

Navigating Challenges of Islamic Civilization in the Era of Global Modernity

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Abstract

This article analyzes the dynamics and challenges faced by Islamic civilization amid the dominance of Western modernity, which has now transformed into neoliberal globalization, digital capitalism, and epistemic hegemony. The study explores how Islamic civilization can reformulate its strategic role in constructing a modern Muslim society that is not only technologically advanced but also spiritually and ethically grounded. Employing a qualitative library-based method with a descriptive-analytical approach and a civilizational analytical framework, this research examines classical and contemporary literature on civilizational theory, modernization, the coloniality of knowledge, and Islamic reformism. The findings indicate that Western modernity does not merely generate scientific and institutional progress; it also promotes a secular-materialistic paradigm that tends to marginalize the

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dimension of transcendence from the public sphere. In this context, the crisis experienced by Muslim societies is not a theological crisis, but rather an epistemic one crisis and a crisis of civilizational confidence. Historically, Islamic civilization was built upon the integration of dzikir (spiritual consciousness) and fikir (intellectual rationality) as two fundamental pillars of societal advancement. Therefore, the revitalization of Islamic civilization in the global era requires the reconstruction of epistemology, educational reform, and the strengthening of a civilizational identity that engages modernity in a selective and critical manner.

Keywords: *Islamic Civilization, Global Modernity, Epistemic Hegemony, Islamic Reformism, Dzikir and Fikir.*

Abstrak

Artikel ini menganalisis tantangan yang dihadapi peradaban Islam di tengah hegemoni peradaban Barat modern serta mengeksplorasi peran strategisnya dalam membangun masyarakat Muslim modern yang berlandaskan spiritualitas. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif berbasis studi kepustakaan dan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis dan kerangka analisis peradaban, penelitian ini mengkaji literatur klasik dan kontemporer mengenai modernisasi, teori peradaban, dan reformisme Islam. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa modernitas Barat, meskipun berkontribusi terhadap kemajuan teknologi dan kelembagaan, kerap mengedepankan paradigma materialistik dan sekular yang memarginalkan dimensi spiritual. Secara historis, peradaban Islam mengintegrasikan tata kelola, ilmu pengetahuan, dan etika dengan menyeimbangkan zikir (kesadaran spiritual) dan fikir (nalar intelektual) sebagai dua pilar kemajuan masyarakat. Kajian ini menegaskan bahwa kemunduran masyarakat Muslim bukan bersumber dari ajaran Islam, melainkan dari stagnasi epistemik dan adopsi model eksternal secara tidak kritis. Oleh karena itu, revitalisasi peradaban Islam yang berakar pada Al-Qur'an dan Hadis, diperkaya tradisi intelektual, serta responsif terhadap realitas kontemporer menjadi prasyarat bagi terwujudnya masyarakat modern yang mandiri dan berketabahan etis.

Kata Kunci: *Peradaban Islam, Modernitas Global, Hegemoni Epistemik, Reformisme Islam, Dzikir dan Fikir.*

Introduction

Debates on civilization have long occupied a central position and have regained prominence in the twenty-first century, particularly in the wake of geopolitical tensions, identity polarization, and global fragmentation driven by digitalization

and transnational capitalism. In this context, the thesis of Samuel P. Huntington, entitled *The Clash of Civilizations*,¹ has once again become the subject of debate, although conflicts today are no longer merely geopolitical in nature, but also epistemological and cultural.

Meanwhile, the cyclical theory of civilization proposed by Arnold J. Toynbee,² and the concept of *al-'umrān al-basyarī* articulated by Ibn Khaldun³ suggest that the rise and decline of civilizations are largely determined by internal cohesion, intellectual creativity, and their responses to external challenges.⁴

In the contemporary period, Muslim societies face what may be described as a global civilizational asymmetry: technological dependence, economic subordination, and the dominance of Western discourse in the production of knowledge.⁵ Modernity no longer manifests solely in the form of physical colonialism, but also in the form of epistemic coloniality and algorithmic domination through digital technologies. This crisis is not merely a matter of material backwardness; rather, it reflects epistemic stagnation and a loss of civilizational direction. Many Muslim societies are trapped between two extreme poles: uncritical imitation of Western modernity or romanticization of the past without creative reconstruction.

Mahmud Hamdi Zaquq, observes that Muslims today often function as consumers, spectators of global civilization

¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (Simon & Schuster, 1996).

² Krishan Kumar, 'The Return of Civilization — and of Arnold Toynbee?', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 56, no. 4 (2014): 815–43, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417514000413>.

³ Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History* (Princeton University Press, 1967).

⁴ Laroussi Amri, 'The Concept of 'Umran: The Heuristic Knot in Ibn Khaldun', *The Journal of North African Studies* 13, no. 3 (2008): 351–61, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13629380701844672>.

⁵ *Ibid*

rather than its producers.⁶ Similarly, Hasan Yaser Malik highlights the geopolitical marginalization of many Muslim-majority states despite their strategic resources.⁷ Western powers have a significant influence on shaping the contemporary global order.⁸ Taken together, these dynamics suggest a gradual global decline in the position and influence of Muslim societies.

Historical evidence further illustrates this civilizational decline. For instance, Egypt—once regarded as the cradle of world civilization, or *umm al-dunya*—has experienced economic, social,⁹ and political challenges¹⁰ that contrast sharply with its historical prominence.¹¹ American journalist David Lamb observed the paradoxical state of Cairo, remarking that “*it was never easy to know whether Cairo belonged to the first or third world... Egypt itself [is] in danger of becoming a Bangladesh*”.¹² This contrast underscores a broader pattern of civilizational decline marked by the widening gap between historical legacy and contemporary reality.

The importance of civilization for societal development has long been emphasized by Muslim thinkers. Ibn Khaldun, the 14th-century historian and sociologist, introduced the concept

⁶ Maḥmud Ḥamdi Zaquq, *Islamic Philosophy and Civilization* (Al-Azhar University Press, 2005).

⁷ Hasan Yaser Malik, ‘The Role of Majority Muslim Littoral States to Establish a Prosperous and Stable Indian Ocean’, *Legal Transformation in Muslim Societies* 1, no. 1 (2024): 92–108.

⁸ Dragan Potočnik and Primož Šterbenc, ‘Islam as the Nationalist Instrument of Resistance to Perceived Domination of the West’, *Unity and Dialogue* 78, no. 2 (2023): 369–82, <https://doi.org/10.34291/Edinost/78/02/Potocnik>.

⁹ Walaa Elsayed, ‘Breaking the Cycle of Child Labor in Egypt: Exploring Social and Economic Factors Associated with Child Labor in Egypt for a Sustainable Future’, *Sustainable Futures* 8, no. June (2024): 100235, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sfr.2024.100235>.

¹⁰ Ossama Sayed Ramadan and Çiğdem Akman, ‘The Structure of Local Governments in Egypt Historical and Contemporary Perspectives’, in *Structure, Autonomy, and Policy Impacts of Local Public Administrations* (IGI Global, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3373-5576-4.ch001>.

