

THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS OR
CIVILIZATIONAL PEACEFUL
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CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS OR CIVILIZATIONAL PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

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Abstract: Contemporary Islamic resurgence is often stereotyped by the West in negative and confronting terms: a 'Green Menace', 'the Arc Crisis', 'Still Fighting the Crusades', 'Rising Islam May Overwhelm the West', etc. This article analyzes Western misconceptions and apprehensions of Islamic resurgence and Islamic civilization. For this purpose, the related views and ideas of Samuel P. Huntington and Khurshid Ahmad are presented and discussed. It is clear that although for Huntington the clash of Western and Islamic civilizations is inevitable, Khurshid Ahmad does not look at the Islamic resurgence as a threat to Western civilization. It is argued that the philosophy behind the rise of Islamic civilization is antithetical to the philosophical foundations of Western civilization. If the main objectives of Western civilization are Western economic and political hegemony and Western cultural imperialism, the thrust behind the rise of Islamic civilization are the strengthening of the faith [imam] of Muslims, the unity, integrity, and development of the Muslim umma and peaceful co-existence with other cultures and civilizations. For Khurshid Ahmad the agenda of contemporary Islamic resurgence is not communal, parochial and confrontational but rather universal and peaceful. Hence, it is suggested that in the multi-civilizational post-cold war period, the burden of civilizational construction should be shared by all diverse cultures and civilizations with mutual trust, understanding and constructive dialogue rather than bias, prejudice and contempt for each other. However, if the West continues to maintain its antagonistic relationship with Islam and perpetuates its cultural invasion and imperialism, the Muslim world will definitely resist this 'monstrosity', because, as stated by Khurshid Ahmad, 'a living and dynamic civilization never yields easily'. Hence, it seems conducive for the West which has already lost its attractiveness since the late 1960s, the result of its moral and spiritual bankruptcy, to change its attitude towards Islam. In a multi-civilizational world, an accommodating attitude seems better for all civilizations if world peace and harmony is to be achieved.

Introduction

No matter how much a civilization is advanced, technologically, economically, politically and militarily, it is threatened if it is not able to provide a peaceful environment for the happy

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living of all of mankind. The failure of any dominant civilization gives rise to another civilization which is capable of demonstrating the well-being of mankind. This rise of another civilization is perceived by some, in the beginning, as a threat to the dominant civilization. Contemporary Islamic resurgence, for example, is perceived by most Western scholars as a specter of 'threat'. As a result, hostile images and stereotypes are projected by Western scholarship on relations between Islam and the West and in this way they continue to incite fear and suspicion against Islam.

Against this background it is argued by a few scholars, notably Samuel P. Huntington, that the clash of Western and Islamic civilizations is inevitable. He has frankly revealed the hidden agenda of the continuation of Western global hegemony. He is also apprehensive that the global Islamic resurgence might revert the existing balance of power. Hence, he has suggested to Western leaders and scholars to preclude other civilizations, particularly the Islamic and Sinic civilizations, from further progress and development. He has proposed that the West should conveniently develop exploitative strategies against other civilizations and remain dominant as a world civilization.

Contrary to this, Khurshid Ahmad, an ideologue of the contemporary Islamic movement, has consistently asserted that Islamic resurgence, should not be perceived as a 'threat'. He has made it abundantly clear that the primary concern of the Islamic movements, the driving force of the Islamic resurgence is to 'set their own house in order'. However, he has also stated that as far as the strategic interests of the West are concerned, they can be settled through dialogue and negotiation.

In this paper an attempt is made to present and analyze the Western stereotyping of Islamic resurgence and Islamic civilization and to clarify such misconceptions so as to provide a better understanding. It is argued that Islamic resurgence, as contended by Khurshid Ahmad, is neither a threat nor an imperialistic strategy for global hegemony. Whereas the West as portrayed by Huntington perceives its relations with the rest, particularly with Islam, as a means of furthering its own power and influence on a global scale so as to continue its political, economic, technological and cultural superiority.

The paper suggests that in the multicivilizational post-Cold War period, if the West shows tolerance towards other civilizations, avoids its interventions particularly in the Muslim world and puts an end to its exploitative strategies, the clash of inter civilizations can be preventable. As for the Islamic resurgence leadership, it deems it essential that a clearer picture of the resurgence's philosophy and methodology be presented in more comprehensive and concrete terms; this being the agenda for the well-being of mankind both now and in the Hereafter. It is also suggested that there should be more inter-civilizational dialogues and roundtables so as to promote better understanding and mutual

cooperation for peaceful coexistence. Hence, the paper emphasizes the preventability rather than the inevitability of a clash of civilizations.

For this purpose, a few important assertions and contentions of Huntington and his clash theory are presented and analyzed. Simultaneously, the relevant concepts, notions and ideas concerning the contemporary Islamic resurgence as perceived by Khurshid Ahmad are presented. Along with these the differences between the Islamic and Western civilizations are identified and briefly elaborated upon.

Preamble

Graham Fuller asserts:

... A civilizational clash is not so much over Jesus Christ, Confucius or the Prophet Muhammad as it is over the unequal distribution of world power, wealth and influence.¹

If such is the case, then the inter-civilizational clash between Islam and the West is preventable unless the West is determined to have one. The reason for this is simple. Muslims do not advocate a civilizational clash merely for 'power', 'wealth' or 'influence'.

When the Makkan chiefs realized that the *tawhidic* message of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) would not only shackle the polytheism of Makka and destroy its idols but also thereafter its 'power', 'wealth' and 'influence', they appointed a prominent leader, 'Utba ibn Rabi'a, to negotiate with the Prophet (pbuh). 'Utba called the Prophet (pbuh) to the Kaba and tried to convince him that although he belonged to the Quraish, he had insulted their gods, ridiculed their wisdom and broken their unity. Having seen that the Prophet did not respond to him positively, he said:

If you want wealth, we will all contribute to make you the richest of us all. If your object is honour and power, we will make you our leader and promise to decide nothing without you. If, even, you think of royalty, we will elect you our king. If that which you experience and see (the visitation of Gabriel and the revelation) is beyond your control and you cannot defend yourself against it, we shall help cure you by spending money for medical care. It is possible for a man to be overcome by the force of an unseen power until he finds a way to a cure.²

The Prophet (pbuh) listened to him patiently and recited the basic tenets of Islam from the Qur'an. Negotiations broke down and the Makkan oligarchy resorted to violence against the Prophet's (pbuh) mission.

The primary concern of Samuel P. Huntington is the protection of Western interests, in wealth, power and influence at the global level. He writes:

To preserve Western civilization in the face of declining Western power, it is in the interest of the United States and European countries: to achieve greater political, economic, and military integration and to coordinate their policies so as to preclude states from other civilizations exploiting differences among them; ...to restrain the development of the conventional and unconventional military power of Islamic and Sinic countries; and, most important, to recognize that Western intervention in the affairs of other civilizations is probably the single most dangerous source of instability and potential global conflict in a multicivilizational world. ³

It is quite obvious from the above that Huntington even suggests exploitative strategies to prevent other civilizations from further development and to continue Western global hegemony. The primary concern of Islamic resurgence on the other hand is not global hegemony but the manifestation of *iman* (belief). Khurshid Ahmad observes:

Furthermore, Islamic resurgence is primarily a religious and ethical movement. It has political overtones, yet one must appreciate its real ethos, which is mainly an effort to strengthen *iman* (belief). To reaffirm this commitment to Allah (swt), it champions certain introspection so that Muslims can live spiritually, ethically, and religiously. It is unfortunate that most Western literature on the subject of Islamic resurgence does not bring out these salient features. In my view, the political, social, and structural dimensions of Islamic resurgence are only outward expressions or manifestations of this ethical renovation, without which the rest is doomed to failure. ⁴

It is contended by Khurshid Ahmad that Islamic resurgence is not a manifestation of greed or lust for 'power', 'wealth', or 'influence', as is generally perceived by some Western scholars. Islamic resurgence is a demonstration of *iman* by strong believers and followers of Islam spread across the world. However, Khurshid Ahmad, further clarifies that the West need not worry about its material and political interests nor need it perceive the Islamic resurgence as a threat:

To my mind, no Muslim country, no Islamic movement, no Muslim nation is a threat to the political power of Europe, China, Japan, America or any other country. Instead, we only want the freedom of our own lands and to see that the interests and the will of the people can be realized through a

fair political process. As far as the strategic interests of the Western countries are concerned, whether it is oil, or air, sea and land routes, raw materials, essential commodities, and international trade, we would very much like to have a dialogue so that we can resolve conflicts through negotiation.⁵

Despite all these and other such clarifications, Islamic resurgence is still perceived as a 'threat', as a 'Green Menace', or as an 'evil empire' at war with the emerging New World Order. John L. Esposito rightly observes:

Belief that a clash of worldviews, values, and civilizations is leading to an impending confrontation between Islam and the West. Such worldviews are reflected in headlines and articles with titles like these: 'Still fighting the crusades,' 'The New Crescent in Crisis: The Global Intifada,' 'Rising Islam May Overwhelm the West,' 'The Roots of Muslim Rage,' 'The Islamic War against Modernity,' and the 'Arc Crisis.'⁶

No doubt such phrases capture the attention and imagination of the public, but they also reinforce what Esposito has observed as 'an astonishing degree of ignorance and cultural stereotyping of Arabs and Islam'.⁷ He, therefore, pointed out that such exaggerated terms and phrases distort the nature of Islam and also tend to overlook 'the diversity of its multiple and complex manifestations'. Burgat and Dowell also observe the same:

The inflation in terminology - 'Islamism', 'Fundamentalism', 'Integrism', 'Khomeinism', 'Muslim Brothers', etc. created by Western writers intrigued and disturbed by what they see, attests both to the difficulty of coming to terms with the movement's diversity from the exterior, and of grasping the essence of its meaning.⁸

It seems to us that what the West 'sees' has much to do with what the West 'aspires to see' and that essentially the whole problem lies in what the West 'aspires to see'. For instance, Huntington writes:

The West is and will remain for years to come the most powerful civilization. Yet its power relative to that of other civilizations is declining. As the West attempts to assert its values and to protect its interest, non-Western societies confront a choice.⁹

Huntington, further asserts that a few societies try to emulate the West 'to join or to "bandwagon" with the West'. Whereas, other cultures like Confucian and Islamic societies not only resist Western values but also try to expand their own economic and military power

to resist or achieve 'balancing' against the West. Hence, a 'central axis of post-Cold War world politics' depends on the interaction of Western power and culture with the power and the culture of non-Western civilizations.

