

Globalization and Muslim Identity Challenges and Prospects

Ahmed Ibrahim Abushouk¹

International Islamic University

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Globalization: A Catchword in the 21st Century

The term globalization was presumably coined in 1944 by Reiser and Davies,² and became a catchword for various researchers across a wide range of academic disciplines after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in the last decade of the 20th century. But the meaning of the term remained unclear because it was largely influenced by the academic concerns and ideological backgrounds of the researchers who defined it. This dissimilarity of ideological backgrounds has generated a variety of definitions that can be categorized into five broad forms that are in some ways interconnected and to some extent overlapping, but their emphases are substantially different.

The first definition treats globalization as synonymous with *internationalization*, on the assumption that globalization also means cross-border relations between countries in terms of large and growing flows of trade and capital investment.³ But this definition has been rejected by some scholars, such as Jan Art Scholte, who argue that the cross-border relations between countries had come into existence a long time before the introduction of the word “globalization” into the modern dictionary of international relations. Accordingly, Scholte considers this definition as redundant, and does not give a convincing meaning of the term globalization, or accommodate all current global activities within its framework.⁴

The second definition views globalization as *liberalization* and describes it as a process of international economic integration and widespread reduction of statutory constraints on cross-border movements of goods, services, money and financial instruments.⁵ But the critics of this definition reject the total identification of the two terms (globalization and liberalization), and argue that

the process of international economic integration had emerged a long time before the birth of globalization, particularly when the European imperial forces maintained their control over the so-called Third World countries. Therefore, the association of globalization with liberalization, from their perspective, might water-down the modern concept of globalization, and give it a historical dimension before its emergence in the second half of the 20th century.

The third definition equates globalization with *universalization*, and its advocates describe globalization as a process of spreading various objects and experiences to people at all corners of the globe. They trace the evidence for such globalization to the spread of the Gregorian calendar, automobiles and television.⁶ But this definition has been criticized by several scholars who argue that the transcontinental spread of religions and commodities was universal a long time before the term globalization appeared. Therefore, the pre-existent vocabulary of universality or universalization is quite adequate to describe the transcontinental spread of objects and experiences, and the term globalization should be confined to the new global activities that emerged in the second half of the 20th century, and those that are taking shape in our own time.

The fourth definition associates globalization with *Westernization*, and presents it as a dynamic factor that motivates the transcontinental spread of the social structure of modernity (capitalism, rationalism, industrialism, bureaucracy, etc.), and destroys the pre-existent cultures and self-determination of non-Western nations.⁷ Evidence for such globalization, from the point of the definition's advocates, can be found in the transcontinental spread of Hollywood culture and McDonald's fast-food restaurants. For critics of the definition, the spread of such Western values can be discussed under the concept of colonization, modernization or Westernization. In this sense there is no great need for coining a new term (globalization) to deal with the spread of Western values and ideas in Third World countries.⁸

The fifth definition has been introduced by Jan Art Scholte, who defines globalization as *deterritorialization*. Global relations, he says with emphasis, are "transborder exchanges without distance."⁹ Such relations are becoming more significant as communication and production increasingly occur without regard to geographical constraints, transborder organizations of many kinds proliferate, and more people become aware of the world as a single whole. Pushed by the "structural forces" of capitalism and rationalism, and propelled by "actor initiatives" such as technological innovations or regulatory decisions, the transformation is creating a new world. "Only since the 1960s has globality figured continually, comprehensively and centrally in the lives of a large proportion of humanity."¹⁰

This discourse shows that the term globalization is no longer the prerogative of business schools but rather is a central topic of debate across the social disciplines. In this sense one may argue that each of the above definitions addresses the term from a certain perspective, but in the end, all the definitions suggest that the upshot of today's Anglo-Saxon globalization will lead to a form of *comprehensive globalization* which will include all the forces that are guiding the world towards a global village, compressing distance, homogenizing cultures, diluting national sovereignty and reducing the relevance of political borders. In this sense, we can agree with Ali Mazrui and other scholars who argue that globalization is the "villagization of the world."¹¹ However, this concept of villagization should not be understood as a positive culmination in which all the inhabitants of the planet would be affluent, equal and even harmoniously integrated, but rather a process of global homogenization deliberately constructed by American and other Western interests.

Muslims' Responses to these Definitions

The mainstream of Muslim scholars considers globalization or globalism as an old phenomenon that has been in process since the dawn of history, and is currently in the most rapid phase of its development,¹² whereas a few of them view it as a recent phenomenon associated with the socio-political and economic values of the post-modern era. The major difference between these two views is one of time associated with the historical background of globalization rather than understanding its essence and impact on the Muslim world. Therefore we shall focus on the opinion of those who address this issue from a historical perspective, and propose that "much of today's civilizations and inventions are the cumulative results of peaceful and less peaceful interactions of previous civilizations."¹³ These civilizations trace the history of globalization back to the Greek civilization, where Alexander the Great (356–323 BC) tried to expand his political territories over the neighboring countries, and impose the values of Hellenistic civilization on the indigenous communities of the Mediterranean region. The Greeks gradually left the scene for the Romans, who based their civilization on the Greek legacy and Christian heritage. These developments enabled Constantinople to establish itself as the capital of the Roman (or Byzantine) phase of globalization, from where the Romans tried to impose their cultural and political values on the nations of the Mediterranean Sea, the Near East and North Africa. The spread of Roman values in the old world put the Romans and their clients in conflict with the Persians, and the tension between the two superpowers (the Byzantine and Persian empires) of that time dominated the political landscape until the Muslims appeared as a new political force in the 7th century.

