

IIPES 2011
Dr. Antony T. Sullivan

Huntington

What do you anticipate may be the major characteristics of world history during your lifetimes?

Do you believe that your country, and/or the world as a whole, will be characterized by stability or upheaval during the next half century and more?

Does the idea of “civilization,” or “culture,” make sense to you? Are “civilizations” static?

Is there still a chance of a “clash of civilizations” pitting the Islamic world against the West?

Is religion an important civilization denominator?

What particular challenges do you believe this century will hold for the United States? For Europe? For the Middle East and the Islamic world?

What are most likely to prove the flashpoints for global instability during the next half century and more?

If you were an international business person and wished to ascertain what countries might offer the greatest return on investment over the coming decades, what states might you select? Why?

What role may emigration/immigration play during the coming decades?

Huntington (con't)

Does the idea of “civilization, or “culture,” make any sense to you?

Are you satisfied with the way Professor Huntington defines civilization? If not, why not?

Does the idea of different “civilizations” within the continent of Europe make sense? Is religion truly an important civilizational marker? If not, why not?

Has the idea of “nation-state” lost at least some of its meaning? What about the idea of “ideology”?

Are “civilizations” static? To what degree do you believe that both civilizational and personal redefinition are constantly occurring?

Or is the issue not one of separate, discrete, and colliding “civilizations” but rather the “civilizational” collisions that constantly occur within the minds of an increasing number of discrete individuals throughout the world?

Can one ever (really) “go home again,” after studying at foreign institutions, such as (for example) IIPES?

What are the implications of the current “Arab Spring” for the whole notion of a conflict of civilizations?

What do you believe are the future prospects for the “civilization” from which you come?

Ibn Khaldun

What are the basic polarities that ibn Khaldun identifies in the social structure of his times?

What is Asabiyyah, and why was it important for ibn Khaldun?

Does the notion of Asabiyyah have relevance today? If so, how and why? What group or groups might be identified today as playing the same social role as ibn Khaldun argued that Bedouins did in his time?

What are the lineaments of ibn Khaldun's philosophy of history? What role does the notion of "generations" play in it?

How would you describe ibn Khaldun's notion of political economy?

What impact does ibn Khaldun see taxation having on economic development?

What role did ibn Khaldun see for the state in the economy? Is government a part of the solution or part of the problem in his opinion?

Why has there been so little attention devoted to ibn Khaldun by Arab and Muslim scholars in the centuries since his death?

Alexis de Tocqueville

In Tocqueville's opinion, is democracy a blessing or a curse? Or is the question more complicated than such a polarity might suggest?

What dangers does Tocqueville see political "majorities" potentially presenting? Why?

What is Tocqueville's notion of the separation of political power? In his view, is such division good or bad?

What is Tocqueville's idea about religion? Does he consider religion important, and if so, why?

Tocqueville (con't)

What does Tocqueville have to say about equality of condition? Is he for it or against it, and on what bases?

What does Tocqueville see as the relationship between democracy and liberty? Is this relationship a problematic one? What role does political centralization “uniformity” play?

In Tocqueville’s opinion, are democracies inherently “conservative?” If so, what role does private property play in this orientation?

What factors have contributed to maintenance of a democratic republic in the United States?

What did Tocqueville perceive as the prospects of democracy? Would it be proper today to extend Tocqueville’s forecast to the entire world?

What do Samuel Huntington, ibn Khaldun, and Alexis de Tocqueville have in common, if anything?