Concept of Civilisation and Sustainable Development: A *Maqasidic* Orientation

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Abstract: This paper discusses the concept of "civilisation" and "civilisational sustainable development" with special reference to *maqasid* and values system in Islam. Islam, in its very nature, posits that civilisation is an integrated and a multi-faceted social phenomenon involving intellectual, social, socio-economic, cultural, spiritual, moral, material, and other aspects. The concept of "civilisation" refers and links to several other social phenomena, such as development, progress, human association, *umran*, *tamadun*, *maqasid*, and values. Hence, studying civilisation from an Islamic perspective demands an integrated approach or rather, a civilisational framework or model. This paper addresses the following points: the concept of civilisation and civilisational development from an Islamic perspective, mapping the civilisational model for a balanced civilisation and development, *maqasid* framework, sustainable development goals, and reviving the civilisational vision of Islam as a pre-condition for civilisational development. This paper explains the leading role of the Islamic view of civilisation in the progress of society. Furthermore, it highlights the urgency of a contemporary understanding of Islam that envisions it as a project for a civilisation of creativity, balance, justice, peace, and progress. Additionally, this paper follows textual analysis and library research to discuss the main aspects that make the general framework of civilisation from an Islamic perspective; a topic of more merit and interest to the Islamic world and its development, today. The findings show the need for an integrated Islamic model of civilisation and development. The main

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peculiarities of civilisation in the Islamic perspective are value-loaded, balanced, comprehensiveness, *maqasidic*, and flexible. Additionally, it has been clearly established that, inter alia, human factors, values, *maqasid*, sustainable development goals, modern know-how, technological means, managerial capabilities, and governance are essential elements in the Islamic model of civilisation.

Keywords: Civilisation, Civilisational Development, Sustainable Development Goals, *Maqasid* Framework.

Introduction

This article addresses the questions of civilisation and sustainable development from an Islamic perspective. To provide a comprehensive framework for such a study, one has to first analyse the concept of civilisation and development, and articulate the concept of civilisational development. In general terms, the ultimate goal of any human society is to undergo the process of civilisation and reach certain levels of human association and advancement in accordance to its own vision of life and social aspiration. Therefore, one may say, at the first preliminary theorisation, that civilisation is the result of balanced transformation of society towards high degrees of development. However, for this transformation to occur, there is always a need to have a sound, comprehensive, and balanced model of civilisation. Without such a model or paradigm, the society will not be able to undergo a systematic transformation resulting in civilisation and development. Many human societies in the past and recent times have undergone the process of transformation through adopting different models of development and civilisation.

Muslim society is also another clear case of civilisational development. Indeed, similar to many other religions, Islam has provided a vision for civilisation. By its very nature, the Islamic view of development and civilisation is integrative, value-laden, balanced, and comprehensive. Furthermore, the civilisational vision of Islam stresses the urgency of a balanced eco-system and integrative environment of development.

Textual analysis and library research are utilised to discuss the main aspects that make the general framework of civilisation from an Islamic perspective. Furthermore, some classical and selected contemporary Islamic works on the questions of civilisation and development would be referred to, in order to scrutinise the main principles of civilisation. The significance of this study stems from the nature of the topic. It is one of the most pressing issues of a more merit and interest to the Islamic world and its development today. The work shows the need for an integrated Islamic model of civilisation. As a process, civilisation from the Islamic perspective requires more than worldview and a system of values. It also needs the implementation and transformation means, tools, and know-hows similar to any other civilisation.

This article is subdivided into the following sections: the concept of civilisation and civilisational development from an Islamic perspective, mapping the civilisational model for balanced development and reviving the civilisational vision of Islam, and civilisational education as a pre-condition for the renewal of the *ummah*.

General Exposition of the Concept of Civilisation: An Integrative Approach

In order to provide a clear analysis of the concept of civilisational development from an Islamic perspective, it is important to define both the meanings of civilisation[3] and its development.

1.   *The Concept of Civilisation: General Definition*

In certain Arabic literatures, the term "civilisation" is used to mean "presence viz.-a viz. Absence, sedentary viz.-a viz. Bedouin" (Al-Afriqi, 1311). Al-Bustani, one of the prominent experts of Arabic

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[3] It is worth noting that there are different utilisations of the term "civilisation" in the Muslim world. The Arabs have coined the following integral terms for civilisation, viz., human association, urbanisation which means progress or development. The Persians have coined two terms for civilisation, namely, *urbanisation* and *human association* (Byle, 1949). The Malays of Malaysia and Indonesia unanimously use the word *urbanisation to indicate the meaning of civilisation* (Beg, 1980).

language, defined civilisation as "an infinitive means staying in a city and opposite of Bedouin, also the inhabitant of the cities and villages" (Al-Bustani, 1970). Moreover, the term "civilisation" was literally used in the Western tradition to mean, "civilisation is derived from the Latin word *civites*, which means a city, and *Civis*, which means the inhabitant of a city. Or *Civilis*, which means civility or what, is related to the inhabitant of a city. Or used to mean a citizen" (Weiner, 1973, p. 613). It is obvious that one important aspect of civilisation is living in cities or creating cities that transform into big civilisational entities and communities. Emphatically put,

> whatever else their function, cites were places where upper classes of early civilisations lived…they were the main location of high-level political and administrative activities, specialised craft production, marketing, long-distance trade, higher education, artistic and cultural achievements, conspicuous display, court life, and religious rituals (Trigger, 2003, p. 121).

