



THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS: AN ANALYSIS
FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

BY

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ABSTRACT

The Clash of Civilizations theory has made waves since 1993. It described the post-Cold War world as one where eight civilizations clash frequently on national, regional, and sometimes international levels, as a direct result of the increased importance of civilizational factors in the identity politics that predominate global affairs today. Focus was placed on the Islamic and Sinic civilizations as two “challengers” with the greatest capacity to confront today’s most powerful civilization, the West. The theory is not without flaws, and continues to be critiqued and counter-critiqued, but continues to hold sway in Western policy-making and academic circles. Unfortunately, many of the Islamic responses to it seemed more like rebuttals rather than rigorous, evidence-based analyses, and did not reference relevant Islamic textual evidence and principles. As the theory interweaves religion, politics, and history together, an interdisciplinary approach that combines those three angles is vital. Theoretically, certain socio-political aspects were explored and, more importantly, the Islamic perspective as delineated by the Qur’ān, the Sunnah, and relevant Islamic International Relations principles. Judging from a confluence of Islamic factors such as the law of *tadāfu*’, its relationship to the broad struggle between truth and falsehood, the largely civilizational roots of anti-Muslim and anti-Western sentiment, and Islam’s ambitions toward religiopolitical paramountcy and leadership; the Clash of Civilizations theory does carry significant truth, particularly as it relates to Islam and the West. This was also established practically by performing a historical analysis of the relationship between Islam and the West in history, and a political analysis of that relationship in current times. Despite frequent clash, the uniqueness of Islamic tolerance throughout its history was most evident, as attested to by Western proponents themselves. The West understands Islam’s broad spiritual appeal and manifest capacity to challenge Western monopoly on global affairs and world order. Considering the West’s surviving power and political supremacy, and its unrestrained war on what it purports is extremist Islam, which many in the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds view as a war on Islam itself, the onus is on the West to reverse the current clash of civilizations with Islam, or to preclude an impending one.

ملخص البحث

لقد أثارت نظرية صراع الحضارات ضجة كبيرة منذ صدورها عام ١٩٩٣م. لقد وصف صاحبها عالم ما بعد انتهاء الحرب الباردة بأنه عالم صراع متجدد بين ثنائي حضارات، وذلك على المستوى الوطني والإقليمي وأحياناً الدولي، وهذا كله نتيجة مباشرة لما اكتسبته العوامل الحضارية من أهمية متزايدة في مجال السياسة المتعلقة بالهوية، والتي تهيمن اليوم على القضايا الدولية. كان التركيز على حضارتين متحديتين، هما: الحضارة الإسلامية والصينية، واللتان لديهما أكبر قدرة متوقعة على مجابهة الحضارة الأقوى اليوم، أي الحضارة الغربية. وهذه النظرية لا تخلو من العيوب وتخضع للنقد والنقد المضاد؛ لكنها ما زالت تلقى قبولاً لدى دوائر صنع القرار الغربية والأكاديمية منها كذلك. من المؤسف أن كثيراً من الردود الإسلامية كانت أقرب إلى الرد العاطفي منه إلى التحليل المتأني المستند إلى الأدلة، وفي غالبها لم تشر إلى النصوص والمبادئ الشرعية المتعلقة بالموضوع. وحيث إن النظرية تجمع بين الدين والسياسة والتاريخ في آن واحد، فإن انتهاج منهجية متعددة التخصصات والتي تجمع بين هذه المجالات الثلاثة أمر ضروري. أما من الناحية النظرية فقد تم فحص بعض الجوانب الاجتماعية السياسية؛ والأهم من ذلك، فقد تم بحث النظرة الشرعية المعتمدة على القرآن والسنة والمبادئ المرتبطة بالعلاقات الدولية في الإسلام. ونظراً إلى مجموعة من المبادئ مثل: سنة التدافع وعلاقتها بالصراع العام بين الحق والباطل، والعاطفة العدائية المتبادلة بين الإسلام والغرب وجذورها الحضارية في غالبها، ثم الطموح الإسلامي للتمكين الديني السياسي والدور القيادي، فإن نظرية صراع الحضارات تتمتع بقدر من الصواب، خاصة فيما يخص العلاقة بين الإسلام والغرب. وقد قُدر هذا من الناحية التطبيقية كذلك من خلال الاستعراض والتحليل التاريخي للعلاقة بين الإسلام والغرب، ومن خلال التحليل السياسي للعلاقة ذاتها في الوقت الحاضر. ورغم كثرة الصراع الحاصل إلا أن سماحة الإسلام الفريد عبر التاريخ كان ظاهراً بوضوح، كما يقره الغربيون بأنفسهم. الغرب يفهم جاذبية الإسلام الروحية وقدرته العالية على تحدي الاحتكار الغربي لمجال الشؤون الدولية والنظام العالمي. على اعتبار قوة الغرب وهيمنته السياسية، وحره غير المحدودة على ما يزعم أنه الإسلام المتطرف، ويعتبره الكثيرون في العالم الإسلامي وغيره حرباً على الإسلام نفسه، فإن التبعة على الغرب لكبح جماح الصراع الحضاري الحالي مع الإسلام، أو منع حدوث صراع مرتقب.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage in Uṣūl al-Dīn and Comparative Religion.

