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International Boundaries and the New World Order: An Islamic Perspective[1]

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Abstract: Although the ideas of spheres of influence or *'hima'* of tribal groups and that of frontier zones of separation between emerging kingdoms have existed since time immemorial, the concept of political or international boundaries in the form of lines of separation or demarcation between countries in modern times has been a European creation. Contrary to the European concept of political boundaries, Islam as an international religion, a religion for all mankind, and the Islamic Umma or 'nation' for that matter, did not consider the formulation of political boundaries in the form of strict lines of separation either internally among Islamic regions or externally between the Islamic 'super state' or the state of the Caliphate epoch and her neighbours. The existing boundaries among Islamic countries have, however, been imposed by imperialist powers during the period of colonization. One of the cornerstones of European imperialist policies has been to 'divide and rule' or 'separate and dominate'. Accordingly, the once unified state of the Caliphate era has been subdivided by imperialist powers into a large number of smaller and presumably weaker states, many of which are at odds with one another (Riad 1986; Blake 1992; Saleh I 993). As it may be desired, for the sake of stability, to have a smooth relationship between neighbouring powers, historical evidence has pointed in many occasions to the reverse. Although tensions and disputes may breakout between neighbouring countries over various issues, the question of boundaries has always been the most contentious. This is why disputes over boundaries in many parts ot the world have in more recent years blown up into full-scale wars. The existing tensions over political boundaries witnessed throughout the developing world have to be sharply contrasted with the cancellation of boundaries among the highly developed countries of Europe and North America. In a way, the post-cold war period has so far been characterized by two opposing tendencies, namely, the fragmentation or "balkanization" and consolidation of nation-states. While the process of fragmentation ends by putting up more boundaries that of consolidation leads to the cancellation of boundaries. In a sense, the balance of power which was maintained during the cold war era gave way to an imbalance during the post-cold war period and has thrown the world into a deeper turmoil under the domination of a single superpower. To complicate the situation still further, the vacuum created by the defeat of enemy number one, communism, has according to western thinking, to be filled by a new foe, in this case Islam, so as to keep the idea of challenge to western civilization and values alive (Pinto I 999).

Concerning the New World Order which the superpower wishes to impose, there are already signs that the so-called "Order" will ultimately give way to 'Disorder'. A New World Order based primarily on the hegemony of a single superpower is not likely to succeed because of the many inherent contradictions. To begin with, contradictions will simply arise from the clash between the interests of the superpower and those of the others. Equally the new policies of open boundaries and globalization of trade, which are being advocated by the world major powers, are being undermined by the recent tendencies of fragmentation and consolidation of nation-states.

Key words: *International boundaries, 'hima' or sphere of influence, frontier zones, line boundaries, imperialist powers, post-cold war, fragmentation and consolidation of nation-states, Islamic perspectives, Islamic super state, superpower, New World Order, globalization of trade.*

