypothesis as self-evident. Needless to say, not everybody would accept this without sufficient clarification, substantiation and qualification. Similarly, it is open to question if, since the end of the Cold War, more and more people are embracing (or have embraced) liberal democracy, understood and defined by Fukuyama as popular sovereignty, along with a formal guarantee and protection of individual rights.<sup>8</sup>

A few years ago L. J. Diamond<sup>9</sup> argued that it is essential to differentiate between what he labeled 'electoral democracy' and 'liberal democracy'. According to him, these are the two visibly divergent trends following the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and Africa, the spread of electoral rights and the continued disrespect for liberties that are supposed to be a postulation for a meaningful exercise of them. Diamond put together an array of empirical data to demonstrate that even the spread of 'democracy' cannot be equated with the spread of 'liberalism'. Mass participation in the political process can also at times challenge certain liberal values as recently demonstrated in Algeria and Turkey. James Rosenau and Mary Durfee were perhaps closer to the mark than was Fukuyama when they wrote: '[t]he world's peoples are not so much converging around the same values as they are sharing a greater ability to recognize and articulate their values'.<sup>10</sup> A caveat is in order here. Rosenau and Durfee had the benefit of hindsight, whereas what Fukuyama was engaged in six years earlier was a predictive, and by implication, prescriptive, endeavor that naturally allowed relatively little latitude.

To the aforementioned questionability of the empirical validity of Fukuyama's argument, we can also add a critique of the logic of his analysis, that is, in respect to the fact that his arguments proceed from an unwarranted assumption to a foregone conclusion. His assumption is that communism was defeated by liberal democracy. His conclusion is, as mentioned above, that liberal democracy is superior to all other ideologies. It can be argued that communism's defeat was due more to its inadequacy to sustain itself and achieve its ideals than to its exhaustion subsequent to putting up a good fight. As we all know, communism, while opposing liberalism, strove to perfect it. No wonder then some viewed the Cold War as 'a civil war within the Western ideology'.<sup>11</sup> It does not, therefore, follow that one ideology is superior to the other. The

assumption as well as the conclusion that presumably follow from it is also problematic for, notwithstanding their familiarity, they have not undergone rigorous tests.

Implicitly as well as explicitly, for Fukuyama, consciousness takes primacy over matter. This is what one would be led to believe after reading his contention that ‘... the victory of liberalism has occurred primarily in the realm of ideas or consciousness and is as yet incomplete in the real material world.’<sup>12</sup> It is in the same sense that one would understand him when he writes: ‘one unfortunate legacy of Marxism is our tendency to retreat into materialist or utilitarian explanation of political or historical phenomena, and our disinclination to believe in the autonomous power of ideas’.<sup>13</sup> Yet Fukuyama appears to contradict himself on this issue when he refers on the first page of his essay to

... the ineluctable spread of consumerist Western culture in such diverse contexts as the peasants’ markets and color television sets now omnipresent throughout China, the cooperative restaurants and clothing stores opened in the past year in Moscow, the Beethoven piped into Japanese department stores, and the rock music enjoyed alike in Prague, Rangoon and Tehran.<sup>14</sup>

presumably, these being both the catalyst and the manifestation of an unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism.

While he openly favors the Hegelian conception of the relationship between matter and consciousness, his practical examples therefore seem to suggest the truism of Marxism in this regard.

Fukuyama’s attempt also to underscore the primacy of the ideal over the material especially in reference to the reform movements in Russia, Eastern Europe and China is less than convincing and lacks coherence. He writes, for instance: ‘[t]hat changes were in no way made inevitable by the material conditions in which either country found itself on the eve of the reform, but instead came about as the result of the victory of one idea over another’.<sup>15</sup> The question that arises is whether it might not be the case that reformist ideas (consciousness) were conceived in the first place because of the bad state of the economy (matter). Take also the concrete examples he mentions with respect to the effect material factors can have on ideas with reference to Burma vs. Singapore<sup>16</sup> and China vs. Taiwan.<sup>17</sup> In general, it appears that the relationship between matter and consciousness is circular rather than linear, as Fukuyama’s analysis seem to suggest.

In another book, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Wealth*, which was published after *The End of History and the Last Man* became a bestseller, Fukuyama advanced another ‘theory’ that seemed to be deeply flawed logically in a similar way. The central focus of *Trust* was the presumed relationship between culture and development:

... the most important lesson we can learn from an examination of economic life is that a nation’s well-being, as well as its ability to compete, is conditioned by a single, pervasive characteristic: the level of trust in one society.<sup>18</sup>

A causal linkage between culture and development thus formed the fundamental premise of the entire book. Fukuyama’s conclusion was that there is a one way, direct and positive relationship between the two variables. However, he did not adequately address rival hypotheses that are the reverse of his thesis, such as that whether or not the level of wealth does affect the level of trust in a society, rather than the other way around and that even if the relationship between the two variables holds true, how we

could ascertain that it is linear? At least in theory, it is possible that wealth may positively affect the level of trust but only up to a certain point beyond which it would begin to yield a diminishing return. In any event, one ought to remember that linear thinking such as Fukuyama's view of the relationship between matter and consciousness precludes the theoretical possibility that a given effect may be the result of many causes, and in turn produces still further effects, one cause reinforcing another.

