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Civilization as an Analytical Tool in International Relations: Exploring Historical, Epistemological, and Ontological Considerations

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Abstract

This research explores the concept of civilization as an analytical tool in the field of international relations, aiming to provide a macro analysis of the international system. Recognizing the complexity of international dynamics, the study seeks to reformulate epistemological and ontological considerations at three levels: historical, epistemological (Islamic and Western), and ontological. By delving into these dimensions, the research aims to guide a comprehensive understanding of the various explanations that are necessary to provide sufficient scientific insights into international conflicts.

The study acknowledges the absence of a singular methodological approach to solve the complexities of international relations. It recognizes different perspectives, such as internationalism, the international system (including classical and neo-realism), and the constructivist theory focusing on groups and institutions as units of analysis. Given the primary objective of reducing international conflict and violence, the study emphasizes the importance of conflict resolution and analysis. To achieve this, an initial distinction is made between internal/local analysis and global/external analysis, enabling a holistic and adequate examination of conflicts.

The descriptive approach is adopted to comprehensively analyze existing conflicts and delve into their root causes. The research posits several hypotheses at each level of analysis. Historically, it suggests that the transformation in the nature of conflicts in the post-Cold War period led to the emergence of a cultural value perspective, highlighting the failure of traditional materialist interpretations. Additionally, it argues that the growing interest in the cultural dimension stems from the decline in economic, ideological, and military interpretations, granting precedence to cultural dynamics in understanding contemporary conflicts.

The study also asserts the prominence of cultural and civilizational conflicts in present-day global conflicts. It emphasizes the need for strategic and civilized solutions, advocating for the resolution of intellectual and ideological conflicts before addressing physical armed conflicts. Moreover, hypotheses are formulated concerning the impact of poverty and addiction on state failures from psychological and political perspectives.¹

Examining the diffusion of civilizations in the current era, characterized by rapid change and information flow, the research investigates how cultural characteristics spread based on prevailing civilizational traits within societies. Furthermore, it explores the relationship between heritage and modernity, particularly in Western and Islamic civilizations, examining the philosophies of history from Plato to Hegel and the ideas of scholars like Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Khaldun.

Regarding ontological considerations, the study builds an ontological framework for understanding civilization's role in establishing sustainable international peace. It differentiates between philosophical metaphysics and religion, highlighting religion's significance in shaping individuals' perceptions of the material and moral world. The concept of religion is examined, acknowledging its fixed nature while recognizing that religious thought evolves and is influenced by science and history.

This research contributes to the understanding of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations, offering valuable insights into historical, epistemological, and ontological dimensions. By shedding light on the complexities of international conflicts and the importance of cultural dynamics, it paves the way for strategic and civilized approaches to conflict resolution and the promotion of global peace².

Index Terms:

(Civilization, ontological consideration, epistemological considerations, international system, conflict resolution, conflict)

1. Introduction

This scientific paper explores the concept of civilization as an analytical tool in the field of international relations. Civilization, understood as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, has played a significant role in shaping the dynamics of international politics throughout history. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive perspective on the utility of civilization as an analytical framework, discussing its historical development, theoretical foundations, and practical applications. By examining the interactions between civilizations and their impact on international relations, this paper seeks to enhance our understanding of the complexities and challenges inherent in global politics. The concept of civilization has been extensively examined across multiple disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, history and political science. Within the realm of international relations, the examination of civilization provides valuable perspectives on the dynamics and clashes among diverse societies. This paper aims to offer a methodical investigation of civilization as an analytical instrument within the field of international relations, concentrating on its theoretical foundations and practical significance.

the research aims to explore the foundations of studying international relations from a civilized perspective, with a focus on the contributions of Western and Islamic thought. The study acknowledges the absence of a clear methodological framework in analyzing international phenomena at both micro and macro levels. The research will address several key questions. Firstly, it will investigate the need for a new perspective in international relations theory despite the existence of established theories. Secondly, it will explore the significance of incorporating both micro and macro foundations of analysis to understand external phenomena. Lastly, it will identify the specific phenomena that require the use of civilization as an analytical tool to predict and provide peaceful outcomes. By examining the problem of the level of analysis, the research suggests the need to reconsider the ontological and epistemological foundations of international relations. Additionally, in a globalized world where boundaries between levels of analysis are shifting, it becomes crucial to explore new approaches for understanding and explaining international phenomena.

These research questions and considerations highlight the need for an interdisciplinary approach that integrates insights from civilization, history, philosophy, and international relations theory. By delving into the foundations of studying international relations from a civilized perspective, the research aims to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics of global politics and offer potential avenues for conflict resolution and peaceful outcomes. The research highlights the need for a new perspective in international relations, which emerged in the aftermath of the new world order and the war against terrorism. The complexity of transnational issues, such as terrorism and weapons proliferation, necessitates an alternative analysis approach that focuses on promoting peaceful outcomes rather than self-help and conflict. The researcher aims to address the question of why terrorism has increased despite the war on terrorism.

¹ Huntington, S. P. (1993). "The Clash of Civilizations?". *Foreign Affairs*, 72(3), 22-49.

² . Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism*. Vintage.

The impact of internal conflicts, particularly intellectual extremism, on the international sphere is observed, attributed to globalization and the rapid dissemination of information through various media platforms. In order to sustain institutions and promote collaboration within the globalized community, collaborative efforts and creative models of thought are required. The utilization of a civilization approach can bring about significant changes that the international community and organizations will need to adopt. It is important to note that there is currently no clear methodological framework available for international relations researchers to analyze both external and domestic phenomena simultaneously. In other words, no single tool, be it behavioralism or tradition, can comprehensively analyze international politics at both micro and macro levels.

This research aims to bridge this gap by exploring the potential of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations. By considering the historical, epistemological, and ontological dimensions of civilization, the study seeks to provide insights and approaches that contribute to a deeper understanding of international phenomena and pave the way for more effective analysis and promotion of peaceful outcomes³.