Most of the fears and apprehensions of Huntington revolve around the following: Western civilization should continue to thrive as the most dominant civilization and no other civilization should assert and rise to resist or 'balance' the West. Among non-Western civilizations, the great troublemakers for Huntington include the Sinic and, Islamic civilizations. However, more than China and its missiles, he perceives Islam and its revival as more threatening. He writes:

Some Westerners, including President Bill Clinton, have argued that the West does not have problems with Islam but only with violent Islamist extremists. Fourteen hundred years of history demonstrate otherwise; the relations between Islam and Christianity, both Orthodox and Western, have often been stormy. Each has been the other's Other.¹⁰

He took pains to strengthen his thesis by presenting several historical events from his peculiar threatening perspective and quoting already threatened scholars like Bernard Lewis. 'For almost a thousand years', Bernard Lewis observes, 'from the first Moorish landing in Spain to the second Turkish siege of Vienna, Europe was under constant threat from Islam'.¹¹ Huntington then asserts: 'Islam [is] the only civilization which has put the survival of the West in doubt and it has done that at least twice'.¹²

Fortunately or unfortunately, his visualization of 'threat' is supported by a large number of respondents of whom he asked questions pertaining to the Islamic threat to the US. According to him, in 1994, 61 percent of a sample of 35,000 Americans said that the Islamic revival represents a threat to US interests in the Middle East. In the same year, when asked to identify 'critical threats' to the US, 72 percent of the public and 61 percent of foreign policy leaders pointed out 'nuclear proliferation' while 69 percent of the public and 33 percent of leaders identified 'international terrorism' which according to Huntington are 'two issues widely associated with Islam'.¹³ He seems to be quite convinced that there is no 'error' in his perception of 'terror' in Islamic revival to which he refers in many ways as 'global rival', 'fundamentalist Islam', etc.

Yet the problem of Huntington is not so simple. Rather it is wider and more complex, for it is not Islamic fundamentalism alone which he sees as a problem but rather Islam as a civilization as a whole. He writes:

The underlying problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is Islam, a different civilization, whose people is convinced of the superiority of their culture and is obsessed with [the] inferiority of their power.¹⁴

According to Huntington, for Islam the problem is not the CIA or the US Department of Defense, rather it is the West, a different civilization. Hence, in both these civilizations people are convinced of the universality and superiority of their cultures. They also resist if one culture imposes its culture on the other. Hence, according to Huntington more than anything else these are 'basic ingredients that fuel [the] conflict between Islam and the West'.

In other words, for Huntington, the main elements of a clash between Islam and the West are Islam's civilizational differences and conviction of its cultural superiority over others including Western culture. The civilizational clash, in other words, is fuelled by the conviction of both civilizations of their cultural superiority in the world. For this reason, Islamic resurgence is perceived as a movement of cultural independence from the West. Referring to Islamic resurgence, Burgat writes:

We are witnessing the third phase of the process of decolonization. The first phase was political, the independence movements. The second (was) economic, the nationalization of the Suez Canal in Egypt, or oil in Algeria. The last phase is cultural...¹⁵

No doubt there are several fundamental cultural differences between Islam and the West. There is also no doubt that Islam has always resisted the West's cultural imperialism. Although, during and after colonialism, the Western cultural onslaught in Muslim countries had secularized and Westernized great segments of Muslim societies, it did not succeed against all elements of these Muslim societies. This does not, however, mean that Islam resorts to war and fights to expand its culture. As it is not in the culture of Islam to accept alien concepts and ethos if they contradict Islamic concepts and ethos, it is also not in the culture of Islam to fight for cultural imperialism. At the same time, it is the culture of Islam to resist cultural imperialism that is imposed on it to preserve its own. Khurshid Ahmad observes:

The current phase of Islamic resurgence entails moving away from a slavish imitation of Western models, and adopting a selective out-look on what should and should not be adopted from external civilizations. Although Islamic society can benefit from the Western experience in a number of ways, it has no intention of perpetuating the imposition of alien cultures at the expense of its own.¹⁶

This clearly implies that Islamic resurgence does not possess any programme to impose its culture on other cultures, except to preserve its own. Hence, if the West puts an end to its own programme of cultural imperialism the inter-civilizational clash may be preventable, should the clash be based on cultural motives.

However, according to Hunter, the clash between the two civilizations — Islam and the West — should not be perceived in terms of cultural and ideological differences alone but rather in terms of interest and power related issues. She contends that the clash is between the 'civilization of the poor and the powerless and that of the rich and the mighty. It is a conflict between those who have power and those who do not, those who control the world's destiny and those who [are the] subject of control'.¹⁷

In other words, the clash is for global power and global influence more than it is for global culture. The same is also observed by Fuller as mentioned earlier. It is argued that the Islamists resent Western domination of the international economic and political systems, Western support for 'unrepresentative and repressive governments in Muslim countries that are subservient to the West', and Western, particularly US support for Israel, etc. It is also argued by Hunter that the rights of Muslims in Jerusalem is another important factor accounting for 'the level of enmity between the Muslim world and the West'.¹⁸

Besides all these, the 'explosive marriage of Islam and oil' is another crucial factor in the theory of a clash. Hunter points out that from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf, and from the peaks of the Caucasus to the sands of Arabia and the Steppes of Central Asia, there are reservoirs of oil and gas. The industrial and military strength of the West depends on oil and gas. Hence, Hunter asserts:

No analysis of the theory of a potential clash of civilizations between Islam and the West, nor any answer to the question of whether the clash could be replaced by peaceful coexistence, can be found without accounting for the explosive marriage of Islam and oil.¹⁹

From the above, it is self-evident that other than the cultural interest, the West possesses several socio-economic and political interests to continue its global hegemony. It is also evident that the Muslim world appears to be a potential threat to the West in its way of global hegemony because of historical, cultural, geographic, geological and other reasons. Hence, in general, the clash between these two civilizations seems unavoidable to the West.

All the above no doubt represent the economic, political and strategic reasons for the clash and so as to continue global power. However, Huntington argues that culture follows power. Hence, he contends that Western culture can be imported by others through 'expansion, deployment and [the] impact of Western power'.²⁰ He asserts that 'imperialism is the

necessary logical consequence of universalism'.²¹ At the same time, Huntington seems to realize the immoral attitude of the West in imposing its values, institutions and culture on other civilizations. He writes:

In the emerging world of ethnic conflict and civilizational clash, Western belief in the universality of Western culture suffers [from] three problems: it is false; it is immoral; and it is dangerous.²²

Despite this true realization, Huntington insists that the West should strive 'to maintain Western technological and military superiority over other civilizations' and 'to restrain the development of the conventional and unconventional military power of Islamic and Sinic countries'.²³

All these explicitly reveal that the reasons for the clash include Western lust for economic, political and cultural hegemony as also Western deprivation of other civilizations, in this latter respect seeking to preclude them from following their own economic and political systems and from preserving their own culture. But such is not the case with Islamic resurgence. Islamic resurgence is not the manifestation of arrogance for economic and political power and cultural imperialism, but rather a return to Islamic values and institutions in a time and space context. Khurshid Ahmad observes:

Thus, the spirit of the Islamic resurgence can conceivably be defined as a return to the roots of Islamic idiom. This return to the 'sources' is seen by Muslims as a liberating force, yet it is labeled by secular elites and the West as 'fundamentalism'. Reviving the faith and establishment of a din, the essential premise upon which Islamic life is based, is not akin to 'fundamentalism' that has become bogged down in retrogressive, violent historical wishful thinking. Rather, it brings a freshness of approach, a new commitment, dynamism, flexibility and an ability to face current challenges.²⁴

As far as Western strategic economic, and political interests are concerned, Khurshid Ahmad argues that the Islamic resurgence is not 'merely the angry reaction of underprivileged Muslims against Western affluence'.²⁵ It is also not a mere 'reaction to the legacy of imperialism'.²⁶ Muslims are, by and large, disaffected with most of their governments which are promoting Western interests. Islamic resurgence is therefore 'a critique of both the status quo in Muslim societies and the secular Westernization of these communities'.²⁷ Khurshid Ahmad further elaborates the point in the following words:

The Islamic resurgence is a positive, ideological movement by Muslims which is concerned with the reconstruction of the Muslim world's socio-

economic order based on the values of Islam. It has no expansionist tendencies. It is bound to cross paths with members of the international community, and have disagreements with some of them. While the colonial legacy is relevant to popular unrest in the region, it is not going to remain the most decisive factor in provoking Islamic reaction.²⁸

It is quite obvious from the above that Islamic resurgence has not the slightest intention of fighting against the West for economic, political or cultural interests to launch its global hegemony. Islamic resurgence is more interested in the reconstruction of its own socio-economic order rather than in expansionist tendencies. Hence, even if the clash of civilizations is supposed to be based on economic, political and other strategic issues, it can be prevented provided the West stops intervening in the affairs of the Muslim world for its own interests. But, as Hunter points out, 'Western behavior has been determined primarily by security concerns, political and economic interests, and the drive for power and prestige....²⁹

According to Esposito, since Islam and Christianity possess a universal message and mission and they both reinforce their differences despite their common theological roots, sometimes the chances for confrontation appear more than the chances for mutual cooperation. He writes: 'Both sides have focused solely on and reinforced differences, and have polarized rather than united these three (Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions) great interrelated monotheistic traditions...³⁰

But, as far as Islam is concerned, it respects the differences in other religions, cultures and civilizations but it rejects cultural and civilizational imperialism. Islam accepts the scientific and technological advancement of Western civilization but it rejects its philosophical foundations. Khurshid Ahmad elaborates the views of Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi on this point:

He appreciates the scientific and technological achievements and the vigour shown in general by Western civilization during the past few centuries. At the same time he thinks that Western civilization does not possess the right sense of direction, and is inherently rotten because of the falsity of its foundational principles.³¹

This clearly implies that Islam is not totally against the West only because Islam is different from the West, as is often portrayed by the West. Furthermore, differences do not necessarily demand confrontation, rather they demand negotiation and communication. It is possible that differences in culture and civilization may remain due to their different ideological principles, but mutual understanding and mutual cooperation between different societies can be formed for common and humanitarian causes. Khurshid Ahmad writes:

Naturally, they (the Islamic movements) do not compromise principles, yet they are very flexible about their strategies, tactics, and modes of operation, and even about responding to real difficulties which they face on the ground. I would also like to emphasize that they are eager to have dialogue with the West. They are not arrogant, and they do not opt for isolation from that world. They are cognizant of the fact that the world today is becoming one 'global city'. We certainly have to co-exist, and this is possible only if we all apply a humanistic approach to our political, intellectual, economic, and social problems.³²

But Huntington is more prone to perceive the relations between Islam and the West from a clashing perspective. He writes:

So long as Islam remains Islam (which it will) and the West remains the West (which is more dubious), this fundamental conflict between two great civilizations and ways of life will continue to define relations in the future even as it has defined them for the past fourteen centuries.³³

It sounds illogical and absurd. But Huntington insists that the fight between Islam and the West is inevitable. One of the important reasons as he points out, for this fight is the 'Godlessness' of the West. He writes:

Muslims attack the West not for adhering to an imperfect, erroneous religion, which is nonetheless a 'religion of the book', but for not adhering to any religion at all. In Muslim eyes Western secularism, irreligiosity, and hence immorality are worse evils than the Western Christianity that produced them. In the Cold War the West labelled its opponent 'godless communism', in the post-Cold War conflict of civilizations, Muslims see their opponent as 'the godless West'.³⁴

