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**CROSSING THE BORDER BETWEEN RELIGION AND
CIVILIZATION: TRENDS AND CASES IN THE STUDY OF
ISLAMIC AND WESTERN CIVILIZATIONS**

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I declare that all information contained in this work is collected and presented in accordance with the academic rules and ethics, and that all information and documents that are not original in the study are referred to in accordance with the standards of quotation.

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ABSTRACT

CROSSING THE BORDER BETWEEN RELIGION AND CIVILIZATION: TRENDS AND CASES IN THE STUDY OF ISLAMIC AND WESTERN CIVILIZATIONS

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What may account for the nature of relation between “religion” and “civilization” and how this is reflected in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations? Standing on the shoulders of formative figures in the field of “Civilization Studies”, I studied how, on the one hand, religion and civilization are positioned among the various theories of civilization, and on the other hand, how this debate is particularly framed in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations. Apart from generally reviewing literatures in the field, the study closely examined the works of Ibn Khaldun, Toynbee, Hodgson, Spengler, Guizot, Jaspers, Comte, Halim Paşa, Al-Faruqi, and Karakoç. This review of theories revealed there were three major trends subsuming typical characteristics, especially in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations. These were Historic-empirical, Religiophilosophical, and Multiplex. These trends differ from one another based on the methods or approaches adopted; the preponderances of certain themes or contents; and their particular focus in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations. Of these trends, it was only in the study of Islamic civilization all the three trends were present. Except the Multiplex trend, the remaining trends generally dominate the study of Western civilization. This absence of Multiplexity could be attributed to the tendency that theories under this trend theorized about civilization, particularly Islamic civilization, without necessarily being confined to the traditional disciplinary confinements, which is rather common in the study of Western civilization. The study concludes although the nature of relation between religion and civilization tend to show divergence in the study of these civilizations, religion remains as an indispensable element.

Keywords: Civilization Studies; Historic-empirical; Islamic civilization; Multiplexity; Religiophilosophical; Trends; Western civilization.

ÖZ

DİN VE MEDENİYET ARASINDAKİ SINIRIN AŞILMASI: İSLAM VE BATI MEDENİYETİ ÇALIŞMALARINDA AKIMLAR VE ÖRNEKLER

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Din ve medeniyet arasında nasıl bir ilişki vardır ve bu ilişkiye İslam ve Batı Medeniyeti çalışmalarında nasıl yer verilmiştir? Bu çalışma medeniyet ve din arasındaki ilişkinin çeşitli medeniyet teorilerinde ne şekilde ele alındığı ve analiz edildiğini incelemektedir. Öte yandan çalışma özel olarak medeniyet ve din arasındaki ilişkinin İslam ve Batı medeniyetlerinde yapılmış akademik çalışmalarda ne şekilde ele alındığını ortaya koymaktadır. Çalışma kapsamında İbn Haldun, Toynbee, Hodgson, Spengler, Guizot, Jaspers, Comte, Halim Paşa, El-Faruk, ve Karakoç'un eserleri yakından incelenmiştir. İslam ve Batı medeniyetlerine odaklanan bu yazarların yaklaşımlarında medeniyetin tipik özellikleri bahsinde üç ana eğilim olduğu görülmektedir: i. Tarihi-ampirik eğilim (“historic-empirical”), ii. Dini-felsefi eğilim (“religiophilosophical”), iii. Çok katmanlı eğilim (“multiplex”). Bu eğilimler benimsenen yöntem ve yaklaşımlar, temalar ve içerikler ve odak konusu bakımından birbirinden farklılıklar arz eder. İlk iki eğilimin özellikle batılı düşünürlerce yapılan çalışmalarda etkili olduğu görülmektedir. Çok katmanlı eğilim ise bu çalışmalarda nadiren karşımıza çıkmaktadır. İncelenmiş olan çalışmaların ekseriyetle geleneksel disiplinler sınırları içinde kaldıkları, bunun ötesine geçen multi-disipliner imkanlardan yeterince istifade edemedikleri görülmüştür. Sonuç olarak bu araştırmada İslam ve Batı medeniyetinden yazarların çalışmalarında niteliksel farklılıklar olmasına rağmen dinin medeniyet çalışmalarının vazgeçilmez unsuru olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Batı Medeniyeti; Çok Katmanlılık; Dini-felsefi Eğilim; İslam Medeniyeti; Medeniyet Çalışmaları; Tarihi-ampirik Eğilim.

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SECTION ONE

RESEARCH PROBLEM, METHODOLOGY, AND OVERVIEW OF CIVILIZATION STUDIES

The following two chapters of this section provide two major aspects of the present research. The first chapter specifically outlines the background, problem statement, objective, methodology, significance, scope, and limitation of the study. The second chapter, on the other hand, provides a general review of social science literatures that examine closely the different aspects of the link between “religion” and “civilization”. This will be extended further into trends and specific theories in the subsequent sections.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

A systematic study of civilization(s) as a particular field of social science is a recent phenomenon. Notwithstanding this, thinkers and philosophers have long been writing and theorizing, in one way or another, about the nature and future of civilization(s). From the fourteenth century polymath Ibn Khaldun, the eighteenth century Mireabu and J. J. Rousseau, the nineteenth century F. Guizot, A. Comte, and E. B. Tylor, the twentieth century Ottoman thinker Said Halim Paşa, A. Toynbee, M. G. Hodgson, and other western and non-western thinkers, were all, in some fundamental ways, engaged in the very idea of civilization(s), particularly, its genesis, growth, decline, crisis, and revival.

The growing interest in civilization studies in the subsequent periods brought with it a wide array of theoretical formulations, models, approaches, and perspectives. This is precisely reflected in the very concept of civilization and related other categories, such as Islamic civilization, Western civilization, Chinese civilization, and so forth. However, this is accompanied by minor-to-significant differences or divergence among these theories. In other words, the emerging civilization studies have largely been characterized by unresolved conflicts and differences beginning from the purely conceptual “civilization” to the historical and empirical “civilizations”.

Of the many ways in which this can be explained is the traditional disciplinary knowledge formation and reproduction of ideas in the social sciences, within which the general thought processing takes place. Thinking and writing, or more generally, civilization-related knowledge production, tends to reflect disciplinary orientation and

other pre-commitments. Many of the theories engaging civilization, pure or empirical, explicitly (or sometimes tacitly) endorse and display certain features, some disciplinary (such as history, philosophy, anthropology, psychology, or sociology), some methodological (such as empirical, historical, ideas, experiences, institutional), some personal precommitment (faith, philosophy, spirituality, religion), and others.

It is axiomatic that writing under the influence, or a sort of intellectual or academic pre-commitments, of philosophical, religious, historical or empirical conditions, or realities fundamentally shape and alter how civilization is conceived and subsequent empirical civilizations are formulated. Accordingly, the divergence of theoretical perspectives in the study of civilizations (especially in the context of Islamic and Western civilizations) can be accounted by detecting patterns that can be traced back to the ontological, epistemological, and methodological pre-commitments of the social scientists. This, being one of the core objectives of the present research, will be dealt in a fairly detailed manner in the proceeding sections.

The multiplicity and diversity of perspectives in civilization studies are not only confined to the general idea of “civilization” but also reflected in the discursive formation and proliferation of multiple ‘actual’ civilizations. In the very idea of, for instance, Islamic or Chinese civilization, the formulation and internal synthesis implied or expressed therein, implicitly or overtly presupposes, on the one hand, the social scientists’ ontological, epistemological or methodological presuppositions, pre-commitments and nuanced positions, and the peoples’ or culture’s ontological *Weltanschauung* about whom the researcher writes, on the other. Even though in this research I am not interested in the mutual antagonism or borderless continuity between what anthropologists call the “Etic” and “Emic” perspectives concerning the very idea of civilization (s), various conceptions and formulations of civilization, as in Islamic and western civilizations, necessarily project, so I argue, the *weltanschauung* (s) of the social scientists in their quest for understanding. Even more, it becomes more manifest and evident as one specifically examines theories which conventionally subsumed under, for instance, Islamic or Western civilization.

As the proceeding sections make it more clear, the various theories of what came to be called Islamic or western civilization do not necessarily entail common methodological, epistemological, or ontological vantage points, or more generally, a common *Weltanschauung*, both in terms of *modus operandi* and *raison d'être*. This, in short, is what lies behind the present research interest and pursuit. To this end and so for the sake of focused engagement, I will specifically examine the nature of the relationship between religion and civilization in the very ideas (and conceptions) of Islamic and western civilizations. In an effort to show the methodological as well as other pre-commitments of the theories (and thus the theorists), I will attempt to classify and determine some of the theories under major trends and within which an in depth comparative discussions of individual theories will follow.

1.2. Problem Statement

The study of world civilizations has always been approached from various perspectives. Of these perspectives, the majority involve, in one way or another, the idea of some form of religion. Among those widely studied world civilizations, Islamic and Western civilizations can present relevant instances. In this regard, there are many researches specifically engaging Islamic and Western civilizations from different perspectives. However, given my review of pertinent literature in “civilization studies”, studies examining the nature, extent, and circumstances of religion playing any role in the making (and conception) of civilization, especially in the context of Islamic and Western civilizations, are relatively inadequate and remains understudied. In the absence of an in depth investigation into this problem, therefore, the present research aims to tackle, and thus, contribute through examining the nature and form of relations implied or expressed between religion and civilization both in the very conceptions of Islamic and Western civilizations.

A general glimpse at literature produced in the area of Islamic and Western civilizations reveal debates, often contradictory, in framing and assigning the role of religion in their respective conceptions of civilization. To begin with Islamic civilization, there seems to be no fundamental disagreement as to whether Islam as a religion constitutes a *crucial* element or not in the formation of Islamic civilization (See, for instance, Toynbee, 1946; Hodgson, 1974; Bennabi, 1992; Nadwi, 2005; Karakoç, 2005; Qutb, 2006; Allawi, 2009; Faruqi, 2013; Paşa, 2015).

One may, however, consider the works of Ziya Gökalp, Abdullah Cevdet, and Alija Ali Izetbegovic and argue for the absence of the proper “Islamic” civilization. Even though less of a trend to command a place here in this study or elsewhere in the overall study of Islamic civilization, I think, by way of summary, worth highlighting. Of the above three, the first two do not consider Islamic civilization as a civilization having anything to do with religion. In fact, one of them, Gökalp, went so far as to argue that there cannot be a civilization based on religion, and as such, the formulation of ‘Islamic civilization’ is a

misnomer and nonexistent (Berkes, 1959, p.272). Being an acclaimed atheist also, Cevdet had denied the presence of Islamic civilization and made it clear that: “There is no second civilization; civilization means European civilization” (Lewis, 1961, p.23).

As for Alija Ali Izetbegovic, although he wrote about civilization, giving it an extended focus in his well-received book, *“Islam between East and West”* (1986), [esp. see pp. 48-108.], he never makes mention of Islamic civilization or anything close to it. Although it could be argued that he took a sort of strategic-nuanced position for the religion-and-civilization debate, it is nevertheless evidently clear that he finds all the evils that destroy human collective existence in the world in the very idea of civilization, much like J.J. Rousseau in his ‘Discourse’ (1992). On the whole, however, one can easily discover some degree of agnosticism and indifference in his attitude towards civilization. To this, his point that “civilization is neither good nor bad in itself”, is a rather good instance to bear in mind (1986, p.45).

In spite of these thinkers, although the overall scholarship renders a significant role to religion or Islam in the making of Islamic civilization, it is far from assuming any consensus. This is especially the case when one inquires into the nature and form of relations implied or expressed between “religion” and “civilization” in what came to be called Islamic civilization. One way of showing this subjectivity would be to examine how these studies conceive of their versions of civilization when they construct and define “Islamic civilization”.

A close scrutiny of some of these studies generally unveils at least three major trends in conceptualizing civilization: the first is more of historically-and-empirically oriented approach; the second draws primarily from philosophy and religious scriptures and sources; and finally, the last one generally involves the mixture of these or other elements and I called this a multiplex approach. However, it should be noted that this classification does not pretend to be strictly mutually exclusive, nor does it is exhaustive. But, again, this classification can still help us gauge, at least at the macro level, the overall trend in approaching the idea of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular. Furthermore, this can present the opportunity to see ontological, epistemological, and methodological pre-commitments of the researchers in approaching

Islamic civilization. Depending on the nature of the trend (or in specific terms, the approach pursued), one can easily unlock the nature and form of relations implied or expressed between religion and civilization in the very idea of Islamic civilization. Accordingly, to effectively deal with the present research problem, I will now move on to briefly introduce, and thus, demarcate these trends and approaches.

I define the first trend (when used in a limited-methodological sense as an approach) as that which principally draws from the historically-and-empirically charged approach to the study of Islamic civilization¹. Among other things, studies or theories in this trend emphasize interpreting and explaining issues and factors embedded, for the most part, in particular time and space (spatiotemporal confinement). Due to this, studies in this trend may argue that Islam, starting in the seventh century, gave an ideological impetus and identity to what came to be called Islamic civilization. However, they assign significant roles to what may be called “time and space embedded factors”². This, in other words, means that Islam only assumes a symbolic role in the making of its civilization. Islam might have triggered the genesis of Islamic civilization through its “ideals” and gave it some “identity”; however, the civilization implied therein is not fundamentally its own. Rather, it is seen as one among others with many things having precedence in time and space. In this sense, Islamic civilization is seen as part of a greater cultural process subsuming interactions, exchanges, and continuities. However, in light of some of its own certain peculiar characteristics which it developed through time, the origin and genesis of Islamic civilization are dated back to the seventh century in the Arabian desert, and as such, there was not an Islamic civilization before. It would be worth noting that Islam’s assertion for its origin in the first prophet Adem is appraised as a claim short of empirical evidence (as I will be dealing with this in detail later, many theories (such as Toynbee and Hodgson) that generally fall under the historic-empirical trend tend to take evolution as a given fact or axiomatic). To specifically showcase this

¹ Here it would be worth noting that the historically-and-empirically charged approach or trend in the study of Islamic civilization does not necessarily function in a philosophical vacuum; rather, a great deal of emphasis is rendered to factors corresponding to a particular time and place.

² In this regard, a greater degree of historicism, positivism, and cultural relativism are recurrent tendencies to look after among historians, sociologists, anthropologists, religious studies, philosophers, and more generally, among students of “Civilization Studies”. I will, however, have more to say in the upcoming sections.

trend, the present study closely investigates the works of Marshal G. Hodgson and Arnold J. Toynbee.

The second trend equally, or in some proportion, employs philosophical and religious approaches to Islamic civilization. Emphasizing concepts and ideas having their roots in philosophy and/or religious scriptures, studies in this trend underscore the revolutionary nature of Islam as a religion, dated either from the last prophet Muhammad (pbuh) or from the creation of Adem. It is clear from this, however, that the temporal genesis of Islamic civilization either from the advent of the last prophet or from the creation of Adem fundamentally alters their conceptions of Islamic civilization. For instance, if Islamic civilization is to be traced back to the creation of Adam, then questions arise as to whether there exists a world civilization or civilizations, multiple or unitary civilizations. And if there is one, then how about others, including western, Indian, Chinese and other civilizations. Thinkers like Sezai Karakoç, operating even under Islamic civilization, have an all-inclusive mechanism of framing both the unitary and multiple civilizations models³. Despite this concern, under this religiophilosophical trend, the determinative and precedence of Islam as a religion serves as a necessary fertile ground for the genesis and development of Islamic civilization.

Similarly, those studies which emphasize Islam during-and-after Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) spell out the role of Islam in facilitating a conducive environment for the development of science, philosophy, art, economic and political power and, ultimately, the development of an Islamic society and civilization. In addition to these, studies in this trend can employ other important concepts and ideas in their conceptions of Islamic civilization. Some of these include the idea of “the vicegerency of man on earth”, “human consciousness”, “freedom,” and others. In either of these two contexts, the works of Sezai Karakoç, Sayid Qutb, and Ismail Raji al Faruqi can arguably present relevant instances.

The last trend generally encompasses studies with a wide array of philosophical, historical, and religious orientations and hence multiplex trend. These studies adopted, in one way or another, the interplay of religious views, empirical evidence, and

³ I will provide a more detailed account in the upcoming sections.

philosophical ideas in their conceptions of Islamic civilization. Accordingly, different real life-empirical realities, political movements, institutions, and policies are posited along side with religious and philosophical ideas. Here, the works of Ibn Khaldun and the Ottoman thinker Said Halim Paşa can serve as relevant starting points.

When it comes to Western civilization, the relationship implied or expressed between religion and civilization is highly variegated and multiple. Considering their close proximity to-and-distance from religion, studies into western civilization can be broadly divided into three major categories, two of which are relatively more dominant than the third. The first category involves theories which underscore the relative importance of religion, Christianity in particular, in their study of Western civilization. Examples included the works of, for instance, Guizot (1887), Hegel (1895), Toynbee (1946), Schweitzer (1947), Vico (1948), Jaspers (1953), Voegelin (1999), Hughes (2003), and Mirabeau (2004).

The second category encompasses theories or studies, which envision opposite direction between religion and civilization or emphasize the relative independence of civilization in what came to be called Western civilization. This category can be further divided into two clusters of thinkers. The first cluster sees religion as a necessarily opposite other to civilization. Examples include the works of August Comte (1896), Oswald Spengler (1918), Edward B. Tylor (1881), Jean J. Rousseau (1992), Bertrand Russell (1999) and others. The latter cluster involves theories, which represent a much less common academic trend in the conception of Western civilization. Here, Western civilization is approached mainly without the necessary and specific reference to religion. In this regard, the works of Norbert Elias (2000) and Peter Katzenstine (2011) present relevant instances.

Theories about Western civilization, much like the theories of Islamic civilization, follow some fundamental trends. The first is a trend that adopts more of a historical-and-empirical approach to the study and conception of Western civilization. Examples include the works of Oswald Spengler, August Comte, Edward B. Tylor, Buckle, Burckhardt, and others. The second trend tends to rely more on philosophy and religious based foundations in their conceptions of Western civilization. The writings of Hegel,

Toynbee, Jaspers, Vico, Mireabu, Schweitzer, Voegelin, and others present relevant instances⁴.

In light of these divergences, due primarily to ontological, epistemological, and methodological pre-commitments of various theories and studies, in conceiving both Islamic and Western civilizations, the nature and form of relation implied or expressed between religion and civilization remained highly diverse and multiple. However, there are some common trends, at certain fundamental levels, as indicated in the aforementioned lines and the following sections fully explore. Firstly, therefore, through thematically developing these trends, the present pursuit closely investigates how the nature and form of relation between religion and civilization are implied or expressed in what came to be called Islamic and Western civilizations. To this end, therefore, the proceeding sections draw cases from these trends and comparatively studies how religion and civilization are systematically synthesized in the context of Islamic and Western civilizations.

In an attempt to frame this research pursuit, the following three major questions should play some important roles: How did studies engaging Islamic and Western civilizations conceptualized civilization in general and Islamic and Western civilization, in particular? Which aspect of religion is or are implied or expressed in what came to be called Islamic and Western civilizations? What is the implied or expressed relation between religion and civilization in their conceptions of Islamic and Western civilizations? To this end, while chapter two presents a more detailed discussion of some of the points mentioned earlier, in chapter three and four, I specifically deal with cases-individual theories of Islamic and Western civilizations under the three trends. The analysis follows the above questions. Simply put, firstly, I try to figure out how each thinker defined civilization in general; secondly, how each demarcated their own respective civilizations (Islamic or Western civilization); and finally, I conclude with how each dealt the relation between religion and civilization in the context of these two civilizations.

⁴ Chapter two provides more detailed accounts explaining why they should be examined as such. The same will be done to theories of Islamic civilization as well.

1.3. Research Goal and Objectives

1.3.1. Goal

- The general purpose of this research is to explore and comparatively analyze the relation between religion and civilization in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations. It aims to accomplish this through developing thematic trends, and under this, a closer appraisal of case studies or theories.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- To explore and classify major trends generally characterizing civilization studies, particularly in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations.
- To assess how these trends generally define the nature of relation between religion and civilization
- To determine the most dominant forms of relation between religion and civilization in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations
- To explore epistemological and methodological factors in the very conceptions of Islamic and Western civilizations.
- To comparatively examine cases in an attempt to show the nature of relations between religion and civilization both in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations.
- To shade some light on possible areas where additional, future research might be required.

1.4. Research Methodology

The present study principally brings together sociological, anthropological, philosophical, and historical works to tackle the major research question of this study: the nature and form of relation between religion and civilization in general and how this relation is reflected in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations, in particular. To this end, this research encompasses and follows the upcoming three major procedures.

1.4.1. Research Procedures

Firstly, specifically focusing on academic works addressing the relationship between religion and civilization, I will show the overall trend (s) in the study of the two. To this end, my review of literature primarily engages studies of civilization-relevant ones. Again, of the many theories of civilization and civilizations in the wider academic knowledge production, my review is concise in essence that it will only deal with Islamic and Western civilizations, both as a matter of research delimitation and for a balanced in-depth pursuit of the goal of this research. Before moving on to the second procedure, it would be worth providing a working operational definition for what I will be dealing under “trends” in this study. Unless stated otherwise, by trend, I am referring to *a shared scholarly tendency, overt or covert, transcending spatiotemporal contours and disciplinary compartments in accounting for the nature and form of relations, implied or expressed, between religion and civilization both in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations.*

The *second procedure* involves thematically analyzing the aforementioned literature for possible trends that can potentially serve as analytical categories in the relation between religion and civilization in the study of both in Islamic and Western civilizations. As the ‘problem statement’ section briefly outlined, and certainly, a more robust account will also be given later in chapter two, there are some trends, at least in some crude forms, that can provide working analytical categories and trends. For the sake of convenience, I

will begin with trends in the study of Islamic civilization, and after that, it will be followed by trends in the context of Western civilization.

The first general trend in the study of Islamic civilization draws from-and-relays heavily on historically-and-empirically charged approach⁵. Studies with a great dose of this orientation are to be found abundantly⁶. However, the present study, especially in the third chapter, closely analyzes the works of Arnold J. Toynbee (1889-1975) and Marshall G. Hodgson (1922-1968). The inclusion of these historians is not only due to a tendency they, to a larger extent, share under this trend, but also the significance of their role and contribution to the study of world civilizations in general and Islamic civilization, in particular.

Toynbee, an important figure among world historians and students of civilization (s), is particularly known for his twelve volumes of *A Study of History*. Being one of the forerunners in the study of civilizations in the twentieth century, he continues, through his vast and penetrating writings, as an important source of inspiration for much of the contemporary civilization centered discourses in the academia. Perhaps one of the reasons why Toynbee's insights are being recycled to these days could be due to his emphasis on the relation between religion and civilization⁷. In fact, among other civilizations, he closely explored the relative importance of Christianity in the making of Western civilization; and Islam and its proximity to Islamic civilization (although he was limited to Arabic and Iranic civilizations, instead of Islamic civilization which he rarely employed).

Apart from this, Toynbee's critical appraisal of both Islamic and Western civilizations provides, among other things, an opportunity to comparatively explore aspects of Islam in the making of Islamic civilization and of the Christian religious tradition in Western civilization. At macro level also, I argue that there is a dialogue between those who are

⁵ See the "Problem Statement" section for a brief detail.

⁶ See the next chapter for a more detailed presentation of more academic works falling under this trend.

⁷ There are some posthumous scholarships involving Toynbee which point to this direction (See, for instance, Pearson (2008). Other much earlier works like John Wendon (1956) share similar tendencies.

Muslims and studying western civilization and those who are non-Muslims (like Toynbee with a Christian background) studying Islamic civilization. This is a dialogue of different actors and the phenomena of civilizations through which each actor defines, in some distinctive ways, the “other” civilization with own unique ontological, epistemological, methodological universe, and in the process, one can easily discern the underlying assumptions, biases, and precommitments.

Hodgson’s inclusion in this research is owing to two major considerations. For one thing, his well-received three volumes on *The Venture of Islam* present a paradigm shift in the study of Islamic civilization. By adopting more of a humanist approach to Islamic civilization, he contributed a new insight into the study of Islam and the civilization associated with it. In doing so, he uncovered and challenged the often taken for granted Orientalists’ misleading tendencies-epistemic categories and methodologies-in approaching Islam in general and Islamic civilization, in particular, while criticizing them from root-to-branch.

Secondly, a close investigation of his writings reveals a more down to earth and detailed assessment of how religion, for instance, Islam, and civilization is organically linked to form what he styled as “Islamicate” civilization. In other words, Hodgson’s study of Islamic civilization provides a relatively explicit and better-equipped theoretical formulation in accounting for the relation between religion and civilization, especially between Islam and civilization. Moreover, the study will explore the idea (s) behind Hodgson’s “Islamicate” civilization that made it different, in some ways, from the conventional Islamic civilization. Does Hodgson’s “Islamicate-ness” represent a significant shift in the relative proportionality between religion and civilization in the making of Islamic (ate) civilization? If it does, how and why? Here too, like Toynbee, the present research examines if Hodgson’s Quaker-Christian being affected his conception of “Islamicate” civilization and the nature and form of relation, implied or expressed, between religion and civilization therein.

The second trend employs philosophical and religious approaches to study of Islamic civilization. Emphasizing concepts and ideas having their roots in philosophy and/or religious scriptures, studies in this trend underscore the revolutionary nature of Islam as a religion, dated either from the last prophet Muhammad (pbuh) or from the creation of Adem⁸. In either case, Muslim scholars' works, almost all of the writings (about civilization) I came across with while preparing for this research, embrace this general tendency in their conception of Islamic civilization⁹. Here in this trend, Islam is not conceived of as a passive receptor of an independent civilization, *sui generes*; rather, it is portrayed as *the mother that gave birth* to its own civilization, otherwise known as Islamic civilization. Accordingly, this trend generally assumes a great deal of religious-determinism in attempt to account for Islamic civilization and it represents the norm, not the exception-there are many Muslim thinkers that would fall into this trend. However, by emphasizing the works of Sezai Karakoç and Ismail Raji al Faruqi and closely aligned thinkers such as Sayid Qutb, the present research attempts to figure out the nature and form of relation between religion and civilization in the context of Islamic civilization.

The focus on Karakoç and Faruqi is due to their reliance on the combination of religious and philosophical approaches to civilization studies in general and Islamic civilization, in particular. The selection of Karakoç is primarily because of his portrayal of Islamic civilization as essentially a "Qur'anic" civilization. In another place, he calls Islamic civilization a civilization of revelation, "vahiye medeniyeti". In these two contexts, one can simply observe the degree of religious-Islamic preponderance in dictating civilization, in our case, Islamic civilization, in his decision to use the above appellation. Similarly, the inclusion of Al-Faruqi is also due to his insistence on Tawhid, religious idea of monotheism behind Islamic civilization. He argues that if it had not been for the monotheism propagated by subsequent Muslim prophets, especially the last prophet Muhammed, Islamic civilization would have been impossible and non-existent. In both

⁸ Also see the "Problem Statement" section.

⁹ Please see the next chapter for a more detailed presentation of additional academic works, written by Muslim scholars, falling under this category.

cases-Faruqi and Karakoç, prophets are conceived of as “torch bearers” of Islamic civilization.

The last trend involves studies with a relatively flexible amalgamation of ideas, methods, and concepts originating in philosophy, history, and religious sources. These studies adopted, in one way or another, the interplay of religious views, empirical evidence, and philosophical ideas in their conceptions of Islamic civilization. Of works considered to fall under this trend, the present closely examines the works of Ibn Khaldun and Said Halim Paşa. Although these individuals may appear quite strange due to different existence in time and space, they do present relevant opportunities. One among others is the difference itself. For instance, Ibn Khaldun, being one of the key individuals in the social sciences in general and civilizations studies, in particular, can help us reconstruct the nature of Islamic scholarship concerning civilization-religion discourse, in some ways, among Muslim intellectuals in the fourteenth and much earlier centuries. Furthermore, contrary to some recent portrayals of Ibn Khaldun’s thought as typically Aristotelian and Machiavellian-realist, I would argue for the need for a different reading of Ibn Khaldun’s thoughts.

The present study, contrary to the reductionist tendency of downplaying Ibn Khaldun’s conception of civilization to a merely bio-psychological phenomenon called *Assabiyyah*, will provide a relatively new insight in reclaiming the thoughts’ of Ibn Khaldun. Of which, I argue that Ibn Khaldun’s idea of civilization cannot be simply unlocked by stringing bits of evidence scattered around in his *Muqadimah* and surgically removing them from their contexts. Accordingly, by pointing toward at least to two faces of the Khaldunian conception of civilization, I attempt to show that religion is a necessary integral ingredient of Khaldunian imagination of civilization. And to this end, I argue that this is possible only on the condition that Khaldun’s reading of empirically and historical realities are complementarily tailored along with his own admittance to and acceptance of the divine in the making of civilization (s).

While Ibn Khaldun highlights the rise and fall of dynasties, especially with a particular emphasis on Omayyad and Abbasid dynasties, in Islamic civilization, Said Halim Paşa, an Ottoman Islamist and philosopher, continues with accounting how Islamic civilization went through crisis under the Ottoman Empire in its last vanishing century. Thus, an attempt will be made to single out how religion-civilization discourse is understood and contextualized in the thoughts of Halim Paşa during the times of the Ottoman Empire, and this constitutes the principal locus of my forthcoming discussion.

When it comes to Western civilization, the present research limits its scope to the first two major trends (historic-empirical and religiophilosophical trends). Unlike the first two trends, I found the last (multiplex) to be much less of a trend due to the scanty nature of scholarship and, by contrast, the other two presenting well-developed theoretical trends. The first trend in the context of the study of western civilization is that which adopts more of a strictly historical-and-empirical approach to the study and conception of western civilization. Studies that can be considered to fall under this trend include the works of Sigmund Freud, James Frazer, Oswald Spengler, Edward B. Tylor, and August Comte. These thinkers, unlike many others in the social sciences in general and history, anthropology, and sociology, in particular, are known for assuming an “inverse” form of relationship between religion and civilization.

In the historic-empirical trend of Western civilization, religion and civilization are presented as direct opposites. Of these thinkers, one went so far as to claim that the “essence of every civilization is irreligion” (Spengler, 1918). Freud and Comte believed that what the future holds for human society is science and, as such, religion will have to give way to material civilization and natural philosophy (Comte, 1896; Freud, 1962). Due to this, Comte is known for his positivism in the social sciences. As representative figures of this trend, in the disciplines of history and sociology, the present study, therefore, closely examines the works of Spengler and Comte.

The other dominant trend in the study of Western civilization relays more on the creative synthesis of philosophy and religious sources and approaches to the conception of

western civilization. Here, without the necessary and specific reference to religious institutions and institutions (religion, Christianity, the Christian church, spirituality, consciousness, Providence, and God) the conception of civilization in general and Western civilization, in particular, is considered inadequate. To show case this, I will explore the works of a historian, Guizot, and of a philosopher, Karl Jaspers.

For Guizot, Western civilization in general and European civilization, in particular, is the product of what he called “social progress” (“outward”) and the “individual” (“inward”) progress. According to him, Christianity (and Christian Church) is one of the three-and-the most dominant formative elements of European civilization. Jaspers, on the other hand, a Christian philosopher is known for his “Axial Period” concept-and-thesis. This Period represents a transformative moment in the history of humankind, and at the core of which lays consciousness, spirituality, and more generally, religion (not necessarily confined to institutional religions). This is despite Jasper’s explicitly claimed preference for an *empirical* approach to civilization studies. In other words, as I will argue in the section allotted for it, Jasper’s allegiance to empirical orientation is not more than a symbolic allegiance. He, I argue, rather defends the revolutionary nature of the advent and influences of the great personalities of human history, which primarily included prophets and philosophers with lasting influences and legacies in the area of religion, spirituality, and human consciousness. According to him, most of the key personalities in the history of humankind appeared in the years between 200 and 800 BC, which gave the basic and fundamental shape to the world and world civilizations. However, contrary to his claim for empirically engaging the Axial Period, he failed to do so. In fact, he admitted that the events of the Axial couldnot be explained; instead, it was “miraculous”, “mysterious”, and “enigmatic”.

In order to focus, and consequently, provide an in depth treatment of the subject, scope wise, I will follow two levels of analysis, constituting the *third procedure*. First, in an effort to responding the major research questions of this research, a more general meta-level analysis will be employed. In other words, a literature review of directly relevant theories of religion and civilization will be provided and this will be used to establish the

overall trend in the relation between religion and civilization both in the context of Islamic and Western civilizations. Second, after having done away with the overall trend in the relation between religion and civilization, an in depth investigation of some of the representative cases mentioned above will follow. In addition to comparatively analyzing the theories, the present study will utilize thematic and content analysis to examine various theories and further discussions throughout the study.



1.5. Scope and Limitations of the Study

The present study is a comparative, case oriented and theoretical in nature. In order to compare important elements in a given study, it is obvious that the subject matter of the study needs to be focused and defined to a certain manageable extent and size. Likewise, although a significant proportion of space will be allotted to discussing general trends in the relation between religion and civilization in the context of Islamic and Western civilizations, a minimum of two purposefully selected case studies, under each thematic trend, will be the cornerstones of this study. Accordingly, as a case study, this research is scope wise delimited in two dimensions: firstly, in the number of cases employed; and secondly, in examining Islamic and Western civilizations as typical examples in the study.

Secondly, it should be admitted that the number of cases employed under the trends in the study may not necessarily represent the trend in the perfect sense of the world. However, being only an approximation, it is hoped that future studies will, on the one hand, widen and develop the trends, and increase the number of cases to be examined under a specific trend, on the other. Put differently, due to time and the generally accepted academic norm for detailed assessment of (a) well-defined dimension (s), extended engagements with the present research problem need to be left for other researchers, through drawing cases, developing trends or otherwise, to delve in and strike the balance.

Lastly, and perhaps more importantly, this study does not necessarily go for finding any panacea for the subjectivities surrounding the idea and meaning of “Religion” and “Civilization”. This is particularly the case for the first two chapters of this dissertation. Here, especially in the first two chapters of the dissertation, the prime concern is how the conceptual categories of “religion” and “civilization”, without necessarily falling to the intricacies and subjectivities behind, are related and configured in the writings of some of the social scientists explored. Chapters following the second chapter will, however,

closely analyze and critically reflect on how the individual cases selected conceive the idea and meanings of both religion and civilization in their respective-specific works.



1.6. Significance of the Study

The present study, by closely examining the relationship between “religion” and “civilization” both in the conceptions of Islamic and Western civilizations, aims to serve two fundamental purposes. The first and most important contribution of the present engagement is closely related to the study of civilization(s) as a discipline itself. By taking “religion” and “civilization” as relevant epistemic categories, the present study attempts to show that in the study of civilization, whether a given civilization or across civilizations, there are multiple theoretical nuanced positions, methodological preferences, and academic pre-commitments. Due to these subjective orientations in the study of civilization (s), there is not a single acceptable model of studying a civilization (s) and this applies to a single civilization (e.g., Islamic Civilization) or multiple civilizations (Islamic, Western, Chinese, Indian, Abyssinian, Egyptian, etc). Being cautious of these subjectivities at different layers of the study of civilization, programs (education curriculums addressing civilizations studies, particularly those pertaining to theoretical, methodological or otherwise), must be designed to reflect these currents (or trends, as it is used in this research). This way, any study program of civilization(s) can reasonably assume multiplicity, inclusiveness, and sagacity. For instance, the study of Islamic civilization can be approached from two perspectives, Emic and Etic perspectives¹⁰.

The first one entails studying Islamic civilization by those methods and theories developed by the Emic (i.e., the people themselves, Muslim thinkers, and their theories). This, again, can involve those three relevant but emerging trends and approaches. These involve religiophilosophical, historic-empirical, and multiplex approaches to the study of Islamic civilization. These trends generally reflect and are the product of a scrutiny of

¹⁰ One of the preliminary findings of this research is the presence of differential theoretical and methodological preferences among those studying civilization from within and those from without. This, for instance, applies to students (thinkers) of Islamic and western civilizations. Some of the factors accounting this involve religious orientation, temporal constraints (context of the thinker), disciplinary affiliations, methodological preferences, philosophical positions, and more generally, the intellectual pre-commitments of the theoreticians in the study of civilizations. The following chapters broadly examine this.

current scholarships in the study of civilization (s) studies. The Etic perspective, on the other hand, assumes thinkers, who are not necessarily Muslims but studying Islamic civilization from outside. Much like the Emic perspective, this also can engage the above three approaches to the study of Islamic civilization. This same thing, by extension, applies to the study of Western civilization and others as well.

The second importance of the present study is that it sheds some light upon the ongoing debate, especially about the crisis and revival of Islamic civilization. By comparatively examining how “religion” and “civilization” are reflected in the works of some of the thinkers in the field, it attempts to highlight possible areas where this crisis or revival of Islamic civilization might be conditioned.

CHAPTER TWO

RELIGION AND CIVILIZATION: AN OVERVIEW

The present chapter aims at crossing the most often than not imagined contours drawn between religion and civilization. To this end, it attempts to shed some light upon two major and interrelated themes. Firstly, it attempts to reconstruct the general academic climate in conceiving the contested relationship between religion and civilization. While it touches up on, by way of summary, the general knowledge production in the social sciences, particularly those dealing with religion and civilization, it gives a special focus to the dominant theoretical and methodological orientations in the social sciences. For this purpose, some key representative figures of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries social sciences will be contextually and comparatively analyzed. Secondly, it moves on to chart out major trends in the study of particularly Islamic and Western Civilizations. Under Islamic civilization, three and under Western civilization, two major trends will be the principal frame of references and review of literature. In the next chapter, however, individual cases selected from these trends, both from Islamic and Western civilizations will be dealt in a relatively detailed manner.

2.1. A Glimpse at Civilization Studies

Considering the many years of systematic social science studies, the nineteenth century presents a fundamental shift in paradigm. A shift characterized, for the most part, by a move in ontological, epistemological, and methodological orientations (McCabe, 1907; Pritchard, 1965; Howard, 2000; Hughes, 2003). This has obviously influenced the way how studies, especially pursuits in philosophy, anthropology, history, and sociology, framed the religion-and-civilization debate. Accordingly, concepts and ideas related to “empiricism”, “rationalism”, “natural philosophy”, “historicism” and “positivism” came to be the currency of various social science discourses. Many of the theories and

researches into civilization(s) reflect this particular tendency. Among others, the “historicism” of Burckhardt in the study of civilization who wrote *“The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy”* (1878)¹¹; Buckle and his “positivism” in his magnum opus, *“History of Civilization in Europe”* (1864)¹²; the eurocentric and evolutionist E.B. Tylor’s civilization-centered Anthropological writings; the works of a major figure in the positivist social sciences, August Comte; the writings of Adallah Cevdet¹³, Ziya Gokalp¹⁴, Seyd Ahmed Kahn¹⁵, and others present relevant instances.

While this can be considered one particular trend in framing the study of civilization (s), there were other equally important trends that deserve our attention. This was also the period for the writings of such authority as Guizot whose writings remained to be a significant echo both among Western and non-Western thinkers alike, especially among Muslim thinkers¹⁶; the works of Hegel, Jaspers, Said Halim Paşa, Toynbee, Hodgson, Qutb, Faruqi, Fairburn, Allawi, Karakoç, Hughes, Faruqi, Nadwi, and others present a more religiously or theologically informed approach to civilization.

Unlike the latter, the former trend especially in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century adopted to a larger extent approaches, which conceive of the relation between religion and civilization in more mathematical terms, and as such, assumed “inverse proportionality”. In other words, as a given society “evolves”, “progresses”, its religious foundation begins to crumble down and, ultimately, gives way to civilization. Thus, civilization, contrary to any form of religion, is perceived as an independent intellectual and scientific phenomenon. Religion, however, is associated with a stage in the pre-civilization socioeconomic, political, and cultural conditions¹⁷. In

¹¹ Howard (2000)

¹² McCabe (1907)

¹³ Abdullah Cevdet, considered “radical westernizer” in the words of Jaroslav Krejci (2004, p.77) pointed out that “There is no second civilization; civilization means European civilization, and it must be imported with both its roses and its thorns” (Lewis, 1961, p.231).

¹⁴ Gokalp argued that there is no Islamic civilization, for civilization cannot be based on religion (Berkes, 1959).

¹⁵ Seyd Ahmed Kahn is known for his “naturalism” (see Nadwi, 2005; Hourani, 1983).

¹⁶ Hourani (1983) presents a number of thinkers who read and apparently “influenced” by Guizot in the Muslims world.

¹⁷ Religion as an illusion and as a “universal obsessional neurosis of humanity”(Frued, 1970, p.43); religion as the “opium of the people” (Marx, 1970); religion as typical of “savages”, “barbaric”, “less civilized”, and more generally, “lower races”(Darwin, 1871; Comte, 1896; Lubbock, 1898, Tylor, 1871).

any case, the dissolution of religion and civilization, which assume an apparent bond in some ways among other thinkers, can be attributed to the dominance of natural philosophy, positivism, historicism, and empiricism¹⁸. One way of discerning this academic trend in the nineteenth and early twentieth century would be to examine how some of the representative figures of the time portrayed religion(s) in contradistinction with civilization(s).

2.1.1. Religion, “Myth-Makers”, and Civilization

In the study of religion, compared to centuries before-and-after, the nineteenth century was, as Evans Pritchard rightly stated, “the century of myth-makers”(1965, p.1). As a formative period in the study of religion in the mainstream social sciences, especially in Anthropology and sociology, the “myth-makers” of Pritchard came to monopolize the knowledge production. He included in the list, for instance, such individuals as Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, August Comte, Herbert Spencer, Sigmund Freud, James Frazer, and Charles Darwin. However, the list of thinkers and theories explaining religion to this day can range from two broad categories (Pritchard, 1965), three (Henning, 1898), nine (Pals, 2014) to seventeen (Stausberg, 2009). However, some, if not all of Pritchard’s “myth-makers” remained potent and recycled by contemporary social scientist to these days. Among others, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Max Weber still command the fellowship of a huge audience (Goldstein, 2012).

With the intent to focus the present discussion, I followed Robert A. Segal’s (2005) classification of theories of religion along religious and socio-historical planes. For him, social scientific theories of religion generally examine two key aspects: the origin and function of religion. In a historical perspective, the conventional narrative deemed the nineteenth century as the period in which the great majority of thinkers were primarily concerned with studying the “origin” of religion. However, the trend partly changes in the twentieth century, when most of the thinkers shifted their focus from “origin” to

¹⁸ Apart from these epistemological and methodological issues, I will raise some additional supporting arguments in the proceeding sections.

more of “function” of religion (Segal, 2005, p.75)¹⁹. Although the “origin” and “function” of religion might have been the centripetal forces for the mainstream social scientist, theories based on “need” and “religious experience” appear more common among religious studies or among what Segal called “religionists”²⁰. A brief look at some of the theories of social sciences is in order.

2.1.1.1. Myth-Makers of the 19th Century

Theories of religion are at least as many as the disciplinary tradition to which they belong. A thematic analysis of some of these theories, however, reveal some cross-cutting core features, albeit minor differences, that underpin the broader discussion. In an effort, therefore, to sharpen and give a sense of direction, the discussion that follows is framed after A.M. Fairbairn’s analytical framework well articulated in his “Studies in the Philosophy of Religion and History” (1878). He, for instance, enlisted three general characteristic-propositions of many of the theories of religion. The first include a proposition that man was originally destitute of religious beliefs; secondly, a proposition that views religion as a product of delusions due to ignorance, fear, or dreams; and thirdly, a proposition that “the primitive religion was one of terror, a series of rude attempts to propitiate supposed unfriendly beings” (p.19).

In the first instance, the degree of man’s destituteness rests, for example, as it is for Nietzsche and Marx, on socio-political and economic conditions of human beings. Nietzsche claimed that religions were “invented by the weak to delude the strong” (In Alija, 1986, p.37). Contrary to this, Karl Marx, in the *Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Religion*, believed that religion was “the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, the soul of the soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people” (Marx,

¹⁹ Segal has good reasons as to why this particular change took place in the social sciences. But, as a matter of time and space, and economy of words, I invite readers to explore *the* chapter in the following book, Segal, Robert A. (2005). “Theories of Religion” in Hinnells, John R. (ed.). *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*. London; New York: Routledge, [esp. pp.49-60].

²⁰ Segal argued exceptionally that it was the famous contemporary sociologist, Peter Berger, who went further and argued for the “truth” in religion which seems to have not been attempted by many social scientists (2010, p.76).

1970, p.1). As a vehicle of social stratification also, Marx holds that religion effectively serves the elite, people of higher socioeconomic and political status (Alija, 1986, p.37). He also claimed that, for instance, religion was “man made” and an “illusion” that provides “illusory happiness and comfort” (Marx, 1970).

As for the second proposition, the great majority of western scholarship in the area that reached us since the beginning of the 19th century to the present generally appears to affirm similar position. Religion as a product of some sort of “delusion”, “imagination”, “illusion”, “ignorance” and “dream” is a recurrent theme from Charles Darwin’s the *Descent of Man* in the 19th century to the twenty-first century *The God Delusion* of Richard Dawkins. Interestingly, Richard Dawkins writing in the twenty-first century expanded the “illusion” of Sigmund Freud, who had his own reason not to extend it, into “delusion” in his “The God Delusion” (2008). Here the extension of Dawkins included the move from “illusion” to “delusion”, and in that, he rejected Freud’s idea that the “illusory” nature of religion has some kind of touch with objective reality.

Similarly, Darwin believed that religion, having its origin in animism and belief in unseen or spiritual agencies, was “not difficult” for him to comprehend²¹. He expatiated that,

As soon as the important faculties of the imagination, wonder, and curiosity, together with some power of reasoning, had become partially developed, man would naturally have craved to understand what was passing around him, and have vaguely speculated on his own existence (Darwin, 1871, p.63)²².

Following the proposition of Sir Edward Benedict Tylor, he included “dream” as a probable initial genesis of religion. He shared the view that “dreams may have first given

²¹ It should be noted that religion with a creator of universe at its core was *axiomatic* for Darwin (1871, p.64).

²² The questions as to why this “reasoning” happened to man per se and how “naturally have craved to understand” follows, alongside with other peculiarities of human beings, remain as an unbridled slit.

rise to the notion of spirits: for savages do not readily distinguish between subjective and objective impressions” (p.64). Corollary to this, the initial origin of religion through dream and imagination parallels the lagging of mental development and thus typical of "savages", "barbaric", "less civilized", and more generally, "lower races" (Darwin, 1871; Comte, 1896; Lubbock, 1898, Tylor, 1920). By the same token, the development of religious ideas, for instance, according to Comte (1896, p.3), could be correlated to human natural as well social development. He noted that,

Now, each of us aware, if he looks back upon his own history, that he was a theologian in his childhood, a metaphysicians in his youth, and a natural philosopher in his manhood . . . Besides the observation of facts, we have theoretical reasons in support of this law.²³

According to this positivist law, Comte believed that the origin of religion was “Fetishism”. Subsuming it under the theological stage, the “fictitious”, the “imagined” and the “vain search for the absolute” paves the way for the polytheistic religions and finally to monotheistic religions (1896, p.2). However, as human mind “progresses”, the theological stage is replaced by the metaphysical stage and this will be *inevitably* followed by and reaches its mature expression in, the positive or scientific stage-of human mind and thus society. Like many social philosophers of his time and others who came later, Comte believed that once the scientific stage is reached, religion will wither away through time.

By the same token, Tylor also argued that religion and society evolve, and as such, move from savagery conditions to barbaric and then finally to civilization. Time and again, resonant with Comte’s position, Tylor believed that religion “may only gradually, in the course of ages, lose its place in the nation, but all the power of statecraft and all the wealth of the temples will not save it from eventually yielding to a belief that takes in higher knowledge and teaches better life” (1881, p.372).

²³ The same thing, that is, the relation between being “child” and the state of “religiosity” is also reflected in the works of Sigmund Freud (See, for instance, “*The Future of Illusion*”, 1961, esp.p.43). It is also worth noting that he saw religion as a “universal obsessional neurosis of humanity” (p.43).

Third, the last proposition which considers the origin of religion as “one of terror, a series of rude attempts to propitiate supposed unfriendly beings”, was commonly shared by the majority of thinkers in the nineteenth century (Fairbairn, 1878, p.19). The “unfriendly beings” such as spirits, ghosts, soul, and dead ancestors are recurrent themes, for instance, in Darwin (1871), Tylor (1920) and Spencer (1897, 1901). Herbert Spencer, for instance, shown this by shifting his initial position for the origin of religion from “we conclude that ancestor-worship is the root of every religion” (1883, p.440) to “from kinship of belief among races remote in time, space, and culture, strong warrant for the inference that ghost-propitiation is the origin of all religions” (1897, p.7). For him, this “ghost-propitiation” is a response for what he called “fear of wrath of the departed” (1897, p.7).

Although many social scientists in the nineteenth century were obsessed with ‘evolution’ and ‘progress’ to account for many social issues and as Pritchard concisely labeled it, the “myth-makers” century was able to generate a sense of assurance that “in modern times every real scientific work will treat the question [origin of religion] from an evolutionary standpoint only” (Henning, 1898, p.373). However, none of the evolution-positivist theories of religion have escaped, partly or completely, rejections and criticisms. In short, I will raise some three major-general criticisms that partly reveal their inherent impotencies in explaining religion or religious experiences in contradistinction with civilization.

For one thing, religion in the twenty-first century, contrary to the “illusion” thesis of the nineteenth and early twentieth century social philosophers, has remained pervasive and intact in the face of advances in science and technologies. Not only is the current world population affiliated with some form of religion, but also the future of religion appears more promising than irreligiosity of some sort²⁴. This can imply at least two relevant points. First, either science, and whatever associated with it, is unable to conquer, even in its advanced stage in the twenty-first century, the spell of religion or, more than likely,

²⁴ According to the PEW statistical estimations, the proportion of world population projected to affiliate with some form of religions will be more than 90 % by 2050. Accessed on Thursday, January 28, 2016 from <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/>

the incompatibility model, and its ontological configuration, is not an accurate model at all. Talal Asad succinctly summarized the above points as,

In much nineteenth-century evolutionary thought, religion was considered to be an early human condition from which modern law, science, and politics emerged and became detached. In this century most anthropologists have abandoned Victorian evolutionary ideas, and many have challenged the rationalist notion that religion is simply a primitive and therefore outmoded form of the institutions we now encounter in truer form (law, politics, science) in modern life. For these twentieth-century anthropologists, religion is not an archaic mode of scientific thinking, nor of any other secular endeavor we value today; it is, on the contrary, a distinctive space of human practice and belief which cannot be reduced to any other (Asad, 1993; p.27).

Second, in response to the above, the third proposition, Fairbairn (1878, p.19) concluded that,

It is hard to see how a religion so produced, and of such a nature, could be otherwise than injuries to man, its terror fatal to his incipient moral nature, its delusions bewildering and oppressive to his intellect . . . such a religion could only increase the difficulties in the way of progress, make civilization less possible. Then how can the admitted virtues and graces of religion evolved from this barbarous faith? *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. The highest moral qualities do not spring from the lowest.

Third, broadly labeling some of these theories under the “Natural History of Religion”, Fairbairn underscored that they generally demand “an inverted actual history of religion, the reversal of its historical place in society and the state” (Fairbairn, 1878, p.20). Not only are they “ahistorical”, but also and most importantly, they assume “the truth of an empirical philosophy” with its deficits and shaky foundations (p.20). In addition, other

thinkers writing in the same age, but in different parts of Europe, posited ideas fundamentally different from those of Tylor, Spencer, Comte, and Darwin. For instance, Schelling argued “a nation and its religion rose together, that, apart from religion, a nation with its institutions and laws, was impossible” (Cited in Fairbairn, 1878, p.20). Similarly, the German philosopher of history and religion, Hegel (1895, p.247) underscored that,

In general sense, religion and foundation of the state are one and the same; they are in their real essence identical . . . There is but one conception of freedom in religion and the state. . . . A nation which has a false or bad conception of God, has also a bad state, bad government, bad laws”.

Lastly, Fairbairn concluded that developing religious ideas out of sensation, imagination, delusion, and dream is too simplistic to human beings and too complex for animal creatures. This is mainly because, in the human experience of religion, faith is not the product of sensations and as such the human mind is active, not a passive receptor of environmental determinism.

When it comes to the function of religion and the way it relates to civilization is the other important aspect. The works of Emile Durkheim (1857-1917), Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), Max Weber (1864-1920), and other sociologists and anthropologist present relevant instances. For these thinkers, religion plays various roles to human beings and this range from society to higher sociocultural orders like civilization. For Durkheim, being a well-known functionalist in the broader theories of Sociology and Anthropology, proposed that religion provides social cohesion through shared rituals and beliefs; provides mechanisms of social control to enforce religious-based morals and norms to help maintain conformity and control in society; and it offers meaning and purpose to respond to any existential questions²⁵ (Durkheim, 1964).

²⁵ <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-sociology/chapter/the-functional-perspective-on-religion>

Similarly, Weber, in his *The Protestant ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930), pointed out that religious ideas facilitated the prosperity of Europe. There, he argued, for instance, that the belief of wealth accumulation and economic prosperity as typical of success in the Hereafter and the reverse having the negative effect had been the causal explanation for the rise of capitalism in Europe. However, with the emerging rational pursuit of profit gradually diminished the functionality of religion. When it comes to Freud, he claimed that religion helped control human natural instincts and drives. In doing so, religion, despite its illusory origin, helped achieve societies and civilizations. However, religion will be replaced by more potent mechanisms of sustaining civilization, science, and rationalism. Although August Comte held the almost the same view as Freud, he admitted that religion, particularly Christianity played some roles in the advent of European civilization²⁶.

An important function of religion in the works of E. Durkheim and S. Freud is closely related to civilization. Unlike Weber, Durkheim and Freud explicitly engaged the concept of civilization and its close relation to religion. As I have briefly dealt with Freud (and I will have more details in the subsequent sections as well), I will briefly discuss Durkheim's ideas. Durkheim, unlike Frazer and Tylor, rejected the idea that religion was delusional, nonfunctional, or something illusory. He went on to label Tylor's theory of religion as "skeptical hypothesis" (Durkheim, 1964; p.289). For Durkheim, religion is the very foundation of society and civilization. In this regard, society is conceived as the embodiment of religion, and as such, for Durkheim, there cannot be a society devoid of religion, of some sort. He made it clear that "nearly all the great social institutions have been born in religion . . . If religion has given birth to all that is essential in society it is because the idea of society is the soul of religion" (Durkheim, 1964; pp.418-419). By the same token, for Durkheim, religion is the springboard of human civilization as well. In this connection, he argued that,

It is this double nature which has enabled religion to be like the womb from which come all the leading germs of human civilization. Since it has

²⁶ See chapter four for a more detailed discussion.

been made to embrace all of reality, the physical world as well as the moral one, the forces that move bodies as well as those that move minds have been conceived in a religious form. That is how the most diverse methods and practices, both those that make possible the continuation of the moral life (law, morals, beaux-arts) and those serving the material life (the natural, technical and practical sciences), are either directly or indirectly derived from religion (Durkheim, 1964; p.223).

Durkheim, in his *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1964), dealt extensively with the nature and form of connection between religion and civilization. Here, Durkheim posited religion and the related state of religious conditions of various societies along with their level of civilization (from “primitive”, “tribal”, “rudimentary” to “advanced”, “higher”, “great” civilizations) (Durkheim, 1964). Durkheim and Mauss also provided more refined conceptualization and operationalization of the idea of civilization in another work, *Notes on the Notion of Civilization* (Durkheim and Mauss, 1971).

In short, whenever some of the above formative figures of sociology and anthropology dealt with religion, especially in terms of its origin and function, it has always been addressed in the context of civilization. While some of these viewed religion as typical of “lower races”, “savages”, and “barbarians”, and thus, the character of “less civilized” societies (e.g., Tylor, Comte, Lubbock, Frazer, and Darwin), others argued for its immense service to human society in general and the genesis of civilization, in particular (e.g., Durkheim, Weber, and etc.). Yet, it seems safe to point out that the connection between religion and civilization, in some ways, has always been present among social scientists, dealing with either religion or civilization. The forthcoming section specifically addresses the relationship between religion and civilization in the theories of Islamic and Western civilizations.

2.2. Religion in Civilization Studies

A body of knowledge exclusively devoted to transcending the most often than not supposed border between religion and civilization, if anything, is a rare phenomenon. Different thinkers, owing to varying degrees of ontological as well as epistemological predispositions, frame their studies of civilization (s) with or without the necessary reference to some form of religion. As Jaroslav Krejci (2004, p.3) concisely put it *“The choice of focus is influenced either by the angle of empirical observations or by one’s theoretical starting points, which may involve taking a priori ontological or epistemological positions”*. However, a closer engagement of literature produced in the study of civilizations, of the most studied ones, Western and Islamic civilizations, assume to a larger extent an implicit, subtle, fainted or explicit presence of some form of religion (s) behind.