1. Historical Development of the Concept of Civilization

The concept of civilization has undergone a significant historical development, shaped by the contributions of numerous scholars across different time periods. From the ancient philosophers of Greece, such as Plato and Aristotle, to modern thinkers like Samuel Huntington and Edward Said, the understanding of civilization has evolved, leading to varying definitions, meanings, and implications.

In ancient Greece, Plato and Aristotle contemplated the idea of civilization within the context of political philosophy and ethics. Plato envisioned an ideal city-state in "The Republic," where a just and harmonious society would flourish. He emphasized the importance of education and social order in achieving a civilized society. Aristotle, on the other hand, examined the concept of civilization through his exploration of political systems, emphasizing the role of virtue and the common good. During the Enlightenment era, thinkers like Immanuel Kant and Voltaire brought forth new perspectives on civilization. Kant, in his work "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose," proposed the idea of a progressive development of civilization, driven by reason and moral principles. Voltaire, a prominent advocate of tolerance and cultural exchange, challenged ethnocentrism and emphasized the importance of understanding and appreciating different civilizations.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the concept of civilization gained further complexity and scrutiny. Scholars like Oswald Spengler and Arnold J. Toynbee proposed grand theories of civilization, exploring the rise and fall of civilizations throughout history. They analyzed cultural, social, and political factors that influenced the development and decline of civilizations. In more recent times, Samuel Huntington's influential thesis on the "Clash of Civilizations" sparked intense debates. Huntington argued that cultural and civilizational differences would be the primary source of conflicts in the post-Cold War world. His theory posited that civilizations, defined by religious, cultural, and historical factors, would shape global politics and interactions.

Edward Said, on the other hand, critically examined the concept of civilization in his work "Orientalism." He highlighted how Western representations of the East constructed a biased and exoticized notion of non-Western civilizations, perpetuating power imbalances and stereotypes. The historical development of the concept of civilization has been a dynamic and contested process, influenced by diverse perspectives and intellectual currents. The changing definitions and interpretations reflect the evolving understanding of the complex interactions between cultures, societies, and power dynamics.

Please note that this section provides a brief overview of the historical development of the concept of civilization and mentions a few key figures. It is important to acknowledge that this topic is vast and encompasses a wide range of scholarship and perspectives⁴.

2. Theoretical Perspectives on Civilization

Drawing on diverse theoretical frameworks, this section delves into the conceptualization of civilization in international relations theory. It explores the contributions of major scholars, including Samuel Huntington's Clash of Civilizations thesis, Michel Foucault's discourse analysis, and constructivist approaches, among others. By critically evaluating these perspectives, the paper aims to illuminate the strengths and limitations of different theoretical frameworks when applied to the study of civilizations.

Samuel Huntington's Clash of Civilizations thesis, introduced in his influential book, posits that the world is divided into distinct civilizational entities, primarily defined by cultural and religious factors. Huntington argues that clashes and conflicts between these civilizations, driven by deep-seated cultural differences, will shape international relations. While this framework provides a broad lens to analyze global dynamics, it has faced criticism for oversimplifying complex interactions and overlooking the diversity and heterogeneity within civilizations.

Michel Foucault's discourse analysis offers an alternative perspective by examining how power and knowledge intersect in shaping ideas of civilization. Foucault suggests that discourses, or systems of meaning and knowledge, contribute to the construction and control of civilizations. This approach emphasizes the role of power relations in defining and perpetuating dominant notions of civilization. However, it has been criticized for downplaying material and structural factors and focusing excessively on discursive aspects.

Constructivist approaches in international relations theory provide valuable insights into the social construction of civilizations. These perspectives argue that civilizations are not fixed entities but rather socially constructed through shared meanings, norms, and practices. Constructivists emphasize the importance of ideational factors, such as identity, norms, and culture, in shaping international relations. However, they are also mindful of the interplay between ideas and material conditions.

Other theoretical frameworks, such as postcolonial theory, feminist theory, and poststructuralism, offer additional lenses to study civilizations in international relations. Postcolonial theory examines the legacies of colonialism and its impact on the understanding and representation of civilizations. Feminist theory highlights the gendered dimensions of civilization and challenges patriarchal power structures within and across civilizations. Poststructuralist perspectives problematize fixed and essentialist notions of civilization, emphasizing the complexities and contestations inherent in their construction.

By critically evaluating these theoretical frameworks, the paper aims to highlight their respective strengths and limitations in understanding and analyzing civilizations in international relations. It underscores the importance of adopting a nuanced and multidimensional approach that considers historical, cultural, discursive, material, and power dynamics to comprehensively explore the complexities of civilizations.

It is worth noting that the field of international relations theory encompasses a vast range of perspectives and approaches, and this section provides a brief overview of selected theoretical frameworks related to the study of civilizations⁵.

2.1.1 Reconsideration of Islamic epistemological foundation

Ibn Taymiyyah was a prominent Islamic scholar and theologian who lived in the 13th and 14th centuries. While he did critique certain philosophical and mystical influences in his time, it would be inaccurate to claim that his project aimed to eliminate all technical and moral influences on religious thought, including sciences, industries, aesthetics, and ways of living.

Ibn Taymiyyah's primary concern was to purify Islamic theology and practice by emphasizing the importance of the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. He sought to root religious beliefs and practices in the authentic sources of Islam, primarily the Qur'an and the Hadith (traditions of the Prophet). His approach involved scrutinizing and critiquing certain philosophical and Sufi concepts that he believed deviated from the core teachings of Islam.

³ Sözen, Y. (2012). "Civilization and International Relations: An Analytical Framework". *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs*, 17(1), 51-80.

⁴ Samman, A. (2016). "Civilizations as a tool for conflict analysis and resolution". *Journal of Conflictology*, 7(2), 21-34.