In a broad sense, the term "civilisation" connotes sophisticated and advanced forms of human association in which people share a common life and work together to achieve certain levels of advancement in different aspects of life, such as the moral and material aspects. Indeed, the other important aspect of civilisation is human cooperation and interaction. When a human group reaches this level of inter-dependability on each other at the individual, group, and societal levels, civilisation becomes more ingrained into the society's fabric and culture. In other words, as interdependence of people increases with the increasing division of labour, everyone becomes increasingly dependent on everyone else" (Powell, 2011).

The term "civilisation" is also used to denote "a land or house inhabited, peopled, well peopled, well stocked with people and the like; in a flourishing state; in a state contrary to desolate or waste or ruined; a land colonised, cultivated or well cultivated; a house in a state of repair" (Lane, 1968, p. 2155). Here, the concept of civilisation shows the importance of the state of stabilising or settling in a place, land, or house, which indicates that "stability" is demanded in the civilising process as it provides the basic foundations of a civilisation. Furthermore, the state of development and flourish is another indicator

of the state of civilisation of a society. In another definition, civilisation denotes "a building, a structure, an edifice; or perhaps the act of building" (Lane, 1968, p. 2156). The latter adds another important aspect related to the civilising process. It conceives civilisation as an act of building which requires a vision and plan for action and construction. In other words, civilisation can be a process of constructing a state of progress and stability in the human life (Berghout & Saoudi, 2018).

To sum up, the term "civilisation," in its literal meaning, has various connotations. The most relevant definitions to our analysis are stabilising in a land, constructing a state of development, and presence vis-à-vis absence and staying in a city. Even though all these aspects are important in the concept of civilisation from an Islamic perspective, it is equally important to complement our study with a more scientific meaning of civilisation. In this context, civilisation should be approached as a process or a project to achieve certain levels of moral and material balance and development. Hence, borrowing some technical definitions of civilisation would assist in discerning its in-depth meaning as process and project (Berghout & Saoudi, 2018).

2.   *The Concept of Civilisation: The Social Phenomenon*

The term "civilisation", in its technical definition, has various meanings depending on the background, vision, approach, and social context. For instance, sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, and historians used to define civilisation in different ways in respect to their area of specialisation. In a broad sense, the term "civilisation" means, as Ibn Khaldun[4] puts it, "the necessary character of human social organisation." In this context, the term underlines the social dimension of the civilising process which stresses the human characters and qualities. In other words, civilisation is a state of human development and organisation, which reflects a certain kind of personality and human gathering that function as a systematic body to achieve certain objectives.

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[4] Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) was born in Tunisia. He is considered to be the pioneer in introducing the science of human association from an Islamic perspective.

In a different context, Taylor (1988) provides one of the most comprehensive definition of civilisation saying it is a "degree of fairly advanced culture, in which the arts and sciences, as well as political life are well developed, provides an additional perspective" (p. 117). On an another note, Jary and Jary (1991) argued that civilisation is,

> a well-established, complex society. Crucial characteristics of a civilisation would include the emergence of towns and cities; an increasingly specialised division of labor; and the development of trade, manufacture, and commerce, and centers of local and national political and legal administration, systems of communication, literacy, and an elite culture of artistic and religious expression.

Accordingly, it is obvious that that the notion of civilisation has to do more with human accomplishments in various aspects of life. Furthermore, it has social, psychological, and cultural dimensions.

3. *The Concept of Civilisation: An Islamic Perspective*

To further elucidate on the Islamic view of civilisation, one may refer to the seminal works of Malik Bennabi (d. 1973), who made civilisation as one of the major themes of his thought and contribution to the world of Islam. His usage of the concept of civilisation was dynamic and contextual. He articulated in different contexts and perspectives, leaving an expanded dynamic understanding of what civilisation stands for. In all his usages, Bennabi (1993) underscored the importance of the functional and practical aspect of civilisation. He stressed the dynamic role of civilisation as a social action that enables the society to become a witness over other nations and advance in all aspects of human association. By his account, civilisation cannot progress harmoniously unless it stands on two important poles; that of the moral aspects and that of the material aspects. He argues that, like many other scholars, civilisation demands the equilibrium between the spiritual and the material, and finality and causality. Furthermore, he noted that civilisation cannot be defined or studied from one perspective; it is a multifaceted phenomenon in which several factors and elements play an interconnected function. This forms the complex concept of civilisation (Bariun, 1993). In other words, civilisation consists of

integral parts that function to form the whole of the integrated shape and system.