¹¹ Robert L. Tignor, *Egypt: A Short History* (Princeton University Press, 2011).

¹² David Lamb, *Cairo: City of Paradox* (HarperCollins, 2002).

of *al-'umrān al-basyarī* (human association) to explain the role of human society in constructing and sustaining civilization. His observations were recorded in *Kitab al-Ibr* and summarized in the *Muqaddimah*, highlighting the interplay between social cohesion, leadership, and the rise and decline of civilizations.¹³ This study employs the concepts of epistemic discontinuity and epistemic dependency to analyze the encounter between Islamic and Western intellectual traditions. Epistemic discontinuity refers to the rupture or disconnection from indigenous knowledge traditions, while epistemic dependency denotes the reliance on external—primarily Western—epistemological frameworks.

This article argues that the current decline of Islamic civilization is not the result of theological weakness, but rather of epistemic stagnation and uncritical adaptation to Western modernity. Therefore, a critical understanding of the nature of modernity—particularly its epistemological assumptions and its tendency toward secular-materialistic orientations—is an essential step before formulating any civilizational response. Modernity not only shapes material progress but also redefines knowledge, values, and social order. Without adequate understanding, the responses that emerge risk being reactive or imitative, leading Muslim societies to fall into either uncritical adoption or simplistic rejection.

By examining the epistemological foundations and socio-cultural implications of modernity, it becomes evident that the challenges faced by Muslim societies are rooted in an imbalance between material progress and spiritual-ethical values. In this context, Islamic civilization requires an integrative reconstruction between spirituality and rationality—between *dzīker* (spiritual consciousness) and *fīker* (intellectual rationality)—as a balanced framework for building a modern Muslim society capable of navigating the dynamics of global modernity.

¹³ Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*.

This study employs a literature-based qualitative approach, with a civilizational-analytical framework.¹⁴ Rather than merely describing modernization, it evaluates Western modernity through Islamic epistemology.¹⁵ The analysis compares classical Islamic civilizational structures with contemporary socio-political realities in Muslim societies to identify patterns of decline, adaptation, and potential renewal.

Through this approach, the study aims not only to critically assess the impact of Western modernity on Muslim societies but also to explore how Islamic principles derived from the Qur'an and Hadith can inform strategies for building a modern, spiritually grounded, and resilient Muslim civilization.

Global Modernity and New Challenges for Islamic Civilization

Many scholars assert that the entire world is undergoing a profound process of modernization. From an Islamic perspective, change is considered part of *sunnatullāh*, as it is an intrinsic property of humans and nature. It is therefore natural for individuals, communities, and societies to experience transformations.¹⁶ This aligns with Gordon's view of progress, where everything is subject to evolution, displacement, or change: "All must change, to something new and something strange".¹⁷

¹⁴ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2014)., Mestika Zed, *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2008).

¹⁵ M. Amin Abdullah, 'Religion, Science, and Culture: An Integrated, Interconnected Paradigm of Science', *Al-Jami'ab: Journal of Islamic Studies* 52, no. 1 (2015): 175–203, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2014.521.175-203>.

¹⁶ Nedim Haracic and M. Y. Zulkiffi Mohd Yusoff, 'The Reasons of Social Change and the Role of Mentoring Therein; Its Methods and Contexts from a Qur'anic Perspective', *AlBayan* 14, no. 1 (2016): 89–118, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-12340033>.

¹⁷ H. Scott Gordon, *The Modern World: Progress and Change* (Routledge, 2000).

Linguistically, the term “modern” denotes something new, contemporary, or up-to-date, in contrast to the old or traditional.¹⁸ The essence of modernity, according to scholars such as Anthony Giddens, refers to a social order characterized by continuous transformation and reflexivity.¹⁹ Modernity is not only expressed in societal structures but also in individual personality traits and behaviors.

Modernization is often discussed in the context of technological and economic developments. However, as Halpern emphasizes, true modernization requires transformation across all societal systems, including political, social, economic, intellectual, religious, and psychological. Modernization is inseparable from the globalization of Western powers, manifested in rapid advancements in communication, transportation, technology, and information, as well as cultural and knowledge exchange.²⁰

The process of modernization produces fundamental changes in behavior, beliefs, and social organization. Economically, it is reflected in industrialization, economic growth, the emergence of large capital needs, scientific development, new social classes, and social mobility.²¹ Politically, it is manifested in the formation of parties,²² youth movements, and new governance structures.²³

¹⁸ Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “modern,” *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

¹⁹ Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

²⁰ Abdullah Salavati et al., ‘Ontological Transformations of Human Existence in Virtual Space: An Islamic Ethical and Spiritual Perspective on Divine Presence, Intentionality, and Moral Accountability’, *Legal Transformation in Muslim Societies* 2, no. 2 (2025): 54–69.

²¹ Sukanya R. and Veerta Tantia, ‘Urbanization and The Impact on Economic Development’, in *New Perspectives and Possibilities in Strategic Management in the 21st Century: Between Tradition and Modernity* (IGI Global, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-9261-1.ch019>.

²² Stefanus Sampe, ‘Why Political Parties Don’t and Do Matter in Local Government Elections in Indonesia: A Manado Case’, *Revista de Sociologia e Política* 29, no. 77 (2021): 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.1590/1678-987321297703>.

²³ Carlos Jalali et al., ‘They (Don’t) Really Care about Us: Youth Representation in Portuguese Political Parties’, *European Political Science* 24, no. 4 (2025): 862–77, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11130-025-1000-0>.

Socially, it leads to changes in gender relations,²⁴ urbanization,²⁵ and mass communication.²⁶

These transformations inevitably affect demography, social stratification, governance, education, family structures, and cultural values. Population growth and rural-to-urban migration reshape societies.²⁷ Stratification increasingly emphasizes merit over ascription,²⁸ women's social status improves, and education becomes central in shaping modern individuals.²⁹ Family structures shift from large to nuclear units, creating new dynamics and challenges in interpersonal relationships.³⁰

In contemporary Muslim societies, Western culture dominates, producing materialistic and secular tendencies that challenge Islamic norms. In Indonesia, the influence of Western consumer culture, lifestyles, and entertainment—ranging from fast-food consumption to discotheques—has generated moral and

doi.org/10.1057/s41304-025-00548-2.

²⁴ Heather M. Gerling et al., 'Fractured Modernization: Cultural and Structural Predictors of Attitudes on Gender Equality', *International Review of Sociology* 29, no. 2 (2019): 260–78, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03906701.2019.1614294>.

²⁵ Safaa Alwedyan, 'Urbanization And Its Effect On Jordanian Cities: A Case Study of Irbid, Jordan', *Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies* 65, no. 1 (2023): 129–56.

