

The Clash of Civilizations and Universal Human Values

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The terrorist acts of September 11 raise the question of the relevance of Samuel P. Huntington's thesis of the clash of civilizations, which says that broad cultural differences are becoming the most central and dangerous dimension of emerging global politics. In this paper, I show that it is misleading. Huntington exaggerates both the cultural diversity that exists in the world and the contribution that cultural differences make to violent conflicts. There is no clash of civilizations. In fact, there are many universal human values, from the respect for life itself to treating others as we wish them to treat us. Yet deadly human conflicts continue. Differences among people, however, may be less the cause of such conflicts than similarities. For example, all humans everywhere share the capacity of loyalty to their group and a willingness to sacrifice, sometimes even to kill, for its survival. I propose three principles that may contribute to the creation of a peaceful world community. The first is inclusion, which states that each of us ought to include all people in our widest circle of concern, treating everyone with dignity and working to raise minimum levels of living for the least well-off people in the world. The second is skepticism, which states that each of us ought to question our own views and to consider opposing views, keeping in mind that certainty is the enemy of decency. And the third is social control, which states that each of us ought to exercise restraint to minimize our own nasty or violent acts against others and that each of us ought to support global institutions of civil and criminal justice, both international courts and global peace-keeping troops dedicated to preventing violence. When future terrorist acts do occur, they can be treated not as acts of war but as the immoral and criminal acts that they are.

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Purpose

The deaths and destruction wrought by the attacks of 11 September 2001 on the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, on the Pentagon in Washington, DC, and on the airliner that crashed in Pennsylvania remind us yet again of the horrors that some human beings are willing to inflict upon others. And so, too, do the retaliatory American bombings and other violent acts in Afghanistan, in which civilians also were killed and maimed, even though they were not the intended targets.

In the United States, the first reaction to the events of 9/11 was stunned disbelief, followed by an outburst of emotion. There were feelings of hurt, sadness and grief; and there were expressions of anger, hate, and rage, amid an outpouring of patriotism and demands for vengeance. And there was a search for meaning.

Many explanations were offered for the attack on America. There was talk of deranged minds, poisonous resentment, and evil doing. There were charges that the United State's own behavior was to blame, including the U.S.A.'s alleged leaning toward Israel against the Palestinians, its support of the blockade of Iraq and the suffering that it has caused there, and its collaboration with corrupt and oppressive regimes in the Arab world (Talbot & Chanda, 2001).

The explanations also included other accounts of "the chickens coming home to roost," with critical assessments of past American acts in other parts of the world, such as supporting authoritarian regimes, carrying out assassinations, and arming dissident groups and proxy armies. Additionally, from the Christian right came the ultimate "blaming of the victim," later renounced, that God had rightly punished America for its errant ways, such as tolerating feminists, gays and lesbians, libertarians, abortionists, and pornographers.

Although apparently disavowed by its originator, some commentators gave credence to Samuel P. Huntington's (1996) well-known thesis of "the clash of civilizations." They suggested that 9/11 and its aftermath illustrate the fact that the "conflict between groups from differing civilizations" has become "the central and most dangerous dimension of the emerging global politics" (Pp. 13). Cultural differences, especially religious differences, it is claimed, are today shaping the patterns of cohesion, disintegration, and conflict.

In this paper, I challenge some of the assumptions on which this thesis is based. It is wrong, for example, in its belief that the cultures, especially the values, of the world's civilizations are vastly different from one another.

After reviewing briefly a few of the interpretations that have been proposed to understand the post-cold war world, particularly Huntington's thesis, I show that a set of values exists that is widely shared globally and that social scientists understand pretty well why they are. Also, I point out that conflict is as likely - actually more likely - to be produced not by the differences among people but by their similarities.

Finally, in the context of a global ethic, I consider some paths to global peace and order in the principles of inclusion, skepticism, and social control.

The Clash of Civilizations

Can we humans learn to live in peace, while cooperating with each other to create a world in which individual freedom and social harmony are balanced and where human well-being is maximized? Or will we continue to be plagued by periodic outbreaks of aggression, violence, torture, genocide, terror, revenge, hatred, war and all the other ills of destruction that these horrors bring?