On another aspect, Bennabi (1992) stresses the intellectual and psychological aspects of civilisation. In this context, civilisation functions as a process; civilisation helps the individual to annihilate the primitive features and negative elements within themselves, causing improvements in their personal and social context. Put in psychological terms, civilisation provides a psychological and mental force that re-organises the human capabilities as well as the human vital energy directing it to respond to the needs of social development. Furthermore, civilisation is in its essence "an idea....and a project for a systematic work. It is aspiring towards activating the social capacities in order to face the crucial problems of a society" (Bennabi, 1986, p. 116).

Taken together, all these definitions help determine the necessary elements needed in the civilising process. From the first definition, one could see that civilisation needs the balance between the moral and material aspects. From the second definition, civilisation requires organisation and planning. It is a process. Moreover, the third definition explains the essence of civilisation as an idea and a project for accomplishing certain missions in a given time and space. In substantive terms, civilisation could be analysed from various angles. It consists of several integral dimensions that vary based on the point of focus, ranging from literal, socio-cultural, socio-economic, spiritual, to civilisational.

4. *The Concept of Civilisation: Social and Intellectual Aspects*

It is equally important to highlight the functional aspect of civilisation in which the social and intellectual dimensions are relevant. At the social level of analysis, civilisation is "the total result of the moral and material conditions which grant a given society the possibility to offer each one of its members, in every stage of his existence from childhood till afterlife, with necessary social assistance requested for his growth in this stage or in the other" (Bennabi, 1991, p. 43). Accordingly, and as made very clear in this definition, civilisation in its true sense, is a social dynamic force which plays an important role

in developing the individual and society as well. It is a high state of development resulting in providing the necessary needs of life for the society.

This societal aspect of civilisation is important in the Islamic perspective. It is society that generates civilisation and assists the individual to play their role in history as a transformation agent. It is society that provides the real context and aspiration for individuals to embark on a civilising process and developmental activities. Indeed, it constitutes the progressive milieu that helps the individual to carry out their responsibilities in the form of a mission. Islam advocates a civilisation where balance is maintained between the spiritual and material, as well as the individual and societal forces. Indeed,

> the relation between the individual and society has been regulated in such a manner that neither the personality of the individual suffers any diminution or corrosion… nor is he allowed to exceed his bounds to such an extent as to become harmful to the community…In Islam, the purpose of an individual's life is the same as that of the life of the community, namely, the execution and enforcement of Divine law and the acquisition of God's pleasure (Bennabi, 1991).

The social dimension of civilisation represented in the strong social relations network is important in the civilising process. In this aspect of civilisation, man learns how to live within a group and acquires the essential elements of living in society, forming with others the social relations network. This network is crucial in any civilisational development (Bennabi, 1985). In addition to this social aspect of civilisation, the intellectual dimension is also important. Ideas are important to spark and guide the civilisation process. Bennabi (1988) argues that civilisation is,

> The product of a substantial idea, which inspires to a pre-civilised society the vital drive that, penetrates it onto the historical movement. Thus, the society constructs its intellectual system in conformity with the original pattern of its civilisation. It is rooted in an original cultural ambiance, which will decide all its characteristics viz. a-viz. other cultures and civilisations (p. 41).

The above passage shows the significance of ideas in formulating a civilisation. In general terms, creative ideas help make a vision of civilisation, develop a civilisational project, and shape the intellectual characteristics of society. Indeed, ideas are the premier factors, which drive society into the threshold of history; they assist it to accomplish its mission and to carry out its responsibilities in a given historical moment. Moreover, ideas enable the members of the society to play their roles on the civilising process (Bennabi, 1988). On the basis of the above analysis, civilisation appears to be a complex phenomenon with multi-dimensions which require an integrative approach in dealing with it. Therefore, for a better understanding and articulation of the civilisation process, we need to reconcile its integral parts in order to constitute its entire dynamic structure of what we call civilisation.