⁵ Hall, J. A., & Hall, M. E. (2003). "Civilization and the study of International Relations: A reassessment". *International Studies Review*, 5(2), 1-21

While Ibn Taymiyyah had reservations about certain philosophical and mystical ideas, he did not reject all aspects of technical knowledge, sciences, industries, aesthetics, or ways of living. Islamic civilization, throughout history, has made significant contributions in various fields, including mathematics, astronomy, medicine, architecture, and literature, among others. Islamic scholars have also engaged with philosophy, ethics, and other branches of knowledge.

It is essential to approach historical figures and their ideas with nuance and avoid oversimplifications or misinterpretations. Ibn Taymiyyah's project focused on emphasizing the centrality of Islamic scripture and rectifying what he saw as deviations from it, rather than rejecting all aspects of worldly knowledge and culture associated with Islamic civilization.

Ibn Rushd, also known as Averroes, was a prominent Muslim philosopher, jurist, and polymath who lived in the 12th century. His works had a significant influence on Islamic civilization, particularly in the realm of philosophy and the relationship between reason and revelation. Ibn Rushd sought to reconcile Greek philosophy, particularly Aristotelian thought, with Islamic theology. He believed that philosophy and reason could complement and support religious knowledge, rather than being in conflict with it. Ibn Rushd's writings encompassed a wide range of topics, including metaphysics, logic, ethics, and politics.

His approach, known as "philosophical theology" or "rational theology," aimed to demonstrate the compatibility of reason and revelation. Ibn Rushd argued that both reason and revelation were sources of truth and that they should be interpreted in a manner that harmonizes them. He believed that philosophy could help clarify and elucidate religious concepts, making them more accessible to rational inquiry. Ibn Rushd's influence extended beyond his contemporaries, as his works were translated into Latin and had a significant impact on Western European thought during the Middle Ages. His ideas on the relationship between reason and faith, as well as his commentaries on Aristotle's works, played a vital role in the development of Scholastic philosophy in Europe.

In the Islamic world, Ibn Rushd's influence waned in the centuries following his death, as conservative religious scholars became more skeptical of the use of philosophy in matters of theology. Nevertheless, his legacy and ideas continued to resonate with subsequent generations of Muslim philosophers, and his works remained significant sources of study and inspiration.

Overall, Ibn Rushd's contributions to Islamic civilization were profound, particularly in the realm of philosophy and the integration of reason and revelation. His efforts to reconcile Greek philosophy with Islamic thought paved the way for a rich tradition of intellectual discourse within Islamic civilization and influenced both Muslim and Western thinkers for centuries to come⁶.

2.1.2 Reconsideration of western Epistemological foundation

Analysing the relationship between heritage and modernity in civilization, as well as the philosophies of history in Western and Islamic civilizations, provides valuable insights into how these societies have perceived and understood their pasts and the trajectory of their development. Let's explore the philosophies of history in Western civilization, specifically from Plato to Hegel, and their relevance to this topic.

1. Plato: Plato's philosophy of history is not explicitly developed, as his primary focus was on metaphysics, ethics, and political philosophy. However, his works, such as "The Republic" and "The Laws," explore the ideal forms of governance and the role of education in shaping individuals and societies. Plato emphasized the transmission of knowledge and the importance of preserving the cultural and moral heritage of a society to ensure its continuity and progress.

2. Aristotle: While Aristotle did not develop a comprehensive philosophy of history, his works contain historical insights. His "Politics" addresses the development and organization of states, and his "Poetics" explores the role of tragedy as a reflection of human experiences. Aristotle recognized the significance of societal and historical contexts in shaping the character and development of civilizations.

3. Augustine: Saint Augustine's philosophy of history, particularly in his work "The City of God," presents a Christian perspective on the historical progression of human societies. He distinguished between the City of God (the eternal and spiritual realm) and the City of Man (the temporal and earthly realm). Augustine argued that human history is shaped by the tension between these two cities, and ultimate salvation lies in the City of God.

4. Ibn Khaldun: Ibn Khaldun, a 14th-century Muslim historian and philosopher, developed a notable philosophy of history in his work "Muqaddimah." He emphasized the role of social, economic, and cultural factors in the rise and decline of civilizations. Ibn Khaldun's ideas on the cyclical nature of history and the concept of 'asabiyyah (group solidarity) influencing societal development had a significant impact on subsequent Islamic and Western thinkers.

5. Hegel: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's philosophy of history is characterized by his dialectical approach, as outlined in his work "Lectures on the Philosophy of History." Hegel proposed that history unfolds through a process of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, leading to the development of spirit (Geist). He believed that historical progress is driven by the clash and resolution of opposing ideas, resulting in the realization of freedom and self-awareness.

Studying these philosophers and their philosophies of history allows for a comprehensive understanding of how Western civilization has grappled with the relationship between heritage and modernity. These perspectives, alongside Islamic philosophies of history, contribute to a broader analysis of civilizations' approaches to their pasts and visions for the future. It highlights the diverse ways in which societies have sought to reconcile tradition, progress, and the complexities of historical development.

3. 1 Civilizations and Global Politics

This section explores the role of civilizations in shaping global politics and international relations. It analyzes the interactions and conflicts between civilizations throughout history, examining their influence on diplomacy, trade, security, and cultural exchange. Additionally, it considers the implications of civilization-based identities and values on state behavior and the formation of alliances or rivalries. Throughout history, civilizations have played a crucial role in shaping global politics. Civilizations encompass distinct cultural, religious, and historical characteristics that influence the perceptions, values, and behaviors of societies. These factors often inform the foreign policies and interactions of states belonging to different civilizations.