²⁶ Marita Carballo et al., 'Communication, Public Opinion, and Democracy: New Challenges', *Communication and Society* 31, no. 4 (2018): 121–34, <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.31.4.121-134>.
Communication and Society 31, no. 4 (2018)

²⁷ Ran Liu and Yuhang Jia, 'Resilience and Circularity: Revisiting the Role of Urban Village in Rural-Urban Migration in Beijing, China', *Land* 10, no. 12 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.3390/land10121284>.

²⁸ Herman G. Van De Werfhorst, *Is Meritocracy Not So Bad After All? Educational Expansion and Intergenerational Mobility in 40 Countries* (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1177/00031224241292352>.

²⁹ Carlijn Bussemakers et al., 'Women's Worldwide Education–Employment Connection: A Multilevel Analysis of the Moderating Impact of Economic, Political, and Cultural Contexts', *World Development* 99 (2017): 28–41, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2017.07.002>.

³⁰ Tapas Dey and Srinivas Goli, 'Examining the Role of Modernization and Urbanization in Family Changes in India: Evidence from Panel Data Analyses', *Journal of Family History* 51, no. 1 (2026): 20–50, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03631990251376548>.

social anxieties among Muslim youth.³¹ Empirical studies indicate that Western cultural exposure, particularly through globalization and media, affects behavioral patterns, value systems, and identity formation among young Indonesians, producing both adaptive and disruptive consequences, as demonstrated in the study by Farizi and Mustofa.³²

This article seeks to emphasize that twenty-first-century modernity is no longer synonymous merely with industrialization, but rather with the digitalization of social life, platform capitalism, Artificial Intelligence, information disruption, and identity polarization driven by social media. If classical modernization theory, as articulated by Daniel Lerner, was grounded in urbanization and mass communication, contemporary modernity is now anchored in digital networks, the data economy, and algorithm-driven opinion production.³³ The secular-materialistic paradigm of Western modernity tends to separate religion from the public sphere and to position technological advancement as the primary measure of civilization. As a consequence, global society faces a crisis of meaning, existential anxiety, and social fragmentation.³⁴

Nevertheless, Islam does not reject change. Within the framework of *sunnatullah*, change is a necessity.³⁵ The problem arises when modernity is adopted through imitation rather than

³¹ Lili Romli et al., 'Azyumardi Azra on Islamic Fundamentalism and Wasathiyah: Insights into Contemporary Islamic Thought in Indonesia', *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 12, no. 1 (2025): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2025.2571754>.

³² Firdaus Irvan Farizi & Triono Ali Mustofa, "The Influence of Western Culture on the Behaviour of Senior High School Students," *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Multikulturalisme* 5, no. 2 (2023).

³³ D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (Free Press, 1958).

³⁴ Senad Ganić, 'The Crisis of Pluralism in the Context of the Weakening of Universal Law', *Sociologija* 66, no. 1 (2024): 126–46, <https://doi.org/10.2298/SOC2401126G>.

³⁵ Nur Lailatul Musyafa and Hammis Syaafaq, *Pemikiran Khalid Muhammad Khalid Tentang Konsep Negara Dalam Islam* (Pustaka Press Indonesia, 2026), 69.

engaged through critical dialogue.³⁶ In confronting these challenges, Muslim communities cannot retreat; rather, they must respond by revitalizing Islamic civilization, drawing inspiration from its historical achievements.³⁷ Thus, Islam acknowledges change as a necessity within the framework of *sunnatullah*, yet emphasizes that it must be engaged through critical reflection rather than mere imitation, calling on Muslim communities to actively revitalize their civilization by drawing upon their historical legacy.

The Historical Trajectory of Islamic Civilization: Origins, Development, and Engagement with Western Modernity

1. Definitions of Civilization and The Role of Urbanization in Civilizational Formation

Many definitions of civilization have been proposed by scholars. Etymologically, the Arabic terms *alḥaḍārāh* and *tamaddun* connote urban settlement (*alīqāmāh fi almadīnah*) and organized communal life, contrasted with *albadāwah* (nomadic life), where complex sociopolitical institutions are absent. The term in English, civilization, derives from the idea of *civis* (citizen), signaling advanced citizens living within structured polities.³⁸ This conceptual framework positions civilization not merely as material achievement but as a comprehensive system of intellectual, ethical, and institutional order that is historically contingent and socially produced.

Meanwhile, terminologically, civilization may be understood as the product of organized human cooperation fulfilling diverse human needs, a conception that resonates with Ibn Khaldun's

³⁶ Ihwan Agustono et al., 'Reviving Islamic Civilization in the Late Period of Abbasid: A Historical Analysis of the Madrasa al-Mustanṣiriyya', *Tasfiyah: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 8, no. 2 (2024): 179–202, <https://doi.org/10.21111/tasfiyah.v8i2.11669>.

³⁷ Mohamad Ali et al., 'The Conceptual Nexus between Islamic Foresight, Islamic Thought and the Shariah', *Malaysian Journal of Syariah and Law* 12, no. 1 (2024): 62–76, <https://doi.org/10.33102/mjssl.vol12no1.524>.

³⁸ Hammi Syafaq, *Al-Hadārah al-Islāmiyah al-Gontoriyah* (La Tansa, 1999).

theory of *al-'umrān*, where social organization (*ijtima' al-insāni*) is necessary for human survival and the development of institutions.³⁹ Ibn Khaldun conceptualizes civilization (*al-'umrān al-basyari*) as the product of human social organization and cooperation, emphasizing the role of social cohesion and collective purpose in shaping complex societies.⁴⁰ Similarly, Arnold J. Toynbee views civilization as the outcome of a dynamic process of “challenge and response,” in which societies develop institutions, values, and knowledge systems to address internal and external pressures.⁴¹ From a broader perspective, Samuel P. Huntington defines civilization as the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity, encompassing shared history, language, religion, customs, and institutions.⁴² Therefore, these perspectives indicate that civilization is a complex and dynamic construct, shaped by patterns of social organization, cultural identity, and the capacity of societies to respond to historical challenges.

Civilization emerges from the dynamic interplay of human social organization, economic activity, and cultural development.⁴³ Historically, humans have transitioned from nomadic to sedentary lifestyles, a movement that Ibn Khaldun⁴⁴ conceptualized as *al-'umrān al-basyari*, the social bond that forms the foundation of complex societies. Humans, as political beings by nature, require collective structures—groups, organizations, or states—to meet their needs, and it is within these structures that civilization arises.

³⁹ Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, 89–100.

⁴⁰ Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).

⁴¹ Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934–1961).

⁴² Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

⁴³ Jin Bei, ‘New Industrialization and New Model for Human Civilization’, *China Economist* 2 (2024): 42–53, <https://doi.org/10.19602/j.chinaeconomist.2024.03.02>.

⁴⁴ Amri, ‘The Concept of ‘Umran: The Heuristic Knot in Ibn Khaldun’.

When social organizations grow populous and institutionalized, they evolve into more complex civilizational systems.