The Notion of Civilisational Development: The Islamic Perspective

Having outlined a general framework for the definition of civilisation, the study now provides a definition of civilisational development as the central focus of the present work. In general terms, civilisational development is a result of collective and systematic human endeavours aspiring towards building a civilisation in its multi-dimensional meaning. The latter includes many aspects, such as intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, economic, technological, ethical, material, and cultural advancements. All this development happens according to the worldview of the society and its social context. Thus, civilisational development does not happen haphazardly or occurs in a vacuum; rather, it is a process that demands scientific orientation. It is a process that has a goal and an end. That is to say, 'development' has as its goal a fuller and/or greater and/or better situation attained through the expansion or attainment of defined possibilities" (Machowski, 2003, as cited in Skowroński, 2008). As a process, development involves, among other things, having vision, mission, objectives, strategies, plans, approaches, and activities geared towards achieving progress at all levels. In more specific terms,

> sustainable development conceptualises the different elements of civilisation in a holistic manner. It takes in the management of natural, economic and human resources, spatial planning, institutional solutions, the

> moral dimension, the shaping of awareness and the choice of a defined life model (Piontek, 1999, p. 120).

Islam, as a comprehensive way of life, offers an integrated model and framework for civilisational development. It provides a balanced developmental model that is value-laden and comprehensive (Berghout, 2013). Like most advanced models of development today, Islam addresses the question of development from an integrated perspective, stressing on the importance of balance between the martial and spiritual aspects of civilisation. In this model, the approach to development and civilisation is holistic and balanced. It is holistic and comprehensive in the sense that aspects, such as socio-political, economic, religious, cultural, educational, scientific, technological, and civilisational are interconnected and dealt with comprehensively. Additionally, while it stresses the comprehensiveness of the developmental model, it also regards the balance between spiritual and material forces as essential character of real development.

Furthermore, the civilisational model that Islam advocates establishes and further advances the importance of both human and religious elements in the pursuit of development. In other words, "it points to the need for the spiritual development of humankind, and for an exchange of the goals of development from the material centred to the non-materialistic" (Skowroński, 2008, p. 120). By doing so, this model posits that issues like civilisational vision, religion, ethics, culture, spirituality, technology, and education are central to development. As a matter of fact, the Islamic civilisation, in its glorious moments, was a real manifestation of aspirations and projections of Islam as a balanced civilisational developmental model calling for spiritual, material, technological, scientific, economic, social, cultural, educational, artistic, and aesthetical progress.

1. *Islamic View of Civilisational Development*

In today's age of globalisation and technological advancement, more than any time before, the question of balanced development becomes of more interest and merit, particularly to the developing world. The world of Islam, like others, engages in the process of development aspiring towards achieving progress at all levels. As such, what is

needed for the civilisational development, in general, is a clear vision and model of development that suits the traditions of respective people and nations as well as responding to their present and future aspirations.

In a global perspective, civilisational development is a complex process. As such,

> any process of global sustainable development must perforce entail fundamental changes in the attitudes and behaviour manifested by human beings – as compared with those characteristics of the industrial and technological era. Having at its disposal ever greater technical and technological possibilities and ever greater speeds with which information can be transferred and people moved about, humankind needs to make the necessary psychological and moral adjustments to such a state of affairs. From the point of view of its axiological and ethical content, sustainable development entails a moral obligation towards other forms of life (i.e. nature) and other human beings, be these living now or yet to be born. Sustainable development requires ethical maturity and a fundamental enlargement of the intellectual potential of the global society, as well as further appropriate development of science and technology" (Skowron´ski, 2008, p. 123).

Ethical and intellectual maturity is crucial, particularly in a situation of imbalance, such as in the movement of today's present human civilisation, whereby the martial, technical, and technological aspects suppress and befall the ethical, spiritual, and moral aspects of life. Hence, an Islamic perspective of civilisation becomes of more merit and benefit not only to the Muslim world but also to the entire humanity.

Any study of Islam as a way of life would eventually lead to the discovery of a well-articulated set of civilisational values and principles. Islam advocates a set of values, such as trustworthiness, integrity, work as a form of worship, excellence, justice, fairness, brotherhood, mercy, respect, cooperation, consultation, quality, piety, sincerity, caring, sharing, moderation, etc. As a matter of fact, it is these values that make the Islamic model of development distinctive

from others. With these values in the very core of Islam, development becomes more human and value-loaded, paving the way for a friendlier and integrated model.

In fact, it is those values that made it possible for Muslims to build a balanced Islamic civilisation that lasted for long centuries and bridged the world of old civilisations with those that came after Islam. It was able to nurture quality people and culture for civilisational development. The human models that the Islamic civilisation nurtured echoed the real civilisational values of Islam that have been referred to earlier.

Indeed, throughout the course of Islamic history, except in periods of the decline of the Islamic civilisation, the Muslim world has learnt the lesson that whenever Muslims undermined these civilisational[5] values, their understanding and practice of Islam reflected deficiency and disequilibrium. Therefore, it is always vital to stress those values, particularly those addressing the question of civilisation and development from an Islamic perspective. Hence, it is insufficient, from an Islamic perspective, to consider development only from material, physical, technological, and scientific aspects but also from ethical, moral, intellectual, spiritual, cultural, and civilisational aspects. Therefore, the core feature of the Islamic vision of development lies in this balance and equilibrium without which the whole process of development becomes futile.