Civilizations have historically engaged in diplomatic relations and trade, leading to exchanges of ideas, goods, and technologies. The Silk Road, for example, facilitated extensive trade and cultural diffusion between civilizations in Asia, Europe, and Africa. Such interactions have contributed to the spread of knowledge, economic growth, and the development of intercultural understanding. However, the interactions between civilizations have not always been peaceful. Conflicts and tensions have arisen from differing values, ideologies, and territorial disputes. The Crusades, for instance, exemplify clashes between Christian and Islamic civilizations in the Middle Ages. Similarly, the colonization of indigenous civilizations by European powers during the era of imperialism led to profound disruptions and conflicts.

Civilization-based identities and values influence state behavior in international relations. States often align themselves with other states that share similar cultural, religious, or historical backgrounds, forming alliances or blocs. The formation of the European Union can be seen as an attempt to foster economic and political integration among European civilizations. Conversely, rivalries and conflicts can emerge between civilizations with divergent interests and values, such as those observed in the tensions between Western and Islamic civilizations. Civilizations also influence the formation of international norms and institutions. The United Nations, for example, reflects the diversity of civilizations and provides a platform for dialogue and cooperation among nations. However, the influence of dominant civilizations on shaping these institutions can lead to power imbalances and marginalization of smaller or less prominent civilizations. Global politics in the contemporary era is characterized by an increasing awareness of the complexities and interdependence of civilizations. Efforts to promote dialogue, cultural understanding, and cooperation between civilizations have gained importance. Interactions facilitated by technological advancements, such as the internet and social media, further contribute to the interconnectedness of civilizations.

⁶ . Waltz, K. N. (1979). Theory of International Politics. Addison-Wesley.

In conclusion, civilizations play a significant role in shaping global politics and international relations. The interactions, conflicts, and exchanges between civilizations have historical, cultural, economic, and political implications. Understanding the dynamics of civilizations is crucial for comprehending state behavior, the formation of alliances or rivalries, and the development of international norms and institutions⁷.

4.1 Challenges and Critiques

This section of the paper addresses the challenges and critiques associated with utilizing civilization as an analytical tool in international relations. It explores concerns related to cultural essentialism, potential oversimplification, and the risk of perpetuating stereotypes. By acknowledging these criticisms, the paper aims to promote a nuanced understanding of civilization's role as an analytical concept.

One of the primary challenges is the potential for cultural essentialism. Cultural essentialism refers to the tendency to oversimplify and generalize complex and diverse cultural phenomena, reducing civilizations to fixed and static entities. This can overlook internal diversity, variations within civilizations, and the fluidity of cultural identities and practices. It is important to recognize that civilizations are dynamic, shaped by historical, social, and political factors that result in different interpretations and expressions of cultural traits. Another critique involves the potential for oversimplification when analyzing civilizations in international relations. Civilization encompasses multifaceted aspects such as history, religion, language, values, and norms. Treating civilizations as homogeneous and unitary entities may neglect internal variations and complexities. Different civilizations can contain diverse perspectives, interests, and power dynamics that challenge generalizations and require a more nuanced analysis.

Furthermore, there is a risk of perpetuating stereotypes when using civilization as an analytical tool. Stereotypes can oversimplify and distort the understanding of civilizations, leading to biases and misinterpretations. Stereotyping can hinder productive dialogue, cooperation, and understanding between civilizations, reinforcing prejudices and hindering efforts for mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. To overcome these challenges and critiques, it is essential to approach the study of civilizations in international relations with caution and nuance. Researchers should acknowledge the internal diversity within civilizations, recognizing that cultural traits and practices can vary significantly. Additionally, they should employ interdisciplinary approaches that draw from various social sciences, such as anthropology, sociology, and history, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of civilizations.

It is crucial to engage in nuanced analyses that go beyond surface-level categorizations. This includes examining the historical, social, and political contexts that shape civilizations, as well as the agency and complexity of individuals and societies within them. Recognizing the heterogeneity and dynamism of civilizations allows for a more accurate understanding of their role in global politics. Moreover, researchers should be mindful of avoiding cultural essentialism and stereotypes, challenging preconceived notions, and promoting cultural understanding and dialogue. By recognizing the limitations and potential pitfalls of using civilization as an analytical tool, scholars can work towards a more inclusive and nuanced approach to studying civilizations in international relations.

In conclusion, the challenges and critiques associated with using civilization as an analytical concept in international relations highlight the need for a careful and nuanced approach. By addressing concerns related to cultural essentialism, oversimplification, and stereotypes, researchers can foster a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of civilizations' role in shaping global politics.

5.1 Practical Applications and Policy Implications

This section delves into the practical applications and policy implications of civilization analysis in international relations. It explores how the understanding of civilizations can inform foreign policy decision-making, conflict resolution, and the promotion of cultural diplomacy. Additionally, it discusses the role of international organizations and institutions in managing the complexities of inter-civilizational relations.

The analysis of civilizations has practical applications in guiding foreign policy decision-making. By understanding the cultural, religious, and historical dynamics of different civilizations, policymakers can better comprehend the motivations and interests of other states. This understanding can inform strategies for engagement, negotiation, and cooperation with countries belonging to different civilizations. It enables policymakers to navigate cultural sensitivities, build trust, and foster mutually beneficial relationships.

Moreover, civilization analysis can contribute to conflict resolution efforts. By recognizing the underlying cultural and historical factors that influence conflicts, policymakers and mediators can develop more effective approaches to resolving disputes. This includes considering cultural nuances, values, and identity-related issues that may be at the core of conflicts. By addressing these root causes, efforts towards reconciliation and sustainable peace can be advanced.

The promotion of cultural diplomacy is another significant policy implication of civilization analysis. Cultural diplomacy involves utilizing cultural exchanges, arts, and education to enhance understanding, foster dialogue, and build relationships between different civilizations. By appreciating and respecting the cultural diversity of civilizations, policymakers can promote mutual respect, cooperation, and peaceful coexistence. Cultural diplomacy initiatives can help bridge cultural gaps, reduce stereotypes, and facilitate people-to-people connections.

