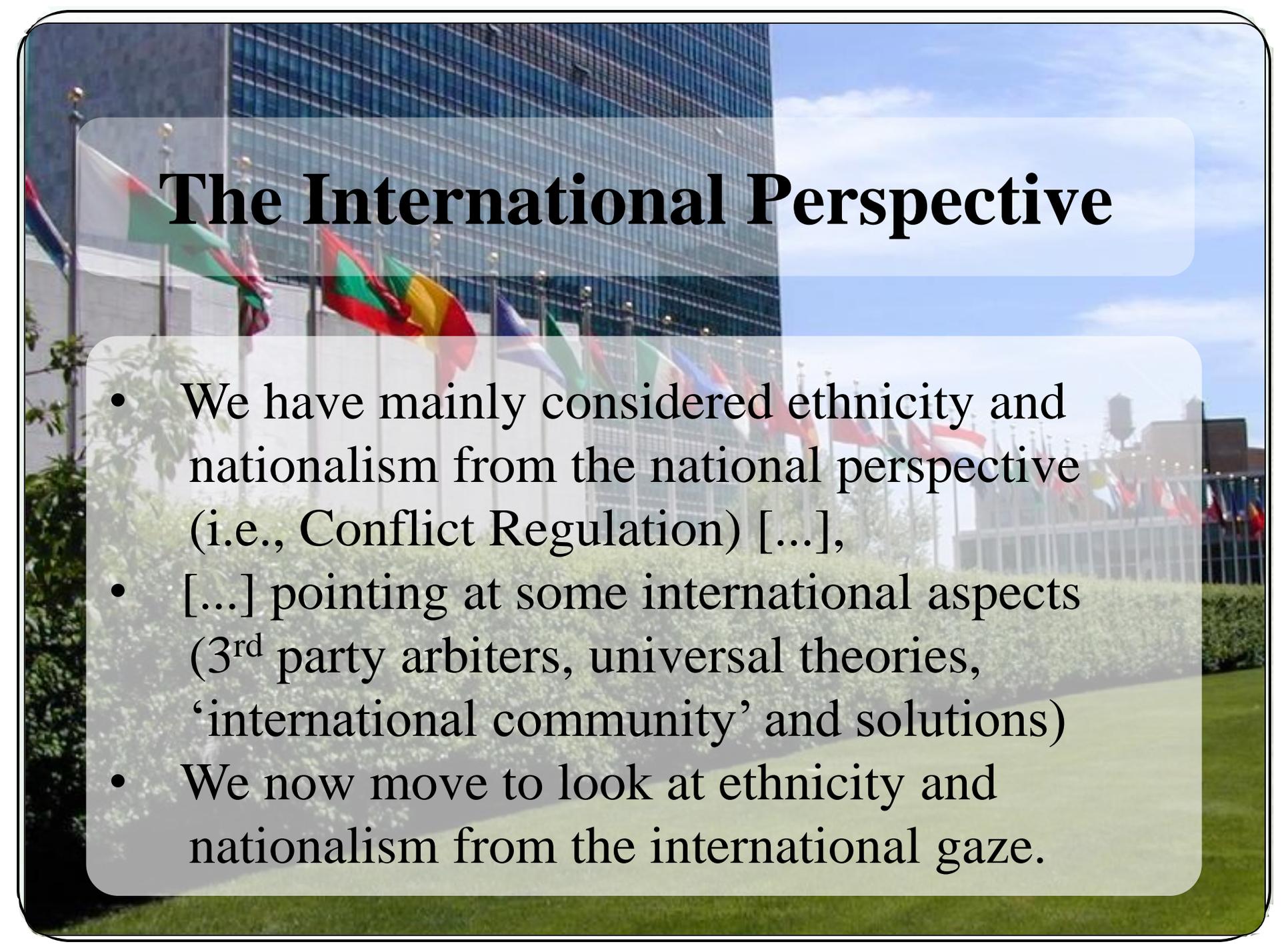




**Nationalism in
International Context**

**4. IR Theory I - Constructivism
National Identity and 'Real' State Interests**

23 October 2012



The International Perspective

- We have mainly considered ethnicity and nationalism from the national perspective (i.e., Conflict Regulation) [...],
- [...] pointing at some international aspects (3rd party arbiters, universal theories, ‘international community’ and solutions)
- We now move to look at ethnicity and nationalism from the international gaze.