Etymologically, the city (*civitas*) has always functioned as the primary locus of civilization. Cities serve as administrative and economic hubs, concentrating governance, trade, and labor. The migration from rural to urban areas—urbanization—fosters social mobility, economic diversification, and the formation of bureaucracies, military organizations, and professional institutions.⁴⁵ Cities also generate opportunities in commerce, craftsmanship, and artisanal production—ranging from woodworking and textiles to architecture and gastronomy—demonstrating that economic specialization and occupational diversity are central to civilizational vitality.

Urbanization is not merely an economic phenomenon but a catalyst for social transformation. Lerner emphasizes that the growth of cities is a precondition for modernization, as urban centers facilitate the diffusion of new ideas, technologies, and cultural norms.⁴⁶ Architecture, medicine, literacy, and the arts constitute essential components of civilization. Monumental buildings symbolize political authority and social cohesion; writing functions to preserve and transmit knowledge; medicine sustains public health; and music and literature express the depth of cultural sophistication. The decline of these institutions often signals civilizational stagnation or collapse, highlighting the interdependence of social, intellectual, and material development.

Civilizational theory suggests that civilizations progress through identifiable epochs: formation, consolidation, and decline. Initially, social organizations stabilize, establishing governance, trade, and cultural norms. Subsequently, material and intellectual achievements flourish, transforming lifestyles and broadening

⁴⁵ F. Wang, 'Research on the Construction of Small Towns and Regional Economic Development in Shaanxi From the Perspective of Spiritual and Emotional Anxiety of Urban Residents', *Psychiatria Danubina* 34, no. 2 (2022): S556.

⁴⁶ Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*.

horizons. Ultimately, unchecked internal and external pressures—erosion of group solidarity (*‘asābiyyah*), cultural complacency, and external domination—can precipitate decline, as observed in historical societies.⁴⁷ Ibn Khaldun similarly notes that civilizations, like living organisms, are subject to growth, maturation, and eventual decay, in accordance with *sunnatullāh*.

Modern scholarship reinforces the centrality of cities as engines of civilization. Urban centers are sites of innovation, education, and cultural synthesis, where social networks and institutions interact to support political governance, economic activity, and intellectual production.⁴⁸ By concentrating human talent and resources, cities enable the emergence of scientific, literary, and artistic achievements, providing the structural and cultural infrastructure necessary for the development of complex societies. In this framework, urbanization is both a process and a symbol of civilizational advancement.⁴⁹

Among the important elements in building a civilization is architecture, because with its existence will be able to build great monuments.⁵⁰ Other important things are skills, such as midwifery,⁵¹

⁴⁷ Badrane Benlahcene, ‘The Presence of Ibn Khaldun and Toynbee’s Ideas in Malek Bennabi’s Interpretation of the Cyclical Movement of Civilizations’, *Afkar* 23, no. 2 (2022): 445–88, <https://doi.org/10.22452/afkar.vol23no2.12>.

⁴⁸ Neave O’Clery et al., ‘Unravelling the Forces Underlying Urban Industrial Agglomeration’, in *Handbook of Cities and Networks* (University of Oxford, 2021).

⁴⁹ Xuemei Bai et al., ‘Linking Urbanization and the Environment: Conceptual and Empirical Advances’, *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 42 (2017): 215–40, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-102016-061128>.

⁵⁰ Patrik Schumacher, ‘The Power of Architecture: Transhistorical Dimensions and Contemporary Parameters’, in *The Power of Design and Convergence of AI* (CRC Press, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003491781-10>.

⁵¹ David Rabinerson and Eran Horowitz, ‘The Evolution of Midwifery’, *Harefuah* 146, no. 5 (2007): 380–84.

writing, book production,⁵² literary arts,⁵³ and medicine.⁵⁴ Midwifery is very important because it is responsible for the lives of newborn babies, while man is the driving force of civilization, so is medical science, because it oversees human health. The art of writing is also important because with it will be published books that preserve the things remembered by man and keep him from forgetting, these books allow the emergence of civilization.⁵⁵

The art of music and sound is also a manifestation of civilization, because in his opinion, if a civilization appears, then music will also appear, if civilization regresses, music will also disappear. No less important are sciences, such as physics, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, attics, and so on, because these sciences are in decline in cities whose civilizations are beginning to collapse, so the development of science depends heavily on the progress of civilization and state.⁵⁶

From the description above, it can be concluded that civilization is the result that has been achieved or created by a group of humans or social organizations to improve their lifestyle, both in the fields of economics, politics, industry, architecture, art, culture, and others.⁵⁷ So, no nation or group of people does not have civilization, because every human being who lives in this world must strive to achieve development, and progress to achieve a better or ideal life improvement. The civilization was synonymous with the movement of nomads to cities (urbanization) to change

⁵² William M. Schniedewind, 'Writing and Book Production in the Ancient Near East', in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: From the Beginnings to 600* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139033671.006>.

⁵³ Chenghua Zhang, 'Reconsidering the Relationship among Literature, Art and Reality in Light of Marxist Art Production', *Foreign Literature Studies* 43, no. 4 (2021): 51–61.

⁵⁴ Giovanni Silvano, 'A Brief History of Western Medicine', *Journal of Traditional Chinese Medical Sciences* 8 (2021): S10–16, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtcms.2020.06.002>.

⁵⁵ Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*.

⁵⁶ Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 411–413.

⁵⁷ Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 434–436.

lifestyles to be more modern (civilized life), which in Arabic is usually spoken with *al-madaniyyah*.⁵⁸

The civilization went through three epochs: The period of formation of an organization (*al-'umrān*), the period of civilization, during which life began to stabilize and increase rapidly. Some luxury buildings began to be built, lifestyles began to change, both in the art of building (architects) and in matters of clothing and food became more modern than before. His mind began to be open-minded, and finally is the time of destruction, where with increasing lifestyles, people begin to be carried away by the current, '*asābiyyah*' (group-feeling) begins to weaken.⁵⁹

External factors began to act, their civilization gradually began to disappear, to be colonized by outside civilizations, even though they were more proud of consuming outside civilizations than local, and did not feel that they were being colonized, so finally people lost their identity and returned to primitive life as before, lost control and finally complacent with their success. His society began to be negligent, complacent, and lazy, his life began to be individual, and there was no longer a sense of community.⁶⁰

Toynbee likens civilization to a person who climbs a cliff, when he reaches the top, he sometimes forgets and ends up slipping down, and then dying.⁶¹ In his theory, Ibn Khaldun also concluded that civilization is like any other living thing (mortal).⁶² It grows, grows, and then disappears to be swallowed by time, and that is the *sunnatullah*, because civilization is abstract, dynamic,⁶³ and has an age limit of no more than three generations or about 120 years.⁶⁴ This framework remains analytically relevant: contemporary

⁵⁸ Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 91–95.

⁵⁹ Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 263–268.

⁶⁰ Philip K. Hitti, *History of The Arabs* (Macmillan Press, 1974).

⁶¹ Kumar, 'The Return of Civilization — and of Arnold Toynbee?'

