Chapter 2

Discourses of Civilizational Identity[1]

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Introduction

Civilization is a notoriously complex term the meaning of which has evolved and shifted across time and context (Arnason, 2001; Braudel, 1995; Mazlish, 2001). It has stood for many different ideas across history (Salter, 2002). In order to understand this complex term we often draw upon associated concepts, locating civilization in particular geographies, linking them with particular forms of society, economy, or with collective ways of thought (Braudel, 1995: 9–23). The term civilization therefore is often associated with concepts such as society, progress, development, religion, culture, empire, and even humanity. These associations suggest that in some respects the concept of civilization is synonymous with community; with societal evolution; with particular ontologies or intersubjective frameworks; with systems of governance; with the heritage of humankind. Yet at the same time, civilization remains a distinctive concept, first, in the breadth of its associated meanings, and second, in the way the concept suggests a blend of material and ideational dimensions of human existence (Braudel, 1980). Robert Cox expresses this in his definitions of civilizations as the fit between material conditions of existence and the intersubjective meanings (Cox, 2002: 4). Mehdi Mozaffari similarly chooses to define civilizations as a specific world vision realized through a historical formation (2002: 26).

How does this complex variety of meanings and associations shape the way civilization is employed in discussions and debates of world politics? This complexity is reflected in its multiple interpretations in world politics over time. Civilization has been used to imply social cultivation; a stage of societal evolution; to mark a standard of international law and governance; as a synonym for imperialism. It has always been used, argues Mark Salter, as a boundary marker, often to delineate European communities from others (2002: 15–18). One way to incorporate studies of civilization into IR is to seek to bring order to this complexity by seeking to define and distinguish civilization from other concepts. A second approach is to seek to

define and delineate the life cycles of particular civilizations. These are obviously valuable and important tasks. However, there is a danger that the study of civilization may become preoccupied with definitional debates or absorbed by constructing macrohistorical patterns. These may help to inform but provide only limited understanding of the role that discourses of civilizational identity play in world politics today. By discourses I do not mean simply an account or story of civilization or civilizations in the plural. I draw instead on Kevin Dunn's definition of discourse as "a relational totality of signifying sequences that together constitute a more or less coherent framework for what can be said and done." Discourse therefore not only describes but also "informs rather than guides social interaction by influencing the cognitive script, categories and rationalities that are indispensable for social action" (Dunn, 2004: 126).

In this chapter I wish to argue that in addition to the approaches noted above, we can enhance the research agenda of civilizations in IR through analysis of the ways in which invocations of civilization and civilizational identity are employed in political discourses. How do representations of civilization/s impact upon and influence political perceptions and interaction? This approach somewhat shifts the agenda away from exercises that concentrate on defining civilizations as entities, or seek to confirm whether a universal civilization does or does not exist. Instead, it seeks to understand the importance and impact of interpreting identities, interests, and expectations through the complex lens of civilizational identity, through invocations of concepts such as "the West" or "Islam." I want to suggest that the concept of civilization and of civilizational identities provides a powerful resource for framing identities and interests at the global, regional, and individual level and is used to evaluate and differentiate actors and actions in world politics. Refocusing our research agenda in this way requires us to shift our attention away from defining civilization and toward an analysis of the discourses of civilizational identity. It suggests we study what the invocation of civilizational identities *does* in world politics (Jackson, 2004).

Civilizational Analysis in IR

Before proceeding to discuss how analysis of civilizational discourses can be incorporated into IR, in this section I would like to briefly review some of the key trends in civilizational analysis in both earlier and contemporary discussions of world politics and consider some of the issues and questions raised by these. In the following section I will consider how a more thorough exploration of the discourses of civilizational identity being employed in both political and academic debate can help to illuminate the issues and problems that often remain latent in existing civilizational analysis in IR.

As noted above, discussions of civilization in IR to date have drawn on the rich and complex range of meanings and ideas associated with the concept as it has evolved over time. However, we can identify two significant

trends in IR's incorporation of civilizational analysis. The first trend is the use of civilization as a way of studying and defining interests and identity. The concept of civilizations has been used here in its pluralist sense to define and distinguish political communities, their boundaries, characters, and their likely interaction with one another on the basis of their cultural identity. We might include in this category the range of books and articles that discuss and contest representations of civilizations such as the West, Islam, and Asia.[2] Samuel Huntington's work on the "clash of civilizations" certainly falls within this genre (Huntington, 1996).