International Relations

“**Study of the relations of states with each other and with international organizations** and certain subnational entities (e.g., bureaucracies and political parties) [....]

The study of international relations has always been heavily influenced by **normative considerations**, such as the goal of reducing armed conflict and increasing international cooperation [....]

At the **beginning of the 21st century**, research focused on issues such as terrorism, **religious and ethnic conflict, the emergence of substate and nonstate entities**, the spread of [WMD] and efforts to counter nuclear proliferation, and the development of international institutions.”

(Encyclopaedia Britannica)

Central Question IR

- **Why** do states behave toward each other as they do?
 - **TRADITIONAL ANSWER 1**
 - States seek **to maximise power** and wealth.
 - These ‘billiard balls’ collide in war or strategically cooperate in alliances
 - **TRADITIONAL ANSWER 2**
 - States are directed by **universal global forces like** capitalism, technology, **universal human values** and global/supranational institutions and international law and norms.

Realism

- States pursue their **own interests**
- The State system is **anarchic**, but coheres around clusters of states in alliances
 - System may be bipolar or multipolar
- ‘Rational choice’ assumptions
- Offensive versus Defensive realists
- Key authors: H. **Morgenthau** (Realism), J. **Mearsheimer** (Neo-Realism), H. Kissinger.

Liberalism

- Democratic Peace Theory
- Economic **interdependence**, global capitalism, global culture
 - “As societies around the globe become enmeshed in a web of economic and social connections, the costs of disrupting these ties will effectively preclude unilateral state actions, especially the use of force” (Walt 1998).
- **TNCs**: Corporations challenge the state
- Liberal **institutions**: WTO, IMF, UN, etc.
- Universal **values**: UNHCR
- Key authors: F. **Fukuyama** (‘End of History,’ 1992); R. **Keohane** (‘After Hegemony,’ 1984)
- What’s **missing**?

Constructivism

- New theory in **early 1990s**
- Stress on **norms and role of ideas** as shaping material interests
- **Better explanation** for end of Cold War than existing theories
- Shares with liberalism an **optimistic belief** in global norms as constraining state anarchy
- A **postmodernist attitude** of declining to make predictions from the theory
- Key figure **A. Wendt**, ‘anarchy is what states make of it’
- Times **when ideas are in flux**, and rational calculation of realism less important (i.e., late 1980s USSR).

Limits to Constructivism

- In the optimistic liberal tradition of the US
- Wendt argues that his approach seeks to bolster the liberal claim that global institutions constrain state anarchy
- Focus on global and supranational networks of norms (i.e., end of apartheid, cooperation among democracies)
- Constructivism **less eagerly applied to ‘realist’ concerns** due to its radical and postmodernist ideological leanings
- Shares IR’s preoccupation with the importance of international, as opposed to **domestic, forces.**

Missing Links

1. Role of Sub-State Groups

- IR is influenced by US perspective: individuals and the state, maybe ideology matters, but no understanding of **cultural nationalism**
- Peel away the ‘black box’ of the state
- **Competing sub-state groups**, not reducible to individuals (Liberalism), or the state as a whole (Realism)
- Groups might be economic or ideological, but they are just as often **national, ethnic or religious**
- These sub-state actors can influence state policy
 - E.g., Israel lobby in US, Tamil lobby in India, Turkish Islamists, pro-Syrian Hezbollah).

Missing Links

2. Content of State Interests

- States' interests are not just about power and wealth, but about **culture**
- Some states share cultural links with other states
 - E.g., Russia-Serbia-Greece are Orthodox; US and Britain are 'Anglo-Saxon'; Egypt and Pakistan are Muslim
- This **shapes the way they act toward other states** and the kind of coalitions they join
- National **identities encode stories of the nation** and who its traditional allies and enemies have been
 - E.g., US and UK 'special relationship,' longstanding English-French antagonism until 1904.