Again, to place Fukuyama's arguments in a proper philosophical context, we shall digress for a moment and briefly compare them with that of Immanuel Kant. For Francis Fukuyama, humankind's historical advancement is progressively linear until it reaches the end point: the end of history. Kant also had a roughly similar idea with respect to the direction of human progress: '... nature follows a regular course in leading our species gradually upwards from the lower level of animality to the highest level of humanity'.<sup>19</sup> The very idea of progress as a directional change for the better is itself not unsusceptible to a counter-argument. It is true, one may say for instance, that humankind has witnessed significant 'progress', especially in the materialistic sense of the term. At the same time, humanity has also borne witness to events, or chain of events, that can unequivocally be regarded as historical 'retrogression'. The birth and consolidation of Fascism and Nazism during the first half of the last century and the recent revival of tribalism in different parts of the world do not seem to provide a ringing endorsement of the idea of 'a regular progression of history'—let alone 'the end of history' itself. A strong disagreement to the notion of progress also comes from an increasingly large number of ecologists or environmentalists. Kant thus elaborates his idea of historical progress in more concrete terms:

... the earlier generations seem to perform their laborious tasks only for the sake of the latter ones, so as to prepare for them a further stage from which they can raise still higher the structure intended by nature ...<sup>20</sup>

In this sense, and in light of what transpired in the last century, humanity's history can be viewed as either retrogressive or, at best, a progressive history replete with aberration. For both Kant and Fukuyama, historical progress is the result of the (natural) law of negation. The law of dialectics governs the transition from a lower to a higher stage of human development. In Kant's own words: '[t]he means which nature employs to bring about the development of innate capacities is that of antagonism within society, in so far as this antagonism becomes in the long run the cause of a law-governed social order'.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the similarities in this respect, Kant and Fukuyama diverge on a number of important issues. For instance, for Kant it is the formation of a confederation or union of states, not the 'triumph' of one ideology in a group of countries, which would ultimately herald 'the end of history'. This stage could only be reached by

... abandoning a lawless state of savagery and entering a federation of peoples in which every state, even the smallest, could expect to derive its security and rights not from its own power or its own legal judgment, but solely from this great federation ... from a united power and the law-governed decisions of a united will.<sup>22</sup>

As for its achievability, Kant was cautiously optimistic:

... this cycle of events seems to take so long a time to complete, that the small part of it traversed by mankind up till now does not allow us to determine with

certainty the shape of the whole cycle, and the relation of its parts to the whole<sup>21</sup>

but after the transforming effects of many revolutions

... the highest purpose of nature, a universal cosmopolitan existence, will at last be realized as the matrix within which all the original capacities of the human race may develop.<sup>24</sup>

In short, Fukuyama's 'end of history' thesis appears to have been anchored in a shaky logical and philosophical ground. What theory and empirical evidence seem to bear out with regard to the future of global affairs will be treated more fully in the concluding section of the essay. It would suffice here to say that we now know that the triumphant claim of the end of history was at best premature.

## The Clash of Civilizations

Like Francis Fukuyama's '*The End of History?*', Samuel Huntington's '*The Clash of Civilizations?*' is an essay that purported to predict where we were headed. For the same reason it sparked much debate and discussions. By way of preface to this sub-section, let us try to delineate the philosophical boundaries of Huntington's ideas in comparison, again, to Immanuel Kant's writings on the subject. Clearly, it is difficult to compare Kant's ideas with those of Huntington's, since their premises as well as conclusions are poles apart. The following contrastive points can, however, be made with respect to the philosophical foundations of the two. Kant's views are universalistic in that their point of reference is 'human species' in contrast to 'distinct civilizations' of Huntington. Huntington's philosophy is particularistic, for he not only believes that 'Western civilization is a superior form of civilization',<sup>25</sup> but also he prescribes ways as to how this superiority can be preserved *vis-à-vis* the 'other' civilizations. On civilization, Kant wrote: '[w]e are civilized to the point of excess in all kinds of social courtesies and properties. But we are still a long way from the point where we could consider ourselves *morally* mature'.<sup>26</sup> It appears therefore that for Kant moral maturity constitutes an important dimension of a civilization. Let us now briefly consider the logical and empirical problems associated with Huntington's idea of 'the clash of civilizations'.