From the very beginning of its manifestation in Arabia, Islam presented itself as a global and universal religion. More than one verse in the Qurʾān states that the message of Islam is universal, and addresses the humanity of all races.¹⁴ Prophet Muḥammad also emphasized this universal dimension in a tradition that said there is no difference between an Arab, a Persian, an Ethiopian, a black or a white except how pious and good one can be. Following the rapid territorial expansion of the Islamic state and the spread of Islam as a global religion, Islamic civilization entered a new phase of “globalism,” based on interaction with other civilizations. During this period, the world witnessed a flexible mobility of human knowledge and associations within the borders of the Muslim world that generated a continuous interaction among Muslims themselves, placed them face-to-face with the heritage of ancient civilizations, and enabled them to present themselves as a new source of knowledge. Between the 7th and 13th centuries, Muslim scholars comprehended a great deal of the intellectual heritage of their predecessors, and shaped it into a brilliant civilization and a scientific, philosophic and artistic culture based on the fundamentals of Islam.¹⁵ First the Arabs, then the Persians and later the Turks set about the task of creating this classical Muslim civilization. In the 13th century, both Africa and the Indian Subcontinent became great centers of Muslim civilization. Muslim kingdoms were established in the Malay-Indonesian world, while Chinese Muslims flourished throughout China.¹⁶ This Muslim collective effort led the authors of *History of Western Civilization* to say that:

Conversion of large numbers in the conquered areas was not a feature of early Islam. That came later when Islam was more firmly established as a government, when its brilliant material success gave it added prestige, and when the civil rights and privileges enjoyed by all the faithful tempted many unbelievers into conversion to Islam.¹⁷

The acknowledgment of these scholars refutes the allegation propagated by Orientalists, such as Oliver of Paderborn, that “Islam began by the sword, was maintained by the sword, and by the sword would be ended,”¹⁸ and indicates that the mass conversion took place when Islam became as a way of life and a guidance for all Muslims. These merits of Muslim civilization and the harmonious interactions of its pioneers had seemingly led George Bernard Shaw to forecast that “the faith of Muhammad would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today.”¹⁹

However, by the 17th century, Islamic civilization had begun to lose some of its global dynamics, and the Ottoman caliphate, then the supreme institution of governance in the Muslim World, entered upon a long process of territorial

disintegration that lasted over 200 years. Meanwhile, European civilization spread over the globe, and the large European nation-states, equipped with the overwhelming new powers of science and industry, expanded to empires throughout the globe. With the rise of the United States in the 20th century, the term “Western” came into use, signifying European in an expanded sense. The emergence of Japan made the term “Western” inappropriate for some purposes, and later the industrialization of the Soviet Union created similar “verbal embarrassments.” Hence, by the mid-20th century, it was customary to speak of developed parts of the earth, alongside which others were seen as developing or less developed. In this atmosphere the term “Third World” was born without any specific geographical identity except that it meant outside the orbit of Western countries and the Soviet Union. The Muslim countries were accommodated within the frame of the Third World on the criterion of their poverty, weakness and “backwardness.”²⁰

This political classification marked the end of Muslim globalism and paved the way for the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon globalization. Under the impact of this new phase of globalization, many aspects of Islamic civilization began to come apart, particularly when the European imperial forces moved into the Muslim countries, controlled their natural resources, transformed large elements of the local population into wage employees of foreign owners, and substituted the Shari‘a laws with secular ones that could govern the vertical relationships between the colonizers and the ruled, and maintain law and order at the grass-root level of the Muslim communities.

This era of Anglo-Saxon globalization can be divided into three distinct periods. During the first, covering the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, European imperial forces invaded Third World countries and imposed their political, cultural and economic values on them. The second period, that of the Cold War, witnessed the bipolar tension between the then two superpowers, and the victimization of Third World countries such as Korea, Vietnam and Palestine. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Cold War came to an end, and the center of international political gravity lost its duality and is now largely controlled by the United States and its “New World Order.” This political development marks the beginning of the third phase of the Anglo-Saxon globalization that has divided the world into a “center” (USA) and a “periphery,”²¹ enabling the former to impose its values on the rest and branding those who dared to reject its global policy as an “axis of evil” or enemies of civilization and democracy.²²

In short, this is the perspective of several Muslim scholars who perceive the Anglo-Saxon globalization of today as “neocolonialism,” or as a process of Westernization of the non-Western countries at the expense of their indigenous heritages. To understand the reaction of younger generations of Muslims to the

issue of globalization at large, we need to focus on three distinct groups. The first group includes many of those Muslims who received their education at Western academic institutions, whether at home or abroad, and became much fascinated by the achievements of Western civilization. Therefore, they worked towards the Westernization of state and society in their countries, and assumed that this approach would enable them to contribute positively to the development of their “backward communities.” The best historical example of this attitude can be found in the experience of Kemal Atatürk, who adopted an extensive and thorough policy for the secularization, de-Islamization, and cultural and political nationalization of post-Ottoman Turkey. As Shireen Hunter wrote, “Atatürk was a firm believer in Turkey’s European destiny and in theories that attributed to Islam the greatest part of the responsibility for the economic and military backwardness of Muslim countries.” In contemporary history we have the example of Zayn al-Ābdin bin Ali of Tunisia, who followed the footsteps of his predecessor, al-Habbib Bourgiba, working towards the Westernization of the Tunisian state and society.

