

Shifting Axis Of Power From Atlantic To Pacific And An Emerging Islamic-Confucius Alliance: Pearls, Perils And Pitfalls

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Abstract

To some political scientists, World History is taking a gentle curve from West to East. With successive failures in the US-led War on Terror axis of world power seems to shift from Atlantic to Pacific. The Muslim world has begun to align itself with China because yesterday's moral equivalents of American forefathers like Abraham Lincoln in the American political narrative have turned into America's arch enemies. With Huntington's thesis of 'Clash of civilization,' more fault lines are being located between Christian West and Islamic Asia. This paper intends to analyze what options lie in store for the Muslim world in the emerging world political system. Either Muslim World has to remain in a perpetual process of serving the history of others or have to forge its own destiny anew. If not, then it suits her to be a partner with Confucius China or stay aligned with Judaic Christian West. This paper is based on qualitative research. A view based on historical realities, economic imperatives, and socio-cultural facts would be brought forward to foresee what lies in store for the Muslim world.

Keywords: Islam, West, China, America, Power, Monotheism, Clash, Civilization, Alliance, History.

تلخیص

کچھ سیاسی مبصرین کے مطابق تاریخ عالم مغرب سے مشرق کی طرف ایک نرمی سے جھکاؤ کا مظاہرہ کر رہی ہے۔ امریکی قیادت میں لڑی جانے والی دہشت گردی مخالف جنگ میں پے درپے ناکامیوں کی وجہ سے عالمی طاقت کا محور بحر اوقیانوس سے بحر اکاہل کی طرف منتقل ہونے کو ہے۔ مسلم دنیا نے چین سے جڑنا شروع کر دیا ہے کیونکہ کل جو امریکی بیانیے میں اخلاقی عظمتوں میں ابراہم لنکن جیسے امریکی بانیان کا ہم پلہ تھے امریکا کے دیرینہ دشمن قرار پائے ہیں۔ سیمونل ہنٹنگٹن کی تصنیف تہذیبوں کا تصادم منظر عام پر آنے کے بعد عیسائی مغرب اور عالم اسلام کے درمیان نئی درنئی فالٹ لائن دریافت کرنے کا عمل جاری ہے۔ اس مقالے کا مدعا و مقصود یہ ہے کہ نئے ابھرتے عالمی سیاسی منظر نامے میں دیکھا جائے کہ مسلم دنیا کے لئے کیا آپشنز ہیں؟ آیا کہ عالم اسلام نے ہمیشہ دوسروں کی

تاریخ کی مطابقت میں رہنا ہے یا از سر نو اپنی منزل کا تعین کرنا ہے؟۔ اگر ایسا نہیں تو کیا اسے کنفیو شس چین کے ساتھ اتحاد زیادہ موزوں ہے یا پھر یہودی عیسائی مغرب کے ساتھ جڑے رہنے میں عافیت ہے؟ اس مقالے میں معیاری تحقیق کو بروئے کار لایا گیا ہے۔ تاریخی حقائق، معاشی جبر کی مجبوریوں اور سماجی و ثقافتی حقائق کے بنیادی عدسوں سے دیکھا جائے گا کہ عالم اسلام کے لئے مستقبل اپنے دامن میں کیا رکھتا ہے۔

کلیدی الفاظ: اسلام، مغرب، چین، امریکا، طاقت، تہذیب، تصادم، اتحاد، تاریخ

Introduction

In this paper, our major concern is to size up the broader contours of world politics and imminent cataclysmic changes on the horizon to see what lies in store for the Muslim world. Economic and strategic concerns are the sole indicators which are defining the making and breaking of alliances. America and Europe are fast receding grounds for the rise of China. China is going to shape the world on the moral principle of shared prosperity under the umbrella of the One Belt One Road initiative. The Muslim world has long served the history of others after the West comes to the helm of affairs. Muslim Asia and Africa had been submerged in European imperialism. After decolonization too, they remained dovetailed with Western powers because both belong to the Abrahamic family of religions. However, thanks to the intellectual stupor of the Muslim world, which remains unturned even after the Enlightenment movement, either it had been a master-slave relationship, or the euphemistically Muslim world turned into a collaborator. From Enlightenment movement gushed forth scientific and industrial revolutions which proved a sure recipe for the hegemony of the West against the rest. Due to the tight grip of orthodoxy on the Muslim mindset Muslims seldom tasted the fruits of the Enlightenment movement. That is because after geographic colonialism neo-colonialism served the purpose of Europe's imperial interests and designs. Against Russian aggression in Afghanistan, Muslims touched crescendo of collaborations with America and the West. The liberators of Afghanistan against Russia were termed the moral equivalent of America's forefathers the likes of Abraham Lincoln etc. However, after the disintegration of Soviet Russia, the same stayed terrorists in the eyes of European capitals. War on terror ensued against them on the pretext of the 9/11 incident. Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya were run amuck.

Now, the Muslim world is aligning itself with China. However, oblivious of the fact they are changing mere loyalties instead of carving out their free destiny. For almost two centuries they had served the history of the Imperial West, now going to serve the history of China. Be it a decline or a rise of any community it first engineers on the conscience of that community, it is intellectual lethargy that seals

destiny, and equally, it is an intellectual awakening that brings any community on the steering wheel of history. It is a lack of scientific spirit and industrial cum corporate mindset that had rendered the Muslim world a consumer community. If only China has to dictate the terms of alliance ours is a movement in the circle.

We are going nowhere if we entertain a lass's fair attitude towards scientific and industrial progress. Changing the masters is not progress at all. The history of civilizations proves that Knowledge is a real force behind every emerging power. Without equipping manpower with real intellectual prowess Muslims are going to serve the great powers with the labor force. This paper intends to portray what sort of measures we need to secure our esteem status in global affairs.

No one is a darling community of God in the world arena. There are specific hard and fast, cut and dried rules that govern the rise and fall of communities. Communities are weighed down minutely on the balance of these unalterable laws. Not only acts and deeds even the whispering of soul matters on the touchstone of these laws. The nascent community of Islam emerged in Mecca when Rome and Persia were calling shots in global affairs with decrepit state of internal affairs because a long time had passed on them and rot had set in. However, it was fresh moral fervor that brought the Muslim community to the helm within three or four decades and for almost a thousand years Muslims led the world.

This paper intends to portray what these unalterable laws of God are which drive and steer history upward and downward. In light of these laws of history, we would formulate what the Muslim world ought to do in present circumstances.

Research Methodology

We employed qualitative research in this paper. This is mainly focused on library research. The works of scholars of global repute are guided before us. However, Quranic teachings is an anchoring point for this paper.

Research Question

In present global scenario when axis of power is shifting from Atlantic to Pacific what options lie for the Muslim World? Should it remain clung to the West or put all eggs in China basket or it needs to carve its own free destiny with intellectual renaissance?