The most explicit and often considered closely aligned with religion, for instance, is in the very conception of “Islamic” or “Islamicate” civilization. Undoubtedly, the very appellation of “Islamic” or “Islamicate” civilization entails a variant of civilization based, under some form and nature of relation, on the religion of Islam (See, for instance, Toynbee, 1946; Hodgson, 1974; Bennabi, 1992; Nadwi, 2005; Karakoç, 2005; Qutb, 2006; Allawi, 2009; Faruqi, 2013). The same thing, however, cannot be applied to what came to be known as Western civilization.

While there is almost a consensus among historians, sociologists, anthropologists, philosophers and others about the “Islam” qualifier of Islamic or Islamicate civilization, it is hardly possible, by the same or closer standard, to find such a degree of consensus propounded among those who conceptually work with Western civilization. In other words, although there are many thinkers who argue that religion, especially Christianity, in some forms, is behind the advent of Western civilization, there are those who equally dispute the validity of such a claim for many reasons. Accordingly, two broad categories of theories of Western civilization emerge: those theories which are relatively charged with religion, particularly Christianity and those without.

In the former context, Christianity is allotted with the role of civilizing Western society in general and Europe, in particular (see, for instance, Guizot, 1887; Hegel, 1895; Vico, 1948; Mirabeau, 2004). Closely aligned with this view is the emphasis that religion, in some important ways, assumes some role in Western civilization (see, for instance, Toynbee, 1946; Schweitzer, 1947; Jaspers, 1953; Voegelin, 1999; Hughes, 2003).

In the later sense, the discourse follows different and often contradictory patterns. One group of thinkers would argue that religion, whatsoever might be its variant, represents an anti-thesis to-and-playing a retardant effect on civilization (see, for instance, Tylor, 1881; Comte, 1896; Spengler, 1926; Freud, 1961; Rousseau, 1992; Russell, 1999). Apart from these major trends, other individuals like Norbert Elias (2000) and Peter Katzenstine (2011) chose to focus on psycho-social and political processes devoid of the spirit of religion in their studies of civilization in general and Western civilization, in particular.

Although Katzenstine (2011) admits that “at the core of civilizational complexes we typically find religious traditions”, his theoretical precommitment to the constructivist variant of the mainstream international relations embellished his entire discussion and analysis. He, for instances, negated the “unitary” conception of civilizations, implying his relativistic-subjectivist-constructivist cling; rather, he sees “internal variegations”, often contradictory, within these civilizations (e.g., the emergence of “Afro-Islam”, “Euro-Islam”, “Asia-Islam” etc. under Islamic civilization). Approached from a world political order perspective, his anti-essentialist stand essentially undermines issues, experiences, institutions, and factors that may be counted under a given civilization. His focus is, therefore, more on processes, interactions, exchanges, and how these are reflected in the global politics. When it comes to Norbert Elias, his major contribution to civilization studies (“The Civilizing Process”(2000) has been criticized for ignoring to discuss the origin (possibly of religion) of the manners and other behaviors functioning as “civilizing”, except for his focuses on process (c.f., Mennell, 1990).

The proceeding sections briefly develop the arguments for the religion and civilization connection in the context of Islamic and Western civilizations. Accordingly, I first dealt with theories of Islamic civilization and after that Western civilization will follow.

2.3. Islamic Civilization between Religion and Civilization

Even though there is a general understanding concerning the relationship between religion and civilization, as in Islamic civilization, there is much less of consensus over the nature and form of this relationship. As I will closely show, this difference in the study of Islamic civilization emanates fundamentally from the very ontological, epistemological, and methodological predispositions, of researchers one intends to examine. In this regard, studies with a significant dose of, for instance, historical, philosophical, or religious orientations, their respective formulations of Islamic civilization necessarily reflect multiplicity in the nature and form of relations between religion and civilization. As it was highlighted in the “problems statement section”, most of the studies concerning Islamic civilization fall under either the historic-empirical, religiophilosophical, or multiplex trend. The following theories of Islamic civilization briefly highlight these trends.

Of those well-received studies into Islamic civilization, world historian, Marshal G. Hodgson's contribution represents a shift in paradigm. In his original reappraisal of what came to be called Islamic civilization, Hodgson began his engagement by introducing what he styled as "Islamicate" civilization. As will be detailed later, Hodgson's Islamicate civilization symbolizes a radical shift, both in content and form, from the conventional portrayals associated with Islamic civilization. For him, this appellation, among other things, signifies the latest stage of “Irano-Semitic civilization” (Hodgson, 1974). In doing so, Hodgson repositioned the role commonly attributed to Islam in the making of civilization to other temporal and spatial factors. Accordingly, Islam as a religion is defined in such a way that plays the role of reforming ages old civilization (s) preceding it both in time and space. He went even more so far as to argue that,

What is more, the Muslims inherited also in large measure the problems, the opportunities, and the temptations of their ancestors in the region. Even those aspects of the civilization which were most strikingly new-for instance, the Muslim religion itself were formed in the context of the earlier Irano-Semitic traditions. The goals to be set, the norms to be abided by, had been adumbrated long before. . . What differed under Islam was largely the relative weighting of different elements in the culture, the balance among them. In working out that new balance, the impulses which formed Islamicate culture proved to be exceptionally comprehensive and self sufficient. Even these impulses go back into pre-Islamic times, however (Hodgson, 1974; p.104)²⁷.

In other words, “Islamicateness” in his formulation, contrary to the conventional “Islamicness” (as in Islamic civilization among Muslim thinkers, for instance), fundamentally entails a shift in the role and degree of religion in the constitution of civilization, to more of various interactive factors embedded both in time and space. In spite of this passivity of Islam under Islamicate civilization, it does not necessarily negate the “ideological” centrality of Islam. It is indeed what gave Islamicate civilization, its “youthfulness,” and “creative synthesis”.

Operating even under the conventional conception of Islamic civilization does not necessarily assume consensus in the role and centrality of Islam in the making of civilization. Ismail Raji al Faruqi, a Muslim philosopher argued, for instance, that Islamic civilization dates back to the creation of the universe and Adam. For him, the essence of Islamic civilization is Islam and that the essence of “Islam is Tawhid, the act of affirming Allah to be the One, absolute, transcendent Creator, Lord and Master” (Faruqi, 1992, p.1). Here, the essence and, by implication, the role assigned to Islam, contrary to Hodgson’s formulation of Islamicate civilization, assumes primacy and precedence in the making of Islamic civilization. Due to this, much like Hegel, Faruqi

²⁷ Islam (and Islamic civilization) between pre-Islamic Arabian and Indo-Persian cultures and traditions, on the one hand, and between Christian and Greek-Latin traditions and cultures, on the other.

favors the perfectibility of civilization resting on the proximity to and distance from monotheism. Centuries ago, Hegel, a philosopher of history and religion had argued that,

In general sense, religion and foundation of the state are one and the same; they are in their real essence identical . . . There is but one conception of freedom in religion and the state. . . A nation which has a false or bad conception of God has a bad state, bad government, bad laws. . . (1895, p.247)

Time and again, Muslim scholars, largely drawing from Islamic sources, put forth various conceptions of Islamic civilization. One among others is the renowned Abul Hassan Al-Nadwi. Although Nadwi shares a view like Faruqi, his conception of Islamic civilization differs significantly from that of Hodgson. Like Faruqi, Nadwi views the creation factor as an axiomatic fact in the very conception of Islamic civilization. However, he emphasizes the uniqueness and revolutionary nature of the advent of Prophet Muhammad in the seventh century and Muslims' later global adventures²⁸.

He believed that Islamic civilization is not a tribal-Arabic civilization as much of the orientalist scholarships would have us believe, a view equally shared by Hodgson. It is rather a civilization based on the purity of monotheism and the last prophet Muhammad. In this connection, Mohammed, being the last prophet of all those preceded him, came to radically transform humanity, not only Arabs, Asians, Africans or Europeans, but all human creation on the face of the earth. It is here, for Nadwi, where the very foundation of Islamic civilization lays (Nadwi, 1979, 1983, 1986, 2005). Put simply, much like Faruqi, Nadawi believes that Islam as a religion is a fundamental precondition, an indispensable springboard for its civilization.

Closer to the conceptions of Faruqi and Nadwi is those of Sayid Qutub and Sezai Karakoç. In spite of their differences in specific matters, especially in the nature and form of relation between religion and civilization, they share some fundamental features-

²⁸ See, for instance, Miftah, M. (2016) "Islamic Civilization between Crisis and Revival: A Comparative Appraisal of the Works of Abul Hassan Al-Nadwi and Ali Allawi" *Islamic Perspective*, Vol. 16, 113-135.

in their respective conceptions of Islamic civilization. One is the indispensability of monotheism expressed through creator-and-created relations. For Qutb, this relation manifests through a complete obedience to his law, Shariah. This distinguishes Islamic civilization, from what he calls *Jahili* society. In light of this, he conceptually delineates what he perceives to be an Islamic civilization:

When, in a society, the sovereignty belongs to Allah alone, expressed in its obedience to the Shari'ah—the Divine Law—only then is every person in that society free from servitude to others, and only then does he taste true freedom. This alone is 'human civilization', as the basis of a human civilization is the complete and true freedom of every person and the full dignity of every individual of the society (Qutb, 2006, p.108).

For Karakoç too, Islamic civilization is based on the very primary link that bonds the creator-and-created. This link is called “vahiyy” or the common English rendering of which is ‘revelation’ (Karakoç, 2005). This revelation is the mechanism through which the prophets, whom he considered the torchbearers of civilization, receive messages that help them build an ideal society. For this very reason, he calls Islamic civilization as a “Kur’an medeniyet” or “Qur’anic civilization” (Karakoç, 2005, p.76).

The second feature that brings together not only Qutb and Karakoç but also Faruqi and Nadwi is the creation factor. Islamic civilization traces its genesis with the creation of Adam and the subsequent leading role of prophets, divine revelations, and the vicegerency of man on earth. For instance, Karakoç argues that Islamic civilization begins with Adam “*Adem'den baslayarak son pegambere kadar insa edilen hakikat medeniyeti*” (Karakoç, 2005).

In spite of this convergence, the points of divergence for Qutb and Karakoç can even be more pronounced. One among others would be the classification of civilizations. For Qutb, there are only just two types of societies in the world: the civilized and the uncivilized or what he called “Jahili”. As I will briefly deal with it in later sections, the

parameters of the distinction between the two can be contended for a variety of reasons. A similar tendency can also be seen in Karakoç's thought, especially in his view of one world civilization with multiple realities or the presence realistic civilizations. This involves the view of world civilizations as one *ideal (only)* civilization and the view of multiple *realistic* civilizations. Put in yet other words, civilizations as an empirical fact and civilization as an ideal-religious-philosophical unity.

The above discussion presented intellectual discourses that can be considered to fall under the historic-empirical trend, such as those of Hodgson and Toynbee; and a trend with a greater degree of reliance on philosophical and religious ideas and approaches, as in the works of Karakoç, Qutub, and Faruqi. The last trend encompasses studies with a multiplex eclecticism in approaching Islamic civilization. Relevant examples in this regard can include the works of the fourteenth-century polymath thinker Abdurrahman Ibn Khaldun and the late Ottoman thinker Said Halim Paşa.

As I will provide a more detailed account in the upcoming sections, Ibn Khaldun's position with regard to religion-civilization discourse requires a holistic reading of his *Muqadimah*. In spite of this, some studies of Ibn Khaldun's thought appear to yield an ardent realist-empiricist while some others portrayed him as an honest follower of Aristotelian philosopher. Still, others found at the core of Ibn Khaldun's thought of civilization what he termed as "assabiyah" determinism, a sort of bio-psycho-social solidarity dictating the nature and form of civilization. Some dubbed Ibn Khaldun as "secularist historian"(Turner, 1971; p.43); "Methodologically positivist" (Ibid, p.45); "Cyclic theory of history"(Ibid, p.45); "founder of conflict sociology"(Ibid, p.46); others claimed he used a "moderate" and "Orthodox" approach to Islam (Busch, 1968; p.321); and Ibn Khaldun as a "functionalist" (Gellner in Arnason and Stauth, 2004, p.29). However, a well-known student of Ibn Khaldun, Muhsin Mehdi, rejected the idea that Ibn Khaldun was an empiricist, historicist, determinist, positivist, or pragmatist (Mahdi, 1957).

Contrary to these reductionisms, however, I argue for a more context oriented, eclectic and multi-layered reading of Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddimah. This engagement, cognizant of the possibility of dualism in Ibn Khaldun's imagination of civilization, presents a view that complementarily draws from empirical realities and Divine providence. In other words, reductionism of Ibn Khaldun's thought to either of the extremes could prove fatal and erroneous and, as such, its analytical reflection would be inadequate and, above all, misleading.

Accordingly, although a sort of nature deterministic approach to Ibn Khaldun's thought of civilization might be possible, an equally Divine Providence perspective is also another possibility. This becomes more obvious when one realizes that Ibn Khaldun's close allegiance to Asharism, which is known in Islamic thought for a greater degree of God's Providence in human action. In this line of thought, for instance, one would argue that Ibn Khaldun explicitly underscored that human nature and action, and more generally, human civilization as God driven state of affair, a kind of providence that God has bestowed up on his creations. As a result, human survival and preservation of life end up the necessary task of God.

However, a different approach or reading of Muqaddimah can potentially, at the same time, posit another side or face to human action and civilization²⁹. This latter view of civilization can be considered nature deterministic perspective. In this perspective, like many other social and natural scientists, Ibn Khaldun holds that human nature and action, and thus, civilization is nature deterministic process and geared towards survival and preservation of human species. Contrary to these extreme dimensions of Ibn Khaldun's thought, it is in light of the creative synthesis of these two perspectives where, I argue, Ibn Khaldun's contribution to the study of Islamic civilization, especially in the context of the relationship between religion (i.e., Islam) and civilization lies.

Although the nature deterministic reading of Ibn Khaldun's thought negates the role of religion in general and God, in particular, the Divine's Providence perspective renders

²⁹ In any case, there are wide and diverging readings of the thoughts of Ibn Khaldun yielding contradictory labelings and, ultimately, contradictory conclusions (Arnason and Stauth, 2004).

an absolute power to God³⁰. However, if a holistic reading of Ibn Khaldun's thought concerning civilization is attempted or conceived, then the emerging synthetic perspective would prove much safer, contextually sensitive, and thus, more meaningful. This third perspective, different from the above two extreme versions, adopts a more multiplex approach to civilization study in general and Islamic civilization, in particular. This multiplexity in Ibn Khaldun's thought of Islamic civilization signifies religious based ontological and epistemological orientations; historic-empirical realities and observations, and philosophical positions.

As it will be discussed in chapter three, Ibn Khaldun's conception of Islamic civilization is impregnated, especially with the first two. In other words, Khaldunian discussion of Islamic civilization requires a specific and necessary reference to the Divine, on the one hand, and historic-empirical observations and realities available to him, on the other. All in all, important in my forthcoming discussions are the concepts of "Assabiyah", "the vicegerency of man on earth", and the Ashari theological foundation of Ibn Khaldun. Moreover, the synthesis of his religious predisposition needs to be contextually evaluated along with his own personal experiences in politics, religious activities and own philosophical and sociological projections³¹. Chapter three extends this discussion.

Sait Halim Paşa, on the other hand, sees two relevant dimensions in the very idea of "Islam Medeniyeti"³². The first domain is what he called "Islamiyet" and it includes all the religious prescriptions, laws, institutions, and frameworks rooted in Islam. The other important, and intrinsically inseparable, is the role of empirical realities, experiences, and more generally, an active engagement with the challenges and opportunities of life in the world. It is in light of this frame of reference he analyzed the crisis of Islamic civilization in the context of the Ottoman Empire.

³⁰ See, for instance, Busch, B.C. (1968). "Divine Intervention in the "Muqaddimah" of Ibn Khaldūn. *History of Religions*, Vol. 7, No. 4, pp. 317-329.

³¹ For Arnason and Stauth (2004, p.33), the religious dimension is in as much important as other aspects of Khaldunian understanding of civilizational analysis.

³² Meaning, Islamic civilization

For Paşa, Islam is the necessary ingredient in the initial genesis and continuing vitality of Islamic civilization. He argued that: “*İslam’a göre din, beşeriyetin maddi manevi ve akli muvazenesini sağlayan ebedi kanun ve dusturlara karşı gösterilmesi gereken saygı yoluyla, insanlığın saadetini bir hayal olmaktan kurtarip müsbet bir kılmaktır*”³³ (Paşa, 2015, p.148). For him, Islam is beyond what many social scientists understood as “religion”, it is rather a reservoir and springboard of Islamic civilization. In this regard, for instance, he argued that

Şeriat’in sosyal nizami, kısa zaman içinde, hiç yoktan hayret edilecek bir medeniyet meydana getirerek, yüzyıllarca insanlığı ilmi, hikmetin ve adaletin nurları ile aydınlatmış; onu sosyal, ahlaki ve maddi bakımlardan benzeri görülmemiş bir saadet içinde yaşatmıştır³⁴ (Paşa, 2015, p.231).

Yet, this does not necessarily make him remain compartmentalized and limited to the “religious” aspect of Islam only; he equally emphasized the need for understanding objective realities (that is, challenges and opportunities) in the world. This complementarity, for him, is a natural bond behind the making of Islamic civilization. However, it was the disentanglement of these aspects of Islam that caused the crisis of Islamic civilization in the later days of the Ottoman Empire. In this connection, he pointed out that “*Ayrıca şunu da ilave edelim ki, icap ve ihtiyaçları anlaşılacak ve yerine getirmek şart ile*” (Paşa, 2015, p.67).³⁵

Both Ibn Khaldun and Paşa shared two fundamental aspects in their understanding of Islamic civilization although the matter of difference remains obvious on issues of degree-emphasis, style, and experience of Islamic civilizations in their respective

³³ According to Islam, religion encompasses both the material and nonmaterial aspect of human existence. In doing so, it respects, and thus applies, the eternal law and constitution while achieving human happiness even though assumed an untenable dream (Author’s translation).

³⁴ Sharia’h, through its own social system, in a very short period of time, brought about Islamic civilization from nothing. And by doing so, gave humanity enlightenment in science, wisdom, and justice. It helped, unlike any other, to make happiness possible through its own social system, ethics-morality and material renderings (Author’s translation).

³⁵ We need also to add that it has to deal effectively with the requirements and needs of the time. And this demands careful understanding and implementations. With these conditions, we can say that Islamic civilization then assumes completeness (Author’s translation).

periods. Let me first start with the differences. If one approaches Ibn Khaldun through the realist frame of reference, it is possible that what can be seen will include Ibn Khaldun's obsessions with his analysis and conclusions he reached about human collective existence-human nature, human action, history, economy, politics, and more generally, civilization-which may not necessarily be linked to Islam as a religion or civilization. However, if one rather sees Ibn Khaldun's view of civilization in terms of religious determinism or Divine Providence, then the picture will be different.

If the third proposition, which is the one I am suggesting in this research is adopted, then one would unveil a kind of intermediate theoretical stance, possibly common to many of the Muslim thinkers in the past. Accordingly, understood under this third perspective, although the emphasis of Ibn Khaldun would largely tend to empirical realities and observations, it is, however, a mistake to assume that he had downplayed religion, God, or more generally, the Divine dimension to it.

Similarly, despite his practical experiences and observations during the Ottoman Empire, I would argue, that Paşa strongly believed in the constitutive effect of Islam and, as such, the making of Islamic civilization. However, this does not imply that he sought after for solutions in Islam for the crisis of Islamic civilization during the last quarter of the twentieth century when the Ottoman Empire was undergoing decomposition for once and for all. Instead, as I will note in detail in the upcoming section, he explored and, in fact, located the factors behind the crisis of Islamic civilization in other domain, human activity. This activity includes a sense of inferiority among intellectuals; the making and imposition of alien laws, institutions, and systems, which, through time, not only were detached from the very fountain of Islamic civilization, which is Islam, but also went against it in many ways.

When the style of causations and articulation of both Ibn Khaldun and Halim Paşa is observed, there comes a huge difference. Looked simply from outside Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddimah, as a writing of a fourteenth-century Muslim thinker, begins and ends every single issue of virtually all of his discourses, empirical or Divine related state of

affairs, with religious colorings. This might obviously mean anything. It could be argued that in those periods and beyond, religious colorings might be one of the ways in which they exercised what might be called a “politics of writing” or simply showing their humbleness. If the politics of writing is assumed, then, presumably, he might have adopted this strategy assuming that his writings might get rejected or unread among fellow Muslims for his beyond-average focus on the affairs of this world.

Perhaps one of the ways in which he, or any of those who preceded him in spatial and temporal terms, could have avoided this would be to adopt the politics of writing. This might be the reason why his discussions on any issues are wrapped up with Qura’nic verses, poems, Hadith, prophetic traditions and others. This style of writing, however, cannot totally undermine the obvious possibility that he actually wrote under the Devine’s Providence perspective; otherwise, concepts and ideas, such as Man’s vicegerency on earth, which not only used explicitly but also provided with extended explanations.

The same thing, however, cannot be said for Halim Paşa. In fact, living in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries with a more refined knowledge of what Islamic civilization is, Paşa’s writing rarely resembles Khaldun. Although he believed in the necessity of Islam as a religion, his discussions in one of his widely acclaimed works, “Buhranlarımız” (our crisis), it could be clearly seen that he was closely analyzing the challenges and problems that were responsible for the fall of the Ottoman empire. Seen in this way, he was concerned about how and why the Ottoman society, particularly Muslim intellectuals, political leaders, and institutions remained stagnant, more counterproductive and, eventually, constituting the factors behind the nemesis of the empire. While this remains his principal focus, it is also necessary to underscore that Islam as a religion and beyond remained the foundational normative frame of reference for Paşa’s diagnosis. Beside this, he strongly believed in the perfection of Islam as and that is capable of producing an ideal human civilization.

2.4. Contesting the Role of Religion in the Study of Western Civilization

As for the conception of Western civilization and its connection with religion, there are at least two general views. On the one hand, there are theories of civilization which, to a lesser or greater extent, posit religion along side with civilization; and those which do not, on the other. The former one includes theories of Western civilization which posit religion in complementarily with or substitutive of civilization. The first envisions a thesis, which might be called an inseparability thesis in which case Western civilization is seen as the product of the systematic synthesis of religion and civilization. The second view, however, is characterized by relations in which case religion is assumed to have lesser or having no any place in the making of Western civilization. An extreme position in this cluster is the view of religion playing a retardant effect on civilization. In other words, there are theories of Western civilization, which propose opposite directions between religion and civilization.

As I have briefly alluded to above, historians like Guizot placed religion at the core of civilization and specifically gave it the role of civilizing European society in general and France, in particular. He, for instance, underscored that “at all times, in all countries, religion has assumed the glory of having civilized the people” (1887, p.13). This, he believed, gave rise to essentially a European society, European civilization. Not very different from Guizot is the position of Mirabeau. For him too, religion is a principal driving force behind human civilization. He believed that the “first and most useful constraint on human nature and action without doubt is religion” (In Mazlish, 2004, p.5). In so far as religion exercises a restraining force on human general conditions, it remains to be the “mainspring” and “principal source” of human civilization. In other words, the “restraining of violence is one of the building blocks of human civilization” (Ibid, p,18). It should be noted, however, that such functional bond between religion and civilization is not necessarily limited to Mirabeau in the Western scholarship. Thinkers like Toynbee

(1946), Sigmund Freud (1961; 1962), and, although he did not necessarily and explicitly render this role to religion, Norbert Elias's "The Civilizing Process" faintly reflect this³⁶.

Arnold Toynbee, a renowned world historian, also posited religion along with his discussions of civilizations, including Islamic and Western civilizations. This is particularly distinguishable in his latest scholarships on civilizations³⁷. In this regard, Toynbee made a radical transformation in his view of the relation between religion and civilization in the course of his academic career. This can be easily discerned in his well-received magnum opus, the voluminous *A Study of History*. In the first three volumes of this contribution, Toynbee relatively appears agnostic and much indifferent about religion (and its relations to civilization thereof) although he recognized that religion gives a unique identity to civilizations and plays some role in the rise and fall of civilizations.

A complete transformation of Toynbee's thought pertaining to the role of religion, however, explicitly unleashed in the next volumes and other later works. This, for Pearson (2008), reflects a radical transformation of Toynbee's thought, and as such, represented the 'Christianization' of Toynbee's thought in accounting for the link between religion and civilization. An important example of this change could be seen in his later book, *Civilization in Trial* where he argued that,

The spiritual progress of individual souls in this life will, in fact, bring with it much more social progress than could be attained in any other way. It is a paradoxical but profoundly true and important principle of life that the most likely way to reach a goal is to be aiming not at the goal itself but at some more ambitious goal beyond it (Toynbee, 1946, p.247).

³⁶ Stephen Mennell (1990, p.207), for instance, criticized Elias for his inability to establish the foundation for some of the behaviors and standards he analyzed in his book, "The Civilizing Process" (Elias, 2000).

³⁷ According to Arnson and Stauth (2004, p.29), Arnold Toynbee made a "turn to an explicitly religious vision of history"

It should be noted that this “spiritual progress”, for Toynbee, generally assume a “religious progress” (see, for instance, Ibid, p.245). Commenting on the nature of the relation between religion and civilization, he said, “Christianity appears in the role of civilization’s humble servant” (Ibid, p.231). For him, Christianity assumed either the role of “subservient”, “a chrysalis” or a “chariot” in which case it functions as “if the wheels on which it mounts towards Heaven may be the periodic downfalls of civilization on earth”(Ibid, 235). At any rate, it is interesting to note that the conception of civilization, western civilization in particular, in terms of the inseparability of spiritual and social progress marks an important intersection point for many thinkers (see, for instance, Guizot, 1887; Toynbee, 1946; Schweitzer, 1947).

Contrary to this inseparability thesis is the second amalgam of views in the very conception of Western civilization. Under this category, the views generally assume incompatibility and opposite direction in the relationships between religion and civilization in their discussion of Western civilization. In this regard, for instance, one would include the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau (1992), Oswald Spengler (1926), August Comte (1896), Edward B. Tylor (1881), James Frazer (1907), Bertrand Russell (1999); Sigmund Freud (1961;1962) and many others. In short, it is safe here to point out that most of the nineteenth and early twentieth-century positivist social scientific traditions generally fall into this category, especially in the fields of sociology, cultural and social anthropology, philosophy, and history. Since I have briefly touched up on the works of Comte and Tylor, I will now turn to Spengler, Freud, and Rousseau.

Oswald Spengler is not only one of the most recycled thinkers in the study of Western civilization, but also a representative figure of a general trend in the relationship between religion and civilization. This trend assumes opposite directions or some kind of “substitutiveness” between religion and civilization. While accounting for ‘The Decline of the West’ (1926), Spengler unveils the idea of opposite direction between religion and civilization. He conceived of civilization as a rupture in the continuing vitality of religion in the culture stage. In this phase, religion plays a significant role, but, through time, loses its vitality with the decline of culture, which, in turn, assumes the advent of

civilization. Civilization represents, therefore, soullessness of society, and, as he saw it, the internal cancer that kills Western society inside out. Put simply, Spengler believes that “The essence of every civilization is irreligion” (1926, p.358).

Not fundamentally different from Spengler is the view of Francophone Genevan philosopher, J. J. Rousseau. In his writing on the ‘Discourse on the Sciences and Arts, First Discourse’ (1992), Rousseau, contrary to his countrymen, Guizot, argued that civilization appears like a disease that causes sickness and destroys individuals and society alike. It sucks out virtuousness, goodness, and make humans hypocrite. He argued, “human soul has been corrupted in proportion to the advancement of our sciences and arts towards perfection” (1992, p, xiv). Rousseau considers civilization, conceived as the overall proliferation of sciences, philosophy, and art, inversely related to a given societies’ conditions of morality, ethics, virtue, and faith. In his own words, Rousseau claimed,

Suspicious, offenses, fears, coldness, reserve, hate, betrayal will hide constantly under that uniform and the false veil of politeness, under that much-vaunted urbanity which we owe to the enlightenment of our century. The name of the Master of the Universe will no longer be profaned by swearing, but it will be insulted by blasphemies without offending our scrupulous ears (1992, p.6).

Although Rousseau, much like Voltaire, was a deist who believed in the creation factor (especially the belief that God created human beings in his image), God’s ordering of the universe, his idea of religion was nevertheless a nuanced one³⁸. In other words, Rousseau recommended what he called a “civil religion” to reclaim, or more appropriately, compensate for the loss of the state of nature wherein human beings lived a happy and compassionate life. Rousseau’s state of nature is often contrasted with that of Hobbesian state of nature in which case “every man against every man” state of affair exists. Human beings are seen as “brutish”, “nasty”, and “solitary” as opposed to

³⁸<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan/27/rousseau-humanity-divine-not-reason> (accessed on Saturday, October 29, 2016).

Rousseau's natural goodness of man (Smith, 1909; p.99). Interestingly, however, Freud argued, in what can be dubbed as the Freudian state of nature, human beings expressed their instinctual desires by engaging in incest, lustful killings, and cannibalism. Freud exclaimed ". . . how splendid, what a string of satisfactions one's life would be!" (Freud, 1961; p.15). Civilization, therefore, is a dissatisfaction acquired by relinquishing these instinctual drives, wishes, and satisfactions. It is, ultimately, a discontent, at least at the individual level (Freud, 1962). This is, of course, does not necessarily include politicians like dictators who have all the means to do what they may desire (1961; p15). For Rousseau, however, the loss of natural goodness in human beings in the state of nature was due to the advent of private property, inequality, passion, arts, sciences, and more generally, civilization (Rousseau, 1992).

As Rousseau believed in the inherent goodness of human nature, especially in his state of nature, this can be achieved by a just system, political order or state that uses a collective ideology devoid of rituals called "civil religion". This religion, unlike such religions as Christianity and Islam, only functions to cement social and cultural bonds of citizens in a given society. This is because, he believed that religions like Christianity and Islam rather promote divisions as there are people, from within and without, who disagree with their doctrines (Rousseau, 1762; pp.105-106). This is despite the fact that he believed that Islam, compared to Christianity, was able to manage to deal with this problem (that is, Sunni Vs Shiah) well before it eventually came to reckon with (1762; p.106).

Lastly, Sigmund Freud had a view, much like Spengler, Comte, and Tylor, that religion would eventually wither away, especially in the context of White Christen European civilization. For thousands of years, religion, he has "Judeo-Christian" monotheism in mind, served civilization. It served civilization in two important ways: for one thing, as one achievement of civilization itself, it helped human beings' effort in conquering the "crushingly superior force of nature" (Freud, 1961, p.21)³⁹. This, for him, generally

³⁹ Freud's take on the relation between religion and civilization, as I have hinted earlier, is fundamentally functional. In this regard, he says "Religion has clearly performed great services for human civilization. It has contributed much towards the taming of the asocial instincts" (Ibid, p.37).

involves the risk of life and dangers associated with, on the one hand, the nature of man, at the heart of which human beings coveting lustful killings, incest, and cannibalism, and the natural and social environment they find themselves, on the other. The second function of religion was, in what he called “the urge to rectify the shortcomings of civilization which made themselves painfully felt” (Ibid, p.21).

In this latter sense, since Freudian civilization demands the relinquishing and repression of human natural instinctual wishes and drives, religion comes and serves as a safety valve. Religion, through its divine providence, provision of hope, happiness and provisional contentment, provides an ephemeral, but ultimately, an illusory mechanism to maintain the status quo of civilization. In this regard, religion, for instance, prohibits incest taboo, murder, and cannibalism. Accordingly, for the purpose counterbalancing the cruel reality of instinct repression in civilization, religion addresses it through its metaphysical universe. In this connection, he underscored that,

The gods retain their threefold task: they must exorcize the terrors of nature, they must reconcile men to the cruelty of Fate, particularly as it is shown in death, and they must compensate them for the sufferings and privations which a civilized life in common has imposed on them. . . [*In addition*]It now became the task of the gods to even out the defects and evils of civilization, to attend to the sufferings which men inflict on one another in their life together and to watch over the fulfillment of the precepts of civilization, which men obey so imperfectly (Emphasis mine, Freud, 1961; p.18).

In short, Freud’s idea of civilization is highly tied to instinct repression and control. However, this can be done through the provision of illusion (as done through religion) or through rational mechanism (as he thought to take place in the realm of advanced natural sciences). In essence, and ultimately, Freudian civilization moves from religious based but primitive form of civilization to that based on rationalism and the natural sciences. This movement, however, entails the progressively diminishing role of religion in a

society, and consequently, in civilization. In either condition, nevertheless, the purpose of civilization is “Eros”, the instinct of life through the repression of “aggressiveness”, the instinctual tendency to destruction. In fact, he argued that “the evolution of civilization . . . may be described as the struggle for life of the human species. . .combine single human individuals, and after families, then to races, peoples and nations, into one great unity, the unity of mankind” (Freud, 1962; p.69)⁴⁰.

To use Freud’s expressions, thinkers in the nineteenth and a significant part of the twentieth century, here Freud himself is included, were hit by the positivist “obsessional neurosis”. Much like Spengler, Tylor and Comte, Freud believed that the bond between religion and civilization, no matter how illusory might be this relation, will be tested by the advent of natural sciences and rationalism. When civilization’s reliance on religion ends, the source of its vitality will be replaced by natural sciences and rationalism. He characterized this movement as,

The scientific spirit brings about a particular attitude towards worldly matters; before religious matters it pauses for a little, hesitates, and finally there too crosses the threshold. In this process there is no stopping; the greater the number of men to whom the treasures of knowledge become accessible, the more widespread is the falling-away from religious belief- at first only from its obsolete and objectionable trappings, but later from its fundamental postulates as well (Freud, 1961; p.38).

Now, it is inevitable that religion will no longer be the vehicle of civilization, but the growing educated secular vanguards are. In this regard, he concluded that,

Civilization has little to fear from educated people and brainworkers. In them the replacement of religious motives for civilized behavior by other, secular motives would proceed unobtrusively; moreover, such people are to a large extent themselves vehicles of civilization. . . [*And as such*] If

⁴⁰ Unity of mankind in the study of Civilization is a constant theme from Marshal Hodgson (1974) to Karl Jaspers (1953).

the sole reason why you must not kill your neighbor is because God has forbidden it and will severely punish you for it in this or the next life then, when you learn that there is no God and that you need not fear His punishment, you will certainly kill your neighbor without hesitation, and you can only be prevented from doing so by mundane force (Ibid, p.39).

Freud concluded that religious teachings and doctrines must cease to be considered as “the reasons for the precepts of civilization”. On the contrary, he pointed out “the time has probably come, as it does in an analytic treatment, for replacing the effects of repression by the results of the rational operation of the intellect (Ibid, p.44).

In short, the study of civilization (s) has been approached from various perspectives and approaches. As I have tried to give a snap shot at some of these perspectives, there are at least three major recurrent tendencies in the study of civilization, particularly those pertaining to Islamic and Western civilizations. The first trend tends to adopt more of an empirical-historical approach to the study of civilization, and as such, confine civilizations to particular place and time. In this trend, philosophical, metaphysical, religious and other ideas are much less important than aspects which may involve practical-empirical realities such as urbanization, science, arts, state formation, empire building and, more generally, material and outward manifestation of civilizations-which are taken as axiomatic parameters that define the nature and form of civilizations.

Metaphysical, religious, and related philosophical aspects are only seen to provide symbolic identity to a civilization. Even though common among the theories of Islamic and Western civilizations, the great majority of theories that theorize about Western civilization tend to rely on this trend (approach). In other words, most of the theories about Western civilization rely heavily on this (empirical-historical) approach, and as such, represents a major and dominant trend. As the aforementioned discussion has shown, many of the theories that can be considered to fall under this trend tend to see religion withering away through time and giving way to science and rationalism-based

civilization. However, this is the most common tendency among theories explaining Western civilization, but much less is the case for Islamic civilization.

The second trend tends to embrace the interplay of philosophical and religious ideas in defining civilization. This trend, compared to the former one, emphasizes such ideas as the uniqueness of human beings, consciousness, spirituality, freedom, purpose, prophets, human experience, and God in their conceptions of civilization. Theories that adopt these factors to explain civilization tend to see civilization as the outward-manifestation of these conditions and processes. In other words, if it had not been for these factors, then there would not have been any civilization, including Islamic and Western civilizations. These theories, which through time emerged as the second dominant trend in the study of Islamic and western civilizations, see in civilization the permanence of ideas while its outward manifestations changing over time.

The last trend in the study of Islamic civilization is the multiplex trend. This trend, compared to the other two, encompasses theories which attempt to study civilization employing a wide array of approaches, factors, and contexts, and as such, takes into account multiple conditions to conceive of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, particular. This trend attempts to bridge the empirical-and thus-nature deterministic and the religiophilosophical- reductionism of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular. Simply put, the multiplex trend subsumes multiplicity and complexity of methods, contents, and focuses in order to make sense of Islamic civilization. In the following sections, I will try to show how these major trends are generally represented among some of the theories of Islamic and Western civilizations.

SECTION TWO

TRENDS AND CASES IN THE STUDY OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

In this section, I examined the nature of relation between religion and civilization in the various theories of Islamic civilization. To effectively deal with this, unlike chapter two wherein I discussed the overall trends in the study of civilization in general and Islamic and Western civilizations, in particular, I focused here on case studies and specific theories. In the last chapter, I attempted to provide a general glimpse at some of the major scholarship trends in civilization studies. Focusing on formative key figures in the fields of social sciences, particularly sociology, anthropology, history, psychology, and religious studies, I argued for the persistence of three commonly shared scholarly tendencies (which I called trends): historic-empirical, religiophilosophical, and multiplex trends.

Even though the first two trends are applicable to Islamic and Western civilizations alike, the last one, the multiplex trend, is arguably more pronounced among the theories of Islamic rather than Western civilization. In what follows, therefore, I focused more on contextually exploring individual cases or theories subsumed under the above three trends. In so doing, I intend to show how different theories, belonging to different academic trends, framed the religion and civilization debate: which aspects are emphasized; the nature of relation implied or expressed between the two; methodological orientations; and any intellectual or academic precommitments. This section, therefore, deals with theories of Islamic civilization while the next section will address those of Western civilization. In order of appearance, chapter three examines the “Historic-empirical” trends, Chapter four examines the “Religiophilosophical” trend,

and finally, Chapter five explores the multiplex trend. All these trends are analyzed based on two representative cases or theories.



CHAPTER THREE

THE HISTORIC-EMPIRICAL TREND: TOYNBEE AND HODGSON

. . . *the real issue is whether indeed there can be a true representation of anything, or whether any and all representations because they are representations, are embedded first in the language and then in the culture, institutions, and political ambiance of the representer. If the latter alternative is the correct one (as I believe it is), then we must be prepared to accept the fact that a representation is eo ipso implicated, intertwined, embedded, interwoven with a great many other things besides the "truth," which is itself a representation.*
(Edward W. Said, "Orientalism", 1978; p.272)

Said's obsession, a fruitful enterprise as it proved, with "representation" is a very crucial point to start off any discussion of culture or civilization, and especially so when there are people who are considered "the representer" and "the represented"⁴¹. Coming from the Western world (and as such, Western civilization) and Christians by faith, Arnold Toynbee and Marshal Hodgson *represent*, among other thinkers, those who were invested in understanding *the other* for different reasons, academic or so. Except for being empirically well grounded and methodologically rigorous, in both cases, the study of civilization in light of spatiotemporal contours, trajectories, and processes does not necessarily assume coherence. One among others would be on the very idea of civilization in general and the meaning of Islamic civilization, in particular. This

⁴¹ This is also represented in the "Etic" (representer, anthropologists) and "Emic" (represented, the people) perspectives in Sociocultural Anthropology.

includes whether or not civilization, Islamic or otherwise, goes through any predetermined laws or cycles and processes.

The centrality and relative importance of some form of religion in the making of civilization are another area of difference. The forthcoming sections deal extensively with these issues. In spite of these, both historians believed in the intelligibility of civilization as a unit of historical analysis rather than, for instance, national history. Furthermore, they also expressed the importance of religion or spiritual human experiences in their respective discussions of civilization. In chronological order, I will begin the discussion with Toynbee and continue later with Hodgson. By the end of this trend, however, brief analytical and comparative points encompassing both Toynbee and Hodgson will be provided.

3.1. Arnold Toynbee's Civilization: History, Religion, and Civilization

Writing in the last quarter of the twentieth century, Toynbee had felt that his earlier robust twelve volumes work on *The Study History* were far from being complete, and thus, still inadequate. At least in spatial terms, the list of civilizations which he enumerated (ranges between twenty-one to thirty civilizations) was not, he eventually realised, comprehensive enough for it did not include what he called “the indigenous civilizations of Africa to the south of the Sahara” and others in the East Asia. If he had additional years, obviously, he would probably include others, waiting to be unveiled through archeology or so, in his basket of civilizations. What is, in spite of its variants in qualitative terms or size in quantitative terms, in any case, this Toynbeean Civilization? How does it is distinguished from, for instance, very much related concepts like culture and society? Does it have any religious-spiritual dimensions to it? If so, what is (are) the nature and forms of relation between them? A detailed investigation is in order.

3.1.1. Culture, Society, and Civilization

Toynbeean civilization is different from, and, at the same time, very much part of the ideas and concepts of culture and society. Society, he believed, is “the total network of relations between human beings (Toynbee, 1972; p.43). The components of society, however, are not human beings but relations that exist between them. Culture, on the other hand, involves “regularities in the behavior of the members of society”. Drawing from the works of P. Bagby and A.L. Kroeber, he added that culture also “embodies values” (Ibid, p.43). Civilization, however, entailed “pre-civilizational societies”; “societies in processes of civilization”; and finally, “societies that are the embodiments of higher religions” (Toynbee, 1972; p.44).

On a historical plan, Toynbee estimates that the “Age of Civilization” “appears to have begun approximately five thousand years old” (Ibid, p.43). Put simply, for Toynbee,

civilization is the latest phenomenon in human evolution, and as such, there were animal conditions of human beings in past centuries and the presence of those subsequent pre-civilizational societies and cultures. In fact, Toynbee believed that “During the first half million, or perhaps one million, years after our pre-human ancestors had become human, we were primitives who have left no record except a few bones and a quantity of Paleolithic tools . . . civilization is only about five thousand years old, and most of what we know about human history is limited to these comparatively recent times” (Toynbee, 1972; p.10). This is another peculiar feature of the historio-empirical trend in the study of civilization, that is, evolution (which he, much like others in this trend, took it as axiomatic). Moreover, Toynbee went so far as to claim that there might be “post-human species . . . [which] might evolve out of mankind” (Toynbee, 1966; p.9). This is, obviously, despite the fact that scientists might have estimated “the history of matter and life back to a possible primary form, but they have left the origin of life, as well as the origin of matter, unexplained” (Krejci, 1981; p.10).

In more substantive terms, Toynbee saw civilization in two important ways. On one hand, civilization entails a city centered life, a division of labor, and an economic activity-free minority of elites or “non-economic specialists”. In this connection, therefore, civilization stands for:

. . . a state of society in which there is a minority of the population, however small, that is free from the task, not merely of producing food, but of engaging in any other of the economic activities-e.g., industry and trade-that have to be carried on to keep the life of the society going on the material plane at the civilizational level. These non-economic specialists-professional soldiers, administrators, and perhaps, above all, priests-have certainly been city dwellers in the case of most of the civilizations known to us (Toynbee, 1972; p.44).

He added that the presence of a minority-soldiers, administrators, and priests in a given civilization is only an identifying “mark” of civilization in general and not necessarily a

definition of it. Yet, they play an important role. One among others would be that these specialist minorities “monopolize social tasks which were formerly the responsibility of all participants in the society” (Toynbee, 1972; p.43). Similarly, he lamented that any change in the amount of food production or technological advances in any given society should not be considered as to “how civilization become possible”. In fact, much like the non-economic specialist mark of civilization, advances in technology and food production are also “truly enough, coincidental with the rise of civilization” (Ibid, 44).

In short, civilization is marked by division of labor, particularly a specialist minority, city life, advances in technology, and finally, surplus food production. Furthermore, it has its own “manifestations” and expressions like “Christian churches crosses and surplices” and it has its own “artistic styles, cultural style and visible arts . . . are merely expression of it” (Toynbee, 1972; p.46). In its second dimension, however, Toynbeean civilization assumes “high activity”, “cosmological outlook” and “vision”. He pointed out that “in spiritual terms”, civilization can be seen “as an endeavor to create a society in which the whole mankind will be able to live together in harmony, as members of a single all-inclusive family. This is, I believe, the goal at which all civilizations so far known have been aiming unconsciously, if not consciously” (Toynbee, 1972; p, 44).⁴²

⁴² In exactly the same way as Toynbee’s this later articulation, Sigmund Freud had believed much earlier that the purpose of civilization is “to combine single human individuals, and after families, then to races, peoples and nations, into one great unity, the unity of mankind” (Freud, 1962, p.69).

3.1.2. The Making of Toynbeean Civilization

Toynbee believed that all civilizations go through a common trajectory consisting of four major stages⁴³. The stage starts with a period of origin; then a period of growth; followed by a period of breakdown; and finally, a period of disintegration. Each stage has peculiar features that distinguish it from the others on a historical plane. In spite of these peculiarities, there are at least two crosscutting themes in Toynbee's study of civilization: one is what can be generally called as the "social" and the other is the "spiritual" or the "religion" domain of civilization (across all stages of civilization, from its genesis, growth, breakdown, and disintegration). In the following section, therefore, I will critically summarize these stages keeping in mind, and if possible, by critically reflecting upon, the religion-civilization relation reflected in his works.

1. Genesis

In an attempt to account for the genesis of civilization, Toynbee started by discarding two widely held explanations-racial and environmental determinism. He believed that it could not be of the racial characteristics of some societies that paved the way for their civilization as over against the racial characteristics of other peoples that destined them to remain in primitive states. In fact, he saw no adequate historical or other reasons and evidence for the doctrine of racial superiority in the making of civilization. In addition to the racial factor, he also rejected the theory which assumed that it is a favorable environment of soil or climate or habitat in certain parts of the world that was responsible for the initial emergence of civilizations. Much like the first theory, he had no reasons to believe that the points in the second theory were behind the genesis of civilization; rather, he argued that a causal explanation would necessitate similar

⁴³ The following discussion is very crucial for my overall assessment of the nature and form of relations between religion and civilization in Islam (Or in the context of Islamic civilization). By critically reviewing Toynbee's four stages of civilizational life cycle, I would be in a better position to systematically asses where and how he situates religion (he prefers "higher religions") in his appraisal of civilizations from birth to death.

appearances-occurrences of civilizations in similar environments in different parts of the world, a phenomenon that did not actually take place. He, thus, rejected the “view that civilizations are begotten in environments where the conditions unusually easy is clearly shown to be untenable . . .” (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; p.2). Accordingly, he concluded that civilizations are born neither out of superior biological makeup nor of environment conditions acting separately.

Contrary to the above two deterministic theories, Toynbee located the initial genesis of civilization in an interactive process of what he called “challenges” and “responses”. According to him, the initial genesis of civilization is attributed to three processes. The first is through what he called “the spontaneous mutation of some pre-civilizational societies” (e.g., many of the first generation civilizations like the Egyptian, Sumerian, Minoan, Indus Culture, Shang Culture, Andean, and Mayan). The second process is when “a pre-civilizational society may be stimulated into changing into civilization by influence of some civilization that is already in existence” (e.g., “Satellite civilizations” like Russian civilization). Finally, the last process is through the “disintegration of one or more civilizations of an older generation and the transformation of some of their elements into new configuration” (e.g., “Affiliated civilizations” of East Orthodox, Western Christian, and Islamic civilizations emerging out of their parent civilizations- Hellenic and Syriac Civilizations) (Toynbee,1972; p.85). For Toynbee, however, the interactive process of challenge-and-response constitute a fundamental modus operandi through which civilizations emerged. This process, he believed, expresses itself (successfully) in changing societies’ habits and habitats. When a primitive society faced with uniquely challenging conditions and situations, they had to curb and address these predicaments with creative mechanisms-responses, and this way, the first civilization appeared. For instance, societies in North Africa and South Western Asia had to respond to the physical challenge, which had expressed itself in terms of a continuing drought. Due to such challenges, some societies failed to produce a creative response, for instance, in changing their hunting habits and habitats. For this reason, some societies simply died out.

Others held on to their hunting habits without any change in their habitats and drifted toward Africa, and as such, they remained on the primitive level of social development. Others, on the contrary, stayed in the same place but changed their habits from hunting to that of shepherding, and due to this, they became the nomads of the desert regions of the “Afrasian Steppe”. Still, others changed, this time more successfully, both their habits and habitats by working out a creative response. They, then, went to the river valleys of the Nile or the Tigris and Euphrates and there began agricultural societies based on the cultivation of the soil. They produced “first generation” Egyptian and the Sumerian civilizations. Similarly, the Mayan civilization was a response to the luxuriance of the tropical forests of Central America. For this, Toynbee explained that:

. . . the ruins speak still more eloquently of the intensity of the struggle with the physical environment which the creators of the Mayan civilization must have waged victoriously in their day . . . Tropical Nature testifies unwillingly to the courage and the vigor of the men who once, if only for a season, succeeded in putting her to fight and keeping her at bay (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; p.4).

Other civilizations that came into being due to a successful response to environmental challenges included, Andean, Minoan, Syriac, and other civilizations. Andean civilization was a response to the barren challenge of the Peruvian plateau; and the Minoan civilization was also a response to the challenge of the open spaces of the Mediterranean Sea; and for Syriac civilization, Toynbee believed “such were the achievements of the Syriac civilization under the stimulus of the desert”(Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; p.11). Apart from this, however, there is another challenge posed by what Toynbee called “easy environments” in the contexts of two related circumstances⁴⁴. For instance, a society that moves to a new place is more likely to produce striking features than if it remains on the old ground of its “parent” civilization. For him, this is especially

⁴⁴ Toynbee believed that “We have now perhaps established decisively that the truth that ease is inimical to civilization . . . The greater the ease of the environment, the weaker the stimulus towards civilization which that environment administers to Man” (Ibid, p.31).

the case when the new ground has to be reached by sea or ocean travel. In this connection, Toynbee argued,

Now, the first is one in which people are introduced into an easy environment who after having lived in some difficult environment of the kinds that we have examined above. The second situation is that of people in an easy environment who have never, so far as is known, been exposed to any other environment since their pre-human ancestors became men (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; p.18).

However, this does not necessarily diminish or rule out the role of natural environment in the initial genesis of civilization. Although he rejected this in its deterministic sense, he had to acknowledge that the power of nature, either through being appearing to human beings as “easy environment” or “difficult environment” remains strong. Understandably, Toynbee’s theoretical potency rests on the “creative response” and this may have caused the role of nature to escape close scrutiny.

Toynbee’s “creative response” in the making of civilization was not only directed at environmental or physical challenges, but also others. Some civilizations that came out of their primitive conditions responded successfully to other challenges. Toynbee argued that this is particularly the case for those that came *later and affiliated* civilizations, the challenge to them was more likely to have arisen from “human” related rather than from the purely physical challenges of the external environment. Accordingly, in addition to the above two environment-related challenges (posed by easy and hard environments), there are stimuli from human sources that are represented by three types of challenges. These are: the “blows of defeat” administered by outside societies (like the Persian onslaught upon Athens); the external and relentless “pressure of outside societies” (such as that of the Ottoman Empire over a long period of time upon Western Europe); and the “penalization that a privileged group puts upon an underprivileged” ones (like the penalties put upon the Jews, Slaves and the Negroes in North America). In this last case, the penalized group is more likely to respond back to the “challenge of handicap” by

concentrating its energies upon other fields and excelling in these. For instance, the Jews responded to “political handicap” by excelling in religion, and slaves in the Roman Empire responded to political discrimination by excelling in religion or philosophy (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934).

Put differently, under these five major circumstances, civilizations emerge from primitive conditions responding successfully to challenges posed, two environmental (as in hard and easy environments) and three human-related factors-conditions and stimuli. However, Toynbee noted that the challenge presented to these primitive societies must be strong enough only to evoke a creative response, but it cannot overwhelmingly sever that the society involved cannot make a creative response. Accordingly, the challenge must be relatively in “a golden mean” in environments that are neither exclusively easy nor excessively difficult. The most stimulating and optimum challenge is, therefore, a mean between “a deficiency of severity and an excess of it.” A deficient challenge may fail to stimulate civilization, and an excessive challenge may also overwhelm the challenged society (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934).

2. Growth

The next stages after the genesis of civilizations are growth, breakdown, and disintegration. The growth of a civilization results, according to Toynbee, when a civilization not only responds successfully and creatively to a particular challenge that presents in front of it, but, most importantly, it should continue producing further challenges which in turn result in other successful and creative responses. In this connection, Toynbee argued that “Birth is a single act: growth is a continuous process. The movement of challenge-and-response becomes a self-sustaining series if each successful response provokes a disequilibrium requiring new creative adjustments” (Toynbee, 1972; p.131). However, this successive growth (not necessarily progressive) is highly contingent upon the relative conditions of the “creative minority” and that “. . . the growth of a society can be measured in terms of the increasing power of self-

determination won by the society's leaders; and I believe that the future of a civilization lies in the hands of this minority of creative persons (Ibid, p.127).

In any case, the interactive concept of cultural development entails the dynamic processes of successive stages of “equilibrium”, “overbalance”, “equilibrium restored”, “disequilibrium”, a new equilibrium reached, and so forth. Put simply, it is through this interactive process by which civilizations generally grow. If they fail to meet challenges dynamically or unable to produce further challenges that garner creative responses, the civilization will then stop growing and begins to enter the next stage of its life cycle, breakdown-which, for Toynbee, is defined as the failure to continue to grow. The condition of growth is not confined to the mere ascendancy of control over the external environment. For Toynbee, this control is expressed through two forms.

The first is a control over social and human environments by principally employing geographic mechanisms, military conquest, or political influence of other peoples and societies. The second form of control is a control over the physical environment by technically improving the means of industrial and agricultural production. The ultimate source of sustainable civilization, however, is beyond these forms of control over the natural and social environments. These ways of “feeding” civilization are rather symptomatic of a period of breakdown or disintegration in civilization than ascendancy. The genuine condition of growth is not in these material expressions, but, most importantly, in responses which are necessarily internal and more spiritual rather than something external and material. This is a process which Toynbee Identified as “etherialization,” and expressed through a progress towards “self-determination” (Toynbee, 1972).

In this process of civilizational growth, the key role is played by what he called a “creative minority”. He argued that all growth in society (by extension civilization) originates among either creative individuals or minorities. As a society, as alluded to earlier, is not simply an aggregate of discrete individuals or crowds who are conceived as the only realities or that a society is an organic reality of which individuals are simply

parts. For him, even though society is a field of action, the source of all action, however, is the individual members. Besides, some of these individuals can possess “superhuman” abilities that would make them initiate the process of growth at a certain point in time. This creative and superhuman ability Toynbee identified it with “personality” whose possessor is “impelled” by his own nature to try to “transfigure his fellow men by recreating them in his own image”. These creative personalities are always, however, in a minority and always find themselves surrounded by the uncreative mass of the great majority of a society. These creative individuals and minorities follow a process which Toynbee identified as “withdrawal-and-return”. They must withdraw from society’s field of action (which is the society itself) in order to make their achievement of “inspiration” or “discovery” and then they must return back to the field of action in order to try to convert the society to the new way of life they have envisioned.

Toynbee contextualized and grounded this process through such creative personalities (primarily included prophets, saints, and philosophers) as Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, the Buddha, St. Paul, St. Benedict, St. Gregory, Plato, Machiavelli, and Dante⁴⁵. These creative personalities, once they came from their “withdrawal” (where the creativity takes place through “vision” or “inspiration”), they inevitably face the problem of how to “convert” what Toynbee called the “uncreative mass” to its new way of life. This problem is addressed, Toynbee argued, through the faculty of “mimesis” or imitation as this is the only easy way to inculcate a new lifestyle. This is so partly because imitation is the highest faculty that the great masses of people have for learning. In fact, Toynbee believed that it is “a generic feature” of social life characteristic of both primitive and civilized societies (Toynbee, 1972; pp.135-140).

Furthermore, Toynbee believed that imitation or “social drill” must be employed for the reason that the mass of people cannot generally respond to the process of “cultivated intelligence” as a means of solving critical problems, and as such, they must, by logical necessity, rely upon the intelligence of the creative minority for leadership and direction.

⁴⁵ This resonates with Karl Jasper’s “Axial Age” wherein, to use Toynbee’s formulation, some of the “creative minorities” of world history and civilization emerged (Jaspers, 1953). Brief comparative points will be addressed in Chapter Four where I dealt with Karl Jaspers’s notion of “Axial Period”.

Understood in this manner, therefore, growth demands social differentiation between two classes of people, the creative individuals or creative minority and the uncreative mass. If this differentiation between members of a given civilization does not occur, growth will not then occur. Ideally speaking, it would be better if the mass could, as the creative minority does, undergo the same experience that has transformed the creative individuals, but the reality is that what all the uncreative mass can do is just to engage in mimesis of the external results and follow the leaders. Apart from these two classes of people, there are some portions of the mass who even fail to imitate and, as a result, remain succumb (Toynbee, Vol.III, 1934).