This kind of Westernization has been rejected by members of the second group, who call for a return to the pristine purity of Islam, denounce all the products of Western civilization, and reject the validity of Muslim practices that are not in harmony with the fundamental principles of the Qurʾān and Sunna. The target of this group is to restore and implement Shariʿa law in Muslim countries. The implementation process should include all aspects of human activities and international relations with non-Islamic countries. One faction of this group encourages the implementation of Shariʿa law from “above,” in the sense that the secular governments in the Muslim world should be removed from power and substituted by Islamic governments that would follow the footsteps of the early Muslim leaders and work towards the betterment of the Muslim community.²³ To achieve this objective, the advocates of this view assume for themselves the right of assassinating “secular Muslim leaders” or declaring a jihad against them and their Western patrons. Here one can single out the leaders of al-Qaida and the followers of the Taliban movement.²⁴ The members of the second faction adopt the idea of reforming the Muslim community from “within,” and show less interest in challenging the ruling authorities in their own countries. Evidence for such an attitude can be found in the manifesto of the Jamiʿat al-Tabligh²⁵ and the daily practices of some leaders of the Sufi orders.

The members of the third group tend to appreciate some of the Western values of Anglo-Saxon globalization, provided that they are in harmony with the objectives of the Shariʿa law. They assume that this approach will enable them to bridge the gap between traditional Islamic beliefs and institutions and the sociopolitical realities of the contemporary world, and pave the way for

the revival of Islamic values as the most potent device for the development of Muslim communities. To achieve this objective, they established a wide network of charitable, social, educational, financial and political organizations at the grass-root level of the society, and at the same time entered in an open competition and confrontation with the ruling authorities in their countries. The outcome of this struggle was the legitimization of their political existence as opposition parties or political pressure groups,²⁶ and in a few cases, some succeeded in seizing power by force and establishing different forms of “Islamic governments,” as happened in Iran and the Sudan.

The assessment of the political outcome of these three groups lies outside the scope of this study, whose primary objective is to examine the reaction of Muslim activists to the Anglo-Saxon globalization of today, and highlight their position in relation to the preservation of Muslim identity. The sum total of this examination suggests that it is hard to brand all the Islamic revivalist movements as rejectionist or reactionary in their attitudes towards Western civilization because some of them are moderate, pragmatic and ready to deal with globalization if it does not harm the core of their Islamic identity.

Islam and Muslims in the Mind of the West

The image of Islamic revivalist movements mentioned above is blurred in the Western mind, which has been largely influenced by “expert opinion” on the Islamist phenomenon in the Muslim World. This expert opinion, according to Shireen Hunter, may be divided into two schools: “the Neo-Orientalist and the Neo-Third Worldist.” The former, which has won the hearts and the minds of the vast majority in the West, attributes “the emergence of the Islamist phenomenon mainly to Islam itself rather than to the social, economic and cultural dynamics of Muslim societies and the mutations caused by economic development and growing interaction with the outside world.”²⁷ Again this means that the Islamist phenomenon is the consequence of Islam’s inherent characteristics and its incompatibility with the Western values of Anglo-Saxon globalization. Hence, Islam has been described as a static phenomenon that cannot converge or coexist with Western ideas. Such a cultural deterministic attitude can be found in Samuel Huntington’s hypothesis that argues that Islam has from the start been a religion of the sword that glorifies military virtues. It originated among “warring Bedouin nomadic tribes” and this “violent origin is stamped in the foundation of Islam. [. . .] The Koran and other statements of Muslim beliefs contain few prohibitions on violence, and a concept of nonviolence is absent from Muslim doctrine and practice.”²⁸ As a result of what has been said, Neo-Orientalists and their followers believe that the only way the West can deal with the Islamist phenomenon is by resistance, suppression, and containment.²⁹

This “cultural deterministic attitude” has been criticized by the Neo-Third Worldists whom Martin Kramer (a key figure of the Neo-Orientalists) characterizes as “apologists” and Amos Perlmutter brands as “naïve and prone to wishful thinking.” But from the point of Shireen Hunter, the subscribers of this school are “fully cognizant that certain inherent characteristics of Islam have contributed greatly to its relevance and vitality as a social and political idea throughout its history despite periods of dormancy.”³⁰ Therefore, they do not vote for an inevitable clash between Islam and the Western world, because they consider Islam to be capable of change and adaptation, and compatible with “certain concepts of Western liberal ideology.”³¹ Based on this understanding, the Neo-Third Worldists view “the latest wave of the Islamic resurgence not as the consequences of Islam’s peculiarities but rather as a combination of economic deprivation, social alienation and political disfranchisement.”³² One of the most distinguished scholars of this school, Francois Burgat, sees the emergence of Islamic resurgence as an outcome of a long period of neglect of the problems and aspirations of the South by the prosperous North. Thus he argues that the Islamic resurgence was born as the third cultural phase of the process of decolonization, where the Islamists try to get rid of Western colonial legacy and reinstate their own Islamic values.³³ Muslim activists such as Khurshid Ahmad describe this Islamist phenomenon as “a movement of internal renovation, rejuvenation and reassertion. It is a movement that allows Muslims to go back to their roots intellectually, morally, culturally, and ideologically.”³⁴