Thameem Ushama
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage in Uṣūl al-Dīn and Comparative Religion.

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This dissertation was submitted to the Department of Uṣūl al-Dīn and Comparative Religion and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage in Uṣūl al-Dīn and Comparative Religion.

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Ibrahim Mohamed Zein
Dean, Kulliyah of Islamic
Revealed Knowledge and
Human Sciences

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Mohamad Saleh Kotob

Signature:

Date:

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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Transliteration Table

ء	'	خ	kh	ش	Sh	غ	Gh	ن	N
ب	B	د	D	ص	ṣ	ف	F	هـ	H
ت	T	ذ	dh	ض	ḍ	ق	Q	و	W
ث	Th	ر	r	ط	ṭ	ك	K	ي	Y
ج	J	ز	z	ظ	ẓ	ل	L		
ح	ḥ	س	s	ع	ʿ	م	M		

Short Vowels	
َ	a
ِ	i
ُ	u

Long Vowels	
ا + َ	ā
ي + ِ	ī
و + ُ	ū

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Civilizational clash is not a new concept. Civilizational clash as a structured theory of global politics, however, is. In both cases, Islam seems to be the nexus.

According to many Western academics, conflict between Islam and the West goes back a long way. Some trace it back to Napoleon's landing on Egypt's shores with his *Armée d'Orient* at the end of the 18th century, while others go further back to the initial victories of the Ottomans in the 14th century. Bernard Lewis, Samuel Huntington and others trace it back to the advent of Islam itself: "Fourteen hundred years of history demonstrate otherwise. The relations between Islam and Christianity, both Orthodox and Western, have often been stormy."¹

Islam as a world religion has been around for over 14 centuries, but its reach and influence fluctuated during that period, just like any other religion or civilization. For most of its history, Islamic rule was in the form of *Khilāfah*, or a Caliphate, wherein one *Khalīfah* assumed leadership of a large body of Muslim lands that transcended the borders of nation-states we know today. Since the later stages of the Ottoman *Khilāfah*² and its subsequent dissolution in 1924,³ Islam and its influence were in decline. Muslim lands were apportioned between European colonizers in the

¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2nd ed., 1997), 209.

² This is more of a reference to recognized Ottoman sovereignty over the Islamic world than to *Khilāfah*, given the juristic condition of Qurayshite ancestry. See p. 167.

³ The official date of *Khilāfah* abolishment is March 3, 1924. However, in reality, the *Khilāfah* had become symbolic and the *Khalīfah* merely a figurehead since the separation of the authorities of Sultanate and *Khilāfah* in 1922. ‘Abd al-Majīd II was the first *Khalīfah* without a Sultan's authority. Others may even claim the *Khilāfah* became nominal much earlier since the overthrow of Sultan ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd in 1909.

notorious Sykes-Picot agreement in 1916. Palestine was occupied and more than 800,000 of its inhabitants were forced into exile.⁴ On an individual level also, Islam did not occupy the place it once did in people's hearts. Westernization was on the rise and had taken its toll on Muslim youth. This downward trend had started to reverse in the 1970s and 1980s in the wake of a widespread Islamic Resurgence affecting different aspects of Muslim religiosity, social relations and political life.