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المستخلص: على الرغم من أن مناطق نفوذ أو حمي الجماعات القبلية ومناطق النفوذ الفاصلة بين الممالك القديمة والتي عرفت بالتخوم سادت منذ فترة طويلة ضاربة في القدم إلا أن فكرة الحدود الفاصلة بين الدول والتي وضعت على الخرائط كانت من صنع القوى الأوربية عندما أعتمدت فكرة "الدولة القومية" ولكن على عكس ذلك كانت نظرة الاسلام للحدود خاصة وأن الإسلام قد أرسل للناس كافة ومن ثم لايعترف بهذه الحدود لا بين أقاليم الدولة الاسلامية الكبرى ولا بين هذه الدولة والدول المجاورة غير الاسلامية . أما الحدود الحالية بين الدول الاسلامية فهي من صنع الاستعمار الاوربي الذي كانت من أبرز سياساته سياسة "فرق تسد" فكان أن قسمت دولة الخلافة العثمانية إلي دويلات ومستعمرات جعلوها في حالة تنافر مع بعضها البعض . بالرغم من أن حالة الحدود المستقرة ذات منفعة للدول المتجاورة إلا أن التاريخ يعلمنا أن معظم المشاحنات بين الدول تكون عبر الحدود وتصل إلي ذروتها إلي الحرب المدمرة . حدث هذا في حرب الحدود بين إثيوبيا وإرتريا . هذه الحالة من التشرذم في الدول النامية عادة ما تكون بايعاز من الدول المستعمرة بعد أن حصلت الدول النامية على الاستقلال .تعاكس هذه الحالة في الدول النامية من صراعات حول الحدود حالة فتح الحدود على مصراعيها في الدول المتقدمة متمثلة في الأتحاد الأوربي ودول النافتا . فكانت نتيجة هذه النظرات المتعاكسة أن تتعزز قدرات الدول المتقدمة وتضعف قدرات الدول النامية بتفكيكها . وبزوال قوة الاتحاد السوفيتي إنفردت الولايات المتحدة لفترة قصيرة بالقوة مما قاد إلي عدم التوازن في الأسرة الدولية .وجعلت الدولة المهيمنة تنظر للعالم بمنظار مصالحها دون الأخذ في الأعتبار مصالح الآخرين . ويزاول العدو الأول وهو النظام الشيوعي بدأت الدول الغربية بقيادة الولايات المتحدة في إيجاد عدوٍ قديم جديد وهو "الاسلام" . في هذا الاثناء بدأ ظهور أقطاب جديده، ولكنها لا تضاهي قوة الدولة الأعظم منها دول شرق آسيا، كما عادت روسيا بوتن في ثوبها الجديد لتلعب دور الاتحاد السوفيتي سابقاً. ومن الغريب أن سياسة تفتيت الدول الضعيفة إلي دويلات وما تبعة من تكتل الدول الكبرى يعمل على زيادة طول الحدود والصراع بين الدول النامية ومن ثم يهدم فكرة العولمة التي تسعى الدول العظمى لفرضها على العالم اقتصادياً وسياسياً وثقافياً .هذه الاوضاع المتضاربة والمتناقضة جعلت الوضع الجديد يميل للفوضى وعدم الاستقرار . بناءً على ذلك لا بد من إعادة النظر في أوضاع السياسة العالمية والنظر اليها بما جاء به الدين الحنيف هادياً للبشرية.

كلمات مفتاحية: الحدود الدولية، الحمى أو مناطق النفوذ، التخوم، الحدود الخطية، القوى الاستعمارية، بعد الحرب الباردة، تفكك وتكتل الدول القومية، النظرة الإسلامية، دولة الإسلام الكبرى، النظام العالمي الجديد، عولمة التجارة.

1- Evolution of Political Boundaries:

It may be safely speculated that the roots of present-day political boundaries may be traceable in the distant past history of mankind. Ancient tribes and early civilizations operated from a central core area where they enjoyed maximum authority, and at the same time recognized some form of frontier zones that separated them from one another in peripheral areas. Tribal groups throughout history, have come to recognize the tribal *hima* or sphere of influence indicating the land area under tribal domination. Such lands were considered of vital importance to the livelihood of those tribes. The areal extent of the *hima* was directly related to the power of the tribe. In other words, the more powerful the tribe the greater would be its *hima*. Moreover, powerful tribes could always extend their territorial possessions at the expense of weaker tribes. As time went by, some of those tribes became very powerful, either through an increase in sheer numbers and material wealth, or by merging with other tribal groups. This concentration of power marked the birth of small kingdoms which were to grow later into fully-fledged kingdoms and empires with considerable economic and military power. The shift from the tribal status and its related tribal *hima* to the more organized power structure of kingdoms and empires has led to the emergence of frontier zones of separation between neighbouring powers. Unlike the line boundaries of today, frontier zones may be up to 100 km. wide, providing a no-man's-land between competing powers or warring

factions, thereby reducing the level of tensions and confrontations (Riad 1979; Prescott 1967; Jones 1945; Holdich 1916) (Fig. 1).
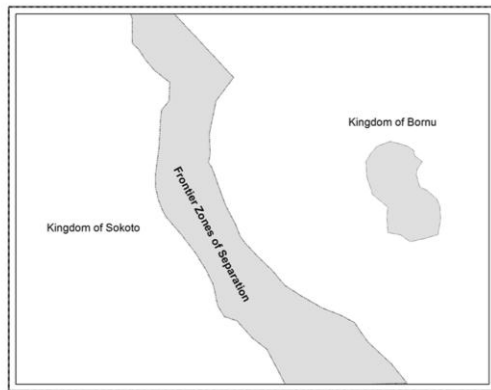
Source: El Bushra (1999)

Fig. (1): Frontier zones of separation between Tribes and Kingdoms.