No doubt, according to Muslim scholars, one of the biggest problems faced by the West is its secularism, its denial of God's guidance in the public realm. However, this does not mean that they threaten the West into either following God or disappearing. Muslim scholars only emphasize that the West should be critically studied because its ideologies and culture are merely based on human reasoning without Divine guidance and that this has only caused havoc in the West. Khurshid Ahmad elaborates the views of Mawdudi in this respect:

The fundamental fault of that civilization (Western)... is that it is based on man's independence of, and indifference to, Divine guidance. Modern man has gradually come to a point where he neither considers it necessary to follow God's guidance, nor feels that he is answerable to God for his conduct. And if any at all are conscious of the need to follow God's

guidance, then the purview of that guidance is confined to a very narrow sphere of man's life, allowing human caprices, biases and concern with narrow interests to play havoc with human life.³⁵

Islamic movements endeavour to protect Muslim societies from the onslaught of Western ideas, concepts and ideologies. They also see that Muslim societies are molded on Islamic principles rather than on non-Islamic value systems. This should not imply that Islamic movements are always ready for the fight against the West, only because the West is different from Islam. The reconstruction of one's own house does not necessarily entail the destruction of others. Khurshid Ahmad writes;

In this regard, our only submission is that Islam and Islamic movements should not be looked upon primarily as a threat to the West, because the primary concern of the Islamic movements is to set their own house in order. We do possess a programme for remolding and refashioning society and polity, and our aim is to reconstruct Muslim society.³⁶

But Huntington even finds room to complain when Muslim intellectuals and leaders venture into a critical assessment of Western ideologies, culture and its foreign intervention in the affairs of Muslim societies. He expresses grief that earlier at least a few Muslim leaders used to say 'we must Westernize',³⁷ but now it is hard to find any Muslim scholar, journalist or leader 'praising Western values and institutions'. He points out that most Muslim scholars, whether fundamentalists or liberal, Western culture is 'materialistic, corrupt, decadent and immoral'.³⁸ It is interesting to note that he referred to Fatima Mernissi's *Islam and Democracy* which is hailed by Westerners as a 'courageous statement of a modern, liberal, female Muslim' and quoted a few of her statements on Western industrialism, materialistic culture, military research etc. Then he identifies how she asserts that Muslims should liberate themselves from Western power developing their own engineers and scientists and building their own weapons. A very funny and curious thing to note here is the bracket in which he writes: (whether nuclear or conventional, she does not specify). Then he ends the paragraph by warning his readers: 'These, to repeat, are not the views of a bearded, hooded ayatollah'.³⁹

Huntington discusses the relationship between 'culture' and 'power' throughout his book. At one place he writes:

The distribution of cultures in the world reflects the distribution of power. Trade may or may not follow the flag, but culture almost always follows power. Throughout history, the expansion of the power of a civilization has usually occurred simultaneously with the flowering of its culture and has almost always involved its using that power to extend its values, practices,

and institutions to other societies. A universal civilization requires universal power.⁴⁰

The Imperialistic and exploitative perspective of Huntington, which is quite characteristic of the West as a whole, is explicit here. He further elaborates upon it by giving examples from Roman power of the classical world, European colonialism of the nineteenth century and American hegemony in the twentieth century. However, he regrets that 'European colonialism is over; and American hegemony is receding'.⁴¹ The erosion of Western culture is due to the reassertion of indigenous cultures and particularly the revival of religions across the world.⁴² He points out that even adaptive and Western-educated leaders 'indigenized themselves'. For instance he writes: 'the secularist Jinnah became the fervent apostle of Islam as the basis for the Pakistani state. The Anglofied Lee learned Mandarin and became an articulate promoter of Confucianism. The Christian Bandaranaike converted to Buddhism and appealed to Sinhalese nationalism'.⁴³ He argues that indigenization manifested the revival of Islamization, Hinduization and the promotion of Confucianism which occurred in Asian and Muslim countries. Thus, he argues that as the West is declining, the world is manifesting 'unsecularization' as also pointed out by George Weigel.⁴⁴ He also asserts that the long-lived assumption that Westernization is a prerequisite for modernization is fading away and giving rise to modernization through deWesternization.⁴⁵

Although Huntington refers to the revival efforts of several Asian religions, he seems to be more concerned and apprehensive about Islamic revival. He contends that in rapidly modernizing societies where traditional religions have failed to adapt to modernization, Western Christianity and Islam are attracting people. However, he points out that although the majority of protagonists of Western culture in such societies are Christian missionaries, latterly it is Islam which is more successful. He writes:

Neither Adam Smith nor Thomas Jefferson will meet the psychological, emotional, moral, and social needs of urban migrants and first generation secondary school graduates. Jesus Christ may not meet them either, but is likely to have a better chance. In the long run, however, Mohammad wins out.⁴⁶

He points out that Islam is spreading fast through conversion as well as through reproduction. In the 1980s, the percentage of Christians in the world was about 30 percent but declining. By 2025, Christians will represent approximately 25 percent. The proportion of Muslims in the world conversely is expected to increase, surpassing the number of Christians and 'probably accounting for about 30 percent of the world's population by 2025'.⁴⁷

But more than with conversion and reproduction, Huntington seems especially concerned about Islamic resurgence and the interrelationship between power and culture clashing with Western culture and Western power. He writes:

The causes of the renewed conflict between Islam and the West thus lie in fundamental questions of power and culture.... Who is to rule? Who is to be ruled?⁴⁸

Huntington's statement reminds us of comments by Joseph A. Camilleri on the crisis of civilization:

Traditional conceptions of time, space and movement have been overthrown by the technological revolution and the shift to an exploitative, power-centred culture. The ensuing social and psychological discontinuity and moral vacuum have produced a severe crisis of conscience and a large-scale flight from reality ...⁴⁹

Power-centred culture may be one of the characteristics of the West but not of Islam. In Islam power and authority belong to Allah (swt) and man as a vicegerent of Allah (swt) exercises the power of vicegerency on the earth which is conferred to him by Allah (swt). Khurshid Ahmad elaborates the views of Mawdudi on this point in the following words:

As for man, he is God's creature, and hence is bound to the service and obedience of God. Not only that, God has chosen man, in the words of the Qur'an, for the unique distinction of His vicegerency on earth. Each human being is endowed with the trust of vicegerency from God and is accountable to Him in that regard. In his capacity as God's vicegerent, man is also committed to his Principal - God — to administer the affairs of the world in strict accordance to the latter's directives, and to exercise all his powers which after all have been conferred upon him by God - within the limits prescribed by Him.⁵⁰

And this, in short, is the political culture of Islam. Allah (swt) possesses sovereignty and He is also the Lawgiver. Man as the vicegerent of Allah (swt) legislates, executes and adjudicates on earth keeping himself within the bounds of the Sharia which mainly comprises the Quran and the *Sunna*. Man is also given the right of *ijtihad*⁵¹ which implies that he can use his intellectual reason on those areas and issues on which either there are no explicit injunctions in the Qur'an and the *Sunna* or where they are not given in sufficient detail. However, man is allowed to present and develop his opinions on such issues through using *ijtihad* while keeping the spirit of the Qur'an and the *Sunna* intact.

The philosophy behind such Islamic political culture is that both the East and the West belong to Allah (swt) and man is created as Allah's (swt) vicegerent to serve Him. Hence, it is the Law (Sharia) of Allah (swt) which should reign supreme, not man made laws nor the power of man. For the same reason, unlike the West Islam does not possess the concept of 'conquest', rather it possesses that concept which implies the opening of the territories for Allah (swt). It signifies that Islam is 'open' for all and all those who want to submit to Allah (swt) enter into the fold of Islam willingly, without compulsion. It also entails that when these people accept the sovereignty of Allah (swt), they are already liberated from man-made laws, ideologies and systems because they become Allah's (swt) vicegerents and only follow the Shari'a. Thus, from this obvious concept it is quite obvious that Islamic political culture is not obsessed with a power which dominates or exploits people. It also underlines that the territories in Islam are expanded not for self-domination and self-aggrandizement but rather for Allah (swt) so that His Laws are established and people are liberated from oppressors and despots.

Esposito also seems to have comprehended this concept of Islam. He points out that Islam not only provides the basis of community identity but also the rationale or legitimacy for rulers. Thus, 'for example, the wars of conquest were termed *fath*, "opening or victory" of the way for Islam'.⁵²

Hence, although Huntington's assertion is that presently Islam and the West are vexed with the question of 'who is to rule? who is to be ruled,' is not true at least for Islam. How Islam looks at its relationship with the West, is expressed by Khurshid Ahmad in the following words:

I think that one must consider at least two dimensions of the relationship between Islam and the West. The first concerns the question of those moral values and principles that Islam stands for and those that Western civilization stands for. There are certain areas where there is no conflict between the two, but there are certain values in respect of which they differ. However, we must not look at this difference as a threat, or something that should lead to enmity or bitterness, but as an arena for healthy competition. There was a time in history when ideas and values were imposed through political power. May I submit that one of the major developments of contemporary history has been the free expression of ideas, and freedom of discussion and communication. We must encourage healthy dialogue and the exchange of ideas between Islam and the West.⁵³

This clearly implies that the leadership of Islamic Resurgence is keen to prevent the supposed clash between Islamic and Western civilizations. But Huntington does not seem to perceive the relationship with other civilizations in terms of peace and cooperation. He

assumes that Asian societies, particularly the Sinic civilization, may join the Muslim countries to fight against the West. He writes:

At the macro level, the dominant division is between 'the West and the rest', with the most intense conflicts occurring between Muslim and Asian societies on the one hand, and the West on the other. The dangerous clashes of the future are likely to arise from the interaction of Western arrogance, Islamic intolerance, and Sinic assertiveness.⁵⁴

Everyone can agree about Western arrogance, but very few may agree with 'Islamic intolerance' and 'Sinic assertiveness'. God alone knows how Huntington defines 'tolerance' and 'intolerance'! In the nineteenth century, Europe colonized the Muslim countries as a 'White man's burden'. America intervenes, even today, in the domestic and external policies of Muslim countries for its own interest and defines it as the interest of humanity and, thus, contains its military, economic and political hegemony. What have the Muslims done during this time? They have only struggled hard to defend their faith and their territories and assert their own value system and culture. Is to be assertive to be intolerant? The fact is if one cannot face even the assertiveness of others it is 'intolerance'. If Islamic and Sinic civilizations have any dignity and honour for their own ideologies and cultures, they would assert and they would defend. Defence and assertiveness of one's own ideology and culture is not bad but rather commendable but colonization and forceful domination over others is not just bad, it is rather condemnable. Colonization in the name of the White man's burden is a 'white lie' and the continuation of military and politico-economic hegemony in the name of modernization is a 'modern lie'. The truth lies somewhere else - in the efforts to promote Western culture and power at the global level. Huntington writes quite frankly:

Alone among civilizations the West has had a major and at times devastating impact on every other civilization. The relation between the power and culture of the West and the power and cultures of other civilizations is, as a result, the most pervasive characteristic of the world of civilizations. ... The central problem in the relations between the West and the rest is, consequently, the discordance between the West's, particularly America's, efforts to promote a universal Western culture and its declining ability to do so.⁵⁵

Isn't this too much? This is sheer childishness! In the above lines, Huntington presents a picture of America as a stubborn, naughty and problem child who always wants to win the games and who screams and shouts if others rise and win.