⁶² Huntington, *The Clash*.

⁶³ Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*.

⁶⁴ Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*.

Muslim societies exhibit fragmentation, dependency, and erosion of collective civilizational confidence.

2. Classical Islamic Civilization: From Medina to the Golden Age

The foundations of Islamic civilization were laid with the Prophet Muhammad's migration (*hijrah*) from Makkah to Yathrib, later named 'al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah' (the enlightened city).⁶⁵ The construction of the Quba Mosque en route and the Prophet's Mosque upon arrival marked the inception of Islamic architecture and institutional life.⁶⁶ This transformation illustrates the conversion of a primitive society (*jāhiliyah*) into a structured, modern society (*al-mutabaddir*) grounded in *syari'ah* and centered around communal institutions, particularly the mosque. The Prophet's approach emphasized social justice, gender equity, and collective responsibility, evident in the legal recognition of women's inheritance and divorce rights, regulated polygamy, and their participation in public and even military life.⁶⁷

The Prophet's migration established Madīnah not merely as a city but as a civilizational blueprint. Robert N. Bellah described the Madīnah polity as "remarkably modern" in terms of its participatory governance, and moral universalism.⁶⁸ The community formed around ideology rather than kinship, creating what Toynbee and Qutb describe as the first "super tribe" or the ummah, a model

⁶⁵ Khalil Ahmad and Fareed Malik, 'Hijrah and Its Application in Classical and Contemporary Muslim Contexts', *Hamdard Islamicus* 45, no. 4 (2022): 97–117, <https://doi.org/10.57144/hi.v45i4.640>.

⁶⁶ A. A. Macca and Tutin Aryanti, 'The Domes: El Wakil's Traditionalist Architecture of Quba Mosque', *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering* (Bandung), 2017, 1–4, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/755/1/011001>.

⁶⁷ Mohd Anuar Ramli et al., 'Gender Analysis in Contemporary Islamic Discourse', *Asian Social Science* 9, no. 7 (2013): 62–74, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v9n7p62>.

⁶⁸ Robert N. Bellah, *Religion and Progress in Modern Asia* (The Free Press, 1965). See also at Robert N. Bellah, *Religion and Society in Tension* (New York: Harper & Row, 1991).

for political and religious community life.⁶⁹ While the early Islamic polity thrived, post-Prophetic leadership reverted partially to tribalism and dynastic tendencies, highlighting the tension between ideological governance and human limitations in succession.

Under the Rashidun Caliphate, particularly during Umar ibn al-Khattab's rule, Islamic civilization expanded territorially into Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Persia, and Palestine, institutionalizing administrative innovations such as diwans, taxation systems (*zakāt, kharāj, jizyah*), police, state treasury (*bayt al-māl*), and currency reform. Cities such as Basra, Kufa, and Fustat emerged as administrative and economic hubs. Uthman ibn Affan consolidated religious practice through the compilation of the Qur'an into a standardized **mushaf**, while expanding infrastructure, naval capacity, and urban planning.⁷⁰ During Ali ibn Abi Talib's caliphate, literary culture flourished, exemplified by the recorded collection of speeches in *Nahj al-Balāghah*.

The Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties epitomized the material and intellectual zenith of Islamic civilization.⁷¹ Arabic became the lingua franca of administration and scholarship, Islamic coinage reflected Qur'anic inscriptions, and monumental architecture such as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and the urban development of Damascus and Cordova expressed a unique synthesis of Persian, Roman, and Arabic styles infused with Islamic ideals. Abbasid Baghdad hosted the *Bayt al-Hikmah* (House of Wisdom),⁷² a hub for translation, scientific research, and jurisprudential development across the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali schools, fostering advances in mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and philosophy.⁷³

⁶⁹ Sayyid Qutb, *Ma'ālim fī al-Ṭarīq* (Dar al-Ilm li al-Malayin, 1980).

⁷⁰ Hitti, *History of The Arabs*.

⁷¹ Steven C. Judd, 'Umayyad Caliphate', in *The Encyclopedia of Empire* (Wiley, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118455074.wbeoc178>.

⁷² Agustono et al., 'Reviving Islamic Civilization in the Late Period of Abbasid'.

⁷³ Tayeb El-Hibri, *The Abbasid Caliphate: A History* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Islamic civilization also influenced Europe during the Middle Ages through Spain, Sicily, and other contact zones, transmitting knowledge in philosophy, medicine, and natural sciences, thereby shaping the European Renaissance. Cities such as Cairo, Samarkand, and Cordova became centers of art, literature, and philosophical inquiry, producing figures like Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes).⁷⁴ In the Safavid, Mughal, and Ottoman empires, the 15th–17th centuries saw cultural renaissances manifesting in gardens, palaces, mosques, madrassas, and public infrastructure, demonstrating multidimensional civilization encompassing material, intellectual, and spiritual domains.⁷⁵

Prominent modern thinkers, including Muhammad Abduh and Mohammed Arkoun, highlight that Islamic civilization historically transformed Arab society from a state of *jabiliyah* into a modern,⁷⁶ sophisticated socio-political system, illustrating Islam's capacity to produce civilizational leadership and knowledge production. This underscores that Islamic civilization, from its inception to its apex, integrated governance, scholarship, and culture to establish a model of a flourishing society.

4. The Encounter with Western Modernity and Its Challenges

The 18th and 19th centuries marked a critical juncture for Islamic societies, as Western modernity increasingly penetrated political, economic, and cultural spheres.⁷⁷ Napoleon Bonaparte's

⁷⁴ Mohammed Abattouy, 'The Arabic-Latin Intercultural Transmission of Scientific Knowledge in Pre-Modern Europe: Historical Context and Case Studies', in *The Role of the Arab-Islamic World in the Rise of the West: Implications for Contemporary Trans-Cultural Relations*, ed. Nayef R. F. Al-Rodhan (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2012), https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230393219_8.

⁷⁵ Ahmad Guliyev, "'A Brother's Portion': Regifted and Requested Items in Safavid-Mughal Diplomatic Gift Exchanges', *Acta Orientalia* 77, no. 3 (2024): 515–34, <https://doi.org/10.1556/062.2024.00425>.

⁷⁶ Muhammad Abduh, *Risālat al-Tawhīd* (Al-Matba'ah al-Amiriyah, 1905).

⁷⁷ Ali Yaycioglu, 'Global Transformations in the "Muslim World"', in *The Wiley Blackwell History of Islam* (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118527719.ch21>.