This resurgence started during the Cold War era in a bipolar world, in which the U.S. and U.S.S.R. were competing for global domination. Interestingly, that political situation was not very different from what existed when Islam first emerged in Arabia, as two major civilizations were taking turns at hegemony, the Romans and the Persians. In light of U.S.-Soviet rivalry, the Islamic resurgence while usually vilified by the West, was exploited to the fullest in defeating the decades-old Communist enemy.

The end of the Cold War meant the end of the simplistic bipolar paradigm of international politics. For some, it meant the beginning of a long-awaited, peaceful, unipolar world. Francis Fukuyama had predicted the "end of history" and the fateful victory of liberal Western democracy. He posited that centuries of boredom may ensue.⁵ This is reminiscent of "the war that will end war" that started in the beginning of the 20th century. Such was the title of H. G. Wells' book with the commencement of World War I, prophesying the end of war and "the unique opportunity to create a new world order that would render future wars impossible."⁶ Less than a quarter century later, the next world war broke out.

⁴ This figure is the subject of dispute. Some Palestinian sources mention even higher figures. Salman Abu Sitta in *From Refugees to Citizens at Home* raises it as high as 935,000. Other sources quote lower figures. The UNCCP final report put it at 711,000.

⁵ Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?", *The National Interest*, no.16 (Summer 1989), 18.

⁶ W. Warren Wagar, *H.G. Wells: Traversing Time*, (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 148.

Others saw the end of the Cold War as the beginning of a new U.S. century, a unipolar world where the U.S. would become the global policeman that creates and protects world peace and order. Still others saw it as the beginning of a multipolar, multi-civilizational world, where international politics would become that much more complex, most prominently championed by Huntington. This last viewpoint, however, did not prevent Huntington from declaring that “The West is and will remain for years to come the most powerful civilization.”⁷

However one views the global political situation following the end of the Cold War, the fact remains that there were no longer two heavyweights battling it off with their representative blocs in various military and ideological arenas. But the bipolar Cold War paradigm had offered something of massive political value to the opposing powers; it identified the obvious archenemy, whose existence was conducive to political unity and industrious efforts for achieving economic and military superiority back home. Thus, after the Cold War ended, the need arose for a new “Communism”, a common enemy that could rally the West’s faithful into vigilance and action. That “Communism” was Islam. Thus, Rand Corporation based its report *Building Moderate Muslim Networks* on a comparison between Cold War strategies to fight Communism and post-Cold War strategies to battle “radical Islam”, highlighting that the latter is even more complex.⁸ Of course, the sheer irony of this is that the Muslims who played a pivotal role in removing the paramount Red Menace had now become the Green Peril.⁹ During the same year Huntington’s thesis was published, a New York Times

⁷ Huntington, 29. Since this research mainly relies on Huntington’s 1996 book as opposed to the 1993 article or other works, all subsequent citations are from his book, unless otherwise mentioned.

⁸ Angel Rabasa, Cheryl Benard, Lowell H. Schwartz, and Peter Sickle, *Building Moderate Muslim Networks*, (Santa Monica, Ca: RAND Corporation, 2007), 37.

⁹ A term used for the perceived global threat of Islam.

headline read “Seeing Green; The Red Menace Is Gone. But Here's Islam.”¹⁰

On the other hand, it is quite true that the West is a rich collage of differing opinions and perceptions, and that such an Islamophobic outlook is not an object of consensus. Many scholars and writers, Western and non-Western, Muslim and non-Muslim, are against such melodramatic representations and thus called for an open dialogue of civilizations and a rejection of the clash of civilizations paradigm, or at least building an awareness to avoid it. Taking into account these contrasting opinions, assessing which group represents the majority may not be that easy or precise; the power and influence of either group may be more telling.