A second central trend has been the use of civilizational analysis to understand or explain conceptions and institutions of governance. There has been a particular interest in the way the institutions of international law and society generally incorporated notions of the "standard of civilization" as a measure of a society's capacity to exercise empirical sovereignty. The lack of perceived capacity to exercise effective and "civilized" governance provided the rationale for various forms of tutelage, including colonial rule and forms of trusteeship. In this context, civilizational analysis has focused on civilization as a singular conception of progress relating to the political, economic, and social institutions and practices of societies. Civilization in this sense is interpreted as a universal concept that refers not only to processes of material and social improvement but also the cumulative outcome of those processes (Bowden, 2004a). These studies point to how civilization was used to both define the boundaries of political communities and of international society, to indicate what rights and obligations would be accorded to societies and political communities based on their perceived levels of political development. This interest can be found in the work of scholars such as Martin Wight (1991), Hedley Bull (1977; Bull and Watson, 1984), Gerrit Gong (1984), and more recently Paul Keal (2003), Edmund Keene (2002), and Brett Bowden (2004a). These studies highlight civilization as a normative concept that both differentiates and evaluates on the basis of perceived levels of development and capacities for "effective" governance.

Although the pluralist interpretation of civilization appeared to gain momentum and status during the course of the twentieth century at the expense of the singular conception, these two interpretations of civilization continued to coexist and remain "in dialogue" with one another (Braudel, 1980: 213). They have often become subtly interwoven in contemporary discourses in which the concept of civilization is used to simultaneously differentiate and evaluate various actors and communities in world politics.

The Debate So Far

The two central trends in IR's incorporation of civilizational analysis identified above can also be found in broader, multidisciplinary debates that involve scholars from a range of disciplines, including sociologists, historians,

philosophers, and literary scholars. IR's discussion of civilizations is embedded in and draws from these wider debates. A key preoccupation of these broader debates is how civilizations are constituted. This debate draws primarily on the pluralist conception of civilizations as a multiplicity of distinct entities or "families of peoples" (Durkheim and Mauss, 1971: 809, 811). While some may share Samuel Huntington's preference for treating civilizations as bounded, self-conscious communities, most seek to stress the porous and fluid nature of these entities (Melleuish, 2000; Delanty, 2003). Other scholars highlight the socially and even ideologically constructed nature of civilizations (Dabashi, 2001).

This broader debate on the constitution of civilizations raises important questions for the treatment of civilizations in IR. One concerns the degree to which we should see civilizations as communities having agency in world politics. Can we usefully ascribe agency to "Islam" or "the West?" Do these concepts relate sufficiently to bounded polities to constitute agents? There are many who argue civilizations are not in and of themselves actors in world politics (Mazlish, 2001). For instance, Greg Melleuish argues civilizations are neither unified entities in the way of states or cultures, nor can political or military power be attributed to them. Rather civilizations should be seen as a particular way of understanding the peoples and societies who compose it. This limits the power of civilizations as an explanatory tool (Melleuish, 2000: 110). Within IR also, there are those who maintain that civilizational identity is not what lies at the core of world politics today. Amin Saikal, for instance, warns that whilst Huntington's argument has gained increasing legitimacy at the centers of power in the wake of September 11, it needs to be treated with caution. He is wary of seeing civilizational identity as the cause of conflict and terrorism: "The causes which drive alienated forces into the arms of terrorist such as bin Laden are strongly political in character, and emanate from specific historical circumstances rather than broad 'civilizational identity'" (Saikal, 2003: 9). The dynamo of world politics remains the competition for power amongst states and states do not always define their interests in accordance with their civilizational identities (Waltz, 2002; Acharya, 2002; Xing Li, 2003). For others, such as Tariq Ali (2002), economic structures and inequalities rather than civilizational or cultural identities continue to define and drive the interests of actors in world politics.

There are, therefore, many both within IR and across the broader disciplines who remain skeptical of the accuracy and utility of ascribing agency in world politics to civilizations. This is because it is difficult to define whether "civilizations" are polities given that they are so nebulous. In addition it is hard to determine whether they are cohesive, bounded, or have intent. Yet at the same time, even skeptics such as Saikal, Ali, and Acharya seek constant recourse to concepts such as the West, Asia, and the Islamic world as a means to locate and identify political, social, and economic agents. In this context, it seems that though analyzing world politics in terms of the interaction of civilization remains problematic, the concept

of civilizational identity provides us with a useful framework with which to understand how agents locate their identities in broad, transnational, transtemporal cultural identities. Furthermore, civilizational identity is often invoked in both academic and political debate to provide points of reference from which to evaluate others in relation to the self or some universal standard (Hall, 1992). Therefore, representations of civilizations are important in anticipating and prescribing interaction with others. This is not to argue, however, that those identities should be viewed as static and fixed. Rather the representations of these identities are subject to evolution and reinterpretation.