But the challenge facing Islamic revivalism is that the Neo-Third Worldist school has failed to change the hearts and minds of the Neo-Orientalists and their followers in the West, who view “Islam and events in the Muslim world primarily through the prism of violence and terrorism,” and pay less attention to “the breadth and depth of contemporary Islam, the multiplicity of orientations and diversity of expressions.”³⁵ This situation seems to have led some Western scholars, like John Esposito, to raise the question: “Why has there been a persistent tendency [in the West] to reduce Islam and Islamic activism to religious extremism and terrorism,” although we agree that “violence, terrorism, and injustice exist in the Muslim as in non-Muslim World? They have been legitimated on occasion in the name of Islam, as they have in the name of Christianity, Judaism, and secular ideologies such as democracy and communism.”³⁶ In light of the available literature and historical evidence, one may trace this Western bias to the several following reasons.

The first reason is associated with the Western educational system that views Muslim societies through the modern prism of a development theory that is secular and Western in its principles, values and expectations. This educational setting leads academics, government analysts and the media to

equate “secularization with progress, and religion with backwardness and conservatism, believing that modernization and Westernization are necessarily intertwined.”³⁷ The textbooks used at the pre-university levels are not only full of bias and prejudice, but also lack a thorough knowledge and understanding of Islam and Muslim civilization.³⁸ Against this background, the options of the development of Muslim societies can be primarily seen in terms of a clash of civilizations: the tug between tradition and modernity, the past and the future, the *madrasa* (religious school) and the secular school, and the *hijab* and Western dress.³⁹

The second reason is of an ideological nature, based on the widely held belief among Christians that “Islam is a false religion, Allah is not God, Muhammad was not a prophet; Islam was invented by men whose motives and character were to be deplored, and propagated by the sword.”⁴⁰ This ideological consensus has led the vast majority in the West to believe that Islamic movements are inherently violent and opposed to Western values of secularism, democracy, the rule of civil law, and equality between men and women, and between Muslims and non-Muslims. It is therefore seen as a threat to world stability.

The third reason is based on the “myth of the necessary enemy,” which emerged as a consequence of the disappearance of the “red enemy” (the Soviet Union) from the political scene. Hence, both arms manufacturers and Neo-Conservatives painted Islam as “the green enemy” that would reject the unification of the world under the leadership of the United States, and challenge the centrality of Western civilization.⁴¹

The fourth reason is related to the hostile attitude of some Muslim activists who spoke out against all Western values, called for the Islamization of state and society, described their enemies in the Muslim world and the West as “the enemies of God,” and legitimized the declaration of jihad against them and their properties. Consequently, a series of political assassinations took place in various capitals of the globe. Explosions that targeted American interests shattered the West’s peace of mind and provided the confrontationalists of the United States and its client nation-states with the pretext to lobby the White House to formulate a forceful policy towards the Islamists. Islam was thus painted as the enemy of “civilization and democracy.”

Islamic Revivalism and the New World Order

A decade after the Second World War, the Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI) was founded as part of the University of Pennsylvania, and in 1957 it published the premiere issue of its quarterly journal of world affairs: *Orbis*.⁴² The inaugural article in this issue was written by Robert Strausz-Hupe,⁴³ entitled “The Balance of Tomorrow.” This remarkable article, as Walter A.

McDougall described it, was reprinted in the Winter Issue of 1992, after the fall of the Soviet Union, in order to maintain the commitment of FPRI to its founding imperial mission. Srausz-Hupe wrote:

The issue before the United States is the unification of the globe under its leadership within this generation. How effectively and rapidly the United States will accomplish this task will determine the survival of the United States as a leading power, probably the survival of Western culture, and conceivably the survival of mankind. [. . .] The establishment of such a universal order had become now the sole alternative to anarchy and the destruction of what man has wrought since his ancestors left their caves. The one and only question is, therefore, who will be the people that will establish the universal order in their image and under their domination. [. . .] Will the coming world order be the American Universal empire? It must be that — to the extent that it will bear the stamp of the American spirit. [. . .] The coming world order will mark the last phase in a historical transition and cap the revolutionary epoch of this century. [. . .] The American empire and mankind will not be opposites, but merely two names for the universal order under peace and happiness.⁴⁴

Three weeks after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the term “New World Order” was revived by Brent Scowcroft,⁴⁵ President George Bush’s national security adviser, who said in a press conference: “We believe we are creating the beginning of a New World Order out of the collapse of the U.S.-Soviet antagonisms.”⁴⁶ On September 11, 1990, President Bush addressed the U.S. Congress and emphasized that out of the Persian Gulf crisis “A New World Order can emerge.” History proved that the values of this New World Order are the same as those of Anglo-Saxon globalization. The only functional difference between them is that the New World Order would, by controlling the power of finance with the power of information and media, safeguard the expansionist Western hegemony under the guise of Anglo-Saxon globalization.