That said, the notion that civilizations have clashed in the past is a widely held view; that civilizations are clashing today or are heading for such a clash, are points of deep contention. Since Islam is believed to play a primary role in such a perceived clash, elucidating the Islamic perspective becomes of paramount significance.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

About two decades ago, Samuel Huntington proposed his controversial theory about “the Clash of Civilizations”. It generated much heated debate at the time and, to an extent, still does today. According to its originator, the response to his first article on the subject in *Foreign Affairs* in 1993 was so enormous that the journal editors said no article they published since the 1940s - half a century earlier - had stirred up so much discussion.¹¹ In his review of the book, Henry Kissinger commented that “it is one of the most important books to have emerged since the end of the Cold War.”

¹⁰ Elaine Sciolino, “Seeing Green; The Red Menace Is Gone. But Here's Islam”, *The New York Times*, 21 January, 1996, <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/01/21/weekinreview/seeing-green-the-red-menace-is-gone-but-here-s-islam.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>.

¹¹ Huntington, 13.

The clash of civilizations theory deals with global political developments and their underlying determinants. While other theories have been propounded for achieving such an understanding, Huntington's view is that world politics can be understood and analyzed through the prism of clashing civilizations. Although his analysis includes the possibility of several civilizations as significant global players, he gives special attention to the role of Islam, which he does not view favorably. He also shares the conclusion of many analysts and academics that Western civilization and its model of polity is one of the superior achievements of humanity, though not necessarily a universal one.

Since the inception of the theory, there have been many writings on it, either in support or rejection of its validity. However, many of those writings can be classified into two main categories: purely political analyses of the theory through a secular worldview or largely apologetic Islamic rejections of it. Those who wrote about the subject from a purely political and secular angle have overlooked the religious aspect of civilizations in general, as well as the important role religion plays in global politics and strategies. Such an analysis is destined to be quite superficial in scope and conclusion. As for many who wrote with an Islamic purview, the content mostly appeared apologetic and defensive, as if Islam and its civilization were on trial. This is problematic in two ways. Firstly, it reduces the whole theory to the idea that the West and Islam are at war with each other, regardless whether that is true or false. The theory is much broader than that, and the relationship between Islam and the West is one of its constituents. Secondly, it takes a purely defeatist approach, treating the theory as a direct accusation of Islam, similar to many Islamophobic writings that also demonize Islam. As a result, such writers spend most of their time defending Islam as

a religion of peace that condemns violence, which is not the point, rather than pragmatically analyzing the theory and its claims.

Furthermore, much of what was written from an Islamic perspective does not deeply analyze the textual references from the Qur'ān and Sunnah that may relate to the topic of “clash of civilizations”, and particularly as that relates to the relationship between Islam and the West. Also, such writings rarely make use of pertinent issues that were discussed in the field of Islamic International Relations. What is missing is an objective, rigorous Islamic analysis that would allow for the identification of the theory's faults as well as its merits, while exploring the true motivation behind the Western onslaught against Islam. While diagnosing the relationship between Islam and the West is enlightening, it is equally significant to analyze the underlying causes of friction in that relationship as well. Finally, as important as such a theoretical analysis would be, a practical analysis of the relationship between Islam and the West in history and in the present, would make the theoretical analysis that much stronger.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Here are the main questions that this research answers:

1. What is the clash of civilizations theory and what kind of response did it receive?
2. What is the Islamic perspective on the clash of civilizations, particularly as it relates to the relationship between Islam and the West? Are there direct or indirect references to the concept of clashing civilizations in the Qur'ān, Sunnah, or Islamic International Relations discourse?

3. Through studying the relationship between Islam and the West in history, can it be characterized as a clash of civilizations?
4. What type of relationship exists between Islam and the West today? How might it look in the future?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:

1. To offer an understanding of the clash of civilizations model, its premises, and its religious and political implications for understanding international politics.
2. To elucidate the Islamic view concerning other peoples and civilizations in general and the clash of civilizations theory in particular.
3. To highlight the status the West accords Islam as a ‘challenger’ civilization, and its unique capacity to threaten the present Western monopoly on global affairs and world order.
4. To survey the relationship between Islam and the West, in history as well as modern times.
5. To contribute a deep analysis of the nature of that relationship, past and present, in theory and practice.
6. To educate readers, especially in academic and policy making circles about this contentious theory and the extent to which it influences Western political decision-making.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Considering the fact that Huntington's thesis is mentioned in practically every book falling under a wide spectrum of categories such as historical Muslim-Christian relations, the current Islam-West relationship, contemporary International Relations, global order, and even security studies and strategy, it was important to perform an objective, interdisciplinary study of the thesis, while offering a concrete, evidence-based Islamic analysis based on the principles of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Such a study paves the way for a realistic understanding of the theory and its underpinnings, while exploring the nature of the relationship between Islam and the West. Also, such an unabashed analysis helps the Muslim world comprehend the place this theory occupies in Western geopolitical discourse and decision-making. As Ja'far Shaykh Idrīs pointed out, this subject is critical and requires deep thought and deliberation, and deserves its due share of thinking, planning and action on the part of scholars, intellectuals, and Muslim statesmen.¹² John Esposito emphasized the importance of a proper understanding of relations between Islam and the West in the 21st century, especially in domestic and foreign policymaking circles in Europe and the U.S.¹³ Thus, it is hoped that this study will serve to educate the Muslim Ummah at the leadership and grassroots levels about this consequential topic, and to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of global developments and their motivations. Ultimately, this will enhance the ability of the Muslim world to construct insightful long-term strategies that serve its best interests.

¹² Ja'far Shaykh Idrīs, *Širā' al-Ḥaḍārāt bayna 'Awlamah Gharbiyyah wa Ba'th Islāmī* (Al-Riyāḍ: Majallat al-Bayān, 2012), 25.

¹³ John Tolan, Gilles Veinstein, and Henry Laurens, *Europe and the Islamic World: A History*, translated from French by Jane Marie Todd (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), xi.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Considering the interdisciplinary nature of the clash of civilizations (CoC)¹⁴, the topic of this research is quite broad. Therefore, some of the issues presented in the Qur'ān and Sunnah chapter are not pursued or elaborated on as extensively as possible, but only as far as that serves the elucidation of factors pertinent to forming an Islamic perspective on CoC. Furthermore, the analysis of the relationship between Islam and the West in history is understandably not a comprehensive history. The purpose was to attempt a synopsis of the most important stations in that history, and as that relates to the concept of civilizational clash. The same goes for the present relationship between Islam and the West. As for the more distant future where conflicts take on eschatological characteristics and proportions, that is out of the scope of this study. As this is a Master's dissertation, the subject matter was limited to the four research questions above.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research probes CoC from several angles all at once: history, religion, and politics. As CoC relies on an interweaving of those three components, neglecting any of them would render the analysis incomplete. Such an interdisciplinary approach has become not only useful, but even required for the study of modern international relations. This study primarily depended on the use of books, religious texts, academic journals, specialized reports, the Internet, and more. The focus of this study is both theoretical and practical. The theoretical component derives from a socio-political and Islamic evaluation of CoC as proposed by its founder. The practical component derives from analyzing the role and influence of CoC in the real world today, vis-à-vis

¹⁴ Hereafter, the “clash of civilizations” will be referred to as CoC.

the following two elements: 1. The relationship between Islam and the West 2. Western foreign policy making and strategy.

For exploring CoC theory and its suppositions, the research relies upon the primary source, Samuel Huntington's book itself. In order to expound the Islamic perspective on CoC, a textual analysis was performed, referring directly to the Qur'ān and Sunnah, as well as scholarly expositions of these sources.¹⁵ Furthermore, modern scholars' writings on CoC and international relations in Islam were also consulted. In trying to understand and characterize the relationship between Islam and the West, in the past and present, the research covers the most important events in that long relationship, after which a comparative approach was used to draw parallels between the past and present, if any. In clarifying the situation of international politics today and Western foreign policy motivations, the researcher referred to specialized reports on policy and strategy, and the researcher's own observation of current affairs.