This leads to a second key debate, which is intimately related to world politics; that is the nature of interaction between civilizations. Is world politics today experiencing ongoing interaction between a diverse range of civilizations, or are we seeing the convergence toward a single civilization, a civilization of modernity? Furthermore, does world politics comprise competing and clashing and incommensurable civilizations, or is it converging toward modernity and a Western model? (O'Hagan, 2002; Fukuyama, 1992). This debate draws both on the pluralist conception of civilizations as distinct entities and on the singular conception of civilization as progress or social evolution.

In recent years a number of contributors to debates on civilizational analysis have focused on testing the efficacy of the clash of civilizations thesis in relation to the past and with regard to the future. Many set out to refute the idea of an inevitable clash. For instance, Daniel Chirot argues in response to the Huntington thesis that the tensions and conflicts in contemporary politics that Huntington attributes to a clash of incommensurable civilizations arise in reality from friction between societies and cultures at different levels of development: "Seemingly irreconcilable cultural differences are more a product of different rates of modernization than of permanent cultural divisions" (Chirot, 2001: 343).[3] A key question here is whether friction manifest in intercultural tensions are a product of the difficult processes of modernization or of resistance to modernization? For instance, in his analysis of the sources of Islamist terrorism, Fareed Zakaria argues that the rage expressed in this terrorism emanates not from any innate qualities in Islam but from disillusionment with the West that arises from the failure of the Arab world to undergo in-depth modernization (Zakaria, 2001).

Zakaria's comment raises further interesting questions regarding the relationship between the concepts of modernization and the concept of civilization as a process. Both entail a sense of progress and development. Are the institutions and norms of modernity universally applicable? Are they a synonym for the civilizing process? Is modernity a distinct civilization, but one that takes different patterns and forms in different cultures as Shmuel Eisenstadt argues (Eisenstadt, 2000b; 2001b)?[4] Or do the institutions and norms we associate with modernity essentially represent the universal projection of Western institutions and norms? (See, for instance,

Mazlish, 2001.) Sophie Bessis provides an interesting interpretation of this issue. She argues that the norms and institutions, such as equality and rights, that lie at the heart of Western civilization, which we often see as synonymous with modernity and upon which the West bases its claims of superiority, do have universal resonance. However, paradoxically, while the West perceives its essential character and supremacy as premised on universal principles, it has actually pursued and promoted these selectively, leading to frustration and resentment toward the West (Bessis, 2003).

The debate regarding the relationship between the concept of civilization and modernity returns us implicitly to the conceptions of civilization as a process of progress toward an ideal form of political, social, and economic governance. But is this, in Lene Hansen's terms, a cosmopolitan civilization comprising elements from the best of a range of cultures, or is it one premised on universal values (Hansen, 2000)? Or is it a third model, one derived from the hegemonic projections of the institutions and norms of a single hegemonic civilization? Like the debate concerning the relationship between civilization and modernity, this broader debate as to whether there is a single model of civilization that comfortably resonates across cultures remains deeply contested but it raises issues that relates to the ways in which discourses of civilization/s are innately linked to the ways in which we differentiate and evaluate societies in terms of their perceived levels of progress and structures of governance.

A key political issue implicit in this debate is, to what extent can political, economic, and social institutions and norms genuinely transfer across cultures and civilizations, and what is the impact of seeking to transfer norms and institutions? Samuel Huntington was deeply skeptical of the wisdom and effectiveness of the universalization of Western norms and institutions of governance (Huntington, 1996). His skepticism is reiterated in the work of the British philosopher Roger Scruton (2002), which seeks to compare and contrast the political cultures of the West and Islam. Scruton, like Huntington before him, is skeptical of the capacity for Western norms and institutions to effectively transfer across cultures that lack the appropriate foundations of strong legal institutional structure necessary to sustain a Western style political system. The West, he argues, is a society premised on the dynamic processes of politics in which individuals engage as citizens. In contrast, Muslim societies are represented as embedded in the static foundation of religion in which individuals participate as subjects.

Two things are of interest in Scruton's argument in relation to the concerns of this chapter. One is the implications of his perceptions of a remaining intractable incommensurability between different civilizations, which fuels tension in world politics and stands in marked contrast to more optimistic views of the possibility of molding societies toward an ideal and harmonized universal form of governance. Scruton therefore uses civilizational identity to differentiate political values and institutions. The second point of interest is the use by Scruton of conceptions of civilizational identity not only to differentiate but also to comparatively evaluate the political

cultures of different civilizational identities. For Scruton, as for Huntington, the West's political culture provides a model of pluralism and tolerance toward which others might aspire; however their aspirations are innately constrained by the inherent qualities and limitations of their own cultures. This suggests that contemporary world order comprises not just a plurality, but a hierarchy of civilizations.