In light of this political situation, some Western scholars tried to propose a new understanding of the international political landscape after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The two most important strategic studies that have attracted the attention of the world’s intellectual community are Francis Fukuyama’s *The End of History and the Last Man* and Samuel P. Huntington’s *The Clash of Civilizations and Remaking of World Order*. Fukuyama sees the failure of communism and unacceptability of the Islamic model for the non-Islamic world as indicating the ultimate triumph of liberal democracy and in his own words “the end of history.” He argues that liberal democracy, which originated in Western civilization, has universally acceptable values and that the world is now moving in a fundamental way towards their implementation. In this sense, Fukuyama presents liberal democracy and free market economy

as the two most distinctive features of Anglo-Saxon globalization, and, at the same time, acknowledges the failure of the Islamic model which, from his perspective, lacks the dynamism and universality of liberal democracy as a system of governance. Based on this hypothesis, Fukuyama recognizes the global leadership of the United States of America, and encourages its policymakers to bring the hope of democracy, development, and free trade to every corner of the globe.

Huntington, in contrast, denies the possibility of a universal acceptance of Western civilization. He argues that world politics is entering a new phase in which the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. Therefore, the fundamental sources of this conflict “will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating sources of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.”⁴⁷

This future conflict, in his view, will be largely shaped by interactions among seven or eight major civilizations, namely Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African civilizations.⁴⁸ Using this classification, Huntington assumes that five of these civilizations have core states: for Western civilization, the European Union (EU) and the United States; for Orthodox civilization, Russia; for the Hindu civilization, India; for the Chinese civilization, China; and for the Japanese civilization, Japan. Besides that there is no such core state for the Islamic civilization, Latin America and the Sub-Saharan Africa.

For his expected clash of civilizations, Huntington selected the Chinese and Islamic civilizations and presented them as the most dangerous threat to Western civilization. To frustrate a possible alliance between these two hostile civilizations and ensure the sustainability of their Western identity, Huntington advises the core states of the West to adopt short- and long-term strategies. In the short-term strategy they should:

1. Promote greater cooperation and unity within the framework of their own civilization, particularly so between its European and North American components;
2. Incorporate the Westernized societies in Eastern Europe and Latin America with those in the West;
3. Promote and maintain cooperative relations with Russia and Japan;
4. Prevent escalation of local inter-civilization conflicts into major inter-civilization wars;
5. Limit the expansion of the military strength of Confucian and Islamic states;

6. Moderate the reduction of Western military capabilities and maintain military superiority in East and Southwest Asia;
7. Exploit differences and conflicts among Confucian and Islamic states;
8. Support groups in other civilizations that are sympathetic to Western values and interests;
9. Strengthen international institutions that reflect and legitimize Western interests and values; and
10. Promote the involvement of non-Western states in those institutions.

In the long-term strategy, Huntington advises the core nation-states of Western civilization to be aware of the development of non-Western civilizations (i.e., Confucian and Islamic civilizations) that could be interested in reconciling some aspects of Western modernity with their traditional cultures and values in order to maintain their existence. He argues that this degree of reconciliation will require the West to maintain the necessary economic and military power to protect its interests *vis-à-vis* these civilizations.⁴⁹ In his chapter on “the Global Politics of Civilizations,” Huntington says:

The underlying problem of the West is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is Islam, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the superiority of their culture and are obsessed with the inferiority of their power. The problem for Islam is not the CIA or the U.S. Department of Defense. It is the West, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the universality of their culture and believe that their superior, if declining, power imposes on them the obligation to extend that culture throughout the world. These are the basic ingredients that fuel conflict between Islam and the West.⁵⁰

Since the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington DC, the advocates of the clash of civilizations doctrine have dominated the American political and media scene. Before any evidence was revealed about the identity of the attackers, and within a few minutes, Islam and Muslims were placed in the dock by leading American newspapers such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. In the Western media, Islam was also painted as a violent religion, and ordinary people were made to believe that Islam and terrorism go hand-in-hand. The war on terrorism became consciously or subconsciously associated with the war on Islam.⁵¹ In this atmosphere, George W. Bush Jr. divided the world between “believers and non-believers”; the former are those who accept the values of Anglo-American capitalism and the latter are those who do not. In his address to an antiterrorist summit in Warsaw, November 6, 2001, President Bush said that there was no room for neutrality in the war against terrorism. “You are either with us or against us.” In response to the question by the *Association of Muslim Social Scientists Bulletin*: “Do you feel that

September 11 has helped confirm Samuel Huntington's concept of Clash of Civilizations?" Ali Muzrui said:

It is not September 11 which has vindicated Samuel Huntington's prophecy of "clash of civilizations." It is the reaction of the Bush administration which has been targeting Muslims not only in Afghanistan but also in the Philippines, former Soviet Georgia, potentially Somalia, almost certainly Iraq, and elsewhere. The most absurd was President Bush's description of Ariel Sharon, as 'a man of peace.'⁵²

On the platform of the "End of History," these political developments led Fukuyama, prophet of liberal democracy and advocate of its inevitable spread all over the world, to reconsider his position by saying:

The struggle between Western liberal democracy and Islamo-fascism is not one between two equally viable cultural systems, both of which can master modern sciences and technology, create wealth and deal with the *de facto* diversity of the contemporary world. In all these respects, Western institutions hold all the cards and for that reason will continue to spread across the globe in the long run. But to get to the long run we must survive the short run.⁵³

In connection with this passage and Huntington's proposition, sixty American scholars came out with a letter giving moral justification for the declaration of war on terrorism.⁵⁴ The signatories of this letter recognized the universality of their Anglo-Saxon values and accused the alleged attackers of September 11 of being the enemies of these values and Western civilization. They argued that the ongoing globalization process must carry one set of universal values, namely the Western ones.