3. Breakdown

The third in the life cycle of civilization is what Toynbee called “Breakdown” stage. Contrary to the conventional understanding of breakdown that assumes falling apart or a collapse, it rather means the end of the period of growth in civilization and the subsequent loss of creativity in facing the challenges of the environment(external) or of encounters (human aspects). Breakdown also sets in whenever a leveling off period is experienced among civilizations. The above conventional view rather best fits into the fourth stage of the civilizational cycle, “disintegration” of civilization.

For Toynbee, three symptomatic processes characterize the third stage. The first is when the minority loses its creativity and unable to command the support and fellowship of the majority. The second is when the majority withdraws its voluntary mimesis of the creative minority who ceased to be so. Finally, the emergence of social disunity within the civilization, which will, in turn, hardens the class differentiation between the creative minority and the mimetic mass. Notwithstanding these, Toynbee attributed huge responsibility to the minority class who failed to be creative (for which he used “nemesis of creativity”) and lead its uncreative mass.

Due to this lose of creativity, they either follow the majority itself in which context the civilization becomes “arrested” or the former creative minority may end up being the

“dominant minority” in which case force is employed (“militarism”). This later course of action set in motion by the creative minority is, for Toynbee, typical of an entrance into the fourth stage of civilizational cycle, disintegration (Toynbee, 1972; p.199-110). For Toynbee, the stagnation and loss of appetite for creativity among the creative minority is their loss of self-determination. In other words, this loss of sense of self-determination within civilization meant the loss of unity in society, and thus, breakdown. It is, then, this way that civilization commits suicide, a death from within. Toynbee rejected all other explanations to the contrary, deterministic, or otherwise⁴⁶ (Toynbee, Vol. IV, 1934).

4. Disintegration

Finally, the last stage of Toynbeean civilizational cycle is disintegration. Divisions and schisms both in social and spiritual domains of a given civilization characterize this stage. For him, disintegration happens in three important states and conditions (social dimension). Firstly, civilizations experience what Toynbee called a “time of troubles” identified by increasing conflicts and war between societies and a friction between minority and majority groups within a given society. Secondly, the minority, realizing that it can no longer command the majority through its ideas (may be dead or so ideas), starts to keep the uncreative mass by employing force. The typical means which the minority uses to exert its leadership by force (it then assumes the role of “dominant minority”) is the creation of a universal state.

Thirdly, the disintegrating civilization experiences a period of interregnum when the universal state (controlled by the “dominant minority”) loses its real power over societies under its control. Due primarily to this anomie, the mass begins to respond back to the iron fist dominance of the minority, strengthen its power for opposition to reverse the power structure (reversing the control, majority subduing the minority), and

⁴⁶ It is not, for instance, the inevitable decay of a social organism as Spengler stipulated (Spengler, 1926).

finds its ultimate purpose in the creation of what Toynbee called “universal church”⁴⁷. The mass then becomes an “internal proletariat”⁴⁸ commanding great power and devolving its own creative minority for leadership. Another group which Toynbee called “external proletariat” which was outside of the disintegrating civilization, but which was subjected to universal state’s compulsion now organize into “barbarian war bands” and attack the already collapsing universal state until its eventual fall (Toynbee, Vol.V. 1934).

The spiritual dimension of disintegration entails what Toynbee called the “schisms in the soul” of human beings which parallels schisms in society. He included three aspects of schism: behavior, feeling, and life. In the context of behavior, he argued that in a disintegrating civilization, creativity is replaced by either a “passive abandon or active self-control”. Abandon assumes letting oneself engage in passion, unbridled freedom and hedonism. Self-control, on the other hand, calls on active disciplining of oneself and controlling impulses of nature, as represented by philosophers, saints, and mystics like Socrates, Lucretius, Stoics, or Christian ascetics. In the second context, a disintegrating civilization is characterized by a passive “sense of drift” and/or an active “sense of sin”.

Lastly, a disintegrating civilization on the plane of life, as opposed the etherialization and spirituality in a growing civilization, is confronted with four alternatives. The first two courses of action are violent; and in that, the first is “Archaism” which entails the attempt to reinstate a happier state of the idealized past in terms of language, art, or religion; and the second is “futurism” which in turn assumes an attempt to achieve a utopia by sudden, rapid or revolutionary action. The remaining two are “passive detachment” and “active transfiguration”. The former is defined as an effort directed at withdrawing from this world and finding some sort of asylum in another world or a state of mind. The latter is defined as the double movement of withdrawal from this world for

⁴⁷ The “universal church” generally implies the advent of what Toynbee called the “Higher religions”, and associated personalities and institutions like the Christian Church (Monotheism-Judaism, Christianity and Islam-and Mahayana Buddhism) with or through the emerging “internal proletariats” who are going to be (or devolve from it) the next creative minorities.

⁴⁸ A proletariat (internal) is a group which feels, and acts up on the idea, that it has lost its stake in the disintegrating civilization (in fact, the dissatisfaction is traced back to the third-breakdown-stage of Toynbeean civilizational life cycle).

inspiration and come back to induce change in society, and as such, recreate the society in the “image of the vision of the spiritual world”. Toynbee finds in transfiguration the birth of a new society and civilization, for other courses of action lead to dead ends (Toynbee, Vol.VI, 1934; 1972; pp. 241-249).

To conclude, it can be pointed out that the making of Toynbeean civilization presupposes the inevitability of a universal church behind or at the times of a universal state. This universal church encompasses internal proletariats with new “visions” or higher religions. This internal proletariat is then responsible for the initial genesis and growth of civilizations. The continuing vitality of civilizations then depend on the internal proletariats which produce their own creative minorities to respond to environmental as well as human (social) challenges and lead the uncreative common. However, as the creative minority exhausts its creative energy or fails to meet the spiritual and social needs of its citizens, it turns into dominant minority and then experiences universal state, but left only with two options, revitalized again by a new internal proletariat-creative minority with a new vision, or disintegrates. In this Toynbeean civilizational cycle, therefore, higher religions and spiritual circles-minorities, universal churches, or internal proletariats are foundational elements.

3.1.3. Toynbee between Religion and Civilization

In the last two important sections, I dealt specifically with two important elements constituting the central pinnacles of my research pursuit. The first was about the very concept of civilization, its relation, and unique peculiarities; and the second element was about the life cycle of civilization going through four important, and highly interrelated, stages. In each of these trajectories, I have attempted to draw attention, by way of critically summarizing and highlighting, towards various processes, ideas, factors and elements that, tacitly or overtly, expressed the nature and form of relation between religion and civilization. Similarly, in the following section, I will specifically deal with how Toynbee delineates and work out mechanisms of relations between what he called

“higher religions” and civilizations. The second part of this discussion will go one step further and see this in the context of Islamic civilization.

3.1.3.1. Religion as Chrysalis of Civilizations

To appraise effectively Toynbee’s conception of civilization, one needs to equally explore the religious and spiritual dimensions and contexts as well. This is because, without the necessary and specific reference to these elements, Toynbee’s construction of various civilizations would prove extremely difficult, if not impossible, to understand⁴⁹. It should also be noted, as I have discussed above, that these domains are foundational in the study (but also in the constitution) of history and civilizations. It is for this reason, much like other thinkers, that he saw civilization as human beings’ peculiar enterprise and experience⁵⁰. For instance, in his “*Change and Habit: The Challenge of Our Time*” (1966), Toynbee underscored that there are at least two inherent unique characteristics of the nature of human beings: spirituality and curiosity. He argued in the former context that although technological advancement is “the most successful achievement, it is not the essence of humanity, and is not even the feature of human nature that is the most crucial for mankind’s existence, survival and well-being”, but it is spirituality that is at the center of the essence of humanity (p.11). Spirituality, being one of the distinctive features of human nature, is the springboard for the creation of cultures “of which tools are material evidence” (Ibid). He expatiated more broadly that,

The distinctive spiritual features of human nature, which are the most significant marks of being human, are known to us, not through any material products of human work, but through a human being’s spiritual

⁴⁹ In fact, Toynbee’s civilizations, after the first generations, are all conceived as the product of the chrysalis of effect of higher religions.

⁵⁰ Muslims thinkers, such as Ibn Khaldun, belived in the idea that “human beings are civilized or city-oriented by nature” (“*Al-Insan madani bil-tab’a*”) (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.96).

encounters with his fellow human beings, with himself, and with the ultimate spiritual reality in the Universe (Ibid, pp.11-12).

For him, there are four important distinctive features (Toynbee called them the four “stable ingredients”) of human nature which are highly interlocked with spirituality. These are consciousness, the power of will, a sense of ethics, and finally, religion (Toynbee, 1966; pp.11-19). Human cultural achievements (including civilizations) are, attributed to and the reflections of these unique attributes of human nature (Ibid, p.13). Furthermore, these features under the spirituality of human beings also collectively provide a sense of permanence and stability to human life. Although spirituality provides a sense of permanence, it is what Toynbee called “curiosity” that effects social and cultural changes in human existence. Still, since curiosity is the product of human consciousness, if it is “pursued perseveringly, it will end in religious experience” (Toynbee, 1972; p.489). In either case, Toynbee believed, the religious or spiritual experience is very important. The following sections further this attribute (more generally in the context of higher religions”) of human beings in relation to the idea of civilization.

3.1.3.2. Higher Religions and Civilizations

Even though Toynbee felt that religions are subsumed under spirituality (in his “Change and Habit”,1966), he preferred to stick with higher religions in most of his works, including his magnum opus, *The Study of History*. For him, these higher religions are six in number and included Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. These religions occurred in different times and places, separately and independently in the span of 1200 years culminating in the last of them, Islam in the seventh century⁵¹. Toynbee pointed out that it was in the centuries that elapsed between

⁵¹ This is a recurrent theme starting from Karl Jaspers (1953) to Marshal G. Hodgson (1974). Including Toynbee, these thinkers believed that there was a period when key historical personalities (such as prophets and philosophers) appeared with some “transformative” ideals, in the different parts of the world, that have since shaped the nature and fate of human existence. Unlike Toynbee, Jaspers’s Axial

the first-Zarathustra and the last-Muhammad that the historical higher religions came into being and, in the course of time, able to command the fate of the great majority of human race. This “religious revolution”⁵² in the history of humankind,

. . . have conferred an immense boon on mankind . . . the glimpses of truth and the aids for living that each founder of a higher religion has given its fellow human beings have been dazzlingly novel and beneficent. The founders of the historic higher religions are, in fact, by far the greatest human personalities that have appeared so far; and today, more than 1300 years after the death of the most recent of them, they are all of them exercising a far greater influence on the lives of a far greater number of people than anyone who once lived before them (Toynbee, 1966; p.163).

He believed that it is in the religious sphere that human beings have first won their individual freedom, and thus, the higher religions have been the original liberating agencies. Due to this, the breakthrough of these religions has been the most radical and transformative “new departure” so far in the history of religion and man. He argued that these religions “have released Man from the social prison house which he had inherited from his pre-human ancestors” (Ibid, p. 162). Put differently, Toynbee believed that without the necessary reference to these and earlier forms of human spiritual and religious experiences, one cannot simply conceive of civilization as we know it today- the following paragraphs provide more details.

Whilst this being the gist of Toynbee’s civilizational thesis, he knew that there were arguments quite contrary to his. This, among others, included the views of Edward Gibbon and James Frazer⁵³. The bone of contention between Toynbee and Gibbon primarily included whether the sinking Roman Empire and the rising of Christianity (Christian Catholic church) in early centuries correlated in some ways or not. Gibbon

Period took place in the centuries between 800 and 200 BC. Most of these higher religions were, however, concentrated around “Oxus-Jaxartes basin and in Syria” (Toynbee, 1972; p.394).

⁵² Karl Jaspers called it “events” of the “Axial Period” (1953).

⁵³ Toynbee considered both Gibbon and Frazer as “. . . the last generation of Western neo-pagans of a rational, unenthusiastic . . . school” (Toynbee, Vol.VII, 1954; p. 382).

believed that the “triumph of barbarians and religion” (Christianity in particular) accounts for the eventual demise of the Roman Empire. Similarly, Frazer argued that,

The religion of the Great Mother, with its curious blend of crude savagery with spiritual aspirations, was only one of a multitude of similar Oriental faiths which in the later days of paganism spread over the Roman Empire, and by saturating the European peoples with alien ideals of life gradually undermined the whole fabric of ancient civilization . . . The spread of Oriental faiths over the Roman Empire contributed to undermine the fabric of Greek and Roman civilization (Frazer, 1907; p.251).

Toynbee believed, however, that this Gibbonian thesis (which, for Toynbee, is identical with those of James Frazer and Alfred Rosenberg) is fundamentally erroneous. He pointed out that it was neither Christianity nor any other oriental higher religions behind the demise of Greco-Roman civilization. To the contrary, he underscored that

. . . in truth it had inflicted mortal wounds on itself long before the appearance, above its horizon, of Christianity or any of the other higher religions with which Christianity eventually competed for the conquest of a moribund Hellenic World. It is, indeed, indisputable that the Hellenic achievement of parochial self-government and the Hellenic virtue of parochial patriotism had by that time been discredited and extinguished through being misdirected and misused by their own authors and exponents . . . The sufferings that the Hellenic Society had inflicted on itself had produced this revolutionary change in its outlook without the intervention of any external agency (Toynbee, Vol.VII, 1954; p. 385).

Furthermore, the “Oriental faiths” (Christianity in particular) in the Greco-Roman world were filling a spiritual vacuum, not creating one. He rather argued that the question is whether “spiritual and social values” are actually antithetical and inimical to one another or not and whether the very fabric of civilization is “undermined if the salvation of the

individual soul is taken as being the supreme aim of life” or not (Toynbee, Vol.VII, 1954; p.386). Toynbee lamented that such an antagonistic form of relation between religion and civilization, appraised in terms of spirituality and social values, is rather “illusory”. He concluded that,

In seeking God, Man is performing a social act; and, if God's Love has gone into action in This World in the redemption of Mankind by Christ, then Man's efforts to make himself less unlike a God who has created Man in His own image must include efforts to follow Christ's example in sacrificing himself for the redemption of his fellow men. Seeking and following God in this way that, in a Christian's belief, is God's way, is, in a Christian's eyes, the only true way for a human soul on Earth to seek salvation. The antithesis between trying to save one's own soul by seeking and following God and trying to do one's duty to one's neighbor is therefore false . . . The two activities are indissoluble because 'he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? The Christian soul that is truly seeking to save itself by loving God in God's way is as fully social a being. He is a citizen, not of a secular commonwealth, but of the Kingdom of God, and therefore his paramount and all-embracing aim is, not to identify himself with the genius of an earthly city, but to attain the highest degree of communion with, and likeness to, God Himself . . . *the spiritual progress of individual souls in this life will in fact bring with it much more social progress than could be attained in any other way* (Emphasis is mine, Toynbee, Vol.VII, 1954; pp.387-388).

Due to this critical form of bond between “spirituality” and “social progress”, Toynbee discovered higher religions in most of the civilizations he enlisted and examined. The internal proletariats, being the torchbearers of the higher religions (and assuming the role

of universal church), were behind the emergencies of world civilizations⁵⁴. In this connection, it is the universal church that saw the seeds of new civilizations. The universal church, encompassing the internal proletariats with their higher religions, served as what Toynbee called the “chrysalis” out of which new civilizations are born. Accordingly, out of the Islamic religion came Islamic civilization (specifically, Arabic and Iranic sister civilizations); from Mahayana Buddhism came the Far Eastern civilization; out of Hinduism developed the Hindu civilization; and out of Christianity emerged two civilizations, the Western Christian civilization and the Orthodox Christian civilization arose when the Christian Church divided into its Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox branches.

Now, it is only twenty-one human societies (and thus civilizations) Toynbee identified that have gone beyond their primitive states and have displayed the dynamic characteristics of full-fledged civilized societies. Toynbee believed that “the first civilizations emerged among the primitive societies which had previously been the only existing form of human social organization” (Toynbee, Vol. II, 1934; p.1). To avoid any possible confusions, it would be worth noting that these civilizations are primitive forms of civilization belonging to what Toynbee called “pre-civilizational societies” and “societies in process of civilization”. Those that came after, including the six identified and the later five full-fledged ones are closer to assume “compact” civilizational status (Toynbee, 1971; p.44). The remaining “primitive” forms of civilizations or societies, however, did not succeed for some reasons: “aborted”, “arrested” or so in Toynbee’s words. Out of these civilizations, however, it was only seven of them that came directly out from their primitive existence. Out of these, again, it was only three that appeared in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East region. These were the “Egyptiac”, the “Minoan”, and the “Sumieric”. Another one emerged in the Far East region which Toynbee styled as the “Sinic”. Another variant, again, appeared in the

⁵⁴ Although Hodgson generally adopted the idea of “axial age”, he disagreed with what it entailed. He said, “When it becomes clear that long-range historical change cannot be adequately interpreted in terms of the initiative of great men or of direct geographical or racial causation ; and when interpretation through the evident moral level of the leading classes or even through immediate economic interests proves to require explanation in turn of why the moral level or the economic interests were as they were ; then recourse can be had to explanation by unevident but seminal culture traits” (Hodgson, Vol.I. 1974; p.35).

Asian-Indian continent, which Toynbee styled as “Indus Culture”. Finally, the remaining two appeared in what came to be called the New World. These were the “Andean” around Peru and the “Mayan” in Central America. These were, then, to be Toynbee’s “first generations” (the Egyptian, Sumerian, Minoan, Indus Culture, Shang Culture, Andean, and Mayan) of the unfolding of many others-“affiliated”, “offspring”, “second” and “third” generation civilizations⁵⁵.

The “second generation”, or what he called “apprenticed” civilizations, included Hellenic, Syriac, Sinic, Indic, Egyptian, Hittite, Babylonian, Andean-Mayan-Yucatec-Mexic (New world) civilizations. These apprenticed civilizations, in turn, served as germinal civilizations that facilitated a smooth transition to-and-the emergence of five surviving (but, generally eight) “affiliated” civilizations. In serving as germinal civilizations-the apprenticed civilizations, the chrysalis role of the universal church is revolutionary and transformative. In other words, if it had not been for Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and Mahayana playing their chrysalis role within the context of the above eight second-generation civilizations, then there would not have been third generation-surviving five civilizations.

The third generation civilizations include, out of the Hellenic civilization (with the universal church’s formative role) grew two offspring: the Western Christian and the Orthodox Christian (with a Russian offshoot); out of Syriac civilization the Iranian and Arabic, which later in time, fused to produce the Islamic; out of the Indic emerged the Hindu civilization of India; and finally, out of the Sinic developed the Far Eastern civilization (mainly in China and a Japanese offshoot) (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; p.411-412). Put differently, the seven civilizations mentioned above stood midway between their parents in the first generation (which were around twenty-one) and their offspring in the third generation (which were, again, around eight, but five are surviving civilizations). The surviving civilizations included the Western, the Orthodox, the

⁵⁵ According to Toynbee, the first generation civilizations “arose out of the mutation of some primitive society at a stage of social development earlier than the invention of techniques for keeping records . . .” (Toynbee, Vol. IX, 1954; p.374).

Islamic, the Hindu, and the Far Eastern civilizations-which, Toynbee believed, were the outcome of universal churches with their higher religions and internal proletariats.

3.1.4. Toynbee and Islamic Civilization

In the last two important parts of Toynbee's take on civilization studies, I dealt, firstly, with Toynbee's conception of the meaning of civilization, and secondly, the relations between religion and civilization. Here, I will continue this discussion by extending these axiomatic features of Toynbee's thought to Islamic civilization. It focuses on three important questions and themes: First, the origin and nature of Islamic civilization; second, whether there is any relation between Islam as a religion and civilization, and if it does, the nature and form of this relation; and finally, a critical commentary on Toynbee's study of Islam and Islamic civilization.

3.1.4. 1. Historicizing Islamic Civilization

For Toynbee, the origin of Islamic civilization is dated back to the centuries between 500 BC and the end of the 13th century AD. The centuries elapsed between these two periods, he believed, constituted what he called the "Universal State Phase" (USP) of Islamic civilization which had, in turn, been inherited by Abbasid caliphate from the Syriac civilization (Toynbee, 1972; p.72). It should be underscored that for Toynbee, universal states are "negative institutions . . . for they arise after, and not before, the breakdowns of the civilizations to which they bring political unity . . . [and] they are the products of dominant minorities [who once were creative minorities who lost their creative power] . . . while universal states are thus symptoms of social disintegration, they are at the same time attempts to check this disintegration and defy it . . . they are the products of a processes of social decline, and as such, are stamped by their certificate of origin as unmistakably uncreative and ephemeral (Toynbee,1972; pp.265-267). This

goes, however, against the view that sees high level creativity in the arts, philosophy, theology, sciences, and other areas before the collapse of the Abbasid Caliphate (Bennabi in Basha, 1992; Nadwi, 2005; Karakoç, 2005).

It is also questionable whether the Abbasid or the one preceding it in time “arise after the breakdowns of the civilizations to which they bring political unity”. The link which Toynbee tried hard to establish among Syriac civilization (being the spring board of Arabic and Iranic civilizations), Islamic caliphate in the subsequent periods, and the emergence of Arabic civilization is very weak devoid of any continuity, “reunification” as himself claims, or any conceivable bond-except for geographical proximity in the emergence of Islam.

In a table illustrating the growth of world civilizations between the years 3500 BC and 2000AD, he rather located Islamic civilization in the centuries after the Mongol invasion of the Abbasid Caliphate in the second half of the thirteenth century. It is, therefore, in the fourteenth century and beyond when the universal state phase gave rise to what Toynbee called the “Islamic” civilization in the “Political Plurality Phase” (PPP). However, though Toynbee’s USP and PPP may appear to provide a working temporal contour to the genesis and growth of Islamic civilization (and perhaps others in the list as well), it is far from being the commonly recycled, and often taken as axiomatic, position in the study of Islamic civilization. Many theories date the initial genesis and growth of Islamic civilization, obviously with slightly different parameters, in the first two centuries of the birth of Islam in the Arabian Desert (See, for instance, Hodgson, 1974; Bennabi, 1992; Nadwi, 2005; Karakoç, 2005; Qutb, 2006; Allawi, 2009; Faruqi, 2013).

In spite of adopting the “Islamic” appellation to this civilization, what Toynbee actually imply and work with under this civilization is something different. Following the end of the universal state of the Abbasid Caliphate in the thirteenth century, what came after is “Arabic” civilization followed by “Iranic” civilization. It was in this transition from the Syriac-Abbasid universal state to the Arabic civilization that Islam came to assume a

universal church, which would eventually pave the way for the advent of a new civilization. In this regard, Toynbee argued that,

. . .the reunification of the Syriac world had been successfully achieved, on the whole, in the 'resumption' of the Syriac universal state under the 'Abbasid regime and in the establishment of a 'totalitarian' Syriac universal church in the shape of Islam (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; p.235).

Yet, it is questionable whether the “universal church” being of Islam came to be the way Toynbee felt it did around the demise of the Abbasid Caliphate. This is, obviously, despite the fact that the universal church is characterized by mass religious conversion (in this case, Mongol’s conversion to Islam) and it is contestable that this had actually happened only during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In fact, the first two centuries of Islam saw one of the most significant religious conversions ever in its history.

The Syriac world and civilization, in Toynbee’s final analysis, is the birthplace of not only Islamic civilization (in terms of Arabic and Iranic civilizations) but also Judaic and Christian civilizations. He believed that it was in three consecutive centuries between the years 1425 and 1125 BC that what he styled as “Syriac civilization” emerged (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; p.87). According to Toynbee, there are at least three great feats to its credit. The Syriac civilization discovered the Atlantic Ocean; invented an alphabetic system of writing; and it arrived at a particular conception of God which brought together all the Monotheistic religions of Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam (Toynbee, 1972; p.117). However, due to the “political intrusion” of Hellenism upon the Syriac civilization and its Iranian world in the train of Alexander the Great, which Toynbee considered it to have presented a challenge to these societies, they responded differently, although centered on religions, and with different outcomes. He argued that,

Were they or were they not to rise up against the intrusive civilization and cast it out? Confronted with this challenge, they made a number of

attempts to respond, all of which took a religious movement as their vehicle. The Zoroastrian and Jewish reactions were failures; the Nestorian and Monophysite reactions were failures; the Islamic reaction was a success . . . In consequence, the Syriac-Hellenic ‘culture-compost’ produced an Islamic civilization (Toynbee 1972, p.123).

This “Islamic civilization” which Toynbee mentioned here is an “Arabic civilization” which came into being after the dissolution of the Abbasid caliphate and with Islam as a universal church by the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries. Contrary to Toynbee, Hodgson argued that the “Arabic” appellation is misleading and a philological bias, because “The special role of old Arab families has given rise (in combination with certain more extraneous circumstances) to a tendency on the part of many scholars to interpret the development of Islamicate civilization from an Arab, even an Arabian point of view” (Hodgson, Vol.I. 1974; p.41). For Toynbee, therefore, it was after the collapse of the Abbasid Caliphate following its interregnum period (975-1275 AD) that the “affiliated” Syriac civilization, which Toynbee called “Arabic”, came to birth (Toynbee, Vol. II, 1934; p.76). The “original home” of this affiliated civilization was in both Egypt and the old ground of Syria where Syriac civilization was first it emerged. The leading role, however, was played by Egypt, and Syria was a subordinate one in Arabic civilization (Ibid, p.77). For Toynbee, since Arabic civilization had “easy birth” it “. . . did not have a distinguished career . . . no creative forces were gathering in its bosom . . . before prematurely brought to an end by the masterful intervention of a sister society-the Iranic-which had been nurtured in hard environment” (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; pp.391-392). In other place, he argued “. . . the Arabic civilization displayed such vigor as it did display before its career was prematurely closed by incorporation in the body social of its lustier Iranic sister. . . (Ibid, pp. 76-77).

Another ‘affiliated’ and “sister” civilization to Arabic civilization in the broader Syriac world is Iranic civilization. Here, the affiliation and sisterhood assumed by Toynbee between Arabic and Iranic civilization are all in the religion of Islam, but much less

explicitly accounted. Iranic civilization “erected” its imposing monuments on sites piecemeal to alien civilizations (Mughal and Ottoman worlds). Although it was in the heart of Iranian Plateau and Oxus-Jaxartes Basin where the Iranic civilization was originally found, they never became “active focus” of the civilization. However, distinguished by the end of fifteenth and beginning of sixteenth centuries, its great achievements principally revolved around war, politics, architecture, and literature⁵⁶. For Toynbee, these were,

. . . accomplished at one or other of the two extremities of the Iranic world; either in Hindustan, at one end, or in Anatolia, at the other, and they culminated respectively, in these two areas, in the Mughal, and in the Ottoman empire. Ottoman Empire was erected on the domain of the orthodox Christian civilization and performed, for Orthodox Christendom, the function of the universal state. Similarly, Mughal Empire was erected on the domain of the Hindu Civilization and performed the function of a universal state in the Hindu World (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1952; p.77).

3.1.4. 2. Islam between Religion and Civilization

In his study of Arabic and Iranic civilizations, what Toynbee saw was the time and space confinements of what he called “Islamic” civilization⁵⁷. Unlike Christian Catholicism and to some extent Hellenistic tradition which, for Toynbee, make up for the centripetal forces of Western civilization, the same degree of constitutive effect is missing for Islam in the making of Arabic, Iranic or even what he occasional referred to as “Islamic”

⁵⁶ Toynbee believed that Persian literature was “not the creation of Iranic civilization, but the apparented Syraic civilization” (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; p.77).

⁵⁷ Hodgson found Toynbee’s division of what has been called “Islamic” civilization into Arabic, Syriac and Iranic civilizations as an “error” (Hodgson, Vol. I, 1974; p. 32).

civilization⁵⁸. In fact, Toynbee's *A Study of History* fundamentally reveals an intellectual or academic effort to shed light on the centrality and quintessence of Christianity and Hellenism in the making of western civilization. His beyond average deployment of the Christian bible and Christian belief system in terms of the frequency of verses, instances, Christian Church, Jesus Christ, saints, and so forth in the whole body of his writing can tell a lot beyond any words. It is obviously expected that this conscious or not pre-commitment can influence, in way or another, the way how he frames and analyses his ideas of civilization in general and Western and Islamic civilizations, in particular⁵⁹.

As Sorokin rightly noted, Toynbee showed an extra degree of sensitivity in approaching the Greco-Roman and Western civilization, but much less did he care for other civilizations. This criticism exactly applies to Toynbee's appraisal of Islamic civilization. One reason, Sorokin notes, is that he has understudied ("much thinner" knowledge) these civilizations, and as such, he found him to be "one-sided" (Sorokin, 1940; p. 380). In any case, it is safe to conclude that it is very daunting to find any reasonable driving force, idea or Islam as a religion in the inner workings of Arabic, Iranic, or generally, Islamic civilization beyond noting what is peculiar to each of them-Arabic and Iranic civilizations. This does not only apply to Islam as a religion but also as a civilization having its complete sense of being.

By treating Arabic and Iranic civilizations as distinct civilizations with some vague form of sisterhood and affiliation by religion, Toynbee assigned a symbolic role to Islam in the making of these civilizations. Quiet contrary to Western civilization which, for Toynbee, is the product of western Christianity (Catholicism) with a lending hand of Hellenism (readily integrated with), no clear resemblance, both in methodological and content related points, is posited in how Islam is related to either of the above civilizations. Put differently, Toynbee's treatment of Western civilization assumes a compact civilization subsuming Catholic Christianity and Hellenism in its baggage while

⁵⁸ The "idea", Islam as a religion and system of life is considered as an important aspect of Islamic civilization by many in the field (See, for instance, Hodgson, 1974; Bennabi, 1992; Nadwi, 2005; Karakoç, 2005; Qutb, 2006; Allawi, 2009; Faruqi, 2013; Paşa, 2015).

⁵⁹ Additional points (pertaining to "pre-commitment") are discussed in the last paragraph of this subsection.

this is generally absent in the context of Islam or Islamic civilization. One of the ways in which he avoided any degree of compactness in Islamic civilization was to expose it to historicism, and consequently, to culturally relativize it to particular places and times. Instead of adopting “Islamic civilization”, which he rarely employed throughout his *A History of History*, he was satisfied with Arabic and Iranic civilizations while the same is missing in his treatment of Western civilization.

Furthermore, whilst Western civilization followed the universal church in the crumbling universal state of Roman Empire, the same thing cannot be said for Islam or Islamic civilization. For he has already decided that there are be two sister civilizations under the symbolic guise of Islam, they had to follow from two universal state stages, one before the advent of Arabic civilization and another one for Iranic civilization⁶⁰. It is questionable, however, that Islam never gave rise to its own version of civilization in some form before the collapse of the Abbasid Caliphate following its interregnum period (975-1275 AD).

For Toynbee though, interestingly, Islam never gave rise to a civilization of some form before the advent of Mongol invasion in the thirteenth century. It was, he argued, rather accomplishing the role of what a universal church does. Here, again, it is questionable that whether Islam had any existing universal state during its emergence and expansion in the Arabian Desert (Mecca or Median) or not. In other words, Toynbee believed that since the advent of Prophet Muhammad, all the way through the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates, Islam was only serving as a universal church, not yet devolved its civilization. This view, however, as I have noted above, is much less sophisticated and convincing than others who held the opposite view. For Mian Muhammad Sharif, for instance, Islamic civilization was born and subsequently reached its initial Zenith during the centuries before the thirteenth century. The centuries after the collapse of Abbasid caliphate are rather conceived as “second rise” and “internationalization” of Islamic civilization (Sharif, 1963; Hodgson, 1974).

⁶⁰ Toynbee argued that the existing civilization during the Abbasid period was Syriac civilization. It was just only the age of Abbasid in the larger Syriac civilization (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; p.77).

Toynbee proposed that Islamic civilization, in either of its forms, is rather the byproduct of Greco-Roman (Hellenistic) civilization. This is quite interesting, because this Hellenistic “stimulus” is also another part of the newly “affiliated” western civilization. In the former context, he underscored that the Roman Empire provided “an Hellenic-made cradle for a mainly Syriac inspired. . . Islam and its political cradle the Caliphate were Syriac reactions on the religious and political plane to the long sustained intrusion of Hellenism on the Syriac world”(Toynbee, 1972; p.394). This “intrusion” aroused reactions from Zoroastrian, Jewish, other Christians (Nestorians and Monophysites), and Islam. Although the others’ reactions failed, the “Islamic” reaction was only successful (Ibid, p.123).

And due to the blending of Syriac and Hellenic cultures in the fifth century, it created what he called “Syro-Hellenic ‘culture-compost’” which, in turn, produced “an Islamic civilization”(Ibid). Here too, much like the points mentioned above, Toynbee relegates the possible religious foundation of Islam to reactions to other civilization and is only conceivable in spatio-temporal lines (where, again, he failed to empirically support). In other words, Toynbee preferred to appraise the emergence of Islamic civilization from reactions to certain intrusion instead of the originality of its ideas, claims or in its own specific historical and temporal conditions. Contrary to Toynbee, Hodgson believed that while both Christianity and Buddhism failed to produce their own cultures, for there were many cultures developed under Christianity for instance, Islam had a single culture (Islamdom created Islamicate culture and civilization) (Hodgson, Vol.I, 1974, p.95). Still, the genesis of Islamic civilization in this regard is, however, by negation, not by accommodation of Hellenism (Greco-Roman civilization).

Toynbee saw Islamic civilization, contrary to western civilization, as anti-Hellenistic civilization. In fact, he went so far as to argue that “Catholic Christianity had not defied Hellenism at all but had found its field of action in the Hellenic world as Syro-Hellenic syncretism; most of the subsequent Syriac religious movements were deliberate and successful anti-Hellenic reactions” (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934; p.374). Put simply, the Syro-Hellenic ‘culture compost’ or ‘syncretism’ produced Islamic civilization by the negation

(of Hellenism) while Western civilization by accommodation (Hellenism). However, although he argued that there was an accommodation and synthesis in the making of western civilization, he lately noted that the Catholic Christian domain of this civilization gave up its vitality for a new secular order in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Toynbee, 1956). In any case, this view of Islamic civilization needs further refinement both in empirical as well as theoretical terms. As it stands now, however, its analytical ground is much less stronger than its speculative power⁶¹.



⁶¹ Hellenism and its continuity is a highly contested issue among historians. Some even questioned whether there actually was such a thing as “continuity” or not and whether Islamic civilization was actually a “reaction” to Hellenism or not (See, for instance, Goody, 2006; Hobson, 2004). John Hobson argued, as the title of his book manifestly shows, about “The Eastern Origin Western Civilization“.

3.2. Hodgson's Islamicate Civilization

Another thinker that falls under the historio-empirical trend in the study of Islamic civilization is the well-reputed world historian Marshal Hodgson. By challenging Orientalism and its epistemic categories, ideas, concepts, presumptions, and pre-commitments, Hodgson made significant contributions to the study of Islamic civilization (despite its own manifest and latent flaws). Of these contributions, his reappraisal of Islamic civilization as part of world history; the effort to underscore the importance of Islam in the making of what he called Islamicate civilization (much less of a success compared with Muslim thinkers debating Islamic civilization from an insider and phenomenological perspectives); and his "revisionism", viewed in favorable terms than "admonitionist" tendencies, of the conceptual tools and infrastructures in the study of Islamic civilization, are all efforts that can be linked to the originality of Hodgson's own venture into Islamic civilization. In spite of this, his revisionism was not comprehensive enough though, and in that he, for instance, excluded Allah in favor of "God" beyond noting the differences (the tendency of what he called the attitude of admonitionists). The difference between God and Allah is significant that, in the words of Assad, "For in the central Islamic tradition, God is not describable at all, whether by image or by sound. The pronouns by which he is referred to are grammatical, not ontological. He is, thus, literally unrepresentable" (Assad, 2001; p.207). The problem becomes even more complex as "Christians' relation to God" is perceived as something "personal", to which both Wilfred Smith and Hodgson subscribed, is problematic in the contexts of Islam (See Assad, 2001).

There are also some problems associated with Hodgson's contribution. The following discussion outlines two of these: one related to his demarcation of the "faith" and "religion" dimension of Islam and its interaction with civilization; and the other concerns his own personal and intellectual pre-commitments and biases coloring his discussion of Islam between religion and civilization. Before moving on to discuss these issues, I will first examine two fundamental notions in Hodgson's study of Islamic civilization: Islam as a religion and its bond with his Islamicate civilization.

3.2.1. Islam between “Faith” and “Religion”

“Islamicate” civilization, for all its pretensions and flaws, attracted much attentions among contemporary Muslims and non-Muslim students of Islam. Of these, Bruce B. Lawrence, a self proclaimed “Hodgsonian” and professor of history of religions, uplifted Hodgson as a “genius and visionary” having a continued importance in the study of Islam⁶². Yet, in spite of his original contributions, what most, if not all, of these thinkers ignored is the fact that Hodgson deployed outdated conceptual tools in his attempt to understand Islam and what he called “Islamicate” civilization. No doubt, however, that concepts and words are very important in framing and subsequently informing how one deal with a given issue or problem. In fact, Hodgson himself believed in the idea that,

The terms one uses determine the categories by which one orders a field- or at least all those categories that are not the immediate focus of one's inquiry. The categories one presupposes, then, necessarily delimit the questions one can ask-at least all the constants implied in the questions, apart (again) from the special point of focus. The questions posed, in turn, determine what answers will ultimately be reached when the questions, as posed, are pursued (Hodgson, Vol.I, 1974, p.46)

It is, therefore, important to start with some of the words, terms, concepts and categories he employed in the *Venture of Islam*. To begin with the word “Islam”, Hodgson saw two dimensions of it that one needs to understand. On the one hand, there is what he called “faith”, and on the other, “tradition”. There are many places where he repeatedly deployed these concepts to mold his version of Islam and Islam related civilization, the “Islamicate” civilization. For instance, he argued that “ultimately all faith is private [and] . . . we are primarily human beings and only secondarily participants in this or that tradition” (Emphasis added, Hodgson, Vol.I, 1974, p.28). The same content is recycled elsewhere as “. . . we are primarily human beings with our personal interests to pursue,

⁶² Bruce B. Lawrence (2014) “Genius Denied and Reclaimed: A 40-Year Retrospect on Marshall G.s. Hodgson’s *The Venture of Islam*”. Accessed from <http://marginalia.lareviewofbooks.org/retrospect-hodgson-venture-islam/> (Monday, February 13, 2017).

and only secondarily participants in this or that tradition” (Ibid, p.37). Now this dualism is then contextualized for what he called the religion (Islam) and the socio-cultural (Islamicate) aspect of Islam⁶³. In this regard, he argued that,

‘Islam’ and ‘Islamic’ too casually both for what we may call religion and for the overall society and culture associated historically with the religion . . . The society and culture called 'Islamic' . . . are not necessarily 'Islamic' in the first. Not only have the groups of people involved in the two cases not always been co-extensive (the culture has not been simply a 'Muslim culture', a culture of Muslims)-much of what even Muslims have done as a part of the 'Islamic' civilization can only be characterized as 'un-Islamic' in the first, the religious sense of the word. One can speak of 'Islamic literature', of 'Islamic art', of 'Islamic philosophy', even of 'Islamic despotism', but in such a sequence one is speaking less and less of something that expresses Islam as a faith (Ibid, p.57).

Here, Hodgson may not necessarily be wrong in considering “Islamic” less “coextensive” with what Islam as a faith entails. However, to take the argument to its logical extreme and argue that “much even Muslims have done as a part of the ‘Islamic’ civilization can only be characterized as ‘un-Islamic’ in the first religious sense of the word” is totally misleading. Although, following his operationalization, the ‘Islamic’ is less reflective of Islam in the religious sense of the word, it is hardly possible that it can be conceived in other circumstances otherwise. It was, indeed, contingent up on the general and dominant milieu of Islam and Muslims regardless of the presence or absence of others belonging to different traditions that gave rise to Islamic civilization. Even if there existed, which I think it rarely did, it is less likely to form a culture, or even a subculture, that would go against the “religious” backdrop of Islam⁶⁴. Furthermore, it is

⁶³ He also made a distinction between what he called “Islam” (religion) and “islam” (faith). This is apart from what he called Islamic (religion related activities-Islamic literature, Islamic philosophy, etc). Simply put, Hodgsonian “Islamicate” stood, in essence, very far away from “islam”, “Islam” and then whatever is “Islamic”.

⁶⁴In fact, as he himself argued that Islamicate civilization is based on (the culture carried by the society of Islamdom) “Islamdom” which is in turn “the society in which the Muslims and their faith are recognized

questionable that it is only an “association” that exists between “Islam” as a faith and “Islamic” as a socio-cultural phenomenon. This will be expanded in a moment.

Interestingly, even though Hodgson believed that whatever “Islamic” is not necessarily Islamic in the religious sense of the world and can even go to the extent of becoming “un-Islamic”, is reversed right after some pages down the line. This time, Hodgson decided that, whatever “Islamic” in one way or another “must be restricted to 'of or pertaining to' Islam in the proper, *the religious, sense*When I speak of 'Islamic literature' I am referring only to more or less 'religious' literature, not to secular”(Ibid, p.59). Accordingly, this and the above statements are obviously contradictory. It should be noted, however, that Hodgson preferred this last conception throughout *The Venture of Islam*.

3.2.1.1. Islam and “islam”

In an effort to distinguish between the “religious” (“faith”) and “cultural tradition” (and thus historically “cumulative tradition”) aspect of Islam much like Judaism and Christianity, Hodgson found it convenient to disentangle Islam into two core forms⁶⁵. The first is the faith dimension which he called “islam” and the second as the proper Islam. He went on to support this distinction on the basis of a linguistic meaning he assigned for the word Islam and he discovered that it stood for “the act of submitting to God” (Ibid, p.72). This form of Islam is deemed as “the inner spiritual posture of an individual person of good will”(Ibid). Furthermore, in his own words, this Islam is something personal and in that,

as prevalent and socially dominant, in one sense or another-a society in which, of course, non-Muslims have always formed an integral, if subordinate, element, as have Jews in Christendom” (Ibid, p.58). The same view is also reflected in *“Al-Tawhid: Its Implications for Thought and Life”* (Al-Faruqi, 1992).

⁶⁵ Al-Atas underscored that, unlike other religions, Islam “is conscious of itself from the very beginning; it originated from Divine Revelation not from the circumstances of history”(Al-Atas, 2001, p.4). In fact, there are many places where this divine consciousness was expressed. In one place, for instance, it is unequivocally stated in the Qur’an that Allah says “This day, I have perfected *your religion* for you, completed My favor upon you” (Chap.5, V.3). When it comes to other religions, Al-Atas observed that their fundamental teachings and doctrines have been exposed to the process of “evolution”. They evolved their system of beliefs or forms of submission through the historical development of their cultural traditions (Al-Atas, 1978). The same thing, however, he underscored, cannot be said for Islam.

. . . it means accepting a personal responsibility for standards of action held to have transcendent authority. In this sense, many persons who have admittedly had no part in the historical community of Muhammad among them, all the Hebrew prophets and Jesus and his first disciples-have been regarded by Muslims as having accepted islam. In any religious tradition, it is an inward stance in individuals (varying intimately, of course, from individual to individual) that lies at the heart of all the ritual and myth. It is this elementary islam, a personal acceptance of godly ideals, which stands at the heart of Islamic religion, and from which it receives its name (Hodgson, VI, 1974, p.72).

The idea and implications of the “personal” and “transcendental” notions of Hodgson intrinsically entail different ontological universe than that of Islam. These concepts are less helpful to understand Islam as a religion or religious tradition (See, for instance, Al-Faruqi, 1992; Assad, 2001; Al-Atas, 2001; 1978)). For instance, Assad argued that “Actually, a pious Muslim would not use the word "transcending but probably would echo the Qur'an and say, "I have faith in God almighty and in the hereafter (al-akhira). The term “al-akhira” refers to the end of time and is often linked by the Qur'an in opposition to the temporal world “(Assad, 2001; pp.213-214).

However, Hodgson’s this interpretation of Islam is very misleading on at least four important grounds. Firstly, linguistically speaking, the Arabic word Islam only refers to the state of “submission” or a peace acquired by submission. However, the direct linguistic rendering does not necessarily embody God within it. Or, even if it does “subsume” God, the implied presence of God does not necessarily entail the “personal” nature of this submission either⁶⁶. Furthermore, faith cannot be represented, translated, interpreted, or exchanged for “islam”, nor it is applicable to use it to represent “Iman” or “belief” (Al-Faruqi, 1992; Assad, 2001). This will be dealt in a relatively detailed manner in the following sections.

⁶⁶ Hodgson argued “islam” “. . . is a personal submission to God” (Ibid, p.75). The same is recycled elsewhere as “Islam was a personal relation of men and women to God” (Ibid, p.197).

Secondly, and most importantly, what Hodgson failed to mention, however, is the other religious (Shari'ah) meaning of Islam itself⁶⁷. In a well established conception of Islam, the prophet Muhammad himself defined Islam encompassing the worship of Allah, testifying Muhammad as His messenger, establishing prayer, paying charity, fasting and pilgrimage. It is understandable, however, why Hodgson preferred the linguistic implication of Islam than its religious connotation and place in Islam itself (for, in some faint manner, Hodgson is arguing that this later meaning is an improvement, or historical development as in "cumulative tradition"). This may be because he preferred the former path to evade the other more comprehensive meaning, and this may, understandably jeopardize his overall venture. In other words, the latter meaning of Islam entails acts going beyond what Hodgson considered something "personal". All the five embodiments of Islam, as the prophet himself put it, are played in a collective social setting. It is, therefore, doubtful that "a personal acceptance of godly ideals, which stands at the heart of Islamic religion, from which it receives its names" (Ibid)⁶⁸.

Thirdly, the same is true for what Muslims accept for previous prophets and their followers. It is a farfetched position to reduce all the previous religions, Christianity and Judaism included, into something "personal". If not all, most of what the prophet outlined was considered applicable to earlier prophets and their followers-among other things, religious percepts guiding modes of collective conducts, which were essentially social. However, this does not mean that the "personal" is totally absent, but one integral part of the religion itself.

Finally, although Hodgson's distinction between the faith (religious) and religion (cumulative tradition) are very foundational to his system, he failed to demarcate unequivocally where and when the cultural-traditional (religion-Islam) starts and the faith ("islam") ends⁶⁹. Although, understandably, Islam is conceived as the extension,

⁶⁷ It is axiomatic that any word or concept in Islam is generally understood both in its linguistic and religious (shari'ah) implications.

⁶⁸ It is worth noting that this, nevertheless, is Hodgson's own imposed binary, not the "Emic" perspective of what Islam is (from practical or scriptural vantage points).

⁶⁹ The problem is compounded by the fact that Hodgson failed or deliberately ignored to specify what he meant by religion except for seeing it represented through Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, etc.

directly or not, of the primordial “islam”, the demarcation remains blurred⁷⁰. At any rate, Hodgson’s response to this would be that the “private”, “inner”, “personal”, and “individual” believers attitude” about the “soul” had to be lived in actual life and that, necessarily, needed working out extended mechanisms (religion as a cumulative tradition, historically speaking) of carrying it out. In this connection, Hodgson claimed that

The various elements of the historical religion can be seen as depending more or less directly on the act of islam of the individual believer . . . Thus from a fundamental private attitude of soul is derived a concrete social body and a precise formula of belief to define membership in it. All this must be worked out in massive detail if people are to move from the general ideal to its actual implementation in the midst of the innumerable complexities of living. In the course of doing so, Muslims move still further from the inward core of personal Islam to a vast body of social conventions (Ibid, p.72).

3.2.1.2. The Archeology of Hodgson’s Dualism

Hodgson’s revisionist stand required a precaution that entailed reforming and when deemed necessary inventing new words, terms, and concepts. Although this task focused on such words as “Islam”, “islam”, “Islamic”, “Islamdom” and “Islamicate”, what Hodgson essentially tried to do is to demarcate between two important domains that constitute his system. On the one hand stood Hodgson’s inner and private dimension which he called “faith” or the “religious” aspect, and on the other, the sociocultural aspect (“Islam” and “Islamic” as part of religion which, according to Hodgson, is

This may have got something to do with the anti-essentialist temperament he inherited from Smith (see the forth coming heading).

⁷⁰ Edmund Burk, editor of Hodgson’s “Rethinking World History” rightly questioned that “But, we may inquire, how does one select which of the numerous ideals that can be extracted from the Qur’an and other authoritative Muslim writings are to be regarded as formative? While the problem of deciding what constitutes ‘real Islam’ is put out by the door (by admitting a plurality of dialogues), it returns by the window” (Burke, 1979; p.256).

synonymous with a “cumulative tradition”, whereas “Islamdom” and “Islamicate” are in turn associated with the “Islamic” society and culture, respectively).

Although both are centered on “the creative event” of revelation, for Hodgson, the former one has the potential of being universal and logical while the latter, in spite of its universal propensity, is part of an Ecumenical world civilization⁷¹. In other words, Islamicate civilization (Islamdom as a society, Islam as a religion, and whatever is “Islamic”) is a civilization taking a new form due to Islam, but essentially in its root an Irano-Semitic civilization⁷². At any rate, Hodgson’s dualist view of Islam in terms of faith and cumulative tradition is not something new. In fact, as himself admits, Hodgson’s idea of religion and faith in general and Islam, in particular can be traced back to Wilfred Cantwell Smith’s “The Meaning and End of Religion”(1991). In fact, Hodgson appreciated Smith by pointing out that,

Wilfred C. Smith, in *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New English Library, 1966), has pointed out that the very notion of 'a religion', as an integral system of belief and practice held to be either true or false, is relatively recent as compared with the notion of 'religion' as an aspect of any one person's life, which may be more or less true as that person is more or less sincere or successful. Even in the Irano-Semitic sphere, where 'religions' were earliest and most sharply set off as self-contained total communities, the notion of 'a religion' as a system was slow to prevail and has become dominant only in quite modern times. He suggests that what we generally have to deal with are cumulative traditions through which religious faith has been expressed. I am indebted to him for sharpening my awareness here (Hodgson, Vol.I, 1974; p.79).

⁷¹ This relates to Smith’s conception of “faith” (see, *The Meaning and End of Religion*” (1991). It will be argued that Hodgson’s view of religion, faith, and Islam can be argued to have been under some degree of influence that Hodgson, in addition to employing his constructs, appreciated Smith for it. I will expand on this shortly.

⁷² I have expanded this section in the upcoming heading.

From this note, there are at least four important points that need close attention⁷³. The first is about the idea that religion is a recent phenomenon as compared to faith or religious belief⁷⁴. The second is the idea that faith is something to do with “one person’s life”. The third point is related to the idea that religions, Islam included, were “as a system slow to prevail and dominant in quite modern times”. The last point is about how faith has been expressed in cumulative traditions. Put simply, as noted above, these four points, and additional ideas, which I discuss shortly below, bring Hodgson and Smith closer to each other, and as such, the possible “influence” the former sustained from the latter. Accordingly, Wilfred Smith’s conceptions of religion, faith and Islam are very critical, therefore, to understand Hodgson’s take on the same issues.

Smith, as did Hodgson, believed that “faith”, which is defined more personal (“personal faith”), is given primacy over that which is “secondary”, religion (Smith, 1991; p.56)⁷⁵. In this connection, Smith argued, “human history might prove more intelligible if we learned to think of religion and the religious as adjectives rather than as nouns, that is, as secondary to persons” (Ibid, p.21). For Smith, faith is not only personal, but also more “genuine” than the “formalities” associated with religion (cumulative traditions) (Ibid, pp. 128-129). Like Hodgson, Smith believed that faith is a universal phenomenon and closely tied to the “transcendental” (Ibid, p.18). Smith elaborated that “faith” entails “. . . deeply personal, dynamic, ultimate, is a direct encounter relating one. . .to the God of the whole universe, and to one’s Samaritan neighbor-that is persons as such, oblivious of the fact that the he be outside one’s organized religious community” (Ibid, p.127). In other words, what articulates faith is the transcendental personal relation to God and the implied ethical bond between human beings. This ethical and moral dimension is, however, extended more in Hodgson’s venture into Islam. In fact, Hodgson’s humanism outweighs his concern for the transcendental in his reconstruction of the study of Islamic (and hence Islamicate) civilization.

⁷³ An interesting evaluation of Smith’s writing is to be found in Fatimah Abdullah’s “Islam and the Orientalists” (2004), *Intellectual discourse, Vol. 12, No 1, 63-72*.

⁷⁴ Hodgson argued “. . . the actual Islamic religious tradition was formed, historically . . .” (Vol.I, 1974; p.90)

⁷⁵ Hodgson’s dualism can be also traced back to the “inner (faith) and “outer” (religion as a cumulative tradition) dimensions of religion Smith considered axiomatic in his works (See, Stevens’s appraisal of the works of Smith, PhD dissertation, 1985).

Whilst faith is conceived as universal, logical, and most importantly, “real”, religions or cumulative traditions are not. In his own words, Smith argued, “We hold that behavior, institutions, creeds and other externalities are real and significant, but are not religion. At least they are not all of it, and particularly are not faith” (Cited in Stevens, 1985; p.7). For him, religion does not exist and it just only the reification of it. This reification meant that “. . . a long-range development that we may term a process of reification: mentally making religion into a thing, gradually coming to conceive it as an objective systematic entity” (Smith, 1991; p.5). The other meaning (in addition to the “mental thing”) of Smith’s reification, which Hodgson adopted for his “The Venture of Islam”, is “that of a high degree of systematization in doctrine or practice” (Assad, 2001; p.209). For Smith, like that of Hodgson, this reification of religion in terms “cumulative tradition” crystallized “. . . in material form the faith of previous generations, and it sets the context for the faith of each new generation as these come along . . .”(Smith, 1991; p.159). He described this further as,

the entire mass of overt objective data that constitute the historical deposit, as it were, of the past religious life of the community in question: temples, scriptures, theological systems, dance patterns, legal and other social institutions, conventions, moral codes, myths, and so on; anything that can be and is transmitted from one person, one generation, to another, and that the historian can observe" (Smith, 1991; pp. 156-57).

Furthermore, the most interesting parallel between Hodgson and Smith is in their views of Islam between faith and religion or religious tradition. Among other things, for instance, Hodgson believed that Islam, due to its core “transcendental ideals” and unlike Christianity and Buddhism, has been able to command huge fellowship and form a single culture under Islamdom, Islamicate civilization. In his own words,

Among Christian or Buddhist peoples, religion has indeed been very central also. But it has informed the culture of Christian Occidentals and of Christian Abyssinians, for instance, almost entirely in isolation from

each other, so that there is no single civilization associated with Christianity. Nor is there one civilization associated with Buddhism. But-despite the vaster areas covered-those who participated in the tradition of Islamic faith . . . never lost contact with each other: their cultural dialogues were always intermeshed (Hodgson, VI, 1974, p.94).

Here in the above note is faintly implied that Islam, unlike any other monotheistic religions, is the most centralized and “systematized in doctrine and practice” (and thus cumulative tradition with the associated, direct or not, cultural consequences). Similarly, Smith believed that Islam was the most reified of all monotheistic religions, and that the least reified in the continuum was Hinduism. Smith believed that “the various religions of the world do in fact differ among themselves in the degree to which each presents itself as an organized and systematized entity. If this be so, then one of them may well be, must be, the most entity-like. One could suggest that Islam, it so happens, is that one” (Smith, 1991; p.85). Paradoxically, being anti-essentialist, it is an irony that he consciously essentializes Islam. Contrary to Islam, Smith argued, “There are Hindus, but there is no Hinduism” (Smith, 1991; p.16). Put simply, Hinduism should be appraised nominally not essentially (as it applies to Islam)⁷⁶. Whilst Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism tended toward the *personal faith* dimension of religion, Islam tended to be “godly transformative” that it “helped to knit together peoples who otherwise might have remained remote . . .” (Hodgson, VI, 1974, p.94). At any rate, it could be for this reason that Hodgson concluded that there are isolated Christian cultures but not single civilization comparable to Islamic or Islamicate civilization⁷⁷.

⁷⁶ Contrary to his deconstructivist (anti-essentialist) approach to religion(s), he made significant effort to make Islam one. He pointed out that “Never before had an organized, systematic, and exclusive community carrying (or being carried by) what was in theory an organized, systematic and exclusive idea arrived . . .” (Smith, 1991; p.64).

⁷⁷ This view, however, can be challenged on the ground that Western civilization before its eventual divorce with Christianity, was appraised as the product (chrysalis role) of religion (Christianity) (Toynbee, 1972). Similarly, Guizot also believed that at the heart of western (“European”) civilization lies Christianity and Christian church (Guizot, 1887). Again, more or less the same view is echoed by many other Western thinkers as well (See, for instance, Schweitzer, 1947; Vico, 1848; Voeglin, 1999; Mirabeau, 2004; etc).

3.2.1.3. Ramifications of Hodgson's Dualism

Hodgson's dualistic view of Islam, like that of Smith, needs to be explored in a wider context. There are many thinkers and social scientists who, in one way or another, questioned, firstly, whether it is feasible to decompose "religion" into these two "domains" or not; and secondly, its applicability to Islam in particular. This part benefits from the works of particularly Talal Assad, Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi, and others.