Literature Review

For this paper we had reviewed a long list of literature. Our anchoring point in this paper is Quran of course, however we had reviewed the discourse of Spengler

regarding rise and fall of histories. “Reconstruction of Religious thought in Islam” written by Iqbal also brings forward some intellectual and political acumen for our guidance. Jamal al-Din Afghani the first Muslim modernist had also weaved out a broader zeitgeist in his lectures in response to Western Imperialism. We had also benefited from the analysis of unprejudiced and unbiased orientalist. Huntington’s thesis of “Clash of Civilizations” also served well to understand present and emerging realities of the World politics. Noam Chomsky’s viewpoint regarding crisis of modernity and portraying America as an empire of chaos with sound judgments also remain beckon of light in evaluating current crisis of world politics. Dr. Shariati helped us well in interpreting Sura Rome which provides fresh impetus and hope for morally sterile community of Islam to carve out destiny anew. However, Dr. Fazlur Rahman stands tall from all his contemporaries and successors in his intellectual constructs. Be it his “Islam and Modernity” or “Revival and Reforms in Islam” both are milestone for breaking intellectual stupor of Muslim World. His “Islamic Methodology in History” is a case history of Islam which distinguishes between normative and historical Islam. His “Islam” is basically a statement of Islam for modern world. His “Major themes of Quran” is in reality reconstruction of Islamic thought which concretely brings forth Quran’s weltanschauung and provides matrix of socio-economic and political cum cultural reforms in Islam. For this paper we had benefited from the esteemed thought of Dr. Fazlur Rahman.

We had benefited from the esteemed thought of Dr. Radha Krishnan also in evaluating present dynamics of social change that has made unity of mankind something more than merely a phrase.

Dr. Eqbal Ahmad known as Ibne Khaldun of Modern Times, and secular Sufi saint also served well in estimating dynamics of social change and narrative of imperial West. In nutshell we have drunk to our fill from variety of versatile literature. Cumulative force of this literature served us well to bring forth this paper with valuable insights.

Knowledge is power. If kneaded into faith and action, turns into elixir of life for civilizations. Superiority lies in knowledge rather than a privilege of particular race or community. Power, peace, progress and prosperity are an essential fruits of knowledge. Sovereignty resides in abode of knowledge. *“Ignorance had no alternative to prostrating itself humbly before science and knowledge in its submission”* (Safi, 1994). Be it Egyptians’ march towards Mesopotamia and to some accounts India, or Phoenicians’ occupation of the Britain Isles, Spain, Portugal, or Alexander’s calling shots on the realms of Eastern and Western hemispheres, in reality knowledge rules the world and keeps its capitals changing sometimes from East to West and other times from West to East. After a long hegemony of Western hemisphere whether there emerges a multipolar world or

China becomes superpower, neutral world observers are viewing power radiating towards the East, shifting axis of world power from Atlantic to Pacific. Either way China's assuming world leadership is most probable, for the patriotism and moral fervour in that community bears no parallel in our times. Then what future lies in store for Muslims in general and Pakistan in particular in this newly emerging scenario? Is putting all eggs in a single basket and an unconditional alignment with China a viable option, or hedging the bets? History is taking a gentle curve, such crucial moments demand serious soul search. Gramsci rightly portrays the situation "*the old is tottering and the new is unborn but is offering tantalizing prospects*" (Polychroniou, 2016). Equally worthy is an observation of Father of Modern History Napoleon the Great "*there is but one step from triumph to downfall. I have seen, in the most significant of circumstances, that some little thing always decides great events*". Caught in terror and awe, ravelled in an intellectual stagnation and an abject poverty, held bondage in an iron clad grip of minority corrupt regimes from Morocco to Malaya, unless true leaderships come to fore to break this inertia, Muslims are prone to grovel in cesspit of status quo, or to some extent serve the history of others instead of seeking their own honourable role in global affairs. In fact "we live in scoundrel times. This is the dark age of Muslim history, the age of surrender and collaboration, punctuated by madness. The decline of our civilization began in eighteenth century when, in the intellectual embrace of orthodoxy, we skipped the age of enlightenment and scientific revolution. In the second half of twentieth century, it has fallen finally we had hit rock bottom"

Discussion

Islam born in the heart of Asia, Africa and Europe's crisscross, from its beginning was apt to play its broader role in history, and could remain oblivious of the changing world order on its own perils. Therefore shifting axis of power from Byzantine to Persia was of utmost concern to the nascent persecuted community of Islam in Mecca; a gossip about changing winds in corridors of power sets in, a community mostly consisted of the destitute, whose members are being dragged on hot sands and stones of the valley with whom Persia or Byzantine have not even pathetic concerns to rule it. Quran enters the fray. Remember! Quran deals a situation in historic context with an eternal import, it is not an analysis of an intellectual that sounds reasonable at particular juncture of history, gets redundant, irrelevant and ultimately obsolete on the other, it like sun gives life afresh each new day to the ever-evolving scenarios of life. Its emissions are constant, only a life habitual to darkness cannot imbue with the light of scripture, therefore Quran's treatment of Persian and Roman Empires imbroglio in seventh century Christian era disentangles the knots of our crisis ridden world with the same import and fervour. For, the Muslims, with the exception of oligarchy subservient to imperial powers for personal aggrandizement, are in same misery, left with no

option but to complete surrender or collaboration. And, now are being dozed with palliative analysis that soon with China on the helm the doors of peace and prosperity would be flung open on them.

Seesaw struggle for hegemony between Persian and Roman Empires in 7th century world arena, depicts Quran in the light of eternal laws that govern history. What are the laws operational in the upswing and downswing of civilizations? for the heaven and the earth and everything between them are created with just ends and term appointed when that hour reaches, no respite is given to the communities and neither Earth weep nor heaven cry on their destructions. The scripture state the scene *“The Roman Empire has been defeated- in a land close by; but they after defeat of theirs will soon be victorious- within a few years. With God is the decision in the past and the future: on that day shall the believers rejoice”* (Ellethy, 2014). Unluckily it had been portrayed in traditional circles as a childish play between Pro Persia pagans and Pro Rome nascent community of Islam, former share idolatry with Persians and latter like Christian Rome are people of the Book, though we are told that Zoroastrians of Yemen in Prophet’s own time were treated as people of the Book. So, the notion that resurgence of Rome will bring deliriums to the downtrodden of Mecca seems beyond the pale. In broader terms, rise and fall even of mighty empires as the Persian and Roman Empires, were but small events on the Chequer board of Time, compared to a mightier movement that was taking birth in the promulgation of Islam. What was the state of human civilization when Islam appeared at the realm of history; a verdict of modern historian is worth-read.

“It seemed then that the great civilization that it had taken four thousand years to construct was on the verge of disintegration, and that mankind was likely to that condition of barbarism where every tribe and sect was against the next, and law and order were unknown...the old tribal sanctions had lost their power. Hence the old imperial methods would no longer operate. The new sanctions created by Christianity were working division and destruction instead of unity and order. It was a time fraught with tragedy. Civilization, like a gigantic tree whose foliage had overarched the world and whose branches had borne the fruits of arts and science and literature, stood tottering, its trunk no longer alive with flowing sap of devotion and reverence, but rotted to the core, riven by the storms of war, and held together only by the chords of ancient customs and laws, that might snap at any moment” (Iqbal, 2013). The world life intuitively sees its needs, and at critical moments defines its own direction. In fact, human civilization spanning four millennia had reached its logical end, and it is law of God at such moments he renders the slate clean. It is only natural that Islam should have flashed across the consciousness of simple people, untouched by any of the ancient cultures and occupying a geographical position where three continents meet together.