In sum, this attitude of American scholars reflects a century-old myth that under-girded the second phase of the Anglo-Saxon globalization by justifying wars of colonial expansion and missionary crusades during the nineteenth century under the rubric of civilizational mission, "white man's burden," or "Manifest Destiny." It also crystallizes the superiority of Western man who willingly assumes the burden of sharing his values and achievements with the "backward world." As Yvonne Haddad says, "This myth justified the ransacking of the cultures of the conquered people and confining Muslim achievements to ethnological museums or the dustbin of history."⁵⁵

As we have seen earlier, Huntington denies the total universality of Western civilization and acknowledges its superiority over other civilizations, including the two hostile ones (Confucian and Islamic civilizations). To sustain this superiority, he advises the core nation-states in the West first to incorporate into their Western orbits other civilizations whose cultures are close or at least not hostile to the Western civilization, and, second to use all the means and

ways that will enable them to maintain their Western identity against the threat of the hostile civilizations. In this respect, Fukuyama argues that “the challenge faced by the United States [the core state of Western Civilization] today is more than a fight with a tiny band of terrorists. The Islamo-fascist Sea within which the terrorists swim constitutes an ideological challenge that is in some ways more basic than the one posed by communism.” He then estimates the subscribers of this Islamo-fascism at 10 to 15 percent of the total population of the Muslim world.⁵⁶ The dilemma here is that about 15% of the total population of the Muslim world has been painted as the real enemy of the “superior civilization,” and the war has been waged on them. In such a gloomy situation the Bush administration declared that there is no buffer zone between the two rival worlds: you are classified either as a client of those who are fighting against “terrorism” or a patron (if not a subscriber) of “Islamofascism.”

Consequently, the White House called for a “march of freedom in the Muslim World,” that will be based on the support of “moderate [pro-Western] regimes especially in the Muslim world,” and the declaration of war on “international terrorism.” This march of freedom, as defined by President Bush, is not a “clash of civilizations” but rather a clash “inside a civilization,” and its battlefield will be in the Muslim world. “This is an area where America must excel.”⁵⁷ These extracts from the National Security Report reflect the features of the new U.S. policy in the Muslim world, and also show how Washington has taken a wide-angle view of the Muslim world from Indonesia and the Philippines in the east to Mauritania and Morocco in the west. Thus the Middle Eastern countries are no longer the sole focal point of U.S. foreign policy, since the so-called Muslim *jihadists* have been present in every country of the Muslim world. Tactically, the Bush administration divided the Muslim world between “moderate governments” that should receive the support of the White House and “evil ones” that should be treated as patrons of international terrorism. But the long-term strategy of Washington seems to have been based on the substitution of the so-called Wahhabist form of Islam by the Kemalist version that contributed to the de-Islamization of post-Ottoman Turkey. Therefore, the leaders of some “moderate regimes” in the Muslim world were strongly advised to shut down the *madrasas* that propagate anti-American sentiments, and remove all Qurʾān verses and ideological concepts (i.e., “martyrdom,” and “jihad”) that would promote terrorism from their school curricula and daily practices.

Another shift in U.S. foreign policy took place immediately after the statement of Usama Bin Laden that attributed the major reasons of Muslims’ hatred of the United States to its never-ending support of Israel. This statement and its consequences “brought all anti-Israeli forces such as Hamas and Hezbollah within the ambit of U.S. response, uniting the United States and

Israel in the war against Islamic militancy.” Thus the United States shifted its position from “a passive guarantor of Israeli security” that limits itself to diplomatic support and material aid, to a committed patron who seeks to destroy the enemies of Israel such as Hamas and Hizbollah.⁵⁸ The Bush Administration also ignored all international agreements and UN resolutions that support the Palestinian case, and put emphasis on the security of the Israeli state by making the establishment of a Palestinian state conditional on meeting a list of Israeli requirements: “if Palestinians embrace democracy, the rule of law, confront corruption, and firmly reject terror, they can count on America’s support for the creation of a Palestinian state.”⁵⁹

Besides these Palestinian grievances, the other provocative features of the “march of freedom in the Muslim world” can be summarized as follows:

- The human tragedy caused by the sanctions against Iraq;
- U.S. military, moral, and even financial support to undemocratic Arab regimes;
- U.S. opposition to Islamization of Muslim societies;
- Cultural Americanization of the Muslim world through globalization.⁶⁰

It appears that the United States has been influenced by the Huntington thesis, and accordingly moved towards paralyzing Islamic civilization, maintaining its control over the heart of the Middle East, and strengthening the position and influence of Israel. The outcome of this American hegemony is that Islamic jihadist groups are increasingly convinced that their duties are to fight against the West (the United States) and its client nation-states in the Muslim world by all means, including launching mass terrorism. As Fadli Zon argues, this “cycle will become a vicious circle, trapped in Huntington’s thesis that made the world the most dangerous place to live in.”⁶¹

Conclusion

The latest call for the revival of Islamic identity was triggered by Islamists who criticized the total dependence of Muslim nations on the heritage of Western and communist civilizations. The current challenge facing Muslims is that this call for the revival of Islamic identity, no matter what the facts or the circumstances, is perceived by Western societies as a call for disturbing liberal democracy and its political values based on secularism and religious tolerance. As a result, Islam as a whole has been branded as a threat to Western democracy and the values of Anglo-Saxon globalization.