Still further, some of the old groups and communities, as was the case in ancient Greece, preferred to belong to a city rather than to tribal groups, kingdoms and empires, thereby giving rise to what came to be known as the "city-state". In this case, the city was both a city and state and as such was sharply separated from other cities and the countryside by high walls forming formidable fortifications. In this sense, the boundary of the city-state was even more rigid than those of modern line boundaries. The rigidity of the boundary of the ancient ˝city-state" had to be matched with an even greater rigidity of its social structure (Fig. 2). The building of walls for protection against invaders brings to mind the Great Wall of China (6,400 km) built around 210 B.C., and in more recent years (1961) the building of the Berlin Wall for political reasons to stop the defection of Germans from what used to be East to West Berlin (The World Book Encyclopaedia 2 & 3, 1984).

As indicated earlier, the idea of political boundaries, as we know them today, was born in Europe in the middle of the l8th century and was closely associated with nationalist movements. In a way, European nationalism constituted the main driving force behind the bloody wars which plagued the continent and lasted for two centuries. In fact, it was not until the end of World War II that the question of political boundaries was finally settled in Europe (Riad l979).

The stability of international boundaries, which has been maintained in Europe for almost half a century since the end of World War II, has been completely shattered with the collapse of communism during the last decade of the 20th C., as will be explained later. On the whole, the wave of nationalism which swept across Europe since the mid-1700's had contributed to the idea of the "nation-state". The latter can only exist if a nation and a state have the same boundaries. The word nation, being itself a vague term, may be taken to mean a large group of people who share common language, origin, history and culture, and who think of themselves as a nation (The World Book Encyclopaedia 14, 1984). The definition of a nation in this sense brings it closer to ethnically related groups and as such it carries with it a lot of racial connotations. According to this, a 'nation-state' is a state inhabited by one nation or ethnically related groups. In reality, however, a state has always been inhabited by more than one ethnic group. Fortunately, these dangerous racist ideas did not take root and most countries and states have come to terms with their multi-ethnic or multi-national composition. However, the outcome of those long years of

nationalistic feelings and struggle has been the birth of the new 'doctrine of national self- determination' for those groups who felt of themselves as nations (Riad 1979).
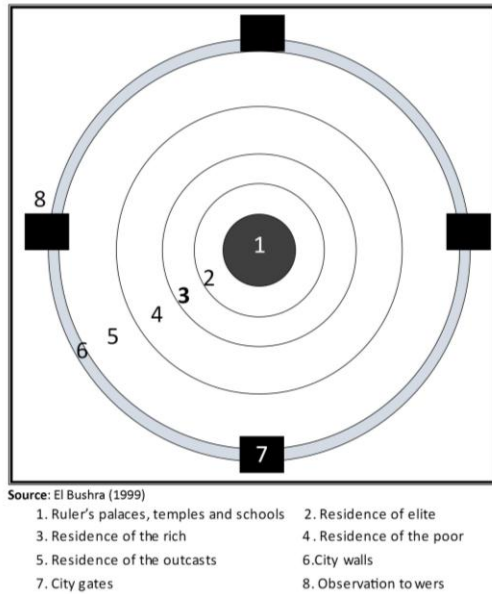

Source: El Bushra (1999)
1. Ruler's palaces, temples and schools   2. Residence of elite
3. Residence of the rich   4. Residence of the poor
5. Residence of the outcasts   6.City walls
7. City gates   8. Observation towers

Fig. (2): The Ancient City or the City-State.

In any case, the disturbance of the world balance of power with the collapse of communist rule in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has led, during the last decade, to the most serious albeit negative repercussions on world peace and stability. Hence have been some of the bloodiest and most widespread ethnic and civil wars ever recorded in modern history. The political upheavals that followed the downfall of communist power has resulted in the redrawing of the political map in this part of the world, as many republics have gained their independence from what used to be the Soviet Union and the Yugoslav Federation. The past decade has also witnessed one of the most terrible and devastating ethnic wars in the Balkans waged by ethnic Serbs against Croatians, Bosnians and of late Kosovars. This

is a clear indication that extreme nationalism, as practised by the ethnic Serbs and the Zionists, usually results in racial hatred and the persecution of minority and other groups. Throughout history despots and dictators as well as racist and extremist organizations have used extreme nationalism to promote ethnic cleansing and the annihilation of minority groups.