1798 expedition to Egypt exemplifies this encounter. Accompanied by 167 experts across scientific disciplines, Napoleon introduced printing technologies in Latin, Arabic, and Greek and established the Institut d'Égypte, which encompassed four domains: exact sciences, natural sciences, political and economic sciences, and literary and artistic sciences. The institute published the *Courier d'Égypte*, disseminating knowledge and exposing Egyptian society to Western scientific methodologies.⁷⁸

Confronted with these changes, Muhammad Ali (1805–1849) spearheaded a modernizing agenda in Egypt, often considered the “father of Modern Egypt.” He reformed the military with French training and technology, introduced Western-style educational institutions, invested in infrastructure such as the *Al-Qanāṭir al-Khayriyah* reservoir, and cultivated administrative and industrial modernization.⁷⁹ To support this project, he dispatched students to France under the supervision of Rifa‘ah al-Tahtawi, who upon their return established schools that combined Western knowledge with Islamic moral and ethical frameworks.⁸⁰ This transformation reflects a form of epistemic dependency, in which local intellectual traditions are subordinated to imported frameworks.

The encounter with Western modernity has generated significant structural and epistemological challenges within Muslim societies.⁸¹ On the one hand, the introduction of Western legal systems, military technologies, and modern educational institutions

⁷⁸ Abdulrahman Abdullah and Al-Ma, ‘Process of Decolonization in Nabulyun Fi Al-Azhar’, *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies* 14, no. June (2014): 123–34, <https://doi.org/10.17576/gema-2014-1402-09>.

⁷⁹ Samir Ahmeti and Gazmend Rizaj, ‘European Impact on Egyptian Industrialization during the Rule of Muhammad Ali Pasha (1805-1848)’, *Journal of European Economic History*, no. 2 (2024): 9–41.

⁸⁰ Ivan V. Sivkov, ‘The Western Constitutional Principles of XIX Century in the Eyes of Arab Scholar and Traveler, Rifa‘a Rafi‘ Al-Tahtawi, Based on “Tahliş al-Ibriz Fi Talhiş Bariz Aw al-Diwan al-Nafis Bi-İwan Baris”’, *Romano.Arabica* 18 (2018): 185–96.

⁸¹ Mojtaba Mahdavi, ‘Muslims and Modernities: From Islamism to Post-Islamism?’, *Religious Studies and Theology* 32, no. 1 (2013): 57–71, <https://doi.org/10.1558/rsth.v32i1.57>.

has disrupted established hierarchical orders and social norms. On the other hand, these processes have also introduced new administrative models and created opportunities for intellectual and industrial development.⁸²

Nevertheless, Muslim scholars have not responded uniformly to the encounter with Western modernity. Reformist figures such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani⁸³ and Muhammad Abduh⁸⁴, along with modernist thinkers like Fazlur Rahman⁸⁵ and Muhammad Iqbal⁸⁶, have viewed modernity as an opportunity for institutional renewal and the integration of knowledge. In contrast, more critical or conservative figures, such as Sayyid Qutb⁸⁷ and Abul A'la Maududi⁸⁸, perceive Western civilization as a hegemonic and threatening entity, at times even characterizing it as a distortion of earlier Islamic civilizational achievements. This divergence reflects the ongoing dynamics of intellectual debate within the Muslim world, rather than a single unified stance.

Contemporary scholars, such as Muhammad Rusydi, emphasize that the tension lies in negotiating between Western universalizing frameworks and the moral-epistemic foundations of Islamic civilization.⁸⁹ This encounter prompted critical engagement

⁸² Muhammad U. Faruque, 'Decolonizing the Muslim Mind: A Philosophical Critique', *Philosophical Forum* 55, no. 4 (2024): 353–75, <https://doi.org/10.1111/phil.12378>.

⁸³ Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, "Refutation of the Materialists," in *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*, trans. and ed. Nikki R. Keddie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 130–160.

⁸⁴ Muhammad Abduh, *Risalat al-Tawhid* (Cairo: Dar al-Manar, 1897), 45–60.

⁸⁵ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 132–145.

⁸⁶ Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930), 1–10, 148–160.

⁸⁷ Sayyid Qutb, *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq* (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1964), 101–120.

⁸⁸ Abul A'la Maududi, *Towards Understanding Islam*, trans. Khurshid Ahmad (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1960), 55–70.

⁸⁹ Muhammad Rusydi, *Modernity and Islam: Negotiating Cultural and Epistemic Encounters* (Prenada Media, 2015).

with Western intellectual paradigms, inspiring reformist and revivalist movements that sought to synthesize Islamic principles with modern social, political, and technological advancements. The historical process illustrates both the transformative potential and civilizational anxieties inherent in the Islam–West encounter.

5. Islamic Reformist Negotiations with Modernity

The encounter with Western modernity in the 18th and 19th centuries provoked diverse reformist responses within the Muslim world. Thinkers emerged who sought to revive Islamic civilization by synthesizing religious principles with modern political, social, and scientific paradigms. Jamāl al-Afghānī (1838–1897) pioneered the Pan-Islamic movement, advocating the unification of Muslim communities against colonial domination.⁹⁰ His intellectual and political struggle was continued by his student Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849–1905), whose reformist vision emphasized the modernization of education, legal institutions, and religious thought. Abduh challenged rigid *taqlīd* (imitation) and promoted *ijtihād* (rational reinterpretation), seeking to harmonize Islamic spirituality with contemporary knowledge.⁹¹

Abduh's ideas were systematized and propagated by Rashīd Riḍā (1865–1935), who emphasized the integration of religious education and modern sciences. Riḍā critiqued the stagnation of Muslim societies under despotic rulers and colonial pressures, advocating for independence, self-reliance, and moral renewal.⁹² His later engagement with Wahhabi and Hanbali thought reflected a strategic alignment with movements perceived as resilient against colonial subjugation. Riḍā's intellectual legacy directly

⁹⁰ Marina Santana Martín, 'La Renovación Religiosa y El Panislamismo En Al-'Urwa al-Wuḍū'ī qā: Una Herramienta de Resistencia Ideológica y Política Frente a La Ocupación Extranjera', *Anaquel de Estudios Arabes* 36, no. 2 (2025): 199–210, <https://doi.org/10.5209/anqe.99784>.

⁹¹ Muhammad Abduh, *Risālat al-Tamhid* (Cairo: Dar al-Manar, 1897), 65–90.

⁹² Rasyid Rida, *Al-Manar: Selected Essays on Islam and Modernity* (Dar al-Manar, 2000).

influenced Hasan al-Bannā (1906–1949), founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, which framed Islam as a comprehensive system governing individual, social, and political life. Al-Banna emphasized social Islam and ethical reform, promoting civic engagement while resisting Western cultural domination, though without advocating indiscriminate violence; jihad was construed primarily as defense and moral struggle.⁹³

Beyond Egypt, reformist currents also emerged in India. Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–1898) established the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College (later Aligarh Muslim University) to enable Muslims to access Western sciences and languages while preserving Islamic ethical frameworks. His efforts reflected the belief that education was the key to revitalizing Muslim civilization in the context of Western ascendancy.⁹⁴

In the Ottoman context, reformist debates intersected with emerging nationalist and secularist agendas. Figures such as Badiuzzaman Said Nursi advocated the Islamization and integration of civic life while maintaining a conceptual distinction between religious worship (*ibādāh*) and social law (*mu'āmalah*).⁹⁵ In contrast, secularists under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk pursued an ambitious program of Westernization, including the abolition of the caliphate, the adoption of Western legal codes, the secularization

⁹³ Dietrich Jung and Ahmed El Zalaf, 'Hasan Al-Banna and the Modern Muslim Self: Subjectivity Formation and the Search for an Islamic Order in Early 20th-Century Egypt', *Numen* 66, no. 4 (2019): 381–402, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685276-12341545>.