Talal Assad, in his critical review of "The Meaning and End of Religion" (by Smith), raised some key points (applicable to Hodgson as well) worth noting here. Smith's conception of faith is highly reductionist, and thus, ignores ideas which are part and parcel of the very idea itself. He pointed out that Smith conceived "Faith as inner state, not as a relationship created through, maintained by, and expressed in practice" (Assad, 2001; p.208). Contrary to Smith's view, Assad argued "the man or woman of faith is not a split subject (as Smith has it) living, on the one hand, in a pressured, imperfect, and particularized world and, on the other hand, always linked through his or her faith to another world transcending this" (Ibid, p.214). Thus, the attempt to differentiate between faith and tradition (cumulative tradition) is less persuasive. In fact, Assad went on to argue that "Faith is inseparable from the particularities of the temporal world and the traditions that inhabit it" (Ibid).

Not only did Assad find the dualism associated with religion less coherent, but also it expressively unleashed a western modern liberal separation between the private and public spaces (Assad, 2001). Furthermore, this view, according to him, "prevents one from investigating how "faith" and " cumulative tradition" form each other, and how the grammar of faith differs from one tradition to another (Ibid, pp. 214-215). Another consequence is that, by separating faith from cumulative tradition, it makes ". . . the difference between the man of faith and one who has no faith virtually unobservable" (Ibid). By the same token, although Smith believed that faith and belief are related, the former is primary while the later is secondary (for its supposed bond with cumulative tradition). Livingstone rejected this formulation, and thus, argued that,

. . . faith also includes the *fides quae creditur*, the mental assent or belief in the reality or truth inherent in the object of trust and loyalty. Faith and belief are thus bound together. Subjective faith unspecified is simply empty, while the object of faith, without the subjective act of internalization, may be real but purely notional.

When it comes to Islam, the Assad's rejoinder was accompanied by those of Al-Faruqi. Apart from both questioning the application of some the terms used such as "faith", "transcendental", "belief" and "religion", Al-Faruqi went so far to argue that religion (at least Islam) has an essence⁷⁸. According to Assad, the distinction assumed between faith and tradition is not readily apparent in Islam as it might be the case for Christianity. In fact, he went on to add that these supposed dimensions of Islam form an integral whole which cannot be disentangled for, the point at which this happens, Islam loses its meaning, originality, and complete sense of being. In this connection, he pointed out that, like Hodgson, Smith was unable to see that,

. . . there are such things as structures of devotional practices, disciplines for cultivating religious virtues, and the evolution of moral sensibilities within changing historical circumstances. He dissolves these things into mere linguistic forms . . . whilst he could have seen them as a coherent existential complex (Assad, 2001; p. 217).

Accordingly, faith goes beyond the personal confinement attributed to it by Smith and Hodgson, and in that, integrates practice and tradition. In Islam, Assad argued, "faith is not a singular act but a relationship based on continuous practice, a trusting attitude toward (not being mistrustful of) another. Unlike Christianity, faith in Islam neither connects with the "kinship inheritance nor gift of a divine promise", but connects primarily "with commitment, under God, to the continuous practice that forms a

⁷⁸ As I will deal with Al-Faruqi in the proceeding sections, he believed that not only did Islam has an essence but also its civilization, Islamic civilization has an essence as well. The essence of these, for him, was "Tawhid" (see, for instance, Al-Faruqi, 1992; 1986).The same is reflected in the writings of Sezai Karakoç, Seiyd Qutb, and others which I will be examining under the "religiophilosophical" trend.

community of faithful” (Ibid, p.216). Furthermore, faith, unlike “islam”, is usually translated into English as “Iman” is not a singular act that “one performs naked before God” (Ibid, p.218)⁷⁹. It is rather a virtue acquired by being faithful to God and this entails an “unquestioning habit of obedience” (“mu’min”) to Him. In this context, faith is rather a “disposition” that needs to be constantly cultivated, and in doing so, it links one through mutual responsibility and trust to others who are faithful (Ibid, p.219).

3.2.2. The Vision and Venture of Islam: Islamicate Civilization

In order to critically examine Hodgson’s articulation of the relation between religion and civilization in general and Islam and Islamicate civilization, in particular, one needs to closely explore Hodgson’s own idea of religion, especially Islam as it relates to Islamicate civilization. As I have discussed above, Hodgson discovered significant distance between what he called “islam” and “Islamicate” civilization. In between these two concepts, there existed such terms as the proper Islam and that which he called “Islamic”. Whilst he insisted that “islam” is something related to the “inner”, “individual”, “private” and “personal” aspect which he called “faith”, Islam and Islamic were considered part of the tradition of Islam and things associated with the religious aspect. In this frame of reference, what Hodgson called “Islamicate” is neither “islam” nor “Islamic”.

In the following lines, therefore, I argue that Hodgson’s Islamicate civilization renders the civilization commonly associated with Islam less religious (hence less directly linked with Islam), and thus, except for its manifest and often symbolic form and role, the religious and the proper Islam is relegated to other process contingent up on other factors

⁷⁹ Al-Faruqi pointed out that “The Muslims should never call his iman "belief" or “faith”. When used in a general sense, these [belief and faith have] an implication of untruth, or probability, of doubt and suspicion. Obviously, this is the exact opposite of the meaning of the term iman. This terms, deriving from *amn* (security), means that the propositions it covers are in fact true, and that their truth has been appropriated (i.e., understood and accepted) by the mind. . . .[due to this] Iman and *yaqin*[certainty] are synonymous terms. Unlike the faith of the Christians, the iman of Islam is truth given to the mind, not man's credulity. This cannot be said of Christian faith . . . [It is the] first principle of logic and knowledge, of metaphysics, of ethics and esthetics, it follows that it acts in the subject as a light which illuminates everything” (Emphasis added, Al-Faruqi, 1992; pp.39-41).

embedded in time and space. Before going to account for this argument, I provide a brief critical review of Hodgson's view of civilization in general and Islamicate civilization, in particular.

3.2.2.1. Islamicate Civilization: Civilization and Religion

For Hodgson, civilization can be seen in different ways. It can be approached as having an integral unity and as a process developing via interaction and dialogue through time. In either way, however, civilization entails the "grouping of cultures" linked to each other in some important ways. Hodgsonian civilization encompasses, among other things, "lettered tradition", "cumulative tradition" (faith and/religion), "creative minority" (Toynbee's appellation), urbanity-city life, and "cultural complexity" and integrality. More specifically, he defined civilization as,

“. . . any wider grouping of cultures in so far as they share consciously in interdependent cumulative traditions (presumably on the level of 'high culture'-of the relatively widely shared cultural forms at the urban, literate level of complexity and sophistication), then the shared traditions will be likely to centre in some range of 'high' cultural experience to which the cultures are committed in common (Hodgson, Vol.I, 1974; p.33)

An important element in Hodgson's discussion of civilization is the idea of "cumulative tradition". Originally, being the formulation of Smith, cumulative tradition involves religious traditions, such as Islam, Christianity and so forth⁸⁰. In other place, he also added that civilization should be considered as "a consciously cultivated human heritage" (Ibid, p.92). Put differently, a cumulative tradition entails, in some ways, the conscious cultivation of human cultural traditions. Yet, this must be accompanied by the "continuity of lettered traditions" on urban and literate level. For Hodgson, this lettered

⁸⁰ See above sections for the difference between "faith" and religious tradition as "cumulative tradition".

tradition can be religious or scientific literature (Ibid, p.92). On the other hand, as a complex cultural grouping, civilization assumes compactness (in the essence of unity), and as such, subsumes important constituents. In this connection, he pointed out that,

But in studying a given civilization our first interest is in those aspects of culture that have been most distinctive of it; that have been most interesting and humanly significant in their variation within its own sphere of space and time as well as in their diverging from other forms of culture. During much of history, at least, this has meant the artistic, philosophic, scientific life, the religious and political institutions, in general all the more imaginative activities among the more cultivated of the population. It is in terms of these aspects of culture that we do commonly distinguish the great civilizations from one another (Ibid, p.92).

In other words, civilization is not only defined by its own exceptional cultural infrastructures, but also they constitute its state of being. As I will shortly discuss, this was, applied to Hodgson's study of Islamicate civilization. Put in yet other words, the "distinctive" aspect of the culture of a given civilization has paramount importance to Hodgson⁸¹. This "distinctive aspect of culture" primarily included such fields as art, science, philosophy, religious and political institutions. These, then, collectively define, and thus, "distinguish great civilizations". For Hodgson, underlying these distinctive qualities of a given civilization lays a normative order. According to him, civilization being a "delimitable complex of cultural traditions" is constituted by "standards of cultural valuation, basic expectations, and norms of legitimation, embodied in its traditions. In the high culture, these are carried partly in lettered traditions directly and

⁸¹ Hodgson believed that Islamic civilization is not a "typical" civilization, but rather an "exceptional" (for which reason he considered himself "exceptionalizer"). He, thus, admitted that "Hence the humanistic historian must concern himself with the great commitments and loyalties that human beings have borne . . . Hence, for an 'exceptionalizing' historian with such intentions, it is Islamdom as a morally, humanly relevant complex of traditions, unique and irreversible, that can form his canvas (Emphasis mine, Ibid, p.26).

partly in other traditions, such as social and artistic ones, associated with the lettered traditions” (Ibid, p.93).

3.2.2.2. Islam in Islamicate Civilization: Identity, Unity, and “Concerned Minorities”

Hodgson’s formulation of civilization demands religion in such a way that it plays some roles. A close reading of Hodgson’s writings in his study of Islamic civilization reveal his attitude toward religion. According to him, religion, used in various forms and contexts, plays key roles if not determinative in his view of civilization in general and Islamicate civilization, in particular. He argued that in the historical development of civilization “religion almost inevitably plays a key role; but not necessarily so much because of the inertia of folk habits as because of its place in the consciences of a concerned minority” (Ibid, p.93), Yet, it could be argued that he saw religion, in the context of his conception of civilization, in three important ways. Firstly, it served as an important springboard for the initial formative ideals that help mark a civilization and its identity⁸². Here, religion is seen as a cumulative tradition springing from the *initial* personal faith. However, Hodgson lamented that civilization cannot be simply considered as the outgrowth and expression of faith or religion. If any, the link between the two is indirect, and in some cases, civilization may even go against some of the percepts of religion⁸³. For instance, this could be seen in his discussion of the relation between Islam and Islamicate civilization. He argued that,

⁸² The formative ideals gave Islamicate civilization its identity partly because there has always been a pattern of consistence of these ideals thoroughly and different from other subsequent developments through various “dialogues” in various times and places. In this regard, he pointed out that “In religion, the impact of the creative, revelatory events has tended to stand out most strongly from the continuing dialogue in which their implications were being worked out (Ibid. p.93). Also, Islam’s formative ideals (no matter what they are), he observed, defined Islamicate civilization, and in this connection, he argued “Perhaps especially among Muslims, religious vision has often proved decisive at just the points that are historically most interesting. Moreover, that vision proved sufficiently potent to ensure that Muslims formed a single civilization of their own (Ibid, p.94).

⁸³ This view of the relation between religion and civilization is reversed among those theories which I will address in the next chapter among the ‘religiophilosophical’ trends (for instance, Al Faruqi, Karakoç, Qutb, Binnebi, and etc).

Yet the 'civilization of Islam' as it has existed is far from being a clear expression of the Islamic faith. From the first, pious Muslims themselves differed as to what the 'best community' should be like. The Islamic vision of what mankind might be has been seen and interpreted variously: no one ideal has ever fully prevailed among the Muslims. Moreover their efforts, such as they were, to build a good society often produced actual results strikingly different from what anyone had anticipated. Some of the greatest triumphs of culture under an Islamic aegis have been such as many devoted Muslims could not look on with favor (Hodgson, Vol. I, 1974; p.71).

What appears to be the “vision” of Islam is less attractive for Hodgson except for its pursuit by Muslims and the consequences, intended or not. In this regard, Islamicate civilization is then appraised as the “venture” of the pursuit of Muslims’ to live up to the visions of Islam. However, this does not necessarily satisfy Hodgson’s formulation of “Islamicateness”, because “It was not only the Qur’anic challenge and its consequences that Muslims confronted together, but also a whole series of historical events and problems in every sphere of life (Ibid, p.90). It is rather this, according to Hodgson, which “often produced actual results strikingly differently from what anyone had anticipated”. Yet, apart from the less obvious role Islam assume in the public sphere for Muslims and non-Muslims (dialogue and cultural productions, and thus, Islamicate civilization), its interaction with Islamicate civilization is secondary and not direct. He pointed out that “since the cultural traditions which together made up the civilization associated with Muslims often depended little, directly, on the Islamic tradition as such, they were by no means restricted to Muslims” (Ibid, p.90).

Similarly, he pointed out that “The scope of the historical civilization, then, was not only distinct from the religion as to field of activity; it was not even coextensive with it in time and space” (Ibid, p.90). The point Hodgson is making here is that there are “Many non-Muslims . . . [who] must be recognized not only as living socially within the sphere of the Muslim culture; they must be recognized as integral and contributory participants

in it, engaging actively in many of its cultural dialogues” (Ibid, p.90). In this context, Hodgson is approaching Islamicate civilization as the society and culture of Islamdom. In other words, he believed that even though Islamic ideals and Muslims are dominant in Islamdom, they have little or no direct relation with Islamicate civilization⁸⁴. In fact, one of the reasons why he chose “Islamicate” over “Islamic” or else added another adjective (i.e., “ic” and “ate” to Islam) is basically to deliberately distance it from the religious implications that the word “Islamic” came to signify⁸⁵ (Ibid, p.57-59). Furthermore, he noted that this distance was not only his own analytical nuanced position, but also was consciously pursued by Muslims themselves. In this connection, he pointed out that,

What was religion and, in particular, what was Islam, was always, if diversely, kept consciously distinct from the total culture of Muslim society. In even the most pious man's life there was much that he could not call religious. The wider cultural life of Muslims, their civilization, had its own historical integrality, which was not simply an extension of the specifically religious unity of Muslims (Ibid, pp.89-90)⁸⁶.

Although the substance of Islamicate civilization is cultural, Islam was nevertheless the general milieu garnering “Islamicateness” for the civilization. One of the ways in which Hodgson invented this distance between Islam and Islamicate civilization was partly through his adoption of Smith’s “reification” thesis for religion in general and Islam, in particular. As noted above, compared to other religions, both Smith and Hodgson believed that Islam was one of the most reified of all. Employing an anti-essentialist stand, Islam, contrary to islam, is approached as evolving historically, and thus,

⁸⁴ He underscored that “In studying Islamicate civilization, we will be concerned with society and culture as the context in which concerned individuals have worked, especially Muslim individuals, and as the handiwork which exhibits in varying ways the intended and unintended results of their work and of their vision”(Ibid, p.98).

⁸⁵ This is despite the fact that he knew that whatever implied in “Islamic” is not necessarily religious as in the proper Islam. In fact, sometimes what may be considered Islamic can even become “un-Islamic” (Ibid, p57).

⁸⁶ This should be debatable for many reasons. Among other things, many Muslim thinkers still believe that Islamic civilization, defined in some different ways than the way Hodgson perceived, was the product of essentially Islamic processes.

assuming a cumulative tradition. By historicizing Islam, Hodgson, like Smith, argued that,

What has been felt as Islam, however, considered historically, in all its ramifications and even in its most central implications, has of course varied enormously. The very comprehensiveness of the vision of Islam as it is unfolded has insured that it can never be quite the same from one place or one time to another⁸⁷ (Ibid, p.79).

For Hodgson, Islamicateness is not only safe on the ground that it distances itself from Islam which in concrete terms does not exist (in essence culturally relativistic-changing in different time and space), but also due to the heterogeneity inherent in the cultures commonly associated with Islam itself. In this regard, he argued that,

The wider culture associated with Islam has been as highly differentiated and heterogeneous as any; has been, in fact, the sum of many cultures, or at least of aspects of them. The peoples concerned, flourishing from the time of Muhammad in the seventh century to the present, have extended in space over half of the Eastern Hemisphere of our globe. They have been correspondingly diverse in language, climate, historical situation, and national culture patterns (Ibid, p.90).

The second way through which Hodgson viewed religion (Islam in particular) was how it functioned in providing a sense of comprehensiveness and unity. This, for him, makes religion more attractive than other variables and factors in dealing with civilization in general and Islamicate civilization, in particular. In this connection, he argued that,

. . . the most important focus of persistent cultural ideals has often tended to be in religion . . . [and] hence religion could provide unusual continuity

⁸⁷ In this regard, Talal Assad is right in pointing toward what called the view of “Islamic history in terms of progressive reification” (Assad, 2001, p.212). In addition to Smith, this also works for Hodgson’s views of Islamic history and civilization.

in the dialogue itself. Moreover, even more than in the aesthetic or the political spheres, the circle of responsive confrontation that spreads out from religion tends to be comprehensive of all life (Ibid, p.93).

Unlike all other religions he considered, Hodgson, much like Smith, singled out Islam as an ideal representative of the above tendency. This is obviously due to two important reasons. On the one hand, Islam, compared to other religions, was deemed the most institutionalized doctrine (reification as a cumulative tradition); otherwise, the “personal” level of spiritual encounter with the transcendental reality is an open possibility for all religions. However, none of them went beyond their primordial conditions comparable to Islam. This, in turn, historically enabled Islam to come out successful in garnering unity within the cultures it played central role. On the other hand, Islam’s core transcendental ideals were highly transformative that they demanded unity in all spheres of life. According Hodgson, this is the case primarily because,

The bonds of Islamic faith, indeed especially the irrepressible transcendent ideals implied in the root meaning of Islam, with their insistent demand for a godly transformation of all life, have been so telling in certain crucial aspects of the high culture of almost all Muslim peoples that we find ourselves grouping these peoples together across all their different regions, even apart from considering other facets of high culture. Islam offered creative impulses that ramified widely throughout the culture as a whole, even where it was least religious. It is largely around the central Islamic tradition that the concerned and the creative built and transmitted a common set of social and, above all, literary traditions; these were carried in many languages but looked largely to the same great classics, not only religious but secular, and especially to the norms which they express, applicable to all aspects of life. Thus Islam helped to knit together peoples who otherwise might have remained remote, or have drifted apart if they were close to begin with. Through the greatest diversity of forms (as the chart giving an overview of the history

may suggest), these traditions (religious and otherwise) have maintained a decisive continuity (Ibid, p.94).

Furthermore, there are at least two unique attributes of Islamicate civilization, which Hodgson constantly recycled throughout “The Venture of Islam”. These were: the formative ideals of Islam (which he, unfortunately, was unable to unequivocally specify) and the “continuity of tradition”. The latter is particular very important in accentuating Hodgson’s decision to emphasize Islam’s propensity to unity and life comprehensiveness. Due to this, he believed that “. . . the Islamicate society represents, in part, one of the most thoroughgoing attempts in history to build a world-wide human community as if from scratch on the basis of an explicitly worked out ideal (Ibid, p.98).

The third important way in which he approached Islam in his theory of Islamicate civilization is closely associated with the role of what Toynbee called the “creative minorities”⁸⁸. Just Islam has been found less related, at least directly, to Islamicate civilization, the same is Hodgson’s view of the creative minorities in the making of Islamicate civilization. In achieving continuity in the culture of Islamicate civilization, what he called, the “creative event” played key role. However, the success of this creative event depended on the creative minorities who carried the creative event. Hodgson saw Islam as a cumulative living tradition “composed of three moments: a creative action, group commitment thereto, and cumulative interaction within the group (Ibid, p.80). Islam as a tradition is, then, originated,

. . . in a creative action, an occasion of inventive or revelatory, even charismatic, encounter: for instance, . . . in the case of religion, an occasion of fresh awareness of something ultimate in the relation between ourselves and the cosmos-that is, an occasion of spiritual revelation, bringing a new vision (Ibid, p.80)

⁸⁸ In different places, Hodgson used “piety-minded” and “Shari’a-minded”

As I have noted above, Hodgson is much less interested in what he called the “creative event”. However, he focused his study on Islamicate civilization based on “peoples among whom a few privileged men shared such masterpieces and discoveries . . .” (Ibid, p.90). The same class of people is also mentioned elsewhere as “. . . in general all the more imaginative activities among the more cultivated of the population (p.92); and simply put, they are the “concerned minority for whom cultural or spiritual ideals are a major driving force”⁸⁹ (Ibid, p.93). However, Hodgson’s creative minorities, unlike Toynbee’s creative minorities, do not have whatever it takes to facilitate the emergence of a new civilization. They just simply play some key roles, particularly in the development of a religion but not necessarily in the culture. He argued that,

A fresh sense of impact from whatever it may be in the cosmic presence that is seen as transcending the natural order may be felt strongly by only the concerned minority. But if these take it seriously, it can touch every point in the natural order of human affairs: it can reorient people's aesthetic sense, their political norms, their whole moral life, and with these everything else that can be seen to matter. A religious commitment, by its nature, tends to be more total than any other (Ibid, p.94).

One of the roles Hodgson assigned to this creative minority is in the facilitation of “wilder level of integrality” in civilization. This “integrality” in Islamicate civilization is not set in motion by the religious (aspect of Islam), and thus, was not its “extension”. Rather, it was due to “. . . the strategic position in which the carriers of the religious vision have found themselves within the civilization, notably in the high culture which gives definition to a civilization in the most meaningful sense of that term” (Ibid, p.90). Time and again, as the formative ideals do not have any direct relation with Islamicate civilization, the same was the fate of Hodgson’s creative minorities. In fact, he made it clear from the outset that,

⁸⁹ As Burke noted “Hodgson's theory of civilizational studies suggests that an inherently conservative culture will be offset by the periodic interventions of the men and women of conscience in each era, whose insights forge new strands in the ongoing cultural dialogue” (Burke, 1979; p.256).

Certainly, as we shall see, *the conscious planning of idealists has played no great direct role in the social evolution of the Muslim peoples*. Yet, the presence of the Islamic ideals (whatever their cause) has made the crucial difference between the existence of a society that can be called 'Islamic' (Emphasis mine, Ibid, p.72).

In spite of these three ways in which Hodgson approached Islam in the context of Islamicate civilization, he believed that even those “formative ideals” of Islam were not, historically, fundamentally different from other human endeavors in different part of the world. Like western civilization, the root of Islamic civilization was based on “the urban commercial tradition of the ancient Fertile Crescent, the Hebrew religious challenge, the classical Greek philosophical and scientific culture”⁹⁰ (Ibid, p.97). In fact, following Toynbee’s example, he considered these civilizations “sister civilizations”. Moreover, he observed that Islamic civilization cannot be considered as self constituted civilization in essence that it is not, culturally, independent from others. For this he argued that “the civilization that united the lands from Nile to Oxus in the Islamic period could be regarded, for some purposes, as *no independent cultural body* but simply the latest phase in a long term Irano-Semitic civilization continuous from the time of the ancient Sumerians” (Emphasis mine, Ibid, p.91)⁹¹. Finally, except for different when measured by consequences, the fundamental formulations of Islam were not also themselves different. In this regard, Hodgson wrote that,

In particular, the creative events at the founding of Islam were themselves part of an ongoing monotheistic tradition. They took place within the setting formed by the dialogue that was working through the implications of the ancient Hebrew prophetic discoveries; they formed a response to challenges presented historically in that dialogue at the point when Muhammad was drawn into it. In the Islamic dialogue, the same basic

⁹⁰ Toynbee , however, believed that while Christianity found its “field of action in Hellenism, Islam and Judaism defied Hellenism” (1934, Vol.II, p.374).

⁹¹ The same view is echoed by Toynbee as well when he argued that “Islam and its political cradle, the Caliphate were Syriac reactions on the religious and political plane to the long sustained intrusion of Hellenism on the Syriac world” (Toynbee, 1972, p.394).

monotheistic commitment persisted, though the particular allegiance was new (Ibid, p.91).



3.3. Concluding Remarks

Under the historio-empirical trend, I have been discussing the works of Arnold Toynbee and Marshal Hodgson. Apart from sharing some of the basic characteristic feature of this trend, both historians, in their attempt to understand Islam and Islamic civilization, ventured with their own conceptual (and theoretical) boundaries and personal (and religious) precommitments. In the former context, both historians implied or expressively underscored the time and space confinement of Islamic civilization (particularly the seventh century as the point of genesis). Both historians took evolution as something axiomatic (especially after the emergence of the first generation of civilizations); the absence of direct relationship religion and civilization (particularly between Islam and Islamic civilization); historicism and cultural relativism (Islam as a cumulative tradition, subjective in different parts of the Muslim world despite the symbolic unity it achieved); both historians believed in multiple civilizations and Islamic civilization as one of them (also both implied one “human” civilization); the Syriac world (“Syriac civilization” for Toynbee and “Irano-Semetic” civilization for Hodgson) was conceived as the religio-cultural springboard for the emergence of Islamic civilization; Hellenistic tradition as one integral part of Islamic and western civilizations; and finally, the relative importance of “creative minorities” in civilization studies (with diverging degree of role assigned).

In spite of these major points shared, Toynbee and Hodgson differed on other grounds. One among others would be in the degree of role attributed to Islam in the emergence of Islamic civilization. For Toynbee, ideally, religion (“higher religions”) is very fundamental in his conception of civilization, particularly civilizations after the first generations (which rather emerged out of “the spontaneous mutation of some pre-civilizational societies”)⁹². However, the same degree of emphasis is absent when addressing Islamic and Western civilizations. Before Western civilization was to divorce itself from Christianity (particularly Western Christianity, Catholicism) in the later ages,

⁹² See, for instance Toynbee (Vol.III, p.443)

it was conceived as the outcome of the chrysalis effect of Christianity⁹³. Also, for Toynbee, Hellenism is an integral part of Western civilization. Still, Toynbee constantly highlighted throughout his “A Study of History” the revolutionary nature of Christianity (the “universal church”, “creative minority”, etc) in the advent of Western civilization. Unfortunately, Toynbee was not successful in characterizing Islamic civilization as the outcome of the chrysalis womb of Islam although he employed the same conceptual tools. Two major reasons can be raised to support this point.

On the one hand, Toynbee’s in-depth engagement with Western civilization, especially in the context of the history of the Roman Empire and Christianity overshadowed his study of Islamic civilization in many ways. While the Roman Empire might have been the ideal representative of a “universal state” before the advent of the “universal church” under Christianity, the same, as Toynbee attempted, cannot be said to apply for Islamic history. In spite of Toynbee’s relaxed tendency to make the Syriac civilization comparable (as universal state) to the Roman Empire of Western civilization-is beyond unsuccessful⁹⁴. For Toynbee’s Roman Empire’s comparable universal state to appear he had to wait for the Abbasid Empire in the later history of Islamic civilization. Furthermore, it is questionable that the first creative minorities of Islam rose against any crumbling universal state in Arabian desert, simply because there was not any comparable to the size and function of the Roman Empire in Toynbee’s system⁹⁵. By the same token, it can be argued that the universal church of Islam was already set in motion with massive conversions before Islam was to occupy large territories in the subsequent periods in different parts of the world.

⁹³ Toynbee (1966) noted that it was in the period between the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries that this took place.

⁹⁴ As Sorokin rightly noted, Toynbee’s knowledge of other civilizations, including Islamic civilization, except for Greco-Roman and western civilization, was very poor, and thus, had “much thinner” knowledge (Sorokin, 1940; p. 380).

⁹⁵ As Mazrui rightly argued, it is fundamentally different how Islam (and Islamic civilization) and western civilization (Christianity under Roman Empire) arose. He pointed out that “*The globalization of Christianity started with the conversion of Emperor Constantine I of Rome 313. The religious conversion of an emperor started the process under which Christianity became the dominant religion not only of Europe but also of many other societies thousands of miles distant from where the religion started. The globalization of Islam began not with converting a ready-made empire, but with building an empire almost from scratch*” (Mazrui, 1997; p.1).

The other reason why the chrysalis role of Islam in the making of Islamic civilization was unsuccessful is exactly related to the very absence of Islamic civilization itself. For Toynbee, except for the religious symbolism of Islam (and thus Islamic civilization arising among the Muslim world), there are only two linguistically classified sister civilizations, namely, Arabic and Iranic civilizations. It was for this very reason that Hodgson questioned Toynbee. Hodgson noted that Toynbee's division of what has been called "Islamic" civilization into Arabic, Syriac and Iranic civilizations as an "error" (Hodgson, Vol. I, 1974; p. 32). By culturally relativising Islam, Toynbee failed to render a civilization theoretically comparable to western civilization.

Hodgson's approach to Islam and Islamic civilization was essentially based on the idea of world history. To this end, except for its "formative ideals" and subsequent "dialogues" that distinguish Islamic civilization, nominally, it has nevertheless benefited from the already available cultural traditions set in motion in the Irano-Semitic world and the "parity" of cultural continuity. Unlike Toynbee, Hodgson insisted on the "integrality" and "exceptionality" of Islamic civilization that emerged in the Nile to Oxus region. He, thus, preferred religion over geography or region in his appellation of Islamic civilization. However, the relation between Islam and Islamicate civilization is very little, and if it does, not direct. This is complicated by the fact that Hodgson divided Islam into two parts, namely, faith and religion although, as noted earlier, it is very problematic.

Whilst the former is commonly shared all across the globe, religion was culturally relativistic, changing over time, and thus, assumes a "cumulative tradition"⁹⁶. Islamicate civilization was, therefore, conceived as the culture of Islamdom. Except for its role of being an identifier of Islamicate civilization, mechanism of achieving unity and comprehensiveness, there is hardly any substantive core element in Islamicate civilization. In fact, he argued that Muslims themselves made conscious distinctions between what they considered religious and other parts of their life, including civilization. Put simply, Islamicate civilization is fundamentally far from Islam (in the

⁹⁶ Much like Smith, Hodgson's interpretation of Islamic history seems to be based on the view that conceives "Islamic history in terms of progressive reification" (Assad, 2001; p.212).

essence of religion), and thus, the need for two adjectives (Islam, faith→Islam, religion +“ic” + “ate”= Islamicate). Islamic is, Hodgson laminated, at the end of the day, must be something religious. What he was looking for was something cultural, which, according to him, has little direct relation with the “religious”.

Apart from these major points of convergence and divergence, both Toynbee and Hodgson’s studied Islam and Islamic civilization with their own explicitly stated or implied paradigmatic or academic precommitments. These precommitments influenced, in one way or another, how they dealt with Islam and Islamic civilization. The works of these historians reveal at least two of these. One is religion, particularly Christianity. For instance, Toynbee’s major contribution in the study of world civilizations, “A Study of History” was largely under the influence of Christianity in many ways. Firstly, the frequency of the “Christian church”, “Jesus Christ”, “Universal Church”, biblical quotations and parables apart from framing almost all chapters of his major writings, they are recurrently recycled not comparable to any other religion or civilization in the twelve volumes. One important point worth noting is that Toynbee’s attempt to approach Islam and Islamic civilization through his beyond-average study of the link between Christianity and Western civilization. As I have noted previously, the universal state and universal church as used in western civilization are not coherently synthesized, and thus, less convincing when applied to the history of Islam and Islamic civilization.

Furthermore, Toynbee’s use of religious personalities, texts, and quotations are, the very least, biased⁹⁷. Throughout the twelve volumes, quotations from the bible are simply stated as axiomatic while if any things mentioned from other religions, especially from Islam, they are managed differently. For instance, when he talks about the heaven in Islam, he presents the quotation as if it was said or ordered by Muhammad, not GOD’s words and His commands. Toynbee said, for instance, that “Prophet Muhammad depicts in the Qur’an whenever he wishes to evoke in the minds of the faithful an image of

⁹⁷ Toynbee viewed Christianity as the most successful religion of all. In one of his writings, he argued that “And in this really very brief period of less than two thousand years Christianity has in fact produced greater spiritual effects in the world than have been produced in a comparable space of time by any other spiritual movement that we know of in history” (Parag. 6, accessed from <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=476> and retrieved on Wednesday, March 1, 2017).

paradise” (Vol.II, p.10). It’s not God’s wishes, it is Muhammad who “depicts” and “wishes”. The same degree of precision is missing when it comes to ideas, quotations, and words from the Christian bible. He, for example, noted that “In seeking God, Man is performing a social act; and, if God's Love has gone into action in this World in the redemption of Mankind by Christ, then Man's efforts to make himself less unlike a God . . .”(Toynbee, 1934, Vol.VII, p.387). In the next page, Toynbee stated Prophet Solomon’s earlier biblical words as simple axiomatic fact. In this connection, he restated that “the spiritual progress of individual souls in this life will in fact bring with it much more social progress than could be attained in any other way” (Ibid, p.388).

When it comes to Hodgson, in spite of his commendable effort in *rethinking* world history in general and Islamic civilization, in particular, his explicitly stated humanistic tendency, Christianity, and his misunderstanding of Qur’an visibly stand out⁹⁸. Although Hodgson, from the outset, mentioned that, there are five major precommitments in historical scholarship in general and in relation to the study of Islamic history and civilization, in particular. Three of them as old: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and the remaining two of them new, “westernists” and “Marxists”. However, I contend that Hodgson’s insistence on humanism should be considered as the other, sixth precommitment in academic and scholarly pursuits. As he clearly noted, it does not necessarily mean that any precommitment is a safe haven from any scholarly errors, biases, and misjudgments. However, perhaps the most interesting and commendable measure taken by Hodgson was to clearly state it black-and-white. Yet again, it did not do much of a justice or helped him as an ultimate panacea from such problems⁹⁹. In fact, much like the new sorts of scholarly precommitments, Hodgson’s humanism was not still immune from Christianity. I will provide two instances from my researches.

⁹⁸ This is very important as he particularly commented that “Precommitment can lead the unwary and often even the most cautious scholar to biased judgment. Bias comes especially in the questions he poses and in the type of category he uses, where, indeed, bias is especially hard to track down because it is hard to suspect the very terms one uses, which seem so innocently neutral (Hodgson, 1974, Vol.I, p.27).

⁹⁹ Hodgson approach to Islam and Islamic civilization was found “highly personal and partisan account” and influenced by “his stubborn Quaker moral conscience” (Burke, 1979; p.241). Kiesling (2016) also observed that he was “influenced by Marx” (https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/magazine/letter-of-recommendation-the-life-of-marshall-hodgson.html?_r=0 Accessed Tuesday, February 28, 2017).

The first instance concerns Hodgson's deployment of the dual aspect of religion reflects western Christian experiences¹⁰⁰. Faith as something "inner" and religion as something "outside" have always been closely wrapped with the concept of secularism commonly associated with the history of Christianity in general and Christian church, in particular (Taylor, 2007; Assad, 2001; Al-Atas, 1978). Concepts and ideas like "faith", "personal" relation with God, the "transcendental" and others may work for Christianity, but do not necessarily apply to Islam. In fact, the idea and implications of these notions Hodgson deployed intrinsically entail different ontological universe than that of Islam. These concepts are less helpful to understand Islam as a religion or religious tradition (See, for instance, Al-Faruqi, 1991; Assad, 2001; Al-Atas, 2001; 1978). For instance, Assad argued, "Actually, a pious Muslim would not use the word "transcending but probably would echo the Qur'an and say, "I have faith in God almighty and in the hereafter (al-akhira). The term "al-akhira" refers to the end of time and is often linked by the Qur'an in opposition to the temporal world "(Assad, 2001; p.213-214).

Furthermore, the moment Hodgson adopted Smith's articulation of religion in general and Islam in particular, he failed to deal effectively with Islam in many ways. Apart from being a believing Christian and an ordained Presbyterian minister, Smith viewed Islam with an Orientalist cling¹⁰¹. Quiet contrary to any established historical evidences, he erroneously argued, for instance, that "Muslims and outsiders may disagree as to what Islam really is...Yet they may come together in discussing how specific persons at certain times and places have understood it"(Smith, 1981; p.49). Smith's ignorance of Islam is very misleading that he would attempt to interpret Qur'an in his own terms and that led him to a conclusion not only contrary to Qur'an itself (in Qur'anic exegesis, among other things, Qur'an interprets itself) but also to any conscious reader of it. He interprets (rather transforms), for instance, ". . . *Inna al-dina 'inda Allahi al Islam* (3:19)

¹⁰⁰ An acclaimed Christian "we Christians" (Hodgson, 1960; p.74) in "A *Comparison of Islam and Christianity as Frame Work for Religious Life*" *Diogenes* 8 (32):49-74.

¹⁰¹ Assad observed that Smith viewed Islam as a "violent" religion (Assad, 2001; p.210). Similarly, Fatimah viewed Smith as a representative figure of the Orientalist scholarship trend in Islamic studies (2004).

may be read as stating the essential religious truth that 'the proper way to worship God is to obey Him' ” (Ibid, p.47)¹⁰².

Finally, Hodgson’s view of Islam in general and Qur’an, in particular shows his lack of understanding¹⁰³. Some of the misunderstandings include such points as,

Membership in Islam is not through a sacramental rite but through visible allegiance to common symbols the recognition of Muhammad as prophet and, above all, of Mecca as qibla in prayer. Granted these essentials, considerable scope is allowed for variation in personal convictions and even in cult practices (Hodgson, 1960; p.66).

Among other things, it should be noted that membership in Islam is primarily based on the *Shahadatain*, recognition of Allah and his last messenger, and all other foundations of Islam (of which, however, “qibla” is not even among the preconditions). He mentioned this in his article where he tried to comparatively analyze Islam and Christianity as “frame work for religious life”.

Objections to this claim may include, inter alia, whether the “visible allegiance to common symbols-the recognition of Muhammed as prophet and above all, of Mecca as qibla in prayer” essentially constitute membership in Islam or not, and whether qibla has been central to the question of what it means to be a Muslim. Although, as he rightly put it, “considerable scope is allowed in personal convictions”, he failed to succinctly note that the “shahadatayin” presupposes the worship of God at the same time Muhammed as the prophet. However, membership in Islam that misses either of the two foundations, of God and Mohammed as the Prophet, can only be Hodgson’s own imagination of membership without any evidence. It is also doubtful whether, accepting Hodgson’s own claims, only these two conditions constitute the “essentials” of membership in Islam

¹⁰² For the evaluation of Smith’s other erroneous remarks, see Fatimah A. (“Islam and the Orientalists” (2004), *Intellectual discourse, Vol. 12, No 1*,63-72).

¹⁰³ Here Hodgson’s earlier article on “*A Comparison of Islam and Christianity as Framework for Religious Life*” (1960, *Diogenes*, 8 (32):49-74.) is full of this. I will list them down here below.

given the rich history of Islam and Muslims in different times and places. To add another instance, Hodgson claims that,

We may thus try to reduce the contrast between Islam and Christianity to something more generic and therefore simpler to evaluate, by selecting two types of basic faith. These may be labeled (rather unjustly) the this-worldly and the other-worldly. On this basis, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Islam are this-worldly in contrast to Christianity and Manichaeism (Ibid, p.68).

Here also, it is questionable that Islam, as compared to other religions, is “this-worldly”. In fact, Islam is generally seen to balance life; otherwise, as Talal Asaad rightly noted, there is no such kind of dualism in Islam. In the same article, Hodgson makes additional erroneous remarks about Islam. Among others, he argued that,

Islam may well have developed on the basis of Jewish rather than Christian notions of what a religion should be like . . . Islam did not turn itself into an Ishmaelism corresponding to the Jewish Israelism, despite apparent temptations to do so. (The Qur’an might have seemed to allow this, and social history favored it.)

Except for his sweeping generalizations, he does not offer any evidences, scriptural or empirical. Islam, obviously share many things with other religions, particularly Judaism and Christianity. However, except for certain tendencies among the Shiite (this, however, has nothing to do with Ishmaelism), it is very much unlikely that it had any propensity as Hodgson would have us believe. Furthermore, Hodgson is mistaken to assume that “Qur’an might have seemed to allow this”. It is a crystal clear fact that there is not any debris of evidence that can be extrapolated from Qur’an that would allow “Ishmaelism”. The very fact that “Ishmaelism” did not take place is contrary to Hodgson’s imagination.

Among his very simplistic assumptions about Qur'an included the view that "The books of the Bible always have their best impact when read as wholes; the reverse is the case with the Qur'an" (Ibid, p.61). This is debatable on many grounds, much like him, for instance, I have my own opinion that unless one reads and understands Qur'an in its entirety, one's knowledge of Qur'an will end up being erroneous! It is also incorrect to assume that it is in ". . . the Chapter of Light, which contains the most ethereal passage in the Qur'an (Ibid, p.62). The most ethereal passage, if there is anything of this sort, must be sought elsewhere (one among others would be Chap.112). Interestingly, Hodgson also recycled the common Orientalists' invention (or appropriation from Christianity) of "holy war" (p.63-64) as an equivalent of *Jihad* when we know, for fact, that there does not even exist such a concept in Qur'an or Islam in general.

At the end, Hodgson mistakenly argued, contrary to the clear Qur'anic verse, that "The Qur'an referred to numberless prophets and gave no clear indication that Muhammad was to be the last of them" (Hodgson, 1974, Vol.I, p.197). Basically, here what Hodgson trying to accentuate was his point that there was some kind of 'normlessness' immediately up on the death of Prophet Muhammad in 632 AD. However, it seems Hodgson failed to notice the Qur'an's verse (Chap.33:V.40) where it is stated, or at least implied, that Muhammad was *the* last prophet. This *tafsir* for the word "*khatam*" in the verse is a view the great majority of *u'lema* shared for centuries. Muslims scholars with this view included Al-Qurtubi, Ibn Katheer, Ibn Jarir at-Tabari, Az-Zamakhshari, Hasan al-Basri, Abu Hanifah, Fakhr ud-Deen ar-Razi, Ash-Shawkani, and Qatadah¹⁰⁴. This is also supported by the *hadith* tradition, Al-Bukhari, for instance, where the same was mentioned¹⁰⁵.

In spite of this, he could have alluded to the text-context engagement and the coexistence, in contradiction as Shahab Ahmed would have put it, of at least two diverging views (Ahmed, 2016). The latter may include Sufi inspired views and the postnineteenth-century Ahmadiyya movement. If we were to follow the above orthodox

¹⁰⁴ For a detailed discussion, see Cheema, W. (2013): "Scholars on the Meanings of Khātām an-Nabiyyin". *Journal of Islamic Sciences. Vol.1, Issue. 3.*

¹⁰⁵ See Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 4, Hadith 661.

line, not only Muhammed would be the last, but also, contrary to Hodgson's "numberless" prophets, some twenty-five prophets were explicitly named in the Qur'an, and as far as the *Hadith* of the Prophet is concerned, around 124,000 are mentioned. Yet, again, scholars differed on what constitutes a prophet and a messenger.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE RELIGIOPHILOSOPHICAL TREND: KARAKOÇ AND AL-FARUQI

The previous chapter dealt with the works of Arnold Toynbee and Marshal Hodgson under the historic-empirical trend in the study of Islamic civilization. Among other things, it has shown that under this trend, a greater degree of emphasis had been given to various spatiotemporal factors, and that was done, as argued above, at the expense of Islam as a complete system despite its secondary roles. This included, for Hodgson, unity, comprehensiveness, and its formative ideals facilitating Islamdom where Islamic or Islamicate civilization was to be its cultural expression. This is, of course, despite the various latent and manifest flaws I mentioned. The second trend, the religiophilosophical trend, however, presents a fundamentally different account for the nature and form of relation between religion (Islam) and civilization under Islamic civilization. This trend, as I will discuss shortly below, frames the nature and form of relations between religion and civilization in religiophilosophical terms. Unlike the Historic-empirical trend, the present trend views Islam as the overall body and soul of Islamic civilization.

Contrary to the historic-empirical trend, the religiophilosophical trend puts religious and philosophical ideas at the forefront of the discussion of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular. Arguably, this trend encompasses the works of many Muslim thinkers. For instance, the writings of Seyed Qutb, Sezai Karakoç and Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi can present relevant instances. Simply put, thinkers in this trend would unequivocally underscore that the essence of Islamic civilization is Al-Tawhid (unity of God). Methodologically, therefore, Islamic civilization is conceived in such a way that its emergence owes to Islam as a religion, and thus, prophets, Qur'an, Sunnah, Al-Tawhid conception, Shari'ah, and revelation are defined as the very fundamental bedrocks of Islamic civilization.

Focusing primarily on the works of Al-Faruqi (1921-1986) and Karakoç (1933-present), the present chapter expands on the above and related other issues relevant to the discussion on Islamic civilization. Al-Faruqi was a Palestine-American professor of philosophy, comparative religion, and Islamic studies at Temple University. Sezai Karakoç, on the other hand, is a Turkish prolific writer, thinker, and poet. In spite of their difference in their level of sophistications and the degree of emphasis on certain aspects of Islamic civilization, both thinkers, arguably, shared some common grounds. The most important one, relevant in this research context, would be that their thought and knowledge production took place under the revival theoretical orientation.

Al-Faruqi, together with Al-Atas, was known for the revival of Islamic thought, knowledge, and sciences. In this regard, he and his close associates established the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT). One of the major projects of IIIT was the Islamization of Knowledge. However, revivalism (or, as he calls it in Turkish, “Driliş”, meaning revival) is more pronounced in the writings of Karakoç than Al-Faruqi. In fact, it is not the only visible framework within which he thought about Islam in general and Islamic civilization, in particular, but also the overall content and form of almost all of his essays, books, and all other writings explicitly (and implicitly) reflect revivalism. Beyond noting this, the following discussion specifically addresses two major themes. First, it deals with how each of the individual thinkers viewed civilization. Second, it examines how they define and characterize Islamic civilization. Lastly, it discusses how each handled the religion and civilization relations, and the nature and form of this relation for both thinkers.

4.1. Sezai Karakoç's Conception of Civilization

It is worth noting that Karakoç studied political science, read many books on philosophy, history, and Islamic thought, past and contemporary¹⁰⁶. In fact, all of his writings evidently reflect that his is, indeed, a polymath. From Nietzsche, Toynbee, Sartre, Farabi, Ghazali, Mawardi, Malik Binnebi, Iqbal, Maududi, Nadwi, to Qutb and still many others are relevant instances¹⁰⁷. Yet, due to his greater emphasis on the importance of Islam in general, Qur'an, revelation, prophets, and historical Muslim heroes, in particular, Karakoç's thought and construction of Islamic civilization is much closer to Muslim thinkers and reformers, like Qutb and Al-Faruqi¹⁰⁸.

He believed that civilization cannot be approached in racist and geographical terms. The same is true for approaching civilization along meeting physical and physiological needs¹⁰⁹ (Karakoç, 2015). For him, civilization goes far beyond these conditions, and in that, it includes spiritual domains, such as ethics, morality, metaphysics and culture. In his own words, he argued that, "*Medeniyet, insanin sadece fizik ya da fizyolojik ihtiyaclarina cevap veren bir system olmakla kalmaz, ayni zamanda manevi-ahlaki, metafizik ve kulturel istelerini de karşilamak amacini taşir*" (Karakoç, 2015; p.7). Karakoç's idea of civilization, different from the theories that can be considered to fall under the historio-empirical trend, but much like Qutb and Al-Faruqi, takes into account three important factors and conditions.

The first is that civilization is an idea that, by its very nature, encompasses all human beings. In this regard, he argued that "*medeniyet, tanimi itibarile butun insanliğa hitap eden tarih olgusudur*" (Karakoç, 2015; p.7). This civilization begun with the first human

¹⁰⁶ Unless specifically noted, Karakoç's words here are translated and interpreted in the context (e.g., with in the paragraph) where they are used. This translation and interpretation is of mine.

¹⁰⁷ One research claims that Karakoç's thought about civilization was "influenced" by Arnold Toynbee (Aydin and Duran, 2015). Except for some degree of superficial resemblances, Sezai Karakoç's idea of civilization differs in many ways form the way Toynbee dealt with it. This will be expanded on later.

¹⁰⁸ Nacip Fazil Kisakurek is another Turkish poet and writer who shares much of Karakoç's view of Islam and Islamic civilization.

¹⁰⁹ This view is also shared by Toynbee. He believed that racial and environmental determinisms cannot adequately explain civilization (Toynbee, Vol.II, 1934).

being, continuing as of now, and would remain as such till the end of time. According to Karakoç, this civilization is called “*insanlığın medeniyeti*” (human civilization). This version of civilization is, however, different from, and, in some important ways also, shares certain features with actual civilizations (“*reel medeniyetler*”, that is, “real civilizations”). Basically, Karakoç argued that, the ideal civilization is a supernatural phenomenon (“*doğüst bir olgu*”). Whilst at the core there is only one civilization, the ideal civilization in actual life, through time, branched out into various versions of civilization (“*dallara ayrılmış, varsyonlari olmuştur*”) (Karakoç, 2015; p.17).

This ideal civilization presents the centripetal force around which all actual civilizations revolve. Despite the fact that civilizations may rise and fall, the very critical element of any civilization cannot be lost, and as such, when past civilizations degenerated (“*dejenere*”) and before replaced by the new ones, they leave behind the seeds (“*damalarini*”) necessary to help the genesis and reproduction of emerging civilizations in different times and places (Karakoç, 1986; p.236-237). He saw this intercivilizational continuity in terms of civilizational relay (“*Bu bayarak yarisi gibidir. Yarisi bitiren, bayrağı bir sonrakine teslim eder ve yarıştan çekilir. Ama bayrak hep yarıstadır*”). He believed that this civilizational relay continues and this presupposes old civilizations giving way to the new ones (Ibid, p.238). Unlike Toynbee, this shows Karakoç’s view of civilizations entailing connections, exchanges, and interactions through time and space.

The later form of civilization is the outcome of the efforts to reproduce, in actual life, in a particular time and space, the ideal former form of civilization. In this regard, Karakoç saw the latter form of civilization (“*tarihi-sosyolojik medeniyetleri*”, that is, socio-historical civilizations) as a partly actualized version of the former. Yet, there were also some other civilizations that came out against the ideal form of civilization which Karakoç called “*anti-medeniyet medeniyetleri*” (Anti-civilization civilizations). By employing Hegelian dialects, therefore, he explained the nature and future of civilization (and civilizations). Put simply, currently existing and those that gave rise to other civilizations in the past are agreed to represent, in some ways, the ideal civilization. Still, Karakoç is aware that as there are similarities, there are also differences between the ideal and real civilizations (Karakoç, 1986; pp.236-237). Unlike Aydin and Duran’s

(2015) claim that Karakoç sustained “influence” from Toynbee who believed in discreet counting of civilizations, Karakoç clearly noted the interaction of civilizations among themselves, and with the ideal civilization.

Interestingly, Karakoç underscored that the ideal civilization is Islamic civilization (Islam as in monotheism) (“*medeniyet dediğimiz vak’anın ta kendisidir*”). This position presumably subsumes the idea that Allah created Adam, was a Muslim, many messengers sent, and monotheism was at its core. Prophets, starting from Adam all the way through the last of them, Muhammad, are considered founders (“*Esas kurucuları da peygamberlerdir*”) of civilization¹¹⁰ (Karakoç, 2015). This is, therefore, what Karakoç called the ideal civilization as Islamic civilization. As a seed (“*medeniyet mesalesi*”) to many actual civilizations, it served as a torchbearer (“*isik tutmustur*”). In other words, Karakoç saw Islamic civilization as the civilization of civilizations (“*medeniyetler medeniyettir*”).

Finally, since Islam encompasses all humanity, its foundational principles that underlay all actual civilizations do not change, do not die, and will not cease to exist either (“*değişmez, olmemiştir ve olmaz*”) (Karakoç, 1986; pp.237-238). This is primarily because, Karakoç argued that, it is Allah’s role to play, and as such, continues till the end of times (*Kiyamete kadar da bu böyle surecektir*) (Karakoç, 2015; p.17). This is, of course, despite the fact that he believed in civilizations going through war, peace, change, growth, decadence, and crisis¹¹¹ (“*savas, baris, yükseliş, yıkılış, düşüş . . .*

¹¹⁰ This brings together the prophets of Karl Jaspers (1969) under his “axial” moment; Toynbee’s (1934) inclusive list of prophets and many others.

¹¹¹ Interestingly, Karakoç argued that this birth to death life cycle of civilizations does not necessarily apply to Islamic civilization. This may happen to the various versions of Islamic civilizations, but Islamic civilization, since its origin owes to revelation and Allah, is not restrained by it. In fact, this civilization of revelation is not developed in particular time and space, as actual civilizations (“*Ancak, bunların sona ermesi, İslam medeniyetinin sona ermesi değildir*”)(Karakoç, 1986; p.245). However, western civilization, according to him, rises, declines, falls and will commit suicide (“*Bati Medeniyetinin ise, bir zaman sureci içinde inisi, dususu, bitisi ve intihari*”) (Ibid, p.245). In other place, Karakoç argued that western civilization stands as the only one in the history of civilization that is against and dangerous to itself (“*bugunku bati medeniyeti kendi kendini ortadan kaldirmaya calisiyor. Tarihte ilk defa bir medeniyet kendi kendine karsidir. Kendini yok edecek sartlari yine kendisi hazirliyor. Tarihte ilk defa olarak bir medeniyet intihar ediyor*”) (Karakoç, 2014; p.62).

değişme, durma, bozulma, ya da ortadan kaldırma)¹¹² (Karakoç, 1986; p.230). This is also very much related to the second and third factors in Karakoç's conception of civilization, spiritual aspect of human life and revelation.

The second, perhaps the most important point commonly shared by all theories under the religiophilosophical trend, is the view that civilization is not necessarily the product of material conditions and progresses; rather, it is conceived as the expression of the spiritual conditions of human beings¹¹³. For him, "*ruhi faktoru altyapı, temel olarak kabul ediyoruz. Maddi-ekonomik faaliyetler bunun bir sonucu ve yansıması, netice itibarıyla üstyapısını teşkil ederler*"¹¹⁴ (Karakoç, 2015; p.8). The foundation of any civilization, he noted, is the spiritual factor. Thus, economic activities are only seen to reflect the spiritual origin of civilization¹¹⁵. Put simply, Karakoç took axiomatic that it is inconceivable to think of civilization without the necessary and specific reference to religion and spiritual aspect of human existence.

Third, civilization has its own essence and may display variations in its formulation. Some civilization may have a greater emphasis on material and economic conditions while others may cling toward religion and spirituality, but neither of them negates the initial internal synthesis of the two in each of these cases (Ibid, p.7). The origin of this differential orientation in civilizations, he argued, is located in the degree to which how these civilizations are closely tied to the original idea that brought them to life. In this connection, he believed that civilizations pursue an idea, and thus, have purpose ("*bir inanç, bir düşünce, bir dünya görüşü, kitlelerin mali olduğu zaman, yaşayabilmek için, ya*

¹¹² It is worth noting that Karakoç pointed out that rise and decline in civilizations are relative in essence that it can only be assumed comparatively ("*ilerlik grilik biraz da nisibilik ifade eden terimlerdir*") (Karakoç, 1986; p.231).

¹¹³ He believed every civilization has its own soul ("*Bir Medeniyet ve millet ruhu vardır*") (Karakoç, 1986; p.246).

¹¹⁴ Here Karakoç is reversing Karl Marx's interpretation of history and society in which the foundation of society is material condition (and thus, economic determinism). In this regard, Karakoç lamented that materialists take material condition as an end in itself, but "for us, a means to another end" (Karakoç, 2015; pp.8-9).

¹¹⁵ Religion and spirituality are generally considered very key factors behind many civilizations, and as such, shared by many thinkers in the field (Guizot, 1838; Toynbee, 1934; Jaspers, 1969; Hodgson, 1974; and etc.)

bir medeniyet olmak, bir medeniyet oluşturmak, ya ad en azından bir medeniyetle kaynaşmak zorundadır”) (Karakoç, 2015; p.19).

Moreover, human beings, he noted, can exist only with God. This means that human existence is intrinsically wrapped up with certain idea and purpose which draws, by its very nature, from revelatory experiences¹¹⁶. Accordingly, it is through civilization that human beings try, in multiple, continuous and high level, to achieve their ideals and purposes. For Karakoç, the reason for human existence, all the purposes and ideals must be traced back to Man-God relation, particularly in revelation. In fact, he believed that the exact and true meaning of civilization is to be found in revelation. This then serves as an important litmus paper for distinguishing between civilizations in a continuum, some getting closer, some near the average, and still some others standing far from the “Golden mean”¹¹⁷. However, the ideal civilization, for Karakoç, is a civilization of revelation and it symbolizes a real civilization. The best example of civilization of revelation, Karakoç conclude, is Islamic civilization¹¹⁸ (Karakoç, 1978; 1986; 1999a; 1999b; 2015).