'The fundamental source of conflict in the new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics',<sup>27</sup> thus hypothesized Huntington. After elaborating and refining his hypothesis, he asked the following key question: *why do civilizations clash?* His answer is short and simple and could be logically re-ordered in the following way: (1) there are fundamental differences between civilizations (which he classified into seven or eight),<sup>28</sup> (2) as a result of globalization there will be more interaction between them and this will lead to increased civilization consciousness; and (3) therefore they would clash. One fallacy with this line of argument may be the absence of historical or logical evidence which supports the view that increased consciousness about one's civilizational identity in itself would automatically lead to civilizational conflict. If the preceding statement is correct, one may justifiably wonder if the same phenomenon, i.e. increased interactions among civilizations, does not lead to mutual respect rather than confrontation between civilizations.

Samuel Huntington goes on to state that modernization and social change weakens the nation-state as a source of identity.<sup>29</sup> Even though this statement is not central to Huntington's thesis of the clash of civilizations, it has a profound and wider theoretical implication, the discussion of which we shall defer for the concluding section. However,

it needs to be mentioned here that the role of the nation-state as a source of identity is perhaps one of the most resilient aspects of the function of state that promises to outlive even the challenges of globalization.<sup>30</sup> To use an ordinary example, when two individuals meet for the first time, one of the initial questions they exchange is not to which religion/culture or civilization one belongs to but it is where one is from. Of course, when a person introduces himself as X from country Y, more often, what he/she means or intends to mean goes beyond mere labeling of oneself. It also includes the desire to ensure one's 'ontological' security (Alexander Wendt's term)<sup>31</sup> by implying the relative place of each in relation to the other. Essentially, this is the effect that the speaker intends to produce in the hearer. In other words, when X introduces himself/herself to Y as coming from country Z, the introduction serves two functions. The first is the simple function of identification useful merely for ease of communication. The second and subtler function relates to the speaker's intention to produce a more complex meaning. To speak of oneself as being from country Z in this case is to let the other know how the speaker wants to be treated by virtue of his country of origin. This function also serves the speaker to rule out or at least minimize the cognitive dissonance that would likely arise as the result of not exactly knowing 'where' the other is from.

Huntington also touches upon the dual role that the West plays in enhancing civilization consciousness.<sup>32</sup> The view that civilization consciousness has increased is difficult to disagree with. The principal problem instead pertains to the related idea that this would automatically lead to increased violence and conflict among civilizations.

Huntington notes that de-Westernization and indigenization of the elite is occurring in many non-Western countries at the same time that Western, usually American, cultures, styles and habits become more popular among the masses.<sup>33</sup> Contrary to what Huntington might like us to believe, this seems to support the argument that increased civilization consciousness does not necessarily lead to civilizational seclusion and eventual clash. And many historians of civilization do agree that cultures, styles and habits constitute the core elements of any civilization. It can thus be argued, perhaps more convincingly, that increased interaction between civilizations would lead to co-option rather than collision. With a view to giving his idea a scientific flavor, Huntington then mentions the proportions by which the intra-regional trade rose between 1980 and 1989.<sup>34</sup> It is worth noting, however, that the time frame of the data is altogether irrelevant, in fact, so irrelevant as to be misleading. If what he was trying to do is to show how 'the Velvet curtain of culture has replaced the Iron curtain of ideology',<sup>35</sup> why use data for the period between 1980 and 1989? Similarly, Huntington surmises that culture and religion form the basis of economic cooperation and mentions the case of 10 non-Arab Muslim countries.<sup>36</sup> On the contrary, the reason why these countries would come together may have more to do with common economic interests than cultural similarity. True, there may be no way of figuring out what exactly was in the minds of these elite in signing a mutual economic cooperation treaty. Despite this fact, or because of it, Huntington's interpretation can only be considered just that, his own interpretation.

With the Cold War over, Huntington goes on writing, the underlying (civilizational?) differences between China and the United States have reasserted themselves.<sup>37</sup> That may have been so for the few years before Huntington's article was published but over the past few years China and the US have, if anything, had more cordial relations in decades. Of course, it remains to be seen if this is a short-term trend or a long-term pattern. With respect to Japan and the US, Huntington has also this to say: '[p]eople on each side allege racism on the other, but at least on the American side the

antipathies are not racial but cultural'.<sup>38</sup> Here, there is a fact that Huntington either fails to see or chooses to ignore: that is that, acknowledged or not, cultural bias reinforces racial bias or racism and the difference between the two is academic rather than practical. With regard to the occasional trade disputes between Japan and the US, the way the disputes are perceived and handled is undoubtedly a function of the culture and history of each country. But does this give culture primacy over economics, as Huntington suggests?