Samuel Huntington

The Clash of Civilizations

(1992-1993-1996)

- Huntington critiques realist and liberal theories
- Implicit **reworking** of **constructivism's liberal bias**
- With the end of the polarity of the Cold War, the most important **distinctions** are no longer ideological, political, or economic, but **cultural**.
- **Key issue is identity**: “Who are we?”
- Answers are in terms of ancestry, religion, language, history, values, customs, institutions.
- Specific **social categories** with which they identify: tribes, ethnies, religious communities, nations, and (most broadly) civilizations.

The Civilizational Paradigm (Huntington/Clash of Civilizations)

- Criticizes **realist and liberal paradigms** of causes of international conflict
- Criticizes Liberalism or ‘**harmony paradigm**’
 - E.g., Fukuyama’s ‘End of History’ thesis
 - Liberal democracy heralding a new era of peace, and end of ideological conflict;
 - E.g., global governance theorists;
 - But such theories **discredited by the rise in military conflict** in the 1990s – especially intra-state conflicts based on ethnicity and religion.

[ctnd.] Civilizational Paradigm

- **Limitations of Statist Realism:**
 - Assumes that all states perceive the **same self interests** and behave in the same way;
 - Assumes that international behaviour concerns **only power**;
 - **Domestic values**, culture, and institutions have pervasive influence on how states define their **interests**;→

[ctnd.] Civilizational Paradigm

- Limitations of Statism (cont.):
 - Beyond security, **shared culture** and institutions generate **perception of shared interests**;
 - States define interests differently in **different historical periods**;
 - Post-Cold War, interests becoming more bound up with identity and thus civilizational values;
 - **Less threat** (more trust) is perceived from statesmen and countries with **shared** language, religion, values, institutions, and **culture**; →

Huntington's Four Perspectives

1. **ONE WORLD** – Post-1989 Utopianism (Liberalism)
2. **TWO WORLDS** – East v. West, North v. South, Rest v. West (Bipolar Realism)
3. **184 STATES** – Individual states remain the core international actors (Realism)
4. **ANARCHY** – Failed states, substate conflicts. Moynihan, *Pandaemonium* ('94), Brzezinski, *Out of Control* ('93)

→ Perspectives 3 and 4, states Huntington, are 'too close to reality' and not parsimonious enough (p.16).



Ethnicity in
International
Politics

[ctnd.] Civilizational Paradigm

- A ‘civilization’ is the **broadest** existing **cultural grouping**
- Effect: **Post-Cold War** conflict will be increasingly between countries from different civilizations
- Such conflicts **could escalate** as civilizations rally to defend their ‘kin countries’
- Ethnic Conflicts that involve different civilizations are **more intractable** and serious for the world.

[ctnd.] Civilizational Paradigm

- Which Units?

EIGHT OR NINE MAJOR CIVILIZATIONS

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WESTERN = White, Western Europe, US, Canada, Australia & NZ;	6. SINIC ;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ORTHODOX = White, Eastern Europe (but could be a subset of Western);	7. JAPANESE (but could be a subset of Sinic);
3. LATIN AMERICAN ;	8. HINDU ;
4. ISLAMIC ;	9. BUDDHIST = Tibet, Mongolia, plus Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia (but could be too nebulous).
5. AFRICAN ;	

Huntington vs. Constructivism

- H. makes **predictions** rather than holding to postmodern agnosticism
 - E.g., that warfare is less likely between states belonging to same civilizations.
- H. places more stress on the **‘realistic’ ideas of ethnies and religion**
 - [...] and less on the ‘liberal’ ideas of globalisation, universal human rights, etc.