In addition to these points, Karakoç is well aware of the difference between culture and civilization. Much like many of the thinkers in civilization studies, he believed that civilization embodies culture. Culture, on the other hand, is the “physiological expression” of civilization (*“medeniyetin fizyolojisi gibidir”*). However, he noted that, civilization should not be thought of only as the anatomy (*“anatomi”*); rather, it should be defined as a complete being like a living organism. If there is an Islamic civilization, then there should be an Islamic culture. Consequently, Islamic culture is an integral part of Islamic civilization (*“Islam kültürü, İslam medeniyetinin bir unsurudur”*) (Karakoç, 2015; p.9). Also, in spatial terms, he located this culture in the Middle East. He pointed out that Islamic culture is, originally, a Middle Eastern culture (*“ortadoğunun orijinal*

¹¹⁶ Karakoç argued that it would have been impossible to imagine the state of being human and the advent of human society if it had not been for religion (deen), particularly faith (Iman) (Din, insanın ve toplumun ruhuna yerleşmiş bir ağaçsa bu ağacın koku iman . . .”) (Karakoç, 1989; p.561).

¹¹⁷ Karakoç, like Spengler (1918), distinguished civilizations with certain characteristics. He viewed, for instance, Mesopotamian civilization as having what he called “hayranlık duygusu” (reverence); Chinese civilization as having “erotizm ve zarafet”(eroticism and graciousness), and Indian civilization as having “metafizik bağlantı” (metaphysically connected)(Karakoç, 1978; pp.59-69).

¹¹⁸ This view is particularly shared by Seyed Qutb and Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi (see forthcoming sections).

kulturudur”) (Karakoç, 1989; p.340). At any rate, he believed that it is to be kept in mind that since the two aspects have an interlocking bond, it is generally perceived that the one symbolizes the other (Karakoç, 2015; pp.9-11).

4.1.1. Delineating Islamic Civilization

Karakoç’s almost all writings are written in connection, in one way of another, with the idea of civilization. His use of the concept of civilization generally encompasses origin or birth, crisis, and revival. However, revival, or “driş” as he calls, is the overall foundation of his theoretical framework within which he wrote about civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular. This means that, obviously, revivalism presupposes moments of crisis in civilization, particularly the crisis of Islamic civilization. These two analytical tools are very important, especially in our attempt to understanding the nature and form of relation between Islam, religion and civilization, Islamic civilization. Before going to address these issues, let me first briefly introduce his conception of Islamic civilization.

A closer engagement of Karakoç’s writings reveal that he saw Islamic civilization along at least two relevant vantage points: the first is his foundational thesis for all civilizations in general and Islamic civilization, in particular; and a comparative approach to civilizations studies. In the former context, as I have briefly indicated above, Karakoç, following Hegelian dialects, saw civilization through two ways. Civilization as an ideal reality is comprehensive in scope (“civilization of humanity”); transcendental (and thus, it does not have a birth and death); it has prophets as its torchbearers; it has an essence and purpose of its own, and it is revelation directed. Actual, real civilizations, however, are conceived as the practical lived experiences of the ideal civilization. In other words, in an effort to live up to the ideals of prophets societies developed civilizations (“*oburler, bu ideali ararken gerçekteşen reel medeniyetlerdir*”) (Karakoç, 1986; p.237). Some succeeded (for instance, Islamic civilization) and some failed to generate a sustainable one (for instance, Babylonian, Mesopotamian civilization), and some came

out anti-civilization (for instance, western civilization)¹¹⁹. In this divine challenge and civilizational response, the best model (and thus, “*Hakikat medeniyeti*”) that did not negate the divine inspiration is Islamic civilization.

Put differently, Islamic civilization (Islam as in monotheism) is that which gave rise¹²⁰ to many civilizations, including Islamic civilization represented through its various forms (Arab based civilization (Umayyad and Abbasid based), Andalusian civilization, Ottoman civilization, and so forth)¹²¹. These versions of Islamic civilization may experience rise and decline in different times and places, but the very foundation on which they were built is transcendental, and thus, cannot whether a way. He went on to argue that the very principles of Islamic civilization, Islam, did not die and will never die (“*İslam prensipleri hiçbir zaman olmemiştir ve olmaz, her zaman için dipdiridir, ezeli ve ebedidir*”) (Karakoç, 1979; p.11). Put in yet other words, the ideal civilization begun with the human creation and continues till the end of times. This ideal civilization, according to Karakoç,, is the very definition of a real civilization. This ideal civilization is Islamic civilization (also with its own versions of civilizations like Andalusian and Ottoman civilizations) (Karakoç, 1979; 1986).

The critical element in Karakoç’s definition of civilization is its close proximity to prophetic revelations and monotheism. In fact, he underscored that real civilization draws its inspiration from Allah (“*Hakikat medeniyeti ilahi kaynaklıdır*”). Its creative minorities primarily included prophets (“*esas kurucular da peygamberlerdir*”)¹²² (Karakoç, 21015; p.16). According to him, prophets build society, a society based on a belief in Allah (“*peygamberlerin kurdukları bu toplumu . . . inanalar toplumdur*”). The strength and persistence of a given civilization depend on the degree to which this civilization sticks to its original ideas and its ability to respond to the basic spiritual

¹¹⁹ Even though dominant these days, Karakoç argued, western civilization, unlike Islamic civilization, rose at certain point, will decline (and currently going through crisis) and will commit suicide (“*Bati medeniyetinin ise, bir zaman sureci içinde inişi, düşüşü, bitişi ve intihari*”)(Karakoç, 1986; p.245).

¹²⁰ Karakoç believed that Islam gave birth to many civilizations (“*İslam kaç medeniyet hemlesi yapmıştır*”)(Karakoç, 2015a; p.303).

¹²¹ He considered “ottoman civilization”, for instance, as one extension (“uzantısı”) of Islamic civilization (Karakoç, 2015; p.14). In other places, he used “varsyonları” (versions, verities). He also expanded this in his “Sutun: Gunluk Yazilar II” (2015), esp. see pp.300-303.

¹²² The role of prophets assigned by Karakoç partly resembles Toynbee’s “creative minorities” (1934).

needs of its members, human beings (“*Bir medeniyet, ideasi ne kadar güçlü ve zaman dayanikli ise o kadar yaşar. Medeniyetin temel öğeleri ne denli insanlığın öz ihtiyacına, temel ruh ihtiyacına cevap veruyorsa o kadar omru uzun olacak demektir*”) (Karakoç, 1986; p.248).

Although many civilizations arose in history, it was only Islamic civilization (expressed through its various actual forms) that came to realize the divine challenge, particularly that was posed by the prophet Muhammad. Unlike other civilizations, past and contemporary, Islamic civilization grew out of the seed of faith or belief (“*imanin bir tohumu*”) (1986; p.67). In fact, he specifically noted that the very foundation of Islamic civilization is revelation (“*Islam medeniyet ve hirsinin temeli vahiydir*”) (Karakoç, 1989; p.340)¹²³. This revelatory connection with Allah is not simply an obsession with the other world. Unlike many other religions, Islam is that which brought the two world together (“*Islam dini, kendisini iki dunyanin birleştiği bir dindir*”). Similarly, Islam prohibits this-world rejection, for it balances the two aspects of life, material and spiritual (“*ruhbanlik olmadığından, dünya reddedilmiş değildir*”). This can be seen, he argued, historically practiced in the different versions of Islamic civilization. In fact, compared to today’s conditions, life either during the Abbasid, Andalusian, or Ottoman civilizations was more fulfilling (“*. . . cok daha mesru ölçuler içindeydi*”) (Karakoç, 1986; p.233).

Contrary to this, for instance, Christianity was unable to produce a single civilization of its own (“*Hiristiyanlik kendi basina bir medeniyet olamadi*”)¹²⁴. As it lost its original message, Christianity assumed a secondary role and remained as a passive element of the Greco-Roman civilization (Karakoç, 2015). He argued that, when Christianity arrived, it was able to command the Roman Empire, but this was changed through time, and thus, it was made to subdue, assuming a secondary role under Roman Empire. Through time, therefore, Christianity went through massive transformations, and as such, lost its “saving” capability (*Hiristiyanlik Roma’yi altetmiştir ama Roma da*

¹²³ As compared to Islam, other religions did not translate themselves into history and produce history. Unlike them, Islam was able to make history (“*Obur dinler, tarihi suruklemişlerdir, tarih yuretmemişlerdir. Tarihi yureten tek din, Islamdir*”)(Karakoç, 2014; p.111).

¹²⁴ This is, as will be discussed in the next lines in the paragraph, contrary to Islam, for the latter produced its own civilization (“*Tek başına kendine yeter bir medeniyettir*”) (Karakoç, 2015a; p.302)

hirstiyanlığı altetmiştir. Birbrini karşilikli deęliştirmislerdir. Boylece hirstiyanli kurtarici din ozelięini kaybetmiştir”(Karakoç,1979; p.59). As I have pointed out earlier, this does not apply to Karakoç’s Islam. In fact, Karakoç believed that Islam, with its own unique and original ideas, developed its own civilization. It was achieved in its own way and through speedy processes (*“İslamsa kendi say kaynaęına hiç bir bulaniklik karişmadan hemen medeniyetini kurmaęa yonledi ve hizla kurdu. Bu yuzden , kurulan medeniyete İslam medeniyeti dendi”*). This is, he concluded, how Islamic civilization came into existence (Karakoç,2015; p.20).

In spatiotemporal terms, the origin of all civilizations, including Islamic civilization, is traced back to today’s Middle East (Karakoç, 2013; 2015). Karakoç argued that the ancient center of civilizations in the world is the Middle East (*“İnsanlığın bilinebilen eski merkezi medeniyeti, bugün Ortadoęu dedięimiz dunya parçasında meydana geldi”*)¹²⁵ (Karakoç, 2015; p.15). In this regard, the ancient of all civilizations, for him, is Mesopotamian or Babylonian civilization. This civilization, through time, gave rise to Egyptian civilization, which, in turn, helped facilitate the ground for the emergence of Greek civilization. Again, the Greek civilization paved the way for the advent of Roman Civilization. This intercivilizational continuity is closely wrapped up with the advent of prophets and their messages. For instance, he argued that in the glory of Babylonian civilization, prophet Suleyman is worth noting. Due to this, Karakoç considered Babylonian civilization as human civilization (*“İnsanlığın medeniyeti olan Babil medeniyeti . . .”*) (Ibid, p.15-16). This makes Babylonian civilization closer to Islamic civilization. Islamic civilization, with its actual varieties and extensions, inherited the legacy of earlier civilizations, such as the Babylonian civilization, as in the chain of prophets; their messages; and prioritizing the human (and thus, “human civilization”). This means that Islamic civilization reclaimed the original message and purpose of earlier civilizations by reviving all related past legacies along side with its own peculiar ideas and energy (*“İslam uygarlığıyise, insanlık uygarlığının yeniden diriliş olarak orta çikti . . .”*) (Ibid,pp.16-17).

¹²⁵ Toynbee calls this region the “Syrian civilization” (“Syriac world”) (Toynbee, 1934).

Furthermore, it is also worth noting that Karakoç saw Islam and Islamic civilization in two ways under the concept of revival. The first is that Islam itself came, in the first place, to reorient the original messages of all prophets which, through time, corrupted, and therefore, misleading. The birth or rather the revival (“re-arrival”) of Islam through Prophet Muhammad is a reformative move on behalf of Allah to straighten the correct path, the path of the primordial Islam. In this regard, except for certain details, the core messages and central tenets of Islam and Islamic civilizations are not fundamentally new. For, otherwise, it cannot be traced back to the first human being created on earth, when the actual Islam and Islamic civilization began. This is in essence one way of looking at the human, collective nature of Islamic civilization. The second way through which Karakoç approached Islamic civilization in particular was in light of the ongoing socioeconomic and cultural crisis Islamic civilization (its various versions) found itself, in these two centuries. This will be expanded in a later section.

So far the discussion has been the first vantage point, foundational thesis, from which Karakoç saw Islamic civilization. Now, we move on to the second way through which he approached Islamic civilization, comparison. Karakoç, like Spengler (1918), characterized world civilizations along certain unique features, except for Islamic civilization. By looking at the architectural legacies of Egyptian civilization, he found an association with a feeling of fear. Specifically, a fear for death, he argued, was a peculiar feature of Egyptian religion, and thus, civilization (*“Misir medeniyetinde bu egemen duygu korkudur . . . Eski misir dininde, korku, olum gucunun en buyuk silahdir”*) (Karakoç, 1979; p.59).

The attribute he assigned for Mesopotamian civilization was the passion for reverence. Astronomical and geometric bond with the stars and universe characterizes this civilization (*“Mezopotamya medeniyetinde basat duygu, hayranlik duygusudur”*). Greek civilization, however, is linked with multiple compositions of feelings and passion (*“Yunan Medeniyetinde hakim olan, bir duygudan çok bir duygu kompozisyonudur”*). The other civilization which Karakoç characterized as mystic and metaphysically oriented is Indian civilization (*“mistik veya metafizik baglanis duygusu”*) (Ibid, p.62-63).

Islamic civilization, on the other hand, is fundamentally different from these civilizations and their characters. In an effort to protect the corruption human passions, desires, feelings, and emotions, Islam rather helped to connect these natural tendencies of man, acquired by virtue of being human, with his creator by giving it a safety valve and a perfect life style through which expressed itself (“*İslam medeniyeti, belli bir duygunun obur duygulari korleştirmesine engel olmak için insanın doğustan taşıdığı bütün duygularını, insane Tanrı onunde ulaşılabilir en üstün seviyeye vardiəcək şekilde birbiryle bağdaştırarak geliştirmenin tarz ve usurlerini yapısında taşıyan bir medeniyetti*”) (Karakoç, 1979; p.66). It is exactly for this reason that Islamic civilization stand out different from other civilizations. The other important point that would make Islamic civilization unique is its own exceptional view of the ideal man. The ideal man in Islam believes, thinks, feels, and acts as per the commandments of the Qur’an and based on the lived experiences of the Prophet Muhammad. This, Karakoç argued, is called in Islam “*İnsan-i kamil*” (a complete person) (Ibid, p.67)¹²⁶.

Furthermore, Islamic civilization being the civilization of revelation (“*vahiy medeni’etir*”) and Qur’an civilization (“*kura’n medeniyetri*”), it is also different from western civilization (Karakoç, 2015; p.11). While revelation and Qur’an underpinned the genesis and development of Islamic civilization, the same degree of role cannot be assigned to Christianity in the conception of Western civilization. As I have pointed out above, Karakoç believed that Christianity was not able to generate a civilization of its own; rather, it was corrupted, and through time, assumed a passive secondary role in Greco-Roman and in the later western civilization. In fact, Karakoç underscored that western civilization does not have a unique identity of its own.

To the extent that Western civilization, arising from the time of renaissance, developed out of elements from many other civilizations, it remained not as an original single civilization. It extended the earlier Greco-roman civilization, and through Andalusia, it took many things from Islamic civilization. Due to this, he argued, no real historian or

¹²⁶ He also compared Greek civilization, western civilization, Christianity and Judaism with that of Islamic civilization, particularly with reference to producing model personalities, and concludes that Islamic civilization not only produces models but also provide examples through prophets (Karakoç, S. “Sutun: Gunluk Yazilar II”, 2015;esp. See pp.421-423).

philosopher of civilization would consider western civilization presenting something new (*“Ronesans ve sonrasi Bati medeniyeti de, hem artik Grek ve Roma medeniyetlerinin bir dirilişi, he Endelus yoluyla Islam medeniyeti ogrenciliği sonuunda oluřmuř bir uygarlık denemesidir ki, kimi tarih ve medeniyeti filozoloflari onu orijinal bir medeniyet olarak bile gormemektedirler”*) (Karako, 1986; pp.236-237).

Unlike any other civilization, Islamic civilization is the one which based itself entirely on Devin guidance. Karako argued that the very foundations of Islamic civilization are spirituality and revelation (*“ruhi faktoru altiyapi, temel olarak kabul ediyoruz”*) (Karako, 2015; p.8). Put simply, contrary to many other civilizations, this makes Islamic civilization a civilization of revelation. Apart from drawing its vital energy from revelation, Islam as a religion and civilization assumes a middle ground among many extreme positions taken by various religions and civilizations. He argued that while the East generally appears “anatomical” and the West as “physiological-structural”, Islam brings these elements and turns them into life. The same thing goes for how Islam stands in the middle ground between Christianity and Judaism (*“Dogu sadece anatomi ve bati sadece fizyolojiken, Islam canlı vucuttur . . . Hıristyanlıkla Yehudilik ifratlarının ortasında orta”*) (Karako, 2015; pp.99-100). If this Karako’s parameter is considered a condition for civilizational vitality, strength and persistence, then it means that depending on the degree to which how they are closer to revelation, they are, by extension, closer to the very reason they exist in the first place (Ibid, pp.8-11). He, therefore, concluded that, in light of Qur’an, all other civilizations other than Islamic civilization are all dead civilizations (*“Obur medeniyetler Kur’an medeniyetinin yanında oldular. Ondan ışık alan, diriler. Onun ışıklarından kaçan, mezarasız oldular”*)(Karako, 1989; pp.136-137). The one that drives its inspiration from Quran, that is, Islamic civilization can revive itself as well (*“Ondan ışık alan, diriler”*). The following section expands this.

4.1.2. Revivalism and Islamic Civilization

Since he was born in the 1930s, he had the chance to experience, particularly to see, and to some extent, participate in the reawakening call for Islam and Islamic civilization¹²⁷. He was well aware of the currents of Islamic revivalism in the 1960s and beyond. He closely followed the revival and reform activities of the Pakistani Syed Abul A'la Maududi's Jama'at-e Islami; Seyyed Qutb and the Muslims brotherhood in Egypt; the Nuri and the Great East movements in Turkey; and apparently related other movements in the Muslim world as well (See, for instance, Karakoç, 1978; 1979; 1986; 1989; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2015a). In these reawakening movements in Muslim countries, Karakoç saw one sign of the rejuvenation of Islamic civilization in the coming years. Before going to discuss this aspect of Islamic civilization, it would be very important to start off with the decline or crisis associated with Islamic civilization and how Karakoç appraised it.

Karakoç began by unequivocally pointing out that it is a fact that Islamic civilization is under crisis and that this crisis is continuing (*"İslam medeniyetinin büyük bir krize girdiği ve bu krizin hala sürdüğü bir gerçektir"*) (Karakoç, 1986; p.228). The question worth asking is exactly where this crisis of Islamic civilization is conditioned. Unfortunately, Karakoç argued, many tried to link the crisis with Islam as a religion (Din) (*"İslama bağlamaya çalışırlar"*). To the contrary, Islam in its foundations and essence cannot fall into crisis and wither away. In fact, this will be the state of Islam till the end of times (*"İslam, ruh ve cevher olarak olumsuzdur elbet. İnanimiza göre, kıyamete dek sureçektir"*) (Ibid, p.232). However, he believed that Islam as a civilization, and much like any other civilization, is subject to the law of cause and consequence (*Ancak, medeniyet olarak, her medeniyet gibi, sebep-netice kanuniyetinden etkilenmiştir İslam medeniyeti"*) (Ibid, p.232). Due to this, he believed that although it is wrong to locate the crisis in one factor (*"bir noktada aramak, elbet doğru değildir"*), there are two general conditions underlying the crisis of Islamic civilization, internal and external

¹²⁷ It could be argued that this was exactly the purpose of his writings in these periods and beyond.

factors (“*Bugun, Islam dunyasinda yasanan kriz, iç ve diř bunalimin birleřmesinden kaynaklanmaktadır*”)¹²⁸ (Karakoç, 2015; p. 20).

The first problem is closely related to Islam itself. Even though he realized that the very foundations of Islam do not change in time and space, there are aspects that should have been subject to reform, particularly those related to societal and individual life (“*Din de ozu ve ruhu mustesna topluma ve insane, zamanve medeniyete yerleřen tarařıyla bir geliřme tabi tutulmuřtur, ilahi takdirce*”) (Ibid, 227). In this regard, the problem of fatalism (*metafizik sebeptir . . . Kader sebebi*) in the Muslim world led to passivity and laziness (*kolaylięa ve tembellięe duřmesin*). Apart from this, the crisis in Islamic civilization can be best explained by the ways in which the crisis is experienced by the various versions of Islamic civilization. In these spatiotemporally embedded civilizations, their different system of organization, institutions, state arrangements, and administrative styles may undergo crisis and change. However, Karakoç lamented that this cannot be taken to mean the death or crisis of Islamic civilization.

Some ideas and mechanism can change in response to certain challenges and conditions; otherwise, they will not have any practical value and importance in the making of civilization. This means that the changed, distorted, and spoiled aspects in the overall crisis of Islamic civilization, therefore, are those which have particular span of life and must be seen only as working instruments and arrangements; however, the foundations and the central essence do not and will not change¹²⁹. In fact, it is remained to be seen the emergence of a new form of Islamic civilization drawing from the very essence and foundations in the years to come¹³⁰.

¹²⁸ In other place, he pointed out that while Islamic civilization was undergoing crisis from inside, the newly emerging western civilization came to push the crisis further (“*Bir yandan Islam medeniyeti, kendi iç bunalimini yasarken, ote yandan, yeni Bati medeniyeti'nin baskıřı altında kaldı*”) (Karakoç, 2015; p.20).

¹²⁹ Due to this, the revival effort will not include changing or reforming Islam (“*Din yenilenmeye muhtac deęildir*”) (Karakoç, 1978; p.70).

¹³⁰ In his own words (Turkish version), Karakoç argued that “*Islam medeniyetinin varsyonlarındaki bazı orgütleniřler, zamanla irtibatlı kurumlar so bulabilir, devlet ve yönetim biçimleri ortadan kalkabilir. Bu, Islam medeniyetinin olduęu anlamına gelmez. Bazı duřunceler, duyarlıklar da kendilerini ifade etme biçimlerini deęiřtirebilir. Bu da onların bozuldu demek olmaz. Demek ki, bozulan, curuven, deęiřen*

The second reason is related to geography and trade. This, he noted, cannot adequately explain the crisis partly because when the Western world discovered and redirected trade routes that were already in use by Muslims, why the Islamic world did not respond to it is yet to be answered. Similarly, citing Malik Binnebi, he argued that whilst Western civilization moved from Agriculture to industry, it can be questioned that why it is not the case for Muslims for hundreds of years (*“Avrupa neden ziraat doneminded sanayi donemine geçebildi de, muslumanlar, yuzyilmiza kadar geçemedi diye sorulabilir”*) (Karakoç,1986; p.230).

The other factor behind the crisis of Islamic civilization is the advent of Western civilization. Although, understandably, Western civilization developed out of the legacies and contributions of earlier and contemporary civilizations, it has been busy dismantling Islamic civilization in particular from many directions. Emerging out of the moment of the renaissance, Western civilization, in its urge for world control shaped itself to becoming a world civilization (*Batıların Rönesans'tan sonra dünya hakimiyeti için geliştirdikleri “dünya medeniyeti” diyebileceğimiz bu son çağ atılımları da biz müslümanların mevcut medeniyetlerini şarşıcı olmuştur*) (Karakoç, 1986; pp.244-245). Forgetting the lending hand of Islamic civilization in its rise, western civilization worked hard to destroy it from root to branch (*“butun güçüyle inkara, yıkmaya, yok etmeye çalışmıştır”*) (Karakoç, 1979; p.10)¹³¹. This was not, however, without consequences. Among other things, the invasion and colonization of the Muslim world, and generally, by under developing them, it kept them under its influence with massive consequences. This resulted in creating distance between these countries and their civilization, Islamic civilization (*“Bir çok İslam ülkesi istila edilmiş, fakirleştirilmiş, esir hale getirilmiş, kendi medeniyetinden uzaklaştırılmıştır”*) (Ibid). This way, the west, Karakoç argued, stifled (*“zaptetti”*) the rebirth of civilization in places like Africa and India (Karakoç, 1978; p.76).

kismlar, zaten belirli omru olan kabuğa ait şeylerdir; esas ve öz bozulmaz, değişmez. Fakat sonra, medeniyet yeni bir varyasyonu ortaya çıkar” (Karakoç, 1986; p.238).

¹³¹ Karakoç mentioned that Western civilization owes its rise to Islamic civilization (*“Bati, gelişmesinde İslam'a çok şey borçludur”*) (Karakoç, 2015a; p.302).

In the western hegemony of the Muslim world, the influence and pain it inflicted has created massive chaos in culture, education, and most importantly, in transforming the Muslim elites' mind set. This was particularly visible after the last breaking points of the Ottoman Empire. Realizing the weakening of the Ottoman Empire, the western society infiltrated the Muslim world and destroyed the Islamic "faith" and self-confidence (*Batililar icimize girmiş, Islama olan inanc ve guvenimizi yikmişlardır*) (Karakoç, 1979; p.19). This, Karkoç argued, exposed the Muslim world to western colonization and cultural imperialism (*"kokleşen bir kultur meperyalizimin, otokolonizasyonun kurbanı olmuşuz"*).

One of the most affected of all in this crisis was the educated and intellectual circles. Unfortunately, due to the increasingly sustained western influence, the newly emerging intellectuals came to adopt western ideas and philosophy. The consequence of this crisis was significant that many of this new generation was, in fact, much more than the western themselves, in fighting against, and resistant to, their own culture, history, legacy and religion (*"Batililardan çok kendi kulturumuzu karşı koymakta, direnmekte, savaş açmaktadır"*). For them, he continued, Islamic ideas and culture are not even alternatives¹³² (*"Bunlar için, İslam ideali ve kültürü bir alternative bile değildir"*). This, according to Karakoç, emanated from the inferiority complex that these individuals found themselves in (*"... dipsiz bir aşağılık duygusundan beslenen ..."*), and as such, highly valued the cultures, ideologies and personalities of Britain, France, Germany, America and Russia (Karakoç, 1979; p.18-20). This way, Karakoç argued, the west, in the name of reform and westernization, buried us under the ground (*"Bati bizi hayata kavuşturma iddasiyla bir kabre koydu"*) (Karakoç, 1989; p.454).

Now, I proceed to Karakoç's idea of reviving Islamic civilization¹³³. Here it should be noted that he believed that the revival of Islamic civilization meant the revival of

¹³² Many intellectuals, professors, and "enlightened" academics, he lamented, would argue that religion and this actual world are different; they point out that religion is irrelevant in this modern world; that we cannot escape from western civilization; that Islam does not fit in this world; how do people pray prayer in these days; and etc (Auto's translation, Karakoç; 1979; p.25).

¹³³ Karakoç evaluated the relative efficacy of using concepts like rebirth ("yenidoğuş"), awakening ("uyaniş") or revival ("diriliş"). Finally, he decided that the later (revival) is more comprehensive in scope

humanity, human civilization, or real civilization (Karakoç, 1978; 2012; 2015a). This is partly because the very nature of Islamic civilization is an open civilization and a civilization that can meet the needs of the modern world (“*Yeni Çağalar Medeniyetidir . . . Islam acik bir medeniyet*”) (Karakoç, 1979; p.15). It is the only civilization where what it means to be human is rightly appraised and valued irrespective of one’s color and race (“*Beyaz, siyah, Asyali, Afrikali, Avrupali farkli olmaksizin insanin insane olmasini on plana çikaran bir medeniyeti*”)(Karakoç, 1986; p.392). Its revival, therefore, owes to its being the culture and civilization of humanity (“*insanliğin mali . . . insanliğin kulturu*”) (Ibid, p.340). Accordingly, Karakoç believed that the revival of Islamic civilization must begin with Muslims and this will facilitate the revival of humanity. This means that the revival of Muslims entails preparing half of humanity to save the other half of humanity. These are the two main purpose of reviving Islamic civilization (“*iki hedef yuklenmiştir: bu misyonun brinci perspektifi muslumanların kurtuluşu, ikini perspektifi insanin kurtuluşudur, Muslumanların kurtulmasi demek, insanliğin kurtulmasi için çalışacak büyük bir bolumun kurtulmasi demektir*”) (Ibid, p.436)¹³⁴.

The revival of Islamic civilization, for Karakoç, is based on practical certainty. In fact, he resembled the revival as life after death, even if the death never happened and will never happen (*Olumden sonra insanin dirilmesi, güneşin yarin doğmasından daha kesin tir . . . medeniyet ve kulturlker de boyle*) (Karakoç, 1978; p.36). The revival is certain primarily because the very foundation of Islamic civilization is revelation, and iman or faith in Allah (Karakoç, 2017; p.147). The duration of crisis only lasts as long as the faith (Iman) of Muslims remains weak. However, the point at which Muslims strengthen their faith or Iman, it will pave the way for the advent of a new version of Islamic civilization (“*Imanın her güçlenisinde iman geri geliyor ve beklemedik yeni hamlelerle medneyet yeni varsyonlarla zenginleşiyordu*”)¹³⁵ (Karakoç, 1978; p.36).

and dynamic in its make up than the former ones (see, Karakoç, 1989; pp. 340-355; 2015a; esp. See pp.484-489).

¹³⁴ The same issues is raised elsewhere as saving/revival of muslms means the revival/saving of humanity “*Muslumanların kurtuluş için çıkış yolu bulmaları demek, insanliğin kurtuluş için bir çıkış bulması demek olacaktır da onun için*” (Karakoç, 2015a; p.545).

¹³⁵ Karakoç believed that the inspiration of Islamic civilization is revelation (“*Islam medeniyetinde ilham kaynağı vahydi*”) (Karakoç; 1978; p.35).

One might think that the end of Islamic civilization is getting closer, but it will eventual comes back to life that one would get astonished (*çiçeklenme gösteriri ki şaşarsınız*) (Karakoç, 1989; p.141). Similarly, that is, according to Karakoç, what is happening in the Muslim world (*çağımızda İslam kültürü de işte böyle yeni çiçeklenmeye gibedir*)¹³⁶ (Ibid). Karakoç's optimism might be linked to two important conditions taking place in the world, particularly in the Muslim world. The first could be linked to the post-WWII decolonization in Asia, Africa and Middle Eastern countries. The independence of many Muslim countries led Karakoç, among other things, to propose Africa and Asia as possible environments in the reemergence of Islamic civilization¹³⁷ (Karakoç, 1979; pp.11-29; 1989; pp. 455-457, pp.532-536).

The second was the emergence of various revival Islamic movements in the Muslims word. For instance, Karakoç considered the reform activities of the Pakistani Seyed Abul A'la Maududi's Jama'at-e Islami; Seyed Qutb and the Muslims brotherhood in Egypt; the Nuri and the Great East movements in Turkey; and related other reformative and awakening movements as important trends in this direction (Karakoç, 1979; p.21). In short, he believed that reform and revival efforts must be directed at education (teaching-learning and university), media (Television and cinema), inspiration of faith or iman, Islamic and political thought, art and literature, system of political administration, and so forth (See, for instance, Karakoç, 1978; 1979; 1986; 1989; 2011; 2014; 2015).

¹³⁶ It should be noted that this was what Karakoç felt perhaps in the 1980s when he wrote this part of the book.

¹³⁷ He pointed out that awakening is a possibility in Asia and Africa ("Asya ve Afrika için bir yuaniş soz konusudur")(456)

4.2. Al-Faruqi and Islamic Civilization

Al-Faruqi's conception of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular is closely tied to the religious idea of monotheism. Specifically, perhaps even that can be considered a unique aspect of his thought is his complete reliance on the idea of *Al-tawhid*, Man's vicegerency and *Taklif*, and God's providence. Of these, the idea of Al-Tawhid is used in every single page of his writings, particularly Islamic civilization related ones, that it merits to be called the ontological universe within which he developed his idea of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular (See, for instance, Al-Faruqi, 1986; 1992). This means that without the necessary and specific reference to Faruqi's conception of Al-Tawhid, there can be no "Islamic" civilization, for the absence of *Al-Tawhid* renders his idea of Islamic civilization empty. This is exactly what he meant when he argued that the "essence" and "identity" of Islamic civilization is Al-Tawhid (Al-Faruqi, 1992; p.17).

Apart from Al-Tawhid, vicegerency of man, and God's providence, Faruqi's unique contribution lies in his methodological orientation. He was well aware that many of the studies into Islamic civilization were focused on either spaces or temporal contours. He argued that while Western scholars of Islam preferred the former approach to Islam, Muslim scholars chose chronology to order their studies. According to him, both were, however, unable to take into account "the essence of Islamic culture and civilization". He observed that western scholars' approach to Islamic history, culture, and civilization failed to account for "the element which unites the regions and makes them provinces of one world of Islam and hence integral parts of Islamic culture and civilization" (Al-Faruqi and Al-Faruqi, 1986; p.xii).

By the same token, Muslim scholars ignored "the substance that has persisted through events of centuries and generations that has forged the dazzling diversity of expression into an organic cultural and civilizational unity" (Ibid). Against this backdrop, Faruqi proposed own method to approach Islam in its culture, history and civilization. He proposed a phenomenological approach to the study of Islamic civilization. Here, Faruqi

argued that “the observer let the phenomena speak for themselves rather than force them into any predetermined ideational framework; let the eidetic vision essence order the data for the understanding and be corroborated by them” (p.xii).Of the many arguments spelled out, Faruqi’s two points are worth noting. The first one is that Islam, unlike Christianity and Judaism, is not its history, for Islam was born complete in the first place. The second point is the idea that “Islam is the ideal which Muslims strive” and it cannot be linked with “Muslims’ history” (p.xiii).

Now, in what follows I attempt, in light of Faruqi’s phenomenological predisposition, to deal with, firstly, Al-Faruqi’ conception of Islamic civilization along side with Al-Tawhid, and secondly, how he relates his conception of Tawhid and Man’s vicegerency (and thus, Taklif) to Islamic civilization¹³⁸.

4.2. 1. Al-Tawhid and Islamic Civilization

The concept of Al-Tawhid generally entails the idea that “There is no god but God”. It is what all Muslims first accept and spell out in their full embrace of Islam and its percepts and injunctions. It encompasses the methodology, ontology, epistemology and axiology of Islam, and as such, it constitutes the very quintessence of Islam (Al-Faruqi, 1986;1992). Even though Islam is considered a late comer in the long history and chain of religions, the conception of God brought under Al-Tawhid is relatively new. In this connection, Al-Faruqi pointed out that,

. . .the assertion of the uniqueness of God is new. It brought a refreshing iconoclasm at a time and space where dualism and trinitarianism were the higher, and polytheism the lower, state of religious consciousness . . . [in so doing], Islam demanded the utmost care in the use of language and percepts appropriate to the unique God (Ibid; p.2).

¹³⁸ The forthcoming discussion mainly draws from Al-Faruqi’s two major books: “Al-Tawhid: Its Implication for Thought and Life” (1992) and “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” (2013).

In order to understand the degree of importance Al-Faruqi attributed to Al-Tawhid, we need to explore the elements and dimensions of it. This is very important primarily because Al-Faruqi believed that it is what makes the religion Islam what it entails, and its culture, history and civilization. The first principle of Al-Tawhid is what he called “duality”. Duality implies the order of existence that differentiate between the Creator and the created, and that the distinction is absolute (“utterly and absolutely disparate”)¹³⁹. While the former is conceived as “the eternal”, “the transcendent”, and “absolutely unique”, the later is the “order of space-time, of experience, of creation” (Ibid, 10).

The second principle establishes the connection between the first and second order and is called “ideationality”. Ideationality bonds the two through two mechanisms, through revelation in which case God communicates with man, and the other through observation of creation, of the “Laws of Nature” (Ibid, p.11). This God-Man connection is not good enough for the divine transformation of man and the world he occupies, and thus, must be meaningful. This is what he called the “Teleological” principles of Al-Tawhid. This entails that “the nature of the cosmos is teleological, purposive, serving the purpose of its Creator. The world has not been created in vain” (Ibid). Even though God’s will is realized in the world without the will of all other beings, it does apply to human beings. In fact, to the contrary, “Human action is the only instance where the will of God is actualized not necessarily, but deliberately, freely, voluntarily. But the spiritual function, viz., the understanding and moral action, fall outside the realm of determined nature”¹⁴⁰ (Ibid, p.11).

The fourth principle concerns the capacity of man and malleability of nature. This implies that since everything was created for a purpose, the realization of that purpose must be possible in space and time. If either of the two conditions, human capacity to carry out certain responsibility (“Taklif”) and malleability of nature, is not fulfilled and

¹³⁹ He went so far to argue that “It is forever impossible that the one be united with, infused, confused with or diffused into the other” rendering, by extension, the commonly recycled Sufi narrative of “the unity of existence” meaningless (Al-Faruqi, 1992; p.10).

¹⁴⁰ This will be expanded shortly under the concepts of “Taklif/mukallaf” which are related to discharging responsibility subsuming free choice.

realizable, then everything related to the Divine and His might falls to the ground and renders everything meaningless. It is for this reason that the “divine *raison d’être* of creation must be possible within the process of time” between the point of creation and to the last Day of Judgment. This is a central theme in Al-Faruqi’s conception of civilization, and as such, will be dealt in detail shortly. It could be noted, though, that human beings are the “Mukalaf” and that everything created beside him is to serve him fulfill the divine will. In his own words, Al-Faruqi concluded that “As subject of moral action, man must therefore be capable of changing himself, his fellow or society, nature or his environment, so as to actualize the divine pattern, or commandment, in himself as well as in them” (Al-Faruqi,1992; p.13). It is here where Al-Faruqi’s conception of civilization lies. Finally, the last principle underlying Al-Tawhid is related to responsibility and judgment. This implies that it is not only enough that man is free to act in realizing the divine commandment and that nature is created for this purpose; there must be responsibility for this action, and thus, judgment. He pointed out that,

Moral obligation is impossible without responsibility or reckoning. Unless man is responsible, and somehow and somewhere he will be reckoned with as far as his deeds are concerned, cynicism becomes inevitable. Judgment, or the consummation of responsibility, is the necessary condition of moral obligation, or moral imperativeness (Ibid, p.14)

All of the above principles underlying Al-Tawhid constitute the core of what Islam intrinsically entails and of whatever is related to Islam. According to him, they “constitute the core of Al-Tawhid and the quintessence of Islam. They are equally the core of *Hanifism* (primordial Islam, sometimes called “islam”), of all the revelations that came from heaven. All the prophets taught these principles and built their movements up on them” (Ibid, p.14). Al-Tawhid is not only confined to theological aspect of Islam, but also, and more importantly, Al-Faruqi argued “Naturally all Islamic culture is built up on them, and together they form the core of Al-tawhid, knowledge, personal and social ethics, esthetics and Muslim life and action throughout history (Ibid, pp.14-15). Al-Tawhid is, therefore, perceived as the quintessence and identity of Islamic civilization.

Put in yet other words, the origin and making of Islamic civilization is the necessary reflection of Divine providence in general and Al-Tawhid, in particular. In what follows I will deal with three important dimensions of Al-Faruqi's conception of Islamic civilization. These are; first, God's providence; second, the vicegerency of man; and finally, continuity and comparative appraisal of Islamic civilization.

4.2. 1. 1. God's Providence and Islamic Civilization

One of the key ideas Al-Faruqi employed in his attempt to link between human action, history, culture and civilization with Al-Tawhid is through what can be called the "Divine Providence Perspective". This denotes that without the necessary and specific reference to Divine will and providence, there cannot be anything possible; and as such, the actualization of human action, culture, history and civilization is played out under the guidance of Divine will and providence. Everything, Al-Faruqi argued, emanates "from the benevolent God Whose will is to provide man with theater and materials wherein his action is ontologically efficacious" (Al-Faruqi, 1992; p.65). After all, it is God Who has "created the world for man; and hence, that everything in creation is for man to use and to enjoy. The oceans, the rivers and mountains, indeed the skies and stars, sun and moon-all have been created for man's usufruct and aesthetic *Zinah* (pleasure) (Ibid, p.83). Thus, divine providence is conceived as the ultimate root-cause of everything and anything. In this regard, Faruqi also noted that, God is,

The ultimate Cause of every event, and the final End of all that is; that He is the First and the Last. To enter into such witnessing in freedom and conviction, in conscious understanding of its content, it to realize that all that surrounds us, whether things or events, all that takes place in the natural, social, psychic fields, is the action of God, the discharge of His causal efficacy and ontic power, the fulfillment of one or another of His purposes (Ibid, p.50).

In other words, the making of civilization is closely tied to God's will and provisions. This means that as God provided everything in the world for the preservation of life; it is then the responsibility of man to realize this purpose by employing whatever things at his disposal. To this effect, Al-Faruqi pointed out that "Pursuit of the world, Islam commands, must be carried out as the fulfillment of God's commandment to pursue the world and hence, in obedience to the ethical limits set by God's other commandments" (Ibid, p.84). Due to this, human civilizational and cultural existence and its ultimate legitimacy (and thus, its identity as "Islamic" civilization) depends and draws form this divine providence or commandments. This is the reason, as Al-Faruqi underscored, that "The Ummah's existence and action are legitimate when they fulfill the divine commandments. The moment Islamic law is no longer enforced in the ummah's affairs, that ummah losses its Islamic privilege" (Ibid, p.92). Simply put, it is within this framework that Islam and civilization are brought together under Al-Faruqi's Al-Tawhid, and as such, argued that,

Islam ordered its adherents to cultivate their faculties; to understand themselves, nature, and the world in which they live to satisfy their innate craving for food, shelter, comfort, sex, and reproduction; to realize balance and harmony in their relations with men and nature; to transform the earth into a producing orchard, a fertile farm and a beautiful garden, to express their understanding, craving, doing and realizing in works of aesthetic beauty. All this is history as well as culture. To make history and create culture and to do so well is the content of the divine will (Ibid, p.82).

In spite of this, it should not be taken to mean that Al-Faruqi's view of Islamic civilization is reduced to divine determinism. Although divine providence constitutes the integral part of Al-Faruqi's conception of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular, it did not down play the agency of man in the making of civilization. Accordingly, it is not only the divine providence that matters, but also human free will and action.

Furthermore, at the heart of “Islamic religious experience” lies human beings and it is this experience that “has great consequence for world history” (p.8). In other words, it could be argued that civilization is conceived as the reflection and product of human adventure to live up to the divine will and commandments in this world. In this connection, Al-Faruqi underlined that “The fire of the Muslim's vision caused him to hurl himself on to the stage of history, therein to effect the realization of the divine pattern his prophet had communicated to him” (Ibid, p.8). Put differently, the “world is the realm *where the absolute is to be realized, and so by man*” (Emphasis added, Al-Faruqi; 1992, p.34).

In conclusion, as I have already discussed above, responsibility for action and judgment are of the principles of Al-Tawhid. This in turn entails human free will and action, and as such, it is apparently clear from this that civilization assumes a deliberate and planned process through which human beings play active role (p.51). This point is detailed further below in relation to the vicegerency of man on earth and its implication for civilization.

4.2. 1. 2. The Vicegerency of Man and Islamic Civilization

Next to Al-Tawhid, “the vicegerency of man” is the most important condition for Al-Faruqi’s view of Islamic culture, history, and civilization. The “vicegerency of man” is a notion Al-Faruqi adopted from Qur’an and is closely tied to the concepts of “Khalifa”, “Amanah”, and “Taklif” in Arabic language¹⁴¹. While all of these signify man’s relationship with God, *Khalifa* specifically stands for man’s vicegerency on earth; *Amanah* entails divine trust; and *Taklif* denotes divine responsibility and moral

¹⁴¹ Often the concept of vicegerency is traced back to this Qur’anic verse: “*And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority." They said, "Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?" Allah said, "Indeed, I know that which you do not know."* (2:3; Sahih International). In the same translation, the word for word translation for “a successive authority” is here rendered “vicegerent”. Accessed (on Tuesday, 21 March 2017) from <https://quran.com/2/30>

obligation. Arguably, Al-Faruqi's conception of civilization is closely wrapped up with Man's implementation of these divine injunctions and responsibilities in the world. This, indeed, needed making Man "the vortex of history", space and time. On the one hand, this imply that Man, as opposed to other creatures, assumes higher position from God's perspective, and responsibility over his actions and the availability of everything in the universe for this purpose, on the other. In this connection, Al-Faruqi pointed out that,

Al-Taklif laid up on man exclusively knows bounds as far as his possible scope and theater of action. *It comprehends the whole universe. All mankind is object of man's moral action; all earth and sky are his theater, his material. He is responsible for all that takes place in the universe, in every one of its remote corners, fro man's Taklif is universal, cosmic. It comes to an end only on the Day of Judgment. Man's acceptance of its burden puts him on a higher level than the rest of creation, indeed, than the angels, for only he is capable of it. It constitutes his cosmic significance* (Emphasis added, Al-Faruqi, 1992; pp.62-63).

Man's vicegerency (*Khalifa, Taklif, and Amanah*) entitles him to an important status and play significant roles on earth and even beyond (above "angels" if properly executed). This primarily included the complete transformation of the earth, building society ("ummah"), and thus, civilization. This is, however, impossible without man's own free will and choice, critical thinking, and moral responsibility, on the one hand, and accessibility of the world to this purpose, on the other. This is also closely related to Al-Faruqi's list of Al-Tawhid's principles, namely, "the capacity of man and malleability of nature". It is here where man's vicegerency makes significant difference against any fatalism. In his own words, "The Muslim is confident that what God disposes history to be in the end is *the direct consequence of his own conduct in history, on the personal, individuals level, as well as on the communal or societal*" (Emphasis added, Ibid, p.35). This divine responsibility (Taklif) of vicegerency makes man the "crown of creation" and "a cosmic bridge through which divine will enter the real of space-time and becomes history" (p.62). It is, therefore, through properly assuming his vicegerency that he can transform the world and make civilization possible. This also meant that man, through

his vicegerency, “can bring the will of God to fulfillment in history” (p.36). Apart from assuming the responsibility of Amanah and Khilafa, everything is made available for him to this end. However, the failure to carry out this task cannot be relegated to divine fatalism, and ultimately, his salvation depends entirely on discharging these roles-in one word, civilization. This is exactly what Al-Faruqi argued in the following lines, that,

The availability of revelation, divine will, and the promise of a critical establishment of the divine will by reason, all render unpardonable the failure of man to fulfill his vicegerency. Indeed, fulfillment of his vocation is the only condition Islam knows for man's salvation . . . nobody can do it for him, not even God, without rendering him puppet. This follows from the nature of moral action, namely, it is not itself moral unless it is freely willed and undertaken to completion by free agent. Without the initiative and effort of man, all moral worth or value falls to the ground (Emphasis added, Ibid, p.7).

4.2. 1. 3. Islamic Civilization: A Comparative Insight

Another way of approaching Al-Faruqi’s general conception of Islamic civilization is to explore it comparatively. In so doing, it would be worthwhile to start off with some of the ways in which Islamic civilization is related, or assumed some degree of continuity, to other religions and civilizations. After fleshing this out, I will then move on to discuss the peculiar aspects of Islam as a religion and civilization. Now, in the former context, Al-Faruqi argued that Islam shares many things with other religions and civilizations. One of which is the very idea of monotheism. In other words, it is very important to point out that many conceptions of civilization assume some degree of connection with religion, particularly the idea of God (see, for instance, Karakoç, 2015; Qutb, 2006; Guizot, 1838; Toynbee, 1932; Hodgson, 1974).

Similarly, the quintessence of Al-Tawhid expressed through its basic principles, Al-Faruqi argued, has been shared equally by all monotheistic religions¹⁴². This centripetal force of all monotheistic religions is called “*Hanifism*” (a sort of primordial “islam”). According to him, this is true for all revealed religions because “Hanifism constitute the core of all revealed religions with prophets and it is based on which they built their movements” (Al-Faruqi, 1992; p.14). Put differently, Islam like Christianity and Judaism assumes an omnipotent Creator of all things, and this connection ultimately determines, in one way or another, they way how each of these subsequently organize life, culture and civilization.

While Islam shares the primordial “islam” with Christianity and Judaism, in an effort to explain and give it practical implications, Muslim thinkers, philosophers and theologians adopted and employed various techniques and methods initially originated in the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Greco-Roman civilizations. With the intent to understand the core idea of Al-Tawhid, Muslim theologians and philosophers (e.g., Al Farabi, Al Ghazali, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushed, etc) debated and disputed among themselves and against those of others. In so doing, these theologians and philosophers were "heirs to Greek, the Mesopotamian and the ancient Egyptian legacies of religion and philosophy” (Ibid, p.1). In spite of these and other continuities and cultural parities among various civilizations, the points of convergences may actually outweigh points of convergences.

There are many ways in which other religions and civilizations differ from Islam and Islamic civilization. According to Al-Faruqi, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, and Greco-Roman and western civilizations present a fundamentally different perspective about the nature of reality, the role of religion, human nature and action, culture, history, and civilization. Contrary to Islam, he argued that, western civilization adopted secularism, and as such, sought to remove religion from social life, public sphere.

¹⁴² The five principles of Al-Tawhid, as I have briefly discussed above, are: 1) Responsibility and Judgment; 2) Capacity of Man and Malleability of Nature; 3) Teleology; 4) Ideationality; and 5) Duality. This does not necessarily mean that all the monotheistic religions adopt and implement all these principles alike; rather, differentially, and to some extent, contradictorily. Otherwise, the difference among them would appear blurred.

Furthermore, religion under Catholic Church was and still is rather viewed as tyrannical, exploitative and suppressive. This, Al-Faruqi accounted, emanated from Catholic Church's long centuries of wielding massive economic and political power in the history of western civilization. Due to this, under modern secularism, "secularism is identified with science, realism and progress while religion is charged with the promulgation of the opposite view" (Ibid, p.90). Being racist and ethnocentric Western civilization "viewed itself in terms of European culture exclusively, and thus, relegates the Asians, Africans and other non-Europeans to a subhuman level" (p.71).

Similarly, Greek civilization promoted a unique view of human nature and action, and social relations. It developed, for instance, a strong form of humanism which the "West has taken as model since the renaissance. Founded upon an exaggerated naturalism, Greek humanism defied man-as well as his vices" (p.63). The Greek humanism considered one human being as free while, at the same time, slaving others, considering them inferior. Christianity, emerging within this context of Greco-Roman civilization, reacted to this very humanism in its formative years. In fact, Al-Faruqi argues, in reaction to this Greek's humanism, Christianity went "to the opposite extreme of debasing human through "original sin" and declared him a *massa peccata*" (p.63). By the same token, Al-Faruqi argued that the view of human being in Judaism is also quiet unlike Islam. He argued that Islam is equally different from Judaism as it "differentiates between men on the level of birth and nature by assigning an elect status to its own adherents" (p.71). Contrary to Islam, Judaism's

Social order had a biological base, only born-Jews are Jews, and a conversion of no Jews to Judaism must be emphatically discouraged and kept at a minimum . . . was a tribal religion which defined good and evil in terms of tribalist benefit and harm (p.87).

Finally, Islam is also radically different from Hinduism in its view of human beings and human social relations. As Hinduism classifies its society into castes, it inevitably assigns many members of its society to "the nethermost classes-of 'untouchables' if they are native India, or to that of *malitcha*, the religiously unclean or contaminated of the rest of the world" (p.63). Interestingly, Al-Faruqi argued that if Hinduism managed to

produce “a social order-a state, empire, a civilization, a distinctive human community persisting to this day”, then “they did that in [*unequivocal*] deviation from their Upanishad vision (Emphasis added, Al-Faruqi, 1992, p.87).

Unlike all other religions and civilizations, Islam and its core foundation, Al-Tawhid presents a quite different view of human nature and action, culture, history and civilization. Contrary to all of the above religions and civilizations, Islam is encapsulated in three important principles that inform its overall content and nature-universalism, totalism and freedom. In fact, Al-Faruqi believed that, Al-Tawhid is the most “genuine” instrument that rightly valued what it means to be human, and in that,

It alone respects man and creaturely, without deification or vilification. It only defines the worth of man in term of his virtues, and begins its assessment of him with a positive mark for the innate endowment God has given all men in preparation for their noble work. Contrary to Christianity, in Islam, ethics are inseparable from religion and are built entirely upon it. The Islamic mind knows no pair of contraries, such as "religious-secular", sacred-profane", church-state", and Arabic, the religious language of Islam, has no words for them in its vocabulary. This first principle of Islamic knowledge is therefore the unity of truth, just as the first principle of human life is the unity of the person, and the first principle of reality if the unity of God. All three unities are aspects of, and inseparable from, one another (Ibid, p. 64).

Unlike western civilization, Islam, in its social dimension, is “absolutely unique”. This is so particularly because quiet contrary to modern western secularism and today’s Christianity, Islam defines “religion itself as the very business of life, the very matter of space-time, the very process of history” (p.85). Unlike Greek civilization, Hinduism and Judaism, Al-Faruqi noted, the universalism of Islam “transcends all human distinctions. It reaches to the *Fitrah*. There, it recognizes what nature has given or what, by virtue of being born, the man is entitles to” (p.80). On top of this, Islam considers that,

All communities sharing Islam, its culture and civilization are part of the same Ummah or society of Islam. Ummah as a universal society, with many communities connected by the commitment to Islam, again all Muslim community on its own right ummah, a microcosm (Ibid, p.104).

Finally, in its view of the world and building civilization, Islam is different from Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Contrary to these religions and spiritualities, Islam made it clear from the outset that cultivation, transformation and civilization of the world is necessary for human existence. In this connection, Al-Faruqi underscored that,

Islam ordered its adherents to cultivate their faculties, to satisfy their innate craving for food, shelter, comfort, sex and reproduction; to realize balance and harmony in their relations with men and nature; to transform the earth into producing orchard . . . All this is history as well as culture. To make history and create culture and to do so well is the content of the divine will (Al-Faruqi, 1992; p. 82).

4.3. Concluding Remarks

Karakoç's view of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular resembles Al-Faruq's view of civilization in essence if not necessarily in the methodology adopted. This can be seen in three important ways. Firstly, as it can be deduced from their writings, while Al-Faruqi was a professor of philosophy, Karakoç is a generalist thinker and writer. Secondly, although a considerable academic sophistication characterizes Al-Faruqi's writing, Karakoç's writings are books with collections of various, and often disconnected, essays. Finally, while Al-Faruqi systematically deploys philosophical and religious ideas, the same things cannot be said for Karakoç.

Apart from his occasional reference to some philosophers, historians and doctrines, he rarely displays any synchronization of ideas. In other words, except for his reliance on his own lived experiences and religious ideas, his writings can be judged simple descriptive essays ("thoughts"), and thus, cannot be considered academic. Notwithstanding this, both Karakoç and Al-Faruqi (Qutb is another addition to the list), commonly shared the primacy of Islam and Islamic ideas, such as Shari'ah, revelation, prophets, Qur'an, and monotheism dominate their vocabularies for Islamic civilization.

While Al-Tawhid is the overall breeding ground for Islamic history, culture and civilization for Al-Faruqi, Islam as a complete system and prophets characterize Karakoç's articulation of Islamic civilization. Although monotheism intersects these thinkers, the degree of its use is markedly different in both cases. For Al-Faruqi, monotheism expressed through Al-Tawhid is the point of gneiss for virtually anything Islamic, from art, science, architecture, ethics, morality, culture to social life. The relative importance of monotheism for Karakoç draws its vitality from its role of serving as a chain through which God's will is expressed through prophets, particularly prophet Ibrahim. This prophet symbolizes a civilization that encompasses all, which Karakoç called, the civilization of all (human civilization). It is also mentioned in Al-Faruqi's discussion of Al-Tawhid, called *Hanifism*, but lesser emphasis is given to its relation, if there is any, with civilization, Islamic or otherwise. At any rate, it would be safe to

conclude that, falling under the religiophilosophical trend in the study of civilization, the two authors cling more to religio-centric approach to civilization studies in general and Islamic civilization, in particular.



CHAPTER FIVE

THE MULTIPLEXITY TREND: IBN KHALDUN AND HALIM PAŞA

The previous two Chapters dealt with works falling under the historio-empirical and religiophilosophical trends in the study of Islamic civilization. While in these trends the emphasis has been on dated and spatially confined conception of Islamic civilization, on the one hand, and religious and philosophical ideas driven conception of Islamic civilization, on the other, the multiplexity trend presents something different. Unlike these two, the multiplex trend approaches Islamic civilization taking into account empirical, historical, philosophical, religious, anthropological, and phenomenological conditions, and other factors.

Here, civilization is conceived as the product of historical experiences, natural conditions, religious phenomenon, and more importantly, as lived human experiences. In dealing with Islamic civilization, therefore, this trend assumes both complexity and multiplicity. In other words, civilization cannot be reduced to historical, religious, sociological, or philosophical phenomenon; rather, it is the outcome of an interlocking bond and synthesis of these and other factors. Apart from the multiplicity of methodology employed and content, it assumes complexity in essence that it transcends natural factors and considers other dimensions as the necessary ingredient. This, thus, makes the trend complex in its abstraction, rather than nature or economic-determinist. To show case this trend, the present discussion draws from the works of Ibn Khaldun and Said Halim Paşa.

5.1. Ibn Khaldun: From Reductionisms to Multiplexity

The present study, contrary to some of the reductionist tendencies to down play Ibn Khaldun's conception of civilization to a merely bio-psychological phenomenon called *assabiyah*, provides a relatively new insight in reclaiming the thoughts' of Ibn Khaldun. Of which, I argue that Ibn Khaldun's idea of civilization or *Umran* cannot be simply unlocked by stringing together bits of evidences scattered around in his *Muqaddimah* and surgically removing them from their contexts. Accordingly, by highlighting at two aspects of the Khaldunian conception of civilization, I attempt to show that religion is a necessary integral ingredient of Khaldunian imagination of civilization. And to this end, I argue that this is possible only on the condition that Khaldun's reading of empirically and historical realities are complementarily tailored along with his own admittance to and acceptance of the divine in his conception of civilization (s).