So here, in a world torn apart by Persian and Roman Empires into their respective Eastern and Western blocs, in Arabian Peninsula, gushes forth a movement of Islam, with an agenda of socio-ethical world order, a system of unification based on One God One Mankind paradigm, and though the destitute in its folds are on the mercy of Mecca elites are still being promised to be on the helm of global affairs with their moral élan firmly established on the earth, and their fears vanished into thin air if they persevere in their program. So, what allurements might be for the downtrodden community of Islam, that too in her infancy, whether Rome re-emerges like a roaring lion and turns victor against Persian Empire or disappears like a snake's tail from the world stage, or Persia reigns supreme.

In actuality, there are laws of God which govern affairs of societies called "*judgment in history*" and descend upon communities rather than individuals, on the basis of their collective performance, are pretty cut and dried, under which societies grew, ripen and are mown down with the sickle of time. When civilizations belie just ends written in the constitution of their very beings, and appointed term come, is neither hastened nor postponed, do these laws determine which community to be reaped off, and which keep standing. In scheme of these laws, sometimes there is no quick succession to the decrepit and decayed civilization, though generally when rot sets in there is either a successful reaction from within or power is imposed from without, the former being more common. However, when a civilization ceases to be creative, its moral compass gradually reduces to husk, begins to play havoc with power, peace and prosperity its own hard won fruits, and becomes burden on the earth, it may prolong its existence by whatsoever stratagems, its exit becomes inevitable. For, God is the best executor of stratagems, even though their stratagems might be capable of crushing mountains out of existence. Ultimately moral perversion and moral apathy seal their fate. In such times, that crop need not to be extended or elongated by positive reaction from within, is destroyed and an essential discontinuity between decrepit and its afresh successor is workable, the reason being that instead of symbiosis of the old and the virile, cleaning the slate is the best option, for though grim on past God is optimistic about future, every new-born baby brings message that God is not as yet disappointed by mankind. This substitution of the old by the new, sterile by the creative, decrepit by the fresh brings fresh blood to the veins of aging humanity. This process though involves certain loss of mankind leads to a moral recharge that keeps the perennial moral values alive (22:40-41).

So, the crux of these laws is stated in a terse statement "*with God rests all power of decision, first and last*" (30:3). While Rom and Persia are locked in a deadly war of domination, with a sure-fire prognosis of "*the day the believers will rejoice in God's succour.*" Both powers are in turmoil and travail, the Persia though temporarily victorious is prone to vicious palace intrigues a sure recipe to

destruction, on the other hand Byzantine the Eastern part of Roman Empire seceded from Western capital has tasted the result of disunity, will soon consolidate her power to regain her clout in Asia Minor, however religious colonialism in her genesis carries the strong genes of self-effacement. On hard stones well deep are engraved indelible the laws of God, none can defy His designs, face off with nature of individuals or communities brings their own perils (8:59; 22:51; 34:5,38; 9:2-3; 6:134; 10:53; 11:20). Imperialism inherently carries the seeds of self-destruction, “*when the Quran talks about the death of individuals like Pharaoh or Korah, it is basically talking about the self-destructiveness of a way of life, of a society, of a type of civilization*” (Rahman, 2009) for God knows how to roll the dice to put his laws over to the mankind.

The same phenomenon was on display when Moses had challenged the Pharaoh at an apotheosis of his power in Egypt a cradle of an ancient splendid civilization, he and his Gestapo ridden community asymmetrical in power and resources with the lot on the helm was derided, ridiculed and persecuted in her own milieu. It was a fight between David and Goliath and history is sure enough that if David remains tenaciously clung to the Ideals of truth the fate of Goliath despite powers and resources on his disposal, is doomed. Hence, despite inequalities in strength, disparities in power, un-equilibrium on socio-economic realms, when community of Moses was querulous saying our lot was in trouble both before and after you came to us, he allayed it by swagger and confident remarks that the earth is God’s and bestows on whatever the people he pleases with, He will destroy your enemy making you inheritors in the earth and you would be tried and tested in your deeds. So, in the final round the Israelites once despised and enslaved turned victors Pharaoh whipped up by the angry waves of his own rebellious deeds drowned in the sea of his injustices.

The same promise (7:129) once committed and fulfilled with Israelites is now extended to the Arabs a small community of Islam (24:55), with an encapsulated condition of faith- cum -action that keeps a community on the positive side of history. For, when Israelites opted for the negative side of history, they fell from grace; other people were given honour and power, the reason being that God does never extend His promise to the unjust ones. Now, it came to be the turn of the Arab race, if excels in faith and action, the day is not so far when after the demise of aging and senile, stale and sterile Roman and Persian Empires they would be on the steering wheel in both Eastern and Western hemispheres, but would equally be dislodged from the world stewardship if fail or even cease to deliver, for no one is chosen and darling community of God that it become indispensable, the earth’s belly is full to its fill with the remnants of such civilizations which cherished such abominable claims.

So, at the advent of Islam, world was rife with fretful tumults, mischief's, and worse still an overarching corruption had enveloped earth and ocean in its folds (30:41), in such crucial times laws of nature intervene to give such civilizations taste of their deeds to recover the balance that has been upset by evil and falsehood. So, an inevitable exit of rebellious civilizations from the world stage though brings some loss of humanity is blessing in disguise, it reverts and reorients mankind to its true nature, inlaid laws of his behaviour bound to re-establish his innate relationship with God, an anchoring point of all hopes. If it had not been the phenomenon of nature, mankind once forever would have, far ago, been lapsed into void of nothingness in an abyss of time. Hence Persian and Roman Empires are though jockeying their positions with worst *tour de force*, the movement of Islam equipped with moral zeal and fervour of its socio-ethical program was capable enough to outmanoeuvre their feats. Then, with the loss of almost 585 lives of both sides, within 23 years of Prophet's career amidst peace and war, Islam was unrivalled power of Arabian Peninsula, with sleepless nights in Constantinople and Ctesiphon and alarm bells ringing loud and clear in faraway lands of India and China two countries of note in that era. For to a modern historian "*Muhammad was a rebel against many of the existing social customs. The religion he preached, by its simplicity and directness and its flavour of democracy and equality, appealed to the masses in the neighbouring countries who had been ground down long enough by autocratic kings and equally autocratic and domineering priests. They were tired of the old order and were ripe for a change, Islam offered them change, and it was a welcome change...so, in about 100 years from the death of Muhammad, the Arab Empire spread from the south of France and Spain right across northern Africa to Suez, and across Arabia and Persia and Central Asia to the Borders of Mongolia*" (Lindholm, 2002).