1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW

In a book jointly published with the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington D.C., Shireen Hunter explores CoC as it pertains to the relationship between Islam and the West particularly. Her book, *The Future of Islam and the West: Clash of Civilizations or Peaceful Coexistence?*¹⁶ sheds light on the intricacies governing the Islamic perception of and behavior towards the West and vice versa. In doing so, she clearly placed the onus on Islam, amply analyzing the reasons behind Islamic, anti-Western propensities, without conversely probing the

¹⁵ As the Qur'ān, the Sunnah, and many scholarly expositions of these sources are in Arabic, translation is required. Since many of these sources have not been translated, and some of those that have contain errors, the researcher has performed his own translation of such quoted material.

¹⁶ Shireen Hunter, *The Future of Islam and the West: Clash of Civilizations or Peaceful Coexistence?* (Westport: Praeger, 1998).

Western, anti-Islamic disposition sufficiently. She forcibly argues that anti-Western sentiment amongst Muslims in general and Islamic movements in particular, is more correctly attributable to factors related to Western behavior such as duplicitous foreign policy and support of Arab despots, as opposed to civilizational incompatibility, which is perceived to be inherent in Islamic teachings. She thus concludes that civilizational clash can be avoided, as its real cause is not an immutable civilizational aversion, but a variable political outlook and conduct. She supplements her findings with a practical study of Islam's influence on foreign policy, taking Iran and Saudi Arabia as case-studies. She concludes that Islam was not an important determinant of state behavior, especially as contrasted with conventional determinants such as national security and economic interests. As the book focuses on historical and political analysis, there is scarce textual or religious sources analysis, and whatever references were made in that regard had their share of error and bias. In fact, it was dealt with by making the sweeping statement that original Islamic sources are contradictory and incongruous on matters of governance and international relations.

Another book that dealt with CoC is *The Fallacy of the Inevitability of Clash of Civilisations: A Common Ground for Mutual Understanding and Co-Existence*¹⁷ by Alhagi Manta Drammeh. As is obvious from the title, the author has already presented his conclusion. He argued that CoC is presumptuous and that it fails to accurately describe cultural interaction between civilizations. Although Drammeh deals with CoC directly in some chapters, several chapters touch on other less relevant issues such as the reason vs. revelation debate in Islam. The book is highly philosophical, even in the chapter exploring the ideas of Huntington. This largely philosophical approach, which is a more suitable reply to Fukuyama than Huntington, took the

¹⁷ Alhagi Manta Drammeh, *The Fallacy of the Inevitability of Clash of Civilisations: A Common Ground for Mutual Understanding and Co-Existence* (Kuala Lumpur: IIUM Press, 2010).

author on many tangents and may have precluded a more realistic historical, religious, and political approach to the theory and its inferences. Drammeh explained the concepts of tolerance and dialogue in Islam without any mention of tolerance or the lack of on the part of other civilizations. Like several defensive writings on the subject, there is no real analysis of the relationship between Islam and the West, or of the nature and causes of anti-Islamic sentiment among “other” civilizations. The book does make references to Islam in general, but without any significant textual analysis from the Qur’ān and Sunnah.

Another important work analyzing the focus of CoC on Islam is Muḥammad al-Sammāk’s book *Mawqī‘ al-Islam fī Širā‘ al-Ḥaḍārāt wa al-Niẓām al-‘Ālamī al-Jadīd*,¹⁸ which is essentially the antithesis of typical apologetic responses to CoC. This is manifested through the author’s emphasis on Western civilization’s crimes towards the Muslim world historically and in current times, making a good part of the book read like a prosecution’s extensive bill of indictment. The book is very wide in scope, enriching the reader with important geostrategic information and analysis, and a substantial exposition of CoC and some scholarly responses to it. Although the book is primarily historical and political, it did not neglect references to Islamic sources where pertinent, and clarified certain concepts such as Islamic tolerance vis-à-vis religious minorities in its legislative and historical realms. However, as its title suggests, the book focused on the place Islam occupies in the CoC discourse, as opposed to Islam’s perspective regarding CoC. The author did not hide his hope that the Islamic world will earn its share of apology and recognition from the Western powers as did other political and religious entities, placing the brunt of the responsibility in avoiding CoC

¹⁸ Muḥammad Al-Sammāk, *Mawqī‘ al-Islam fī Širā‘ al-Ḥaḍārāt wa al-Niẓām al-‘Ālamī al-Jadīd*, (Bayrūt: Dār al-Nafā’is, 1995).

on today's dominant Western civilization. The book's conclusion seemed open-ended, leaving the reader in suspense about what to expect next, especially after showing the different possible scenarios of future clash between global powers.