Similarly, Ibn Khaldun's position with regard to religion-civilization relation requires a holistic reading of his *Muqaddimah* as well. In spite of this, some studies of Ibn Khaldun's thought appear to yield an ardent "realist-empiricist" while some others portrayed him as an honest follower of Aristotelian philosophy. Still others found at the core of Ibn Khaldun's thought of civilization what he termed as "*assabiyah*"-determinism, a sort of bio-psycho-social solidarity dictating the nature and form of civilization. Some dubbed Ibn Khaldun as "secularist historian"(Turner, 1971; p.43); "naturalist, empiricist" (Goodman in Kalpakian, 2008; p.367); "positivist" (Turner,1971; p.45); "functionalist" (Gellner in Arnason and Stauth, 2004, p.29); "Cyclic theory of history"(Ibid, p.45); "founder of conflict sociology"(Ibid, p.46); and still others claimed he used a "moderate" and "Orthodox" approach to Islam (Busch, 1968; p.321). However, a well-known student of Ibn Khaldun, Muhsin Mehdi rejected the idea that Ibn Khaldun was either of these. He specifically pointed out that Ibn Khaldun was never an empiricist, historicist, determinist, positivist, nor of a pragmatist (See, for instance, Mahdi, 1957).

Contrary to these reductionisms, I argue for a more context oriented, eclectic and multilayered reading of Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddimah. This engagement, cognizant of the possibility of dualism in Ibn Khaldun's imagination of civilization, presents a view that complementarily draws from empirical realities and Devine providence. In other words, reductionism of Ibn Khaldun's thought to either of the extremes could prove fatal and erroneous and, as such, its analytical power would be inadequate and, above all, misleading. Accordingly, although a sort of nature deterministic approach to Ibn Khaldun's thought of civilization might be possible, an equally Devine providence perspective is also another possibility. This becomes more obvious when one realizes that Ibn Khaldun's close allegiance to Asha'ri, which is known in Islamic thought for a greater degree of God's Providence in relation to human action.

In this line of thought, for instance, one would argue that Ibn Khaldun explicitly underscored that human nature and action, and more generally, human civilization as God driven state of affair, a kind of providence that God has bestowed up on his creations. As a result, human survival and preservation of life ends up the necessary task of God. However, a different approach or reading of Muqaddimah can potentially, at the same time, posit another side or face to human action and civilization¹⁴³. This later view of civilization can be considered a nature deterministic perspective. In this perspective, like many other social and natural scientists, Ibn Khaldun holds that human nature and action, and thus, civilization is nature deterministic process and geared towards survival and preservation of human species.

Contrary to these extreme dimensions of Ibn Khaldun's thought, it is in light of the creative synthesis of these two perspectives where, I argue, Ibn Khaldun's contribution to the study of Islamic civilization, especially in the context of the relation between religion (i.e., Islam) and civilization lies. In short, although the nature deterministic reading of Ibn Khaldun's thought negates the role of religion in general and God, in

¹⁴³ In any case, there are wide and diverging readings of the thoughts of Ibn Khaldun yielding contradictory labeling and, ultimately, conclusions (Arnason and Stauth, 2004).

particular, the Devine's providence perspective renders an absolute power to God¹⁴⁴. However, if a holistic reading of Ibn Khaldun's thought concerning civilization is attempted or conceived, then the emerging synthetic perspective would prove much safer, contextually sensitive, and thus, more meaningful.

This third perspective, different from the above two extreme versions, adopts a more multiplex approach to civilization study in general and Islamic civilization, in particular. This multiplexity in Ibn Khaldun's thought of Islamic civilization signifies religious based ontological and epistemological orientations; historio-empirical realities and observations, and philosophical positions. In addition, the synthesis of his religious predisposition needs to be contextually evaluated along with his own personal experiences in politics, religious activities, and own philosophical and sociological projections¹⁴⁵.

In what follows, therefore, I flesh out two important aspect of Ibn Khaldun's thought about civilization ("Umran"). The first aspect examines what can be called nature-deterministic dimensions of civilization. This includes environmental and natural conditions, such as land, vegetation, water, cultivation, and assabiyah (and broadly human natural predisposition). The second aspect explores the role of divine providence and the concept of vicegerency ("Khilafa") of man on earth. Finally, I conclude that understanding Ibn Khaldun's view of civilization demands both multiplicity and complexity in method and content.

¹⁴⁴ See, for instance, Busch, B.C. (1968). "Divine Intervention in the "Muqaddimah" of Ibn Khaldun. *History of Religions*, Vol. 7, No. 4, pp. 317-329.

¹⁴⁵ For Arnason and Stauth (2004, p.33), the religious dimension is in as much important as other aspects of Khaldunian understanding of civilizational analysis.

5.1. 1. Umran and the Natural World

Ibn Khaldun saw human settlement on earth as something closely related to the availability of oceans, rivers, and overall climatic conditions. In this way, he posited human civilization (“umran”) along with natural conditions. In this context, he noted that “the part of the earth that is free from water and suitable for human civilization (“lilumran”) has more waste (“qafaar”) and empty (“khil’a”) areas than cultivated-habitable (“umranahu”) areas. The empty area in the south is larger (“akthir”) than that in the north” (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.100). Again, the cultivated part of the earth is more abundant in the north than the south. Even though the part of the earth that is free from water is about one-half or less, the cultivated part covers only about one-fourth of it. Based on this observation, Ibn Khaldun, following Ptolemy and Roger, divided this part of the earth into seven zones (“Aqalim”).

It should be noted that this classification assumes direct connection between Umran and geographical conditions. Specifically, his classification was based on the assumption that climatic conditions affect the ecosystem, human activities-social, economic and cultural, and thus, the level of Umran. Basically, Ibn Khaldun believed that the cultivated part (juz’a al-ma’mur) of the earth, there are many rivers. The largest among them are four in number, namely, the Nile, the Euphrates, the Tigris, and the River of Balkh which is called Oxus (“Jayhun”) (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.103).

By employing his own observation (“*bil mushahadah*”) and verifiable reports or continuous traditions (“*wal akhbar al-mutawatir*”), of the seven zones, Ibn Khaldun underscored that, the first and second zones are less cultivated, and thus, have less civilization (“*Aqal umranen mima b’adiha*”). These zones are less cultivated and habitable partly because they have less nations (“*umam*”), population (“*wa anasyhim*”), cities (“*amssaruhu*”), and towns (“*madinahu*”). When it comes to the third, fourth and what comes after these, the condition of civilization is reversed. In other words, Ibn Khaldun noted that, contrary to the first and second zones, the nations and populations are tremendous, and cities and towns are exceedingly numerous (“*tajawaz al-had*”).

'adadin") in zones after the first two. In these parts of the world, therefore, he believed that civilization remains to be much higher (*"mundaraj"*) while the south, the first and second zones, is completely empty (*"khil'a kulluhu"*) (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.105)¹⁴⁶. This difference in the level of civilization is attributed to climatic condition. In other words, while the south tends toward hot, and thus, makes cultivation difficult, the north tends toward cold with the reverse effect. Ibn Khaldun found that countries located more to south, of Africa are less moderate, and thus, unsuitable for civilization. He included such countries as Ghana, Slavs, South Sudan, part of Mali and others in the first and second zones (that is, countries in the North and South end of the earth).

When it comes to certain parts of the second, the third, fourth and fifth zones, the condition was relatively moderate. He included such countries as North of Sudan, Christian Turks, Abyssinia, Persians, Arabs, Israelites, Hijaz, China, Byzantines, India, France, Greeks, and others. However, the most ideal climatic condition suitable for human cultivation, and thus, breeding civilization was located in countries like Syria, Iraq, and few others.

While analyzing the Umran level of the seven habitable, albeit varying in degrees, part of the earth, Ibn Khaldun gave particular emphasis on certain attributes which, in turn, are very crucial to understand what he meant by Umran itself. Some of the factors he used as rubric included what he called "al Ahwal" (conditions). This condition (both material and non-material aspects) encompasses architecture (building styles, homes), subsistence (food), clothing style, economic transactions, character, prophecy and collective life. These are the most recurrent themes that colored (and thus defined) Ibn Khaldun's discussion of Umran, both in specific and general contexts.

I argue, therefore, that it is through these yardsticks and measures that he sought to differentiate between places and societies of higher (perhaps complex) level of Umran from those with less or lower level. To begin with the later group of societies and places (first and second zones-*"iqlim"*), Ibn Khaldun found sufficient reason to consider them

¹⁴⁶ In other place, he changes the vocabulary from *"wal junub khil'a kulu"* to *"kan al-umaran fi iqlim al-ula wa thaniya qalilan"* (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.105).

assuming lower level of Umran than those of the third, fourth, fifth and six zones. He argued that people in these climatic conditions tend to have buildings built on clay (“bi-tin”) and reeds (“wa al-qasab”); their subsistence on durra (“al-zira’h”) and herbs (“wa al-‘ashb”); their economic exchanges (“wa mu’ameletihim bi ghayr al-hajarayin al-sharifayin”) on copper, Iron or skins not on the two noble metals; their characters are close to dumb animals (“wa akhlaqihim qaribatun min akhlaqi al-haywanat al-‘ajm”) and act savagely (“wa’anahum mutawhishun”) and eat each other (y’akulu ba’duhum b’adua); and finally, in their religious conditions, they are ignorant of prophecy (“fela ya’rifuna nubuwa wala yadinun bisharia’h”¹⁴⁷) (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.143). Due to these conditions, Ibn Khaldun concluded, zone one and two are remote from the state of being human and close to those of wild animals (“wa jami’a ahwalihim ba’edatun min ahwal al-unsaya qaribatun min ahwal al baha’em”)(Ibid, p.143).

Contrary to the first and second zones, the overall conditions of Umran, both in terms of habitation and cultivation, assume moderation in places like Maghrib, Syria, Hijaz, Yemen, Iraq, India, China, and Andalusia (lying between the second and the seven zones). Of these, Both Iraq and Syria represent the most temperate and ideal of all places, and thus, higher level of Umran. Among other things, all of these places share important characteristics, such as houses built on stones and embellished by craftsmanship (“ye tahizun al-buyut al-minjidah bilhजारah”); undertake their businesses through the two precious metals-gold and silver; and they avoid intemperance in all their conditions (“wa yeb’adun an al-inhiraf fi amah ahwalihim”)(Ibid, p.142). In other words, these zones were endowed with all the necessary conditions for sustaining civilization (“wa kafatu al-ahwal al-tabi’ah lil’etimar”). In this regard, they could be distinguished by ways of making a living (“m’ash”), dwellings (“masaakn”), crafts (“sin’a”), sciences (“‘ulum”), political leadership (“rayyasat”), and royal authority (“mulk”). They have experiences of prophecy (“fakaanat fihim nubuwat”), religious groups, dynasties (“duwal”), religious laws (“shari’ah”), sciences, countries (“buldan”),

¹⁴⁷ This is very important exclusion criteria that Ibn Khaldun used here. In fact, if it had not been for this, he would have perhaps excluded nations like Abyssinia, North Sudan, Slavs, and Christian Turks from the list of the first and second zones, with less of Umran. This will be expanded on the second aspect of Ibn Khaldun’s view of civilization, Umran.

cities (“amssar”), buildings (“mabani”), horticulture (“furassah”), and splendid crafts (“sin’a alfa’eqah”)(Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.145).

5.1. 1. 1. Umran between Bedouin and Settled Societies

Ibn Khaldun divides Umran into two forms, rural-based Bedouin (“Badawiy”) societies and urban-based settled (“hadariy”) societies¹⁴⁸. Apart from the above geographical and weather conditions, Ibn Khaldun effectively used *assabiyah* and the institutions of economy and political arrangements in designating human social organizations based on cultivations and habitations. In this connection, he underscored that civilization begins in Bedouin societies (“*al-umran al-badawi li’anhu sabiq*”) not in the settled societies. While life is based on natural needs in the first, luxury and perfection characterizes life in the latter. This is, for him, according to the principle that fulfilling natural needs necessarily precedes perfection, and the former is the foundation (“*aslu*”) of the latter (“*furu’e*”). The size and scope (*awsa’u*) of cities and towns are much larger in the latter rather than in the former (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.227).

Furthermore, Ibn Khaldun appraised the state of the Bedouin condition as something very close to nature, and as such, he saw in them truthfulness and goodness (“*khayr*”); courageous (“*shaj’a*”) and savages (“*mutawahishin*”) than the settled whose condition is softened by state laws and regulation; live only in blood-based psychosocial group (“*assabiyah*”); have purity of blood (“*as-saryhu min al-nasab*”), and authority based on *assabiyah* and others (Ibid, pp.223-248). In what follows, I attempt to reconstruct Ibn Khaldun’s articulation of life from the state of nature (which, for Ibn Khaldun, is Bedouin) and analyze the role of *assabiyah* and the institutions of economy and politics in its social organization.

¹⁴⁸ In spite of geographic and environmental conditions, human social organization or societal life is a necessarily (“*in al ijtima’e al-insaniy daruriy*”) and accepted the idea that human beings are civilized or city-oriented by nature (“*Al-Insan madani bil-tab’a*”) (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.96).

Ibn Khaldun's view of human condition in general and among Bedouin societies, in particular, is based on empirical data, own observations, and reports (and thus rarely invokes religion). Here, it can be easily seen that he relied more on what has come to be called the "Great Chain of Beings" and nature deterministic perspective¹⁴⁹. It is through this frame of reference that he conceived the nature and form of life (and thus Umran) among the Bedouins. In line with this, therefore, it can be argued that, for Ibn Khaldun, human beings generally occupied a place above animals, but below angels. He argued, by adopting Aristotelian "chain of beings", that,

The animal world then widens, its species become numerous, and in a gradual process of creation, it finally leads to man, who is able to think and to reflect. The higher stage of man is reached from the world of the monkeys, in which both sagacity and perception are found, but which has not reached the stage of actual reflection and thinking¹⁵⁰ (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.172).

In this world of humans, life is very precarious, dangerous, and unpredictable. In order to succeed, and thus, preserve life in this Khaldunian 'state of nature', it is a necessity to have certain unique survival basic instincts, skills, and generally, mechanism of coping and surviving. In this Khaldunian 'state of nature', human beings need, among other things, food and security to survive. However, the power of the individual human being is not sufficient for him to obtain (the food) he needs, and does not provide him with as much food as he requires surviving ("*an qudrat al-wahid min al-bashar qasirah an tahsil hajatahu min zalik al-ghiza*") (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.97).

Similarly, each individual needs the help of his fellow beings for his defense ("*fi difa'a an-nafsihi il al-isti'annah bi'abna'a jinsihi*"). However, the power of one individual human being cannot thus withstand the power of any one dumb animal. Man is then

¹⁴⁹ Traced back to Aristotelian philosophy of "scala naturae" also sometimes known as ("ladder of nature"). For further discussion see Arthur, O. (2001)'s *The Great Chain of Being*.

¹⁵⁰ The Arabic version reads: "*wat-tasa alem al-haywanat wa ta'dadat anwa'aha wantaha fi tadaruj al-takwin il al-insan sahib al fikr wa ru'eya*" (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.172).

generally unable to defend himself against them by himself. These two conditions, therefore, constitute the ‘prime causes’ of Khaldunian theory of civilization.

The first is the need for economic institution and the second is for political institution. These social institutions are still impossible without the second ‘necessary cause’, namely, cooperation (“*al-ta’awun*”) and social organization. At the heart of this is group feeling (“*assabiyah*”). According to him, group feeling is the basis of mutual cooperation among fellow human beings because every mass undertaking, economic or political, by necessity requires group feeling (“*in kula amrin tahmil aleyhi al-kaafa’h fala bud laha min al-assabiyah*”)¹⁵¹ (p.279). In other words, without developing a cooperation or elementary form of social organization through group feeling, human beings’ survival, feeding itself and security from any danger, could have been impossible. Likewise, when this “mutual co-operation exists, man obtains food for his nourishment and weapons for his defense” (“*fala bud fi zalik kulluhu min at’awun . . . wa maalam yakun haza al-ta’wun fala yahsil lahu quwa’h wala ghiza’a*”)(p.98). Apart from cooperation, human beings cannot exist in a state of anarchy (“*muqatalah . . . il-dim’a wa ’izhab al-nufus*”) and without a ruler (“*al-malik alqahir*”) who keeps them apart, restrain (“*al-wazi’e*”) them and exercises authority (“*fawd*”) (p.322).

All these are, however, only possible if human beings have developed unique qualities (“*bikhawas ikhtassa biha*”) that distinguished them from that which is behind them in the chain of beings, the animals. These qualities included the sciences and crafts resulted from the ability to think (*al’ulum wa sina’a alati hiye natijat al-fikr*) which exalts (“*tamayaza bihi . . . al al-makhluqat*”) him over all creatures; the ability to exercise restraining influence (*al-hukm al-wazi’e*) and strong authority (“*sultan al-qahir*”) of which man, compared to other creatures, cannot exist without (“*layumkin wujudahu duna zalik*”); man's efforts to make a living (“*ass’ay fil ma’ash . . . waktisab asbabhu*”); and at the end, civilization (“*al umran*”)¹⁵² (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; pp. 95-96).

¹⁵¹ The same is mentioned elsewhere that human beings cannot exist without group feeling and cooperation (“*in al-bashar layumkin hayatahum wawujudahum ila bijtima’him wata’awanihim*”) (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.322).

¹⁵² Huntington, S.P. (1996, p.43) considers civilization as “ the broadest cultural entity . . . which distinguishes humans from other species . . . ”

Consequently, the sociopolitical and economic needs of human beings are met by means of adopting necessary survival basic instincts and skills, such as group feeling, cooperation, authority, and thus, civilization.

In this Khaldunian ‘state of nature’, human beings are conceived to be in constant state of perfection, of which nature contributes both the physical and sociocultural ingredients. In this state of nature, human bio-psycho-social make up is defined as the product of the natural environment. Human body color (p.142), body proportion (p.147), human personality, character, and courage (pp.223-248), and religious conditions (p.150), and others are attributed to the physical environment where human beings live¹⁵³. On the sociocultural domain, human beings are viewed as the product, or as Ibn Khaldun himself calls it, the “child” of his sociocultural environment (“*wa’asluhu in al-insan ibnu ‘awa’idahu wama’lufihi*”) (p.233). In fact, he went so far as to claim that man is not the product of his natural disposition and temperament. The conditions, to which he has become accustomed, until they have become for him a quality of character and matters of habit and custom, have replaced his natural disposition (“*la ibnu tabi’atehu wamizajih . . .hata saara huluqan wamalakatan wa’adatan tunzalu manzilat al-tabi’at wal-jibilah*”) (Ibid).

He goes on to argue that through time sedentary people in successive generations have grown up in this way that they have become like women and children, who depend upon the master of the house. Eventually, this has come to be a quality of character that replaces natural (disposition). In this regard, the customs, traditions, and various behaviors such as ‘habit of goodness and evil’ (p.227), ‘sociability’, savageness (everywhere in the text), ‘bravery’ and ‘courageousness’ (p.232), ‘fear, docility and fortitude’ (p.233), friendliness, ‘levity’, ‘excitability’, and ‘great emotionalism’, and related psychological, social, and cultural make up of human beings are attributed to the socio-cultural environment within which man lives. Furthermore, in this Khaldunian state of nature, being rational, human beings do not act individually for it has inherent risks and unsustainable, but collectively for its abundance, sustainability, and security.

¹⁵³ Similar kind of environmental determinism can also be traced in Montesquieu’s work (see, for instance, Mazlish, 2004, p.10)

While the aforementioned discussion presented a sort of nature-deterministic perspective to approach the idea of Umran or civilization, it is far from complete. In fact, as the very central argument of this research, Ibn Khaldun cannot be simply reduced to a certain preconceived theoretical box developed after him. In other words, since Ibn Khaldun shows a certain degree of complexity and multiplicity in approaching Umran (in content, methodology, and focus), he deserves to be examined well above and beyond one simplistic domain. Accordingly, in what follows, I explore the religious implications of Ibn Khaldun's appraisal of Umran. I conclude that without the necessary and specific reference to these two and related other dimensions; the attempt to reconstruct Ibn Khaldun's theory of Umran or civilization could be inadequate and may even be misleading.

5.1.2. Umran, God's Providence, and Man's Vicegerency

Anyone reading Ibn Khaldun cannot help but notice the religious context, coloring, or aspects in any issue he discusses and analyzes in his Muqaddimah. Umran, being the central organizing principle and science of Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddimah, cannot be disentangled from this embedding context as well. Put differently, Ibn Khaldun's thought and assessment of Umran embodies such factors as nature ("empirical")-biological, environmental; socio-cultural, and historical factors-and religious contexts-as in God's providence and the vicegerency of man. As I have already dealt with the former aspect above, the following paragraphs briefly explore the later dimension.

The religious corner of Ibn Khaldun's Umran is in as much important as the nature-deterministic aspect. Here, in this regard, it could be argued that Ibn Khaldun's thought assumes God's plan for Human beings on earth. In this plan of God, human beings are designated with His vicegerency ("Istikhlaf") on earth (p.98). In order for this to happen, God provided everything for human beings, without which human being's existence on earth would be impossible. As a result, God 'gave everything its natural characteristics, and then guided it'(God's providence, surah al-Taha, Ayah-50) (p.99). Human beings being part of the "every creation" are endowed with the necessary survival mechanisms

and “guided” them in the right path that would enable them to preserve their species. In order to meet the needs and wants of human beings and thus its preservation, God gave man of all that is needed. These divine providences also included natural and socio-cultural domains.

Addressing the natural environment, Ibn Khaldun argues that for the success of God’s plan for the vicegerency of man and for civilization and for the preservation of life resulted in making part of the earth free of water¹⁵⁴. Not only did God give the natural conditions for the survival, preservation and continuation of human species, but also the socio-cultural conditions. One of which is a necessary ingredient of any social organization that marks Khaldunian thought of human culture, nature and civilization is *assabiyah*, or loosely translated as “group feeling”. This psycho-social and cultural concept is a blood based relation and feeling towards a group or members of a group, is still a divine providence from God. In this connection, he says that compassion and affection for one's blood relations and relatives exist in human nature as something God put into the hearts of men (“*wa ma ja'alallahu fi qulubi e'ibadihi min al-ashafaqah wa na'arah ala zuwi arhamahum waqarabaa'ihim mawjudaha fi tab'a al-basher*”). It makes for mutual support and aid (“*al-ta'dhud wa al-tanassur*”) (Ibid, p.236). Group feeling and thus cooperation among human beings are from God; otherwise, he invokes God’s promise that ‘If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have brought their hearts together; but Allah brought them together’(Surah al-Anfal: Ayah-63)¹⁵⁵ (Ibid, p.171).

In addition to group feeling and cooperation, God also ensured the security and safety of human beings on earth through facilitating authority. Ibn Khaldun, in light of Qur’anic verse that God saying “We led him along the two paths”, points out that these ‘paths’ are those which “God put into man”, namely, evilness and goodness (“*in Allaha subhanahu rakkaba fi tab'a al-basher al-khayr wa al-sher*”) (Ibid, p. 235). These qualities therefore

¹⁵⁴ Rosenthal translated this as “God's plan for civilization and for the elemental generation of life resulted in making part of (the earth) free of water” (1967; p.96).

¹⁵⁵ The Arabic book I am using for this research mistakenly attributed this verse to “Surah al-Hijr” (see, Ibn Khaldun, Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah, Lebanon, 2013; p.171).

represented in human beings of wickedness (“fujur”) as well as its fear (“taqwa”) of God. Since the evil quality of human beings included injustice (“zulm”) and aggression (“udwan”), God enabled human beings with authority; otherwise, ‘If God did not keep human beings apart, the earth would perish’(Surah al-Barah, Ayah-251) (Ibid, p.254).

In this second aspect of Ibn Khaldun’s conception of Umran, human beings generally acquire or achieve the plan of God. Human beings are represented in a way that resembles players in the field created by God. The players and the field is of God, but given the fact that human beings are shown both the right and wrong direction in their attempt to play the game, both in their physiological and psychosocial make up, they acquire or achieve ‘the plan’ of God. Owing to its weaknesses and inabilities inherent in his creation, human beings need God for the preservation of his own species, and thus, the fulfillment of God’s original plan, man’s vicegerency on earth. Accordingly, human beings survive meeting their needs, primarily, economic and political needs. These needs, being the inherent weaknesses of man, God provides, besides creating them, all the necessary ingredients-the natural and social environment. Group feeling, cooperation, authority and civilization are, therefore, God’s ways of dealing with human beings on Earth¹⁵⁶.

In conclusion, it could be clearly seen that Ibn Khaldun’s approach to umran or civilization synthesizes different conditions and factors, on the one hand, and content and methodology, on the other. In addition to the above two key aspects of Ibn Khaldun’s Umran, there are historical, philosophical (“hukama’a”) and empirical dimensions to it. It is clear that he adopted examinations-historical (“tahqiq”), causations (“‘illa”), personal experiences (“tajrubah”), observations (“mushahadah”), and verified and continues reports (“al akhbar al mutawatir”), logic and others as methods. These methods helped him to triangulate and verify various assumptions, philosophies, myths, prior theories, and others. This not only helped him reduce the chance of making erroneous mistakes, but also strengthened the power of his conclusions and deductions.

¹⁵⁶ In fact this is what Ibn Khaldun considers al-umran. He says “*al-umran . . . wa bayaanuhu inallaha subhanahu khalaq al-insan warakkabahu ala surat la yassih hayatiha wabaq’auha ila bilghiza’a wahadahu tamaassuh bifitratih*” (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.97).

In terms of content and focus, Ibn Khaldun's study of Umran encompasses nature-biological and environmental (living and non-living aspects), historical accounts (embedded in time and space), religious notions and conceptions (prescriptions, actualities, and experiences-like Sufism), human experiences (for instance, magic), economics and trade, sciences, human behavior, agriculture, pastoralism, human life style (rural and urban sociology), power and politics, human psychology, and others. This, consequently, makes Ibn Khaldun's approach to Umran or civilization multidimensional, and thus, assumes both multiplicity and complexity. This, again, make him among thinkers which I classified as multiplex thinkers rather than, say historio-empirical or religiophilosophical.

5.2. Said Halim Paşa: Insights from the Ottoman Empire

Another thinker that arguably falls under the multiplex trend in the study of Islamic civilization is the Wazir of the late Ottoman Empire, Said Halim Paşa. Interestingly, like Ibn Khaldun, Halim Paşa was not an armchair speculator as is usually the case for many western theoreticians of civilization¹⁵⁷. He was an active participant in the political as well intellectual scenes and arenas of the late ottoman era. Much like Ibn Khaldun, the multiplexity reflected in his idea of civilization, particularly Islamic civilization and its ottoman off shot, draws significantly from his practical-empirical, political, philosophical and ideological experiences and thoughts. Being an ardent Islamist and ottoman by predisposition, Said Halim Paşa's (hereafter referred to as "Paşa") general thought resonates with the overall ottoman Islamic and political thought, which, in turn, cannot be detached from the influence of Ibn Khaldun (see, for instance, Ardiç (2012)).

As I will discuss shortly below, Paşa's thought generally assumes multiplicity in the dimensions explored and the complexity of his account. In what follows, principally focusing on his book ("Buhranlarımız"), which encompassed seven of his earlier writings, I attempt to flesh out Paşa's thought under three main headings: the first part deals with his view of Islam and Islamic civilization (and thus the ottoman empire as an important empirical reflection); the second part comparatively appraises how he views Islamic civilization in contradistinction to western civilization; and finally, the last part ends with highlighting what he considered to be the locus of crises and revival in Islamic civilization.

I argue that these dimensions can serve as anchors to decipher Paşa's view of civilization in two important ways. On the one hand, the first two dimensions can collectively provide normative as well as philosophical vantage points to Paşa's understanding of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular. The third dimension which is, in fact, the very purpose of Paşa's writings in "Buhranlarımız" can provide us with an

¹⁵⁷ It is very important to underline that Ibn Khaldun's and Said Halim Paşa's work are the necessary reflection of their lived experiences, not just students of "classical books", and thus, arm chair speculators. I will expand this at the end of the multiplex trend under the "Concluding Remark" section.

understanding of empirical, historical, and sociological constituents and aspects of Islamic civilization, on the other. In other words, by dealing with aspects of the crisis of Islamic civilization, Paşa is to actually analyze the vital or secondary aspects of Islamic civilization where this crisis is conditioned. Put yet in other words, by discussing the crisis and revival of Islamic civilization, Paşa is dealing with the very important dimensions of Islamic civilization. As I will show shortly, this is the very reason why Paşa's understanding of Islamic civilization merits to be examined under multiplex trend, subsuming and reflecting multiplicity and complexity, in the study of Islamic civilization.

5.2. 1. Islam and Islamic civilization

When Paşa wrote about civilization what he had in mind was Islamic civilization in general and Ottoman Empire, in particular. Although he viewed Islamic civilization in close proximity to Islam, he emphasized the challenges and prospects of Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In either case, the frame of reference remained Islam. In fact, he made it clear from the outset that the crisis the Ottoman Empire experiencing in its latest stage was closely aligned with its general tendency to move away from Islam, both in theory and in practice. It is for this very reason that a close assessment of Said Halim Paşa's view of Islam and its relation to civilization and the Ottoman Empire is warranted. A critical reading of Paşa's "Buhranlarımız" ("Our Crises") reveals that there are some important ways through which he understood and deployed Islam. In what follows I deal with three of them, Islam and its ability to devolve a political society and civilization of its own; Islam and Shari'ah; and finally, Islam and "Akhlâq" (character, morality, personality, etc)¹⁵⁸.

Paşa was of the opinion that religion determines everything, every aspect of life. Religion encompasses both material and nonmaterial domains of human individual and collective existence (*"İslama göre din, beşeriyetin maddi manevi . . . saygi yolyle . . .*

¹⁵⁸ "Akhlâq" is hereafter defined as morality.

hakikat kilmaktır”) (Paşa, 2015; p.148). Islam, unlike other religions, cannot be simply reduced to idealism or positivism as some would have us believe, he noted. In fact, Islam not only encompassed these but also entails other important elements beyond (“*İslam, tam olarak ne idealist ne de pozitivisttir. Fakat her iki görüş de onda mevcuttur*”) (Ibid, p.186). As a religion, Islam is a lived truth and ultimate reality (“*en hakiki olani, İslam dini üzerine kurulmuş ve musliman milletler tarafından benimsemiş olan yuze gayedir*”)(Ibid, p.170). Simply put, these and related other factors made Islam the perfect religion (of humanity) that encapsulated all aspect of human life on earth (“*İslamiyet kusursuz bir bütün teşkil eden bütün esaslari dolaysila, en mukemmel ve en olgun insanlık dinidir*”) (Ibid, 185). However, Islam, for Paşa, did not confine itself to spirituality. It went far beyond it. It made civilization possible.

Apart from these internal peculiar aspects of Islam, it has also produced political societies that in turn set in motion Islamic civilization, to which Ottoman Empire was the last political heir up until the first quarter of the twentieth century. Here Islam is appraised as the one which gave rise to many empires (“*her biri ayrı imparatorluk*”) and political societies in the world (Ibid, p.150). Islam made this possible through its own principles underlying social and political systems. It was Islam’s basic principles of unity and brotherhood, unlike nationalism in Christian Europe, that facilitated political unity of Islamic civilization under Ottomans (“*Avrupa hirstiyan hükümetlerinde olduğu gibi milliyet değil, İslam birliği ve kardeşliği esasına dayanmatadır . . . dünyadaki bütün muslimunlar, kendilerini birbirlerinin kardeşi sayarlar*”)(Ibid, p.67).

Other peculiar principles underlying (“*İslam inancından doğan*”) Islamic civilization in general and during the Ottoman Empire, in particular, included freedom (“*hurriyet*”), equality (“*eşitlik*”), justice (“*adalet*”), humanity (“*insanlık*”), and morality, character or manner (“*ahlak*”) (Ibid, pp.60-69). Accordingly, the glory and strength of Islamic civilization was the product of a comprehensive understanding of Islam (and its principles) and systematic application of it taking into account changing circumstances (“*Bu esaslar, geniş ve aydin bir görüşle tefsir ve tatbik olunduğu zamanlarda, İslam cemiyetleri yükselmiş ve mesut olmuşlardır. . . icap ve ihtiyaclari anlaşılmak ve yerine getirilmek şarti ile . . .*”) (Ibid, pp.64-67).

Furthermore, he believed that it is no secret that any progress in civilization presupposes the amalgamation of industriousness, natural resources, and systematic application of these with the capacity to responding to changes in time (*“her türlü beşeri ilerlemenin, insanların çalışma ve zekasından ve muhitleri ile zamanlarının ihtiyacını hakkiyla anlayıp, ona göre tatbikata olan istidatlarından medana geldiğinden hiç şüphesiz yoktur”*) (p.67). For him, compared to other religion, it was Islam that gave rise to Islamic civilization from a desert; established borderless (*“hudutsuz”*) empires; and ultimately solved the problem of racism (*“ırk tedkiklerinde”*) through a comprehensive sociopolitical system (Ibid, p.108). In short, Islam was foundational for life and morality (Akhlak) under Ottoman Empire (*“Butun hayatımız ve ahlakımız, dinimizin eseri olduğu için . . .”*). However, Islam was not only responsible for the advent of Islamic civilization and ottoman empire, but also played significant roles in the later emergence of western civilization as well (*“İslam dininin paralı bir medeniyetle insalığı yükselttiği, Osmanlı Devletini . . . zamanımızda hayranlık duyulan Batı medeniyetine bile herkesin bildiği yardımlarda bulunduğu gerçeği unutuldu”*)¹⁵⁹ (p.119).

The second important way through which he approached Islam in his discussion of Islamic civilization with a particular emphasis on the Ottoman Empire was centered on the idea and practice of Shari’ah. In fact, it can be seen that Paşa saw Shari’ah as the very quintessential being of Islam lying somewhere between the ideal teachings of Islam and its worldly actual realization in terms of civilization, political system, social institutions, and various empires in Islamic history. In other words, the importance of Shari’ah for Paşa lies in its ability to devolve society, political society, and more generally, civilization. He argued that Islamic societies are closely tied together with the idea of Shari’ah (*“İslam cemiyeti şeriat’in hakimiyetine tabi ve bağılidir”*). This means that these societies lived and were the expressions of the moral as well as social norms of Shari’ah (*“ahlaki ve sosyal kanunları”*), and in so doing, it ascertains the fact that there are certain fixed normative prescriptions of Shari’ah that order social and political conditions. And it is the religious responsibility of rulers to implement this in all of its

¹⁵⁹ The same role of paving the way for the advent and strengthening for western civilization is also mentioned elsewhere in *“Buhranlarımız”* (See, for instance, Paşa, 2015; p.142).

forms with respect (*“hukumetten şeriat’e uyup saygi gostermesini ve bütün ahkamini tam olarak tatbik etmesini istemesi, onun din bir vazifesidir”*) (Ibid, p.251).

In societies where Shari’ah had been implemented, it gave rise a unique society, and thus, civilization (*“Şeriat düzeninin hakimi olduğu yerlerde, zaman içinde alınan neticeler çok önemlidir. Çünkü bu sonuçların medana getirdiği cemiyet, oteki cemiyetlerden tamamen farklı esaslara dayanmış ve çok yeni bir topluluk olarak ortaya çıkmıştır”*) (p.229). Founded on the principles of equality, freedom, justice, brotherhood (*“İslam kardeşliği”*), family (*“İslam ailesi”*), and ethics or morality, Islamic Shari’ah brought about a new society and civilization. It brought with it, from nothing, a civilization characterized by science, wisdom, justice, enlightenment, happiness, and its social, spiritual and material conditions were never seen in the world (*“ . . . hiç yoktan, hayret edilecek bir medeniyet meydana getirerek, yüzyıllarca insanlığı ilmin, hikmetin ve adaletin nurları ile aydınlatmış; onu sosyal, ahlak ve maddi bakımlardan benzer görülmemiş bir saadet içinde yaşatmıştır”*) (p.231). Finally, Shari’ah not only helped establish a new society and civilization (social order guided by its norms and values), but also it served as the engine of progress and advancement in human collective life in the Islamic world (*“Şeriat nizami ayrıca, musluman milletlere . . . daima ilerlemeyi ve yükseltmeyi emr etmektedir”*) (p.229).

The third important frame of reference Paşa recurrently deployed throughout “Buhranlarımız” (our crisis) is closely tied to the Islamic concept of “Akhlaq”. For Paşa, the importance of morality is very foundational that he viewed it as the key to explain the crisis as well as revival potentialities of Islamic civilization under the Ottoman Empire¹⁶⁰. This is exactly what he meant when he argued that morality should come before anything in an effort to rejuvenate and strengthen the Ottoman Empire (*“Osmanlı toplumunun kuvvet ve canlılığını tam olarak kazanabilmesi için ahlaki meziyetlerin, faziletin terbiyenin; ve ilm ve bilginin onune geçirilmesi gerekmektedir”*) (Ibid, p.137). It is not only the means for reviving Islamic civilization, but also one of the very purposes

¹⁶⁰ When he discussed about the crisis of Islamic civilization under the Ottoman Empire, he raised this very issue. He, for instance, argued that the danger that caused crisis among citizens was due to the lack of sense of morality (*“Vatanın başına gelen felaketler, vatan evlatlarının ahlaki noksanları sebebiyledir”*)(Paşa, 2015; p.124).

of Islamic society and civilization. In this connection, he pointed out that the ideal society aims for cultivating and producing individuals of high moral character (*“muntazam cemiyetleri, ahlaki fezilet ve olgunluklara sahip insanlar meydana getirir”*) (Ibid).

He went one step ahead and argued that it is morality that defines what it means to be an Islamic society (for it is this morality that produces that ideal Islamic society). Accordingly, the relationship between Islamic morality and society assumes two way interactive dialogues although the influence of the former is more of foundational and constitutive than the latter, and thus, assumes the power to alter the nature and form of the latter. If we, for instance, take Islamic morality, it determines the nature (foundation) of justice, equality, freedom, and solidarity (and cooperation) between members in a given society (*“Islam ahlaki, insanlar arasinda, hak hikmet ve adalet adina hurriyet eşitlik ve yardımlaşma dusturlarini koymuştur”*) (p.190).

On the other hand, on the corner of Islamic society, the ideal society and individual members reach greater glory if and only if they properly understand and implement the basic teachings of Islam (including the percepts of morality) (*“ancak Islami esasları daha iyi anlayarak, daha güzel tatbik etmek suretiyle elde edilebilir”*). If this goes well, then the purpose of establishing Islamic political society becomes fulfilled. In other words, Islamic political society is impossible without properly implementing Islamic morality and social system (*“Islami ahlakın ve cemiyet nizamının daima daha mukemmel şekilde tatbik olunması temin etmektir”*) (Ibid, p.193). Islamic morality, however, cannot be detached (and thus, does not have a life of its own) from Islamic religious belief, for it is Islamic belief that gave birth to Islamic morality (*“İslamın inancından doğan cemiyet ahlaki”*) (p.190). Put differently, Paşa believed that societies’ level of morality and spirituality go hand in hand with levels of freedom, equality, and welfare (*“Cemiyetin umumi ahlak ve ruh seviyesi ne kadar yüksek se, huriyet ve eşitliği de, ferah ve saadeti de o nisbette mukemmel olur”*) (p.191). Finally, like Sezai Karakoç and Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi, Paşa too made a clear direct connection between Islamic morality and the Islamic concept of Al-Tawhid, and in that, he underscored that the basis of Islamic

morality is Islamic monotheism (otherwise known as al-Tawhid)¹⁶¹ (“*Islam ahlakın kaynağı, hak olan tek Allah’a imandır*”) (Ibid, p.189).

5.2. 2. Paşa’s Islamic Civilization: A Comparative Perspective

In attempt to show the relative merits of Islamic civilization, Paşa consistently employed comparative approach throughout “Buhranlarımız”. He specifically compared Islamic civilization, often exchanging it for the East, with Western civilization. I argue that Paşa’s comparison primarily revolved around three major themes. The first dimension explored issues closely related to the origin and nature of civilization. The second aspect analyzed social systems (particularly social structure and politics) in both civilizations. The third theme encompassed issue of change and progress in these two civilizations. Taking into account these three dimensions, he concluded that there were very fundamental differences between Islamic and western civilizations. A brief comparative appraisal of these elements is in order.

When the origin and nature of civilizations are examined, he saw certain attributes that made western civilization distinct compared with Islamic civilization. He, for instances, argued that western civilization, with the advent of natural and positive sciences, detached itself from Christianity, and in the process, devolved philosophical speculations and materialism (“*Hiristiyan dünyasında, musbet ilmin ve fenin ilerlemesi, maddecilik ve felsefe nazariyelerini ortaya çıkıştır . . . bu ise Hiristiyanlığın nüfuzunu ve ona ihtiyacı ortadan kaldırmıştır*”) (Paşa, 2015; p.147). It was then clear that western civilization, operating this way, had already invented a new religion at the expense of Christianity, this time not under prophets or priests, but under the leadership of scientists and philosophers (“. . . fen adami ve filozoflardan meydana gelen, yeni ‘murişdler’ topluluğunun lehine olmuştur”) (Ibid, p.146). In fact, he concluded that Christianity remained as an old legacy as the new religion is taking roots and expanding in the west (“*Evet, eski Hiristyanlık yerine yeni bir din çikiyor*”) (Ibid). The outcome of this was a

¹⁶¹ See individual case studies under the “religiophilosophical” trend in the previous section.

western society that has cherished comfort and safety in the newly instituted secular order (*“Batli toplumlar rahat ve selametlerini kanunlarda aradıkları halde . . . ”*) (p.176).

The same thing, however, cannot be said for Islamic society and civilization. In fact, to the contrary, Islamic societies acquired their peace and comfort from their Islamic faith and their Islamic morality and thought (*“İslam cemaatleri aynı şeyi inanc ve hislerinde, ahlaki ve fikri terbiyelerinde blurlar”*) (Ibid). While western civilization went through idealism and positivism at certain points in its life time, Islam equally encompassed these and other conditions in its attempt to devolve Islamic civilization (p.186). Unlike western civilization, Islamic civilization took its inspiration from Islam in general and Shari’ah, prophets, Islamic morality, freedom, justice, and solidarity, in particular (Ibid).

The second important comparative theme in “Buhranlarımız” of Paşa is the difference in the very idea of progress and change in civilization. He pointed out that since its initial genesis western civilization has been going through changes without any identifiable purpose. The change was very transformative that its social, and more generally every aspect of life, would be subjected to change (*“Bati toplumu, meydana çıktığı zamandan başlayarak günümüze kadar etmek üzere, sosyal muesseselerini ve hayat tarzını, daimi olarak değiştirmek ihtiyacını duymuş ve duymaktadır”*) (Ibid, p.242). By making, then, itself busy with temporarily meeting needs that arise in its march for growth, it remained purposeless and without any lasting values (*“Belirli ve değişmez bir gaye hedef sahip olmayan Bati . . . ”*)(Ibid).Being realist and positivist by its very nature, it was not directed by certain unchanging values; rather, in the process of meeting and changing its material, emotional and technological needs, its existential purposes would change at the same time (*“Maddi ihtiyaçlarının, duygularının teknik belgesinin değiştirmesi ile birlikte gayeleri de değişmiştir”*)(Ibid).

The same is true for its sociopolitical organization as well. It started with Church playing the role of spiritual leadership (*“kilisenin ruhani nüfuzu hakim bulunuyordu”*). This then, through time, led to kingship which helped garnering significant wealth (*“krallık in maddi kuvvetinin eline geçti”*). As the new bourgeois class amassed huge wealth and prosperity, it paved the way for the advent of democratic leadership (*“burjuva sınıfının*

servet ve refaha kavusmasi ile ortaya çikan demokrasi idaresi”). Due to this unsettling urge for change and transformation, western civilization, according to Paşa, remained dissatisfied and unhappy (*“hiç bir zaman ne kafi derecede sosyal sukun ve saadeti bulabilir, ne de arzu ettiđi vicdan huzuruna kavuşabilir”*) (p.243). However, Islamic societies in Islamic civilization do not necessarily change everything, to the extent of changing its reason for existence. In fact, Paşa underscored that the foundations of Islamic institutions do not change, not because they cannot change, but because they are in perfect condition that they do not need changes at all (*“Islam muesseselerinin deđişmezliđi, gelişemez olmalarından deđil, kemal halinde bulunmalarındadır”*)¹⁶² (Ibid, p.177). Here it is important to make it clear that Paşa believed that there is a misleading conception in the interaction between human nature and change. As it applies to Western societies, Paşa believed that it is incorrect to assume that fulfilling the needs of society would at the same time entail changing human nature. He believed that human nature remains one and the same, and thus, does not change (*“İhtiyaclarinin daima deđişmesine karşilik, insane tabiati deđişmez; her zaman aynidir”*) (p.178). For instance, because our spiritual conditions change, it does not necessarily mean that our state of being good or bad will be uprooted (*“Fakat ruh hallerimizin deđişmesi, karakterlerimizdeki iyilik veya kotulukleri ortadan kaldıramaz”*) (Ibid).

Finally, the last important comparative theme in “Buhranlarımız” of Paşa is the difference in social system (social structure and politics, in particular) between Western and Islamic civilizations. While sociopolitical life among Muslims in Islamic civilization was the product of the Islamic system of morality-the root of which, again, is traced back to Islamic faith (*“İslamiyet’in kendine has inanclari, bu inanclara dayali ahlak nizami ve ahlakından doğumuş bir sosyal hayat anlayışı vardır . . . yine tamamen kendine has olan birtakim siyaset kaidelerine sahaiptir”*) (p.185), the case in western civilization is something different. He argued that in history, western societies relied on “historical nobility” (“tarihi asalet”) and the bourgeois (“burjuva”) class to structure their socioeconomic and political activities. This class, according to Paşa, was unimportant (“ehemmiyetsiz”) to Ottoman Empire. Although this class had very powerful power and

¹⁶² It is for this very reason that he recommended Islamization (“İslamlaşmak”) as a solution for the late Ottoman crisis of Islamic civilization (Paşa, 2015; p.183).

role in western societies, it was never the case for Ottoman society. In fact, the most comparable (“buna karşılık”) position in Ottoman Empire was called “memurlar” (civil servants) and they were held in higher regard and respect (“*en faal ve munevver bir unsure teşkil ederler*”) (p.62).

Interestingly, every scholar and intellectuals in the Ottoman Empire would wish to become one of these civil servants (in spite of its negative implications for intellectual independence, neutrality, etc). However, it should be noted that although Ottoman civil servants and Europe’s aristocrats and bourgeois class might be considered comparable to a certain extent, they are far more different and not the same. Simply put, the difference between these two, Paşa argued, could be compared to a difference between production and consumption (“*adeta iktisattaki tüketim ile üretim birbirine karıştırmak kadar büyük bir hataya düşmek olur*”) (p.63).

The system of political organization is another point of difference. While both, Christian Europe and Ottoman Empire, adopted for many years a system of monarchical (“istibdat”) political rule, it entailed different meanings and contexts. The nature, organization, and implications of monarchical system for both were fundamentally different (“*farkle bir mahiyet taşır . . . sebepler de farklıdır*”) (p.64). The Ottoman monarchical system, Paşa argued, grew out of Islamic faith (“*İslam inancından doğan . . .*”), and as such, was effective enough to assure justice, equality and freedom for all in its society. Contrary to this, in the western societies even though people live in one country and are members of the same race and religious sect, their sociopolitical arrangement reflected clear cut and well established differences in status (“*ayni memlekette outran, ayni mezhebe ve irka mensup kimselerin bile sosyal ve siyasi bakimlardan birbirilerinden farklı mevkilerde . . . [ve] bu farklılık, birtakim asılmaz sınırlarla ayrılıp, sabitleşmiş durumdadır*”) (p.65). This also created a privileged class of people (“*imtiyazlı bir sınıf bulunmaktadır*”). Unlike the West, privileges emanating from status and personality never conditioned or served as the reason for monarchical rule among Muslims, especially the Ottoman Empire to which Paşa is himself a personal witness (“*Musulman toplumlarda şahsi veya mevkiden gelen hiç bir imtiyaz, istibdat ve tegallup sebebi olamaz*”) (ibid).

The class difference between those of the privileged and those who were not created many struggles and chaos in the western world. Among other things, it led to many protracted civil wars and the shed of blood (“*iç mucadeler adeta muzmin bir hale gelerek . . . bazen de kanli ihtilallere sebep olmaktadır*”). This also included religious and sect based violence, oppressions, and killings (“*Bati’da din ve mezhep adına yapılan zulumler, cemiyeti kana boyarken . . .*”)(p.64). However, the Islamic society in general and the Ottoman Empire, in particular, never saw any comparable internal civil wars (“*. . . hiç birinde . . . iç mucadeleleri gormediler*”) (p.65). In fact, apart from assuring justice, equality and freedom for all in their respective societies, they were able to extend the same to all other non-Muslim societies so that they live a happy and comfortable life (“*Islam memleketlerindeki gayri Muslim cemaatler mesut ve rahat surmuşlerdir*”)(p.64). In short, Paşa believed that by adopting and extending justice, freedom and equality to all, Islamic civilization (with the Ottoman Empire as an empirical example) devolved an all inclusive and plural political system and society, and consequently, this makes it fundamentally different from western civilization and society. Also, it should be noted that this difference is not simply confined to the idea of monarchy as a political organization, but also on such issues as justice, freedom, and equality¹⁶³.

5.2. 3. “Buhranlarımız” and Islamization

Said Halim Paşa, who was an active member of the late Ottoman Empire era, had both the opportunity and experience to easily recognize and spot change trajectories characterizing Islamic civilization. As a statement of the Ottoman Empire, he was well aware of the crisis of Islamic civilization, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The book “Buhranlarımız” is the recollection of Paşa’s practical experiences and insights into this very condition. It can be seen that he knew, much earlier than other thinkers and social scientists, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, that Islamic civilization was going through periods of crisis and lagging behind world

¹⁶³ In this regard, Paşa noted that “we have the same words but different understanding of meanings” (“*Kelime aynı ama anlatılan mana baska*”) (Paşa, 2015; p.77).

leadership (*“iki asra yakin bir zamandan beri, Islam medeniyeti tam bir gerilemenin içinde bulunuyor . . . gerileyip alçalıyorlar”*) (Paşa, 2015; p.231). In spite of this crisis consciousness, there was not any satisfactory study into this phenomenon at that point in time. He believed that many of the causal explanations were not only inadequate, but also very far removed from Islamic civilization and its Ottoman context (*“Islam aleminin çokuş sebepleri cevapsiz kalmıştır. Bugün ortaya atılan cevaplar ise pek tabii ki, ciddiyyetten uzak, eksik ve kafi olmaktan kurtulamıyor”*) (Ibid, p.150).

In the books included under “Buhranlarımız”, Paşa explored various and multifaceted dimensions and causal factors behind the crisis of Islamic civilization during late Ottoman Empire. The causes he identified included such factors as various steps and actions taken against Islam; backwardness in the natural sciences; problems caused by reformers, statesmen, and thinkers; pre-Islamic and western influences; materialism; and others. Although much of Paşa’s efforts were directed at understanding and explaining these causal factors behind the crisis of Islamic civilization, he did not leave and ended the discussion at the level of description and explanation only. In fact, he went one step ahead and forwarded possible measures that he believed could facilitate the way for the rejuvenation of Islamic civilization in general and ottoman Empire, in particular. This later part is what he termed Islamization (“İslamlaşmak”).

In what follows I argue that it is very crucial to closely explore some of the major issues Paşa raised in his account for the crisis of Islamic civilization. This is because by dealing with some of these factors behind the crisis here, we would be able to uncover possible underlying conditions, factors and ideas, mostly empirical, that define and constitute his very idea of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular. Put in yet other words, in addition to his normative view of Islamic civilization which I have discussed previously, his preoccupation with “Buhranlarımız” (our crisis) can help us garner Paşa’s empirical and lived-experience based view of Islamic civilization. This will then, I argue, add up to the degree of complexity and multiplicity of dimensions he was exposed, and thus employed, in his conception of the nature of Islamic civilization.

Now, even though it could be generally argued that Paşa’s analysis of the crisis of Islamic civilization centered on Islam, a turn away from or going against it as a cause of

the crisis, and Islamization as a way forward, a close analysis of “Our Crisis” engages three interrelated ingredients. The first dimension, and vast in its coverage and penetrative in its depth, is crisis factors closely posited with intellectuals. The second ingredient encompasses local rulers, religious scholars and other internal conditions. The last aspect of the crisis of Islamic civilization, which mostly dealt in conjunction with the first two dimensions, is the multifaceted influence of the West. Or, it can still be classified into two parts, internal and external factors. It should be noted, however, that before going into the details that even though Islamic civilization was going through some “rough moments” during the early days of the Ottoman Empire, Paşa believed that local reform efforts were under way that could systematically help rejuvenate it. This “rough” condition, however, turned into a crisis when the aforementioned three started to intervene and interact in the later days of the Empire¹⁶⁴. It is in the context of this condition that we ought to read Paşa’s blame for intellectuals, rulers, religious scholars, and western powers in the late Ottoman Era. The following paragraphs, therefore, briefly scrutinize these ingredients of the crisis of Islamic civilization, and in so doing; I attempt to show some degree of complexity and multiplicity in Paşa’s account.

5.2. 3. 1. The Crisis of Intellectuals: Intellectual Dependence and Westernization

Of the three major facets of the crisis, the weight of crisis associated with, and brought about by, western oriented and dependent intellectuals outweighs all the other put together. I argue that Paşa tried to show the crisis of this group along three highly interrelated manifestations: they did not know of what their imitation of the West

¹⁶⁴ He, for instance, pointed out that the newly emerging intellectuals started to display pessimistic tendencies against ongoing reform efforts under the Ottoman Empire and felt that it is completely outdated and wrong, and as such, they wanted to destroy it and replace it completely with new Western ideals and social systems (. . . *Vatandaki her şeyi islah ve düzeltmelerle kurtulmayacak kadar bozuk goruyor olmasidir. Bu yuzden, kurtulus, mevcut olani tamamen yikmakta buluyor. Yikacađi cemiyetin yerine az cok Garplaşmış olan bilgi, mentik ve ahlak ve iyice Frenkleşmiş olan sosyal ve siyaset tasavvurlarina gore şekil verecegi yeni bir cemiyet kuracaktır*) (Paşa, 2015; p.94). Interestingly, Paşa noted that these intellectuals, by adopting western ideas and strategies, were unable to produce something new beside destroying existing ones, and this has fastened the transition into crisis (Ibid, p.168).

entailed; they did not know the implication of their imitation of the west given local Ottoman circumstances; and finally, they confused reformation with western ideals based transformations. Let's start with the first. Paşa believed that this generation of intellectuals lacked the knowledge of their own societies, Ottoman Empire and its history, culture, religion, and more generally, the Islamic civilization to which it belonged. This problem, he argued, also extends to the West whom they claimed to follow and imitate.

In the former context, he made it clear that Ottoman Empire came into being through centuries of work, and as such, devolved a civilization. However, the westernizers given the fact that they did not know the value of the spiritual, moral, social and political principles and foundation of the Ottoman Empire, they underrated and aspersed it¹⁶⁵. It is this ignorance that caused their lack of knowledge of themselves (*“Osmanli cemiyeti asirlarca once teşekkul ederek, büyük ve herkesce malum bir medeniyet meydana getirmiş . . . boyle olduğu halde bizim Baticilar, kendi milletlerinin manevi ve ahlaki hayatini, sisyal ve siyasi kanun ve presiplerinde olgunluklari . . . meydana getiren kiymetleri bilmedikleri için kucumser, hatta tahkir ederler. Iste onlari, cehaletlerin en uğursuz olan ‘kendini bilmeme’ haline düşüren de budur”*)(Paşa, 2015; p.97).

In the latter context, even though these intellectuals thought to follow the West in theory, but in actual sense their way of thinking was not even similar to the Western thinkers whom they claim to follow (*“Bati hayrani olan aydin sinifin zihniyeti, kendisine ustad tanidiği, Bati zihniyetine, hiç bir bakimindan benzemez”*) (Ibid, p.93). Even worse, not only were they far from, and at times, against the West, they insisntly believed that their thought and actions were in line with the West (*“Ama onlara tamamen zit bir şekilde dusunup hareket ettikleri . . .gorulmektedir. Kendileri ise, Batililari gibi düşünup hareket etmekte olduklarina son derece emindirler”*) (p. 95).