So, amidst the worst circumstances, the community of Islam is asked to adjust herself to the normative pattern of human nature, with the glad tidings it is He who sends cool breeze, laden with clouds, which give life to the dead soil, such is the case of the down trodden communities when God intends to change their destiny with their *active will* He drizzles dynamic world view on their hearts to make them inheritor of the Earth. And, though Quran negates determinism in support of free-will (13:11) with emphasis on law of causality in sphere of human moral conduct, yet on moral realm the cause-effect chain is not so rigid, irreversible, inexorable or mechanical, for on socio-moral plane effects of human actions can be nullified or overcome by antagonistic acts or fresh course of action which might cancel or set at naught the consequences of previous deeds. This is how "Surely good deeds take away evil deeds (11:114). Spengler rightly says "*Once a nation begins to believe that it has a mission and a vocation to fulfil, or in other words, once it believes in its destiny, it can break through the law of causality and instead of becoming its prisoner it can subject this law to the*

demands and requirements of its own mission turning it into a vehicle and a means for the fulfilment of its ends.”Such was the force of its socio-ethical program and firm belief in destiny that within 30 years after Prophet Persia and Byzantine two gigantic imperial giants of Asia and Europe were licking their wounds against mighty movement of Islam. Yazdgard chained his modern trained armies in Ctesiphon so that they could not flee from the battleground against vigorous armies of Islam, but this battle of chain could not survive an assault of soldiers equipped with moral ideologue, the earth, heaven and mountains could not sustain the burden of. What ideologue? “It is this mission- the attempt to create a moral social order on earth- which the Quran (33:72) describes as the “Trust”

Then what happened? With the conquest of Ctesiphon, as a cascade effect whole of Persian Empire like a ripe fruit fell into the lap of Islamic caliphate, Byzantine the Western giant was presenting herself as a low hanging fruit. On the one side in Isfahan the inheritors of Darius who once ruled Greece were signing treaty as a defeated, disgraced nation; on the other side Roman an impregnable Babylon Fort in Egypt proved a sand dune before a small force of Islam. To Dr. Shariati, with the victory of Islam it was the demise of Persian and Roman Empires, the basis of Quran’s prognosis that Rome is defeated- in a land close by; but they after defeat of theirs will soon be victorious- within a few years. With God is the decision in the past and the future: on that day shall the believers rejoice (30:2-4).

So, immutable laws of God rather than helter-skelter operate with utmost precision and accuracy in the flesh and blood of history with such a finesse that defies description. The welter of political turbulence and turmoil in today’s crisis ridden world seemed mirror image of 7th century Arabia when Persian and Byzantine empires were on the prowl for domination. But, present technological advancement has only multiplied the crisis million folds in our rigger happy world that has brought us on the threshold of nuclear annihilation. However, be it the agrarian civilization of 7th century or highly industrialized developed society of modern era, it is positive moral fervour that brings the communities on the helm and moral apathy that reduces them to husk. Before discussing the likely scenario of shift of power from West to East let us have a bird’s eye view of Quran’s treatment of factors that bestow world leadership upon communities or seal their exit from the world arena.

Quran recurrently asserts that gates of success flung open on them who bring faith and keep to the right side of history. “*God is on the side of those who fear Him and do good*” (16:127). Law of divine retribution governs the process of history, only a community conscious of it fears the consequences of bad deeds, gets virtuous in her conduct towards its own members as well as those outside its fold, gets entitled to the support of God in its struggle against hostile forces. On the

other hand injustice of any kind or aberration from man's normative nature is basically reflexive, in far more ultimate sense recoils upon agent not just metaphorically but literally. *"And when Abraham was tried with certain commands by his Lord, he fulfilled them. Wherefore, God said to him: I am about to make you a leader of mankind. Abraham said, but what about my progeny? God replied: we do not extend our promise to the unjust ones"* (2:124). It is applicable to the leadership collectively exercised by one nation over the others. On a broader spectrum this verse implies that God does not entrust the leadership of mankind to a people who are ethically inferior or incapable of delivering justice within and without for the historical process is ethically oriented one, does not allow to the position of leadership, a group of people unable to dispense justice.

To Quran the process of history is selective. It sifts morally unfit from morally superb. *"He sends down water from the sky so that rivers flow according to their measure and the flood bears (on its surface) swelling foam- from that which they smelt in the fire to make ornaments and tools rises a foam unto like it- thus Allah coins a similitude of what is true and false. Then, as for the foam, it passes away as scum upon the bank and as for that which benefits mankind, it stays on the earth"* (13:17). So, history being not morally neutral itself is a moral agency through which morally superior elements rise to the top, while morally inferior sink to the bottom. Societies are meticulously weighed down on moral plane, for communities imbued with constructive ideals, cannot be treated by the process of historical evolution in the same manner as corrupt ones. A nation on the right side of history, active in historical arena essentially develops moral ideals of high order, such as the spirit of mutual cooperation, a feeling of corporate personality, a readiness to accept the risks, and undergo the sacrifices required by its social ideals. These springs from its faith in destiny that furnishes the element of dynamism in its corporate life a sure recipe to triumph over much larger group with weaker corporate personality.

What factors are operative for an inevitable exit of the communities from the arena? *"Say: He has a power to send on you a chastisement from above you or from beneath your feet or to throw you into confusion (making you) of different parties, and make some of you taste the violence of others."* (6:65) Though in literal sense the verse implies torrential rains and floods for the punishment from above (people of Noah), earthquakes and droughts for the punishment from below (case of Korah), yet to Ibn Abbas punishment from above refers to the tyranny of rulers, while the punishment from below refers to the violence of slaves, while throwing in confusion means putting a community into disarray, disharmony and disunity that weakens its corporate personality which ultimately ends in dissipation, humiliation and disintegration. It is not what men think but what they do is immediately relevant to history. Of course human conduct is moulded

largely by the ideas held by any social group but they have only an indirect bearing on the course of history. So in an utmost analysis power and dominion can go hand in hand with disbelief and paganism but cannot co-exist with injustice and tyranny.

Question arises, how divine calculus operates on the realm of history or what are the mechanics of historical change and to what benefit axis of power shifts from one group to bestow leadership upon the other? To Quran, when historical change is imminent, it comes through conflict between two powers, one of which succeeds in removing the other from the position of power, and although it involves a certain loss for mankind- in summation brings fresh blood to the veins of aging humanity. For the struggle between good and evil, fresh and stale, new and decrepit, virile and decadent, between the vigour of moral youth and dotage of senility is of positive benefit to keep the perennial moral values alive. *“But for the fact that God repels some people at the hands of others, churches, synagogues, places of God’s worship and mosques – wherein God’s name is so frequently mentioned- would be razed; but God must help those who help Him and God is, indeed, powerful and mighty. These are the ones [those who help God and God helps them] who, when we establish them on the earth, shall establish prayers, pay zakat, command the good, and prohibit evil, and to God belongs the ultimate end of all issues [i.e. His command is eventually successful]”* (22:40-41). The raison d’être of this historical phenomenon is that if changes like these do not occur, mankind would corrupt to the core. *“And were it not for Allah’s repelling some men by others, the earth would certainly be in a state of disorder”* (2:251).