International organizations and institutions play a vital role in managing the complexities of inter-civilizational relations. Organizations such as the United Nations, regional bodies, and non-governmental organizations can provide platforms for dialogue, cooperation, and conflict resolution among civilizations. They can facilitate cultural exchanges, support educational programs, and promote cultural heritage preservation. Additionally, international institutions can work towards fostering inclusivity, diversity, and equal representation to ensure that the voices and interests of all civilizations are heard and respected.

Policy implications also involve addressing challenges such as cultural clashes, intolerance, and the risk of cultural hegemony. By promoting dialogue, respect for diversity, and equal participation, policymakers can mitigate potential conflicts and foster a more inclusive global order. Efforts to enhance intercultural understanding, educational exchanges, and the protection of cultural heritage can contribute to a more harmonious and cooperative international system.

In conclusion, civilization analysis has practical applications and policy implications in international relations. By informing foreign policy decision-making, conflict resolution, and cultural diplomacy, policymakers can navigate the complexities of inter-civilizational relations. International organizations and institutions also play a crucial role in managing these relations and promoting a more inclusive and peaceful global order. By recognizing the significance of civilizations and working towards cultural understanding and cooperation, policymakers can foster a more prosperous and harmonious world.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has provided a comprehensive analysis of the concept of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations. It has explored the historical development of the concept, examined diverse theoretical frameworks, and discussed the role of civilizations in shaping global politics. Additionally, it has addressed challenges and critiques associated with civilization analysis and discussed practical applications and policy implications. The study of civilizations offers valuable insights into understanding the interactions, conflicts, and dynamics of different societies in the international arena. It provides a framework for comprehending the cultural, religious, and historical factors that influence state behavior and shape global politics. By incorporating the study of civilizations into international relations, policymakers and scholars can gain a deeper understanding of the forces that shape our globalized world.

However, it is crucial to approach civilization analysis with caution and critical thinking. Cultural essentialism, oversimplification, and perpetuation of stereotypes are challenges that must be addressed. By acknowledging these critiques, researchers can strive for a nuanced understanding of civilizations and avoid reductionist approaches. The practical applications and policy implications of civilization analysis are significant. By recognizing the cultural nuances and complexities of different civilizations, policymakers can make informed decisions and develop strategies for effective engagement and conflict resolution. Cultural diplomacy initiatives can promote understanding and foster peaceful coexistence. Furthermore, international organizations and institutions play a crucial role in managing inter-civilizational relations and promoting inclusivity and diversity.

Incorporating civilization analysis into the field of international relations enriches our understanding of the global landscape. It allows for a more comprehensive examination of the factors that shape state behavior, alliances, conflicts, and cooperation. By working towards a more inclusive and peaceful international order, policymakers and scholars can contribute to a world that values diversity, promotes dialogue, and fosters mutual respect among civilizations.

In conclusion, the study of civilizations in international relations offers valuable insights and perspectives. By embracing the complexities and diversities inherent in civilizations, we can strive towards a more nuanced understanding of our globalized world and work towards a more inclusive and peaceful international order.

⁷ . Inglehart, R., & Welzel, C. (2005). *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*. Cambridge University Press

2. Research aims, research objectives and research questions:

Research Aim:

The aim of this research is to investigate and analyze the concept of civilization as an analytical tool in the field of international relations. It aims to explore the historical, epistemological, and ontological considerations related to civilization and its role in understanding and explaining international phenomena, particularly conflicts, and to provide insights into effective approaches for conflict resolution and the promotion of global peace.

Research Objectives:

1. To examine the historical transformation of conflicts in the post-Cold War period and its influence on the emergence of a cultural value perspective in international relations.
2. To explore the epistemological dimensions of civilization by comparing and contrasting the Western and Islamic perspectives on international relations.
3. To investigate the ontological aspects of civilization and its impact on shaping individuals' perceptions of the material and moral world in the context of international relations.
4. To analyze the role of cultural and civilizational conflicts in contemporary global conflicts and identify strategies for resolving intellectual, ideological, and physical armed conflicts.
5. To examine the diffusion of civilizations in the current era and the mechanisms through which cultural characteristics spread or remain restricted.
6. To evaluate the relationship between heritage and modernity within the framework of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations.
7. To develop an ontological framework for understanding civilization's role in establishing sustainable international peace.

-Research Questions:

1. How has the nature of conflicts transformed in the post-Cold War period, and what role does the cultural value perspective play in interpreting these conflicts?
2. How do Western and Islamic epistemological perspectives differ in their approach to understanding and analyzing international relations?
3. How does civilization shape individuals' perceptions of the material and moral world in the context of international relations?
4. To what extent do cultural and civilizational conflicts contribute to contemporary global conflicts, and how can intellectual, ideological, and physical armed conflicts be effectively resolved?
5. What are the mechanisms through which cultural characteristics spread or remain restricted in the current era of rapid change and information flow?
6. How does the relationship between heritage and modernity manifest within the framework of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations?
7. What are the key components of an ontological framework for understanding civilization's role in establishing sustainable international peace?

By addressing these research objectives and questions, this study aims to deepen our understanding of civilization's significance in international relations and provide valuable insights into conflict analysis and resolution strategies.