Political boundaries in most of the developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America will continue for some time to form flash points of tensions between neighbouring countries, as these boundaries were imposed by the colonial powers. The ongoing wars (1999) over boundaries between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and India and Pakistan, are living examples from the colonial legacy. The boundaries of the previous colonies were drawn by the European colonisers without paying heed to the physical, economic, and human settings of the colonial landscapes. The scramble for Africa, which was started by European powers long before the Berlin Conference of 1885, culminated by the end of that conference into the subdivision of the continent by the new rulers into zones of influence (The World Book Encyclopaedia 1, 1984). This is yet another manifestation as to the superficiality of boundaries in many regions of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. As the newly independent states in these continents have inherited their present-day boundaries from the colonial era, most of them are finding it difficult to accept the status quo. As such, political boundaries throughout the countries of the developing

world constitute lines of considerable sensitivity and great tension between neighbours (Blake 1992). As the ethnic wars which have plagued the Lakes region of Africa intensify, the outcome may be a further 'balkanization' of the region, as more political units will come to be recognized. While the struggle over boundaries intensifies in many developing countries to the point of bloody confrontations, the role of political boundaries have been greatly reduced in the advanced industrial countries of Europe and North America. Although the European powers, with the help of the U.S. have succeeded in dismantling the Ottoman empire after the end of World War l,, and the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia towards the close of the 20th century, they have managed in coming together themselves by forging new unions of considerable economic, military, and political power. In a way, the breakdown of old empires has resulted in putting-up more boundaries, while the new unions in Europe and North America have resulted in the cancellation of political boundaries leading thereby to an even greater consolidation of power. This consolidation of power is not only political and military, but is also economic. ln other words, the New World Order is a world of the rich and powerful, as opposed to the world of the poor and weak. This dichotomy, or rift, between the two worlds is bound to lead to considerable instability and insecurity world-wide, unless a certain formula is agreed upon to redress the imbalance (Nijman; Thrift; Agnew; Taylor; Cohen; de Blij; Van der Wusten; O'Loughlin; 1992).

The globalization of trade and the opening-up of boundaries, which is being stressed by the leading economic powers, will certainly benefit the major economies at the expense of the smaller and less developed ones. In this way, the gap between the wealthy and the disadvantaged will grow even bigger with negative consequences on the world political landscape. A natural consequence of this widening gap between the rich and poor nations should be the flow of migrants from the underdeveloped economies of the Third World to the advanced economies of the First World to make use of the new policy of open boundaries. But it seems that the policy of globalization and of open boundaries, which is advocated by the world major powers, is a one-way traffic, as the greater majority of migrants are being refused entry into the countries of the First World. Migration laws and policies in advanced industrial countries are highly selective, as only those highly qualified and trained technical manpower are allowed in. As more qualified persons leave the less developed countries to join the labour market in the more advanced ones, the poorer countries will be doomed to suffer even more from this 'brain-drain' which has in certain cases reached staggering proportions. The only way out of the dilemma facing the less-developed countries, in a world dominated by the major powers, is to try hard to come together by forming regional economic and political associations in an attempt to safeguard their interests and improve their bargaining power vis-a-vis the others. Considering the global economic situation, it becomes imperative for the emerging

economies of the Third World to embark on forging the aforementioned regional associations. So far the most important of these associations have been the ASEAN (1993) group. The success of ASEAN is expected to encourage similar associations elsewhere. If the idea of economic associations or groups is to become a reality throughout the developing world, a similar cancellation of boundaries will materialize, thereby reducing the existing tensions between neighbours. However, a world dominated by trading groups will resort to creating trade barriers as each economic group will use protective practices leading, as it were, to a trade war. A trade war between economic groups or blocks is of course against the basic principles of globalization of trade.