To overcome this challenge, this writer feels that Muslims need to convince the world in general and the West in particular that Islam is not a fanatic faith but is essentially a peaceful religion that bases its vision on the revealed text and its human ethics, on knowledge and its humanitarian utilization, and on a positive interaction with other civilizations. This vision needs to be communicated, first and foremost, among Muslims themselves, their

governmental and civil institutions, and then regionally conveyed by the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and its associate institutions in the Muslim world. This strategy may put Muslims in a better position to argue that Islam has no “fault lines of war” with other civilizations, but is a religion that works towards the betterment of humanity. The systemic propagation of this fact and the outcome of its implementation in the Muslim world may persuade the West to change its misperception of Islam, which has been built on ancient and deeply-seated stereotypes that portray Muslims as terrorists and religious fanatics. Fostering such an atmosphere may go a long way to enabling Muslims to overcome the current challenges and maintain their political identity as the followers of a religion whose adherents account for one of five human beings on the planet.

Endnotes

1. Associate Professor, Department of History and Civilization, International Islamic University Malaysia.
2. O. L. Reiser and B. Davies, *Planetary Democracy: An Introduction to Scientific Humanism and Applied Semantics*, (New York: Creative Age Press, 1944), 212, 219.
3. Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, “Globalisation: Ten Frequently Asked Questions and Some Surprising Answers,” *Soundings*, vol. 4, Autumn 1996, 48.
4. Jan Art Scholte, 15.
5. H. Sander, “Multilateralism, Regionalism and Globalization: The Challenges to the World Trading System”, in: H. Sander and A. Inotia, eds., *World Trade after the Uruguay Round: Prospects and Policy Options for the Twenty-First Century*, (London: Routledge, 1996), 27.
6. Jan Art Scholte, op. cit., 15.
7. For details see: T. Spybey, *Globalization and World Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 6; P. J. Talyor, “Izations of the World: Americanization, Modernization and Globalization” in: C. Hay and D. Marsh, eds., *Demystifying Globalization*, (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 2000), 49–70; Malcolm Waters, *Globalization*, 2nd edn., (London. New York, Routledge, 2002), 222–230.
8. Martin Khor, “Globalisation: Implications for Development Theory,” *Third World Resurgence*, no. 74, October 1996, 15–21.
9. Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization: A Critical Introduction*, (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 49.
10. *Ibid.*, 87.
11. Ali Mazrui, “Interview”, *Association of Muslim Social Scientists Bulletin*, Spring 2002, 9.
12. Hasan Hanafi and Sadiq Jalal al-Azm, *What is Globalization?* (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 2000), 17–23.
13. Abdullahy Y. Zalloum, *Painting Islam as the New Enemy: Globalization and Capitalism Crisis*, (Kuala Lumpur: Crescent New, 2003), 107.
14. Qurʾān, 7/157; 34/28. For details see: Dayf, Shawqi, *The Universality of Islam*, (trans. El-Affendi, Abdelwahb), (Rabat: ISESCO, 1998).

