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Answer to the question no: 01

“The Clash of Civilizations?” written by Samuel P. Huntington published in Foreign Affairs in 1993. A vast population of people who have a similar culture, religion, language, traditions, and history is called a civilization. A civilization to which people belong symbolizes the most significant cultural group and, is one of the factors that differentiates humans from other animals (Huntington, 1993, p. 24). Because of cultural variation of different stages for example, small towns, regions, cultural groupings, nationalities, religious groups, etc, all have unique cultures(Huntington, 1993, pp. 23-24). We can take the example of two different countries Bangladesh and China. Their culture, religious views, language, etc are totally different. That’s why they belong to different civilizations. Again, a person living in a village and a person who lives in a city, we will see lots of differences between them.

Furthermore, in this new world, ideological and financial factors will not be the main root causes of conflict. Cultural differences will be the main cause of conflict and the most significant divide among humanity(Huntington, 1993, p. 22). Huntington identifies several probable reasons for the clash of civilizations.

First of all, individuals' identities are influenced by their culture and religion. These are difficult to modify, in comparison with political or economic viewpoints. It is far more difficult for a country to change its dominant religion. For example, India would not change their dominant religion. As the maximum number of Hindu people live there. Moreover, the world continues to become smaller and smaller. Day by day the interactions between peoples from other civilizations are occurring more frequently(Huntington, 1993, p. 25). For example, the moral values or lessons of Islamic countries and Western countries are totally different. Because of Increased interaction, this will either create conflicts or it will create unity among countries. Additionally, Europe and the United States are becoming less influential. Besides, other civilizations, including China, Japan, and Islamic countries, are becoming more powerful and becoming an imminent danger to Western domination. Again, economic and military Power Shifting. Growing civilizations frequently pose a threat to previously dominant powers, which leads to disagreements over assets and influence. Furthermore, it's difficult to compromise on religion and culture. For example, Some Islamic countries are against

drawing cartoon images of humans, whereas Western nations support the right to express themselves. Also, people primarily identify themselves as associated with a culture or religion. Religious identity is strongly embedded and sentimental, which increases the possibility of conflict. Civilizational contrasts have given rise to the worst and longest-lasting clashes (Huntington, 1993, p. 25).

Now, moving forward and talk about Huntington's overall arguments. There are some parts I totally agree with if I consider the current situation of the modern world, but there are a few more parts which I disagree. First of all, if I talk about the parts I agree. Religious and cultural differences are primary reasons for conflict in the modern world. Moreover, religion-based conflicts Are hard to resolve. We can see this in our neighboring countries India and Pakistan. So many wars were seen between these two countries. If we see the history, The Bosnian government announced its independence from Yugoslavia on April 5, 1992. In order to obtain desirable territory and "cleanse" Bosnia of its Muslim civilian population, Bosnian Serbs started a military war against the formation of an independent Bosnian nation with a Bosniak majority. It demonstrated how intense religious and cultural distinctions may result in bloody violence, particularly after the demise of a unifying regime (Yugoslavia). Again, another thing other civilizations are rising whereas Western civilizations are declining. China and Islamic countries have been gaining power, becoming more and more developed countries. On the other hand, cultural identity is essential. Different countries have different cultural values. Culture makes a country different from other countries. For example, in Bengali culture, we celebrate pohela boishakh in our own traditional ways. But in China, they celebrate their new year according to their traditions.

Lastly, if I talk about the parts I disagree. Huntington overlooks the political and economic aspects of conflicts. Again, the conflict between civilizations is not just one difficulty facing the entire world. Conflicts within civilizations are very common to us. We can see the conflicts between Shia and Sunni. Additionally, Everyone wants their country to be peaceful and united with countries around the world. Rather than promoting peace, Huntington's philosophy makes violence seem inescapable. In Bangladesh, peace is extremely significant. Professor Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser, emphasized that we want peace in Bangladesh and peace for the whole world (The Financial Express, 2025). Again, Instead of discussing collaboration between different civilizations, Huntington discusses unity within the same civilizations. Nowadays different civilizations are working together and making their country more developed. This will help to prevent clashes. If we only focus on clashes, then we need to be worried all the

time. But, if we make good bonds with other countries then we will be benefited. Our country will be more developed with the support of other countries.