This idea of balance in the developmental modal of Islam has been the focus of the Qur'an and the practice of the Prophet (PBUH) and those who followed his guided path. Thus, we find Muslim scholars, ever since the times of Ibn Khaldun in his celebrated initiative of the science of human association, calling for the revival of Islamic civilisation and the civilisational dimension of Islam stressing the above-mentioned values of development. In modern times, too, the

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[5] The term "civilisational" is used in this study to mean an integral, comprehensive, realistic, universal, balanced, and a creative kind of understanding of Islam. Consequently, when one attaches the adjective "civilisational" to the expression "Islam", it indicates that Islam is presumably considered as a civilising religion with the power to build a civilised human social construction and culture.

contributions of thinkers, such as Malik Bennabi, bear witness to the need for revivification of the civilisational values of Islam.

Moreover, there are numerous Muslim scholars[6] who have contributed to the development of more comprehensive views of the civilisational model of Islam, stressing the need to project it as an all-encompassing way of life and as a civilisational model for balanced development. Even though some of these works have not used the term "civilisational development," or the civilisational vision of Islam, they still reflect the civilisational aspects and values of Islam.

Having said that, it is so far clear that the question of development from an Islamic perspective requires not only a better understanding of the core values of Islam but also possessing capabilities to manage it systematically in real situations; that is to say, one has to have the capabilities, skills, and expertise for the management of the development process. Accordingly, there is a need to envisage a mapping of the developmental model so as to see its requirements and demands. In the process of building a civilisation based on sustainable development, the important tasks include:

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[6] You may refer to: Seyyid Qutab, *This Religion of Islam* (Egypt: Al-Manar Press, 1967); Seyyid Qutab, *The Characteristics of the Islamic Concept* (Delhi: Hindustan, 1984); Abul A'la Mawdudi, *Towards Understanding Islam*, Translated and edited by Khurshid Ahmad (Pakistan: The Islamic Foundation A.S. Noordeen, 1979); Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, First Edition, Edited and annotated by Saeed Sheikh (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1986); Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, First Edition, Edited and annotated by Saeed Sheikh (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1986); Abul al Hasan Ali Nadawi, *Islam and the World*, 2nd Edition, Translated by M. Asif Kidwa'i (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1973); Malik Bennabi, *The Question of Ideas in the Muslim World*, Translated, annoted with a Forward by: Mohamed El-Tahir El-Mesawi (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2003); Muhammad Baqir Al-Sadr, *Our Philosophy*, Translated by Shams C. Inati, Forwarded by Nasr Sayyid Husayn (London: The Muhammadi Trust, 1989); Mutahhari. Ayatullah Murtaza, *Fundamentals of Islamic Thought: God, Man and the Universe*, Translated by Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1985); Mutahhari. Ayatullah Murtaza, *The Human Being in the Qur'an* (Tehran: Islamic Propagation Organisation, 1983); Abdul Hameed Siddiqi and Muhammad Saeed Siddiqi in their work '*The Islamic Concept of Religion and Its Revival*', First Edition (Lahore: Kazi Publications, 1980).

1. promotion of humanity's individual and collective information and knowledge;

2. the linking of the eco-social utility of the work institutions and organisations do with the level of income obtained as a result of that work;

3. the mastering of the skills involved in long-term forecasting, as well as the faithful valuation of work and the consequences of other changes in our surroundings;

4. the establishment of flexible bases (including as regards information) that may head off threats to eco-socially suitable management;

5. the mastering of the skills to recognise the situation regarding quality of life on the basis of ecological knowledge and

6. the mastering of the skills to steer processes of change in humankind's natural environment.

From the above passage, it is obvious that priority is given to technical skills, and the financial, physical, scientific, and social aspects of the civilisational development process. The moral, spiritual, religious, and other intangible cementing elements are not visible. Hence, the next section shows how Islam projects a development that is based on a balance between the martial and spiritual demands of development.

2. *Mapping the Civilisational Development Model of Islam*

The above section has thus far shown that the Islamic developmental model stands for balance and calls for the amelioration of all new means and technologies without undermining the roots and main principles of the religion and tradition. Moreover, the Islamic model stresses the following aspects and elements:

a. An integrated, balanced, and all-encompassing civilisational vision, whereby civilisational aspirations play a crucial role;

b. the dynamic role of human capital in development;

c.   cementing the function of values and ethical norms in the orientation of development;

d.   the significance of education, knowledge, capacity-building, and learning as a pre-condition for any development process;

e.   the importance of the culture of creativity in creating the psycho-social environment required in any civilisational development;

f.   a moderate and balanced method of approaching and solving problems of development;

g.   a strategic and systematic knowledge of development management;

h.   the capability to measure and monitor progress, impact, and outcomes of the developmental policies and plans;

i.   possessing the know-how and technological means and tools;

j.   considering the local, regional, international, and global environment in managing development; and lastly,

k.   developing a flexible set of policies, regulations, and guidelines that facilitates and creates the entire environment for development to take place and achieve its strategic objectives.