Critiques of Huntington

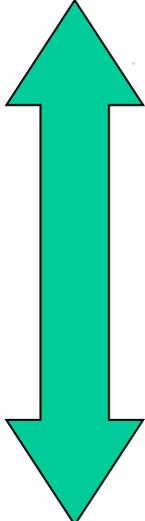
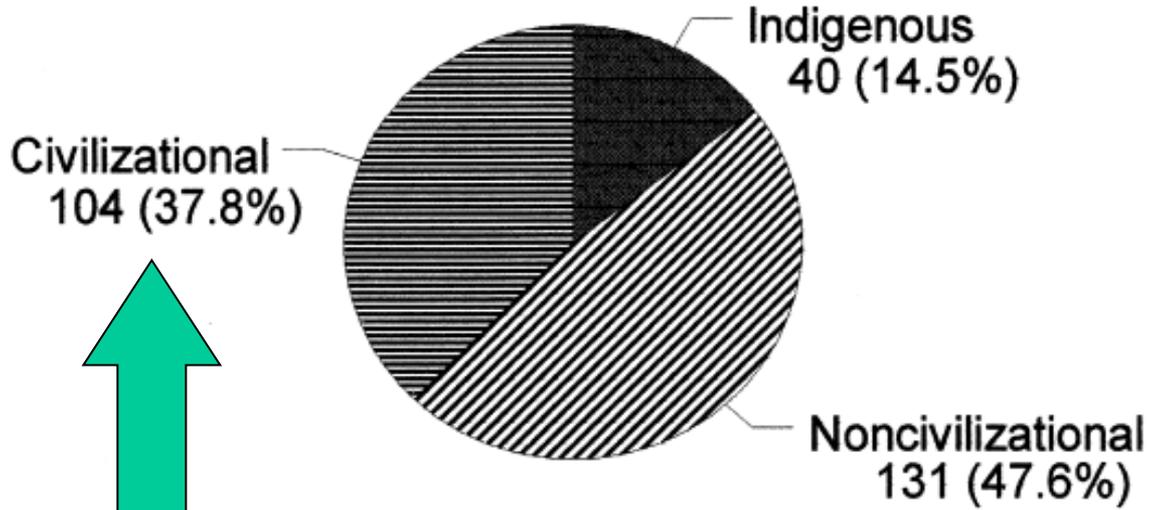
- What is wrong with the **‘anarchy’ theory**? It could be based on the global idea of ethnic separatist politics. That is parsimonious
- There is **no empirical evidence** for the importance of civilizational versus other conflicts
- **Differences within** civilizations matter more than differences between. Related to national identity and history (i.e., Japan, China, Korea)
- Hard to **categorize all nations or ethnies** into civilizations (Muslim Africans? Philippine Christians? Latin America?).

Empirical Test of Theory*

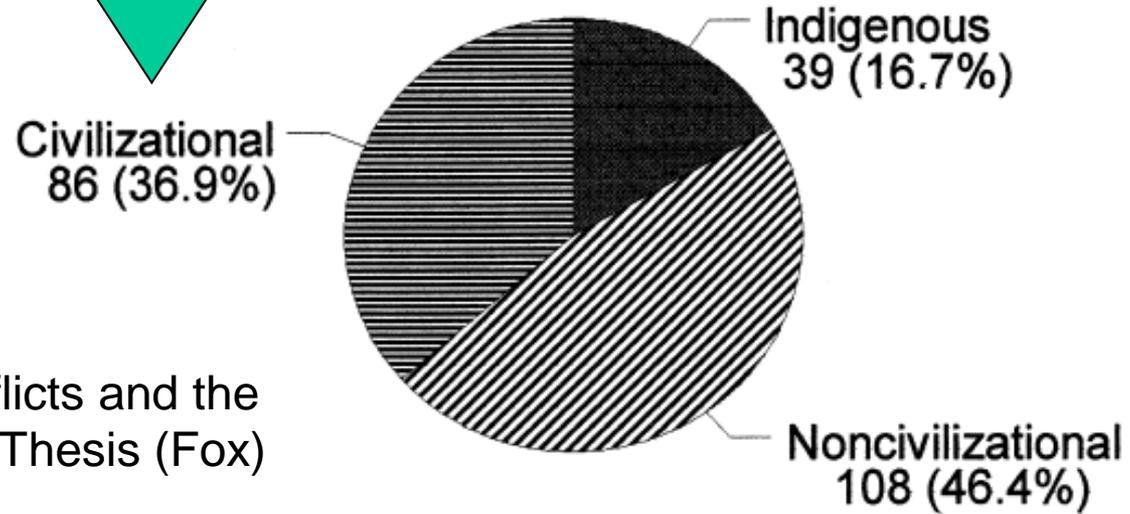
- Quantitative analysis of ethnic conflict using MAR data
- “**Civilizational conflicts** constitute a **minority** of ethnic conflicts”
- “**West vs. Other clashes** are **rare**, contra SH, a minority of conflicts”
- “No statistically significant evidence that the intensity of civilizational ethnic conflicts have risen relative to other types of ethnic conflicts”