However, as the core of Islam lies in belief in One God, the Day of Judgment and righteous deeds, saying prayer implies equality before law, paying zakat ensures socio-economic justice and enjoining good and prohibiting evil means to inject moral program in flesh and blood of history which the generality of mankind deems true. For “the Quran calls good Maruf (well known) and evil Munkar (rejected), which points to the fact that normativity is based on social acceptance or rejection. The social dialectics develop the acceptable definitions of ethical values Rahman, F. (1999). “Islam is not a name of any particular group or section. Any man or group irrespective of his birth, caste and creed, if believes in God, His Apostles, has faith in the life to come and does good work is certainly within the bounds of Islam”. As Islam had replaced imperial Persia and Byzantine with creative socio-moral program, after renaissance, Europe substituted Islam on the realm of history with its vigorous dynamic revolutionary moral spirit whether milked from her own religious theology or imparted by Muslim Spain, for the later had been ceased to be a creative force, got defunct to deliver justice and opportunities to people within and without its folds. This unfolds the mystery of multiplicity of religions; *“if God had so willed, He would have made all of you*

one community, but [He has not done so] that He may test you in what he has given you; so compete in goodness” (5:48). So in historical arena, no one is the darling community of God, only a heavier asset of goodness in moral vision and conduct brings it on the threshold of power, by the keen power of zeitgeist and trimming her wings to the sails it assumed world leadership.

Now, in our crisis ridden world, to keen observers, change is imminent with power radiating from the West to the East. Whether China emerges as a super power or multipolar world is in the making, the axis of power is apt to shift from Atlantic to Pacific, for America’s containment of China and pivot to Asia policies are nothing but to arrest this shift. With the demise of Soviet, Huntington had foresaw a world potentially sitting on the keg of clash of civilizations, calling Islam, a former ally against communist Russia, a potent enemy of Christian West. In this politically motivated sobering narrative fiction replaces fact, for to Toynbee, historically Asia had been tolerant and open society where multiple religions grew and flourished side by side while Christian Europe never allowed any religion to prosper in her lands. Toynbee says *“Centuries before communism was heard of, our ancestors found their bugbear in Islam. As lately as the sixteenth century, Islam inspired the same hysteria in Western hearts as communism in the twentieth century, and this essentially for the same reasons. Like communism, Islam was an anti-Western movement which was at the same time a heretical version of a Western faith; and, like communism, it wielded a sword of the spirit against which there was no defence in material armaments”* (Toynbee, 1947).

From Collapse of Soviet, euphorically termed as *“End of History”*, gushes forth a new era perceived as clash of civilization. Communism in Russia and China has begun to trim her wings to the sails; a new world is in the making. Axis of world power seemed prone to tilt towards the East whether China assumed world leadership or BRICS comes forth. Though emergence of multipolar world seemed pregnant with more choices and opportunities for comity of weaker nations, still patriotism, statesmanship, group solidarity and moral vision of shared prosperity for mankind in China’s OBOR policy is bound to bring her on the helm as leading nation if not sole super power. Greed being a powerful instinct of mankind, serves as an engine of capitalism, on the one side of spectrum, it brings innovations and prosperity, on the other islands of opulence in the ocean of poverty by monopoly of resources of weaker nations by wars or coercive forced policies. Such crises of capitalism are probable to be managed and smoothed by the Chinese moral vision of shared prosperity for mankind, provided this vision remains as harsh as truth, as uncompromising as justice, in her foreign policy. Historically, the Chinese apparently never plundered nor surrendered.

Trump’s assuming power in USA was whether an outcome of Russian manoeuvring of American elections or an indicator of deep religio-racial fissures

and porcupine posturing in her social fabric denotes gentle declining curve in her super power status. His calling NATO a dead horse, Britain's exit from EU, Brexit on the cards, resurgence of religious right in Europe points to the decline in Western military cum political alliance. It is perhaps most likely USA led war on terror would render Western powers a spent force; a strong prognosis of Oswald Spengler in his opus "The Decline of the West" might come true.

In such a circumstance, *"indeed in a certain sense China must be judged as a candidate super power in its own right- not in imitation or emulation of either the Soviet Union or the United States, but as a reflection of Peking's unique position in global politics. In a long term sense, China represents a political and strategic force too significant to be regarded as an adjunct to either Moscow or Washington or simply as an intermediate power"*(Pollack,1984).

To the neutral observers, ongoing war on terror is a result of self-fulfilling prophecy of Huntington thesis of "*Clash of Civilizations*", a term first coined by British orientalist Bernard Lewis, a prominent scholar on Middle East and Islam in his 1990 article "*The Roots of Muslim Rage*". In his specious argument he says *"it should by now be clear that we are facing a mood and a movement far transcending 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 worldwide expansion of both. It is crucially important that we on our side should not be provoked into an equally historic but also equally irrational reaction against that rival"* (Tuysuz, 2020). The timing of article is crucial. Fall of Soviet urged western capitals to seek new rival in international political arena to keep military industrial complex running, resource rich lands of Islam were befitting targets, so former ally against communist Russia turns enemy in post-cold war era. Though some jihad is formerly trained, equipped and left on fulfilment of targets by Western powers, emboldened by success in Afghanistan were inexorably waiting in the wings against Muslim dictatorial regimes and other minority ruling groups engineered and steered by the West; still a large swathes of Muslim masses never shared their agenda of targeting foreign embassies, installations or citizens. For it is only revivalist school in Islam that sharing Huntington's ideologue seeks political emancipation of Islam from the West by open clash; modernist school favours *reconciliation*, while orthodoxy, oblivion of the currents and flow of history is limited to preserve tradition from cultural attacks of Western civilization. So, rounding off all Islamic worlds as a *revivalist clasher* against West is less than a half glittering truth that provides wolf lame excuses against the lamb on the plea that his forefathers have fluctuated history of centuries old war against him, even though prevalence of English common law, system of secular education, free media and other institutions on Western line or legacies in majority of Muslim lands depict otherwise.

Huntington's theory of kin syndrome found no footing in the American Gulf war against Iraq, when the Muslim world stood along the USA against a brother country or during NATO's invasion of Afghanistan, when Pakistan became a front line state. We can safely conclude that nations act out of self-interest rather than utopian ideologies.

The revivalist school of Islam imbues from the reservoir of Ibn e Tamiya's religious-political ideas. Be it the 18th century Wahabi movement of Muhammad bin Abdul wahab in Hijjaz or the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt founded by Hasan al-Banna and Sayyed Qutab or JI of Maudoodi in Pakistan are clothed in Tamiya's ideologue. Seeking political emancipation of Islam is right and justified legacy of this tradition that invokes populism in masses; however non-engagement with others in their puritanical narrative reduces Islam to a *closed value system* that defies not only the tenor of Quran, the conduct of the Prophet but also whatever unfolded in fourteen centuries on the realm of history. It is because Tamiri and tabiri school of Ibn e Arabi and al-Farabi receded to the back and taziri school of Ibn e Tamiya and al-Ghazali and Shah Wali Allah comes to the fore. This is because, Qutb termed Western civilization as an utter Jahiliyya, see its reflection in another protagonist of this school.