Furthermore, the civilisational model takes Islam as its main guiding framework while opening the horizon to benefit from other sources of human civilisational expertise and achievements. The illustration below maps the main aspects of the Islamic model of civilisational balanced development:
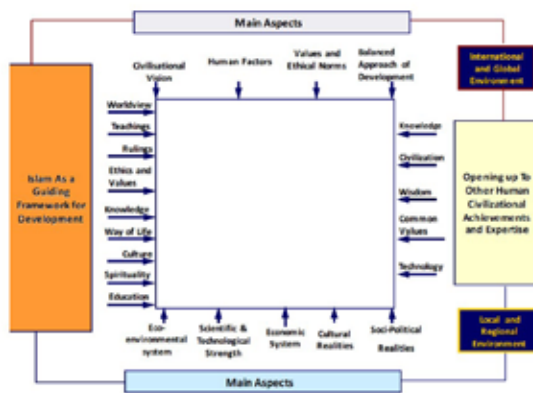
Figure 1: Mapping of the Islamic view of civilisational development

What is important to be stressed from the above illustration is that Islam creates the spirit of inclusive developmental approach, whereby its noble teachings guide the entire processes of development. The latter are guided by the civilisational values of Islam, such as equality, justice, righteousness, freedom, tolerance, forgiveness, humanity, brotherhood, cooperation, solidarity, love, trustworthiness, progress, good governance, time management, etc. More than that, Islam considers all sincere efforts and activities which fall within the ambit of establishing a balanced civilisation as a form of worship and obedience to God.

Having outlined the various aspects of the civilisational model of development, stressing the role of Islam as a guiding source of enlightenment, the next section highlights the main principles and foundations of the Islamic worldview. These guiding principles are essential in any developing process that is in accordance with Islam and its teachings (Berghout & Saoudi, 2018).

3. *Civilisation and the Need for Applied Virtues*

In the process of building a civilisation, applied virtues and noble values function as guiding principles and educative norms that annihilate the non-acceptable characteristics and negative elements

within the human personality, leading to improvements on character, lifestyle, behaviour, cultural expressions, and human relations at large. This, in turn, contributes directly to the development of society through the refined character and efficiency of individuals at all levels. Indeed, applied virtues and noble values teach us the art of living together with other races, people, cultures, and religions. Furthermore, we should be mindful of the importance of religion as one of the main sources of ethics and virtues, especially in the Islamic worldview and religion. Indeed, the history of Islamic civilisation has provided an applied example of how religious ethics and virtues mould the entire personality, society, and civilisation. In general terms, religious values assist us as a group to acquire the essential elements of living in society and forming with others the social relations network.

To go one step further, one may claim that the real objective of reviving Islamic civilisation is to create the societal environment and integrated culture in which high qualities of human personality are moulded and translated into activities resulting in improvements on our political, social, economic, educational, cultural, scientific, moral, and technological endeavours. In religion, there are many noble values that each and every individual need to understand, internalise, and practice. For instance, virtues and noble values, such as sincerity, respect, the spirit of neighbourliness, trustworthiness, valuing time, simplicity, caring, patience, the spirit of cooperation, helpfulness, forgiveness, gratitude and affection, loyalty, and sense of community make the core edifice of any human association. Here, each and every one of us, the ordinary people and leaders, by the very virtue of being a Muslim must ask themselves, how much of these virtues and noble values is practiced in our daily life.

As a general statement, the researchers may safely claim that the practice of these virtues and values constitute the core edifice of reviving Islamic civilisation. In line with this, one may elucidate that virtues and noble values play a role on reviving Islamic civilisation through, firstly, good personality development. Here, the Islamic values and virtues contribute to the development of intellectual, spiritual, social, moral, and leadership aspects, Secondly, the Islamic virtues and values encourages to develop social relations and cultural cohesiveness, and thirdly, help spread aesthetics, arts, and a balanced lifestyle, resulting in a more dynamic and integrated society.

Applied Virtues: Winning the Battle of Heart and Souls

Another important role of applied virtues is to help form a new culture of relations that is based on respect and understanding. In other words, the virtue of winning the battle of souls and hearts first. It is a call not for physical, material, and geographical expansion but primarily a call for the conquering of hearts and souls. Indeed, what befalls the current human civilisation is not the lack of technology, sciences, innovation, and advancement but mainly the shortage of applied virtues and noble values in action.