Islamic Perspectives:

The prevailing values and ideas about race, nationalism, nation- states, political boundaries, and globalization discussed thus far, may be sharply contrasted with Islamic values and ideology. Islam as a religion, propagating the message of peace and tranquillity to all mankind, has always been opposed to racial discrimination and the superiority of one race over the other, especially that Allah has created the whole of the human race from a single pair of a male and a female (Holy Qur'an('), Sura IV, verse: l; Sura XXX, verse: 22; Sura XXXV, verse: 28; Sura XLIX, verse: 13). The same ideas and values have also been underlined in the Sunna, or Prophet Sayings. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "You are `all from Adam, and Adam is from soil (dust)." He also said: "There is no preference of an Arab over a non-Arab,

or White over Black, except through piety." This means, in the sight of God no person is better than another because of his race, colour or socio-economic status. The new values brought by the Islamic faith had to be sharply contrasted with what was happening in Pre-Islamic Arabia. Social life and social bonds in Pre-Islamic Arabia were primarily based on tribal or ethnic affiliations and allegiances, which happen to be the cause of many evils. Right from the beginning Islam has declared war on tribal allegiances and concentrated on the family,, the basic unit of society, and on the Islamic Umma or 'Nation'. For lack of a better term, the word Umma in Arabic is translated into 'Nation', but the word Umma is more comprehensive and by necessity includes peoples of all races and colour following the same faith. In other words, while one of the bonds in case of the term, 'Nation', as being currently comprehended or used, is racial affiliation or racial descend, bonds in case of the Umma are purely religious. The Islamic interpretation of the Islamic Umma is such that it transcends the time boundary, as the Umma does not only include the present followers of the faith, but also the past and future generations (Holy Qur'an, Sura XI, verse: 118; Sura XXI, verse: 92; Sura XXIII, verse: 44; Sura XXVII, verse: 83; Sura XXXV, verse: 24; Sura XLV, verse: 28; Sura LIX, verse: 10)- (*Translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. 3rd Edition. 1938*).

Islam then looks at the followers of the faith, whoever and wherever they may be, as part of a single Umma whose ultimate objective is to disseminate the Islamic faith and see to it that it reaches all the comers of the globe. As

such the 'Islamic Super State' should be viewed as a state in perpetual expansion and has, therefore, no fixed boundaries with the neighbouring Non-Muslim states. The fluidity of boundaries of the Greater Islamic State will soon be appreciated once it is realized that the final goal of Muslims is the overwhelming spread of the faith. In fact, the spreading of the Islamic faith is the duty of every individual Muslim and every Muslim state (Holy Qur'an, Sura III, verses: I9 & 85). The process of spreading the faith has to be achieved through peaceful means and, if necessary, by using force. The use of force becomes legitimate only when another power stands in the way of the peaceful means of propagating the faith (Holy Qur'an, Sura III, verse: 159 and Sura IX, verse: 73).

In Islam there is only one Umma submitting to only one God, Allah Almighty, and living in one unified Caliphate state. The last of these states was the Ottoman Caliphate, which disbanded by European Imperialist powers after the defeat of the Ottomans in World War I. Following the downfall of the Ottomans, the European colonisers have subdivided the last Islamic empire into smaller countries (Saleh 1993) under the domination of European rule, and have continued ever since to support nationalistic and secular movements throughout the Muslim World. It has been for these anti- Islamic policies that the Western powers have so far been successful in keeping the Islamic Umma in disarray. On the whole, whatever the status of the Islamic State and whatever the level of relationship with her neighbours, be it

a state of peace, war, or agreement, Muslims are obliged by their religion to spread the faith (Holy Qur'an, Sura V, verse: 70). In spite of the fact that the Umma is now weak and disbanded, there will come the time when Muslims will realize the advantages of the unity which they once enjoyed. Islam is a religion of brotherhood and unity, and Muslims are promised by the Prophet, peace be upon him, that afier the disarray and weakness the Umma will see unity and strength. As soon as Muslim leaders and nations begin to come together, the existing boundaries among Islamic countries will be abolished and the whole Umma will once more come under one ruler, the Caliph or Caliphat AI Muslimein (Holy Qur'an, Sura XXI, verse: 92).

History tells us how the original Islamic state under the leadership of the Prophet, peace be upon him, started very small and weak in Medina and how, as time went by, the newly born state began to gain strength through the spreading of the faith. Within a short period of time the entire population of the Arabian Peninsula was converted to Islam. From the outset, the spreading of the faith followed two courses of action, namely, through peaceful means and through force. The peaceful means of spreading the faith were adopted in all the areas where the propagation of Islam was not met with armed resistance. However, force had to be used in spreading the faith when the newly emerging Islamic power came in direct confrontation with the major powers of the time (7th century A.D.), namely, the forces of the Roman and Persian empires. Considering the then prevailing

situation, Muslims had no choice but to resort to the use of force in an attempt to protect their newly born state from destruction by the hostile forces of the two major powers. Islam emerged victorious over the two ageing powers of Rome and Persia, and later on the territorial extent of the new religion reached as far east as India and China and as far west as Morocco and Spain (El-Bushra 1992).

