

China, West and the Islamic World: The World in 2050, Romance of Three Civilizations, Amb. Syed Hasan Javed, (Paramount Books), 400.

China, West and the Islamic World: The World in 2050 is written by Syed Hasan Javed. He has served in the Foreign Service of Pakistan for nearly four decades and was appointed as the High Commissioner to Mauritius, Singapore and ambassador in Germany. Amb. Javed also served in various diplomatic assignments in China, Europe and Russia. He remained in China in different capacities for nearly a decade. He thus had an opportunity to closely see different aspects of Chinese society. In *China, West and the Islamic World: The World in 2050*, the author gives an account of the natural traits of Chinese people, which is based on his close observations and interaction with the people while he was in China. The book under review is divided into eight chapters. The author has given a detailed historical background of China, West and the Muslim countries as well as the rise and fall of super powers in the first part. It sort of puts the ensuing analysis in perspective. The following chapters discuss the rise of China, Russia and decline of other major world powers in the coming years.

Amb. Javed narrates how Muslims all over the world have been the victim of Western brutalities for decades. The Western media, sponsored by anti-Muslim and anti-Islam elements, has spared no chance to spread hatred against Muslims and portray them as extremists and terrorists. Syria, Palestine, Indian Occupied Kashmir are a few instances where freedom fighters were painted and presented as terrorists. The Cold war ended in 1991, and the US emerged as the sole superpower of the world. Since then, the US has targeted Muslim countries and the atrocities committed against

Muslims were not shown by the mainstream media in the West. The world remained silent until Russia stood up against the US for wreaking havoc in Syria.

The author goes on to comment that India as an ally of the US, has received favors from the West in general and the US in particular. Whether it is Kashmir issue or Indian state sponsored terrorism in Pakistan, the tilt of the US remained towards India. Nevertheless, the times have changed and the US is no longer the sole super power of the world. The author briefly explains how two Great Powers i.e., China and Russia now can compete with the US in areas of technological innovations, artificial intelligence, cyberspace, military capabilities etc. India, being an ally of the US, may find itself on the losing side in future. Indian atrocities against minorities under BJP government have created instability in the country which will have dire consequences in the times to come. It is likely that Sikhs, Muslims, Christians and low caste Hindus may unite against the high caste Hindus and the government in future which will weaken India's state structure. The author is of the view that India's disintegration in future was certain but when it will happen, one cannot predict.

There are 50 Muslim majority countries in the world at present, according to Pew Research Center. Although, the Muslim countries are categorized as developing states, yet these countries have the potential to play a significant role in shaping the future of geopolitics in the world. 42 Muslim majority countries are the members of the UN and many of them are rich in natural resources. They contribute substantially to the global economy every year. The West is well aware of the potential of Muslim countries to influence geopolitics in different regions. The Muslims in different parts of the world are therefore, made targets of the US and US-led Alliances which keeps them weak and disunited. The author points out that the Muslims all around the world nurture anti-US and anti-

West sentiments due to the sufferings caused to them by the US, therefore, in any future conflict, Muslims will stand with China and Russia against the US. Though, the rulers of a few oil-rich Islamic countries in the Gulf region are pro-America but their people have anti-West sentiments. Nevertheless, the future of any state belongs to the nation and not the rulers. The US, according to the author, is a declining power and it will most likely be isolated by 2050.

The book also discusses the likely world power structure by 2050. The world power structure has shifted from being unipolar and has become multipolar in just two decades. In the contemporary world, China is rising in terms of economy, technology, diplomatic influence, military capabilities, space technology etc. In foreseeable future, the author predicts China to become the sole superpower of the world, with Muslim countries particularly Pakistan on its side. He goes on to explain the blunders committed by the US which led to its weakening. While US used coercion and compellence as tools for engagement with other states and even used military power when diplomacy did not work, China on the contrary, used economic diplomacy to connect with other countries. One Belt One Road is the most significant example of this policy.

The most interesting bit of the book is the Chinese-Muslim relationship. Amb. Javed explains that Chinese and Muslims have had contacts in the early Islamic period. They had flourishing trade relations hundreds of years ago. He narrates that Prophet (PBUH) had met Chinese Tang mission and deputed three of his companions to the Tang mission in China, who later died in China and were buried there. It was after meeting the Tang mission that the Prophet (PBUH) had said that "Seek knowledge, even if you have to travel as far as China". This is indeed most heartening as the story was narrated by some Chinese people to the author during his visit in 1981.

The book does not give source references as the author has written his personal views about the West, based on books he has read, interaction with leaders and people of different countries, and his observations during his long stay in different countries. The author's predictions about the shape of the world power in 2050 however appear suppositions as they are not based on analysis of any data.

The book presents a broad picture of the contemporary international power structure and what shape it is likely to have in the next few decades. The contemporary world in author's view is divided into two blocs. On one side, are the US and its European allies. They are busy conspiring against China and Russia. Conversely, China and Russia are strategic allies. They use soft power to counter threats and challenges posed by the US and its allies. While US is striving for dominance by using offensive measures, China and Russia are making efforts to achieve peace, stability and development in the world.

Reviewed by Maryyum Masood, Assistant Research Program Coordinator, Center for International Strategic Studies Islamabad (CISS).