The whole world before the West is like a big parade ground, the captain being America. If the other countries move 'right' and 'left' following its directions, it is fine; if they follow

their own directions according to their own faith and culture, they are perceived as a 'threat', a 'menace', as 'militants' and 'terrorists'. Huntington writes:

The West, and especially the United States, which has always been a missionary nation, believes that the non-Western peoples should commit themselves to the Western values of democracy, free markets, limited government, human rights, individualism, the rule of law, and should embody these values in their institutions. ... what is universalism for the West is imperialism to the rest.⁵⁶

Definitely, on the one hand, the West likes to impose its own ideologies and culture on others and, on the other, it wants others to call such imperialistic tendencies universalism! What is the main intention behind this self-styled universalism? Obviously, with the power and influence of the West over the rest Huntington asserts that the future of the world depends on the distribution of power and this is also one of the factors behind the clash between civilizations:

Will the global institutions, the distribution of power, and the politics and economics of nations in the twenty-first century primarily reflect Western values and interests or will they be shaped primarily by those of Islam and China?⁵⁷

In other words, the main question is whether Islamic and Sinic civilizations together or alone will revert the balance of power? If they do, there will be 'war', if they don't, there will be so-called 'peace'. On this point, Hunter goes further than Huntington. She writes:

Even a complete secularization of Muslim societies and their adoption of important aspects of Western civilization would not guarantee perpetual amity between the Western and the Muslim countries, however, as long as other sources of discord remain, especially the Muslim countries' desire to redress the unfavourable balance of power vis-a-vis the West.⁵⁸

First of all, as far as the complete secularization of Muslim societies is concerned, it is an unfulfilled Western dream. Even those Muslim countries which were secularized and modernized on the Western model, like Turkey and Egypt, Western scholars like Crecelius⁵⁹ and Bellah⁶⁰ had to finally conclude that 'religion' is still emerging in both the countries as a vital force. Secondly, as far as balance of power is concerned, Islam always aspires to keep 'peace' and 'balance' in the world. But, if 'arrogance of power' is manifested in the name of 'balance of power', Islam will surely resist to restore the right balance. Obsession and arrogance for power are not the civilized gestures to be accepted and respected, but are rather imperialistic and exploitative and to be rejected. Khurshid Ahmad writes:

If in the Muslim mind and the Muslim viewpoint, Western powers remain associated with efforts to perpetuate the Western model in Muslim society, keeping Muslims tied to the system of Western domination at national and international levels and thus destabilizing Muslim culture and society directly or indirectly, then, of course, the tension will increase. Differences are bound to multiply. And if things are not resolved peacefully through dialogue and understanding, through respect for each other's rights and genuine concerns, they are destined to be resolved otherwise.⁶¹

How much the West is prepared to come forward for dialogue and understanding with Islam is a different question. But, as far as Huntington is concerned, he insists that the West should continue its domination in the name of democracy and human rights. He contends that the issues that divide the West and other societies are crucial on the international agenda. He identifies three issues which involve the efforts of the West; (1) to sustain its military superiority; (2) to promote Western political values and institutions by forcing other societies to respect and to adopt human rights and democracy as conceived in the West; and (3) to protect the cultural, social, and ethnic integrity of Western societies. In all three areas, according to Huntington, the West would face difficulties 'defending its interests against those of non-Western societies'.⁶²

From the above, it is self-evident that the West, as portrayed by Huntington, on the one hand is determined to continue its imperialistic mission giving it an image of democratic vision and on the other predicts the clash of civilizations. In fact, Huntington has clearly stated that the non-West realizes the hypocrisy and double standards of the West. He writes:

Non-Westerners also do not hesitate to point to the gaps between Western principle and Western action. Hypocrisy, double standards, and 'but nots' are the price of universalist pretensions. Democracy is promoted but not if it brings Islamic fundamentalists to power; non-proliferation is preached for Iran and Iraq but not for Israel; ...⁶³

Esposito has also expressed how the West is concerned about its own interests and how it exploits others. For instance, he identifies how the West participates in cancelling the elections and repressing Islamic movements in Tunisia and Algeria. He further comments that violence begets violence. Many of those who experience regime violence (harassment, imprisonment, torture) or see their colleagues languish and die in prison will conclude that democracy is a dead end. They will withdraw from the political process and become convinced that violence is the only recourse. US official silence or economic or political

support for regimes is read as complicity and a sign of America's double standards in the implementation of democracy.⁶⁴

Esposito has also observed that American support for repressive regimes will intensify anti-Americanism. However, Hunter has more clearly pointed out the selfish and exploitative attitudes of the West:

The external behaviour of Western states also bears witness that power and interest rather than ideology have been the critical factors in driving their foreign policies. Both before and since the age of ideology, Western behaviour has been determined primarily by security concerns, political and economic interests, and the drive for power and prestige, not by some value and belief related factors such as ideology and civilization.⁶⁵

She also points out that the West has always justified, rationalized and legitimized its actions. She asserts that the West has insisted on democratic norms wherever parliamentary elections could bring to power pro-Western governments. But 'Western states not only have not flinched when their favoured governments have denied the fruits of free elections to their opponents but also helped them eliminate their opponents, for example, in Algeria since 1992. This rule has applied also to other pro-Western Muslim countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Tunisia and several Gulf and Arab states'.⁶⁶

Hunter also discusses how the West has often used the argument for human rights to 'justify hostile policies including covert efforts to destabilize governments when security, economic, and other interests seem to require it'⁶⁷ She also points out how the West keeps its relations with the non-West on the basis of its policies towards the West. She points out that 'the West had little problem with the government of Ja'far Numeiry in Sudan because Numeiry did not challenge the West or its regional allies. On the other hand however, the West has put Sudan's current military Islamist government on its list of pariah states. The reason behind this attitude is not merely Sudan's Islamization policy but mainly because the current Sudanese government has opposed Western policies in the Middle East'.⁶⁸

Here lies the whole problem. The West seems to have seriously committed itself to Machiavelli's doctrine - 'the end justifies the means'.⁶⁹ For acquisition, retention and expansion of power, it is determined to follow any strategy and adopt any policy which may be inhuman, cruel and humiliating for others. All the above quoted scholars, Huntington, Esposito, Hunter and several others acknowledge this fact. The relationship of the West with the rest of the world is based on such selfish interests and exploitation. It acts like a 'fox' and a 'lion' as the situation demands. But it gives moral and humanitarian terms and names to its most selfish and egocentric plans and actions. Khurshid Ahmad observes:

Observers often pose the question: Can Muslim countries afford to reject certain choices vis-a-vis development, technology and so on? Simply put, they do not aim at rejection. The real question is: What type of development is on offer and what are its objectives? Muslims fear that what is being offered to their nations are modern interpretations of Europe's white man's burden a 'civilizing' force that will not promote but actually infringe upon economic, social, moral and ideological development.⁷⁰

This 'white man's burden', whether of the nineteenth-century colonialism or twentieth and twenty-first centuries development and modernization processes, is nothing but a 'white menace.' Similarly, the concept of 'universal civilization' and the rhetoric of the New World Order as presented by the West are but the 'white menace'. This can be better comprehended through Huntington's words:

The concept of a universal civilization is a distinctive product of Western civilization. In the nineteenth century the idea of 'the White man's burden' helped justify the extension of Western political and economic domination over non-Western societies. At the end of the twentieth century the concept of a universal civilization helps justify Western cultural dominance of other societies and the need for those societies to ape Western practices and institutions. Universalism is the ideology of the West for confrontations with non-Western cultures.⁷¹

Western confrontation with non-Western cultures, particularly with Muslim countries, in the name of colonialism, modernization or globalization, has always given rise to various impediments to the Muslim world. The main concern of the West in all such efforts has been to keep the rest at rest and lead the West as best. Khurshid Ahmad observes:

There were genuine difficulties and impediments within Muslim society, particularly the ones generated by the impact of colonial rule on Muslim lands but the situation was aggravated by the continuing efforts of the Western powers to 'Westernize' the liberated Muslim countries and keep them tied to the politico-economic system of the West, to perpetuate some kind of centre-periphery relationship between the West and the rest.⁷²

After centuries of Western exploitative and imperialistic tendencies, as also its euphemistic terms, the non-West now clearly understands the West. Huntington writes: 'The non-West see as Western what the West sees as universal. What Westerners herald as benign global integration, such as the proliferation of worldwide media, non-Westerners denounce as

nefarious Western imperialism. To the extent that non-Westerners see the World as one, they see it as a "threat".⁷³

Ironically, those who threaten and terrorize others call the others terrorists and perceive them as a potential 'threat'. What is more interesting is that whatever Muslims do, they do not have to bother to provide any name to it because the names are generously given by the West - fundamentalism, militantism, terrorism and what not. Khurshid Ahmad observed that 'in 1848 when Karl Marx presented the Communist party manifesto the West perceived it as a specter haunting Europe. Today a century and a half later a new specter is haunting the West, the specter of "Islamic fundamentalism". Yet the difference is that while it was Marx and Engels themselves who identified Communism as a specter, it is not the Muslims who are projecting their programme, as a specter. It is also interesting, if not intriguing, that Marx identified his thought, his message as Communism, but Muslims do not even have the freedom to name the ideology, religion, and programme they want to present. Instead, others provide the names and titles'.⁷⁴

Not only do they decide the names and titles but even the 'capital letters' and 'small letters' for certain tides. For instance, Huntington uses capital letters for Islamic Resurgence throughout his book and has also clarified it in a small footnote: 'Some writers may wonder why "Resurgence" in "Islamic Resurgence" is capitalized. The reason is that it refers to an extremely important historical event affecting one fifth or more of humanity, that it is at least as significant as the American Revolution, French Revolution, or Russian Revolution, whose "rs" are usually capitalized, and that it is similar to and comparable to the Protestant Reformation in Western society, whose "R" is almost invariably capitalized'.⁷⁵

The problem does not lie so much in the term 'Islamic Resurgence' as it hangs so heavily on Islamic fundamentalism. As rightly pointed out by Esposito, 'fundamentalism' conjures up images of mobs shouting death to America, embassies in flames, assassins and hijackers threatening innocent lives, hands lopped off, and women oppressed. 'The contemporary revival of Islam in Muslim politics is far more multi-faceted and significant than these images and slogans communicate'.⁷⁶

Esposito has argued that all Islamic movements cannot be generalized into a monolithic terrorist organization, because there are diversities in the movements in accordance with their objectives, strategies and their relations with the West. But 'the variety of Islamic movements are undercut and distorted by the univocal connotation of the term Islamic fundamentalism'.⁷⁷ He contends that there is only a minority of militant Islamic organizations whereas there are a great number of moderate Islamic movements who do not revert to violence but who rather prefer a peaceful process of socio-political change. Most of these movements though go back to the original sources of Islam - the Qur'an and

the Sunna - but they are also creative enough to respond to the challenges of modernity. Hence, he prefers the terms neo-fundamentalists and neo-revivalists for them:

If we speak of fundamentalism as a return to the foundation of Islam, the Qur'an, and the example of the Prophet in order to renew the community, then these movements are neo-fundamentalist or neo-revivalist, for they look to the sources of Islam not simply to replicate the past but to respond to a new age.⁷⁸

According to Huntington, 'Islamic fundamentalism' is only one component in the Islamic resurgence in ideas, practices, dedication and rhetoric. 'The Resurgence is mainstream not extremist, pervasive not isolated'.⁷⁹ However, for Khurshid Ahmad, the term 'Islamic fundamentalism' is inappropriate to convey the efforts of the Islamic movements for Islamic revival. He writes:

The fundamentalist groups in Christian history came up with many new interpretations and strange religio-political positions and were generally regarded as reactionary and unrealistic. By clamping the same term on Islamic movements great violence is being done to history. It is also bound to misinform the Western people and policymakers about the true nature of Islamic resurgence, as they are being forced to see them in the light of a particular unhappy chapter of their own history. Islamic resurgence is a future-oriented movement and has nothing in common with the fundamentalist approach of the Christian groups.⁸⁰

But the problem is, as Esposito has aptly pointed out, that such terms are being used by scholars considering the 'realities of the market places'. This is a new form of Orientalism. Academia, the media and governments seem to focus on the 'violent fringe' and ignore the mainstream of Islamic movements. Publishing houses, journals, consulting firms and the media seek out that which captures the headlines and 'confirms stereotypes and fears of extremism and terrorism'.⁸¹

For instance, Bernard Lewis's talk on 'Islamic Fundamentalism' is a lucid illustration. The highest honour is accorded by the US government to this prestigious Jefferson Lecture of 1990 which was nothing but, as what Esposito describes, a talk which presented 'the stereotypical image of Islam and Muslims as menacing militant fundamentalists'.⁸² Later, a revised version of the talk was published in Atlantic Monthly under the heading, 'The Roots of Muslim Rage'.⁸³ The images of 'rage, violence, hatred and irrationality' are enforced by the picture on the front cover of Atlantic Monthly. The 'threat motif and confrontational tone' which is deeply embedded in the article is also supplemented by the illustrations. The

article received widespread coverage nationally and internationally and it showed to the Muslim world how the West perceives its relationship with Islam.

Throughout the article Islam is portrayed as aggressive, irrational, militant and terrorist, and always ready for jihad and conquests. While the West is presented as defensive, responding with counter-attacks and crusades. Esposito comments:

Professor Lewis in 'Roots of Muslim Rage' tells us what the roots of Muslim rage, are, but very little about who these Muslims are.... References in his article to specific organizations are minimal.... The predominant picture is that of radicalized, marginalized, and often violent revolutionaries traditional in dress and at war with modernity.⁸⁴

Lewis asserts that the fundamentalists wage war against secularism, capitalism, democracy and modernity as a whole. They perceive Western civilization as a threat to their way of life and culture. They are pitted against 'Judeo-Christian' and 'secular' Western and are determined to revive their age-old rivalry against the West, coming up with a global vision and mission for Islam. He writes:

It should now be clear that we are facing a mood and a movement for transcending the level of issues and policies and the governments that pursue them. This is no less than a clash of civilizations, the perhaps irrational but surely historic reaction of an ancient rival against our Judeo-Christian heritage, our secular present, and the world-wide expansion of both.⁸⁵

However, the stereotyping of Islam in the West is as old as Islam itself. Whether it is the *Divina Commedia* of Dante in 1300 or the *Arabian Night's Entertainment* in Richard Burton of 1885 or Weber's presentation of Islam as a 'national Arabic warrior religion', the portrayal of Islam manifests bias, prejudice, fear, coupled with misunderstanding and ignorance. In fact the West bears a legacy of presenting false and distorted images of Islam. Many reasons can be attributed to this misrepresentation legacy of the West. But one of the important factors that contributed to it is sharply delineated by Esposito:

Islam has generally been regarded in the West (and among many secular-minded Muslims) as a static phenomenon doctrinally and socio-culturally, and therefore anti-modern and retrogressive.... Many experts were trained in area studies programmes by Professors (historians and social scientists) with little real expertise in Islamic religion, and in history and politics courses in which Islam was treated primarily as part of a cultural legacy, historical baggage studied for its relevance more to the past than to the

present. Islamic studies themselves were textually and historically oriented with little reliance on the social sciences and with minimal attention to the modern period.⁸⁶

Obviously, if the professors themselves who educate and train their students on Islam are not 'experts', what can be expected from their 'products'? The presentation of Islam as a 'cultural legacy' or as 'historical baggage' cannot provide an adequate and comprehensive picture, meaning and programme of Islam as a socio-political and economic reality and as a vital civilization.

Another important factor that has contributed to the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Islam is the Western secular worldview. Esposito observes:

Secular presuppositions which inform our academic disciplines and outlook on life, our Western secular worldview, have been a major obstacle to understanding Islamic politics....⁸⁷

Esposito asserts that neither development theory nor international relations considered religion 'a significant variable for political analysis'. He points out that few analysts have become 'conservative clerics' who treat religious beliefs and practices as 'isolated, freestanding realities'.⁸⁸ Such a superficial treatment of religion, particularly of Islam represents a gross injustice to Islam. Esposito writes:

The post Enlightenment tendency to define religion as a system of personal belief rather than as a way of life has seriously hampered our ability to understand the nature of Islam and many of the world's religions. It has artificially compartmentalized religion, doing violence to its nature, and reinforced a static, reified conception of religious traditions rather than revealing their inner dynamic nature. To that extent, a religion that mixes religion and politics appears retrogressive, prone to fanaticism, and thus a potential threat.⁸⁹

The other factor, identified by Esposito in this connection is 'secular elite orientation'. While few scholars of Muslim societies tend to visit traditional conservative scholars and institutions to understand Islam and Muslims, most Western scholars study Westernized and modernized scholars to understand Islam and Muslims. Esposito writes:

Most Western scholars, as well as Western-trained Muslim scholars, were more comfortable working and studying with like-minded elites in modernized, Westernized urban settings. Much of Western scholarship viewed Muslim societies through the modern prism of a development

theory that was secular and Western in its principles, values and expectations.⁹⁰

All the above factors which contribute to the limited, confused and prejudiced Western representation of Islam, explicitly manifest themselves in the writings of Shireen T. Hunter, particularly in her recent work, *The Future of Islam and the West*, 1998. She claims that all the hitherto understanding of Islam by Muslim and Western scholars as a 'fusion of temporal and spiritual domains' is false and an ideal society as envisioned by them is a Utopia. She writes:

Yet neither the Islamist view nor the Western view is supported by historical evidence; on the contrary, an objective and an impartial reading of the history of the Islamic experience in its different temporal and territorial contexts shows that Islam has not been as different from other religions as is often proclaimed, nor has there ever been an Islamic Utopia as some Islamists believe.⁹¹

According to Hunter, the fusion between the temporal and spiritual is at least greater in Christianity and Judaism than Islam. She writes:

The reality is that for centuries the separation between Caesar and God in Christianity was less clearcut than is often believed while the' separation between the two in Islam has been more pronounced than is usually assumed.⁹²

She then points out that the empire of Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire united spiritual and temporal power. Throughout modern European history, the political conflicts between the papacy and monarchs also testifies to this fact. Even in the middle of the nineteenth century, European political thinkers like Joseph Demaistree argued for the combination of both temporal and spiritual powers. 'Even today', asserts Hunter, 'Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain, who is both head of the state and head of the Church of England and defender of the faith, combines spiritual and temporal power'.⁹³ She also points out that in Orthodox Judaism, in the traditions of Prophet Kings like David and Solomon, 'this fusion of the spiritual and the temporal is even *greater*'.⁹⁴ She also asserts that although there is not much fusion in Islam, its secularization process is very slow. She writes:

It is true, however, that even though the fusion of religion and politics, temporal and spiritual, in Islam has not been much greater than in other religions, and hence cannot be held responsible for a lesser degree of secularization in the Muslim world.⁹⁵

At some other place, in the same book, she contends that all those religions which believe in the divine source of law and the supremacy of God-given law are incompatible with secularism, like Orthodox Christianity, Judaism and Islam. However, 'the difference lies in the fact that, in the Western world, religion has lost the battle with secularism, whereas in the Muslim world and in Israel the contest continues'.⁹⁶

Why does such a contest continue in Islam? Obviously, it is due to the fusion between the spiritual and the temporal, the rejection of secularism and the supremacy of the Shari'a which primarily comprises the Qur'an and the Sunna. But, according to Hunter, though God-given law is above man-made law, the source of authority and law in Islam is not God. She writes:

Islam does not place in God the source of authority and law in Muslim society. It made law. But this is not peculiar to Islam for all religions place God's commands above rules made by ordinary mortals.⁹⁷

Hunter also argues that throughout the history of Islam the domains of religion and politics have been separated in fact, if not in theory. According to her, even in juridical theories, 'there was hardly anything to ensure observance of Islamic rules by political leaders'.⁹⁸

Even a cursory reading of the above understanding of Islam, as presented by Hunter, would shock contemporary scholars of Islam. That, Islam is the complete system of life which combines both spiritual and mundane realms of life is consistently and systematically presented in Islamic literature in every age, particularly in more elaborate terms in the contemporary period. Even many Western scholars have come to realize and comprehend this fact with no confusion and ambiguity.

Esposito writes:

Understanding the significance of this phenomenon (Islamic resurgence) requires at the outset that certain presuppositions be recognized. The first is the modern Western secular tendency to separate religion and politics to presume that secularization is the only modern option possible... Islam is believed to be relevant and integral to politics, law, education, social life, and economics. These are not viewed as secular institutions as areas of life but religion (Islamic), based on the belief that Islam is a way of life, and thus religion and society are interrelated.⁹⁹

Obviously, if Islam is perceived as the complete system of life, it intertwines society and state. The Qur'an and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) provide an unambiguous and broad model for the Islamic political system. Esposito observes:

The example of the Prophet offers a paradigm and an ideology for the fusion of religion and state in Muslim experience. The early Islamic worldview provides a model for formation of a state and for protest and revolution.¹⁰⁰

Similarly, John O. Voll also contends that 'the heart of the Islamic faith is the belief in one God who is directly involved in the affairs of humanity'. Hence to be a Muslim, Voll continues, 'is not simply a matter of individual belief; it means participating in the effort to implement God's will on earth'.¹⁰¹ Voll also understands the difference between Islam and the West on this aspect. He writes: 'This distinction between temporal and spiritual leadership was acceptable to the Western negotiators because it was familiar to them, although it was not a significant part of the Islamic tradition'.¹⁰²

In fact, Islam, as the complete system of life has been a recurrent theme of all past and contemporary Muslim revivalists including Iqbal, Hasan al-Banna, Mawdudi, Sayyid Qutb and others. Khurshid Ahmad elaborates the views of Mawdudi on this point:

Again and again, he (Mawdudi) points out that Islam is a way of life, and that it is a complete comprehensive way of life. Neither trade nor industry, neither governmental affairs nor international relations, neither civil nor penal laws, in short, no aspect of human life can claim an autonomous status and thus fall beyond the jurisdiction of Islam.¹⁰³

Nevertheless, Khurshid Ahmad argues that one of the dynamics behind the contemporary Islamic resurgence is the *tawhidic* and integrated approach to life as against the Western dualistic approach to life. He observes:

In fact, the unique contribution of the Islamic resurgence lies in its re-affirmation of the integration of the spiritual and the material dimensions of life. This is the heart of the matter. To my mind, many a Western scholar finds it difficult to comprehend the attempt of Islamic resurgence to achieve thorough integration between the spiritual and the material. Mainstream Western thought, roughly since the Enlightenment, has been based upon the explicit or assumed dichotomy between spirit and matter. As a result of the triumph of rationalism and the negation of the centrality of the Divine in human affairs, Western thought has neglected to focus on the impact that revelation, religious ethics and morality may have had on society, polity, and economy. Modern Islamic thought as represented by Islamic resurgence affirms the unity of matter and spirit, and seeks spirituality through the reform of society and its institutions. The material world is only an expression of that inner reality.¹⁰⁴

Another of Hunter's problems is her perception of Umma. According to her, the concept of Umma as a universal Islamic community above ethnic and national institutions is another myth and Utopian. She asserts that ethnic differences in one Muslim world are acknowledged and, therefore, the concept of Umma as a universal entity is meaningless. She also points out that Umma owes 'more to the tribal nature of Arab society' because Islam was revealed within a tribal system. She insists that if the real meaning of Islamic Umma is that Muslims should maintain their solidarity regardless of their ethnic origin, even the 'Holy Roman Empire could be integrated as a Christian Umma community'.¹⁰⁵ She contends that a united Umma has not existed since the death of the Prophet. She also concludes that the two characteristics of Islam — the fusion of religion and politics and the unity and integrity of the Umma — are 'more myth than reality'. She writes:

In reality these two inherent aspects of the Islamic experience contributed both to the resurgence of Islam as a potent social and political force and to its radicalization. Yet the Islamic phenomenon of the past three decades cannot be explained wholly as even largely in light of these factors.¹⁰⁶

Other Western scholars, however, seem to be quite clear about the Islamic concept of Umma Voll writes:

Throughout Islamic history, the transnational sense of community had been a key element of Islamic identity. The community (Umma) had been the major general focus of loyalty. Tribal groupings, dynastic states, and other local organizations had been of great importance, but they had not provided the framework for special ideological orientation as the local regional groups had been viewed within the broader context of the Islamic faith and community.¹⁰⁷

Similarly, Esposito observes:

The Madman community formed a total framework for state, society, and culture. It epitomized the Quranic mandate for Muslims as individuals and as a community (Umma) to transform the world itself through action in the world. This aspiration and ideal has constituted the challenge for the Islamic community through much of its history.¹⁰⁸

Furthermore, contrary to what Hunter insists, even Islamic resurgence is not perceived in a national or parochial content, but rather from an ummatic perspective. Khurshid Ahmad observes:

Another important aspect of Islamic resurgence is that although socio-political struggles have taken place in the context of national situations, even highlighting local interests and problems, the thrust of the Islamic revivalist movement is not nationalistic in character. It is an ideological movement. Even if it is confined or its impact is confined to a particular territory, its approach is not nationalistic or parochial. It is ideological and then by definition international. Islam is a universal religion and all Muslims, regardless of regional or national ties, belong to a single community of brotherhood (umma).¹⁰⁹

All this implies that Islamic resurgence should be seen in both its comprehensiveness, as a complete system of life, and also as an ummatic reawakening in totality. In other words, Islamic resurgence should be perceived from a civilizational perspective. But the conception of civilization as perceived in Islam differs from its perception in the West.

According to Huntington, 'the idea of civilization was developed by eighteenth-century French thinkers as the opposite of the concept of "barbarism".¹¹⁰ Civilized society differed from primitive society because it was settled, urban, and literate'. He has provided several definitions of civilization and also points out that culture is the common theme in the definition of civilization. To Spengler, a civilization is 'the inevitable destiny of the culture... The most external and artificial states of which a species of developed humanity is capable... a conclusion, the thing-become succeeding the thing becoming'.¹¹¹ Huntington observes:

Civilization and culture both refer to the overall way of life of a people, and a civilization is a culture writ large. They both involve the values, norms, institutions, and modes of thinking to which successive generations in a given society have attached primary importance.¹¹²

What make the values, norms, institutions and modes of thinking of Western culture and civilization? According to Huntington, the West inherited a lot from previous civilizations including classical civilization. From classical civilization, it inherited Greek philosophy and rationalism, Roman law, Latin and Christianity.¹¹³ He contends that Christianity is historically the single most important characteristic of Western civilization.¹¹⁴ It inherited Latin but gradually a number of languages emerged.¹¹⁵

Dualism is also identified as another important feature of Western civilization. He writes:

God and Caesar, church and state, spiritual authority and temporal authority, have been a prevailing dualism in Western culture. Only in Hindu civilization were religion and politics also so distinctly separated. In Islam, God is Caesar; in China and Japan, Caesar is God; in Orthodoxy, God

is Caesar's junior partner. The separation and securing clashes between church and state that typify Western civilization have existed in no other civilization. This division of authority contributed immeasurably to the development of freedom in the West.¹¹⁶

The other characteristic features outlined by Huntington include Rule of Law, social pluralism, representative bodies, individualism, etc.¹¹⁷

Most of the features of Western civilization differ from the Islamic civilization, particularly its 'duality' and 'individualism'.

Civilization was the main object of inquiry of Ibn Khaldun in his science of history which is manifested in his *Muqaddima* (Introduction) to his *Kitab al-'ibar* (Universal History).¹¹⁸ He pointed out the close connection between civilization and politics and, also the relation of religion (Din) with politics in context with the rise and fall of civilization. Ibn Khaldun's terminology for 'umran (specific sense of civilization) is synonymous with *Madaniya* (civilization). And *hadara* (settled urban life) is distinct from *badwa* (rural life). *Hadara* also appears to be equivalent to *tamaddun* (civilization) to be settled and organized in Madina (city).¹¹⁹

As far as the relation between religion and politics is concerned as discussed by Ibn Khaldun, it is clearly manifested in his classification of the *siyasa* (political system or state) into three: (1) *siyasa diniya*: based on the Shari'a, (2) *siyasa 'aqliya* based on man-made laws and (3) *siyasa madaniya*: the ideal state of the philosophers. According to him, *siyasa diniya* is the best because it is advantageous for people both here and in the Hereafter. He contends that association is necessary for man and it is the meaning of civilization. Association needs a restraining authority (wazir) and a governor (hakim) to whom they entrust themselves. At one time, this authority was based on the law sent down by God. Further, he asserts the following:

The *siyasa diniya* comes to pass in this world and the Next because the Lawgiver knows what is best for them in the end, and because He looks after the salvation of the servants (of Allah, 'ibad) in the Hereafter. But the advantage of the second occurs in this world only.¹²⁰

Ibn Khaldun also argues that as long as the laws of God remained supreme and obeyed by the rulers and the people, Islamic civilization in the form of the *Khilafa* thrived because there was a 'force of manliness' in the Muslims. 'But when religion slowly declined among people, they accepted restrictive statutes; the Sharia became a science and an art which was acquired by education and instruction... the statutes of the government and instruction corrupt manliness.'¹²¹

From the above, it is quite clear that, unlike the dualism in the West, one of the fundamental pillars of Islamic civilization is *tawhidic* and an integrated approach to life. The Shari'a embraces all aspects of life including the political and economic. Hence, if politics is separated from religion, the downfall of Islamic civilization begins, reducing it from *Khilafa* to *Mulk* (state based on man-made laws).¹²²

Not only this, according to one eminent Muslim scholar of contemporary times, *Syed Naquib al-Attas*, it is *Din* (religion) which once established in its entirety gives rise to *tamaddun* (civilization). He writes:

The verb *dana* which derives from *din* conveys the meaning of being indebted, including various other meanings connected with debts, some of them contraries. In the state in which one finds oneself being in debt - that is to say, a *da'in* - it follows that one subjects oneself, in the sense of yielding and obeying, to law and ordinances governing debts, and also, in a way, to the creditor, who is likewise designated as a *da'in*.... Thus already here, in the various applications of the verb *dana* alone, we see rising before one mind's eye a picture of civilized living; of societal life of law and order and justice and authority. It is, conceptually at heart, connected intimately with another verb *maddana* which means: to build or to found cities: to civilize, to refine and to humanize; from which is derived another term: *tamaddun* meaning civilization and refinement in social culture.¹²³

Hence, for *al-Attas*, there is an intimate and profound connection between the concept of *din* and that of *madina* which is derived from it. In an endnote, he further points out that 'considerable relevance must be seen in the significance of the change of name of the town once known as *Yathrib* to *al-Madlnah*: the city of the Prophet-which occurred soon after the Holy Prophet (may God bless and give him Peace!) made his 'historic flight (*hijrah*) and settled there'.¹²⁴

This explanation further strengthens the fact that Islamic civilization is inconceivable without the complete establishment of the *Din* which further shows the close relationship between *Din*, *tamaddun* and the sociopolitical order. *Al-Attas* also points out that 'we must see the fact that *al-Madinah* was so called and named because it was there that true *din* became realized for mankind... We may further see that the city became, for the community, the epitome of the socio-political order of Islam'.¹²⁵

Such a conception of civilization where religion (*Din*) is so intertwined with politics is antithetical to Western civilization which takes pride in the separation between Church and State. For instance, Huntington, after having discussed the separation of politics from

religion and the characteristic of individualism and other such concepts of Western civilization, writes:

These concepts, practices, and institutions simply have been more prevalent in the West than in other civilizations. They form at least part of the essential continuing core of Western civilization. They are what is Western but not modern about the West. They are also in large part the factors which enabled the West to take the lead in modernizing itself and the world.¹²⁶

In fact, Huntington expresses such views several times in his book. He asserts that Western civilization differs from other, civilizations because of its values and institutions which made it possible for the West to invent modernity, expand throughout the world, and become the envy of other societies.¹²⁷ Such values and institutions not only led to modernization but they have made 'Western civilization unique, and Western civilization is valuable not because it is universal but because it is unique'.¹²⁸

It is very interesting to note that soon after the above quoted lines, Huntington suggests a few important strategies to Western leaders to preserve this uniqueness of Western civilization. The strategies *inter alia* include, to achieve greater political, economic, and military integration and to coordinate their policies so as to preclude states from other civilizations exploiting differences among them; '...to maintain Western technological and military superiority over other civilizations.'¹²⁹

What can be said about this? Is this the civilized way to keep the uniqueness of the civilization through imperialistic goals and exploitation? Huntington simply avoids mentioning that if 'imperialism' is the goal of Western civilization, 'exploitation' is its mechanism.