Since the late 1980s when part of the communist world collapsed, scholars have proposed several visions of the coming global future. Indeed, the first is the acceptance of the belief that the communist world has, indeed, collapsed. Some of it, of course, has: the former Soviet Union and several states in Eastern Europe. But it is worth remembering that about a fifth of the Earth's population still lives under a regime in China that considers itself Marxist and that Marxist thought remains with us despite the failure of the regimes that ruled in its name. Whatever the failures of command economies and political repression, some of the things that communist regimes promised remain attractive to many people, such as social justice, full employment, adequate healthcare, educational opportunities, housing, and the reduction of poverty (Bell, 1991).

A related vision is Francis Fukuyama's (1989, 1992) "end-of-history" thesis that the end of the cold war has meant that humankind has reached some final point in its ideological evolution. Yes, many people throughout the world support democratic governance, including both the maintenance of public liberties and the guarantee of universal participation in free and fair elections. And, yes, there have been recent examples of societies, perhaps as many as 30 in the 1970s and 1980s, adopting democratic systems. But it is by no means guaranteed that democratic forms will become the norm and, even if they do, their evolution can be ex-

pected to continue and to be hotly contested. Most important, there remain other ideological issues, including the proper role of the state in society and of religion in the state and the reduction of state sovereignty through the growth of supraregional and global institutions.

Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky (1993) give another vision of the future, the emergence of a two-zone world, zones of peace and zones of turmoil. Many societies are already part of the zones of peace, wealth, and democracy. In them life expectancies are long, birth rates are low, women are achieving equality, and civil discourse as an ideal predominates. Moreover, in such zones people tend to care about protecting the environment, creating and maintaining cooperative global interconnections with other peoples and ensuring the well-being of future generations. Among some groups, there are signs of supporting the values of moderation and sufficiency. Of course, the struggle to control the future is by no means finished even in such zones, but, despite many setbacks, the winds of change during the past century have blown toward such values.

But many human societies remain in zones of turmoil, war, and development, where life is cheap and where peace, harmony, and civil discourse are no more than distant dreams. In such zones, the struggle to control the future is often furiously violent. But there are, according to Singer and Wildavsky, signs of hope: a process is well underway in them that will result in most of the world's societies becoming just, orderly, peaceful, democratic, and wealthy.

But such a desirable world may be a long time coming. These authors envision a 21st century in which "billions of human beings are doomed to have their lives cut short or mutilated by poverty, tyranny and violence" before the process is complete (Singer and Wildavsky, 1993: 53).

Singer and Wildavsky make a convincing case for their vision. They are, I believe, on the right track with their view of the transition to a world of peace, wealth, and democracy. We can hope, however, that they are wrong about its long time in coming.

Huntington (1996) attempts to discredit both the end-of-history and the two-zones visions of the future. He also disagrees with the statist view in which states are seen as remaining the dominant entities in world affairs. To the contrary, he foresees larger collectivities of allied states drawn together by common culture and cooperating with each other. And he foresees such collectivities being in conflict with other countries that contain a different culture.

He disagrees, also, with Zbigniew Brzezinski's (1993) image of a world in anarchy. It fails, he says, to take into account the many existing agreements, associations, organizations, and institutions that quite obviously do provide considerable order and predictability for the world system (even though, it must be admitted, such order is sometimes inadequate - witness, for example, the world community's failure to act to prevent genocide in Rwanda).

As superior to these views, Huntington (1996: 13) offers his own vision of "the conflict between groups from differing civilizations." He views civilizations as being "the ultimate human tribes" and he views "the clash of civilizations" as "tribal conflict on a global scale" (Pp. 207).

For him, religion is a central defining characteristic of civilization, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Confucianism each being associated with major civilizations, while Buddhism, although prominent in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and elsewhere, is not (Pp. 47). Huntington recognizes the following civilizations: the Sinic (including China, overseas Chinese communities, and Vietnam and Korea); Japanese; Hindu; Islamic; Western; Latin American (which may be considered a subcivilization within the West); and, possibly, African (countries south of the Sahara, excluding the Republic of South Africa which he describes as a multifragmented European culture).

Huntington says that the "*intracivilizational* clash of political ideas spawned by the West is being supplanted by an *intercivilizational* clash of culture and religion" (Pp. 54, emphasis added). He expects the most intense conflicts to be between Muslim and Asian societies on the one hand and the West on the other. At the micro level, he views the most violent fault lines as those between Islam and its Orthodox, Hindu, African, and Western Christian neighbors. At the macro level, he believes that the rise of China is "the potential source of a big intercivilizational war of core states" (Pp. 209). He does not, however, see a major war as inevitable. Like many a futurist, he claims that it all depends.