Huntington's idea of 'kin-country syndrome', which he tries to substantiate taking the case of the Gulf War, is similarly flawed.<sup>39</sup> Had civilizational fault lines been the major lines along which the post-Cold War battles were to be fought, as Huntington's main hypothesis hints, it would be inconceivable for a Sunni Muslim Iraq to invade a fellow Sunni Muslim Kuwait in the first place. Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was unjustifiable. And yet the conflict and the acrimonious relationship between the two represented a quarrel between two Arab states or, to put it even more precisely, a family quarrel within one 'nation': an Arab nation. One should also note, in this regard, that the very idea of 'state' as a fixed political border was alien to Islamic thought. From a strictly Islamic point of view, nationhood is a self-contained and indivisible legal and sociopolitical entity. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait at another level points to the primacy of economics rather than culture or civilization. In this sense, the Gulf War is at best a double-edged sword and at worst refutes Huntington's conjecture and interpretation putting into question his idea of 'kin-country' syndrome. By the same token, during the war in former Yugoslavia, US policy was not as one-sidedly pro-Serbian as Huntington describes.<sup>40</sup> To say otherwise is to discredit the US and, in general, the West's effort to halt and punish the atrocities committed by Bosnian Serb leaders. Another case that makes the cogency of the 'kin-country' theory dubious is Turkey. In one of his recent writings Huntington discusses 'Turkey's rejection of Mecca only to be rejected, in turn, by Brussels'.<sup>41</sup> If civilizational identity was the major factor defining the orientation as well as behavior of states, then is it not logical to expect Turkey, a successor state to the most recent Islamic empire, to turn its face around and embrace Mecca and reject Brussels? How can one explain such anomaly from a clash of civilizations perspective, and what is the implication of this for its explanatory potential?

For Huntington, countries with large numbers of peoples of different civilizations are in the future candidates for dismemberment.<sup>42</sup> Our view is that it is not civilizational diversity in a country *per se*, but it is how the diversity is handled—or mishandled—which influence the dismemberment of multi-civilizational states. In other words, it is when the crisis of legitimacy and citizenship reaches an acute level that such states become candidates for dismemberment. Toward the end of his essay, Huntington declared: '[a] Confucian–Islamic military connection has thus come into being ... and the flow of weapons and weapons technology is generally from East Asia to the Middle East'.<sup>43</sup> Huntington does not give us facts to substantiate his judgment. If the Confucian–Islamic connection has indeed come into being, as Huntington claimed, it would undermine his kin-country argument mentioned above. Similarly, in terms of the value of weapons, the West by far surpasses East Asia as a major source of arms to Islamic countries.<sup>44</sup> In either case, one of the central propositions of the Huntingtonian idea of the clash of civilizations would be seriously undermined. It may be also argued that neither the presence of a Confucian–Islamic military connection nor its absence need be philosophized, in terms of civilization or otherwise. The occasional groupings and affinity, or lack thereof, could merely reflect either the convergence or divergence of interests among states for a short or long duration of time. While empirical evidence

does not support the claim that the Islamic–Confucian connection has come into being, civilizational logic does not also point to the possibility for that to happen even in the future. In fact, should civilizations become the defining factor of transnational links, the Islamic–Christian or Islamic–Jewish connection is more likely to emerge than the Islamic–Confucian one. Here we may quote Erich Weede's observation to illustrate our point:

From a Muslim perspective, for example, the clash between Islam and the rest of the world is not equally serious on all fronts. The prophet himself reserved a special place for the peoples of the book, i.e. for the adherents of monotheistic religions, for Jews and Christians. At the level of pure doctrine—not least the practice of the prophet himself—Muslim toleration of Jews and Christians looks much easier than Muslim toleration of essentially agnostic or secular Confucianism or polytheistic Hinduism with its relativistic conception of transcendental truth.<sup>45</sup>

It ought also to be pointed out that Huntington's approach lacks objectivity in that it is openly anti-Islamic. We do think that no matter what his personal values, if he disassociates himself from his preferences and presents his observation/findings in a neutral fashion, the contribution of his 'theory' to our knowledge, no matter whether it is or is not true, will be enhanced greatly. When he writes, 'Islam has bloody borders',<sup>46</sup> for instance, the way the sentence is formulated itself reveals a lack of objectivity in his approach. The matter here is not just the morphology of the language. Why not write, for instance, 'the borders between Islam and other civilizations are bloody'. After all, when we talk about a border our points of reference are two or more phenomena—the one within the border and the one without, or the one on this side and the other which is on the other side. Comparing the two statements, one will be left with the impression, after reading the first statement, that Islamic civilization is inherently violence-prone. The message Huntington's statement seeks to convey seems also to be just that. In the case of the second statement, one will not be led to the *prima facie* assumption that one civilization is—or will be—more violent than the other. Underlying the normative foundation of his narrative is his belief that other 'civilizations' are inferior or inimical to that of the West and should be kept in check by any means. To this end, in fact, he offers a piece of Machiavellian advice to his compatriots: 'exploit differences and conflicts among Confucian and Islamic states'.<sup>47</sup> In short, Huntington's argument as to what the 21st century would look like are based on reasoning by too few examples, some of which even undermine rather than support his argument. In addition, he seriously poisons his method by mixing science with politics.