15. For details see: Ismail R. al-Faruqi and Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, *The Cultural Atlas of Islam*, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986).
16. *Ibid.*; "Religion of Islam", <http://www.iad.org/PDF/Global.pdf>.
17. Carlton J. H. Hayes, Marshall Whithead Baldwin and Charles Woolsey Cole, *History of Western Civilization*, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1962), 140.
18. Quoted in: Fawaz A. Gerges, "Islam and Muslims in the Mind of America," <http://www.fathom.com/course/2170771/sessionss.html>, (consulted on May 2004), 1.
19. George Bernard Shaw, *The Genuine Islam*, Vol. 1, no. 8, 1936.
20. For further details see "Chapter XV: Europe's World Supremacy," in: R. R. Palmer and Joel Colton, *A History of the Modern World*, 3rd Edn., (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 601–643.
21. The terms "centre" and "periphery" were first used by Barry Buzan who observed that "the term Third World has lost nearly all its content. In the absence of a Second World now that the communist system has largely disintegrated, [. . .]" Instead he introduced the two terms: centre and periphery. For details see his article: "New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-first Century", *International Affairs*, vol. 67/3, 1991, 431–51.
22. The phrase "axis of evil" was used by George W. Bush, when he was delivering his state of the Union Address on February 18, 2002.
23. For further details see: Ibrahim Abu Rabi', "Discourse, Power and Ideology in Modern Islamic Revivalism," *The Muslim World*, vol. lxxxi, 3–4, July–October, 1991, 283–298.
24. Ayman al-ÚawáÉhrÉ, "al-Wááiyah al-AkhÉrah [The Last Advice]", *al-Sbarq al-Ausat Newspaper*, issue no. 8415, 12/12/2001.
25. Z. H. Faruqi, "The TablÉghÉ JamÉÑat", in: S. T. Lokhandwalla, ed., *India and Contemporary Islam*, (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1971), 60–69.
26. The best example is JamÉÑat-e-IslÉmÉ in Pakistan. For details see: Abdul Rashid Moten, *Revolution to Revolution: JamÉÑt-e-IslÉmÉ in the Politics of Pakistan*, (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2002); Abdelwahab Affendi, *Turabi's Revolution: Islam and Power in the Sudan*, (London: Cryseal, 1991).
27. Shireen T. Hunter, *The Future of Islam and the West: Clash of Civilizations or Peaceful Coexistence?*, (Westport. Connecticut. London: Praeger, 1998), 71.
28. Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, (London: Touchstone, 1998), 263.
29. Shireen Hunter, op. cit., 71.
30. *Ibid.*, 72.
31. *Ibid.*, 72.
32. *Ibid.*, 73.
33. Quoted in Shireen T. Hunter, op. cit., 73. See his article: "Les Islamists en Europe," *L'Express*, May 6, 1994.
34. Khurshid Ahmad, "Islamic Resurgence: Challenges, Directions and Future Perspectives," in: Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi', ed., *Islamic Resurgence: Challenges, Directions and Perspectives: A Round Table with Khushid Ahmad*, (Tampa (Florida): World and Islam Studies Enterprise, 1994), 54.
35. John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* 2nd edn., (New York: Oxford University Press), 232.
36. *Ibid.*, 234.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Fred R. Von Der Mehden, "American Perceptions of Islam", in: John L. Esposito, ed., *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 19–21.
39. *Ibid.*, 230.

40. Albert Hourani, *Islam in European Thought*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 10.
41. Fred Halliday, *Islam & the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East*, (London. New York: I.B. Tauris, 1995), 113.
42. *Orbis* was founded as a forum for policymakers and scholars. It offers informative and lively discourse on a full range of topics relating to American foreign policy and national security, as well as in-depth analysis on important international developments. It includes in its founding editorial board of advisors distinguished figures in American politics and academia such as Henry A. Kissinger, William Yandell Elliot, Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington.
43. He was a former US ambassador to Turkey, NATO, Belgium, Sweden and Sri Lanka. He served as a professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania, and in the 1955 founded the Foreign Policy Research Institute and its journal *Orbis*. His major works include: *Geopolitics: The Struggle for Space and Power*; and *Protracted Conflict and The Balance of Tomorrow*. He died at his home in Newtown Square in Pennsylvania in 2002.
44. Robert Strausz-Hupe, "The Balance of Tomorrow," *Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs*, The Winter 1992, 5, 8, 9.
45. General Brent Scowcroft is one of the few men in modern times who have the combination of experience and expertise in foreign policy and national security affairs. He has served five Presidents, and is the only person to have served two Presidents — Ford and Bush — as National Security Advisor. Both of these tours occurred during some of the most momentous times in American history. With the end of the Cold War, and the collapse of the Soviet Union, it was Brent Scowcroft who coined the term and laid the foundation for the "New World Order." See: "General Brent Scowcroft," in http://www.harrywalker.com/speakers_template.cfm?speaÉ_id=207, (accessed on April 30, 2004).
- The term New World Order was vaguely used in 1915 by Nicholas Murray Butler, in an address delivered before the Union League of Philadelphia, and between the World Wars by several politicians and writers such as Augustus O. Thomas, Arthur Greenwood and Norman Thomas. But during this period it had a different connotation largely associated with the maintenance of peace and order, and did not focus on the unification of the globe under the leadership of the United States of American. For further details see: "New World Order Quotes," in: <http://www.freedomdomain.com/nwoquote.htm> (accessed on April 30, 2004).
46. Quoted in: *The Washington Post*, May 1991.
47. Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, 1993, 22.
48. *Ibid.*, 24.
49. *Ibid.*, 46.
50. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 217–18.
51. Abdulhay Y. Zalloum, op. cit., 7.
52. "Interview with Ali Mazrui," *The AMSS Bulletin*, Spring 2002, 10.
53. Francis Fukuyama, "Their Target: The Modern World," *Newsweek*, Special Davos Edition, December 2001- February 2002, 59.
54. "What We're Fighting For: A Letter from America: 60 Scholars Make the Moral Case for the War on Terrorism," February 12, 2002.
55. Quoted in Glenn E. Perry, "Huntington and his Critics: The West and Islam," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2002, 32.
56. Francis Fukuyama, op. cit., December 2001–February 2002, 55.

57. *The National Security strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002, 31.
58. M. A. Muqtedar Khan, "Nice but Tough: A Framework for U.S. Foreign Policy in the Muslim World," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, vol. ix/1, spring 2002, 356.
59. *Ibid.*
60. M. A. Muqtedar Khan, op. cit., 357.
61. Fadli Zon, "Globalization and the Rise of Resistance Identity Politics", a paper presented at *International Roundtable Conference on "The Future of The Aspired New World Order"*, International Islamic University Malaysia, 16–17 December, 2003, 12.