*J. Fox. 2002. Ethnic Minorities and the Clash of Civilizations: A Quantitative Analysis of Huntington's Thesis. *B.J.Pol.S.* 32, 415-34.

Post-Cold War Era



Cold War Era



Ethnic Conflicts and the Huntington Thesis (Fox)

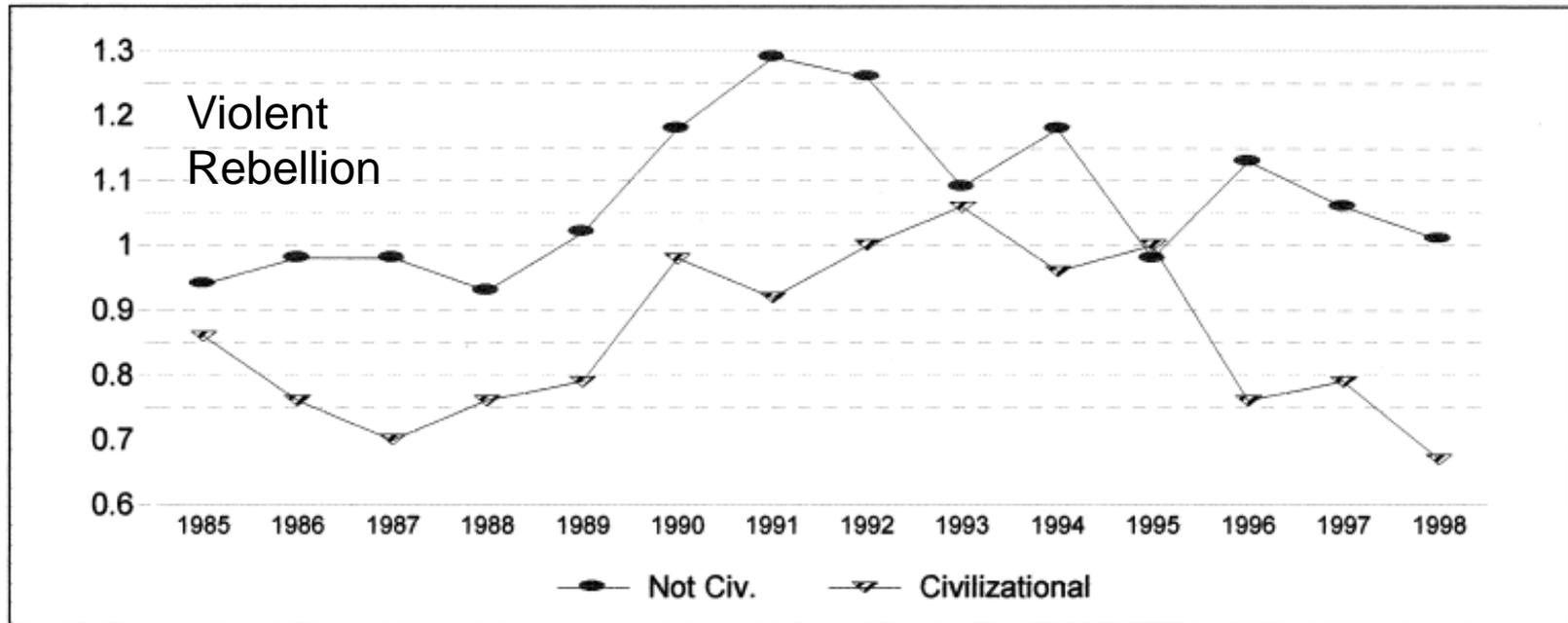
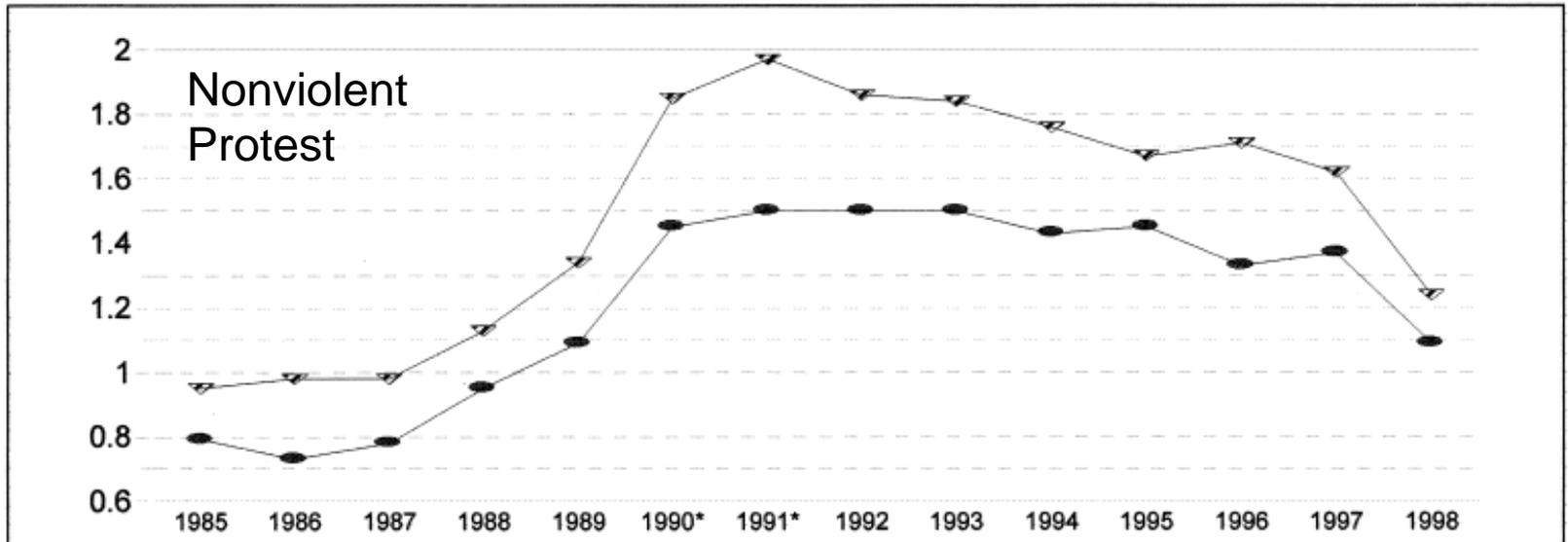
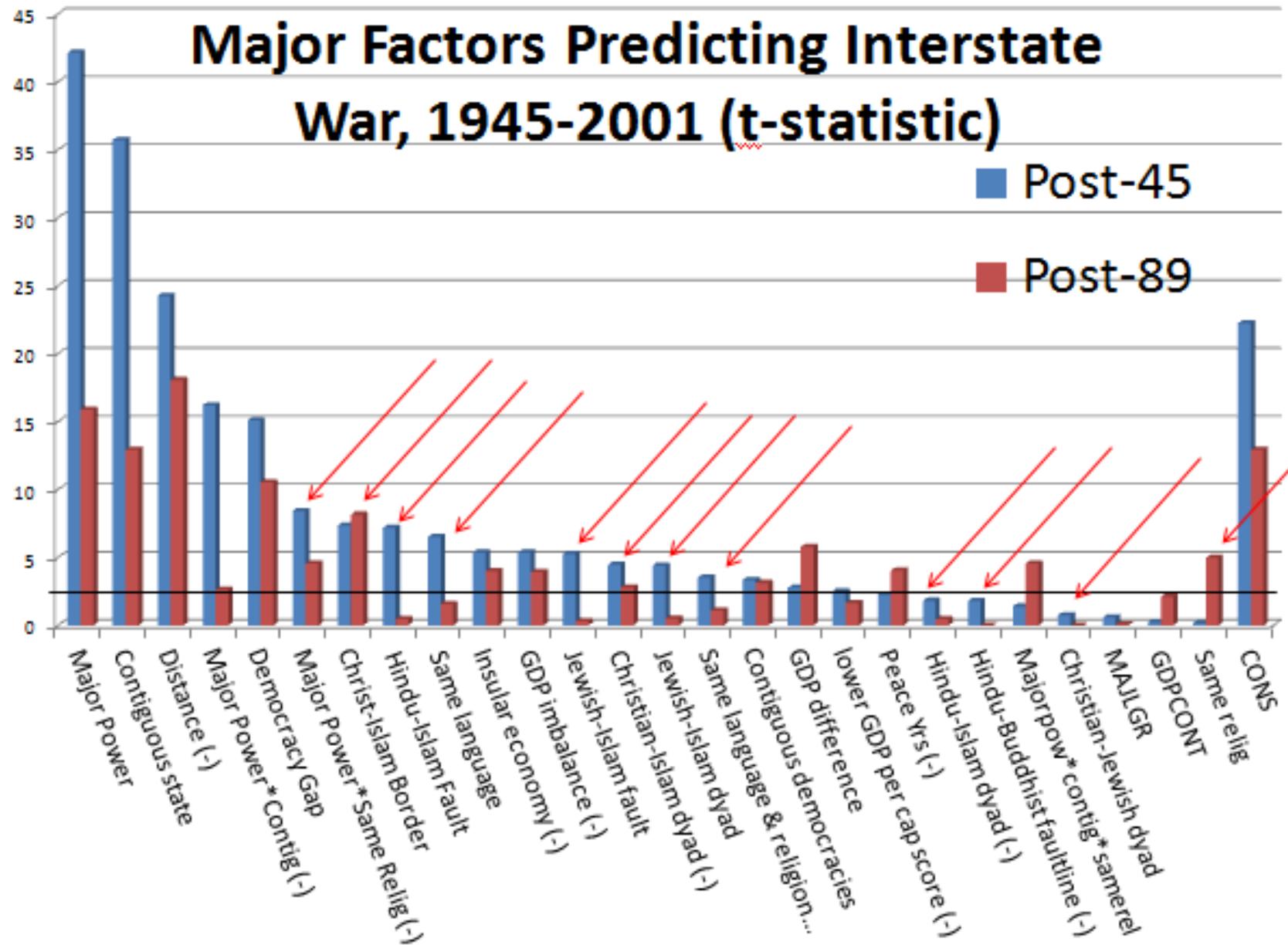


Fig. 3. Average intensity of civilizational vs. noncivilizational rebellion, 1985-98 (Fox)

Major Factors Predicting Interstate War, 1945-2001 (t-statistic)



Or is Huntington Right?

- Fox and others are correct re post-Cold War era ushering in ethnic conflict, but not civilizational
- Yet, there is a **civilizational aspect** in Islam v. West/ Judaic world conflicts not captured by Fox (e.g., 9/11)
- Fox only tests ethnic conflict, **not international relations**. Maybe similar cultures **cooperate**?
- Other critiques of Huntington:
 - Realist: **states still matter**, as against ethnic groups;
 - Liberal: **global institutions**, norms, values **do act to constrain**; Ethnic violence ebbed during 1995-2003.