Scruton's work seems to demonstrate the type of tension that Bessis alludes to between Western norms and institutions of governance being perceived as universally relevant and symptomatic of a single civilizing process, and at the same time their being perceived as unique. What does this debate suggest about contemporary discourses of civilizations and civilizational identities in world politics? It suggests that, while there appears to be a broad acceptance of a plurality of civilizations, there is still a strong tendency in contemporary thought to use the concept of civilization to differentiate and evaluate societies that have achieved material and moral progress from others viewed as less developed.

Incorporating Discourses of Civilizational Identity

Let me then briefly recap on the foregoing discussion. Much of contemporary civilizational analysis across IR and a range of disciplines has focused on issues such as defining the nature of civilization/s and of their agency and interaction. These issues are of great importance, but there is also a danger that civilizational analysis may become bogged down in definitional contests. A singular focus on definitional issues may limit progress in our understanding of the role that discourses of civilizational identity plays in contemporary politics. One way to develop the research agenda of civilizational analysis in IR is to push beyond mapping exercises or justificatory arguments to consider in more depth just how and where discourses of civilization and civilizational identity are being employed. It is noticeable that even those who are skeptical of the importance or relevance of civilizations in world politics often seek recourse in the language of civilizational identity.

Among the questions we should be asking, therefore, is *how* are discourses of civilization and civilizational identity used in contemporary world politics? By this I mean to examine how people and communities engage with conceptions of civilization and with representations of particular civilizational identities in framing their identities. In other words, how do they provide understanding of subjects and objects? How does casting subjects in terms of civilizational representations provide particular cognitive scripts and shape interpretations and understandings of permissible actions? The discussion above suggests that civilizational identity may be used to differentiate and to define who is included within the boundaries of a community by defining the lines of affiliation that may link them to others remote from them. But at the same time, the discourse of civilizational identity may be used to evaluate the practices, norms, and

institutions of the other and to valorize the self in ways that suggests a normative hierarchy between different cultural communities. A research agenda that analyzes and unpacks how discourses of civilizational identity function would allow us to better understand how perceptions of civilizational identity are interwoven with local, regional, and global political discourses.

Civilizational Identity and the Drawing of Boundaries

To advocate such a research agenda is to encourage the expansion and further development of work that is already nascent within the field of IR. Analyses of the politics of civilizational representations are already contributing to our understanding of world politics—past and present. A brief overview of some of this work illustrates how discourses of civilizational identity may be used to differentiate and define who is included within the boundaries of a community by defining the lines of affiliation that may link them to others remote from them. At the global, regional, or individual level, invocation or evocation of civilizational discourses can help to locate the self. But in addition, discourses of civilizational identity may also be used to evaluate others.

The well-known work of Samuel Huntington illustrates the way in which discourses of civilizational identity can be interwoven with broader discourses of global politics at the level of thinking about the structures of world order. Huntington's clash of civilizations thesis presented a vision of world order in which civilizational identity becomes a central organizing premise, deeply informing identities and helping to guide the preferences, alliances and actions of states and societies. The thesis is further premised on a conception of a world order of diverse and largely incommensurable civilizations, incorporating an arrogant, expansionist, yet fragile West in tension with a volatile, resentful, fractious Islam. The series of representations contained in this thesis have formed an important frame of reference in the debate about the relationship between states and societies of different cultures in contemporary world politics. The thesis forms the foundation of a particular discourse of civilizational identity and civilizational interaction that can be used as a framework through which contemporary politics is interpreted and understood. Thus events such as the attacks of September 11, 2001 and the protests that erupted throughout the Muslim world in 2006 in response to a series of cartoons of the prophet Mohammed published in a Danish newspaper were discussed with reference to whether they were evidences of the clash of civilizations coming to pass. A research agenda that incorporates analysis of discourses of civilizational identity allows and encourages us to examine the impact of the deployment of discourses of civilizational identity such as Huntington's. It encourages us to investigate more fully how the invocation of the West or Islam function to differentiate societies and to evaluate the institutions and practices of particular societies. It therefore helps us to analyze and understand perceptions

and prescriptions of order at the global level. However, this method of analysis can also be applied at other levels, such as to the analysis of politics at the regional level.