While analyzing the influence of the West, Paşa observed diametrically opposite stances between late and early Ottoman intellectuals. Early intellectuals were much less interested in the West, and for they were not well informed of it (and with the intention

¹⁶⁵ This went to extent that they viewed our history and early forerunners in suspicions, and aspersed us as well (*“tarihimizin ve ecdadimizin buyklugunden suphe ediyor, bizi tahkir goruyorlar”*)(Ibid, p.97).

of preserving existing civilization), they considered the West as an enemy. However, measured by consequences, the later day intellectuals brought massive crisis and facilitated the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Standing quiet different from early Ottoman intellectuals, they became fans of the West. Once they begin to know about the West, they end up being foreigners, foreigners to their own society's culture, history, religion, and more generally, civilization (*"eski devirlerde, aydin sinifimizin en buyuk kusuru Bat medeniyetini tanimamak, bu yuzden ona karşi daima bir duşmanlik beslemek idi. Simde ise Bati Hayranlarinin eskinin tam ziddi bir duruma dustuklarini goruyoruz. Medeniyetin unusuru olmak bakimindan, eski ve yeni aydinlarl mukayese edersek, yenilerin daha cok zararli olduklari anlaşılr"*) (p.100). In other words, later day intellectuals' attachment with own civilization was very weak compared to early ottoman intellectuals (that is, preservation of own civilization by negation).

The second important manifestation of the crisis of the intellectual group is closely wrapped with the incompatibility between local circumstances and the new ideals and institutions imitated and endorsed. Due to influences sustained from western civilization and their own new idea of renewal, westernizing intellectuals started off war against existing institutions, religious order, values, customs, traditions, norms, and ongoing reform efforts (*"asirlardan beri kurulup yerleşmiş olan inançilari, fikirleri, telakkileri, an'aneleri, hisleri ve ahlaki tahrip etmekten başka bir iş gormediler"*)(Ibid, 201). Paşa observed that they were not only confined to renewal (*"teceddut"*) in the last centuries of the Ottoman Empire, but also embraced what they called ottoman renaissance or ottoman awakening (*"Osmanli Ronesansi=Osmanli Uyanışı"*).

While the former led to spiritual anarchy (*"manevi anarşi'ye"*), the later movement led to, what Paşa called, "a second turn away" from Islam (*"ikinci bir 'Islam'dan uzaklaşma'dir"*) (p.201). All in all, this, according to him, was the product of these intellectuals' encounter with the West and this in turn caused them to "realize" their "backwardness" under the Ottoman Empire (*"Avrupa ile temaslari neticesinde, duşmuş olduklari uyşukluktan silkinip uyanmak istediler"*) (p.199). Unfortunately, they thought that western social and political systems as perfect and attempted to follow them. According to Paşa, this was, however, like to look for happiness in the situation of

depression and failures (“*Batililarin sosyal ve siyasi teşkilatlerinin mukemmel olduğuna inanmak ve Batli milletlerin ilerlik ve refahalarını onlardan bilerek taklid koyulmak, hata ve gaflet içinde mutluluk aramaktan baska bir şey değildir*”) (p.174). However, their knowledge of the West was based on a simplistic and dangerous imitation (and highly superficial one)¹⁶⁶.

Among other things, Paşa noted that Westernizer’s imitation of the west followed top-to-bottom approach, and as such, down played the importance of understanding the foundation of the Western civilization (“*bizim zihinimiz, henüz eşyadan fikirlere intikal edemiyor, fikirlerden eşyaya geçmeyi tercih ediyor*”) (p.76). In fact, they were not, in the first place, aware of the conditions that led to the advent of Western civilization (“*Garp medeniyetini doğuran temel sebeplere vakif olmayarak . . .*”) (p.88). Even worse, they were unlike the people whom they claim to follow (“*Işin tuhafı, Bati hayran olan bu aydin sınıf zihniyeti, kendisine ustad tanıdığı, Bati Zihniyetinem hiç bir bakımdan benzemez*”)(p.92). They were just only impressed (“*hayranlık uyandıran*”) by the material progresses of the west. This blind attempt to imitate the West was met with powerful resistance and leading to other consequences.

For one thing, they lost their personality and were embarrassingly (“*pek utanc verici*”) submissive to the West (“*Bati medeniyetinin tesiri altında şahsiyetini kaybetmiş ve aşiri derecede Bati hayranlığa muptela olmuştur*”) (p.93). This did not end here. In addition to their darkened conscience, and thus, becoming the cause of crisis, they were leading and taking the society to a dark and unpredictable future (“*vicdanları bulandırıp . . . buhranlara sebep oluyor ve memleketi karanlık ve meçhul bir istikbale doğru surukleyip goturuyorlar*”)(Ibid). Secondly, and most importantly, these intellectuals were struggling against the Ottoman society which had already opposed them (“*Halk kendi aydinlari ile mucadele ediyor*”) (p.201). Consequently, people’s reaction to these intellectuals remains strong and intact to these days (“*Uyandırdığı tepkiyi şimdiye kadar geciktirmistir*”) (p.201).

Paşa lamented that the westernizing intellectual class not only lacked a good understanding of the West, but also they were ignorant of their own history, culture,

¹⁶⁶ Their imitation was not methodological and purposeful (“*metodsuz ve gayesiz*”) (Ibid, p.96).

religion and civilization. They did not know what took Ottoman Empire to come into being. They did not know that, for centuries, the Ottoman society worked hard to devolve its own Empire and civilization (*Osmanli cemniyeti asirlarca once teşekkul ederek, büyük ve herkesce malum bir medeniyet meydana getirmiş, dünya tarihinde muhim bir vazif ifa etmiştir*)(p.97). Because they were ignorant of the spiritual, moral, social and political conditions and values that underpinned the Ottoman Empire and Islamic civilization, they undermined and demonized it (“*meydana getiren kıymetleri bilmedikleri için kucumser, hatta tahkir ederler*”)(Ibid). As a result, they end up being those who does not know themselves (“*İşte onlari, cehaletten en uğursuz olan ‘kendine bilmeme’ haline dusuren de budur*”)(ibid).

The third and last manifestation of the crisis closely associated with the intellectual class was an ambiguity standing between reforming and transforming the Ottoman Islamic society. As I have briefly discussed above, Paşa strongly believed that intellectuals in the last century of the Ottoman Empire lacked a proper knowledge of their own society, let alone the western society to which they were attracted and submissive to. Similarly, he argued that these intellectuals’ insistent propaganda for reforming and changing the Ottoman society was full of polemics without any practical additions. In other words, he knew that these intellectuals had no idea of what caused the current circumstances of the Ottoman Empire. As he made it clear, there were no any satisfactory researches that examined the overall conditions of the Empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this regard, he noted that many people talk about reform and progress when there was not, indeed, any serious work or research that uncovered the causes of crisis (“*Bugun islam alaeminin her tarafında islahat ve ilerlemek, yükselmek ve istiklal kavuşmak meselelerden başka bir mavzu konuşulmuyor. . . [ama] hiç kimse ciddi bir şekilde çalışmamaktadır*”)(p.157).

Unfortunately, except for making themselves busy with philosophical speculation which they have imitated from the west, they did not produce anything useful to the society. Even worse, apart from destroying ongoing reform efforts, they intended to replace it with transformative westernization (“*vatandaki her şeyi islah ve düzeltmelerle kurtulmayacak kadar bozuk goruyur olmasidir. Bu yuzden, kurtuluş, mevcut olani*

tamamem yikamakta buluyor. Yikacagi cemiyetin yerine, az çok Garplaşmış olan bilgi, mantik ve ahlak ve iyici Frenkleşmiş olan sosyal ve siyasi tasavvurlarına göre şekil vereceği yeni bir cemiyet kuracaktır) (p.94). Accordingly, instead of reforming and developing ongoing reform efforts, they tried to change it with something new (*“Halbuki düzelterek islah etmek yerine, değiştirmek yoluna gitmek, tamamen yeni bir şey denemek demektir”*) (p.95). This led to the alienation of centuries of old accumulated knowledge and experiences of the society (*“eskiden kazanmış birçok zahmet ve acılara malolmuş bilgi ve tecrübelerden mahrum kalır”*). Paşa added that they did not realize it but introducing a new sweeping-transformative change had many consequences and costs. Among other things, new and transformative changes entail lose of time (*“kiymetli vakitler kaybetmek”*); falling into new unpredictable problems; and the subsequent solutions for the newer problems (*“yeni hatalar işleyerek onların tamirlerine çalışmak gerekir”*). Compared to existing reformative efforts, the mistakes and gaps faced will be more devastating and serious (*“yanlış ve noksanlardan daha zararlı, hatta daha tehlikeli neticelere varılır, dertlere düşülür”*) (Ibid, p.95).

5.2. 3. 2. Politicians and Religious Scholars

The other two groups of people Paşa addressed throughout his *Buhranlarımız* were religious scholars and political leaders. Like intellectuals with western orientation, politicians and scholars in the area of religion were playing their own destructive role, and thus, the crisis. Interestingly, of all those who contributed in some ways to the crisis of Islamic civilization in general and Ottoman Empire, in particular, Paşa found that the role and responsibility of political leaders took the lion share, especially in the late Ottoman Era (*En büyük mesuliyet. Batı kanun ve nizamlarını alma usulünü koymalarında dolayı, son asir devlet adamlarımıza aittir*)¹⁶⁷ (Ibid, p.69). Again, like western dependent intellectuals, the problem of these rulers was obsession with the West and blind Imitation (*Bunların o yola girmelerine, taklit etmek istedikleri milletlerin*

¹⁶⁷ In other place, he pointed out that it is the last generation, of scholars, religious or other, and rulers who were responsible for the crisis (*“... son asir işidir”*)(p.208).

sosyal ve siyasi durumlarini ve almak istedikleri kanunlarin menşe ve mahiyetini bilmemeleri sebep olmuştur”(Ibid).

Ironically, Paşa noted, still these statesmen were being held in high prestige that it clouded our genuine effort to diagnose the cause of our crisis. For without specifically locating and addressing the cause of our crisis, we will not look for possible mechanisms of resolving it (“*Bu adamlarin isimlerinin hala hurumetle anilmasi, başımıza gelen felaketlerin asil sebeplerini ve suclularini anlayip tespit etmekeki acimizi gosterir*”)(Ibid). He specifically pointed out that the responsibility remains to be on political circles in the late Ottoman Era; parliament members’ extreme form of nationalism, inexperience and distance from knowledge; and inexperience attributed the Committee of Union and Progress (“*Fakat tecrube ve bilgiden mahrum ve siffetle vatanseverlik his ve hayalleri ile dolu birtakim ihtilacilerden meydana gelmiş bir meclis . . . Ittihad ve terakki ’nin tecrubesiz ellerine düşmesi . . .*”)¹⁶⁸ (p.70).

The political class was busy imitating western political systems and institutions. However, like western dependent intellectuals, they were less cautious about its appropriateness to local, Ottoman contexts. They did not realize that ignoring existing sociopolitical system and replacing it with copied western social and political system was dangerous (“*milletin kendi siyasi ve sosyal esaslarini terk edip ve ihal edip de, başka milletlerin sosyal ve siyasi esaslarini gelişi güzel kendine mal etmeye çalışmasının ne kadar tehlikeli bir hata olduğunu da gorduk*”)(p.66).

Similarly, they were unable to understand that, by imitating Western political systems and institutions, particularly the political system of France in general and its constitution, in particular, they did not have the choice but to import and internalize the social principles underlying such political system as well (“*Çunku Batinin siyasi rejimini Kabul eden ve muesseslerini taklit edenler, onun sosyal prensiplerini de benimsemeye macburudur*”)(p.261).Unfortunately, they were unable to distinguish between learning from the West and implementing the same thing to local circumstances (“*Bati medeniyetinden istifade edbilmemiz, onu aynen tatbik ile mumkun değildir*”) (p.104).

¹⁶⁸ Paşa also accuses the post 1908 period political actors working to destroy the society and constitution (“*1908 inkilabından sonra hükümeti ele alan adamları da son derece şiddetle mahkum ediyor; onları memleketi ve meşrutiyeti mahcetmiş olmakla itham ediyoruz*”)(p.59).

Finally, these political elites had to accept this without making any adjustments to local conditions (“*kedimize gore deęistirmeden Kabul ettik*”) (p.79). For instance, this was, Pařa argued, how the French constitution was adopted.

Except for importing and complete imitation of the West, the ruling class did not question, on the one hand, the nature and origin of western political systems and institutions; and on the other, whether or not it was acceptable to local Ottoman contexts. Like western dependent intellectuals’ efforts of full-scale westernization, their efforts were fruitless. This was because what they imported were against local sociocultural and political institutions (“*Anayasa sosyal yapimize uygun olmadıęı kadar, siyasi yapimizla da aıktan aıęa uyuşmaz bir haldedir*”) (p.66). This, in turn, was because the foundations of ottoman political system entailed a unique makeup (“*Osmanli devletinin kuruluş esaslari ok ozel bir mahiyet tařır*”)(Ibid). Since the change trajectory assumed top-to-bottom approach, they were not fundamentally different from westernizing intellectuals of the time. They wanted to change Ottoman society by political and justice systems of foreign origin. This, in short, by interacting with problems caused by dependent intellectuals, western influences, and religious scholar paved the way for massive crisis that led to the ultimate fall of the Ottoman Empire.

Apart from dependent intellectuals and political leaders, Pařa also found religious scholars contributing to the crisis of the Ottoman society. He observed that religious scholars of the Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had many problems. One, among others, was the deteriorating condition of comprehensive religious understanding. These scholars, he believed, were having problems of interpretation and understanding of Islam. He noted that one of the crisis of the Muslim societies was directly related to wrong religious understanding and implementation (“*Musulman milletler . . .din hukumlarini yanlıř anlayıp tatbik etmekten ileri geldięi suphesizdir*”) (Ibid, p.163). The reason behind this, according to Pařa, is that Islam was never understood and interpreted in a way that considers existing societal conditions (“*Din, yeni ihtiyaclar iin tefsir edilemedi*”) (Ibid). In this way, the science of Fiqh and Shari’ah were ignored and religious scholars ceased to engage them (“*řeriat’i ogrenmek, duřunmek ve aıklamaktan uzaklařmıř*”)(p.237).

Furthermore, with the increasing obsession of religious scholars with superstitious and world rejecting, the backwardness of Islamic society went unbridled (*“İslamiyet, ruhbani ve ruhani düşünce tarzına tamamen karşı olmasına rağmen, musluman milletler arasında, hiç faydali olmayan bir takım ilimlerin ortaya çıkması ile İslam dünyasındaki gerileme başlamıştır”*) (p.234). The development of this as a knowledge (branch of), which, in the words of Paşa is a “useless knowledge”, paved the way for anti-developmental attitudes and belief. These scholars think, Paşa noted, that the Prophet only ordered us to cultivate science and knowledge as long as it relates to Shari’ah and this does have any other purpose (*“Peygamberimizin, bizlere, hiç durmadan ilim ve irfan aşamamız hakkındaki kesin emirleri, sadece Şeriat’in ihtiva ettiği birtakim hakikatlerin incelenmesi aittir. Bunda başka hiç bir maksadi yoktur”*) (Ibid). However, Paşa lamented that understanding and reducing the prophet’s advices this way is to make a big mistake; rather, he ordered us to cultivate knowledge and produce culture and make civilization possible (*“Hiç şuphe yok ki, peygamberimizin tavsiyelerini bu şekilde tefsir etmek büyük bir hata idi”*) (p.235).

Muslims are advised and obliged to explore the world; must uncover the secrets of this world; and must use this for societal purposes (*“. . . irfan ve Kulture kazanmamızı tavsiye etmişti . . . Musluman, devamlı bir gayet ve azim ile çalışmalı, tabiatın sırlarını keşfetmeli”*) (Ibid). Unfortunately, being highly pervasive among Muslim societies, this religious scholastic view caused significant harm and crisis, to extent that people started to ignore natural and physical sciences (*“az zaman içinde bütün İslam dünyasına yayılmış ve hakim olmuştu. İşte bu ‘iskolastik’ düşünce tarzları gibi çok zararlı olan bu fikir sebebiyle, İslam dünyası, tabiatı araştırıp inceleme vazifesi ihmal etmeye başlamış, sonunda tabiat ve fizik ilimlerini tamamen terk eder bir duruma gelmişti”*) (Ibid). Paşa believed that one of the reasons behind the material progress of the West is directly related to natural and experimental sciences.

In addition to the above two major factors, Paşa also blamed the west, in some loose and indirect sense, for the crisis of Islamic civilization under Ottoman Empire. Although he believed that the West made deliberate efforts in dismantling the Empire, the fertile grounds were already set in motion by Muslims (*“Doğu dünyasının bugünkü aczi*

yuzunden Bati'nin tuzağına dustuğunu ve somurulduğunu unutuyor olmalılar”) (p.152). Apart from this, the West has always been against Islam. They popularized the idea that Islam (Shari'ah, in particular) was backward and was the cause of the ongoing crisis of the Islamic society under Ottoman Empire (*“Batililar, meselyi bit din meselesi haline getirdiler”*) (p.158). However, Muslim's rejection of this assumption was met with west's view of Islam as intolerant and fanatic (*“ . . . delil olarak gosterdiler”*). In reality, however, Paşa argued, it was not true that Muslims enemy of Christians; rather, enmity was the way how the West generally dealt with the East in general and Islam, in particular, since past times (*“aslinda muslumanlarin hiristiyanlara husumetini değil, Bati'nin Dogu'ya olan eski duşmanlığını ifade eder”*)(p,153).

Similarly, this sense of enmity was getting from bad to worse as the West was trying to impose their civilizing politics against others (*“Hristiyanlığın yayılmasına ve Avrupa'nın mahut medenileştirme siyasetine 'islami şahsiyeti' ortadan kaldırmamış olmaktan doğan derin ofkesi ve nefreti, Bati'nin doguya olan dusmanlığının gerçek sebebidir”*). (p.153) However, since they were unable to conquer the personality of Muslims, it became the reason for their worsened hate for Islam and Muslims.

5.2.4. “İslamlaşmak” as the Ultimate Panacea

Finally, after providing an in depth and penetrative coverage of the dimensions of the crisis of Islamic civilization with a particular reference to the Ottoman Empire, Paşa recommended solutions for rejuvenating Islamic civilization. These solutions are closely wrapped up with moves that rectify, on the hand, the aforementioned points of crisis among the three major actors and related other problems; and on the other hand, Islamization. The later recommendation pushes for a better understanding and implementation of Islam and Shari'ah (pp.179-186). He believed that although the crisis is undeniable, we cannot assume that all the key aspects of Islam and Muslim personalities are also undergoing crisis (p.153). Contrary to the west and western

dependent intellectuals of the late Ottoman era, Islam was not the cause of our societal crisis. He challenges this assumption with two counter arguments.

On the one hand, to consider Islam as a cause of civilizational crisis, is not a historical cause [for the problem-crisis is historical one while Islam is not and will not (“ebedi din”, everlasting religion)] (p.150). Secondly, he argued that if Islam was the cause of crisis of Islamic civilization in general and the Ottoman Empire, in particular, then there could not have been the glorious and successful moments of Islamic civilization in world history (p.151). This Islamization, as he conceived, should start from nurturing character and morality, before anything else (p.124). “Akhlāq” is one of the most recycle foundational conceptual tools Paşa carefully deployed throughout *Buhranlarımız*. At the end, he abhorred and thus rejected any effort of westernization and imitation (p.67) while, at the same time, promoting reformative efforts, sometimes even including learning from the west. He knew that change is inevitable and due to this, that he preferred reformative efforts rather than abrupt transformation as in westernization (p.88). Paşa hope that the Ottoman Empire will come back and assume its leadership, bringing happiness for Muslims and non-Muslims alike (p.201).

5.3. Concluding Remarks

While many theories of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular fall under the historio-empirical and religiophilosophical trends and approaches, there are few theories, of Islamic civilization, that typically show certain degree of multiplicity and complexity in method and approach. Most, if not all, theories in civilization studies are confined to either historio-empirical, with extreme forms as in historicism and positivism, or religiophilosophical theoretical and methodological formulations. However, the multiplex trend, which has been appraised to subsume multiplicity and complexity, both in theoretical abstraction and methodological plurality, has been commonly employed among Muslim thinkers theorizing about Islamic civilization.

Of these thinkers, the present study examined the works of Ibn Khaldun and Said Halim Paşa. Apart from methodological plurality and eclectic focus, their appraisal of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular, drives largely from their own lived experiences in their respective periods. It can be safe to conclude that, unlike those armchair speculators (determinisms, reductionisms, and etc), these two thinkers attempted to construct a theory of civilization they believed was too complex to reduce to any single aspect of human life and this meant that they needed to provide a wider theoretical foundation both in method and content.

SECTION THREE

TRENDS AND CASES IN THE STUDY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

In the emerging field of civilization studies, one can observe that there are important developments and trends that generally characterize the overall theoretical pursuits and approaches. In the last three consecutive chapters, I dealt with three of them, in the context of Islamic civilization. Simply put, there I argued that there are at least three dominant theoretical as well as methodological trends in the study of Islamic civilization. These were historic-empirical, religiophilosophical, and multiplex trends. Apart from this macro level systematic classification, I went one-step ahead and tried to show cases or theories of Islamic civilization that fall under these major trends.

Similarly, the present section also examines two of the most dominant theoretical trends in the study of Western civilization, namely, historic-empirical and religiophilosophical trends. Again, much like the last section, I will also deal with two case studies or theories under each trend in the study of Western civilization. Accordingly, all of the theories were assessed based on three guiding questions: What is civilization for them? What do they understand by Western or European civilization? And finally, how do they deal with the relation between religion and civilization in general and how this is reflected in the context of European or Western civilization?

CHAPTER SIX

THE HISTORIC-EMPIRICAL TREND: SPENGLER AND COMTE

In the study of the nature and form relation between religion and civilization, especially among the theories of Western civilization, there are at least two broad groups of thinkers. The first envisions a thesis which might be called an inseparability thesis in which case Western civilization is seen as the product of the systematic synthesis of religion and civilization. The second view of Western civilization, however, is characterized by relations in which case religion is assumed to have lesser or having no any place in the conception (and thus making) of Western civilization. An extreme position in this cluster or continuum of thought is the view of religion playing a retardant effect on civilization. In other words, there are theories of Western civilization that assert opposite directions between religion and civilization.

In the former context, historians and social philosophers like Mirabeau, Guizot, Schweitzer, Toynbee, Emerson and other thinkers posited religion, Christianity (in particular) and civilization in their respective conceptions of Western civilization. Here religion is correlated and given primacy in the advent of Western civilization. For instance, while addressing European civilization, Guizot pointed out “at all times, in all countries, religion has assumed the glory of having civilized the people” (1887, p.13). For Mirabeau too, religion was a principal driving force behind human civilization. For him, religion helped control violence in human collective existence. By assuming the role of restraining violence, religion paved the way for the advent of civilization. In his own words, the “first and most useful constraint on human nature and action, without doubt, is religion” (Mirabeau in Mazlish, 2004, p.5). As long as religion does this task, Mirabeau concluded that the “restraining of violence is one of the building blocks of human civilization” (Ibid, p.18).

Similarly, Arnold Toynbee, renowned world historian, also posited religion along with his discussions of civilizations, including Islamic and Western civilizations. This is particularly distinguishable in his latest scholarships on civilizations¹⁶⁹. In this regard, Toynbee made a radical transformation in his view of the relation between religion and civilization in the course of his academic career. This can be easily discerned in his well-received magnum opus, the voluminous *A Study of History*. In the first three volumes of this contribution, Toynbee relatively appears agnostic and much indifferent about religion (and its relations to civilization thereof) although he recognized that religion gives a unique identity to civilizations and plays some role in the rise and fall of civilizations.

A complete transformation of Toynbee's thought pertaining to the role of religion, however, explicitly unleashed in the next volumes and other later works. This, for Pearson (2008), reflects a radical transformation of Toynbee's thought, and as such, represented the '*Christianization*' of Toynbee's thought in accounting for the link between religion and civilization. An important example of this change could be seen in his later book, *Civilization on Trial* where he wrote,

The spiritual progress of individual souls in this life will, in fact, bring with it much more social progress than could be attained in any other way. It is a paradoxical but profoundly true and important principle of life that the most likely way to reach a goal is to be aiming not at the goal itself but at some more ambitious goal beyond it (Toynbee, 1946, p.247).

It should be noted that this "spiritual progress", for Toynbee, generally implies a religious progress (see, for instance, *Ibid*, p.245). Commenting on the nature of the relation between religion and civilization in the context of Western civilization, he argued that "Christianity appears in the role of civilization's humble servant" (*Ibid*, p.231). For him, Christianity assumed either the role of "subservient", "a chrysalis" or a "chariot" in which case it functions as "if the wheels on which it mounts towards Heaven

¹⁶⁹ According to Arnson and Stauth (2004, p.29), Arnold Toynbee made a "turn to an explicitly religious vision of history"

may be the periodic downfalls of civilization on earth”(Ibid, 235). Put simply, the conception of civilization, Western civilization in particular, in terms of the inseparability of spiritual and social progress, marks an important intersection point for many thinkers (see, for instance, Guizot, 1838; Emerson, 1886; Toynbee, 1946; Schweitzer, 1947).

Contrary to this inseparability thesis is the second amalgam of theories of Western civilization. Under this group of thinkers theorizing Western civilization, the views generally assume incompatibility and opposite direction in the relationships between religion and civilization in their discussion of Western civilization. For instance, one would include the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau (1992), Oswald Spengler (1926), August Comte (1896), Edward B. Tylor (1920), James Frazer (1907), Bertrand Russell (1999); Sigmund Freud (1927;1967) and many others. In other words, it is less of a hasty generalization, and thus safe to point out, that most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries positivist social science traditions generally fall into this category, especially in the fields of sociology, cultural and social anthropology, philosophy, and history.

Of these thinkers, the Francophone Genevan philosopher, J. J. Rousseau is a good example. In his writing on the ‘*Discourse on the Sciences and Arts, First Discourse*’ (1992), Rousseau, contrary to his countrymen, Guizot, argued that civilization appears like a disease that renders sickness and destroys individuals and society alike¹⁷⁰. It sucks out virtuousness, goodness, and make humans hypocrite. He argued, “human soul has been corrupted in proportion to the advancement of our sciences and arts towards perfection” (1992, p, xiv). Rousseau considers civilization, conceived as the overall proliferation of sciences, philosophy, and art, inversely related to a given societies’ conditions of morality, ethics, virtue, and faith. In his own words, Rousseau argued,

Suspensions, offenses, fears, coldness, reserve, hate, betrayal will hide constantly under that uniform and the false veil of politeness, under that

¹⁷⁰ Three French philosophers (Rousseau, Comte, and Guizot) present three theoretical orientations in their studies of Western, or more specifically European civilization. I will have a brief commentary by the end of the paper in the conclusion.

much-vaunted urbanity which we owe to the enlightenment of our century. The name of the Master of the Universe will no longer be profaned by swearing, but it will be insulted by blasphemies without offending our scrupulous ears (1992, p.6).

Sigmund Freud had a theory of civilization in which religion would eventually wither away, especially in the context of White-Christian-European civilization. For thousands of years, religion, he has Judeo-Christian monotheism in mind, served civilization¹⁷¹. It served civilization in two important ways: for one thing, as one achievement of civilization itself, it helped human beings' effort in conquering the "crushingly superior force of nature" (Freud, 1927, p.21)¹⁷². This, for him, generally involves the risk of life and the dangers associated with, on the one hand, the nature of man, at the heart of which human beings coveting lustful killings, incest, and cannibalism, and the natural and social environment they find themselves, on the other. The second function of religion was, in what he called "the urge to rectify the shortcomings of civilization which made themselves painfully felt" (Ibid, p.21).

In this latter sense, since Freudian civilization demands the relinquishing and repression of human natural-instinctual wishes and drives, religion comes and serves as a safety valve. Religion, through its divine providence, provision of hope, happiness, and provisional contentment provides an ephemeral, but ultimately, an illusory mechanism to maintain the status quo of civilization. In this regard, religion, for instance, prohibits incest taboo, murder, and cannibalism. Accordingly, for the purpose counterbalancing the cruel reality of instinct repression in civilization, religion addresses it through its metaphysical universe. In this connection, he underscored that,

¹⁷¹ As for the origin of religion, Freud hold that "In the same way, a man makes the forces of nature not simply into persons with whom he can associate as he would with his equals-that would not do justice to the overpowering impression which those forces make on him-but he gives them the character of a father. He turns them into gods, following in this, as I have tried to show, a not only an infantile prototype but a phylogenetic one" (Frued, 1927; p.17).

¹⁷² Like Mirabeau (noted above), Freudian take on the relation between religion and civilization is fundamentally functional. In this regard, he says "Religion has clearly performed great services for human civilization. It has contributed much towards the taming of the asocial instincts" (Ibid, p.37).

The gods retain their threefold task: they must exorcize the terrors of nature, they must reconcile men to the cruelty of Fate, particularly as it is shown in death, and they must compensate them for the sufferings and privations which a civilized life in common has imposed on them. . . [*In addition*]It now became the task of the gods to even out the defects and evils of civilization, to attend to the sufferings which men inflict on one another in their life together and to watch over the fulfillment of the precepts of civilization, which men obey so imperfectly (Emphasis mine, Freud, 1927; p.18).

In short, Freud's idea of civilization is highly tied to instinct repression and control. This happens through the provision of illusion, as done through religion or through a rational mechanism-which he thought should take place in the realm of advanced natural sciences. In essence, and ultimately, Freudian civilization moves from religious based but primitive form of civilization to that based on rationalism and the natural sciences. This movement, however, entails the progressively diminishing role of religion in a society and civilization. In either condition, nevertheless, the purpose of civilization is "Eros", the instinct of life through the repression of "aggressiveness", the instinctual tendency to destruction. In fact, he argued that "the evolution of civilization . . . may be described as the struggle for life of the human species" (Freud, 1967; p.69). It "combines single human individuals, and after families, then to races, peoples, and nations, into one great unity, the unity of mankind"¹⁷³.

To use Freud's expressions, thinkers in the nineteenth and a significant part of the twentieth century, here Freud himself is included, were hit by the positivist "obsessional neurosis". He believed that the bond between religion and civilization, no matter how illusory might be this relation, will be tested by the advent of natural sciences and rationalism. When civilization's reliance on religion ends, the source of its vitality will be replaced by natural sciences and rationalism. He characterized this movement as,

¹⁷³ Unity of mankind, with respect to Civilization, is a constant theme from Marshal Hodgson (1974) to Karl Jaspers (1953).

The scientific spirit brings about a particular attitude towards worldly matters; before religious matters, it pauses for a little, hesitates, and finally there too crosses the threshold. In this process there is no stopping; the greater the number of men to whom the treasures of knowledge become accessible, the more widespread is the falling-away from religious belief-at first only from its obsolete and objectionable trappings, but later from its fundamental postulates as well.

Now, it is inevitable that religion will no longer be the vehicle of civilization, but the growing educated secular vanguards are. In this regard, he concluded that,

Civilization has little to fear from educated people and brain workers. In them the replacement of religious motives for civilized behavior by other, secular motives would proceed unobtrusively; moreover, such people are to a large extent themselves vehicles of civilization. . . [*And as such*] If the sole reason why you must not kill your neighbor is because God has forbidden it and will severely punish you for it in this or the next life then, when you learn that there is no God and that you need not fear His punishment, you will certainly kill your neighbor without hesitation, and you can only be prevented from doing so by mundane force (Freud, 1967; p.39).

Freud concluded that religious teachings and doctrines must cease to be considered as “the reasons for the precepts of civilization”. On the contrary, he pointed out that “the time has probably come, as it does in an analytic treatment, for replacing the effects of repression by the results of the rational operation of the intellect (Ibid, p.44).

Rousseau and Freud’s articulation of civilization in general and Western civilization, in particular, breathes a sense of direction in which the civilization-religion discourse goes. In other words, both thinkers, in their own respective ways, noticed that in the future of civilizations, particularly Western civilization, the role of religion is conceived as less

promising. In fact, while Rousseau held that civilization goes against anything related to faith and collective existence, ethics, and morality, Freud believed that religion has been providing unsustainable mechanism for civilizational vitality; rather, as society progresses, the illusory role of religion will be taken on by more sustainable mechanisms, of the natural sciences and rationalism.

However, this view of civilization in general and Western civilization in particular, is not necessarily confined to the works of Rousseau and Freud. There are many social scientists' theories with an equal degree of historical and/or empirical predispositions that propounded theories of civilization, particularly of Western civilization. Accordingly, to showcase this, the following two Chapters examine the works of the historian, Oswald Spengler, and the sociologist, A. Comte. In so doing, the specific focus will be on two important aspects of their works. First, it examines how each of these thinkers conceives of civilization in general and Western civilization, in particular? Second, it explores how each of these thinkers dealt with the issue religion in their respective study of civilization? In other words, how is it that each of these thinkers characterized the nature and form of relations between religion and civilization? In what follows, therefore, I have examined the works of O. Spengler and the next part deals with the writings of A. Comte.

6.1. Oswald Spengler and “The Decline of the West”

Oswald Spengler was born in 1880 in Germany to a Protestant family. Before his latest interest in world history, culture, and civilization studies, he had spent significant time in the natural sciences including mathematics. Unlike materialists, humanists, idealists, utopians, and pacifists, he was more of a “political realist” (Helps, 2006). Like his contemporaries in Germany, he believed well before writing his magnum opus, “The Decline of the West”, that war played a regenerating force in the life of a given nation that had experienced spiritual decadence. In fact, in many of his writings, Spengler believed “struggle as a healthy condition of mankind; conversely, he called peace or pacifism a terminal disease of mankind” (Fischer, 1989; p.41).¹⁷⁴ Interestingly, he believed that the “world was conquered by martyrs, not the Christian Gospel” (Helps, 2006; p.xiv)¹⁷⁵. In his view of human nature, Spengler focused on “evilness” and bad tendencies (Fischer, 1989; Helps, 2006).

Apart from this, a close reading of Spengler’s “The Decline of the West” reveals that some of his ideas and concepts were significantly influenced by his readings of the works of Johann Goethe and Friedrich Nietzsche (Nayan, 1984)¹⁷⁶. This can be seen, for instance, in his cyclic formulation of the origin and disintegration of cultures and his designation of Faustian and Apollonian civilizations and souls. According to Fischer (1989, p.95), Spengler was under the influence of J. Goethe, particularly Goethe’s important idea “. . . the idea of the life cycle, the metamorphosis of plants, and the image of Faustian man”. Similarly, Kamal Nayan observed that Spengler was also under the influence of Cartesian dualism, of mind and matter (1984)¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷⁴ Klaus P. Fischer, *History and Prophecy: Oswald Spengler and the Decline of the West* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), 41.

¹⁷⁵ Arthur Helps, Preface in Oswald Spengler, “The Decline of the West” (New York: First Vintage Books, 2006). It should also be noted that he studied Heraclitus for his PhD, a Greek philosopher who believed that war, strife, or struggle always sets in motion changes and thus important.

¹⁷⁶ In the preface of the first volume of “The Decline of the West: Form and Actuality”, Spengler made it explicitly clear that “I feel urged to name once more those to whom I owe practically everything: Goethe and Nietzsche. Goethe gave me method, Nietzsche the questioning faculty” (Spengler, 1926).

¹⁷⁷ Spengler’s dualism is very clear from the outset, that he recycled and posited “culture” and “civilization”, “primitive” and “high cultures”, “soul” and “intellect”, “destiny” and “causality”, “become” and “becoming”, “idea” and “principle”, “organic” and “inorganic”, and etc.

Finally, it would be worth noting that unlike many thinkers that can be considered to fall under the historic-empirical trend in the study of civilization, he rejected evolution in his theory of human beings and culture. He rather believed that "everything happens in nature suddenly without any cause or process". He argued, "they do not develop or alter to adapt themselves to the pressures of nature, rather they go out of existence when not suited to environment" (Spengler, 1926; p.32). Spengler exclaimed, "how utterly un-Goethian are the formulas of 'struggle for existence' and 'natural selection'" (Ibid, p.35). This theoretical stand, however, had its own consequences, particularly in the later scholarly reception of Spengler's "The Decline of the West" (c.f., Nayan, 1984). In the words of Lenihan (2007; p.9), Spengler's book received with "widespread condemnation by the scientific community".

6.1.1. History, Culture, and Civilization

6.1.1. 1. Spengler's Philosophy of History

Although in much of contemporary studies of civilization (s) we see a nuanced, and sometimes blurred, theoretical stand on the meaning of, especially culture and civilization, Spengler had a clear, despite the various criticisms it received in the later periods, the idea of what he meant by each of them. For him, culture was not civilization neither was civilization a culture. Before going to account for his view of these major concepts, it would be worth outlining the context within which these processes and human experiences take place in Spengler's philosophy of history. Spengler began his venture into "The Decline of the West", by clearly outlining what he called the "two possibilities of world formations" (Spengler, 1926; p.8). He noted that "the man of higher Cultures synthesizes and interprets the immediate impressions of his senses History" and this lies,

. . . whether anyone lives under the constant impression that his life is an element in a- far wider life-course that goes on for hundreds and

thousands of years or conceives of himself as something rounded off and self-contained. For the latter type of consciousness, there is certainly no world-history, no world-as-history” (Ibid, p.8)¹⁷⁸.

A close reading of “Decline” reveals that there were cultures that had either of the two consciousnesses. He pointed out that the Classic high culture, particularly the Greeks were more befitting to the later consciousness than the first and that the West was more closely linked to the former consciousness. In the first context, there was no historical consciousness for what mattered was the now-here-and-present as represented in their artworks and sculptures. In fact, unlike the other high cultures, he observed, “What the Greek called Kosmos was the image of a world that is not continuous but complete. Inevitably, then, the Greek man himself was not a series, but a term” (Spengler, 1926; p.9). As Spengler clearly noted, the “world history” or “world as history” was a uniquely Western experience. In this connection, he claimed, “We men of the Western Culture are, with our historical sense, an exception and not a rule. World-history is *our* world picture and not all mankind's” (Ibid, p.15).

In spite of these, it could be argued that he implicitly adopted a third perspective. In this perspective, Spengler would systematically synthesize “the world as history” and “the world as nature”. This, arguably, is what he called the “morphology of world history”. In this proposed world formation, despite the apparently well-loaded idealist-fate-destiny robust arguments, he posited the “become” alongside with the “becoming”. Time and again, the “Decline” has abundantly drawn and recycled stages, cycles, phases, plants,

¹⁷⁸ I came across with two contradictory readings of these two world formations as applied to Spengler himself. On the one hand stood Collingwood, R. G. (nd). In his “*Oswald Spengler and the Theory of Historical Cycles*” where he, criticized Spengler’s theory from root-to-branch, alleged that Spengler preferred the “world as nature” approach to civilization studies (see especially, p.319). There he argued that “*Now the extraordinary thing about Spengler is that, after giving us a penetrating and vivid description of the difference between history and nature, and setting up the demand that we shall envisage " the world as history ',-an admirable demand admirably stated-he goes on to consider the world not as history but precisely as nature, to study it, that is to say, through scientific and not historical spectacles, and to substitute for a truly genetic narrative, which would be history, a self-confessed morphology, which is science*”. Nayan, Kamal (1984), on the other hand, pointed out that Spengler rather preferred the world as history, and thus, “in the frame of history, that is in the frame of life , destiny, duration, incessant becoming . . .”(p,108) in his “*Oswald Spengler: Philosophy of Man and Culture*”, Indian Journal of Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. XI, No.1. pp.101-118. I discussed my reading in the following lines.

and animals in its articulation of cultures and civilizations. However, as Nayan pointed out Spengler's take on the comprehension of history, destiny, and becoming, markedly demands what Spengler called "sympathy", "intuition", and "living" (1984; p.108).

Another ingredient very much important to Spengler's methodological philosophy is futuristic orientation. This temporal contour lies in his morphological world history and the place of Western civilization in it. This is exactly what Spengler does in his "The Decline of the West", predetermining the course and fate of civilizations, particularly Western Civilization. It was this way that he began the very introduction of this book, by unequivocally pointing out,

In this book is attempted for the first time the venture of predetermining history, of following the still untraveled stages in the destiny of a Culture, and specifically of the only Culture of our time and on our planet which is actually in the phase of fulfillment the West-European-American (Spengler, 1926; p.3).

Here Spengler is not necessarily trying to predetermine what has gone in the past for it would mean a logical contradiction and an absolute impossibility; rather, predetermining the course, duration, and stages of "history" (what ought or should be) in the future given its "inherent consistency" as nature is to the natural sciences. It is here exactly where he systematically incorporated his archeological-chronological as well as nature-organic and futuristic dimensions.

6.1.1. 2. Culture

Spengler viewed culture as some kind of living organism (and thus "organic"). It should be noted here, however, that he was not trying to argue that, for instance, cultures resemble analogically to organic beings; rather, he believed, they are themselves organisms (more of homologically, not analogically). In this connection, he claimed that,

Cultures are organisms, and world-history is their collective biography. Morphologically, the immense history of the Chinese or of the Classical Culture is the exact equivalent of the petty history of the individual man, or of the animal, or the tree, or the flower. For the Faustian vision, this is not a postulate but an experience, if we want to learn to recognize inward forms that constantly and everywhere repeat themselves, the comparative morphology of plants and animals has long ago given us the methods (Spengler, 1926; p.104).

In this frame of reference, it is possible that “. . . it will be every man's business to inform himself of what can happen and therefore of what with the unalterable necessity of destiny and irrespective of personal ideals, hopes or desires, will happen” (Ibid, p.39). This view of culture and history has precisely predictable stages, durations, characteristics, patterns, and life cycles. Before moving on to deal with these cycles, stage, and various attributes, I find it necessary first to conceptualize culture in Spenglerian terms. Moving forward, he believed that Culture is “the *prime phenomenon* of all past and future world-history” (p.105). However, despite being “the prime phenomenon”, he did not adequately (In fact, there is no any place in his written books where he specifically mentioned) or demarcated the origin and initial foundation of this “culture”, except for its miraculous appearance and existence, with its own unique idea and soul¹⁷⁹. In this regard, he pointed out that,

A culture is born in the moment when a great soul awakens out of the proto-spirituality of ever-childish humanity and detaches itself, a form from the formless, a bounded and mortal thing from the boundless and enduring. It blooms on the soil of an exactly definable landscape, to which plant-wise it remains bound. It dies when this soul has actualized the full sum of its possibilities in the shape of the peoples, languages, dogmas, arts, states, sciences and reverts into the proto-soul (p.106).

¹⁷⁹ In his “Man and Mechanics” (1932), Spengler made it clear that “everything happened in the nature suddenly without any cause or process”. It should also be noted that Spengler was against Darwinism and the materialist conception of history (c.f., Spengler, 1926; pp.120-121)

In other places, he mentioned, “every culture is an internally governed harmonious personality”; as a “process of realization of an exclusive idea”; a “becoming”; and an “isomorphic system” and so on (Spengler, 1926). Still, he defined it in a circular way, in which it assumed,

. . . the sum total of its inner possibilities, from its sensible phenomenon or appearance upon the canvas of history as a fulfilled actuality. It is the relation of the soul to the living body, to its expression in the light-world perceptible to our eyes (Ibid, p.104).

Analogically also, he used the concept of habit (“habitus”) to denote culture, particularly what he called “high cultures”, such as Indian, Egyptian, and Classical cultures. Here, what he meant by habit included

. . . the special way, proper to itself, in which it manifests itself, i e., the character, course and duration of its appearance in the light-world where we can see it. By its habit each kind is distinguished, in respect of each part and each phase of its existence, from all examples of other species. We may apply this useful notion of “habit” in our physiognomic of the grand organisms and speak of the habit of the Indian, Egyptian or Classical Culture, history or spirituality (p.108).

Despite any flaw one may ascribe to the very ontology of Spenglerien culture, he fairly dealt with some of the characteristic features that distinguish it from other concepts including civilization. Being the “prime phenomenon of all past and future world-history”, it is embedded in the idea that “living nature is, in its most precise sense, applied to all the formations of man's history, whether fully matured, cut off in the prime, half opened or stifled in the seed” (p.105). This, again, echoes Spengler’s sustained influence from Goethe-whose name and idea is literally difficult to escape one’s eyes throughout ‘The Decline of the West’, on the one hand, and his predisposition to predetermined stage-based formation and life cycle of cultures, on the other.

Moreover, Spengler's view of culture presupposes relativism, even though all cultures morphologically resemble each other and have the same life-course and fate. He believed that every culture has its own internal possibilities of self-expression that allows (and conversely limit) it to arise, ripen, pass through times of decay, and die to never return. He observed that there is not one painting, physics, mathematics, or one sculpture; rather, many of them, each in its deepest sense of being different from the others, each limited in duration and self-contained, as every species of plant has its own peculiar blossoms and/or fruits, its unique type of growth followed by decline. Addressing the peculiarities of each culture, he said “. . . that each Culture must necessarily possess its own destiny-idea. Indeed, this conclusion is implicit from the first in the feeling that every great Culture is nothing but the actualizing and form of a single, singularly-constituted (emzigartig) soul” (Ibid, p.129).

Spengler also made a distinction between what he called primitive and high cultures. He observed that the latter kind of culture, which was his principal focus, had a life span of a thousand years. Primitive cultures, however, presumably existed before the rise of high cultures¹⁸⁰. He believed that they were essentially something like tribes or clans and were not organisms like high cultures. In this regard, he talked about what he called the “primitive man” and “man of high cultures”. For instance, in one place he mentioned that “Primitive man feels this dimly and anxiously, while for the man of a higher Culture . . .” (Spengler, 1926; p.117). Nevertheless, high cultures, on the other hand, represented for him “living things or “organic” in its makeup and must go through the phases of birth, growth, fulfillment, decay, and death. For him, there were nine high cultures, eight that came into being and another one which has not yet come into being, but only of his prediction. In the former context, he included Babylonian, Chinese, Classical (Greece and Rome), Egyptian, Arabian (Magian), Mexican (Mayan-Aztec), Indian, and Western high cultures. The ninth high culture, which he predicted, that could arise after the demise of the Euro-American, Faustian or Western civilization, was Russian high

¹⁸⁰ In another place, he discussed the three stages in his study of western civilization, starting from “pre cultural period”, going through culture, and finally, culminating in civilization. Here, Spengler used “pre culture” rather than “primitive” culture (Spengler, 1926; Index).

culture. At any rate, he believed that each of these high cultures would last for 1,000 years and then wither away never to return.

All of the eight Spenglerien high cultures had their own unique “prime symbol” representing their innermost souls. For instance, the prime symbol of Euro-American culture was the "Faustian Soul". This, for Spengler, represented the upward reaching for nothing less than the "Infinite. It represented a tragic symbol of frustration and dissatisfaction together, “the will to power”, “overpowering”, verticalness, infinity, and an insistent ambition for the unattainable and unreachable. The Classical culture often argued to have paved the way for the advent of Western or Faustian civilization, had the prime symbol of what Spengler called the "point-present" orientation. This, for him, implied a strong fascination with the nearby, the small, the "space" of immediate, and now-and-here. As Spengler observed, most of the classical paintings and sculptures lacked backgrounds and future orientations. Due to this, for him, it was difficult to find anything “behind” and/or “beyond” in spite of the apparently manifest image, message, or context. Another example of Spenglerien prime symbol was the Egyptian symbol of “path”. This, according to him, represented how the ancient Egyptians were preoccupied with the soul. For instance, the Egyptian pyramids and their close association with religion and art signified a sense of direction and obsession with soul (Spengler, 1926).

Another feature of Spenglerien take on culture concerns intercultural interactions and the subsequent consequences. I already noted that Spengler believed that every culture has its own unique prime symbol and soul that define the very essence of a given culture. For this very reason, he believed that no culture can borrow from another culture. This is because culture is a single, full-fledged, and indivisible whole, a world by itself and in itself. It may, however, take this or that idea from another culture, but it either remains a minor to it or undergoes a complete transformation before it eventually gets swallowed by the borrowing culture. Yet, since this kind of intercultural interpenetration is coincidental, it will not have any lasting influence on the part of the cultures involved. As a principle, therefore, Spengler believed that no culture can borrow forms and ideas

from other cultures. If it does, then the outcome will be a complete transformation of the borrowed by the borrowing culture. For instance, he observed that,

. . . out of all this wealth, the Faustian soul borrowed only some few church forms and, moreover, in borrowing them, it instantly transformed them root and branch (10th Century, Hucbald, Guido d'Arezzo) Melodic accent and beat produced the "march," and polyphony (like the rime of contemporary poetry) the image of endless space (Spengler; 1926; p. 228).

Finally, Spengler observed that all cultures, given his world as nature take on the issue, necessarily experience four life stages, and will then cease to exist. He claimed that all and every single high culture must go through the stages of birth, growth, maturity, and death. In other words, high cultures like Indian, Egyptian, Chinese, Classical, Mexican, Arabian, Western, and Babylonian are subject to this Spenglerien rule. Furthermore, while explaining the modus operandi of this rule, he argued that the cycle happens to all high cultures through what he called “contemporaneous” way. He thus declared,

. . . without exception all great creations and forms in religion, art, politics, social life, economy and science appear, fulfill themselves and die down contemporaneously in all the Cultures; that the inner structure of one corresponds strictly with that of all the others; that there is not a single phenomenon of deep physiognomic importance in the record of one for which we could not find a counterpart in the record of every other; and that this counterpart is to be found under a characteristic form and in a perfectly definite chronological position (Ibid, p.112).

Cultures being themselves organisms, not analogically organisms, experience the same fate as plants and animals. He compared the life span of cultures with the four major seasons. In the spring phase, every high culture experiences “rural-intuitive”, “awakened dream-heavy soul”, “super-personal unity and fullness”, “birth of a myth of the grand

style”, “expressing a new God-feeling”, and “earliest mystical-metaphysical shaping of the new world-outlook zenith of scholasticism”. In other words, at the beginning, all high cultures start out with rural life, religion with a worldview, and spiritually.

In the summer, Spengler observed, cultures experience “ripening consciousness”, earliest urban and critical setting”; “reformation”; internal popular opposition to the great springtime forms”; “beginning of a purely philosophical form of the world-feeling”; “opposition of idealistic and realistic systems”; and “Puritanism with rationalistic-mystic impoverishment of religion”. In this stage of a given high culture, opposition begins against summer’s mythological and scholastic tendencies and paves the way for the advent of vigorous urban based intelligence that insistently pushes the boundaries of religion into the background and receives with an open hand of a strictly scientific form of consciousness (Spengler, 1926).

The third phase of all high cultures is analogous to the autumn season. For all Spengler’s high cultures, this season meant the emergence of “intelligence of city-zenith of strict intellectual creativeness”; “enlightenment”; a belief in the “almightiness of reason”; the “cult of ‘nature’ ” and "rational" religion arise; and this is particularly the period of what Spengler called the period of “the great conclusive systems” which included such personalities as Plato and Aristotle (in Classic high Culture), al-Farabi and Avicenna (in the Arabian), and Goethe and Kant (West). Simply put, this season is marked by the decay of religion; the impoverishment of spiritual-inward life; the dominance of rationalism and enlightenment.

Finally, the last phase of Spenglerien life cycle is the dawning of the winter season. This is the phase of what Spengler called civilization. It is characterized by the evolution of megalopolitan city-centered life; the “extinction of spiritual creative force”; “ethical-practical tendencies of an irreligious and un-metaphysical cosmopolitanism”; materialism or “materialistic world-outlook”; the emergence of “cult of science, utility and prosperity”; it becomes the “epoch of ‘un-mathematical philosophy’”; “skepsis and the “degradation of abstract thinking into professional lecture-room philosophy” and the “spread” of what he called a” final world-sentiment” represented through, for instance,

“Indian Buddhism”; the “practical fatalism of Islam after 1000”; and “ethical socialism from 1900”. In other words, the winter season symbolizes the death of culture and the reign of civilization (Spengler, 1926).

6.1.1. 3. Civilization: Western Civilization

So far I have been trying to deal with Spengler’s conception of culture. It is by now, then, clear what he specifically meant by culture. It has been shown that Spengler believed that the latest phase of culture was called civilization. However, what is, broadly speaking, civilization? What are its particular characteristics? Where did he locate Western civilization among the eight high cultures, which he examined in the “Decline”? In what follows, therefore, I attempt to respond to these major questions.

As discussed above, Spengler made it clear that the last and terminal phase of a culture is called “civilization”, symbolizing conditions of militarism, dictatorship, giant cities-megalopolitan-cosmopolitan, imperialism, rationalism, materialism, irreligion, etc. This way, then, every culture supposedly ends in civilization. In his own words, civilization stood for,

. . . the inevitable destiny of the Culture, and in this principle we obtain the viewpoint from which the deepest and gravest problems of historical morphology become capable of solution. Civilizations are the most external and artificial states of which a species of developed humanity is capable. They are a conclusion, the thing-become succeeding the thing becoming, death following life, rigidity following expansion, intellectual age and the stone-built . . . (Spengler, 1926; p.31)

In another place, he recycled the same proposition that civilization entails “the definite closing-down of the Culture and the opening of a quite new phase of human existence of anti-provincial, late, futureless, but quite inevitable” (Ibid, p.34). Of the many features of civilizations Spengler enumerated, the following are worth mentioning: he predicted that

life setting will move from “home” to world-city and cosmopolitanism; “reverence for tradition” will be replaced by “cold matter of-fact”; the old religion of soul and spirituality will be taken up by scientific irreligion and atheism; ' 'society ' ' in place of the state; and the conception of money as “an inorganic and abstract magnitude” prevails (Ibid, p.33).

The second important question is: what is, then, Western civilization? In addition to this, how does he evaluate the state of Western civilization writing in the first quarter of the twentieth century? It was clear from the outset what he meant by the “West”. What he had in mind-in fact, he explicitly mentioned that-was Europe and America. Interestingly, unlike many historians who assumed continuity between Greco-Roman history-culture and civilization, he did not necessarily assume any direct continuity between Greco-Roman and Western history, culture, and civilization (see, for instance, Arnold Toynbee in Chapter Three). To contrary, he questioned that,

So, for the first time, we are enabled to understand the Romans as the successors of the Greeks, and light is projected into the deepest secrets of the late-Classical period. What, but this, can be the meaning of the fact which can only be disputed by vain phrases that the Romans were barbarians who did not precede but closed a great development? (p.32).

For Spengler, it could be argued that the three-Greeks, Romans, and the West-represented different categories. The Romans, quite like the post-eighteenth centuries west, were “Unspiritual, unphilosophical, devoid of art, clannish to the point of brutality, aiming relentlessly at tangible successes . . .” (p.32). Furthermore, their imagination, like the nineteenth century West, directed its energy to “practical objects” and they “had religious laws governing relations as they had other laws governing human relations” (Ibid). The Romans, then, represented a kind of culture fossilized, “strong-minded”, and “completely non-metaphysical”. However, these characteristics, taken collectively, are not unique to Roman civilization. These features, Spengler found, recurring in every

high culture he examined, and as such, “the intellectual and material destiny of each and every ‘late’ period”.

Another area of difference, Spengler observed, included the idea that while it is possible to “Understand the Greeks without mentioning their economic relations; the Romans, on the other hand, can only be understood through these” (p.35)¹⁸¹. Unlike the Greeks, the Roman civilization stood “between the Hellenic Culture and nothingness” and concluded that “In a word, Greek soul Roman intellect, and this antithesis is the differentia between Culture and Civilization” (p.32). This is quite different from how Arnold Toynbee saw the Greco-Roman civilization and its connection to Western civilization (See, Chapter Three for a detailed assessment of Toynbee’s take on the same issue).

While the classical culture of Greek culminated in Roman civilization in the fourth century, it was in the nineteenth century that the Western civilization came to be as a full-fledged civilization. To use Spengler’s own words, the “transition from Culture to Civilization was accomplished for the Classical world in the 4th, for the Western in the 19th Century” (Spengler, 1926; p.32). Interestingly, unlike many claims for the role of Greco-Roman culture and civilization to the West, it could be seen that he regarded the Classical high culture (Greco-Roman) owing nothing to the advent or making of Western civilization. In fact, Spengler believed that the West only came into existence in the years around 900 A.D., approximately 400 years following the fall of the Roman Empire¹⁸². It was around this period that the driving forces of culture and civilization came to assume a great role in the west. In this connection, Spengler observed that,

The group of Western Culture-languages appeared in the tenth century.

The available bodies of language - namely, the Germanic and Romance

¹⁸¹ Another way of showing the difference between the Greeks and the other high cultures is through examining how each of these cultures dealt with death. Spengler found out, by comparing the Classic-Greek with Egyptian high Culture, that “. . . in the disposal of the dead. The Egyptian denied mortality, the Classical man affirmed it in the whole symbolism of his Culture The Egyptians embalmed even their history in chronological dates and figures From pre-Solonian Greece nothing has been handed down, not a year-date, not a true name, not a tangible event . . .”(Spengler, 1926; p.13).

¹⁸² In relation to script and writing, he makes a point that “It is a remarkably curious fact, proved beyond doubt by the lack of epigraphic remains, that the Classical alphabet did not come into use till after 900, and even then only to a limited extent and for the most pressing economic needs” (Spengler, 1926; p.12).

dialects (monkish Latin included)-were developed into script-languages under a single spiritual influence. It is impossible that there should not be a common character in the development of German, English, Italian, French, and Spanish from 900 to 1900 . . . (p.153).