In his latest 2012 book *Şirā' al-Ḥaḍārāt bayna 'Awlamah Gharbiyyah wa Ba'th Islāmī*¹⁹, Ja'far Shaykh Idrīs deals with the CoC issue in a more objective and balanced way than other authors. After briefly introducing Huntington's theory and some concepts such as culture and globalization, he expounds the Islamic perspective of other civilizations in general and the CoC theory in particular. His approach was not apologetic as other approaches were, and he discussed the Western civilization's hegemonic tendencies openly, especially as regards its relationship with Islam. He also unequivocally called on the Muslim Ummah to amass all kinds of power, in order to achieve the required force of deterrence on the world arena. However, he also placed considerable emphasis on the tolerance of Islam and its ability in promoting peaceful coexistence, finally concluding that peace and not clash is what we should aim for. Thus, his opinion was more focused on what the goal should be, rather than the veracity of CoC or its prospects in the future. The researcher had intended to explain CoC and its tenets further, to probe deeper into the Qur'ān and Sunnah perspective, and to highlight the significance of CoC in the relationship between Islam and the West and in shaping Western foreign policy.

In his book *It is 'Dialogue' not 'Clash' that We Need: A Study of the Topic from an Islamic Point of View*,²⁰ Salah Ed-Din A. Nefeily leaves no room for surmising his opinion on the subject. He is an ardent supporter of intercultural dialogue as the panacea for humanity's problems today. He presented 20

¹⁹ Ja'far Shaykh Idrīs, *Şirā' al-Ḥaḍārāt bayna 'Awlamah Gharbiyyah wa Ba'th Islāmī* (Al-Riyāḍ: Majallat al-Bayān, 2012).

²⁰ Salah Ed-Din A. Nefeily, *It is 'Dialogue' not 'Clash' that We Need: A Study of the Topic from an Islamic Point of View* (Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Nashr li al-Jāmi'āt, 2009).

recommendations revolving around dialogue for fostering greater co-existence and understanding between cultures. His book is sprinkled with quotations from many authors and personalities, with an emphasis on Prince Charles, Edward Said, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, and John Esposito. In all fairness, his defensive viewpoint did not preclude him from mentioning both sides of the argument, including direct quotations from the rejecters as well as the supporters of CoC. He did not neglect to deal directly with the writings of Lewis, Huntington, and Fukuyama. He also shed light on the roots of anti-Islamic fundamentalism and the real causes of the conflict between Islam and the West. In his conclusion, he clearly remarks: “This notion of the clash of civilizations is an expression of the Western anger and alarm at the fact the[sic] Islam is spreading even in the West.”²¹ However, despite Nefeily’s balanced approach, some of his ideas seemed a little naïve, with some disregard or negligence of reality, such as his statement that the “world should listen to the voice of love, peace and beauty.”²² Furthermore, the analysis of Islamic sources can be deeper and more rigorous.

In his analysis of the subject, Muhammad Mumtaz Ali investigated CoC and the relationship between Islam and the West, relying primarily on the writings of Khurshid Ahmad. In *The Clash of Civilizations or Civilizational Peaceful Co-Existence: An Analysis of the Views of Huntington and Khurshid Ahmad*,²³ Mumtaz Ali was abundantly critical of the West, its materialistic civilization, and its hegemonic practices, especially toward the Muslim world. The secular nature of Western civilization as contrasted with Islam’s wholistic and integrated approach was given considerable attention. This was complemented by severe criticism of Huntington’s views and his arrogantly Westernist outlook. As Huntington also

²¹ Ibid., 178.

²² Ibid., 9.

²³ Muhammad Mumtaz Ali, *The Clash of Civilizations or Civilizational Peaceful Co-Existence: An Analysis of the Views of Huntington and Khurshid Ahmad* (Kuala Lumpur: The Other Press, 2006).