Answer to the question no: 02

“The case for Islamo-Christian Civilization” written by Richard W. Bulliet published in Columbia University Press New York. He criticizes the widely accepted opinion that Islamic and Western civilizations are basically different from one another. Rather, he believes that these two civilizations have significant historical connections and established a term which he refers "Islamo-Christian civilization”.

Islam and Western Christianity have relatively similar past histories so it is best to consider them as being two distinct forms of a single socioreligious foundation (Bulliet, 2004, p. 15). There are several similarities between them. They have similar religious backgrounds. If we look at the previous histories, Christians and Muslims work hand in hand and have impacted each other in fields such as philosophy, science, and business. Islam and Christianity have shared traditions, scientific expertise, and religious beliefs for decades.

On the other hand, if we discuss regarding conflicts. If the Christian communities of Western Europe & America and the Muslim communities of the Middle East & North Africa are considered to be part of one single civilization, then conflicts between both communities will eventually grow internal, exactly like earlier conflicts involving Catholicism and Protestantism (Bulliet, 2004, p. 11). The common history between Islamo-Christian civilizations should be acknowledged instead of its conflict. Disagreements over religion were not the main cause of historical conflicts. There were several reasons for example political disputes, power rivalry, economics or financial issues, etc.

If we see the history, Muslims, Christians, and Jews were the three major monotheistic religions represented in the diverse nation of Islamic Spain (711–1492). Some people refer to Islamic Spain as a "golden age" of interfaith alignment and acceptance between Muslims, Christians, and Jews (BBC, 2009). Again, Muslims advanced their knowledge of science, mathematics, and medicine during the Middle Ages. The field of research witnessed the opening of new possibilities. Despite lacking the same excellent educational institutions as Muslims, Christians were however adopting the works of Muslim scientists and their surgical methods (Medium, 2021). So, this shows how different religions can be helpful for each other in order to learn something. Furthermore, when it came to religious minorities, the Abbasid dynasty, which controlled the Islamic world from 750 until 1258, was renowned for its considerable leniency. As long as non-Muslims paid the *jizya*, a tax, the 'Abbasids permitted Christians, Jews, and various other non-Muslims to openly practice their religion (TutorChase, n.d.). Greek works were translated and preserved primarily because of the Abbasids' encouragement of collaboration between religions and cultural interactions.

Additionally, moving forward and talk about Samuel P. Huntington's theory that reflects the never-ending conflict between the Islamic and Western worlds is opposed by Bulliet. As per Huntington's perspective, Islam & the West are naturally competitive due to their dissimilar beliefs. Huntington's viewpoint may promote separation and conflict, but Bulliet's promotes mutual understanding and peace. Despite admitting the history of conflicts includes colonialism and the Crusades, Bulliet believes that these disputes do not determine the association among Islam and Christianity. Rather, he prioritizes significant periods of peaceful togetherness and mutual growth.

Lastly, the Islamo-Christian civilization theory believes that Islam and the West were both historical siblings whose commonalities lasted even after they separated (Bulliet, 2004, p. 43). Bulliet's argument emphasizes that collaboration and peacefulness have been around all through history in the same proportions as war. So, instead of considering Islam and Christianity just like competitors, we need to think of them as interconnected elements of a shared civilization.

Answer to the question no: 03

“Understanding Bengal Muslims” edited by Rafiuddin Ahmed published in Oxford University Press. Using a "social history" approach, Rafiuddin Ahmed prioritizes on people's lives, perspectives, and society instead of just leaders and significant events that happened in the past.