⁹⁴ Md Yousuf Ali and Osman Bakar, 'Syed Ahmad Khan's Twin Objectives of Educational Reforms In British India: Muslim Advancement And Hindu-Muslim Unity', *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)* 26, no. 1 (2021): 49–70.

⁹⁵ N. F. Zamri et al., 'Bediuzzaman Said Nursi and His Excellence in Modern Science in the Post- Caliphate Era', *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah* December, no. I (2024): 241–53, <https://doi.org/10.7187/GJATSI122024-16>. See also at Achmad Reza Hutama Al Faruqi, 'Pemikiran Badiuzzaman Said Nursi tentang Kontribusi Sains terhadap Peradaban Islam' (Dissertation, UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah, Tulungagung, 2025), <http://repo.uinsatu.ac.id/61994/>.

of education, and the promotion of gender equality within a Westernized framework.⁹⁶ These competing trajectories illustrate the plurality of Muslim responses to modernization, ranging from strict secularization to Islamically infused modernity, as well as hybrid models that integrate modern lifestyles with enduring religious foundations.

Contemporary scholarship highlights that Islamic reformism has consistently aimed to reconcile religious authenticity with rational, scientific, and social progress, positioning Islam as adaptable, dynamic, and relevant in global socio-cultural transformations. Reformers across geographies—from Egypt to India to Indonesia (e.g., Nurcholish Madjid)—demonstrate the persistent negotiation between tradition and modernity, faith and reason, spiritual ethics and socio-political pragmatism.⁹⁷ In the Indonesian context, Nurcholish Madjid emphasized renewal without losing Islamic authenticity.⁹⁸

The encounter with Western modernity precipitated a range of reformist movements across the Muslim world, as leading intellectuals sought to reconcile Islamic principles with emerging political, educational, and scientific paradigms. These reform initiatives involved the rearticulation of religious thought in engagement with modern knowledge systems, while simultaneously addressing the challenges of colonialism, intellectual stagnation, and socio-political transformation. Consequently, this trajectory reflects an ongoing and dynamic negotiation between tradition and modernity, generating diverse responses that range from secular orientations to integrative models that sustain religious authenticity alongside contemporary advancement.

⁹⁶ Asyraf Hj et al., 'The Consequences of Ataturk's Secularization on Turkey', *Asian Social Science*; 11, no. 21 (2025): 350–54, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v11n21p350>.

⁹⁷ Romli et al., 'Azyumardi Azra on Islamic Fundamentalism and Wasathiyah: Insights into Contemporary Islamic Thought in Indonesia'.

⁹⁸ Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam, Doktrin Dan Peradaban* (Paramadina, 2000).

6. Contemporary Implications: Identity, Education, and Civilization

The ongoing interaction between Islamic civilization and Western modernity has significant implications for contemporary Muslim societies.⁹⁹ Key areas of concern include educational reform, epistemological renewal, and sociopolitical agency. Islamic theorists advocate revitalizing educational frameworks that merge traditional religious knowledge with modern sciences, aiming to cultivate a civilizational outlook that can contribute ethically and intellectually to global discourse. Studies on Islamic modernity also stress the need for engaging with modern philosophical and scientific paradigms without relinquishing the moral and spiritual foundations of Islam.¹⁰⁰

The Critical Role of Islamic Civilization in Addressing Western Cultural Supremacy

To face the challenge of Western cultural dominance, Islamic civilization became must fortify the identity of Muslims.¹⁰¹ Whatever model of movement is formed, all must have the aim of building a civilization under the teachings of Islam. If the offer from the West does not contradict Islam, then it can be taken, but if it is the other way around, it must be rejected. That is, what comes from the West is not all rejected (negative), because the world today the world is under their grasp, but the civilization that comes from them must also be filtered and selected so that the Muslim

⁹⁹ Hammi Syaafaq et al., 'Reconstructing Islamic Epistemology: Bridging Metaphysics, Reason, and Revelation', *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam* 14, no. 2 (2024): 240–69, <https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2024.14.2.240-269>.

¹⁰⁰ M. Amin Abdullah, 'Religion, Science and Culture: An Integrated, Interconnected Paradigm of Science', *Al-Jami'ab: Journal of Islamic Studies* 52, no. 1 (2014): 175–203, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2014.521.175-203>.

¹⁰¹ Abu Sadat Nurullah, 'Globalisation as a Challenge to Islamic Cultural Identity', *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences* 3, no. 6 (2008): 45–52, <https://doi.org/10.18848/1833-1882/cgp/v03i06/52625>.

community in Indonesia is not exposed to the Westernization virus. If Western civilization is fully accepted, it could result in the emergence of a modern-century ignorant society. Even though the Arabs and Western societies advanced because of Islam. For this reason, the incessant flow of Western modernization must always be fortified with strong Islamic teachings.¹⁰²

By making the West indifferent to building civilization, the Islamic community will depend on the West. At present, it can be seen how almost all Muslim countries depend on the West, so they are unable to determine their attitude when dealing with Western powers.¹⁰³ How is the conflict in Palestine evidence of the weak political power of Islamic countries, where Muslims are unable to do anything, even put each other's interests first to seek diplomatic support from the West?

Rather than being an entirely independent development, Western civilization as it is known today was significantly shaped by the transmission and transformation of knowledge from earlier Islamic intellectual traditions. Medieval Europe benefited from the translation of Arabic works in science, philosophy, and medicine, which contributed to the intellectual foundations of the European Renaissance.¹⁰⁴ Numerous ideas, inventions, and scholarly works have been appropriated without adequate attribution, raising concerns regarding intellectual integrity. It is therefore important to underscore that the advancement of Western civilization has been predominantly technological, rather than accompanied by a

¹⁰² alī Muḥī Al-Dīn Al-Qarrahdāghī, 'Islamic Jurisprudential Solutions and Renewal in Addressing the Challenges and Effects of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) in the Light of Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah: Methodology and Explanation', *Jurnal Fiqh* 18, no. 1 (2021): 1–66, <https://doi.org/10.22452/fiqh.vol18no1.1>.

¹⁰³ Potočnik and Šterbenc, 'Islam as the Nationalist Instrument of Resistance to Perceived Domination of the West'.

¹⁰⁴ George Saliba, *Islamic Science and the Making of the European Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), 1–25; Mohamed Abattouy, "The Arabic-Latin Translation Movement and the Development of Science," in *Foundations of Science in the Islamic World* (2012), 45–70.

commensurate development in the spiritual domain.