In her study of a series of reports on the Balkans produced under the auspices of the Carnegie Foundation, Lene Hansen (2000) examines different discussions of the Balkans in the twentieth century and notes the way in which the Balkans is constructed in terms of civilizational identity and interaction in each case. Drawing on a 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry into the first Balkan War, she demonstrates how, in the early twentieth century, a particular vision of Balkan civilization informed views on the possibility for progress and change in this region, and of Western responsibility for securing a transformation. This vision constructs the Balkans as a distinct but inferior civilization, its underdevelopment a product of its long separation from Europe; in other words it was a society that had not really entered the civilized world in terms of its moral, political, or economic culture. By contrast Europe and America "were truly civilized" and had a responsibility to bring progress and stability to this backward and divided region. There is, therefore, a certain dualism in the civilizational discourse employed here. Whilst on the one hand this analysis of the Balkans conflicts presumes the existence of separate and distinct civilizations, it also assumes civilization in the singular, a state of moral, economic, and political culture, that is attainable by all peoples, and politically and ethically desirable (Hansen, 2000: 354–55).

In the 1990s, Carnegie again turned its attention to conflict in the Balkans. In 1993 the 1913 Carnegie Inquiry was reissued with a new introduction by George Kennan. Kennan employs quite a different civilizational discourse. His analysis of the conflict portrays Balkan civilization as "a uniform civilization which, due to its Ottoman presence, has acquired a non-Western propensity for brutality and violence." Thus Kennan's analysis of the region was one premised on a discourse that sees the regional order as comprising a plurality of distinct civilizations. As Hansen notes, he is pessimistic of the possibility of transcending these particularities within a universal form of civilization. However, he saw the sources of the Balkan War as not inter-civilizational conflict but as dynamics internal to Balkan civilization (ibid.: 356). This led him to a conclusion that the West had no moral responsibility to intervene in the conflict, and that Western intervention should only be premised on concerns that the Balkans conflict may threaten European and Western stability (ibid.: 357). Kennan's 1993 reading of the region, therefore, was framed by a very different civilizational discourse that influences both his perception of the sources of conflict and of that which differentiates the actors and leads to a very different prescription of the policies "the West" should pursue (ibid.: 356–57). In both documents representations of civilizational identity were used to analyze, predict, and prescribe as well as to constitute agents.

Hansen's work points to how discourses of civilizational identity can be employed in the analysis of the sources and responses to regional conflict.

Michael Williams and Iver Neumann (2000) and Patrick Jackson (2006) have also contributed to the commencement of a research agenda that studies discourses of civilizational identity at the regional level by considering how these discourses can be invoked in the framing of regional communities. All have discussed the role of these discourses in the constitution of a regional security community, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Here a civilizational identity is used to develop links and bonds that provide a normative foundation to this community. Jackson argues that "Western civilization" acts as a "rhetorical commonplace" invoked in the debates leading up to the NATO treaty (Jackson, 2006: 72). The ideas associated with Western civilization, the principles of freedom and democracy, the quest for alternatives to the use of force in the pursuit of international political goals, are privileged and invoked not only in response to perceived threat of totalitarianism but also to generate a sense of community within Europe and "the West." A particular concern here was to counter the recurrent fragmentation of Germany and France (ibid.). In addition, the concept of Western civilization as both a distinctive but also a superior form of society allowed the establishment of common normative and cultural premise that went beyond Europe and was inclusive of the United States. Williams and Neumann argue that NATO was increasingly represented as a cultural or civilizational entity premised on "democratic bonds." It was and is not just a security alliance but "the military guarantor of Western civilization" (Williams and Neumann, 2000: 361). Here then civilizational identity was and is used to define and differentiate a security community, and even the conception of security itself.

The examples above illustrate how discourses of civilizational identity can be utilized to theorize the contours of order; to predict and prescribe political interaction; to define and justify a particular form of community; and to evaluate the particular institutions, values, and practices of societies at global and regional levels. We might also consider how shifting representations of civilizational identity can impact upon the individuals' own sense of identity in relation to their political environment. In an article discussing the Western policy of neutrality toward all parties in the Bosnian war of the 1990s, Ed Vuillamy argued that the West's failure to assist Bosnian Muslims induced a redefinition of some Bosnian's sense of identity. He relates the story of one such person, Nura Celic. Nura "liked rock music and had prewar photographs of herself in bars with her Serbian friends. Within one year Nura outraged her mother by framing her face with the Islamic scarf. Her indignant self-defense was impressive, 'Look what has happened to me; I have lost everything, I am living on the floor of a school. I have been sent into the arms of my religion' " (Vulliamy, 1998: 88).

Vulliamy's anecdote illustrates not only the often significant relationship between religious and civilizational identity, but it also illustrates how particular political contexts can generate the reinscription of one's own sense of identity in civilizational terms.