“It is a purely materialistic civilization. Its whole system is devoid of the concept of compassion, fear of God, straightforwardness, truthfulness, and urge for the right, morality, trustworthiness, virtue, modesty, piety and chastity which form the foundations of Islamic civilization. Its ideology is diametrically opposed to the Islamic concept. It leads mankind in a direction contra Islam. Western civilization strikes at the roots of that concept of ethics and culture which is the base of Islamic civilization. It builds its individual and collective character on a pattern that cannot afford and adjust with the structure of Islamic civilization. In other words Islam and Western civilizations are like two boats sailing in totally opposite direction. Any attempt to sail in both the boats at a time shall split the adventurer into two pieces”.

The same writer while addressing in Ali Garh University said *“see, this system of education cannot prepare even a peon to serve Islamic system of government. But, same university proved arsenal of Muslim league. It brings forth leadership that in her zeitgeist was at par with British and Hindu leadership. Modernist class of this institution without colliding horns with either Britons or Hindus in a battlefield won an Islamic state with sheer political acumen by democratic means a Maruf of our times. Iqbal, the dreamer of Pakistan, termed Western Civilization an extended form of Islamic civilization. In his theological approach integration of mankind on the platform of grand ethical ideal of Oneness of God is an ultimate destiny of man. In pursuance of this goal he envisions unity between Islam, Judaism and Christianity, Zoroastrians treated as like people of the Book*

also becomes part of that unity, this interpretation furthers the scope of this unity that leads to an ultimate unity of mankind. The phenomenon bodes well for the future of mankind. The presence of this school invokes optimism in Bernard Lewis “the movement nowadays called fundamentalism is not the only Islamic tradition. There are others, more tolerant, more open, that helped to inspire the great achievements of Islamic civilization in the past, and we may hope these other traditions will in time prevail” (Lewis, 1990).

However, dictatorial regimes nurtured by the colonial West, in the Muslim lands made modernists endangered species, as a corollary narrower perspective of Islam grew, Muslim dictators, monarchs and western capitals capitalized on that Muslim demographics and zeal against soviet in Afghanistan getting oblivious of the fact that chickens of proxy war come home to roost. Moreover, success gave them tremendous self-confidence and power. Its impact on the Islamic world was, in effect, comparable to the impact which the Japanese defeat of the Russians in 1905 had on the Oriental world. To Benazir Bhutto, this turns Muslim zealots into Frankenstein monster.

Now, roiled by the crisis of war on terror, Islam is at the crossroads, in an emerging scenario either it had to be dovetailed with Western powers as it had been in cold war era, or having learnt from SEATO/CENTO, political turmoil in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria had to enter in alliance of mutual defence which is far from reality, for no core state or substantive power exists in the Muslim world to affect this unity, or it had to enter in wider alliance with Confucius China. In either case Muslims, once for millennium masters of their own destiny, had to serve the history of others, as long as they do not revive the tapered off spirit of Ijtihad to see text (Quran) and context (universe) responding, corroborating and supplementing rather than supplanting each other. In Pakistan there is visible shift in foreign policy from West to East and North, same was observed though temporarily in Saudi policy when Obama was striking deal with Iran, and ultimately it turned to the West, its former saviour and emancipator against Ottomans.

However, geo-strategic necessities and thirst for the alternative rather than cultural affinities or civilizational harmonies are bringing Tehran, Islamabad and Beijing closer, which Huntington termed emerging Islamic Confucius alliance against the West. At subliminal level, racial instinct in Trump, urged him to forge alliance with former red menace Russia against green menace Islam in an ongoing war on terror. But other veritable arms of power prevailed. For to the dominant narrative of American and Western discourse, the twentieth-century conflict between liberal democracy and Marxist-Leninism is only a fleeting and superficial historical phenomenon compared to the continuing and deeply conflictual relation between Islam and Christianity. *“For almost a thousand*

*years” observes Bernard Lewis, “from the first Moorish landing in Spain to the second Turkish siege of Vienna, Europe was under constant threat from Islam”.*¹⁸ To Huntington, *“Islam is the only civilization which has put the survival of the West in doubt, and it has done that at least twice..... So long as Islam remains Islam (which it will) and the West remains the West (which is more dubious), this fundamental conflict between two civilizations and ways of life will continue to define their relations in the future even as it has defined them for the past fourteen centuries”* (Huntington, 1997). Iqbal had far ago the fall of Soviet predicted that in his famous poem Parliament of Iblis where the great Satan points to his advisors that see, Islam not the communism is tumult of tomorrow.

To Edward said, it was corporate political interest rather than true scholarship that shaped the minds of Occidentals about Oriental minds, cultures and traditions. Their rigged scholarship and academic orthodoxy had been prone to see the relation between the West and the East in perpetual war, sometimes with the moral principle of white man’s burden, on the other with mission civilization, a war with barbarous others so on and so forth. It was history of crusades, two centuries western colonialism of Muslim Afro-Asian states, Psyche-Picot arrangement of Middle East, Belfour Agreement of establishing Zionist state in the heart of Levant, sowing the seeds of Cyprus between Turkey and Greece, of Kashmir between India and Pakistan, now preparations for new wave of colonialism and unrelenting hubris of Western hegemony giving no apace to Muslim countries to grow and prosper impelled Kaddafi , former president of Libyain 1994 to say that *“the new world order means that Jews and Christians control Muslims and if they can, they will after that dominate Confucianism and other religions in India, China and Japan what the Christians and Jews are no saying: we were determind to crush communism and the West now must crush Islam and Confucianism. Now we hope to see a confrontation between China that heads the Confucius camp and America that heads the Christian crusader camp. We have no justification but to be biased against the crusaders. We are standing with Confucianism, and by allying ourselves with it and fighting alongside it in one international front, we will eliminate our mutual opponent. So, we as Muslims, will support China in its struggle against our mutual enemy...we wish China victory.”*

The same was vivacity seen in Z.A Bhutto’s vision, when some corners insinuated non-viability of Sino-Pak relations that their ideologies are incompatible. *“It is a historical fact that Islam, as a political force, has suffered more at the hands of Christian states than of others. It was Christendom that launched crusades against Islam, and it was the Christian nations which held almost all Muslim states under imperial bondage for centuries, destroying their social and moral fibre to such an extent that the world of Islam is still recovering from the damage inflicted...it is unlikely that China is going to be responsible for the fall of the*

Granada of Pakistan or for the wresting of Jerusalem from the Muslim states.... If Pakistan's polity and social structure is firm enough to withstand the onslaught of Western culture and civilization, it can hold its own against any other ideology, especially of the country that has never dominated ours or interfered in its internal affairs."

Islam, for almost thousand years insured La Convivencia with Judeo-Christian Hispania, peaceful co-existence with Hindus in India, Christians of Eastern Europe without suffering identity crisis, what is at stake if it takes on partnership with Confucius China, that too, when she is emerging as the "biggest player in the history of man" likely to be materialized in her "Belt and Road initiative" that potentially can turn Pakistan into hemispheric power.