Islam, as a religion and way of life, offers an integrated model and framework for civilisational development. In fact, it is the reservoir of virtues and noble values of Islam which made it possible for Muslims to build a balanced Islamic civilisation that lasted for long centuries and contributed immensely to world civilisations. Today, the Islamic world needs to revive its wealth of virtues and values so as to put it at work as one of the main factors of development. In this respect, the researchers believe that the Malay world with its unique position and model of balanced civilisational development can play a pivotal role in the reviving of Islamic civilisation. The researchers believe that institutions of education and learning, institutions of cultural and social development, and the religious institutions ought to play a greater role in making applied virtues and noble values as the deriving and balancing force behind all endeavours of civilisational development. In this respect, it should be clear that applied virtues and noble values shall not be a subject matter of a theoretical science or subject to be taught in confined classrooms, but it must be a subject of personality, character empowerment, and refinement in the real world situation making an impact on people, relations, culture, development, and the reviving of Islamic civilisation.

Civilisation and the Concept of Sustainable Development Goals

On another note, it seems worth mentioning the new concept of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) mooted by the United Nations. As we discuss the concept of civilisation and development, it is important to refer to these SDGs in order to link them to the civilising process. In this context, one may mention the 17 Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs) which are introduced and adopted by all 193 United Nations Member States. The main aims of the SDGs revolve around eradicating poverty, obtaining prosperity, and protecting the environment and planet. It comes under the 2030 Agenda for the transformation and saving of our world, namely, The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is entrusted with the task of leading the drive to achieve the SDGs by the year 2030. The 17 SDGs are:

> 1) No Poverty, 2) Zero Hunger, 3) Good Health and Well-being, 4) Quality Education, 5) Gender Equality, 6) Clean Water and Sanitation, 7) Affordable and Clean Energy, 8) Decent Work and Economic Growth, 9) Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, 10) Reducing Inequality, 11) Sustainable Cities and Communities, 12) Responsible Consumption and Production, 13) Climate Action, 14) Life Below Water, 15) Life on Land, 16) Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, 17) Partnerships for the Goals (UN, 2015).

Scrutinising the 17 SDGs shows their importance and applicability to the civilising process. All these goals are part and parcel of the civilisation. In fact, any contemporary civilisation must, by the very nature of human basic needs, address these SDGs. In other words, any human society endeavouring to build a civilisation should take these SDGs as indicators of moving towards the higher levels of civilisation. The next illustration reflects all 17 SDGs.

Source: United Nations web site

Given the importance of fulfilling these SDGs in the process of building a civilisation and developing society, we need to see them in the light of the Islamic worldview and *maqasid*. It is moderately clear that the SDGs have not put strong emphasis on the dynamic role of ethics, values, virtues, cultural norms, and religion on the civilising process and sustainable development of society. Therefore, the SDGs should be observed within the framework of the *maqasid* perspective and value system. In fact, the *maqasid* framework does not only address the 17 SDGs but it may include any other human needs and wants as long as it protects religion, life, intellect, wealth, and progeny. On religion, spirituality, ethics, and morality, it sets a whole system of protecting human society and civilisation in its religious, cultural diversity and richness, family, and people. It considers the value system and ethical norms as the balancing factor in human sustainable development, without which, all the SDGs fall apart. Furthermore, it sets a tall stand-alone value, i.e. of progeny to protect human life, human families and societies and its values, well-being, roles, and development.

The *maqasid* framework, also under the protection of wealth, includes not only monetary values and assets but also the protection of environment, universe, and all that is surrounding us in the seas, earth, and skies. On the other hand, and most importantly, the *maqasid* value system provides balancing standards on which the SDG can accept or not accept against the *maqasid* values. For instance, the goals of justice, equality, fairness, education, dignity, and respect of humanity are all defined and protected within the framework of *maqasid*. Hence, adopting the *maqasid* values system will open more horizon for the study of civilisation and sustainable development goals within a value-based framework.

Civilisational Development: The Urgency of Reviving the Civilisational Vision of Islam

There is no doubt that Islam provides a comprehensive and value-laden framework for civilisation development. However, the long centuries of the decline of Islamic civilisation and its creativity has led to some sort of confusion over its dynamism in our contemporary context. Indeed, the culture of inertia that resulted from the decline crippled Muslims and hindered their contemporary civilisational role and as

a major contributor to world civilisation. Therefore, there is a need to revive the civilisational vision of Islam that paves the way for the culture of creativity and innovation (Berghout & Saoudi, 2018).

Certainly, those Muslims wanting to revive back the dynamism of Islamic civilisation need to address the misconception about the role of Islam in civilisational development. At this juncture, one has to stress that Islam is not the cause of inertia, as being portrayed by some quarters, but it has always been the source of enlightenment and guidance to those who approach it properly.