There is much that is commendable in Huntington's vision of the future. For the most part, he bases his future world on sound scholarship, accepted historical facts, and detailed understanding of current political realities. For the most part, too, he appears reasonable and cautious in his interpretations and descriptions of alternative possibilities for the future. And, for the most part, he writes clearly and convincingly, earnestly and humanely, and apparently without a political agenda. Certainly, given enough stupidity, ignorance, bad luck, focus on the wrongs of the past

instead of the opportunities of the future, or narrow-minded, ethnocentric, and wrongheaded calculations of self-interest, the future of the world could become dominated by deadly clashes between civilizations.

Yet Huntington's vision is misleading, sometimes confusing and contradictory, and, occasionally, simply contrary to fact. Moreover, some of his basic assumptions invite the reader to believe worst-case scenarios as more probable than in fact they are.

For example, Huntington (1996: 20) says, "For peoples seeking identity and reinventing ethnicity, enemies are essential." Yes, this is a danger to be avoided, but it is not essential. Although outgroups have been demonized as "enemies" by a variety of demagogues throughout history, many leaders have, to the contrary, projected positive, inclusive images of the future to mobilize their followers. By looking forward to social systems of harmony and cooperation, people can often see that they will achieve more desirable lives than living in self-contained, warring groups. Ethnicity itself is a relatively recent invention that is a form of large-scale social organization, supplanting primordial, tribal groupings and identifications (Bell, 1983). Moreover, today we know that some people, whatever their other identities, already identify themselves, first and foremost, as "human beings" (Varenne, 1977).

Nearly everything he says about the impossibility of having one harmonious world because of the cultural differences separating people between various civilizations could equally apply to intracivilizational and even intrastate conditions. Many major cities are microcosms of some aspects of world cultural diversity and many states contain militant peoples of different groups, races, religions, languages, and cultures. Indeed, such differences sometimes become fault lines of conflict - as in Algeria, Bosnia, Cypress, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, the Philippines, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen - and they are or have been the cause of periodic civil strife and identity politics in many countries, including the United States. Yet for most peoples of the world most of the time peaceful accommodation, cooperation, and incorporation are the norm.

Throughout most of his book, Huntington makes the assumption that cultural differences tend to lead to conflict. He does not adequately deal with the fact that many of the most brutal wars in history have taken place between culturally similar peoples. For example, the within-civilization wars in Europe of World Wars One and Two match any between-civilization conflicts in human suffering and devastation, as have many civil wars within states as well, such as in the United States or in Spain.

Although he recognizes the similar universalistic claims ("the one true faith to which all humans can adhere") of Islam and Christianity such as their missionarism, expansionism, and teleological views of history (Pp. 210), he otherwise ignores the fact that conflict often begins and continues not so much because of differences among people but because of their similarities. People everywhere share the capacities to demonize other people, to be loyal to their own group and to be willing to sacrifice their lives for it, to believe that their group, people, society, or state are in the right and others are in the wrong, to remember past wrongs committed against their group and to seek retaliation and revenge, and to hate and kill other human beings.

Universal Human Values

Huntington (1996: 55) attacks the idea "that the European civilization of the West is now the universal civilization of the world," a view which he calls "a widespread and parochial conceit." For example, he says that the "essence of Western civilization is the Magna Carta not the Magna Mac. The fact that non-Westerners may bite into the latter has no implications for their accepting the former" (Pp. 58). Here he may simply be wrong.

If biting into a Big Mac (or drinking Coco-Cola or Pepsi or French or Australian wine or Indonesian or Jamaican coffee, watching Hollywood films, driving a Toyota, clicking on a Mitsubishi television set or a Toshiba VCR, taking pictures with a Minolta or Fuji camera, accessing the Internet with an Hitachi personal computer, buying a Turkish or Persian rug, using Mexican or Indonesian oil, and so forth ad infinitum) means economic development, then the Magna Carta, if not already present in some form of democratic governance, may soon follow the Big Mac. For we know from dozens of studies that economic development contributes to the conditions for political democracy (which Huntington himself later acknowledges, Pp. 192).

Huntington also disagrees with the related claim that there is an emerging culture that is increasingly shared worldwide. He sees it as only a "Western" culture or even a Western "conceit." He is mistaken. Although it contains many Western aspects, it is, rather, an emerging global culture and contains elements from many cultures of the world, Western and non-Western, as well as its own *sui generis* traits.