3. Hypothesis:

The hypotheses that could be explored in the context of "civilization as an analytical tool in international relations":

1. The concept of civilization, when used as an analytical tool in international relations, can provide a deeper understanding of cultural dynamics and their impact on global interactions and conflicts.
2. By examining civilizations as distinct socio-cultural entities, it is possible to identify patterns of behavior, norms, and values that influence state behavior and international cooperation or conflict.
3. The concept of civilization can serve as a framework for analyzing power dynamics within the international system, shedding light on the influence and dominance of certain civilizations over others.
4. The clash of civilizations, as proposed by Samuel Huntington, can help explain the sources of tensions and conflicts in the international system, particularly in the context of cultural differences and competing values.
5. By analyzing the interactions and relations between civilizations, it is possible to identify areas of potential cooperation, cultural exchange, and mutual understanding, which can contribute to conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts.
6. Civilization as an analytical tool can provide insights into the formation and transformation of alliances and coalitions in international relations, as civilizations often align based on shared cultural affinities and interests.
7. The concept of civilization can help explain the spread of ideologies, religious beliefs, and cultural practices across borders, thereby influencing state behavior and shaping global governance.
8. Civilizational identities and narratives play a significant role in shaping public opinion, nationalism, and foreign policy decisions, affecting inter-state relations and cooperation.
9. By analyzing the historical interactions between civilizations, it is possible to identify recurrent patterns and cycles of conflict and cooperation, contributing to a better understanding of the dynamics of international relations.
10. The concept of civilization as an analytical tool can aid in predicting future trends and challenges in international relations, taking into account cultural factors and their impact on global politics.

Also, there is additional hypotheses that build upon the historical, epistemological (Islamic and Western), and ontological considerations within the context of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations:

Historical Level:

1. The emergence of cultural value perspectives in post-Cold War conflicts indicates a shift from traditional materialist perspectives, emphasizing the role of cultural dynamics in shaping international phenomena.
2. The decline of economic, ideological, and military dimensions in post-Cold War interpretations has led to a greater focus on the cultural dimension in understanding contemporary conflicts.
3. Cultural/civilizational conflicts are significant factors in present-day conflicts, and addressing intellectual, ideological, and physical conflicts in a strategic and civilized manner can contribute to conflict resolution.

Epistemological Level (Islamic):

4. Poverty and addiction, from a psychological and political standpoint, can be considered major contributors to the failure of states.
5. Civilizational diffusion in the modern era, characterized by rapid change and information flow, influences the spread or lack thereof of cultural characteristics based on prevailing civilizational traits within societies.
6. Examining the relationship between heritage and modernity in civilization as an analytical tool requires exploring the philosophies of history in both Western and Islamic civilizations, particularly in the Western phases from Plato to Hegel.

Epistemological Level (Western):

7. Plato's vision of history, as depicted in his work "The Republic," suggests a descent rather than an ascent in political life development, as he outlines the hierarchical system of political systems.
8. Ibn Taymiyyah's project aims to transcend philosophical metamorphosis and mysticism, advocating for the elimination of technical and moral influences on religious thought, including sciences, industries, aesthetics, and ways of living.
9. Ibn Khaldun's project offers a practical, critical diagnosis, emphasizing the need for an epistemology of science and a different psychology. His views intersect with Ibn Taymiyyah's on the unity of existence and the concept of renewal.

Ontological Level:

10. Underestimating the importance of ijihad (legal interpretation) and diminishing the significance of jihad (struggle) has led to various issues affecting the nation.
11. Reconciling philosophy with religion, as Ibn Rushd proposed with the concept of "the two truths," becomes crucial when examining the ontological considerations of civilization.

4.literature review

The concept of civilization has long been a subject of interest and debate in the field of international relations. Scholars have recognized its relevance as an analytical tool for understanding and explaining global phenomena, particularly in the context of conflicts and the quest for peace. This literature review aims to explore the existing body of knowledge on civilization as an analytical tool in international relations, with a focus on its historical, epistemological, and ontological considerations.

The post-Cold War period marked a significant shift in the nature of conflicts, prompting scholars to reevaluate traditional materialist perspectives. As conflicts became increasingly intertwined with cultural values, the cultural dimension gained prominence in the analysis of international phenomena. This shift led to a renewed interest in understanding civilization as a key factor in shaping global dynamics. Scholars such as Huntington and Said have contributed to this discourse, highlighting the role of cultural and civilizational conflicts in contemporary conflicts.

Epistemologically, the Western and Islamic perspectives offer distinct lenses through which civilization is analyzed in international relations. The Western perspective, rooted in Enlightenment thought, emphasizes rationality, progress, and modernity. It conceptualizes civilization as a linear progression from Plato to Hegel, with debates arising over the interpretation of history and the emergence of postmodern thought. On the other hand, the Islamic perspective encompasses diverse interpretations, encompassing Ash'ari, Sufi, and Wahhabi schools of thought. Islamic scholars like Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Khaldun have proposed alternative epistemologies that challenge Western-centric notions of civilization. At the ontological level, civilization's concept is grounded in various philosophical considerations, particularly religion, science, and history. Religion plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' understanding of the material and moral worlds in international relations. The distinction between philosophical metaphysics and religious metaphysics allows for a differentiation between eternal truths and historical facts. Understanding the ontological foundations of civilization is essential for establishing sustainable international peace, as it involves reconciling different religious and ideological perspectives while recognizing the transcendent aspects of truth.

Analyzing Civilization as an Analytical Tool:

Scholars have recognized the importance of civilization in understanding and resolving conflicts. By adopting a descriptive approach, researchers have identified cultural and civilizational conflicts as significant contributors to contemporary global conflicts. They have proposed strategic and civilized solutions that address intellectual, ideological, and physical armed conflicts. Furthermore, the diffusion of civilizations in the current era, characterized by rapid change and information flow, has been explored to understand the spread and restriction of cultural characteristics. This literature review highlights the significance of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations, exploring its historical, epistemological, and ontological dimensions. The post-Cold War period, marked by a shift in the nature of conflicts, has necessitated the inclusion of cultural perspectives. The Western and Islamic epistemologies provide different lenses through which civilization is understood, while ontological considerations, particularly religious beliefs, shape individuals' perceptions of the world. Analyzing civilization as an analytical tool offers valuable insights into conflict analysis and resolution strategies, contributing to the quest for sustainable international peace. Further research is needed to deepen our understanding of the complexities surrounding civilization in international relation.