### **An Alternative View**

In the preceding pages we have tried to demonstrate that not only do 'the end of history' and 'the clash of civilizations' theses have serious philosophical and logical defects from their inception, but also the facts on the ground do not unequivocally bear them out. In this section, we will first place 'the end of history' and 'the clash of civilizations' in the broader theoretical context. We will then attempt to offer an alternative understanding of the future of world affairs in light of what has transpired over the last 10 years.

Emphases and shades of meaning may vary, but virtually all theories of international

relations share the assumption of anarchy in world politics.<sup>48</sup> Political realism asserts that international politics is anarchic. Neoliberalism also concedes that it is so. Even social constructivism, arguably the most radical and progressive school of thought, acknowledges, perhaps regrettably, that 'international system is not a very social place'.<sup>49</sup> The three most important elements embodied in the concept of international anarchy are: (1) absence of world government, (2) sovereignty of states, and (3) egoistic and self-serving nature of state interests. Taken together, we are told, these constituent elements engender a potential for inter-state violence, thereby making the international system incurably anarchic.

Where do the 'end of history' and the 'clash of civilizations' fit in this theoretical spectrum? Certainly Fukuyama's thesis is an indirect attack on the assumption of international anarchy since what he foresaw was a peaceful and prosperous era of liberal democracy in which inter-state wars would become obsolete, or at least unnecessary. Like other mainstream theories in the field, the 'end of history' does not however challenge the role of state as the primary actor in world politics. Ironically, 'the clash of civilizations' despite its implicit endorsement of the notion of anarchy seriously challenges one of the core assumptions of political realism—namely, state as a unitary and a primary actor in international politics. There is also an irony in the fact that the Huntingtonian thesis at the same time shares with realism its aggressiveness and belligerency.<sup>50</sup> However, realism does not buy into the idea of intra-civilizational solidarity or inter-civilizational clash since, as we indicated above, from its vantage point states are by definition self-serving and egoistic, and genuine and long-term cooperation among them is difficult, if not totally impossible.

Developments over the past 10 years seem to indicate significantly reduced inter-state and inter-civilizational conflicts, contrary to what has been suggested by neorealists like Kenneth Waltz and 'clash of civilization' proponents like Samuel Huntington.<sup>51</sup> One explanation for this perhaps lies in the flawed assumption of anarchy in international relations which is shared by both schools of thought. The absence of world government is taken as an empirical equivalent of the 'reign' of anarchy as if the prevalence of 'more' order was also necessarily presupposed by the existence of a central government. We propose to argue that over the years world politics has despite the absence of a government *progressively* become more orderly than its domestic counterpart. A partial reason for this is that hierarchy rather than anarchy characterizes contemporary world politics. And this hierarchy is based on the inter-subjective understanding among states rather than on enforcement from any external body. But why has contemporary world politics become hierarchical and orderly and why progressively so? We can look again at Francis Fukuyama's thesis in our endeavor to disentangle the issues revolving around this question.

Whereas it is true that history has not quite ended as Fukuyama had claimed, there are, as indicated above, more states in contemporary international system that are 'democratic' compared to any period in human history. This appears to provide a congenial atmosphere for enhancements of the trend towards more elaborate hierarchy and orderliness in the international system and, at the same time, provides a more fertile ground for more domestic disorder. Let us look at each of these formidable propositions one at a time.

International hierarchy is in part an extension of an innate human predisposition. Human beings naturally tend to rank and order events, peoples, states and other collectivities, however more or less systematic the process may be. This in turn may be due to the human proclivity for stability in their interaction, a notion not totally

unrelated to ‘ontological security’—a concept described earlier in the discussion. In any case, there is ample empirical evidence that human perception operates in a context of hierarchy—imagined or real. It could thus make sense for Dumont to argue that we should refer to ourselves as ‘*Homo-Hierarchicus*’.<sup>52</sup> Even though we have argued that hierarchy rather than anarchy characterizes international politics, it is however wrong to assume that there is one, universally agreed-upon hierarchy of states. Different sets of hierarchies have existed in different issue areas and at different times.