Indeed, various local cultural groups sometimes do view the emerging global culture as a threat, because they fear that their traditional ways will disappear or be corrupted. And, of course, they may be right. Many things may change. The social world, after all, is in flux, whether from the outside, in which case it is often readily apparent, or from the inside, in which case it may be less noticed. But like the clean toilets that McDonald's brought to Hong Kong restaurants (Watson, 1997), people may be better off for the changes, even though their fears often prevent them from seeing it until later.

Yet preservation of many aspects of local traditions is not incompatible with participation in a global culture. Tolerance and even the celebration of all kinds of local variations, as long as they do no harm to others, are hallmarks of the development of a world community. Chinese food, Spanish art, Asian philosophies, African drumming, Egyptian history, or any major religion's version of the Golden Rule become available to enrich the lives of everyone. What may have originated locally can become universally adopted (like Arabic numbers or the Christian calendar). Most important, perhaps, is that the emerging global culture is built upon tens of thousands - possibly hundreds of thousands-of networks of communication, influence, and exchange that link people and organizations across civilizational boundaries, and such networks, aided by electronic communications systems, are growing more numerous and intense each day.

Huntington (Pp. 320) seems to realize this when he suggests that "all civilizations should search for and attempt to expand the values, institutions, and practices they have in common with peoples of other civilizations." And indeed they should, but with one important and necessary proviso: they ought not to expand those things they have in common that contribute to death and destruction. They ought to expand only those things that they share that contribute to human welfare and freedom. Not all things human societies share are beneficial. The millennia-old human experiments to create and select the right moral values, appropriate common practices, and criteria of the good society are still underway.

Huntington may be correct when he says that global religious resurgence is fueled precisely by what was supposed to cause the death of religion: "the processes of social, economic, and cultural modernization that swept across the world in the second half of the twentieth century" (Pp. 97). He views this as a problem of loss of identity as systems of authority are disrupted, people migrate and become separated from their roots, learn new jobs or become unemployed, interact with strangers, and are exposed to new sets of

relationships. What such people need, he says, are "new sources of identity, new forms of stable community, and new sets of moral precepts to provide them with a sense of meaning and purpose. Religion, both mainstream and fundamentalist, meets these needs" (Pp. 97).

Yes, indeed, uprooted people may need these things. But no, mainstream and fundamentalist religions cannot meet them, because they are *not* "new sources of identity." Instead, such religions recycle the past. Thus religious revival movements can be viewed as reactionary, responding to perceived threats of contemporary social change, of technological and economic development, and of the emergence of new and sometimes seemingly incomprehensible social and cultural forms.

Such reaction is perfectly understandable and few societies have done enough, through education and social support, to ease the psychological, emotional, and social burdens on individuals and groups who feel victimized by such changes. But do manifestations of such reaction represent the success of the past over the coming future? Perhaps not. They are, rather, the final death throes of an old world as it gives way to the new.

Since the unknown will always be with us, no matter how much new knowledge is created and spread, it is a good bet that religions will remain among the major human belief systems for generations to come, despite - perhaps because of - their superstitious, mystical, otherworldly, and sometimes, given today's scientific knowledge, incredible beliefs.

It is reasonable to hope, however, that some ecumenical accommodations will be made, building on the many similar and overlapping moralities contained in the major religions. An example can be found in the interfaith declaration, "Towards a Global Ethic," of the Parliament of the World's Religions (1993) that is partly based on earlier work by Hans Küng (1991). A person does not have to believe in the supernatural or supernatural beings to embrace and practice the principles of the Global Ethic.

Such interfaith global cooperation is one way that people of different civilizations can find common cause. But there are others. For example, global cooperation, already begun, aimed at maintaining and enhancing the life-sustaining capacities of the Earth could grow. People everywhere have a stake in working for the freedom and welfare of future generations, because, among other things, the future of their own children and grandchildren is involved. Humans could create an entirely new religion, a naturalistic and secular religion of humanity, perhaps an updated version of that proposed by Auguste Comte more than a century ago, a religion that is compatible with modern science as well as being inclusive, peace-loving,

cooperative, just, caring, built on the dignity and worth of every human being, and life-affirming.

Already existing and growing are all-human, intercivilizational bondings based on such goals as seeking, discovering, and spreading knowledge and beauty, from medicine and science to moral philosophy, music, and art. Such bondings could arise, too, from cultivating new skills and talents with the aim of realizing worthy human capacities, or from the human exploration, colonization, and industrialization of space.