It is Western civilization, according to Huntington, which has led the world towards modernization, as discussed above. But the question is where this Western-styled modernization has led the world to? Huntington himself states: 'Modernization has generally enhanced the material level of civilization throughout the world. But has it also enhanced the moral and cultural dimensions of civilization?'¹³⁰ According to him, slavery, torture, the vicious abuse of individuals have become leaner and this because of the impact of Western civilization. However, he is afraid that if the power of one Western civilization declines, 'a moral reversion' would occur.¹³¹ He has then enumerated a list of moral, social, economic, political, national and international problems which have already started to occur across the world including the West. Finally, in this respect he states:

On a worldwide basis, civilization seems in many respects to be yielding to barbarism, generating the image of an unprecedented phenomenon, a global Dark Ages, possibly descending on humanity.¹³²

A crucial question arises here: How does a civilization yield to barbarism? Perhaps, there is something lacking in the civilization which has eventually led it into barbarism. What is lacking in Western civilization most, may be 'tolerance'. In the pluralistic world of multi-civilization, it seems essential to think, and to talk in terms of peaceful coexistence with all other civilizations. Instead, if one civilization is determined to preclude other civilizations and to remain globally dominant, it definitely creates insurmountable problems for the whole of humanity. George and Meredith Friedman in their book, *The Future of War: Power, Technology and American World Dominance in the 21st. Century* (1996) point out how the twenty-first century more than the twentieth century will be the American century.¹³³ Similarly, William Pfaff writes: 'The most important force at work in the new year (1997) will be the drive of the United States and its allies to incorporate the non-Western world into a globalized economy'.¹³⁴

What is globalization? 'It is a literally subversive force', as described by William Pfaff. Globalization signifies the internationalization of production, along with a new international division of labour and new migratory movements from South to North. It is a new competitive environment. It implies that globalization has not marked the end of history rather it is 'the initiation of a new era of conflicts and reconciliations'.

It is quite clear from the above that the hidden agenda behind globalization is the same as that of the colonization of the nineteenth century — Western global hegemony. The only difference is that in the nineteenth century, it was Europe which took the 'white man's burden', while in the twentieth and most likely in the twenty-first century, it is the United States, which has volunteered itself to carry the 'white man's burden'. This also implies that the 'white man' is not at all in the mood to share his burden with others - 'Green man' or 'Red man'. Instead the 'White man' perceives the Green and Red men as 'enemies'. In fact some Western scholars have identified that America is badly in need of an enemy to unite all Americans against it. Irving Kristal notes:

With the end of the Cold War, what America really needs is an obvious ideological and threatening enemy, one worthy of its mettle, one that can unite all Americans in opposition. Where are the invading aliens when America most needs them?¹³⁶

The same is also observed by Patrick J. Buchanan:

To some Americans, searching for a new enemy against whom to test our mettle and power, after the death of communism, Islam is the preferred antagonist. But, to declare Islam an enemy of the United States is to declare a second Cold War that is unlikely to end in the same resounding victory as the first.¹³⁷

The above lines remind one of Hegel for whom 'wars' were healthy and wholesome because they unite people with imperialistic sentiments to make the state a world-state, a state that can dominate the world.¹³⁸ It also reveals why the West likes to be preoccupied with 'Hot Wars' and 'Cold Wars' and why Western scholarship is so prone to create enemies and stereotype the images of threat. Hunter writes in this respect:

With its burden of history, Islam is the ideal candidate to be looked upon as the new enemy figure that will fill the gap created by the fall of communism. This predilection for seeing Islam as the enemy is strengthened by the assumption that Islam's specificity and uniqueness, especially the assumed fusion of the spiritual and the temporal, are necessarily carried into practice, render Islam impervious to change, and make it by definition the anti-theism of Western secular humanism.¹³⁹

According to Esposito, 'change is a reality in contemporary Islam and in Muslim societies.¹⁴⁰ But change does not mean that the spirit of Islam is being changed. Through ijihad and a re-interpretation of Islamic texts, Muslim societies can be dynamic enough to make their own strategies and programmes for development. But sometimes, even the new interpretations of Islam are also criticized by a few non-Muslim scholars. If Muslims are reluctant to change a few areas because of their Islamic principles, they are regarded as Orthodox and conservative. On the other hand, if they come up with new interpretations following the Quranic spirit, they are viewed as 'unorthodox' and opportunist. Observing such tendencies, Esposito remarks: 'Ironically, non-Muslim scholars sometimes sound more like mullahs.'¹⁴¹

Leaving aside Muslim and non-Muslim mullahs, is it yet decided whether there is an Islamic threat or not? As discussed above, for many Western scholars like Huntington and Lewis, there is a definite and concrete Islamic threat. However, according to Esposito, the 'threat' is on both sides — Islam and the West. He asks a question and answers it himself: 'Is there an Islamic threat? In one sense, yes. Just as there is a Western threat or a Judeo-Christian threat'.¹⁴² He contends that 'Islam is a threat to the complacency of Western societies spiritually, socially and ultimately politically'.¹⁴³ It questions materialism, liberalism and individualism. However, Esposito asserts that the West is committed to the values of 'tolerance' and 'freedom of expression'.¹⁴⁴ This is a very strange 'revelation' by Esposito. Indeed if the West is 'tolerant', why does it scream at the Islamic Resurgence, variously terming it a 'threat', or a 'menace'?

According to Huntington, toleration in both Islamic and Western civilizations is declining:

The increasing contact between and intermingling of Muslims and Westerners stimulate in each a sense of their own identity and how it differs from that of the other... within both Muslim and Christian societies, tolerance for the other declined sharply in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁴⁵

It is increasingly observed that Muslim immigrants in Western countries are expected to assimilate and accumulate with Western values and Western culture. It is also found that in many schools Muslim female children face problems in following their Islamic code of dress. Muslim workers also experience problems attending Friday congregational prayers. All these intolerances are observed even by Esposito. He writes:

Yet, with unrealized mentality, we have failed to appreciate that, for many people in the world, religious faith is also a primary identity. It is a given, not a choice, and as such Muslim citizens in the West cannot be expected to forgo certain rights in society (e.g. school accommodation to dietary laws, dress codes, and holidays, and the right of the workers to observe their 'Sabbath' by attending the Friday congregational prayer). Thus when we ask what kind of democrats they are, we must be prepared also to ask and answer, what kind of democrats are we?¹⁴⁶

Furthermore, the West is also demographically threatened by the significant Muslim presence in Western countries. According to Esposito, 'anti-Arab/Muslim sentiment in Western Europe is part of a growing xenophobia'.¹⁴⁷ The reason is clear — Islam is the second largest religion in France and the third largest in Great Britain.¹⁴⁸

Another important point which is noticed by Western scholars like Buchanan is that the population of the Muslims in the West is increasing whereas Westerners are controlling their population through an increasing 'condom culture'. He writes:

Clearly, Islam is in the ascent in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. In the West devout Moslems are having children, while in our secular societies, the philosophy of Planned Parenthood takes hold and the condom is King.¹⁴⁹

In the West, if the Muslims give birth to children Westerners are threatened and if Muslim children do not assimilate with Western culture and assert their own culture again they are threatened. Huntington writes:

Western culture is challenged by groups within Western societies. One such challenge comes from immigrants from other civilizations who reject assimilation and continue to adhere to and to propagate the values, customs, and cultures of their home societies. This phenomenon is most notable among Muslims in Europe....¹⁵⁰

In fact, a few Western scholars even perceive the adherence of Muslims to their own values and culture in European countries as terrorism. They predict hot wars between the two - Muslims and Christians. It is observed: 'While Europe has overcome the cold war' it now risks creating a new dimension and conflicts, such as a white, wealthy and Christian 'Fortress Europe' pitted against a largely pro-Islamic world. That could lead to terrorism and another forty years of small, hot wars.'¹⁵¹

Is this toleration? Giving terrifying names to others and thinking always in terms of hot wars, cold wars, small wars and civilizational wars is not toleration. Obviously, a civilization which is determined to achieve global domination can hardly be tolerant if other civilizations arise. All through the book, Huntington expresses his discomfort at the rise of non-Western civilizations, particularly Sinic and Islamic. He writes: 'The key issues on the international agenda involve differences among civilization. Power is shifting from the long predominant West to non-Western civilizations. Global politics has become multipolar and multicivilizational'.¹⁵² Thus, in the post-Cold War period local politics is the politics of ethnicity while global politics is the politics of civilizations. He therefore asserts that 'the rivalry of the superpowers is replaced by the clash of civilizations.'¹⁵³

Huntington points out that two visions of Western power are predicted, one in the ascendancy and the other declining. As regards that which is in the ascendancy he writes:

As the one remaining superpower the United States together with Britain and France make the crucial decisions on political and security issues; the United States together with Germany and Japan make the crucial decisions on economic issues. The West is the 'only civilization which has substantial interests in every other civilization or region and has the ability to affect the politics, economics and security of every other civilization or region.'¹⁵⁴

This clearly signifies that it is the West which plays the game of global hegemonic politics. It is also observed that in this game of global politics for global power, the West has always maintained a biased and a prejudiced stance against Islam. Hunter writes:

In the international arena also, it is the West that exercises a hegemonic influence in that it sets the rules of the game in both economics and politics; this is often prejudicial to Muslim countries....¹⁵⁵

Tolerance and arrogance are two completely different characteristics. A civilization which keeps a prejudicial stance against other civilizations and for its own power and influence is an arrogant civilization not a tolerant one. Western civilization not only aspires to decide political, economic and other issues at global level but it also demands a habitual obedience to its directions and sermons. So much so that it reacts when others do not abide by its instructions. Huntington writes: 'The willingness of other societies to accept the West's dictates or abide by its sermons is rapidly evaporating, and so is the West's self confidence and will to dominate.'¹⁵⁶

In fact according to Huntington, wars for global domination are a recurrent phenomenon in the history of Western civilization. He observes:

Similarly the history of Western civilization is one of hegemonic wars' between rising and falling powers. While bandwagoning may be more characteristic of Asian civilizations. The dynamism of Islam is the ongoing source of many relatively small fault time wars; the rise of China is the potential source of a big intercivilizational war of core states.'¹⁵⁷

Referring to Carroll Quigley and others, Huntington contends that the West is developing 'its equivalent of a universal empire'. It has become a mature society which can be described as a 'golden age' by future civilizations.