"With \$900 billion of planned investments ranging from ports in Pakistan and Sri Lanka to high-speed railways in east Africa to gas pipelines crossing central Asia, china's one Belt, One Road project (OBOR) is arguably the largest overseas investment drive ever launched by a single country". The project entails two components, one Silk Road economic Belt (SREC), the other Maritime Silk Road (MSR). SREC is historical Silk Road plus south Asia and south East Asia divided into north, central and south belts. The north belt would go through central Asia, Russia to Europe. The central belt goes through central Asia, West Asia to the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean. The south belt starts from China to Southeast Asia, south Asia, to the Indian Ocean through Pakistan. MSR is a complementary initiative of collaboration in Southeast Asia, Oceania, and North Africa, through several contiguous bodies of water- the South China Sea, the South Pacific Ocean, and the wider Indian Ocean area. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor are two closely related networks (Hancock, 2017).

With Pakistan being at the cusp of South Asia, Central Asia and Middle East, with deep sea Port at its disposal, CPEC not only can turn Pakistan into Power of Eastern Hemisphere, but also can prove a game changer, can shift an axis of power from Atlantic to Pacific, after a long Western hegemony in global affairs. That is because Gwadar Port, is not only viewed as a commercial threat, but also as a geo-strategic challenge in New Delhi and Western capitals, and could be an ultimate fruit of war on terror, if American ambitions in the region come true, which is a day dream without driving a last nail in coffin of Afghan's spirit of freedom, two millennia history of Afghanistan, widely known as graveyard of imperial powers, depicts otherwise. To Iqbal Afghanistan is heart of Asia, its peace guarantees peace in Asia, if it bleeds, whole of Asia would bleed. Afghanistan being an "Asian Roundabout" is one of the only four countries which with stood Western colonialism, Saudi Arabia, Iran and China being others. China's OBOR initiative is wrapped in the moral principle of shared prosperity for mankind, is seen as the part of China solution for the whole world, not just the

developing world, seemed far higher in impact, import, practicality and reality than US's TPP (Transpacific-Pacific Partnership) and TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) which had lost vigour and momentum after Trump assumed power. It is unclear; whether Western values are threatened or its core strategic concerns, that impelled American secretary of defence James Mattis to controversially weigh in on the CPEC debate by claiming that the "OBOR also goes through disputed territory" an obvious reference to CPEC's route through Gilgit-Baltistan. On the one side studious silence on atrocities committed by Indian forces in IHK, heightened concerns on CPEC route on the other, probably raise questions about American standards, and world observers are prone to think that geo-strategic concerns rather than fault lines are arraying America and India against an emerging Islamic Confucius happy marriage of geo-strategic goals.

It had been, is, and will remain, that nations put forward their geo-strategic and political interests in religious- ideological cast, for an expedient legitimacy but equally on the cost of blood and life, pitting communities against each other, a norm and luxury of medieval era, but a folly of modern era wherein communities have other safer fields rather than battlegrounds to actualize their competitive genius. The roadmap carved out by Huntington reflects medievalism rather than an outlook shaped by zeitgeist of modernity. If clash of civilizations ensues, we are standing at the threshold of utter annihilation, nuclear arsenals and climate threats suggest in the words of Chomsky man an evolutionary error. It does not come as a surprise that man is the only species on the earth capable of committing suicide, as individuals go mad, nations and communities too, mankind as a whole is also prone to that job, in fact, *man is aggressively foolhardy and unjust one*, was a tender rebuke to man by his Lord on accepting faculty of free will in primordial covenant, for despite his destructive instincts pointed out by angles and not denied by Lord, man is equally capable of beautifying this incomplete world of ours, turning sand into mirror, darkness of nights into lights, mountainous terrains into gardens, preparing antidotes against poisons. Man is co-creator of God, so mankind must opt for dialogue and reconciliation, instead of clash and wars on cultural and civilizational lines, which are sublime identities, key to common aspirations and group solidarity to compete in goodness among comity of nations, rather than narcissism of differences that sows the seeds of feuds and conflicts.

In fact, end of cold war era had triggered euphoria on both sides of the border that divides world into Eastern and Western hemispheres. West mired in "mirage of immortality", perceived it as an end of history, on the premise that after demise of communism, Western civilization being the universal and final form of human society has no competitor on the world stage, so history for them is over. So, was the case with *Pax Romania*, *PaxIslamica*, *paxBritanica*, civilizations at their peak are prone to this syndrome, which sets in their decline, the hubris attenuates and

consequently evaporates them from the realm of history. Most often, individuals, communities, cultures and civilizations suffer from power pathologies which seal their destinies. In Eastern hemisphere, fall of Marxism was embraced with equal elation and cacophonies. “The total failure of Marxism...and dramatic breakup of the Soviet Union are only the precursors to the collapse of Western liberalism, the main current of modernity. Far from being the alternative to Marxism and the reigning ideology at the end of history, liberalism will be the next domino to fall” said Japanese philosopher Takeshi Umehara. Far ago, Madudi prognosticated Time will come when communism will be under stress for its survival in Moscow itself; and capitalism based democracy will be in desperate plight to defend itself in Washington and New York; Materialistic Atheism will find its position untenable even in the universities of London and Paris; Racialism and Nationalism will be unable to find devotees among Hindus and Germans. This would lead to the victory of Islam. How does the same élan rings louder in Hindu philosopher when he says “*The human race is one. This oneness of humanity is more than a phrase, it is not mere a dream. It is becoming a historic fact. With the speeding up of communication, ideas and tools now are belonging to man as man. The necessities of the historical process are making the world into one. We stand on the threshold of a new society, a single society. Those who are awake to the problems of future adopt the ideal of the oneness of mankind as the guiding principle of their thought and action*” (Srinivasan, 2014). An American historian, Quigley, concluded: Western civilization did not exist about A.D 500; it did exist in full flower about A.D 1500, and it will surely pass out of existence at some time in the future, perhaps before A.D. 2500. “*New civilizations in China and India, replacing those destroyed by the West, he says , will then move into their stages of expansion and threaten both Western and Orthodox civilizations*” (Huntington, 1997).

If power takes gentle curve towards the Asia and China, birth pangs are probable if not inevitable, for China is unwilling to accept American leadership or hegemony in the world; the United States is unwilling to accept Chinese leadership or hegemony in Asia. For two hundred years the United States has attempted to prevent the emergence of an overwhelming dominant power in Europe. For almost hundred years beginning with its “Open Door” policy toward China, it has attempted to do the same in East Asia. On the other, China intends revival of its glorious past. The inventor of gun powder, paper, compass, abacus for two thousand years China was preeminent power in East Asia. Chinese now increasingly assert their intention to resume that historic role and to bring to an end the overlong century of humiliation and subordination to the West and Japan that began with British imposition of the Treaty of Nanking in 1842. Sharing almost more than similar concerns; Islamic world seems to align with Confucius China.