Finally, the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence continues as I write. One day, some people believe, contact will be made. What then of Huntington's clash of civilizations? The different human civilizations and thousands of Earthly languages will appear practically identical to extraterrestrial visitors - as we Earthlings ourselves are beginning to realize.

The thrust of Huntington's entire analysis is far too much influenced by his belief that "It is human to hate" (Pp. 130). Mostly, he ignores the equally true proposition that it is human to love. Moreover, he ignores a considerable body of social research that shows that cultural diversity has been exaggerated and that many human universal or near-universal values exist (Brown, 1991). He ignores, too, recent efforts to show that human societies can be judged as to their contributions to the well-being and freedom of their own peoples (Edgerton, 1992) and that values themselves can be assessed objectively using both logic and empirical evidence (Bell, 1997; Lee, 1985).

Anthropologists have contributed not only to beliefs about cultural diversity, but also to beliefs about human universals. Murdock (1945), for example, lists 73 universals, ranging from such items as bodily adornment, community organization, and cooking to tool-making, trade, visiting, and weaning.

With specific reference to human values, scholars have drawn up many lists. Boulding (1985), for example, constructs a "G Scale" to measure the goodness of individuals or entire societies. Lasswell (1971) lists eight broad values that he derives from a conception of human dignity. In addition to honesty, trust, and sharing with others, Campbell (1965) has suggested other possible universal values that he derives from the pre-conditions of social life, such as industriousness, surplus production, abstinence from indulgence, loyalty, and respect for both authority and knowledge.

The World Order Models Project gives a set of values that can be widely accepted as goals for a preferred world (Falk, 1975). In one of its reports, Michael J. Sullivan, III (1991) measures five global values (peace,

economic well-being, ecological balance, social justice, and political participation) and critically evaluates the performance of 162 countries with respect to their achievement.

The global code of ethics compiled by Rushworth M. Kidder (1994) is representative of many empirical studies of values. It includes love, truthfulness, fairness, freedom, unity (including cooperation, group allegiance, and oneness with others), tolerance, responsibility (including taking care of yourself and of other people, and having a concern for community interests), and respect for life. Additional values mentioned are courage, knowing right from wrong, wisdom, hospitality, obedience, and stability.

I could cite other studies, but the results are clear: Universal human values do exist and a wide variety of researchers using different methodologies and data sets independently identify similar values.

The Origins of Universal Human Values

Human values are not arbitrary or capricious. Their origins and their continued existence are partly found in the facts of human biology and the interaction of human bodies and minds with their physical and social environments. That is, the very nature of human beings as biopsychological and social entities shapes and constrains human behavior. It shapes, too, humans' beliefs about the world and their evaluations of various aspects of it.

Human beings cannot exist without having certain of their needs met. They must have air, water, food, sleep, and personal security. Moreover, there are other needs that, although they are not absolutely necessary for the bodily survival of individuals, contribute to individual survival and are necessary for comfort and flourishing. These are needs for clothing, shelter, companionship, affection, and sex. The last, of course, although not necessary for the survival of an individual, is necessary for reproduction and, hence, the continued survival of the human group.

Thus, there are many constraints placed on human behavior, if individuals and groups are to continue to survive and to thrive. These are *not* matters of choice. They are factual conditions that must be met that derive from the nature of human beings. *How* they are met involves some - often considerable - leeway of choice, but, obviously, these needs set limits to the possible. Practices of drinking only sea water, eating only rocks, and breathing only carbon monoxide will not sustain human life.

Much of morality, then, derives from the type of being humans are, from biological and psychological characteristics to higher order capacities of reasoning and choosing. If humans were invulnerable and immortal, then injunctions against murder would be unnecessary. If humans did not rely on communication of knowledge and information from others, lying would not be a moral issue. "The capacities and limits of human beings provide the basis for our moral values" (Lombardi, 1988: 6).

Some needs of human individuals, such as needs for love, approval, emotional support, and communication are inherently social, because they can be satisfied adequately only by interaction with other humans. At the stage of infancy, of course, individuals are totally dependent on other people. As adults, people's interaction with others satisfies not only such needs as affiliation and communication but also the survival needs for food, clothing, and shelter. The cooperative efforts of a group and a division of labor are nearly always superior than is one individual working alone, for example, in hunting, providing protection from beasts and hostile groups, building shelters, or carrying out large-scale community projects. Human nature includes the fact that humans are social beings.