At present, however, as the Islamic Umma is disbanded and weak, the only way to spread the faith is through peaceful means in spite of the declared hostility against Islam by the Neo-Crusaders and Zionists. Islam, being the only truthful, convincing, and therefore, appealing faith, continues to attract followers world-wide without much effort being made by Muslims from the Heartland. While the strength of the Heartland was important in the early days of spreading Islam, at present, however, it is the collapse of the Heartland that has resulted in the creation of mini-heartlands in non-Muslim countries as a consequence of Muslim diaspora (Fig. 3). The message of Islam, being the message of the Oneness or Unity of God, and of peace and brotherhood, has been the message of all prophets of Allah from Adam to Muhammad, peace be upon them all (Holy Qur'an, Sura III, verses: 19 and 85). In fact, it is the greatness of the faith and its powerful message to mankind that keeps the Islamic religion expanding and spreading against all odds, irrespective of the strength or weakness of its followers.

Concerning the new policies of open boundaries and globalization of trade, Islam will have no difficulty in endorsing them so long as all parties involved are beneficiaries. Islam encourages free and fair trading relations between parties and is against any form of exploitation (Holy Qur'an, Sura II, verse: 188; Sura IV, verses: 29 & 161; Sura IX, verse: 34). This is why Islamic law prohibits interest-related transactions and considers these dealings as ribba or usury (Holy Qur'an, Sura II, verses: 275-280; Sura III, verse: 130). One of the reasons why Islam has condemned and prohibited usury is the unjustified way of making big gains at the expense of others, particularly that those who are exploited most in society are those in need or distress. Equally, Islam prohibits all forms of gains which one has not really earned, or the making of profit without working for it, such as in gambling or any kind of similar fraud (Holy Qur'an, Sura II, verse:2l9; Sura V, verses 93-94).

From an Islamic perspective, the most dangerous part of the New World Order is embodied in its political configuration. While the Cold War period was characterized by some sort of balance between the two superpowers of the time, the Post-Cold War era has been characterized by the domination of the world political scene by a single superpower. This unilateralism by the U.S. is already causing a lot of concern among the majority of countries, as it is beginning to have a negative impact on international peace and security.
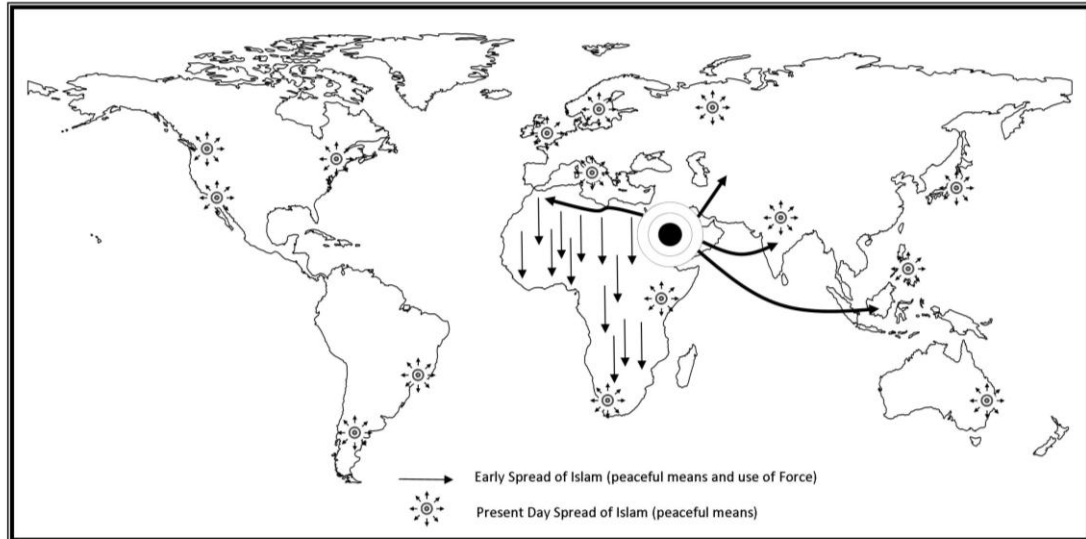
Source: El Bushra (1999)

Fig. (3) Spread of Islam: Old and New

Reaction by the superpower to world events does not emanate from maintaining international law and order,, but rather from what is seen by the superpower as a violation of her national security. This is why the U.S. has been acting unilaterally outside world organizations, such as the Security Council, thereby undermining the proper functioning of this important body. In fact, U.S. military, political, and economic hegemony in the Post Cold War period, coupled with the use of force or intimidation to use force against foes, has shaken still further the foundation of the already volatile world political landscape.