The essence of Western civilization is Magna Charta (1215) and Treaty of Westphalia (1648). Magna Charta paves the way for democracy and its essentials, Peace of Westphalia proved a watershed event for separation of church and state, it gave rise to positivism and modernity that resulted in secular nationalism. The Magna Charta consciously is actually materialization of grand ethical ideal of Oneness of God: if God is one, mankind is also one on socio-economic and political realms. The Peace of Westphalia despite its marvellous achievements, in the long run, was bound to result in spiritual void i.e. materialistic atheism. The cannibalistic nationalism being its essential product not only tore upon the fragile seams of European unity on Christian creed, Asians and Africans took it lock stock and barrel against their spiritual past. In this background, terming Western a universal civilization, viewing world as West versus Rest points toward “mirage of immortality” on their part on the one side, policing the world on Western patterns with imperialistic designs reflect exhaustion of Western potentials, on the other.

Marxism failed against triangle of American technology, Saudi Money and Muslim demographics and zeal, but on broader level it was portrayed as triumph of liberal democracy against Marxism. Now, to retain world power status against an emerging China, nexus of America, Israel and India holds nothing much in store, given the potentials of Confucius Islamic alliance. It was against this setting; Z.A Bhutto (1979) said, “*We know that Israel and South Africa have full nuclear capability. The Christian, Jewish and Hindu civilizations have this capability. Only the Islamic civilization was without it, but that position was about to change*”. Now, nuclear Pakistan is not only capable of self-defence, but a steely wall against Indian probable aggression against Middle East and/or Central Asia.

At this critical juncture of history, the world of Islam needs a serious soul search. Its crisis rather than being allayed or resolved are multiplying. As once Bhutto (1969) said “*Destiny demands an Islamic association, political reality justifies it, posterity awaits it, and by God we will have it. Courage is in our blood; we are a child of rich heritage. We shall succeed.*” However, no change occurs until a fresh moral program is first engineered on conscience of community or engraved on hearts of its individuals, distilled Afghani from Quran at the dawn of modernity when whole of Muslim Asia and Africa was submerged in Western Imperialism²⁷. Dr Fazlur Rahman interpreted Islam in light of Afghani’s vision and Iqbal’s scheme of thought as envisaged in “Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam”. He concluded “*Muslims have, by and large, become prisoners of their own historic creations, whether laws and institutions. In order to set mankind on the right path and provide a positive orientation in the present morass, we must transcend much of historic Islam and rediscover real Islam, which is concretely ever-present in the Quran and its ethical principles. This is the challenge that Muslims must face, for the benefit of all mankind.*”²⁸ His swagger confidence in

truthfulness and efficacy of Islam urged him to say *“Islam at present stands radically polarised and is in unmistakable ferment and transition. Medieval conservatism cannot, however, supply genuine and effective answers to today’s problems. I am therefore confident of the eventual success of the pure Islam of the Quran, which is fresh, promising and progressive.”*²⁹ He termed secularism a horrible philosophy of life which took a heavy toll on hard won human values, an unprecedented phenomenon of human history. *“Muslim world is today passing through a period of rapid change, and at the centre of this change lies the problem of economic reconstruction and economic justice...Muslims nations like other developing ones, have to make certain choices, the two gigantic and competing economic systems of the world- capitalism and communism- necessarily tend to draw developing countries into their respective orbits and accordingly orient their socio-economic policies... the irony of it all is that, while both claim to man all his due dignity, in either case the individual has become no more than a cog in the gigantic wheel of production”*.

Today western observers, “conceive Islam to be a semi-inert mass receiving the destructive blows or formative influences from the West”.³⁴ Being a bearer of Trust-creation of moral world order, Muslims owe to mankind for allaying its ills. Quran proposes them to invite like-minded communities to fulfil this task. “it should be noted that this invitation is for cooperation in building a certain kind of ethical-social world order and is not of the nature of contemporary forms of “ecumenism” where every religious community is expected to be nice to others and extend its typical of salvation to others as much as it can! For Islam, there is no particular salvation; there is success or failure in the task of building the type of world order” (Rahman, 2009).

Conclusions

Change being a historic phenomenon can momentarily be contained, stifled, arrested but never can be restricted or strangled forever. Neither Western civilization is a new species, incomparably different from other civilizations that have ever existed nor have all other contemporary civilizations been sealed to be dead and sterile. Whether a multipolar world emerges or China assumes world leadership, change like a gigantic shift in the axis of power from West to East is pregnant with birth pangs that can annihilate mankind if the game of hegemony continued in Western power corridors and verdict of history is not welcomed with proper care in Eastern and Western capitals. To avoid imminent dangers Huntington’s broad-brush approach of “clash of civilizations” had to be met with a sobering counter-narrative of reconciliation. To me, three options can lead us to a smooth safe destiny. First, putting trust in competitive genius rather than the medieval armament approach let history take its course. In the historical arena, it is a genius of creativity with a responsible moral vision that brings the role of

world leadership to communities. Aging imperial powers confront rising communities on their own perils. So, if the wheel of history moves towards Asia, Westerners should avoid it by their creative genius rather than war. With a few exceptions, the west seems intent on the porcupine posture, the EU's disintegration, the doubtful viability of NATO, and resurge of religious rights depict the same. In such circumstances, coronation would be managed in a court of history without being indulged in the war of crown. The second option is the reconstitution of the UN's Security Council. Core states of each major civilization should be a member of the Security Council so that these could represent their respective concern on fault line border wars to avoid civilizational wars. The third option is, an alliance between three Abrahamic monotheistic religions Judaism, Christianity and Islam be struck on the platform of the grand ethical ideal of Oneness of God that can potentially restrict China or BRICS to challenge American hegemony. Success against Marxism in Afghanistan was recent evidence of the potentials of such an alliance. However, such an alliance seems sure but faraway on the horizon. In nutshell, East and West should learn from each other's successes and failures.

Recommendations

- 1) We have reached a conclusion that for Muslims the easy to go approach is to unconditionally align herself with China which is crystal clear in their foreign policy programs. However, this would prove in the long run a circular and angular journey. It would be mere a change of masters rather than carving out free destiny. We must, first of all get rid of orthodoxy that hinders our way towards intellectual renaissance. We need a new theology that accommodates modern realities. From this theological framework must usher in moral fervor and scientific cum industrial and corporate élan. However, anchoring point of this world view must be the moral ethical program of the Quran which brought forward a nascent Islamic community of Mecca on the helm of world affairs despite lack of human and material resource. Today a billion plus population of Muslim world equipped with mineral resources of high economic value only needs an intellectual renaissance that would pave a way towards carving out free destiny.
- 2) Muslims have also an option to seek an agreement with Judaic Christian West to strike world moral order which Quran endorses in stronger terms. For this our commonality of being members of Abrahamic family of religions serves well. For this West needs to extend her egalitarianism to the Muslim world, and the world of Islam needs to get rid of historical formulations to reinvent, reinterpret and rediscover original Islam from the debris of history.

- 3) If alignment with Confucius China is indispensable, it should neither solely based on economic concerns nor strategic concerns. As Dr. Hamidullah has long before urged Muslim scholars to study Buddhism and Confucianism it stands mandatory for the Muslim world to dig out religious and cultural affinities with her grand eastern partners for while strategic and economic concerns frequently change like the sand dunes religio-moral affinities bears ample permanence in communal relations.

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