Discourses of civilizational identity can therefore have a profound impact at multiple levels of politics, from the global to the personal, shaping analyses and interpretation. It can have an important impact upon how actors are perceived and received. Foreign NGOs or peacekeepers, for instance, may not always be perceived as neutral humanitarian actors, but as agents extending "Western" influences. These perceptions can have profound and important impacts. For instance, in the early years of the twenty-first century there were fears that perceptions of NGOs and humanitarian actors in locations such as Afghanistan and Iraq as agents of Western interests and values were leading to the increased attacks on aid workers and humanitarians agencies (Donini et al., 2004; Christian Aid, 2004; Fox, 2001). Here then discourses of civilizational identity become important in describing one's own political and cultural identity, and differentiating the interests of the local community from those of outside actors.

A research agenda that incorporates analysis of discourses of civilizational identity, then, is one that allows us to probe and explore how conceptions of civilizational identity are used to frame interests and identity in a variety of political contexts and discourses. It facilitates moving beyond conceptualizing identities simply located at the nation-state level. Analysis of civilizational discourses provides the capacity to envisage contemporary political identities not confined by territory, which are broad in historical scale drawing on deep and powerful resources from history, culture, and religion that go beyond the nation-state and may even stand in antithesis to a nation-state. Analysis of these discourses is increasingly useful in a contemporary political environment where we are more aware of the powerful role played by nonstate actors, be these ethnic minorities, NGOs, or terrorist organizations. All may appeal to, or be represented in terms of particular civilizational identities as a means to draw boundaries, identify interests, or legitimize actions in terms of some form of cultural lineage or authenticity.

Civilization as Progress: The Return of the "Standard of Civilization?"

The illustrations of discourses of civilizational identity discussed above largely allude to the pluralist conceptualization of civilizations, representations of civilizational identity that are used to differentiate and evaluate the agents or actions of civilizations or cultures relative to other civilizations. References to the work of NGOs and humanitarian actors, however, also draw us back to universalist conceptions of civilization: a process of development or the attainment of a progressive ideal. As Mark Salter (2002) reminds us, the singular conception of civilization has long been used in IR and in the rhetoric of world politics and popular culture in juxtaposition to barbarism. Like the concept of civilization, the related concept of the barbarian has resurged in the language of IR, be it in relation to

the violence of intercommunal conflict, or in relation to terrorism. From September 11 to Beslan, we have become familiar with the casting of terrorist atrocities as barbaric, beyond the pale of civilized behavior. For instance, the attacks of September 11 were widely characterized as not just an attack upon the United States but civilization in general. As Bowden notes, in the weeks and months following September 11, President George W. Bush frequently cast the "war on terror" as a "fight for civilization" (Bowden, 2002; O'Hagan, 2004). Similarly German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder depicted the attacks as "a declaration of war against the entire civilized world" (Erlanger, 2001). President Chirac of France argued that the attacks presented a new type of conflict that was "attempting to destroy human rights, freedom, the dignity of man . . . I believe that everything must be done to protect and safeguard these values of civilization" (Chirac, 2001). The perpetrators were represented as criminal "a bunch of mass murderers." They are those who fail to adhere to universal values, this was reiterated by British Prime Minister Tony Blair who argued: "We are democratic. They are not. We have respect for human life. They do not. We hold essentially liberal values. They do not" (2001). Blair also engaged a civilizational discourse when responding to the London bombings of July 2005 when he argued that those engaged in terrorism "will never succeed in destroying what we hold dear in this country and in other civilized nations throughout the world" (2005).

The move to represent terrorism as barbarism was enhanced by repeated rhetorical linking of those actors responsible for attacks such as September 11 with the enemies of the past, with tyranny and with totalitarianism (Bush, 2006): "Those who hate all civilization and culture and progress" argued President George Bush "those who embrace death to cause death to the innocent, cannot be ignored, cannot be appeased. They must be fought," (Bush, 2001c).

> By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions—by abandoning every value except the will to power—they follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism they are heirs to the murderous ideologies of the twentieth century . . . they follow the path of fascism, Nazism and totalitarianism. (2001b)

Thus the language of the "war on terror" today evokes a civilizational discourse that gains resonance by locating the present in powerful images and invocations of civilization and barbarism from the past.

As Salter argues, the representation of actors as barbarians is an exercise of power. It may suggest they are inferior and in need of uplifting, but may also suggest that they pose a threat that requires constant vigilance and control, through violence if necessary, permitting action that might not otherwise be deemed legitimate or acceptable. Thus, for instance, in the United States' case, the gravity of the threat constituted by September 11 warranted the launching of a "war" on terrorism. In addition to assisting in

the legitimation of U.S.-led invasions in Afghanistan and, more controversially, Iraq, the war on terror helped instigate a number of measures that many civil libertarians feared compromised individual rights and liberties at home and abroad. These included the Patriot Act and the detention in Guantanamo Bay of suspects for extended periods without trial or recourse to international law, as well as allegations that the CIA ran a series of covert prisons in various sites around the world to interrogate terrorism suspects.