The West is celebrating its 'golden age' because the balance of power is currently in its power. How does it manage to continue global influence? According to Hunter, 'this Western countries exercise through a variety of financial and military means a good deal of influence on the internal politics of Muslim countries...'.¹⁵⁸ For the sake of its own interest, the West supports those Muslim regimes and governments which are not supported even by the majority of the people. If they resist Western domination, they are disliked by the West. Hunter writes: 'the main reason for the West's dislike of the Islamists is their temerity to challenge the West's global superiority and their unwillingness to live by the rules set by the Western powers'.¹⁵⁹

All this reveals Western arrogance, not Western tolerance. Islamic resurgence on the other hand manifests 'tolerance' not 'arrogance'. It also does not believe in the Machiavellian doctrine whereby the end justifies the means. It also has no selfish intention and materialistic motive of hoarding all the wealth and power in its own hands depriving others of their genuine share; Hence, Islamic resurgence cannot be seen as a 'threat' but rather that Western arrogance for global hegemony is a 'manifest threat'. Esposito observes:

If there is an Islamic threat, there has also been a Western threat — of political and religio-cultural imperialism, a political occupation accompanied by cultural invasion. As a result, many in the West, opt for easy anti-imperialist slogans and denomination. At its worst, both sides have engaged in a process of 'mutual satanization'.¹⁶⁰

The only way for 'mutual de-satanization' (if satanization implies perceiving each other as a threat, as mutual Satans) is 'mutual negotiation' and 'mutual salutation'. There is an urgent need for a regular and consistent 'dialogue' between the West and Islam so that they may understand, appreciate and respect each other. But the problem will not be resolved if the West insists on being 'saluted' by others, bearing the 'white man's burden'. Huntington's portrayal of Western universal aspirations and its antagonistic relations with Islam demonstrate the problem:

The universal aspiration of Western civilization, the declining relative power of the West, and the increasing cultural assertiveness of other civilizations ensure generally difficult relations between the West and the rest. With the challenger civilizations, Islam and China, the West is likely to have consistently strained and often highly antagonistic relations.¹⁶¹

If the West has already declared that it aspires to continue as a world civilization and that it will continue antagonistic relations with Islam, how far should Islam ignore this Western threat? Khurshid Ahmad observes:

This, (the Western model) in fact, poses a threat to the Muslim faith and civilization which is characterized by altogether different motivation patterns, social institutions, relationships and modes of pecuniary reward and punishment. Resistance against this monstrous attempt, which is the spearhead of cultural imperialism will continue, because a living and dynamic civilization never yields easily.¹⁶²

Obviously, the Islamic civilization has to resist the imperialistic mission of the West in order to protect its own civilization. According to Hunter, if the Muslim states form a united economic and political power, they may well challenge the West. She writes:

...the possible emergence of a new, viable economic and political counterweight to Western power, which would provide Muslim states with a potential ally and a source of assistance, could encourage their competitive tendencies toward the West and induce them to challenge Western supremacy. By contrast, the lack of such counterweight is likely to elicit a more accommodating Muslim attitude.¹⁶³

Khurshid Ahmad has already presented his general framework for the formation of a Muslim Economic Union (MEU). He points out that Muslims constitute about one-third of the total membership of the United Nations Organization (UNO). There are around 56 independent Muslim states with a population of around 800 million. These states occupy about 20 percent of the world's land area. The Muslims would also occupy a strategic position between Asia and the European hemisphere. Furthermore, around 60 percent of the world's petroleum reserves are in Muslim lands. Besides this, there are huge reserves of other natural resources like iron, copper, tin, rubber, etc. The Muslim world is also not short of human resources.¹⁶⁴

Institutional developments have also taken place in the Muslim world for the sake of mutual cooperation and advancement. The Arab Common Market, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Islamic Development Bank, the Organization of Islamic Conferences and several such organizations have already emerged. Furthermore, there are over 60 interest-free banks in Muslim countries with over 200 branches throughout the world. All these can be considered as landmarks towards the emergence of a Muslim Economic Union.¹⁶⁵

Khurshid Ahmad identifies three reasons for the formation of a Muslim Economic Union:

- (1) It is imperative for the Muslim umma to form a Union so that it emerges as an economic bloc leading towards self-sustained growth of the Islamic umma.**
- (2) It is important to reduce the dependence of the Muslim world upon the Western and non-Muslim countries and to seek economic de-colonization through economic integration of the Muslim world. Hegemony of the West can be broken only if an alternative bloc comes into existence.**
- (3) The agony of the Third World cannot be removed unless the Muslim bloc is formed as a counterweight.¹⁶⁶**

There are several positive factors which can be helpful in the formation of such a Union. For instance, the compactness of the Muslim world into two major geographical regions; developed lines of communication and transport, the availability of capital resources and highly trained professionals and skilled manpower, etc.¹⁶⁷

However, there are also a few hindrances in the way of, the formation of such a Union including the 'non-availability of effective political will; the efforts of Western countries to keep the Muslim world disunited', the dependence of the Muslim world on industrialized countries; and the absence of institutions for strategic planning.¹⁶⁸

Khurshid Ahmad suggested that there should be a think-tank of Muslims under the OIC, the Faisal Foundation and other such organizations to develop and materialize the idea of the Union. He also identified the establishment of a few new institutions to move in this direction, for example, the establishment of a multinational Muslim corporation, International Islamic companies, the development of an effective capital market, the development of a common Islamic dinar, the development of joint shipping and other transport industries, etc.¹⁶⁹

Khurshid Ahmad also contends that through a Muslim Economic Union, Muslims can form a development strategy to achieve self-reliance. To activate self-reliance, it is necessary 'to make a radical departure from the current practice of aid-based development'. He argues that 'aid' is a misnomer. It helps the donor country more than the receiving one.¹⁷⁰

Khurshid Ahmad contends that 'self-reliance' does not mean that the Muslim world would remain isolated from others. It would keep friendly relations with all but would reduce its dependence on others. He argues that 'self-reliance' is essential even to witness Islam to mankind. He writes:

The Ummah is shuhada' 'ala an-nas, and you cannot be a witness of Islam to the world if you are dependent on them economically, intellectually, technologically, scientifically and financially.¹⁷¹

The strategy of self-reliance and the Muslim Economic Union as proposed by Khurshid Ahmad need not be reckoned as strategic plots against the West. Instead they should be considered as developmental mechanisms for the Muslim world against Western imperialistic aspirations. These plans and institutional arrangements are part of the Islamic movement efforts towards Islamic resurgence. Khurshid Ahmad asserts:

They (Islamic movements) also do not want to be dependent on the non-Muslim world. They want freedom with strength; friendship with honour; cooperation without dependence. If the Westernizing experiment has failed to achieve this, what next? The Islamic movement represents one such alternative.¹⁷²

Conclusion

At such a critical juncture in our contemporary times when the West as well as the rest have increasingly realized that Western civilization is passing through a moral and spiritual crisis, it is not wise for the West to continue to improve upon its global hegemony. Huntington himself points to this moral and spiritual decline:

Far more significant than economics and demography are problems of moral decline, cultural suicide, and political disunity in the West. Obvious pointed manifestations of moral decline include:

1. **Increases in anti-social behaviours, such as crime, drugs, and violence.**
2. **family decay, including increased rates of divorce, illegitimacy, teenage pregnancy, and single-parent families.**¹⁷³

It is also observed by Hunter that the Western model has lost its attractiveness not only to the Muslims but even to the secular segments of Muslim societies because of the innumerable moral and spiritual problems generated by it. She points out that from the late 1960s to the 1990s, the West seems to have lost its attractiveness as a moral and spiritual model for Muslims. The spread of AIDS, teenage pregnancies, family breakdowns, and several other familial and social problems are partly responsible for this 'loss of culture'. She writes: 'Many secular Muslims who have a keen appreciation for the better aspects of Western civilization — especially its political institutions, its economic dynamism, its scientific achievements — do not favour the dissolution of their indigenous culture and its replacement by a poor imitation of the worst aspects of Western popular culture'.¹⁷⁴

But, the problem is that the West neither seems ready to leave secularism and materialism nor to accept the resurgence of any other civilization as an alternative. William Pfaff observes:

The West neglects this because of our own historical parochialism, but also because of our economic determinism. Americans believe that economic success automatically promotes human success. In mainstream circles, trade is believed overwhelmingly benevolent, in part because America's leadership can scarcely imagine a valid alternative to the materialism and political values of the modern West.¹⁷⁵

Furthermore the West renders its own meaning to the relevant and important terms in order to continue its leadership. According to Wei-Ming Ta, in the context of modern Western hegemonic discourse, progress means inequality, reason means self-interest, and individualism means greed'.¹⁷⁶

However, it is encouraging to see that amidst scholars like Huntington, Lewis, Hunter and others, there are a few who assert that the West should come forward in a constructive relationship with Islam. Thomas, for example writes:

With the fall of communism, it has become particularly clear that global peace, order, and self-determination of peoples cannot be achieved

without intelligent respect for Islam and the inalienable right of Muslims to live their religion... a necessary step toward the understanding and tolerance without which world peace is in fact inconceivable.¹⁷⁷

In this respect, the following statement by the Prince of Wales, expressed at a Foreign Office Seminar in England on 13 December 1996, are also illuminating:

Islamic culture in its traditional form has striven to preserve this integrated spiritual view of the world in a way we have not seen fit to do in recent generations in the West. There is much we can share with that Islamic world-view in this respect, and much in that world-view which can help us to understand the shared and timeless elements in our two faiths.¹⁷⁸

No doubt, despite a number of underlying differences between the Islamic and Western civilizations, there are many elements in both civilizations which can be shared and respected by each other. But this necessitates that the West give up its antagonistic relationship with Islam and as a corollary sent to stop or prevent Muslim societies in their Islamization programmes. This is also expressed by Esposito:

Contrary to what some have advised, the United States should not in principle object to the implementation of Islamic law or the involvement of Islamic activists in government...The United States should avoid being seen as intervening in state initiated Islamization programs, or as opposing the activities of Islamic organizations, where such programs or activities pose no threat to it. American policy should, in short, be carried on in the context in which ideological differences between the West and Islam are recognized and to the greatest extent possible, accepted as least tolerated.¹⁷⁹

Esposito further asserts that Islamic movements are not necessarily anti-Western, anti-American, or anti-democratic. They also do not threaten American interests. Hence, instead of confrontations and conflicts, 'the West should adopt the policy of appreciation of the aspiration of many in the Muslim world as they seek to define new paths for their future.'¹⁸⁰

Finally, it is gratifying to see that Huntington has happened to state a few words on understanding and cooperation among civilizations. He writes: 'The future of both peace and civilization depend upon understanding and cooperation among the political, spiritual, and intellectual leaders of the world's major civilizations'.¹⁸¹

Many Muslim intellectuals and leaders including Khurshid Ahmad, as detailed below, are ready for negotiation and cooperation:

I would also like to emphasize that they (Islamic movements) are eager to have dialogue with the West... I therefore, submit in all humility that Islam, from the very beginning, has adopted a pluralistic approach to the world and its people. While the Qur'an claims to be the truth, it also claims that all God's Prophets bore the same message,... I also think that Muslims are pluralistic when it comes to political and economic issues and questions. The idea that one monolithic system, culture, or civilization plays a dominant role in world affairs does smack of imperialism. This is what we hear today in certain parts of the Western world. I believe that a more pluralistic approach from our side, and from the side of the Western countries, would perhaps make the world a better place to live in.¹⁸²

No doubt if consistent and constructive dialogues are arranged between the Western and Islamic leaderships to settle their mutual problems with mutual trust and confidence, the predicted clash of civilizations between Islam and the West can be prevented. Islam and the West in fact possess the necessary potential to create a healthy and peaceful socio-political and economic environment in the world in the interests of humanity at large. Humanity would take a breath of peace and tranquility if the so-called second Cold War is lifted and the burden of civilizational construction is shared by all irrespective of whether they hold green, red, white or blue flags.¹⁸³

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