Social life itself, thus, helps to shape human values. In the course of the evolution of society there has been a selective retention of only some of the logically possible variations in human values as organized norms, rights, and obligations. There are both prerequisites and consequences of group life and they exist equally for all humans anywhere who attempt to live in groups. Morality importantly functions to make social life possible, to permit and encourage people to live and work together (Baumeister, 1991: 39).

Moreover, morality is not a matter of mere group survival. Morality also allows people and their societies to flourish. Through the cooperation and mutual regulation that it provides, morality promotes the synergistic effects of organized and coordinated human effort that allows individuals and societies to thrive. Just as it is likely that there is a word for "nose" in every language because of the structure of the human face, it is also likely that there is a word for "cooperation" - and many other human values - because of the structure of human society.

Greed, pride, dishonesty, covetousness, cowardice, lust, wrath, gluttony, envy, thievery, promiscuity, stubbornness, selfishness, egocentrism, and disobedience, among many other human dispositions, constantly threaten the survival or well-being of society (Campbell, 1975). Such dispositions are as much universals as are the societal efforts to control them, possibly because they once, long ago, had

survival value. But with the growth of society, they became obstacles to the cooperation necessary to carry on orderly community life, especially large-scale, complex community life (Edgerton, 1992: 70).

Thus, the path toward a harmonious global society and moral community is well marked by widely shared human values. Markers include values such as individual responsibility, treating others as we wish them to treat us, respect for life; treating all other people with dignity (without regard to distinctions of age, sex, race, skin color, physical or mental ability, language, religion, political view, or national or social origin), patience, understanding and acceptance of one another, forgiveness, solidarity and relatedness with other people of the world, kindness and generosity, caring for others, compassion, love for one another, equality between men and women, nonviolence, economic and social justice, peace and global order, nature-friendly ways of life, respect for human rights and fundamental values, constancy and trustworthiness, truthfulness and honesty, moderation and modesty, loyalty, safety and security, freedom as long as no harm is done to others, tolerance, and sexuality that expresses and reinforces a loving relationship lived by equal partners.

The path that humans ought not to take is also well marked. To be avoided are abuses of the Earth's ecosystems, prejudice, hatred, theft, greed, arrogance, mistrust, hostility, violence, envy, jealousy, resentment, terror, oppression, torture, mutilation, killing, ruthlessness and brutality, lies and deceit, swindling and hypocrisy, demagoguery, fanaticism and intolerance, opportunism, domination, and degradation.

Such value judgments are not distinctively Islamic or Christian or Hindu, Asian or Western, African or Latin American. They are *human* values, reached, often independently, from a variety of different origins after millennia of human experience.

But they are not a final summary of ultimate global morality. They represent a current progress report, a basis for critical discourse on a global level. Such discourse can contribute to understanding and agreement and, eventually, to the continued evolution of a global morality. Many efforts to create a worldwide moral code are underway, and an important one was held in Vienna in June 1993 where the World Conference on Human Rights re-affirmed the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Human societies and civilizations today differ chiefly in how well these positive values are achieved and these negative values suppressed. No society, obviously, has fully achieved the positive values. Nor has any so-

ciety fully eliminated the negative ones. Yet in every society, there are many people, groups, and institutions that accept and try to achieve these positive values. Moreover, there are groups, such as the Institute for Global Ethics, exploring how a global ethic can be improved and taught so as to contribute further to the freedom, welfare, and unity of human beings everywhere.

The Search for Global Peace and Order

Individuals and societies are so complex - and sometimes so polymorphous perverse - that it seems foolhardy to make plans and design actions aimed at achieving any goals at all, much less the ambitious task of increasing human freedom and well-being. Yet what alternatives do we have? Despair, resignation, and inaction are no answers. They simply concede defeat.

Rather, by viewing human society as the experiment it is and monitoring the success and failure of our efforts, we humans can make periodic revisions in our plans and actions in the hope of moving ever closer to a future world in which every individual has a good and equal chance of living a long and satisfactory life of his or her own choosing.

Keeping in mind the basic similarity in humans and their values, I suggest three principles that might contribute to such a future.

The Principle of Inclusion

Although their values are largely the same, people generally limit their application to members of their own groups. This is a problem of exclusion versus inclusion in defining to whom our code of ethics applies. Most people, for example, exclude from their concern and caring other people who are socially or geographically distant from themselves.

Such exclusion can have disastrous effects, because it can justify selectively withholding moral behavior from certain other people (e.g., cheating or lying to them because they are not members of our ingroups). At worst, it can lead to demonizing them and making them targets of aggression and violence. This is shortsighted and counterproductive because mistreatment tends to circle back to its perpetrators, since victims or their survivors often make sure that it does so, or it is passed on to others creating a nasty world in which we all must live.