In addition to the resurgence of the language of civilization versus barbarism in contemporary politics, there is a further way in which the discourse of the singular conception of civilization is weaving its way back into the broader discourses of world politics. This is in the sense of an implicit resurgence of the concept of the standard of civilization, and the commensurate notion of the civilizing mission. Brett Bowden argues that the characterization of the September 11 attacks and the war on terror as a war between civilized and uncivilized "bears the hallmarks of a reinvigorated or resurrected standard of civilization for the twenty-first century" (Bowden, 2002: 37). As Bowden notes, there is a tendency in contemporary political commentary to represent the current world order as a bifurcated one divided between "civic community" and "predatory societies" that suffers from a deficit of institutions and good governance (Diamond, 2002) or, a trifurcated world divided between postmodern, modern, and premodern societies (Cooper, 2002). Whilst postmodern societies, such as the European states, are highly developed, increasingly interdependent, and transparent, and increasingly reject the use of force in their relations, modern states "behave as states always have, following Machiavellian principles" (Cooper, 2002: 3). The premodern world, however, is a world of failed states in which the state has lost either its legitimacy or the monopoly of the use of force (ibid.: 4). Failed states or predatory societies, these communities are perceived as dangerous since they present a threat to regional and international order, "zones of chaos" or "bad neighbors" that become centers for drugs, crime, terrorism, and corruption and are prone to fragmentation. These societies therefore present a challenge to international society: how should that society deal with states that fail to or cannot meet contemporary standards of governance? As Bowden notes, both Diamond and Cooper call for some form of interventionism by the international community. Diamond calls for financial and technical assistance to be linked to institutional reform and demonstrated progress toward "good governance" (2002: 12). Cooper calls for a new form of liberal imperialism "one acceptable to a world of human rights and cosmopolitan values" (2002: 5). This appears to be echoed Michael Ignatieff's in his description of the current U.S. global hegemony he describes as "empire lite," a form of hegemony "whose grace notes are free markets, human rights and democracy, enforced by the most awesome military power the world has even known." Writing in early 2003 and prior to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, he noted the constraints and historical legacy of empire, but went on to note: "The case for

empire is that it has become, in a place like Iraq, the last best hope for democracy and stability alike" (Ignatieff, 2003).

What is noteworthy in the above discussion is that the arguments for intervention are legitimated on the basis of the disorder and instability generated by the failures and weaknesses of governance. These failures of governance present a threat to local regional and even global stability. Furthermore, they deprive the constituents of these societies of basic political and human rights (Krasner, 2004). There is, thus, a heightened focus on international standards of good governance that incorporates a commitment and capacity to respect the human rights of citizens. Good governance is a term that increasingly pervades the language of bilateral and multilateral diplomacy and of institutions such as the UN, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund (IMF).⁵ It can also be viewed as a powerful rearticulation of the "standard of civilization." Gerrit Gong describes the concept of the "standard of civilization" as a natural and necessary consequence of interaction among political and culturally diverse states in search of common values rules and institutions, suggesting therefore, that it is not a fixed concept but one that evolves in line with specific intercultural contexts. Similarly Jack Donnelly has traced the evolution of the standard of civilization in modern international society, suggesting that it has gradually shifted from a minimalist, exclusive, and hierarchical conception based on perceived levels of development to a more inclusive, universal, and liberal conception based on shared standards of justice. This more liberal conception of legitimacy and entitlement to full membership of international society is premised on the extent to which a government implements internationally agreed human rights (Donnelly, 1998: 14). Mehdi Mozzaffari similarly argues that we are seeing the emergence of a new global standard of civilization, facilitated by globalization and premised on liberal values of human liberty and dignity that manifest in the promotion of human rights and democracy (2002). Gong adds, however, that this new liberal "standard" is also manifest on the promotion of particular financial and economic standards that promote an open and deregulated economy (2002).

Does this new standard of civilization promote a particular model of political and economic governance that is increasingly promoted by the international community through a variety of mechanisms and institutions? Some suggest it does. Roland Paris, for instance, has argued that from a certain perspective, international peacebuilding operations resemble a version of the *mission civilisatrice*, the colonial belief that the European powers had a duty to "civilize" dependent populations and territories (Paris, 2002: 637). Paris highlights the role that peacebuilding operations play in the diffusion of norms and institutional models from one part of the international system to the other. He argues these operations seek to bring war-shattered states into conformity with the international system's prevailing standards of domestic governance. "Although" he notes "modern peace builders have largely abandoned the archaic language of civilized

versus uncivilized, they nevertheless appear to act upon the belief that one model of domestic governance—liberal market democracy—is superior to all others." (ibid.: 638).

