

New world order

[History](#)



New World Order? The end of the Cold War has sparked a flurry of new theories about global politics and history. A recent article by Betts identifies three thinkers stand out as having something useful to offer in terms of analysis of the past and suggestions of future trends.

Fukuyama (1989) presents the most positive view, based on the perception that something fundamental has changed, and that a new world order is emerging in which history as we have known it is now ended, along with the regrettable tendency of major superpowers to wage terrible wars with each other. For Fukuyama the new order will be a global state ideology based on Western liberal values, since no other ideology can now compete with it.

Mearsheimer (1992) agrees that the nation state has lost some of its power, and that world politics is much more integrated than it has previously been.

There are, however, many states in the third world which are outside the mainstream, and armed conflict is likely to arise there in the future as it has in the past. He cites the power of global markets as a mechanism that unifies the major world players, but he does not view this as necessarily being a cause for optimism. Competition is built into the economic view of the world, and this will cause friction and ultimately result in military activity even among the established actors. In particular he notes the end of bipolar stability and the arrival of a multipolar and unequal distribution of power. The distribution of nuclear weapons combined with this new instability is seen as grounds to worry about future tensions.

The most persuasive analysis is provided by Huntington, who likewise acknowledges that something has changed in world politics since the end of the Cold War, but defines this as simply the latest in a long history of movement in the hierarchy of civilizations. For Huntington nothing

fundamental has changed, and history will carry in the same cycles of conflict as it has always done. Although all three scholars note the importance of the rise of China and its advance towards hegemony in Asia, Huntington gives this trend the greatest emphasis. Of the three he provides the most cogent explanation for unforeseen events like the 9/11 atrocity: a clash of cultures. The ideologies that underpin clusters of nations are, for Huntington, the defining factor for future global relations and he frames his discussion in terms of the rise and fall of civilizations.

A recent news article from France (Raim, 2012) notes that the word “civilization” has negative connotations of an implied ethnocentric hierarchy and that the American Right have adopted this word in the so-called “war on terror” with deliberate intention to denigrate Islamic ideology. The trend is emerging in France also, in relation to the Muslim faith, which suggests that Huntington is indeed correct. Instead of witnessing a new convergence on Western liberal ideologies the world appears to be shaping up for a familiar clash of ideologies where as ever, nations will group together under a collective banner that is culturally, rather than politically or economically defined.

References

Betts, Richard K. “Conflict or Cooperation? Three Visions Revisited. Foreign Affairs Nov/Dec 2010. Web.

< <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/print/66762> > Fukuyama, Francis. “The End of History?” The National Interest (summer 1989). Web.

< <http://www.wesjones.com/eoh.htm> > Huntington, Samuel P. “The Clash of Civilizations?” Foreign Affairs 72 (3) (1993), pp. 22-49. Web.

< http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Acrobat/Huntington_Clash.pdf >
<https://assignbuster.com/new-world-order/>

Mearsheimer, John J. “ Disorder Restored”. In Graham Allison and Gregory Treverton (Eds.) Rethinking America’s Security: Beyond Cold War to New World Order. New York: Norton, 1992. Web.

< <http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/A0018.pdf> > Raim, Laura. “ The History of “ Civilization”, a Controversial Work. Le Figaro in English. 7th February, 2012. Web.

< <http://plus.lefigaro.fr/note/the-history-of-civilization-a-controversial-word-20120207-705553> >