In spite of the fact that Western powers, headed by the U.S., have emerged victorious after the collapse of communism, signalling the end of the Cold War period, the new Post-Cold War era, supposedly of reconcilliation, is not without challenge, according to Western thinking. The challenge must, therefore, be upheld and a new enemy, real or imagined, must be found. Unfortunately, the war-like mentality of Western powers has found in Islam the old and new enemy, who has to be destroyed (Taylor 1992; Nijman 1992; Pinto 1999). This is why Islamic countries and individuals are being branded as terrorists who must be punished or even exterminated. It must, therefore, be realized that blatant or subtle hostility against Islam and Islamic peoples is most unwarranted and is bound to lead to increasing tension and instability world-wide with extremely dangerous consequences. Rather, a more pragmatic approach by the major powers of today, which takes into account the fact that Islam is a formidable force to reckon with will be welcomed, as it will open the way for dialogue and reconcilliation. The number of Muslims world-wide is presently estimated at 1.8 billion (more than one fourth of the world population) living on about one fifth (30 million km^2) of the Earth's landmass. It will certainly pay more dividend to be friendly rather than hostile to this large section of humanity.

In reality the war against Islam and Islamic peoples by Western and Zionist forces has never stopped since the Crusades (llO0-1300 A.D.) and

has particularly been relentless during the past fifty years. Declared and hidden wars by major powers against Muslims everywhere are being fought on all fronts using all available means at their disposal. The intention is to destabilize the situation in Islamic countries. It is a well-known fact that intelligence agencies, belonging to major powers, work around the clock to instigate trouble inside Muslim countries as well as between these countries and their neighbours. Internally, ethnic and religious violence is instigated in such countries as Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Indonesia, and sectarian violence is stirred up in such countries as Lebanon and Algeria. Across international borders rebel forces, who are being openly assisted by the U.S. and Britain, operate against Sudan from Uganda and Eritrea. Border incursions by Turkey into northern Iraq have been occurring repeatedly in recent years. It has already been suggested that Turkey is trying to establish a security zone in northern Iraq similar to the one created by the Zionist state in southern Lebanon. In blatant violation of international law, the U.S. and Britain enforced a no-fly zone of their own over most of Iraq, and a similar no-fly zone was planned by the U.S. Administration for southern Sudan. While a few thousand East Timorese must be given the right to self-determination, millions of Muslims in Palestine, Chechnya, Dagestan, and Kashmir are denied such rights. The double standard policy adopted by the major powers will not lead to peace and stability in the world, but rather to hate, animosity and destruction. Peace cannot be achieved through the use of force in an unjustified way, but it can be built firmly when justice is served.

The policy behind the destabilization of Islamic states is, to keep them busy with internal and external conflicts and as such make them weak and less attractive for investment from home and abroad. In fact, some of the Islamic countries which have been subjected to acute and chronic conflicts may ultimately fall apart as a result of continuous and relentless political, economic, and military pressures. The scenario for a country like Iraq is a breakdown into three smaller and, of course, weaker states, and that for the Sudan is a split into two or three mini-states. It is interesting to realize that Muslim countries which have considerable reserves of natural and human resources and which have the potential to develop into powerful states are being especially destabilized and targeted by major anti-Islamic powers. These countries include Iraq, Sudan, Algeria, Indonesia, and Malaysia. The policy of destabilizing Muslim countries by western powers continues unabated, as in addition to using military force in an unjustified way, political and economic sanctions have also been the weapon of choice against these countries. The domination of important world organizations, such as the Security Council, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (I.M.F.) by the major western powers gives them extra leverage against adversaries, particularly the developing countries of the Muslim world. One of the most unfortunate developments in modern times has been the undeclared war by major powers against developing

countries under the umbrella of international bodies such as the United Nations. The organizations which have been established to bring about peace and stability have been abused by major powers to further their own interests rather than those of the international community.