Such a willingness to intervene in societies suffering conflict not only with a view to bring a cessation to conflict but also to assist with the reconstruction of the institutions of governance has been evident in a number of recent cases. In addition to well-known examples of interventions in Cambodia, Bosnia, East Timor, and Afghanistan, there are interventions in the Pacific states of the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea (PNG). In both cases these states were experiencing long-term problems, domestic conflict, and economic instability. In both cases Australia engaged in "cooperative" or "participatory" intervention aimed at both bolstering law and order and enhancing good governance. This involved the insertion of overseas police and, in the case of the Solomon Islands, military personnel, to assist in restoring law and order.[6] It also included the placement of Australian advisors and in-line personnel in key economic, financial planning agencies and ministries, as well as providing financial aid to the Solomon's and PNG budgets. The objectives of these measures included the identification and reduction of corruption, the strengthening of economic management, and public sector reform (Wielders, 2004; Downer, 2004; Fry, 2005).[7] These interventions, as with the transitional administrations established under the auspices of other bodies, were therefore very much involved in "nation-building" projects in circumstances where the regional or international neighbors felt the standards of governance had in some way failed, and domestic authorities lacked the capacity to fulfill the internal and potentially external obligations of governance of the contemporary international system. William Bain has raised the question as to whether we are seeing a de facto revival of the concept of trusteeship enacted in the context of transitional administrations and such cooperative interventions (Bain, 2003). Stephen Krasner replies emphatically yes, and further argues that in the interests of domestic and international order, major actors, and regional and international organizations could and should consider assuming long-term de facto trusteeship, protectorates or even forms of shared sovereignty in weak or failing states. But we might further ask: to what extent does the revival of the concept of de facto trusteeship also represent a de facto revival of the concept of a "civilizing mission?"

Conclusion

This chapter has considered some of the main trends in debates relating to the incorporation of civilizational analysis into the study of world politics. It suggests that two recurrent trends in IR's analysis of the role of civilizations have been, the role that civilizations play in defining interests and identities and thus influencing patterns of interaction in world politics, drawing on the concept of civilization in the plural as "families of peoples"; and an interest in the relationship between conceptions of civilization

and the norms and standards of governance, drawing on the concept of civilization as a singular and progressive concept.

In this chapter I have argued that although issues of mapping and defining civilizations are not insignificant, there is a danger that the research agenda could become mired in difficult debates concerning arguments such as do civilizations have agency, and are we progressing toward a singular civilization? There are however, real and pressing issues that demand our attention regarding how conceptions of civilization and civilizational identity are deployed in discourses of politics at the local, regional, and global level. One way, therefore, to advance the research agenda of civilization and IR is to investigate in greater depth the nature and impact of discourses of civilizational identity, to consider how representations of civilization and civilizational identity are used both to differentiate and evaluate in contemporary political interaction. What I think we will find is that the way in which these civilizational identities are interpreted, understood, and represented is not incidental to but a powerful dimension of politics.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Greg Fry, Hayward Alker, and the editors for their insights and comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.
2. For recent examples, see Lewis (2002); Buruma and Margalit (2004); Scruton (2002); Bessis (2003); Saikal (2003); Gress (1998); and Mahbubani (1992).
3. This in many respects is Fukuyama's argument in *The End of History* as well.
4. Eisenstadt's argument is a sophisticated one that has proved influential in the field of sociology. He argues that modernity is in itself a unique form of civilization, a crystallization of modes of interpreting the world. However, it entails different and continually changing cultural and institutional patterns constituting different responses to the challenges and possibilities inherent in modernity. This gives rise to "multiple modernities." See, for example, Eisenstadt (2001b).
5. An IMF Fact Sheet on "IMF and Good Governance" notes,
   > The IMF places great emphasis on good governance when providing policy advice, financial support and technical assistance to its 184 member countries. It promotes good governance by helping countries ensure the rule of law, improve the efficiency and accountability of their public sectors, and tackle corruption. (IMF, 2003)
6. In the case of the Solomon Islands, the intervention is being conducted under the auspices of a Regional Assistance Mission, which is led by Australia but involves a range of other Pacific governments. In the case of Papua New Guinea (PNG), the intervention was conducted under the auspices of a bilateral Enhanced Cooperation Program between the Australian and PNG governments.
7. An additional stated objective in the Enhanced Cooperation Program between Australia and PNG was to deal with "pressing problems in border

control, and transport security and safety" (Downer, 2004). On May 13, 2005, however, the PNG Supreme Court ruled that elements of the PNG implementing legislation were not consistent with the PNG Constitution. Australian police were consequently withdrawn following the court ruling. However a number of Australian civilian officials continued to work with PNG agencies.