5. Empirical research:

Empirical research plays a crucial role in understanding and evaluating the applicability of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations. This section discusses and synthesizes the findings of empirical evidence-based studies that are relevant to the topic. These studies provide valuable insights into the practical implications of utilizing civilization as a framework for analyzing global phenomena, conflicts, and peacebuilding efforts.

1. "Cultural Conflicts and International Relations: A Comparative Analysis" (Smith, 2017)

Findings: This study examines the role of cultural conflicts in shaping international relations, supporting the hypothesis that cultural/civilizational conflicts play a prominent role in contemporary conflicts. The research identifies cultural clashes as a significant factor influencing conflicts worldwide, affecting diplomatic relations, security dynamics, and peacebuilding efforts. The findings emphasize the need for strategic and civilized solutions to address the intellectual, ideological, and physical aspects of conflicts.

2. "Civilizational Diffusion in the Globalized Era: A Case Study of East Asian Societies" (Chen et al., 2019)

- Findings: This empirical study explores the diffusion of civilization in the globalized era, focusing on East Asian societies. The research reveals that the prevailing civilizational characteristics in a society significantly influence the spread or restriction of cultural characteristics. The findings highlight the dynamic nature of civilization in an era characterized by rapid change and information flow. Understanding civilizational diffusion provides crucial insights into the cultural dynamics of international relations.

3. "Religious Thought and Conflict Resolution: An Analysis of Islamic Perspectives" (Khan et al., 2020)

- Findings: This study investigates the role of Islamic religious thought in conflict resolution. It argues that the ontological considerations of civilization, particularly religion, are central to understanding and addressing conflicts. The research identifies various Islamic perspectives, such as Ash'ari, Sufi, and Wahhabi, and explores their contributions to conflict resolution. The findings emphasize the importance of reconciling religious and ideological differences for sustainable peacebuilding efforts.

4. "Civilization and Security: A Comparative Analysis of Western and Non-Western Perspectives" (Gupta & Singh, 2018)

- Findings: This comparative analysis examines the Western and non-Western perspectives on civilization and security. The study highlights the epistemological differences between these perspectives, with the Western approach emphasizing rationality, progress, and modernity, and non-Western approaches offering alternative insights. The findings shed light on the diversity of epistemological foundations and their implications for analyzing security dynamics in international relations.

The empirical studies reviewed provide valuable insights into the application of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations. They collectively support the argument that cultural and civilizational factors significantly influence global conflicts, diplomatic relations, and peacebuilding efforts. The findings emphasize the need for strategic and civilized solutions that address intellectual, ideological, and physical dimensions of conflicts. Additionally, understanding the dynamics of civilizational diffusion and the role of religion in conflict resolution contribute to a comprehensive understanding of international relations.

Empirical evidence-based studies on civilization as an analytical tool in international relations highlight its relevance and practical implications. These studies underscore the significance of cultural conflicts, civilizational diffusion, religious thought, and epistemological differences in shaping global dynamics. By synthesizing the findings, it becomes evident that civilization provides valuable insights into conflict analysis and resolution strategies. Further empirical research is needed to deepen our understanding of civilization's applicability in different regional contexts and its impact on sustainable international peacebuilding efforts.

6. research gap:

While there has been considerable research on the concept of civilization in international relations, there is still a significant research gap that needs to be addressed. This research gap pertains to the need for a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the practical application of civilization as an analytical tool in the field of international relations. Specifically, the following research gap can be identified:

1. Lack of empirical studies on the effectiveness of civilization as an analytical tool:

While there is a theoretical discourse on the role of civilization in international relations, empirical studies that provide concrete evidence on the effectiveness and utility of using civilization as an analytical framework are limited. Existing literature predominantly focuses on theoretical perspectives and conceptual debates, neglecting the empirical validation of the practical implications of employing civilization as an analytical tool. Thus, there is a need for empirical research that examines real-world cases and assesses the practical applicability of civilization in understanding and addressing global conflicts, diplomatic relations, and peacebuilding efforts.

2. Limited exploration of civilization beyond cultural conflicts:

Although cultural conflicts have been widely discussed in relation to civilization, there is a research gap concerning the exploration of civilization beyond its impact on cultural clashes. While cultural factors are undoubtedly significant, there is a need to broaden the scope of inquiry and investigate how civilization as an analytical tool can shed light on other dimensions of international relations, such as economic dynamics, political structures, and power relations. Further research should explore how civilization can inform our understanding of these aspects and contribute to the development of comprehensive analytical frameworks.

3. Insufficient attention to the intersectionality of civilizations:

Current research often treats civilizations as separate and distinct entities, overlooking the potential intersections, overlaps, and interdependencies among different civilizations. There is a need to examine how different civilizations interact, influence each other, and shape global dynamics. This includes studying the cross-cultural exchange, hybridization of values and norms, and the emergence of new forms of civilizational identities. By exploring the intersectionality of civilizations, researchers can provide a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of international relations and how civilizations coexist and interact in a globalized world.

4. Limited exploration of non-Western perspectives:

The majority of existing research on civilization as an analytical tool tends to focus on Western perspectives and theories. This neglects the insights and contributions that non-Western perspectives can offer. There is a research gap in terms of exploring non-Western conceptualizations of civilization and their implications for understanding international relations. By incorporating diverse voices and perspectives, researchers can foster a more inclusive and balanced understanding of civilization and its role in global dynamics.

Addressing these research gaps will contribute to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations. By bridging the divide between theory and empirical evidence, exploring civilization beyond cultural conflicts, considering the intersectionality of civilizations, and incorporating non-Western perspectives, future research can enhance our understanding of the practical applicability and relevance of civilization in the study of international relations.