Hierarchy also emanates from what international relations scholars call regimes. The main function of a regime is ‘the creation of a pattern within sets of issue areas which approximate legal liability whereby states conform to agreed rules due to converging expectations and due to the enhancement of coordinated sanctions against defectors’.<sup>53</sup> Racial, geographic, economic and cultural indicators as well as so-called national character had also been in use for bestowing upon or withholding from a political entity a status in the international system. One set of such an indicator, namely, the quality of health, education and welfare, constitutes the ‘developmental hierarchy of nations’.<sup>54</sup> There are also less explicit sources of hierarchy in contemporary international system. What we should like to stress here is that there are relatively durable hierarchies virtually in all areas of potential conflict and cooperation among states.

Hierarchies are established through ‘voluntary agreements’ or through ‘tests of will and strength’ among rivals. Sometimes, the place a state occupies could simply be bestowed upon it and the status thus attained or assigned could be more or less attuned to what a particular state would wish it to be. Alexander Wendt has recently argued that widespread compliance by states to international rules and norms is attributable to coercion, self-interest and legitimacy.<sup>55</sup> These same factors influence adherence by states to international hierarchy. True, there are, and will always be, instances where a set of hierarchy is contested, and sometimes forcefully, for it is ‘shared knowledge’ rather than an ‘external body’ that regulates and restrains interstate behavior. But, in the final analysis, it is true that most states do indeed follow most international laws most of the time.<sup>56</sup> Thus far we have attempted to substantiate our argument in favor of the view that world politics is marked by a feature that is closer to hierarchy than anarchy. We shall now turn to the related question of why domestic politics is becoming relatively more anarchic than world politics.

It is important to note, first, that in domestic politics there is an alarming lack of ‘shared knowledge’ as to one’s place. All ‘citizens’, regardless of their economic, ethnic as well as political standing, seriously regard themselves as equals, while unfortunately the sad fact is that they are not. Some are richer than others or more educated than others and so on. This distinction also carries with it broad ranging consequences both for the social status and the privileges of individuals as well as for conflict and anarchy. To say that such inequality of ‘citizens’ in the face of a legally ‘guaranteed’ equality is crucial, however, is only to state the obvious, even if the obvious is often ignored. In contrast, despite the principle of ‘sovereign equality’ of states ingrained in the UN Charter, no state seriously considers itself as equal to others. Each state fully realizes that the principle of sovereign equality does not work outside the General Assembly Hall of the UN. Hence a greater potential for anarchy in domestic politics.

Instructive empirical evidence also suggests that domestic politics is progressively becoming more anarchic. It may indeed be an extreme case, but according to a recent nation-wide poll, 70% of Colombians said that they are afraid of going out at night because they feel insecure.<sup>57</sup> One wonders if there is a single state, weak or strong, that

worries in these terms for its survival. In addition, individuals are currently undergoing what James Rosenau has called a 'skill revolution', as a result of which they are now capable of assessing competently 'where they fit in international affairs and how their behavior can be aggregated into significant collective outcomes'.<sup>58</sup> But 'although citizens now have greater awareness of their circumstances and their rights, there is nothing inherent in the skill revolution that leads people more in democratic direction'.<sup>59</sup>

A related issue pertains to a state's legitimacy understood here simply as 'the ability to evoke compliance short of coercion'.<sup>60</sup> Two interconnected venues exist for ascertaining whether or not a government is legitimate. One is by considering how the government came into being. To this end, we ask whether the leaders who hold/held office came to power through a legal/constitutional means or otherwise. Legitimacy could also be judged on the basis of the policy outputs of those who govern. In this case, the regime or the leaders provide the stimuli, first in the form of policies improving citizens' welfare and later in the form of symbolic materials which function as secondary reinforcements, and the followers provide the responses, in the form of favorable attitude towards the stimulators.<sup>61</sup> When we refer to policy outputs, or political outputs, as James N. Danziger puts it, we therefore mean the issues pertaining to what values will be allocated and who will benefit from and who will be burdened by the particular configuration of value allocation.<sup>62</sup> In this sense, the notion of popular reaction to stimulators does not contradict the aforementioned idea of the 'skill revolution'. Historically, authority structures have been founded on traditional criteria of legitimacy derived from constitutional and legal sources. The sources of authority have now shifted from traditional to performance criteria of legitimacy. Again, partly as a result of 'the skill revolution'—and the resultant marked change in the analytical capacity of individuals—future challenges to the legitimacy of state are likely to be significantly different from the past in that they would be more concerted and more powerful. D. Rothchild and A. J. Groth's observation clarify the factors behind this transformation:

With changes in communications ensuring a ready flow of news across state boundaries, ideas on national self-determination, racial equality, inter-group conflict, and political liberalization are readily diffused to an international audience. Such a diffusion (or contagion) effect spreads information on domestic political demands and conflict relations to an international audience by example rather than by deliberate action, initiating an international learning process with enormous potential for conflict creation.<sup>63</sup>

## Conclusion

We may conclude that democratization makes it easier to assess the intentions and therefore predict the behavior of states rather than of individuals. Indeed the structure of corporate 'minds' is typically written down in organizational charts that specify the functions and goals of their constituent elements, and their 'thoughts' can often be heard or seen in the public debates and statements of decision-makers.<sup>64</sup> Intriguingly enough, democratization of political systems appears at the same time to engender more anarchy domestically while enhancing order in the realm of inter-state relations. This is also consistent with the result of a recent study, which found that autocracies are much less vulnerable to state failure than are partial democracies. In the

sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, the study concluded, other things being equal, partial democracies were on average 11 times more likely to fail than autocracies.<sup>65</sup>

Our tentative conclusions are that history has not yet ended, as Fukuyama had claimed; that the end of history, should it somehow happen, would be a bane for domestic politics and a boon for world politics. As regards the clash of civilizations, our conclusion is that such a clash does not appear imminent for, among other things, states rather than civilizations continue to provide individuals with a badge of identity. In the preceding pages, we have also called into question both the logic and empirical validity of the assumption of anarchy in international relations. Since this assumption constitutes the bedrock of contemporary international relations theories and raises wider questions in relation to the end of history and the clash of civilizations, it may be profitable for both the theoreticians of international relations and its practitioners to adequately analyze it from a variety of approaches.

## NOTES

1. Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', *National Interest*, Summer 1989, pp. 3–19. For a brief account of the historical evolution of the idea of the end of history, see E. H. Carr, *What is History?* London: Penguin Books, 1990, especially pp. 110–119.
2. Samuel Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993, pp. 22–49.
3. In fairness to Fukuyama and Huntington, it should be pointed out that our assessment of the two theses is based on their short essays and not on their more elaborate and expanded ideas later published in book form. Here objections are likely to arise by those who deny the propriety of our approach. To such an objection our answer is that while the books are certainly richer in empirical and theoretical details, the central arguments and their logic reflect essentially the same line of reasoning and argument and that the truncated version would therefore be more useful for our purpose.
4. In fact, two hypotheses that, logically and philosophically, are different from one another could both be true. See Bertrand Russell, *The Art of Philosophizing and Other Essays*, Totowa: Littlefield, 1974, p. 58. A good example is a theory in psychology known as *alpha*, *beta*, *gamma* hypothesis, according to which three different hypotheses relating to learning had been supported under different experimental circumstances. The *alpha* hypothesis states that the frequency with which a behavior is performed enhances learning. The *beta* hypothesis states that repetition frequency has no effect on learning. The *gamma* hypothesis states that repetition frequency hinders learning. See Jennifer Bothamley, *Dictionary of Theories*, London: Gale Research International, 1993, p. 20.
5. Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', *op. cit.*, p. 1.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
7. *Ibid.*
8. This is not to deny the empirical fact that more than half of the world's population today live under 'democratic' governments. In Robert Dahl's count, for example, there were 86 'democratic' countries in 1997 as compared with only eight in 1900. See Robert Dahl, 'The Shifting Boundaries of Democratic Governments', *Social Research*, Vol. 66, 1999, pp. 921–923.
9. L. J. Diamond, 'Is the Third Wave Over?', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1996, pp. 20–37.
10. James N. Rosenau and M. Durfee, *Thinking Theory Thoroughly: Coherent Approaches to an Incoherent World*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1995, p. 36.
11. Chris Brown, 'History Ends, Worlds Collide', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 25, 1999, p. 52. The renowned African political scientist, Ali A. Mazrui, made a similar observation nearly a decade before the end of the Cold War: 'Marxism ... is a *child* of the West. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engles were themselves Westerners and their theories and ideas emerged out of Western intellectual and economic history. In that sense, the confrontation between Marxism and Western civilization is between a parent and the offspring; it is an intergenerational conflict in the realm of ideas and values' (Italics original). See Ali A. Mazrui, *The Moving Cultural Frontier of World Order: From Monotheism to North–South Relations*, World Order Models Project, Working Paper No. 18, New York: Institute for World Order, 1982, p. 18. See also Ali A. Mazrui in this issue (Editor).
12. Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', *op. cit.*, p. 4.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.
18. Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1995, p. 7.
19. Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings*, 2nd edn, ed. Hans Reiss, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 48.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
25. The tendency both to classify as distinct and refer to one as superior to another is very problematic. The reasoning involved is that different ‘civilizations’ had been intermingling and borrowing ideas from one another so much so that it becomes hard to talk about their distinctiveness. Robert W. Cox, for instance, reminds us in regard to the relationship that had existed between the Islamic and Western civilizations in these terms: ‘It was through contact with the higher culture of Islam that the Christian West recovered knowledge of Greek philosophy’. See Robert W. Cox, ‘Towards a Post-hegemonic Conceptualization of World Order: Reflections on the Relevancy of Ibn Khaldun’, in *Governance Without Government: Order and Change in World Politics*, eds James N. Rosenau and Ernst-Otto Czempiel, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 151.
26. Kant, *Political Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
27. Huntington, ‘The Clash of Civilizations?’, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
30. Haruhiro Fukui, ‘The Changing State in the Changing World’, *International Political Economy* (Kokusai Seiji Keizaigaku Kenkyu), Vol. 1, March 1998, pp. 1–10.
31. Wendt defines ontological security as ‘the human predisposition for a relatively stable expectations about the world around them ... along with the need for physical security, this pushes human beings in a conservative homeostatic direction, and to seek out recognition of their standing from their society’. See Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 31.
32. Huntington, ‘The Clash of Civilizations?’, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
41. Huntington, ‘The West: Unique Not Universal’, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, 1996, pp. 28–46.
42. Huntington, ‘The Clash of Civilizations?’, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
44. Between 1994 and 1998, the top four suppliers of conventional weapons to Egypt, Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE were, in descending order, USA, Russia, France, UK and Germany. See *SIPRI Yearbook. Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 426.
45. Erich Weede, ‘Islam and the West: How Likely Is the Clash of Civilizations?’, *International Review of Sociology*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1998, pp. 185–186.
46. Huntington, ‘Clash of Civilizations?’, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
48. It is perhaps considerations such as this that prompted some analysts to declare that the assumption of anarchy sets international relations from other disciplines (rather than setting merely one brand of international relations theory from another). See Hans Mouritzen, ‘Kenneth Waltz: A Critical Rationalist between International Politics and Foreign Policy’, in *The Future of*