As mentioned by Rafiuddin Ahmed the emergence of Muslim identity was not just caused by religion. Bengal's Islamic expansion was a lengthy, complicated, and slow process. Numerous more factors also had significant impacts. For example, politics, language, culture, economics, etc. When the Muslim invaders initially came to eastern Bengal in the thirteenth century, they found temples of gods and goddesses. They didn't start transforming society right away because they didn't have the time or zeal to do so. Combining their own political dominance in an area that was largely non-Muslim was their main objective(Ahmed, 2001, p. 12). For a long time, Bengal, especially the low-lying regions in the east and southeast that together make up a major part of today's Bangladesh was the home to the majority of Islam's followers, was largely shielded from the customs and traditions of India's northern region(Ahmed, 2001, p. 11). Again, the aristocracy, the state, the 'ulema, and religious organizations like madrassas, maktabas, Sufi shrines, and tomb shrines all supported and spread a version of Islamic culture that fit their own ideas of which was authentic, even though they weren't necessarily in agreement about its nature, extent, and consequences(Ahmed, 2001, p. 14). Although attempts to express Islamic cultural symbols increased Bengali Muslims' knowledge of Islam and the Islamic world, they were barely able to completely break with their Bengali culture(Ahmed, 2001, p. 17).

There are differences between Bengali Muslims and other Muslims around the Indian subcontinent. In terms of culture and language, they are connected to Bengali Hindus because they speak Bengali. Despite this, they are considered to be part of the wider Muslim community since they practice Islam. Thus, their identity is multifaceted, consisting of both religious Muslim and geographical Bengali elements. For example, in Islamic countries, they don't celebrate “pohela boishakh” as it is not the part of Islam. Rather “pohela boishakh” is one of the biggest celebrations for Bengalis. So, all the Bengal region people from different religions celebrate this festival together. On the other hand, Both the immigrant Ashraf and the ulema were unwilling to broaden the cultural

bounds of Islam, that's why Bengali history & cultural icons remained ignored(Ahmed, 2001, p. 13).

Rafiuddin Ahmed explains that violence and conflict were not only the methods by which Islam spread. Rather, Islam reached the wider population through nonviolent channels of communication like the teachings of Sufi saints, regional connections, and personal ties. When the Sufis arrived in Bengal, they led a life of simplicity while explaining to the local population about love, unity, and commitment to God. No one felt compelled to convert. Rather, they adapted Islamic principles into traditional Bengali culture, which helped the general population to accept Islam. Additionally, the most recognized figure in Bangladesh's Sylhet district is Shah Jalal, a saint from Bengal (Aal-e-Qutub, n.d.). Muslims across the Indian subcontinent remember Shah Jalal with great respect, and Bangladeshis consider him a national hero(Aal-e-Qutub, n.d.). Islam initially spread mostly in rural areas rather than large cities.

Again, Renowned scholar Dr. Akbar Ali stated "The controlling system in Bengal's villages was lenient", therefore, individualism grew (The Daily Star, 2018). This independence improved literature, music, and the arts while additionally helping them in selecting their preferred religion(The Daily Star, 2018). Moreover, we know there are caste system in the Hindu religion. So, too much discrimination was seen in the previous times. On the other hand, Islam religion believes equally. Therefore there is no presence of discrimination. That's why many Hindus from lower castes and poorer backgrounds converted. Again, the 1947 political separation between Bengali Muslims in Bangladesh and their West Bengali coreligionists had numerous impacts on their individual experiences, viewpoints, and beliefs(Ahmed, 2001, p. 4).

Lastly, Rafiuddin Ahmed conveys to us the gradual and peaceful spreading of Islam in Bengal. It was affected by a variety of social and cultural elements in along with religion. We can understood that, Islam gradually merged with regional Bengali traditions, resulting in a unique culture which was both Bengali and Muslim. This highlights how Islam spread throughout Bengal and how it was solidly set in the daily desires, difficulties, and lives of its citizens.

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