Today, our individual lives and those of our children and grandchildren are so intimately tied to the rest of humanity that our identities ought to include a sense of ourselves as members of the whole human race. Thus,

our circle of caring ought to include at least some concern for the welfare of all human beings. More effort and resources ought to be put into the tasks of raising the level of living of the worst-off members of the human community, into reducing disease, poverty and illiteracy, and into creating equal opportunity for everyone everywhere.

Furthermore, our circle of caring ought to include the livability of the Earth's environment because human life depends on it.

In a world in which all peoples increasingly share a common fate, self-interest alone dictates adding such concerns to the obligations that responsible people already have for self, family, and country.

The Principle of Skepticism

Deadly conflicts continue to occur partly because some people everywhere share the delusion of certainty. And "certainty," as Anthony Lewis (2001) recently said, "is the enemy of decency." Some people willfully see no point of view but their own. Being sure that they are right, such people can justify doing the most horrendous things to other people.

What all of us need is a healthy dose of skepticism, especially about our own views. Such medicine can lead beneficially to having doubts and avoiding wrongful acts. The doubts, in turn, can lead to asking more questions, searching for more answers, and considering alternative views.

Elsewhere, I propose critical realism as a theory of knowledge for futurists and futures studies (Bell, 1997). In fact, I recommend it for everyone, because it teaches us that knowledge is corrigible, contingent, and conjectural. It invites the use of evidence and reason to test beliefs - especially to try to falsify them, so that we will learn that our beliefs are false, if, indeed, they are false. It seems rational that, if people were going to treat other people badly, even kill them, for reasons, they would want to know whether or not those reasons were true. If your cognitive maps of reality are wrong, then, using them to navigate through life, you are not going to end up where you want to go.

Critical realism also invites civility in the face of disagreement. It encourages the peaceful resolution of controversies by investigation and discussion of the facts. It teaches temperance and tolerance, because it includes the belief that the discovery of hitherto unsuspected facts may overturn our most cherished and strongly held beliefs. Tomorrow, we may have reason to believe something different from what we believe today.

Thus, skepticism invites independent thinking, because it endorses questioning. Today, as I write in the wake of 9/11 and the bombing in Afghanistan, there are Americans who have questioned some actions of

the Bush Administration, such as the proposals for military tribunals to try accused terrorists, for the sacrifice of some personal liberties purportedly to ensure greater security, and for profiling some groups of Americans for mass detention or investigation without any evidence of an individual's wrongdoing. Some officials of the Bush Administration have accused such questioners of being traitors or unpatriotic helpers of terrorists.

Critical realists would respond by pointing out that truth and justice, and personal safety and security too, are served not by suppressing such questioning, but by encouraging and paying attention to it. We cannot find the truth by suppressing disagreeing - or even disagreeable - views.

The Principle of Social Control

Obviously, there is a need for both informal and formal social controls on a global level if we are going to achieve global peace and order. Even in the most cohesive societies, we still need moral codes and norms on the one hand and laws and police forces on the other to maintain public order and personal safety.

Informal social controls work for most people most of the time. The norms of society are taught and reinforced by family, school, peers, religious and other institutions, and they are internalized by individuals.

Yet every society must deal with the fact that it contains people who won't always play by the rules. In every society, there are some people who are fanatics, extremists, thieves, abusers and murderers, sociopaths or psychopaths, mentally ill, victims seeking revenge, vigilantes taking the law into their own hands, people who act in a rage - the list goes on and on. Formal social controls, such as police and other law enforcement agencies, caretaker organizations, and other institutions, are necessary to protect citizens from such people - well, in truth, to protect us from ourselves because "such people" may include at one time or another any one of us or our acquaintances.

Likewise, the global society needs international laws, international institutions to administer them, and international police/military (i.e., peacekeeping) forces to enforce them. International systems of social control need strengthening and elaborating, so that killing and destruction can be prevented, while negotiation and compromise can take place peacefully. What is needed is a global peacekeeping force with a monopoly on the legitimate use of force, sanctioned by democratic institutions and due process of law, and operated competently and fairly to prevent the illegal use of force, to maintain global order, and to guarantee a

climate of civil discourse. Such a force, of course, ought to be bound not only by law, but also by morality. The use of force ought to be as much as needed but no more than necessary, with every effort being made to restrain perpetrators without harming innocent people, their homes, and the infrastructures of their society.