Therefore, Muslims should not experience an inferiority complex because of the pseudo-Western civilization. Moreover, many predict that Islamic civilization in the 21st century will emerge in Southeast Asia, including in Indonesia and Malaysia.¹⁰⁵ How mosques, pesantren, Islamic educational institutions, mass movements that emerged from Muslims in Indonesia, and even political enthusiasm have been colored by high religious sentiments.¹⁰⁶ So the attention of the Western world is now also focused on Indonesia and Malaysia, by providing a lot of funding to institutions that can weaken Islamic groups in Indonesia.

Historically, when Roman and Greek philosophy “died” they were unable to revive it. Then, by al-Kindi, the Islamic philosopher, ideas such as Aristotle and Plato were modified and classified.¹⁰⁷ In his studies, Plato said that god only “sits sweetly”, then changed by al-Kindi god is god *al-Khāliq* (creator). Similarly, when Aristotle said god the first, al-Kindi changed it to God *al-Ḥaq* (the truth).¹⁰⁸ There is substantial historical evidence indicating that Islamic civilization and its scientific tradition were, at certain periods, more advanced than those of Europe and the West. This advancement was grounded in a robust and enduring tradition of scholarship, in which the pursuit of knowledge constituted a central pillar of Islamic civilization.

Thus, the task of Muslims today is to build Islamic civilization, by often bringing up discourses and concepts about

¹⁰⁵ Asif Mohiuddin, ‘Islamic Revival in South Asia’, in *Handbook of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Lives*, ed. Ronald Lukens-Bull and Mark Woodward (Springer International Publishing, 2021), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-32626-5_102.

¹⁰⁶ Hammis Syafaq et al., “Santri without Pesantren” and the Sectarian Violence on Indonesian Muslim Social Media’, *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 13, no. 1 (2026), <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2025.2612046>.

¹⁰⁷ Peter Adamson, ‘Al-Kindī, Abū Yūsuf Ya’qūb Ibn Ishāq’, in *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy: Philosophy between 500 and 1500*, ed. Henrik Lagerlund (Springer Netherlands, 2020), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-024-1665-7_289.

¹⁰⁸ Adamson, ‘Al-Kindī, Abū Yūsuf Ya’qūb Ibn Ishāq’.

Islamic civilization. Don't just be diligent in taking to the streets but don't know how the concept of building civilization is. The Islamic civilization that must be built in today's modern world is an independent modern Islamic civilization, that is, a civilization that follows the culture of modern Islamic society, not pre-Islamic culture or foreign cultures that corrupt generations of Muslims.¹⁰⁹ That is, a civilization based on the text of the Qur'an and Hadith because the heyday of Islam in the time of the Prophet, when the Qur'an and Hadith were the guidelines, until now cannot be matched. That is important because the basis of a civilization is thought. Islamic thought must be derived from the Quran and Hadith.¹¹⁰

If the above mentioned that Western civilization is only in physical form, while Islamic civilization is built in physical and spiritual form, then in building modern Islamic civilization as well, must pay attention to spiritual aspects. That way, physical civilization will not damage the Muslim generation spiritually, unlike Western civilization, which has damaged the younger generation a lot.¹¹¹

Iqbal himself expressed a high appreciation for the material and intellectual achievements of Western civilization, while simultaneously warning that a civilization detached from spiritual foundations—particularly the dimension of *dzikir*—would remain fragile and unsustainable.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Abdin Chande, 'Global Politics of Knowledge Production: The Challenges of Islamization of Knowledge in The Light of Tradition Vs Secular Modernity Debate', *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (2023): 271–89, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v6i2.3502%20Global>.

¹¹⁰ Andi Muhammad Akmal, 'Studying Fiqh Based on the Quran and Hadith in the Modern Era by Revisiting the Methodology of Legal Istinbat', *Nuris Journal of Education and Islamic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2025): 151–67, <https://doi.org/10.52620/jeis.v5i2.119>.

¹¹¹ Jan Ali, 'A Pursuit of Human Wellbeing: An Islamic Perspective', in *Wellbeing in Islamic Schools: Nurturing the Mind, Body and Soul* (Springer Nature, 2025).

¹¹² Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 3–10, 142–150.

According to Iqbal, building a modern Islamic civilization must integrate physical and spiritual well-being.¹¹³ From a historical perspective, when the Prophet wanted to build the city of Medina, what he built first was a mosque. Similarly, Muslims did so during the creative and dynamic period when the Islamic world became the center of the civilized world; the first thing they did when conquering a city was to establish mosques and schools.¹¹⁴

These two buildings symbolize how deeply the early generation has thought about the abstract world, embodied in concrete buildings: the mosque symbolizes *dżiker*, while the school symbolizes *al-fiker* activity. Not a single person in the course of human history has so clearly formulated its existence on the surface of the earth. *Dżiker* and *fiker* are two solid pillars of civilization.¹¹⁵

Conclusion

The encounter between Islamic civilization and Western modernity presents both crisis and opportunity. Historically, Islamic civilization flourished when governance, scholarship, and spirituality were harmoniously integrated. The current stagnation, therefore, does not stem from Islam itself, but from processes of *epistemic discontinuity*—a disconnection from its own intellectual traditions—and *epistemic dependency*, reflected in the uncritical reliance on external epistemological frameworks.

To navigate these challenges, it is essential to revitalize Islamic civilization as a framework for building modern societies that are both ethically grounded and intellectually robust. This involves: Selective engagement with Western influences – adopting what

¹¹³ Shadab Ali Khan, 'Beyond Reason: Iqbal's Interplay Between Intellect and Love in the Search for Truth', *Kanaz Philosophia: A Journal for Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism* 11, no. 2 (2025): 361–82.

¹¹⁴ Muhammad Atif et al., 'Behavioural Revival of the Arabs through Psychological Method of "Shaping": A Discourse Analysis', *Islamic Thought and Civilization* 11, no. 2 (2021): 263.

¹¹⁵ Khozin and Umiarso, 'The Philosophy and Methodology of Islam-Science Integration: Unravelling the Transformation of Indonesian Islamic Higher Institutions', *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 23, no. 1 (2019): 156.

- Adamson, Peter. 'Al-Kindi, Abu Yusuf Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq'. In *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy: Philosophy between 500 and 1500*, edited by Henrik Lagerlund. Springer Netherlands, 2020. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-024-1665-7_289.
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- Ahmad, Khalil, and Fareed Malik. 'Hijrah and Its Application in Classical and Contemporary Muslim Contexts'. *Hamdard Islamicus* 45, no. 4 (2022): 97–117. <https://doi.org/10.57144/hi.v45i4.640>.
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- Ali, Mohamad, Fadhlina Alias, Hendun Abd, et al. 'The Conceptual Nexus between Islamic Foresight, Islamic Thought and the Shariah'. *Malaysian Journal of Syariah and Law* 12, no. 1 (2024): 62–76. <https://doi.org/10.33102/mjssl.vol12no1.524>.

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