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Dr. Abraham Ebini Dr. Abraham Ebini is a tech expert and modern media professional. He has executed or supervised several ICT jobs for oil servicing firms, media houses, construction companies, engineering firms, and others. In addition to holding a professional certificate from the Cisco International Network Academy and other associated certificates, Abraham Ebini, Esq., holds a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degree. He is also working on his Master of Laws (LLM) in International Business Law at the University of Cumbria in East London. Prior to studying law, Dr. Abraham Ebini studied agricultural economics at the Rivers State University of Science and Technology (now Rivers State University). As a free thinker, he has been the holder of an honorary doctorate of philosophy in the field of metaphysics from Abiden University and Institute, an online learning facility and community of like-minded philosophers, since 2019. In 2021, he was screened and invited by Winners Chapel, Ogun State, the headquarters of the Living Faith Church, to serve as assistant pastor in a Lagos area branch, but as a result of the demise of his mother, he did not positively respond to the call. Prior to 2021, he was ordained and served as resident pastor for the Fire Storms Ministry, a Christian denomination in Port Harcourt; he also served as secretary and principal assistant to the archbishop of the Fire Storms College of Bishops, an institute housing thousands of pentecostal bishops in Nigeria, and resigned from the service to focus on his ICT services in 2022. He has served as an ordained minister at the Mummy B Solution Ministry Worldwide in Port Harcourt. Abraham Ebini, Esq., is the Editor-in-Chief of "Don Intact Magazine" and the Managing Director of Kurukuruaja Limited, which provides ICT services, corporate printing, online TV, etc. He is an experienced ICT consultant who has worked for many national and international organizations since 2005 in areas like software development, website development, network troubleshooting, system security architecture implementation, multimedia animation, etc. He recently developed the Juriscripta (judicial research and judgment writing) software for the Association of Legislative Drafting and Advocacy Practitioners (ALDRAP). This software makes it easy for judges to write decisions, and the Customary Court of Appeal of one of the Nigerian States has started the process of getting its judges to use it. The software won a research grant of \$60,000 (over forty million naira equivalent) from the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Czech Republic for the association in 2022 due to its uniqueness, user-friendliness, and artificial intelligence. Abraham Ebini has appeared in movies with actors and directors like Funke Akindele, Ini Edo, Jide Kosoko, Francis Odega, Yvonne Jegede, Eniola Badmus, Ben Nwosu, Iyabo Ojo, Nora Robert, Anita Ifeoma Isedeh, Rich Tanksley, Jeffrey Daniels, and others in Nigeria's top movie industry, Nollywood. He has also worked for Canadian movie director and actor, Pascal Atuma. Abraham Ebini has authored several articles as a freelancer and correspondent for both local and national tabloids. He has also served as deputy editor of some regional newspapers. Abraham Ebini is a voiceover artist as well as a video editor.

CONCLUSION

A conclusion section is not required. Although a conclusion may review the main points of the paper, do not replicate the abstract as the Findings: "Civilization as an Analytical Tool in International Relations" After conducting empirical research on the topic of civilization as an analytical tool in international relations, the following findings emerged:

1. **Role of Civilization in International Relations:** The study revealed that civilization plays a significant role in shaping international relations. It serves as a lens through which nations and societies understand and interpret global interactions. Civilizational factors, such as cultural norms, values, beliefs, and historical experiences, influence the behavior and decision-making processes of states and non-state actors.
 2. **Cultural Conflicts and Civilizational Clash:** The research findings indicated that cultural conflicts rooted in civilizational differences can have a profound impact on international relations. The clash between civilizations, as theorized by Samuel Huntington, remains relevant in understanding geopolitical dynamics. Cultural tensions and identity-based conflicts often intersect with political, economic, and security issues, shaping international conflicts and alliances.
 3. **Limitations of Civilizational Analysis:** The study identified limitations in using civilization as an analytical tool in international relations. While civilizations provide valuable insights, they can also oversimplify complex phenomena, leading to essentialism and stereotyping. The findings highlighted the importance of avoiding reductionism and recognizing the diversity and complexities within civilizations.
 4. **Epistemological Considerations:** The research revealed diverse epistemological approaches to analyzing civilization in international relations. Scholars from Western and Islamic traditions offered distinct perspectives on the nature of civilization, historical development, and the relationship between heritage and modernity. Understanding these epistemological variations is crucial for a comprehensive analysis of civilization in international relations.
 5. **Ontological Considerations:** The findings highlighted the ontological dimensions of civilization in international relations. Religion emerged as a significant ontological consideration, influencing the conceptualization of civilization and its impact on global affairs. The study emphasized the need to differentiate between philosophical metaphysics and religious beliefs and explore the ontological frameworks that underpin different civilizations.
 6. **Civilizational Dynamics and Global Influence:** The research findings indicated that civilizations are not static entities but rather dynamic and evolving. The diffusion of cultural characteristics and the spread of ideas, values, and norms within and between civilizations contribute to their global influence. Understanding civilizational dynamics is crucial for comprehending the complexities of international relations in an interconnected world.
 7. **Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding:** The study highlighted the potential of using civilization as an analytical tool to address conflicts and promote peace in international relations. By understanding the cultural dimensions of conflicts and engaging in dialogue and mutual understanding, it becomes possible to identify strategic and civilized solutions that focus on resolving intellectual and ideological conflicts before resorting to armed conflict.
 8. **Need for Multidisciplinary Approaches:** The research findings underscored the importance of adopting multidisciplinary approaches to studying civilization in international relations. By integrating insights from various disciplines such as international relations, history, sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies, a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of civilization's role can be achieved.
- These findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge on civilization as an analytical tool in international relations, highlighting its significance, limitations, and potential applications. They provide insights for policymakers, scholars, and practitioners seeking to navigate the complexities of global affairs by considering the role of civilization in shaping international relations.

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