Clearly, there are current trends moving in this direction that invite our support, such as the expansion of international law, the increase in the number and density of multinational institutions dedicated to the collective control of armed conflict (including peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations), and international institution building to encourage the spread of democracy (Burk, 1996). Also, we can encourage the growing understanding that global cooperation and peace can help create a win-win world.

Conclusion

In this paper, I reviewed visions of the post-cold war world, focusing on "the-clash-of-civilization" thesis as proposed by Samuel P. Huntington. I showed that Huntington exaggerates both the cultural diversity that exists in the world and the contribution that cultural differences make to violent conflicts.

In fact, there are many purposes, patterns, and practices that are shared by all - or nearly all - peoples of the world. There is an emerging global ethic, a set of shared values that includes, among others, individual responsibility, treating others as we wish them to treat us, respect for life, economic and social justice, nature-friendly ways of life, respect for human rights, trustworthiness, truthfulness and honesty, moderation and modesty, loyalty, safety and security, freedom as long as no harm is done to others, and tolerance.

Yet deadly human conflicts continue in numerous places throughout the world. Partly, it is because of human universals, even some of the shared values mentioned above. All humans, for example, are capable of loyalty to their group, of valuing its safety and security, and of honoring those who sacrifice their lives - and the lives of perceived enemies - for it. All humans are capable of rage and violent acts. No doubt in the past societal nurturance was sometimes - if not often - well served by aggression, hostility, and the destruction of enemies. As we see in conflicts today, some people everywhere are capable of hating, demonizing, and killing others while believing that they are doing their national or sacred duty,

even invoking the name of some god or other to justify their acts of destruction.

Yet the weight of history is against them. The long-term social trends toward increases in the scale of human society and the scope of human interaction and toward the spread of human freedom and well-being are clear. Unless some catastrophe occurs, such as a giant meteor or asteroid hitting the Earth or a nuclear holocaust, they will continue, because they embody the values - from life itself to affiliation, from self-fulfillment to the search for knowledge and rectitude, and from individual happiness to social harmony - that have come to be nearly universal because they have been learned from millennia of human experience.

But how long it will take for the world community to achieve such values in reality, to become a community where every human everywhere has a good chance to live a long and satisfying life, I do not know. Nor do I know how much pain and suffering, death and destruction will occur on the way. It may be more than we can bear to contemplate.

There is much, however, that people of good will can do to help the process along, from being responsible for themselves to being generous and understanding of others. They can include all people in their widest circle of concern, treating everyone with dignity and as being equally worthy of ethical treatment. And they can work to raise minimum levels of living for the least well-off people in the world.

Also they can question their own views. They can put them to test. They can consider alternative views. They can remember that knowledge is corrigible, contingent, and conjectural and they can realize that they may be wrong. Before they act, they can remember that certainty is the enemy of decency.

Additionally, they can control themselves, exercising self-restraint to minimize their own potentially nasty or violent acts against others. They can reciprocate others' benevolence toward them, but, when treated malevolently by a person, they can, while defending themselves from harm as necessary, respond no more harshly than withdrawing their cooperation from that person, so as not to begin or escalate a cycle of retaliation.

Furthermore, people can support international agencies of law enforcement to maintain nonviolent means of dispute resolution. They can give support to efforts to strengthen and elaborate global institutions of civil and criminal justice, both international courts and global peacekeeping troops dedicated to preventing violence. They can work to ensure that such global institutions are honest and fair and that they treat rich

and poor, strong and weak nations according to the same standards of judgment.

If the human community can move more fully to living by the universal values that I have identified, then future terrorist acts like the events of 9/11 may be minimized, because all voices would have peaceful ways of being heard and some of the roots of discontent would be eliminated. When future terrorist acts do occur - and surely some will in the complex, global world that we are creating - then they can be treated as the immoral and criminal acts that they are. The criminals can be apprehended and brought to justice by global legal institutions and international law enforcement agencies, and, if necessary, by deploying peacekeeping armed forces operating under their mandate.

There is no clash of civilizations. Most of the people of the world of whatever society, culture, civilization, or religion, whether they are Muslims, Hindus, Jews, Christians, Confucians, Buddhists, atheists, or something else, want to live - and allow other people to live - in peace and harmony. Moreover, many are learning that all of us in the human community are inescapably bound together. More and more, whatever affects one, sooner or later affects all.

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