As indicated earlier contradictions in the New World Order become obvious from the opposing policies of fragmentation and consolidation of nation-states. So long, as international law cannot be enforced against major powers, criminal military actions such as those committed with impunity by the U.S. against Iraq, Libya, Sudan, and Afghanistan, will continue. The fact that major powers can use their might at will against adversaries does not bring about peace, as the net result of using violence is an extremely unsettled political situation for all concerned. Therefore, a rethinking of the New World Order based on justice for all, has to be made fast if we are to avoid major global political and economic catastrophes.

Conclusion:

International boundaries, as we know them today, are a new invention. Pre-historic and historic man had moved freely in large numbers in search of more suitable environments for exploitation and settlement. Man has always been on the move in pursuit of better living or in an attempt to escape natural catastrophes and injustices and persecutions by others. Migration in Islam is allowed in pursuit of learning, better living, spreading the faith, as well as for fear of religious persecution (Holy Qur'an, Sura IV, verse: 97). As time went by, tribal groups began to enforce the *hima* which was later

developed into frontier zones of separation between emerging kingdoms and empires. Line boundaries, as we know them today, have developed in Europe after long years of bloodshed when nationalism was rife. International boundaries in the rest of the world were introduced by European colonial powers. The boundaries imposed by colonial rulers were in many cases superficial, as they were drawn haphazardly without paying attention to physical and human factors. Islam, being a universal religion, is not in favour of strict line boundaries from within, among Islamic territories, and from without. The Islamic Umma should be living in a unified super state, where freedom of movement among Islamic regions is guaranteed for all. Islam also believes in the policy of open boundaries with neighbours in pursuit of spreading the faith. People and goods are allowed to flow freely between the Islamic super state and her neighbours, so long as the intentions of this traffic are peaceful and beneficiary to both parties. The crossing of Muslims and Non-Muslims into each other's territory for any legitimate business increases the chances of spreading the Islamic faith.

While most developing countries battle to keep the political boundaries they inherited from the colonial era intact, the world's most advanced countries are coming together by forging greater unions of considerable political, economic, and military power, thereby reducing the importance of international boundaries. The European Union (E.U.) is an example of a giant state which has yet to emerge in the 21st century to counterbalance another giant, the Chinese state. The closing part of the

2lst century may also witness the rise of Russia from the rubble, India, and the Islamic super state, as well as the gradual disintegration of the U.S. The collapse of the U.S. will take place from within, similar to what had happened to the Soviet Union decades ago. History tells us that civilizations usually sow the seeds of their own destruction. Nations grow from a humble beginning until they become mighty superpowers and, after reaching the peak, they begin to decline. The decline may be because a new and more vigorous power is emerging or because of internal decay, or both. Existing contradictions and tensions within U.S. society along racial, religious, and economic lines as well as the pervasive dominance of material over spiritual life, coupled with the degeneration of ethical and moral standards, are more than enough symptoms for such a decline to commence sooner than later (Holy Qur'an, Sura X, verse:24; Sura XXX, verse: 41). Disparities in socio-economic standings of states, as well as between individual communities within each state, together with the concentration of minority groups in certain areas, will perhaps trigger the process of disintegration, encouraging as it were the breakaway of the first state from the Union. The falling apart of the states will finally culminate in the fragmentation of the union.

At present, even though the advanced countries are forging for themselves unions of considerable power, their policies towards many developing countries are those of fragmentation and subdivision. A policy of fragmentation and division means the putting up of more boundaries, which means more trade barriers, thereby impeding the globalization of trade. Subdivided and weaker developing countries will perhaps be easier to exploit, especially that most of the remaining world raw materials are still reserved in developing areas. So, a policy of destabilizing developing countries by major powers serves the double purpose of getting essentially needed raw materials cheaper as well as finding huge markets for their final products in developing areas which hold more than 80 % of world population. But a new world order which is being built on the background of injustice and exploitation, and which is designed mainly to safeguard the interests of the wealthy and powerful as opposed to those of the poor and powerless, is doomed to fail. Therefore, for a peaceful and tranquil world a more humane World Order must emerge. Islam, being the only comprehensive religion dealing with all aspects of human life, has the only code of conduct capable of solving existing human problems in a truly humane way.

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