*International Relations. Masters in the Making?* eds Iver B. Neumann and Ole Waever, London and New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, p. 79.

49. Wendt, 'Social Theory', *op. cit.*, p. 2.

50. Here our reference is especially to what Gidon Rose has recently called 'aggressive realists'. See Gideon Rose, 'Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy', *World Politics*, Vol. 51, 1998, p. 146.

51. In 1998 out of the 27 major conflicts in the world all but two were domestic. See SIPRI, 1999, p. 7. In fact, there has been a steady decline in the number of inter-state wars in the international system since 1648. See Kal J. Holsti, *Peace and War: Armed Conflicts and International Order*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991; and Kal J. Holsti, *The State, War and the State of War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

52. L. Dumont, *Homo Herarchicus*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.

53. Attributed to Robert Keohane, in M. Suhr, 'Robert O. Leohane: A Contemporary Classic', in *The Future of International Relations. Masters in the Making?* eds Iver B. Neumann and Ole Waever, London and New York: Routledge, 1998, p. 98.

54. This taxonomy is from H. Barbera, *Rich Nations and Poor in Peace and War. Continuity and Change in the Development Hierarchy of Seventy Nations from 1913 through 1952*, Lexington, Toronto and London: Lexington Books, 1973, p. 1.

55. Wendt, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

56. Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society. A Study of Order in World Politics*, London: Macmillan, 1977, p. 42.

57. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10 February 2000.

58. James Rosenau, 'Security in a Turbulent World', *Current History*, May 1995, pp. 194–195.

59. *Ibid.*

60. A. C. Janos, 'Authority and Violence: The Political Framework of Internal War', in *Internal War: Problems and Approaches*, ed. Harry Eckstein, New York: The Free Press, 1964, p. 151.

61. J. H. Schaar, 'Legitimacy in the Modern State', in *Legitimacy and the State*, ed. W. Connolly, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984, p. 109.

62. James N. Danziger, *Understanding the Political World. An Introduction to Political Science*, New York and London: Longman, 1991, p. 374.

63. Donald Rothchild and A. J. Groth, 'Pathological Dimensions of Domestic and International Ethnicity', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 110, No. 1, 1995, p. 78.

64. Wendt, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

65. The study defined partial democracy as a country which has some democratic characteristic—such as election—but also have some autocratic characteristics, such as a chief executive with almost no constraints on his/her power, sharp limits on political competition, a state restrained press, or a cowed or dependent judiciary. See Ted R. Gurr *et al.*, 'State Failure Task Force: Phase II Findings', *Environmental Change and Security Project Report*, Vol. 5, No. 49, 1999, pp. 52–55.