Indeed, Islam has never been an obstacle on the way of dynamic, balanced, and comprehensive progress of nations and people. On the contrary, it was a major contributor to the development of human civilisation. Islam strongly advocates technological (Berghout, 2010), scientific, cultural, economic, and civilisational progress and calls for a balanced development in all spheres. It propagates the common human values, such as protection of life, intellect, property, freedom, justice, peace, mercy, balance, integrity, and security. In line with this, as a guiding framework for balanced civilisational development, Islam stresses, among other things, the need to strive for balanced civilisational progress and development. Allah declares:

> But seek, with the wealth which Allah has bestowed on thee, the Home of the Hereafter, nor forget thy portion in this world: But do thou good as Allah has been good to thee, and seek not occasions for mischief in the land (Al-Qur'an 28: 77).

Therefore, for the Islamic civilisational model to bear its fruits and contribute to balanced civilisation and development, Muslims should play their role in understanding and implementing it at both individual and collective levels. Hence, the question of reviving the civilisational vision of Islam is relevant and need to be addressed accordingly. For the civilisational model of development to achieve its goals, Muslims need to rediscover and apply the civilisational vision of Islam. By civilisational vision, this study refers to the integral, comprehensive, and well organised frame of reference which allows for effective study, analysis, interpretation, and generation of ideas and solutions related to the problems of development, based on the teachings of Islam. It should

be clear that empowering the Muslims with the civilisational vision of Islam means possessing the ability to deal with problems, situations, and civilisational phenomena from a more systematic, integral, comprehensive, and balanced way. It is the ability to see things from different facets and use integrated approaches in addressing issues and problems of development (Berghout & Saoudi, 2018).

Certainly, the civilisational vision "maintains that each one of the exclusionary approaches, or paradigms, used in the study of the human condition presents a mere facet of the complex reality" (Rajaee, 2000, p. 44). Therefore, to have a complete picture of any given phenomenon, one has to consider all its facets and aspects (Berghout, 2005), otherwise, it is impossible for a one-sided or segmented approach to provide us with a comprehensive view of any social phenomenon. Hence, as we go through the experiences of many Muslims today, we observe the tendency of this one-sided mind-set, claiming hold of the truth while undermining the rest of the views and aspects. This tendency creates a culture of exclusiveness towards others and overlooks vital factors which affect the civilisational development of the Muslim ummah. Therefore, the absence of civilisational vision in many practices leads to the segmentation of our practices and decisions in real life situations (Rajaee, 2000).

Put more emphatically, the civilisational vision "requires an ecological perspective- a sense of the whole, along with the sensitivity to how things relate to one another. That seems to be missing as we approach the twenty-first century" (Gaddis, 1999; as cited in Rajaee, 2000). This missing element in our practical culture creates many problems when it comes to our understanding and implementation of the teachings of Islam. Therefore, empowering people with the civilisational vision of Islam becomes imperative. Indeed, undermining the very many factors and aspects that constitute the core of the civilisational vision of Islam may end up in fatal consequences to the entire *ummah*.

It is so far clear that reviving the civilisational vision is an important step towards realising development. Muslims should be able to revive and implement the civilisational vision of Islam in guiding the processes of development. The civilisational model of development should be holistic, systematic, balanced, and practical. Taken together, these

characteristics reflect a vision that is more realistic and developmental in nature. This is why the approach of Islam to development covers all aspects of human and social life, stressing on creating civilisational value and progress for the entire mankind. Additionally, its main aspects are values-driven, educational, humanistic, and cultural. Taken together, these aspects show the importance of the civilisational vision and its role in reviving the dynamic role of Islam and its contributions to the development of the Islamic world and mankind at large.

Conclusion

Though the paper is concise, it managed to put forward some ideas on the integrated concept of civilisation and sustainable development. It has also advanced the idea of linking the civilising process and sustainable development to the framework of *maqasid* and the value system of Islam. Civilisation, seen in the light of *maqasid*, has great objectives and goals, and addresses the real issues and problems of humanity and civilisation. It has the balancing power of values, ethics, and applied virtues.

The *maqasidic* framework makes it possible to build communities and civilisations with values and ethics in the core of their vision, goals, and aspirations, making it possible to see a human civilisation of virtue, development, responsibility, fairness, justice, honour, respect, equality, and balance. Therefore, it is highly recommended that researchers and institutions specialising on civilisational and sustainable development studies to embark on in-depth research on areas, such as *maqasid* and sustainable development goals, applied virtues and the civilising process, the five values of *maqasid* and sustainable development goals, approaches to balancing civilisation and sustainable development, education and sustainable development, culture and sustainable development, and religion and sustainable development.

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