Another factor behind this period is due to Spengler's own insistence on the idea that every culture starts with some kind of feudalism¹⁸³. As cultures approach civilization under the disguise of progress, feudalism is eventually left behind and remains in the culture phase. As I have mentioned above, Western civilization was represented through Goethe's fictional character Faust, and thus, Faustian civilization. It could be argued that this personification of Western civilization signifies Spengler's assessment (and own personal experience) of the nineteenth and twentieth century's of the Western civilization in general, and Europe and Germany, in particular. This Western soul was not only Goethe's Faustian "goal directness", the urge for reaching the unreachable and unattainable; "overpowering"; and it was, equally, directed by Nietzsche's idea of the "will to power". As he saw it, however, Western culture, by virtue of being in the latest stage of civilization, assumed "metaphysically-exhausted" state (Spengler, 1926; p.32).

6.1.2. Western Civilization: Religion and Civilization

Spengler's study of civilizations and high cultures in general and Western civilization, in particular, is founded up on-and-closely dealt alongside with religion and closely affiliated concepts and experiences such as "soul" and "spirituality". Meaning, he posited religion, on the one hand, as a systematized doctrine and social institution, and on the other, in the contexts of closely related concepts and issues, such as soul and spirituality. Given this, I argue that the study of Spengler's view of culture and civilization without the necessary and specific reference to religion, it would be inadequate and meaningless. It is not only the foundational frame of Spenglerien reference to "The Decline of the West", but also it is that which marks all cultures and

¹⁸³ For instance, he mentioned the execution of King Louis XVI of France in 1793 marking an important transitional point from culture to civilization (Spengler, 1926).

civilizations. In other words, religion and culture are inseparable to an extent that the one represents the other in Spengler's study of high cultures and civilizations, and it was the growing diminishing role of cultural and religious conditions that worried, and thus, made him pessimistic about the future of Western civilization¹⁸⁴. It is, then, by no means a hasty generalization to conclude that the *decline* of the west primarily rests on irreligiosity, spiritual bankruptcy, and "soullessness" in Europe and North America. In his own words, he argued that,

Every soul has religion, which is only another word for its existence. All living forms in which it expresses itself - all arts, doctrines, customs, all metaphysical and mathematical form-worlds, all ornament, every column and verse, and idea - are ultimately religious, and *must* be so. But from the setting in of Civilization, they *cannot* be so any longer. As the essence of every Culture is religion, so-and *consequently*-the essence of every Civilization is irreligion - the two words are synonymous (Spengler, 1926; p.358).

He believed that religion was an important springboard for many collective pursuits in any given cultural life. All of the material and non-material aspects of culture reflected this, ranging in essence from "customs" to "ornaments". Simply stated, Spengler realized that at the heart of every single culture lies religion and constituted the "essence" of all culture. However, when it comes to civilization, it is, as himself noted, synonymous with irreligion, and thus, irreligiosity becoming the "essence" of civilization. Accordingly, for Spengler, in civilization, the vitality of religion and spirituality becomes close to none. Consequently, he pointed out,

It is this extinction of living inner religiousness, which gradually tells upon even the most insignificant element in a man's being, that becomes phenomenal in the historical world-picture at the turn from the Culture to

¹⁸⁴ While explaining the nature of relation between religion and civilization, Spengler, for instance, observed that, "The spiritual in every living Culture is religious, has religion, whether it be conscious of it or not. That it exists, becomes, develops, fulfils itself, *is* its religion. It is not open to a spirituality to be irreligious; at most it can play with the idea of irreligion. . ." (Spengler, 1926; p.409).

the Civilization, the *Climacteric* of the Culture, as I have already called it, the time of change in which a mankind loses its spiritual fruitfulness forever, and building takes the place of begetting (Ibid, p.359).

As Spenglerian civilization is marked, among other things, by “megapolitanism”, cosmopolitanism, irreligiosity or atheism, and unfruitfulness, the same has been the fate of Western society. It also expressed itself “in the extinction of great art, of great courtesy, of great formal thought, of the great style in all things, but also quite carnally in the childlessness and “race-suicide” of the civilized and rootless strata” (p.359). Furthermore, while accounting for the changing nature of culture and religious life, due to the onset of civilization, in some of the cities of Europe, he observed that,

The megalopolis itself, as against the old Culture-towns-Alexandria as against Athens, Paris as against Bruges, Berlin as against Nurnberg-is irreligious down to the last detail, [and] down to the look of the streets, the dry intelligence of the faces (p.358).

In short, it could be seen that as Christianity came on the deathbed of the Roman Empire and remained vibrant in the coming approximately four centuries, it had evolved what might be termed as “Western culture”. According to the reading of Farrenkopf (2001; p. 32), Spengler believed in the idea that “Christianity forms the wellspring of Western culture”. In addition, since Faustian Christianity, in either of its forms, viewed the soul “as an eternal source of radiant energy”, it helped facilitate the preponderance of “the individualism, dynamism, transformative energy, and expansive power unique to the West” (Ibid, p.67). However, inevitably, as Faustian Christianity (“Western Christianity”, Catholicism, and Protestantism) exhausted its vitality in the remaining four to five centuries, Western culture transformed, or “developed” into Western civilization. And this, for Spengler, meant that as “. . . the Culture suddenly hardens, it mortifies, its blood congeals, its force breaks down, and it becomes Civilization” (Spengler, 1926; p.106). This is, simply put, what lies behind Spengler’s account for “The Decline of the West”.

6.2. August Comte (1798-1857)

Although Oswald Spengler, Sigmund Freud, Auguste Comte (1798-1857), and Edward B. Tylor share certain insights in their general approach to civilization studies (and particularly Western civilization), their attitudes about the nature and future of religion in their respective conception of civilization in general and Western civilization, in particular, present fundamental differences. While, for instance, the demise of religion in the advent and expansion of Western civilization triggers a sense of normlessness and feeling of depression in Spengler's "Decline" (as in Rousseau's "Social Contract"), the others (such as Comte, Freud, and E. B. Tylor) celebrated it as a *natural progress* (inevitable and good) of society.

In addition to Sigmund Freud (and Oswald Spengler), whose principal propositions were critically highlighted in the introductory section of chapter four, the following paragraphs critically posit the ideas of Auguste Comte. Like all the other cases, theories examined so far, the focus will be on two major questions. First, I try to make sense of how Comte conceived of civilization and its relation to culture. Second, I explore how he dealt with religion in his conception of civilization in general and Western civilization, in particular. The following discussion principally draws from the three volumes of Comte's magnum opus, "*Positive Philosophy*" (1890) (Vol. I, II, and III, translated by Harriet Martineau) and "*The Catechism of Positive Religion*" (1858) (translated by Richard Congreve).

6.2.1. Comte's Civilization: Defining and Characterizing Civilization

August Comte is commonly identified as the father of Sociology who initially conceived of it as Social physics. His entire three volumes appear to have been written to prove that there is a subject matter to which Sociology was to be the ultimate panacea. However, any student of civilization would equally find Comte's "Positive Philosophy" attractive

and challenging in its specific ways of approaching the question of civilization in the first half of the nineteenth century. This research is one humble effort in that direction. Moving forward and simply stated, Comte's view of civilization can be seen in two important ways. I argue that, on the one hand, he explicitly used and defined civilization in general in his "Positive Philosophy", and on the other, he deployed civilization, as it is used today in the conception of, for instance, Western (he actually used "European Civilization") civilization, particularly in his theory (and "law") of social development.

To begin with the first, it could be clearly seen that a close reading of Comte's "Positive Philosophy" reveals that there are a number of ways in which he deployed the word civilization and its derivatives in various ways and contexts. Only a scanning of the second volume of Comte's "Positive Philosophy" mentioned the word "civilization" more than one hundred times. This does not, of course, include his numerous recycled derivatives such as "civilized" (and its supposed opposites, such as "savages", "barbarians", and "primitives", and etc) and the much less appearing "civilizing". For him, there are (and were) "primitive", "ancient", "antique", "nascent", "indigenous", "original", "Greek", "Roman", "contemporary", "modern", "European", and other forms of civilizations in his bank of vocabularies.

When it comes to the meaning and nature of civilization, Comte's conception of civilization generally entails at least five major elements and characteristics. Comte's take on civilization, I argue, displays the characteristics of comprehensiveness, hierarchical ("laws", "states", and "stages"), plurality (although he generally spoke of civilizations, he made it clear that his observation was applicable only to European societies), materiality-nature, predictable functional outcomes, and the dynamic balance of principles (markers) of social development. These, put together, make up both the content and body of Comte's conception of civilization. A close examination of these characteristics is in order.

In one sense, Comte defined civilization in close proximity to nature (the interaction of man and natural environment). He believed that civilization, by freeing human beings

from the limits of nature, enables man to enjoy intellectual and moral security and freedom¹⁸⁵. In this connection, he argued that,

Civilization develops, to an enormous degree, the action of Man upon his environment: and thus, it may seem, at first, to concentrate our attention upon the cares of material existence, the support, and improvement of which appear to be the chief object of most social occupations. A closer examination will show, however, that this development gives the advantage to the highest human faculties, both by the security which sets free our attention from physical wants, and by the direct and steady excitement which it administers to the intellectual functions, and even the social feelings (Comte,1890; Vol. II, p.125).

In another place, he implied the same when he observed that it generally entails “the action of Man upon nature” (p.304). Implying the close concordance between nature and civilization, he argued that “the most eminent civilization must be pronounced to be fully accordant with nature, since it is, in fact, only a more marked manifestation of the chief properties of our species” (p.126). More broadly seen, however, nature is a recurrent theme in Comte’s general scheme of things. Among other things, his social development (and the advent of social sciences in general, sociology, in particular) is portrayed to resemble (analogically) biology (physiology, anatomy, zoology, etc). For instance, in one place he claimed, “The subordination of social science to biology is so evident that nobody denies it in a statement . . .” (p.93).

Apart from nature, Comte’s conception of civilization also demands comprehensiveness. He saw civilization implying a wider possible aggregation and broader in time and space. In this view, civilization entails the “continuous increase of population all over the globe” (p.73); and “it must be our rule to study the civilization, not of any one nation, however important, but of the whole portion of mankind” (p.306). This, as I will

¹⁸⁵ It should be underlined that “Intellectual” and “Moral” dimensions are the two foundational elements of August Comte (and his general thought) throughout his “Positive Philosophy”

deal with it shortly, is despite the fact that his theoretical focus was limited to Europe and of which Western Europe.

The other important characteristic feature of Comte's conception of civilization is its hierarchical predisposition. He believed that civilization has stages ("different stages of civilization" (p.72)); states ("the variable state of civilization" (p.61)); laws ("natural laws of civilization" (p.47)); and levels ("the advancement of the civilization" (p.72)). While Comte's thought principally operated in stages, laws, and levels, his "Positive Philosophy" essentially demarcates between the civilized West (particularly, Western Europe) and others whom he considered as "savages", "inferiors" and "brutes"¹⁸⁶. In one place, he claimed that "If we compare savage with more civilized peoples . . ." (p.90). The same degree of "civilizational hierarchy" (if there is any) is recycled elsewhere as "In the lower stages of savage life we see families combining for a temporary purpose, and then returning, almost like the brutes" (p.117). Savages, he claimed, "like children, are not subject to much *ennui* while their physical activity, which alone is of any importance to them, is not interfered with" (p.127). This analogy is extended (to include dogs and monkeys) further in a condition where "If, for instance, we exhibit a watch to a child or a savage, on the one hand, and a dog or a monkey, on the other, there will be no great difference in their way of regarding the new object" (p.156).

Interestingly, however, Comte's most "civilized" and superior race was white European civilization. He deliberately asked, "Why is Europe the scene, and why the white race is the agent, of the highest civilization?" and he apparently responded with unequivocal statement: "No doubt, we are beginning to see, in the organization of the whites, and especially in their cerebral constitution, some positive germs of superiority". Furthermore, he grounded this superiority of the white race in "certain physical, chemical, and biological conditions which must have contributed to render European countries peculiarly fit to be the scene of high civilization" (p.154). In yet another place,

¹⁸⁶ It should be noted that Comte used civilization and social development interchangeability. For instance, he observed that "The influence of *civilization* in perpetually improving the intellectual faculties is even more unquestionable than its effect on moral relations. The development of the individual exhibits to us in little, both as to time and degree, the chief phases of *social development*" (Emphasis mine, Comte, 1890; Vol.II, p.125).

he extended his racist claim that the European White is the “selected” and “vanguard” of the human race. In his own words, he is studying “the *selectest* part, the *vanguard* of the human race, that we have to study; the greater part of the white race, or the European nations” (Emphasis mine, p.151). Of Europeans, he specified that he focused on Western Europe¹⁸⁷.

A very closely related characteristic dimension of Comte’s view of civilization breaths “improvement”, “progress”, “development”, and necessity (“inevitability”). He mentioned that civilization makes intellectual and moral action more “preponderant” (p.90). Of these also, he wrote, “The influence of civilization in perpetually *improving* the intellectual faculties is even more unquestionable . . .”(Emphasis mine, p.125). More boldly, however, Comte made it clear that,

It is unquestionable that civilization leads us on to a further and further development of our noblest dispositions and our most generous feelings, which are the only possible basis of human association, and which receives, by means of that association, a more and more special culture (Ibid).

Although he did not explicitly claim that civilization would lead to “human happiness”, the opposite is not acceptable to Comte¹⁸⁸. In other words, Comte rejected the idea that the advent of civilization brides vices and causes the deterioration of morals, faith, and social conditions¹⁸⁹. Interestingly, as I have dealt with it in the previous sections, one of the protagonists of this view of civilization was J. J. Rousseau. Comte was already aware of his countrymen’s view. What he did, however, was the total rejection of Rousseau’s

¹⁸⁷ In another place he generously extended his observation to include the whole of Europe and in that he argued that “The observations which I have to make on this subject are applicable to all European societies” (p.3).

¹⁸⁸ In fact he made it clear that “If confined myself strictly to a scientific view, I might satisfy myself with proving the fact of social progression, without taking any notice of the question of human perfectibility” (Comte, 1890; Vol.II, p.72).

¹⁸⁹ Yet, he did not deny that civilization, especially modern civilization (in other words, Western civilization in general and European Civilization, in particular) “affected improvement in society” (Comte, 1858; p.262).

view of civilization¹⁹⁰. In fact, Comte alleged that Rousseau's view of civilization can be easily traced back to the Christian theological postulate of the "Fall of Man". In this frame of reference, it is argued that "the continuous deterioration of society coincide with the extension of civilization . . . the more remote, the further we advance in civilization" (p.64)¹⁹¹. However, Comte argued that this is not something peculiar to Christianity, but also to all other religions. In this connection, he pointed out that "this fundamental dogma, which reappears, in one form or another, in all religions, and which is supported in its intellectual influence by the natural propensity of men to admire the past" (Ibid).

Comte stipulated that, given the aforementioned propensity to progress, evolution, and development, society moves through three mutually exclusive stages of social development¹⁹². The evolution starts from the first, "Theological", which subsumed fetish, polytheism, and monotheism; through the second, Metaphysical; and to the third, the Positive or Scientific stages. Comte posited this progressive evolution in terms of the progress of knowledge, on the one hand, and the progress of civilization, on the other. In the former context, Comte pointed out that,

Each branch of our knowledge,—passes successively through three different theoretical conditions: the Theological, or fictitious; the Metaphysical, or abstract; and the Scientific, or positive. In other words, the human mind, by its nature, employs in its progress three methods of philosophizing, the character of which is essentially different, and even radically opposed: viz., the theological method, the metaphysical, and the positive. Hence arise three philosophies, or general systems of

¹⁹⁰ Comte rather preferred the writings of Galileo, Descartes, and Bacon (the last two being recycled throughout his "Positive Philosophy").

¹⁹¹ For a detailed discussion of this view of Rousseau, see the introduction of Chapter Four. A far more detailed account has been provided in chapter two.

¹⁹² Here visible correspondence can be seen between Comte and E. B. Tylor. Both forwarded three-staged progression of (and into) civilization. Interestingly, both were equally racists and Eurocentrists who believed in white supremacy and the inferiority of other races. Comte's claims are addressed in the following paragraphs. For a detailed discussion of white supremacy and Eurocentrism of E. B. Tylor see his "*Anthropology: An Introduction to the Study of Man and Civilization*" (1881), "*Research into Early history of Mankind and the Development of Civilization*" (1878), "*Primitive Culture: Research into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom*" (Vol. I, 1871; Vol. II, 1920).

conceptions on the aggregate of phenomena, each of which excludes the others (Comte, 1890; Vol. I, p.2).

In the latter sense, Comte wrote about the theological, metaphysical, and positive school, polity, doctrine, and markers of civilizational state. In his discussion of social evolution and development, all of the three stages have their own characteristics and features that distinguish them. Societies in the theological stage are defined as “ancient”, “old”, and due to their “natural tendency” to emphasize “order” and maintaining existing status quo, they are “retrograde”, and as such, not progressive. The order is pursued at the expense of progress. This natural makeup of this “retrograde school” meant that there is no space for the advent of sciences and industrial activities. In his own words,

There can be no doubt that the development of the sciences, of industry, and even of the fine arts, was historically the principal, though latent cause, in the first instance, of the irretrievable decline of the theological and military system (Comte, 1890; Vol.II, p.6)¹⁹³.

In this words of Comte, again, is mentioned another core feature of the theological, ancient or old civilization, which is militarism. Comte believed that in this stage of social development, civilization is made possible by war and conquest. Comte mentioned that ancient civilizations (such as Greek and Roman) are noted for war and conquest. He further observed that,

life was then military by necessity . . . the only means of rendering the political organism durable and progressive . . . but if restricted to the social state of the ancients, or that of any population at the same stage of progress, it is emphatically true that war was a means of civilization. Such is the process by which human societies were disciplined, extended,

¹⁹³ Guizot seemed to have Comte in mind when he wrote “*The friends of social development . . . maintain . . . that the progress of society necessarily involves and carries with it the progress of morality; that when the external life is better regulated, the internal life is refined and purified*” (Guizot, 1887, Vol.I; p.13). Chapter five comparatively explores the three ways in which three French thinkers approached civilization, of France, and of Europe.

reconstituted, and led on to their mode of existence (Comte, 1890; Vol.III, p.47).

In addition to order-orientated, retrogressive by its vision, and militarism, the theological stage of (“ancient”, “old” or primitive”) civilization functioned in parallel with what Comte called “feudal spirit”¹⁹⁴. Even though feudalism did not necessarily fit with the theological social formation, both had an equal degree of dependence on war and militarism. Put differently, it is impossible for both to exist without the military and war spirit. He mentioned that, like the theological sociopolitical system, “the military spirit, in which the feudal had its origin” (Ibid, p.18).

However, with the advent of a transitional point in the broader civilizational progress, the metaphysical stage begins to challenge (at the same time preserve) aspects of the old system. Comte viewed this stage as “critical”, “revolutionary”, “deistic”, “scholastic” school, polity, and doctrine. With the advent of the metaphysical doctrine, it “. . . was destined to modify it [theological], it was a matter of course that it should vindicate the general foundations of the old system, even after having destroyed its chief conditions of existence” (Emphasis mine, Ibid, p.17). A “retrograde” was the typical character of the theological stage, it was “social retrogradation” that typically represented the metaphysical stage. This is, Comte argued, something that emanates from the tendency of the metaphysical polity and school to view the past as something preferable¹⁹⁵. In this connection, he pointed out that the “tendency to social retrogradation, under the idea of returning to the primitive state so thoroughly belongs to the metaphysical polity” (Ibid).

Compared to the earlier polity and stage of civilization, the metaphysical stage accepted the need for some degree of progress, demonstrated especially by its rejection of the retrograde order-orientation of the theological stage. However, since it stood for social reorganization based on the assumption that it can only takes place under theological

¹⁹⁴ Another feature of the theological stage is its subordination of reason to faith (using, though, reason it self!, exclaimed Comte) (1890; Vol.II, p.7).

¹⁹⁵ Here Comte criticized Rousseau’s idea of the “State of Nature” for its glorification of primitive moments as something inherently good. As mentioned earlier, Comte believed that this view underlies the Christian theological formulation of the “Fall of Man”

basis (of the old principle), it had to deal with this “fatal inconsistency”, which rather eventually paved the way for the advent of modern civilization under positive doctrine, polity and school and its eventual demise (necessarily because it was a transitional point in social evolution). This, for Comte, presents the internal contradiction that gave rise to the inevitable positive and scientific social reorganization in modern civilization. In either cases-the theological and metaphysical-the purpose of their existence was merely to fulfill their respective stages, conditions, means, and purposes. In short, Comte believed that the central existential problems of the ancient and transitional doctrines, polities and stages of civilization were closely related to how each successfully dealt (which, in fact, they did not, and ultimately, end up being the cause of their eventual demise) with the problem reconciling progress (temporality) and order (spiritual). This was, according to him, primarily because both these stages were primarily entangled with the issue of the order at the expense of progress¹⁹⁶.

The last inevitable stage in Comte’s evolution of civilization is the “positive”, “scientific” or “modern civilization”. Unlike the above stages of social evolution and development, the last stage is marked by the necessary and effective interplay of the “progress” and “order” aspects of civilization. In this connection, he pointed out that,

The ancients used to suppose Order and Progress to be irreconcilable: but both are indispensable conditions in a state of modern civilization; and their combination is at once the grand difficulty and the main resource of every genuine political system. No real order can be established, and still less can it last, if it is not fully compatible with progress: and no great progress can be accomplished if it does not tend to the consolidation of order (Comte, 1890; Vol.II, p.3).

In other words, as himself put it, the “chief feature must be the union of these two conditions, which will be two aspects, constant and inseparable, of the same principle” (Ibid). As I will be dealing with them shortly below under functional correlates of

¹⁹⁶ I will specifically deal with this issue in the upcoming section where I deal with Comte’s engagement of religion in his theory of social evolution and the advent of White European Modern civilization.

civilization, unlike the first two stages of progress, modern civilization is characterized by three core features. These are the prevalence of industry, the wider cultivation of science, arts, and philosophy, and aesthetics.

Now, when we turn to the other very important aspect of Comte's civilization, we find some of the predictable functional outcomes of modern civilization. In fact, he went further to point out that these outcomes, which I will mention shortly, as the very quintessence, principle, and aim of civilization. These are industrial or practical, aesthetic or poetic, and scientific or philosophical. He believed that all these are "indispensable in their several ways: they represent universal, though not equally pressing needs; and aptitudes also universal, though unequally marked" (p.304). In short, in addition to these functional outcomes and features of civilization, he underlined that civilization cannot be conceived without the necessary and specific reference to the dynamic interplay of order and progress. Unlike the incompatibility thesis (of order) in which past civilizations (such as the Greek and Roman) based, modern civilization cannot proceed and subsist without these.

6.2.2. Western or European Civilization?

No doubt, that Comte devoted the entire three volumes of his "Positive Philosophy" to the study of Western societies and civilization. In more than three places, only in the second volume, Comte pointed out that he was studying European societies and that it applies to European societies in general and Western Europe, in particular. In spite of this, I argue that Comte's over all ventures can be seen at three important levels. In the first more general and broad level, it could be argued that Comte was theorizing about the overall civilizational trajectories through which the Western societies have undergone. Here, apart from this abstract and general tendency of Comte's theory (rather "laws") of civilization, he explored and reviewed the overall conditions of societies like America, Holland, Germany, England, France, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. It is, therefore, indeed true that Comte was addressing North America and Europe, which are generally

considered to make up the West. Comte was, however, definitely aware that his study incorporated the entire Europe. This can be then seen as a mesolevel theoretical-and-practical orientation of Comte's focus and study. He specifically mentioned that,

The observations which I have to make on this subject are applicable to all European societies, which have, in fact, all undergone a common disorganization, though in different degrees, and with various modifications, and which cannot be separately organized, however, they may be for a time restrained (Comte, 1890; Vol. II, pp.3-4).

Yet, again, the empirical foundation (and observation) of Comte's study of the evolution of civilization was principally drawn from a specific section (but also the larger and important parts) of Europe. He went on to mention, that he was studying Western European societies and that they primarily included five countries ("the five great nations"). These were France, Germany, Italy, England, and Spain¹⁹⁷. In his own words, he pointed out,

That we must confine our analysis to a single social series; that is, we must study exclusively the development of the most advanced nations, not allowing our attention to be drawn off to other centers of any independent civilization which has, from any cause whatever, been arrested, and left in an imperfect state. It is the selectest part, the vanguard of the human race, that we have to study; the greater part of the white race, or the European nations, even restricting ourselves, at least in regard to modern times, to the nations of Western Europe (Ibid, p.151).

All of "the five great nations" are similar in some respects and different ("immensely different") in some other respect. To begin with their shared traits, Comte believed that they could be considered to have constituted "after the middle ages, one single people" (Comte, 1890; Vol.II, p.307). They all were, on the one hand, "bound up together under the Catholic and feudal system", and on the other, they experienced comparable changes

¹⁹⁷ Similar list of countries are also posited to justify the nature of European civilization elsewhere (See, for instance, Guizot, 1887).

through time (Ibid). In this view, therefore, the five nations of Western Europe were “essentially homogeneous” (Ibid, p.409)¹⁹⁸. However, the difference principally lies in the way they found themselves in the evolution of their respective socio-economic, political, industry, art, philosophy, science, and other conditions. Of the five nations, France “is pointed out by all evidence as the chief seat of social reorganization . . . scientific and aesthetic evolution . . . industry . . . and national unity” (p.409). The second in Comte’s gradation of Western Europe is Italy. This is, Comte noted, “in spite of her want of national unity” (Ibid). The remaining nations are, based on the degree of their social organization, scientific, industrial, and aesthetic evolution, and national unity, Germany, England, and finally, Spain (See esp. Ibid, pp.409-411).

At the third, micro level, it can be seen that even though Comte’s law of social progress, advancement, and civilization have a broader scope for the West in general and Europe in particular, it nevertheless relied heavily on one of the countries of Western Europe, France. The focus on France not only justified on the ground that it full fills Comte’s scheme of progress and civilization, but also, and most importantly because France represented the ideal and model country and society among others in Europe. In this regard, he argued that,

I shall keep the French nation chiefly in view, not only because the revolutionary state has been most conspicuous in them, but because they are, in all important respects, better prepared, in spite of appearances than any other, for a true reorganization (Ibid, p.4).

In addition to the “essentially European” nature of European civilization, it is interesting to note that Guizot, much like Comte, viewed France as the center of Europe and model

¹⁹⁸ The same view of Europe and France is shared by his countrymen, Guizot. As I will be dealing with Guizot under the religio-philosophical trend in the study of western civilization, he believed, exactly like Comte, that “I say European civilization, because there is evidently so striking uniformity (unit'e) in the civilization of the different states of Europe, as fully to warrant this appellation. Civilization has flowed to them all from the sources so much alike-it is so connected in them all, notwithstanding the great differences of time, of place, and circumstances, by the same principles, and it so tends in them all to bring about the same results, that no one will doubt the fact of there being a civilization essentially European” (Guizot, 1887; p.13).

of other nations in the continent. Guizot, as Comte did, pointed out that “. . . without intending to flatter the country to which I am bound by so many ties, I cannot but regard France as the center, as the focus, of the civilization of Europe” (Guizot, 1887; p.14)¹⁹⁹. This is, of course, despite the fact that Guizot’s formulation of civilization is fundamentally different from Comte, at least in his approach to religion and its role therein. This is, in fact, one of the reasons why Guizot has been classified here in this research under the religiophilosophical trend in the study of Western civilization. In what follows, however, I will show the role and place of religion, particularly Christianity (Catholicism and Protestantism) in Comte’s theory of Western civilization.

Finally, as Comte carefully studied five centuries of change trajectories in European societies in particular and the West in general, particularly from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century, he was certain that modern Western civilization started in fourteenth century. He said,

. . . it is the opening of the fourteenth century that we must fix upon as the time when the organic industry of modern society began to assume a characteristic quality. All the chief tokens of civilization indeed concur in marking that era as the true origin of modern history (Ibid, p.307).

There are, however, some important considerations underpinning Comte’s insistence on the fourteenth century as a marker of modern Civilization, of Europe. Among other things, the fourteenth century was a period when Catholicism and popes started losing power in Europe, and this had its own consequences, such as the spontaneous increase in the “exercise of the right of free inquiry” in the subsequent centuries (Ibid, p.278). He observed that before this time, the Church had “universal authority” and/or “indefinite authority” (which, in its own right, had played significant role in the demise of Catholic Church’s authority). However, he argued, that “the extinction of the universal authority

¹⁹⁹ I will raise some points in relation to Guizot, Rousseau, and Comte’s view of civilization in general and European civilization in particular in the last chapter.

of the popes . . . [led to] the almost equal division of Europe, between Catholicism and Protestantism” (Emphasis mine, p.277).

The power of Catholicism was also experiencing, oppositions and protests, and thus crisis. This happened, according to Comte, along three ways: discipline, hierarchy (institutional), and lastly, dogma (anti-trinitarianism). All these were carried on by Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Socinus. Comte conceptualized this decomposition as “the three successive stages of decay of the old system” (p.282).

6.2.3. Religion in Comte’s Civilization

Comte, although like Freud and Tylor explicitly endorsed the preponderance of rationalism, observation, and empiricism (in both the making as well as understanding of civilization), his engagement with religion was uniquely different. I would like to frame Comte’s approach to religion (with a particular reference to civilization in general and Europe in particular) along two important arguments.

On the one hand, I argue that religion, whatsoever might be its content and form, make up the principal driving force and an undying ghost, at least subconsciously, constantly hunting every bold arguments and statements Comte made in his “Positive Philosophy”. This means, religion posited negatively or not, is one of the two major issues underpinning his “Positive Philosophy”. These are: religion, on the one hand, and progress, on the other. In fact, Cartesian dualism typically characterizes Comte’s system of philosophy²⁰⁰. In this regard, he deployed seemingly apparent binary oppositions, such as social “statics” and “dynamics”, “order” and “progress”, “practical and speculative life” and others that can be, in some ways, linked to Catholicism’s foundational principles (and of contradiction) of spirituality and temporality. While spirituality could be correlated to issues of order, temporality is closely linked with

²⁰⁰ As mentioned earlier, Comte’s close affiliates (resembling his positive philosophy), as himself mentioned them, are Galileo, Descartes, and Bacon.

socioeconomic, political, scientific, art, and philosophical, and institutional aspects, of progress.

Broadly speaking, it could be argued that religion, which he appraised under theological, fetish, polytheistic, monotheistic or fictitious stage played foundational role for Comte's progressively developing knowledge. In Comte's view,

the human mind, seeking the essential nature of beings, the first and final causes (the origin and purpose) of all effects,—in short, Absolute knowledge,—supposes all phenomena to be produced by the immediate action of supernatural beings (Comte, 1890; Vol.I, p.2).

This, for him, is the initial formative scene in the advent of more “progressive” knowledge. This, then, applies to “each branch of our knowledge”, and thus, making up Comte's law (Ibid, p.1). Similarly, the second, though partly progressive, phase in Comte's hierarchy of knowledge is the metaphysical stage. This phase, which, for Comte, represents “only a modification of the first”, is still under the greater influence of theology (Ibid). Even the last more “progressive” phase, positive or scientific, contains in itself the formative elements of religion. In this connection, he mentioned, “our most advanced sciences still bear very evident marks of the two earlier periods through which they have passed” (Ibid, p.3). Not only is, therefore, Comte's notion of knowledge started off from religion and remains vibrant thoroughly; but also his theory of civilization in general and European civilization, in particular is closely posited with religion, particularly Catholicism and Protestantism. Comte's take on religion, particularly in the context of European modern civilization will be addressed hereafter.

Although Comte like most historic-empirical trend theoreticians, such as Tylor, Freud, Spengler, and Rousseau, thought the advent of civilization marks the withering away of religion, he nevertheless credited religion, Catholic Christianity in particular, for many things. He argued that the teachings of Catholic Church did a lot of important services, particularly for Europe. Among other things, unlike the “savage patriotism of the ancients” (Greeks and Romans), Catholicism helped establish strong sense of “social morality” in Europe. In specific terms, this, among other things, included the provision

of “brotherly affection”, “championed universal brotherhood”, “advancement of international law”, and most importantly, “bringing all parts of Europe into connection” (Comte, 1890; Vol.II, pp.242-243). In addition, historically, he underlined that we must not forget “the vastness of the moral regeneration accomplished by Catholicism in the Middle Ages” (Ibid, p.244). Furthermore, in the later periods, the social mission of Catholicism might have restrained intellectual progresses, but it remains that the consequences were very foundational for the subsequent emergence of modern civilization. In his own words,

It may appear that the supreme importance of the social mission of Catholicism could not but restrict the development of its intellectual characteristics: but the consequences of those attributes make up our present experience; and all that has happened in human history, from the Catholic period till now, is an unbroken chain of connection which links our own period with that cradle of modern civilization (Ibid).

Apart from the sort of “unintended functional service” to modern civilization, Catholicism indeed helped pave a way for intellectual growth, and thus, the onset of more refined modern civilization. Accordingly, the role of religion is, in spite of various contradictions Comte observed, two fold, anticipated and unanticipated. Now, in defending the direct contribution of Catholicism in particular and Christianity (“Christendom”) in particular, he pointed out that,

Through the efforts of Catholicism to prove its superiority to former systems, even the great philosophical principle of human progression began to arise throughout Christendom,—however inadequate in strength or quality. When each individual thus became empowered to judge of human actions, personal and collective, by a fundamental doctrine, the spirit of social discussion which distinguishes modern periods began to arise (Ibid, p.246).

Another aspect of Catholic Church's contribution to the advent of European modern civilization is its later day's separation between spiritual and temporal powers²⁰¹. Particularly, during the Middle Ages, Comte argued, Catholicism "gave the first worthy reception to the most advanced part of Greek philosophy" (Ibid). Not only receptive of Greek philosophy, but also Comte credited Catholicism for facilitating scientific spirit, and in that, "the scientific influence of Catholicism was equally favorable" (Ibid). In other words, Comte believed that Christian monotheism "was of immense service in disengaging the scientific spirit from the trammels imposed by polytheism" of the previous centuries (Ibid, p.246).

²⁰¹ Although, again, Comte argued that this very idea of separation between spiritual and temporal powers was itself the cause of the decline. In his own words, he made it clear that "The separation between the spiritual and temporal power was itself a cause of decline, both from the want of conformity of the existing, civilization, and from the imperfection of the only existing philosophy (Comte, 1890; Vol. II, p.256).

6.3. Concluding Remarks

Of the many researches and studies into Western civilization, theories falling under historic-empirical trend and approach are abundantly available. The present chapter generally explored the works of Freud, Tylor, Rousseau, Spengler, and Comte. Of these, again, I have just closely examined the works of Spengler and Comte. Unlike the other two major trends, Historic-empirical trend emphasizes spatiotemporal factors more than any other issues, particularly those religion-related ones. Although religion is posited, sometimes constituting the core of the discussion, in their study of civilization, most agree on the idea that civilization finally conquers and prevails (over religion) while religion withers away. Accordingly, the essential characteristic feature of this trend is its inclination to down play the role of religion. For instance, both Spengler and Rousseau felt that the advent of civilization necessarily entails the undermining of religion, religiosity, spirituality, and morality. Freud, Comte, and E. B. Tylor, including the anthropologist J. Frazer, on the other hand, believed in the primitiveness and backwardness of religion, and as such, reason and intellectual progress are invoked as the only energies of the future of human civilization. Except for Rousseau and Spengler, most historic-empirical trend-theories took evolution as axiomatic in their respective theoretical formulations.

Oswald Spengler felt that since Western culture stepped into civilization in the 19th century, money, “megalopolitanism”, atheism, “cosmopolitanism” and individualism are typically characterizing Western civilization. Being in its winter age, the culture age of Western civilization is already left behind and now is followed by irreligiosity and non-spirituality. Spengler, like Rousseau, argued that the nature and form of the relation between religion and civilization are inverse, the advent of the later necessarily entails the necessary demise of the former. This, for Spengler, is what is behind the decline of Western civilization. August Comte, on the other hand, applauded the advent of science and rationalism, which has historically undermined religion in the West. Unlike Spengler’s depressive attitude about the advent of civilization in the west (for it entails, at the same time, the increasingly diminishing role of culture in general and religion, in

particular), Comte celebrated Modern European civilization. Although he admitted that religion, particularly Catholicism played some roles, it had to give ways to science, philosophy, art, and intellectual progress. He believed that as civilization is essentially stood for progress, religion was essentially order-oriented and, as such, retrogressive. Finally, it would be worth noting that while Spengler dated the beginning of Western civilization in the nineteenth century, Comte fixed the origin of Modern European civilization in the fourteenth century.



CHAPTER SEVEN

THE RELIGIOPHILOSOPHICAL TREND: GUIZOT AND JASPERS

In the study of Western civilization, the historic-empirical trend and approach remain as the most common and dominant trend. The other important trend in the study of Western civilization is religiophilosophical trend and approach. Unlike the works of Spengler and Comte, theories, which will be dealt under religiophilosophical trend, display various characteristics that make them different. As noted above, Spengler's theory of civilization, particularly his study of Western civilization is nature deterministic and follows a determinable life course, and thus, dictated by inevitable laws (of birth, growth, decline, and death).

The same things, largely, can be found in the works of Comte, who argued that civilization goes through three stages and this progress is appraised as intellectual and moral progress. In both case, however, religion has been found to contradict the very essence of civilization. While Spengler believed that the "essence of civilization is irreligion", Comte believed that the metaphysical and theological stages (the Catholic Christian Church and Protestantism in particular) as essentially retrogressive. In fact, Comte believed that it is a positive society, scientific society with positive philosophical outlook (rationalism, observation, and experiment) towards which civilization is marching. Nevertheless, thinkers like E. B. Tylor, S. Freud, J. Frazer, and J. J. Rousseau also equally echoed this form of relation between religion and civilization.

There is, however, another group of thinkers whom I will be addressing shortly under religiophilosophical trend, who present a relatively different reading of Western civilization. Unlike the historic-empirical trend, thinkers in this trend show the preponderance of religion, religious ideas, institutions, and philosophical ideas in their conception of Western civilization in general and European civilization, in particular.

Although historical and philosophical elements are still present, their conception of civilization is highly centered on religion or issues that can be broadly related to religion, such as soul, morality, faith, and spirituality. In the following subsequent sections, therefore, I deal with the works of, inter alia, F. Guizot, and K. Jaspers.



7.1. Francois Guizot (1783-1874)

Francois Pierre Guillaume Guizot was a French historian (church historian, apologist), politician (various minister positions-including education), devoted Protestant and head of Protestant Church (in Normandy, France). His popularity in civilization studies is primarily due to his work on “The History of civilization”. There he argued that civilization is a “fact” that needs to be studied like any other phenomenon (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.5)²⁰². Although the philosophy of history appears to be the context within he studied European civilization, he emphasized two major foundational principles and constituents of civilization, social and individual. Even though the first tends to “outward”, socioeconomic and political, philosophical, art, science and others, the second embraces “inward” aspects, of “morality, faith, virtue, Providence, God, or more generally, religion. Of the three important elements of European civilization, either in its primitive, metamorphosis or modern conditions, religion and morality assume strong constitutive effects.

The remaining two are the experiences from the decayed Roman Empire and the Germans or Barbarians, of Goths and Franks, who attacked the empire. The proceeding discussion closely analyzes three core aspects of Guizot’s study of civilization in general and European civilization, in particular. The first part closely engages Guizot’s conception of civilization; the second part defines what Guizot considers are the defining elements of European civilization; and finally, I conclude with his take on the nature and form of relation between religion and civilization in general, and Christianity and European civilization, in particular. The discussion mainly engages the three volumes of Guizot’s “*The History of Civilization: From the Fall of the Roman Empire to the French Revolution*” (Vol. I-III, 1887, translated by William Hazlitt).

²⁰² In another place, he mentioned that “Civilization is one of these facts; a genera, hidden, complex fact; very difficult, I allow, to describe, to relate, but which none the less for that exists, which, none the less for that, has a right to be described and related” (Ibid, p.5).

7.1. 1. Civilization Defined

Guizot's conception of civilization can be seen at two levels. The first level limits the conception of civilization to philosophical, common sense, and popular understandings. The second level examines civilization in the context of a particular spatiotemporal contour, European civilization from the fourth up to the eighteenth century. The second is, therefore, the history of the development of European civilization. It should be noted, however, that the historical dimension is appraised as a close reflection of his philosophical conception of civilization taking outward and inward domains. As I will be dealing with European civilization (historical aspect) next, I here focus on Guizot's philosophical characterization of civilization. Moving forward, an in depth investigation of Guizot's writing will reflect important elements, characteristics, and conditions. Some of these include the necessity of individual or moral and social elements, conditional progress, Divine Providence, creative minorities, and unity of principles underpinning civilizations. While discussing the first two elements of civilization, he pointed out that,

Two facts, then, are comprehended in this great fact; it subsists on two conditions, and manifests itself by two symptoms: the development of social activity, and that of individual activity; the progress of society and the progress of humanity. Wherever the external condition of man extends itself, vivifies, ameliorates itself; wherever the internal nature of man displays itself with *lustre*, with grandeur; at these two signs, and often despite the profound imperfection of the social state, mankind with loud applause proclaims civilization²⁰³ (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.11).

Here in this note, it is not only the two core aspects of Guizot's conception of civilization are outlined, but also the nature of the interaction between the two. Although

²⁰³ It should be noted also that Guizot expressed these two dimensions and principles in different ways. In one place, for instance, he mentioned them as “. . . external and internal civilization, the history of society and the history of man, of human relations and of human ideas, political history and intellectual history” (Guizot, Vol. III, 1887; p.329). While the former ones pertain to the social aspect of civilization, the later ones are associated with the individual or moral aspect.

the two seem to interact two ways, the role of the inward, spiritual, religious, and Providence clearly dominate Guizot's over all theoretical formulation. He began with comparatively weighing the two commonly held academic attitudes about the nature of the interaction between the two elements of civilization. On the one hand, he observed that there are thinkers who held the view that "progress of the social state does not ameliorate, does not regenerate, in like manner, in a like degree, the moral, the internal state of man; that it is a false, delusive progress, the result of which is detrimental to morality, to man" (Ibid, p.13). It seems Guizot was writing with his countrymen in mind, J. J. Rousseau, who was of the view that the progress of manifest social conditions within civilization undermines faith and moral conditions of individuals. There are, on the other hand, those of whom Guizot called "friends of social development". Here no doubt that Guizot had his other countrymen A. Comte, in mind as typical representative of "the friends of social development". This group of thinkers, Guizot observed, argue that "the progress of society necessarily involves and carries with it the progress of morality; that when the external life is better regulated, the internal life is refined and purified" (Ibid).

Contrary to these one-sided views, what Guizot proposed was something different. He realized that the very obsession with the two aspects of civilization among thinkers in the field underscores the relative importance of the two. Furthermore, he argued that not only is civilization owes its existence to these two core factors, but also its crisis and disappearance is naturally tied to these core existential conditions. In this connection, he argued that,

If we interrogate history, properly so-called, if we examine what is the nature of the great crises of civilization, of those facts which, by universal consent, have propelled it onward, we shall constantly recognize one or other of the two elements I have just described. They are always crises of individual or social development, facts which have changed the internal man, his creed, his manners, or his external condition, his position in his relation with his fellows (Ibid, pp.11-12).

Accordingly, due to these and the following three important considerations, he decided to approach the two elements of civilization as complimentary constituents, each necessarily requiring the other. This view of civilization, he believed, is justified by the natural instinctive convictions (“the instinctive belief of humanity”); the history of the world; and finally, by the very nature of the two elements (the inseparability as part of Providence’s grand scheme of things). Instinctively, the two elements of civilization are “closely connected together; that at sight of the one, man at once looks forward to the other” and it is “evidently, therefore, the instinctive belief of humanity, that the movements of civilization are connected the one with the other, and reciprocally produce the one the other” (Ibid, p.13). In terms of the history of the world, Guizot discovered that “We shall find that all the great developments of the internal man have turned to the profit of society; all the great developments of the social state to the profit of individual man” (p.14). It is interesting that in accounting for the historical inseparability of the two elements, Guizot invoked Providence. In this regard, he, for instance, underscored that,

The march of Providence is not restricted to narrow limits; it is not bound, and it does not trouble itself, to follow out to-day the consequences of the principle which it laid down yesterday. The consequences will come in due course, when the hour for them has arrived, perhaps not till hundreds of years have passed away; though its reasoning may appear to us slow, its logic is nonetheless true and sound. To Providence, time is as nothing . . . (p.14).

The third basis is related to what he called “the nature of things”. Here the inseparability of the two is appraised as something “we are infallibly led to the same result. There is no one who has not experienced this in his own case”. This generally entails the idea that how inward conditions set in motion changes that would accrue in the evolution of outward manifestations, and thus, social state. He substantiated this more clearly as:

When a moral change is operated in man, when he acquires an idea, or a virtue, or a faculty, more than he had before in a word, when he develops himself individually . . . As soon as a man acquires anything, as soon as

his being takes in his own conviction a new development, assumes an additional value, forthwith he attaches to this new development, this fresh value, the idea of possession; he feels himself impelled, compelled, by his instinct, by an inward voice, to extend to others the change . . . (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.15).

The second and third conditions, for taking a complimentary view of the two elements of civilization, are posited along with a close proximity to Divine Providence. To mention, in the context of the third condition with which he defended his complementarity thesis, an instance: Guizot employed what Toynbee later called “creative minorities” (used in different ways by different thinkers, such as Toynbee, Hodgson, Jaspers and etc) in his discussion. He wrote that,

We owe the great reformers solely to this cause; the mighty men who have changed the face of the world, after having changed themselves, were urged onward, were guided on their course, by no other want than this. So much for the alteration which is operated in the internal man; now to the other (Ibid)²⁰⁴.

Simply stated, the inward experience and change necessitate changes and progress at social levels. One of the ways in which he showed this happening is through what he called the role of “great reformers”, of spiritual nature, who were inwardly compelled to bring about social change at the macro level. Guizot, then, concluded that the “two elements of civilization are closely connected the one with the other”, and in that, he underlined that,

. . . it is possible they may have to undergo a thousand transformations, in order to regain each other ; but sooner or later they will rejoin each other: this is the law of their nature, the general fact of history, the instinctive faith of the human race (Ibid).

²⁰⁴ This may be related to his protestant ethic, of “experiencing God”.

Next to the inward and outward aspects of civilization, Devine Providence, and creative minorities, comes the idea of progress. Guizot made it clear at the very beginning that, in one way or another, civilization entails progress. He wrote that “The idea of progress, of development, appears to me the fundamental idea contained in the word, civilization” (p.9). In his own words, progress stood for “the perfecting of civil life, the development of society, properly so called, of the relations of men among themselves” (Ibid). Progress in the context of civilization, therefore, entails,

. . . the extension, the greatest activity, the best organization of the social relations: on the one hand, an increasing production of the means of giving strength and happiness to society; on the other a more equitable distribution, amongst individuals, of the strength (Ibid, p.10).

However, his view of progress is different from the way how other thinkers, such as Comte, conceived of progress. Unlike thinkers like Comte, Guizot is dissatisfied with progress only being confined to outward and social conditions. In fact, he felt “repugnant” about such characterization of progress and he raised a question that,

It is almost as if we asked: is the human species after all a mere ant-hill, a society in which all that is required is order and physical happiness, in which the greater the amount of labour, and the more equitable the division of the fruits of labour, the more surely is the object attained, the progress accomplished (p.10)²⁰⁵.

Guizot, relying more on common sense and “public opinion”, decided to view the progress of civilization as that which encompasses “. . . something more extensive, more complex, something superior to the simple perfection of the social relations, of social power and happiness” (Ibid). This is partly because the individual (moral and religious

²⁰⁵ If there is anyone who seem very close to such characterization would be Auguste Comte, see the preceding section for a detailed examination of Comte’s idea of civilization.

conditions) domain is a necessary precondition to Guizot's system of thought in general and civilization, in particular. This could be seen, more explicitly, in his response to the question of whether civilization has any end or not. He responded that societies may rise and fall, but the state of moral and spiritual human being is more than anything and transcendental. Guizot spoke of this in the mouth of M. Royer-Collard, who stated that,

Human societies are born, live, and die, on the earth; it is there their destinies are accomplished But they contain not the whole man. After he has engaged himself to society, there remains to him the noblest part of himself, those high faculties by which he elevates himself to God, to a future life, to unknown felicity in an invisible world We, persons individual and identical, veritable beings endowed with immortality, we have a different destiny from that of states (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.16)²⁰⁶.

Furthermore, in his assessment of the conditions of modern European civilization in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, he observed a trajectory of change, although real, it had caused many to think (I guess he may have J. J. Rousseau in mind) that it was destructive to human- individual and social conditions²⁰⁷. According to Guizot, three major changes took place in these two centuries. The first is the shift in the focus of intellectual enterprise from ideas to “dry scientific facts” and rationalism. The second concerns the social and public administration domain wherein governments, in their dealings with the public, moved from facts to ideas and principles. The third change trajectory concerns the changing nature of the moral character of individuals (Guizot, Vol. II, 1887; pp.22-28). Thinkers whom he called “adversaries” posited that dry scientific pursuits caused human mind to be “dry, hard, narrow . . .” and that “This rigorous positive method, this scientific spirit, cramps, say they, the ideas, freezes up the imagination, takes from the understanding its breadth, its freedom, confines, materializes

²⁰⁶ Guizot continued by saying “I will add nothing to this . . . man inevitably asks himself whether all is exhausted, whether he has reached the end of all things? This, then, is the last, the highest of all those problems to which the history of civilization can lead” (Ibid, p.17).

²⁰⁷ Guizot believed, writing in the first half the nineteenth century, that European civilization has been progressing for fifteen centuries and this continues (from the point of writing the text onwards) (C.f.. Guizot Vol.I, 1887; p.26).

it” (Ibid, pp.23-24). However, although he was well aware of these changes and progresses (and in fact, defended these conditions, see, for instance, p.25) in Europe, he was worried that the third was a real problem.

While the first two changes are acceptable for progress, for they constitute the very origin of civilization, the later change in the nature of morality, faith and virtue could pave the way for the crisis. He realized that modern European civilization had “imposed difficulty up on moral devotion and energy” (Ibid, p. 26). He was also aware that Modern European civilization was faced with “two grave dangers, pride, and indolence; we may conceive an over-confidence in the power and success of the human mind, in our own enlightenment, and, at the same time, suffer ourselves to become enervated by the luxurious ease of our condition” (Ibid, p.19). Furthermore, he complained that in the nineteenth century that “the principles of devotion and energy which were in action in past times are now without effect, for they have lost our confidence” (p.27). To remedy this, thus, he proposed a greater degree of complementarity among science, virtue, and morality. He said,

Science is a beautiful thing, undoubtedly, and of itself well worth all the labor that man may bestow upon it; but it becomes a thousand times grander and more beautiful when it becomes a power; when it becomes the parent of virtue (Ibid, p.27).

At the end, the other important aspect of Guizot’s conception of civilization is the unity of principles underpinning civilizations, except European civilization. He pointed out that civilizations that preceded, such as those in Asia, Greek, and Roman civilizations had their own unique foundations and “it pervades them”. This unity of civilizations, for Guizot, “seem to have emanated from a single fact, from a single idea; one might say that society has attached itself to a solitary dominant principle, which has determined its institute” (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.22). He discovered that Egyptian and Indian civilizations were based on a theocratic principle. This principle was reproduced in community life, literature, “works of the mind”, customs, manner, ideas, and

monuments. He also found a similar degree of unity of civilization in the area of Asia Minor and Syria. He, therefore, underlined that “when we contemplate ancient civilizations, we find them stamped with a singular character of unity in their institutions, their ideas, and their manners; a sole, or, at least, a strongly preponderating force governs and determines all (Ibid, p.22).

On top of this, in the history of these ancient civilizations “The coexistence and the combat of different principles have never, in the history of these peoples, been more than a transitory crisis, an accident”²⁰⁸ (Ibid, p.23). All these conditions that are closely appraised under the unity of principles underpinning ancient civilizations, of Greek, Rome, India, and Egypt, had its own consequences. For the Greek civilization, the unity and simplicity of its principle garnered “a wonderfully rapid development; never have any people unfolded itself in so short a period, with such brilliant effect” while for Egyptian and Indian civilization the consequence was different. In these later civilizations, Guizot argued, due to the unity of the principle of civilization “society has fallen into a stationary condition. Simplicity has brought monotony; the country has not been destroyed, society has continued to exist, but motionless, and as if frozen” (Ibid). However, this does not apply to European civilization. Among other things, he argued that European civilization was “neither narrow, exclusive, nor stationary” (p.27). As I will be addressing shortly below, there were three, instead of one, foundations to European civilization, looked either in its origin, metamorphosis or modern stages. In yet other words, it is not a single idea or principle that underpinned European civilization, but, in fact, to the contrary, the chaotic nature of its origins and subsequent developments that characterized it. Interestingly, Guizot appraised this condition as the advantage of European civilization over other “ancient” civilizations. This meant that European civilization utilized, offered, and cherished diversity, freedom, and liberty of ideas. In this connection, he pointed out that,

²⁰⁸ Guizot appears to be blind here to the degree of “tolerance” and “coexistence” displayed within multiple racial, cultural, and religious societies under Islamic civilization, at least in the context of the Ottoman Empire.

Whilst, in other civilizations, the exclusive, or, at least, the excessively preponderating dominion of a single principle, of a single form, has been the cause of tyranny, in modern Europe, the diversity of elements, which constitute the social order, the impossibility under which they have been placed of excluding each other, have given birth to the freedom which prevails in the present day (Guizot, Vol. II, 1887; p.26).

For Guizot, however, this does not diminish the foundational-importance of religion, in some forms and ways, in the advent of European civilization. For one of the three foundational constituents of European civilization is religion, and as I will be addressing after this, it was Christianity that essentially gave rise to Europe as a civilization. As Guizot argued, there was not Europe before the advent of Christianity, and it was Christianity, for him, that brought together Christians in its cause, such as the Crusade in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It was this occasion that initially established an order of relationships among different cultures, histories, and peoples of Europe.

7.1.2. European Civilization: Origins, Foundations, and Stages

After having settled his conception of civilization, relying on common sense, popular, and philosophical understandings, Guizot went one-step ahead to support it with historical evidences, of European civilization. He did this through three important ways. Firstly, he discovered that there were three foundational contexts and elements that makeup Europe. Secondly, he observed that the emergence of European Civilization owes to various changing circumstances, dating from the fourth to the eighteenth centuries encompassing three developmental stages. Finally, he conceived of Europe largely as a reflection and expansion of the “French experience”.

To begin with the first, he observed that there were three important conditions that gave rise to European civilization. Of these, the first was closely related to the various experiences and institutions from the declining Roman Empire (also used as “Roman civilization”) in the fourth and fifth centuries. In his view, the cradle of Roman Empire

was predominantly “municipal form and spirit” and “town confinement”. In its demise also, the Roman civilization “had returned to its first condition; towns had constituted it; it dissolved, and towns remained” (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.33). With the advent of European civilization, however, the municipal system of the Roman civilization was then “bequeathed to modern Europe” (p.34).

There were also additional elements that Rome had “transmitted” to European civilization. These were: “the idea of the empire”; “the idea of imperial majesty”; and “a general and uniform civil legislation, the idea of absolute power, of sacred majesty, of the emperor, the principle of order and subjection” (Ibid, pp.32-34). In another place, he put it in a slightly different manner: “the Roman world, when it broke up, bequeathed to the future the wrecks of three great facts—central sole power, empire, and absolute royalty” (Guizot, Vol. III, 1887; p.193).

The second, and I argue the most foundational, element in the advent of European civilization is Christianity and Christian Church. Guizot took the position that two features characterized the emergence of Christianity under the shadow of the slowly dying Roman Empire. On the one hand, Christianity in its first appearance (and “during its first stages of existence”) was a cause of “crisis” for the Roma Empire. During its initial moments, it did not challenge the existing social order; rather, Guizot observed, “it announced aloud, that it would not meddle with the social state; it ordered the slave to obey his master; it attacked none of the great evils, the great wrongs of the society of that period” (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.12). Yet, the major part of the crisis is related to the way Christianity changed “the internal man, creeds, and sentiments; because it regenerated the moral man, the intellectual man” (Ibid). This view of Guizot, though rejected by the anthropologist James Frazer, was later supported by Arnold Toynbee²⁰⁹.

The other condition characterizing Christianity was how it evolved within the Roman Empire. In the periods between the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century, Christianity moved from an “individual belief” to a social system and institutions. This

²⁰⁹ See the introductory section of A. Toynbee (and particularly his debate with J. Frazer).

was how what Guizot called the “Christian Church” was developed. This is not Christianity or any other church, but of institutions, governance, “hierarchy of clergy”, “means of independent action”, “provincial, national and general councils”, and “the custom of debating in common upon the affairs of society”²¹⁰ (Ibid, pp.32-33). Guizot, then, concluded that “Had Christianity been, as in the earlier times, no more than a belief, a sentiment, an individual conviction, we may believe that it would have sunk amidst the dissolution of the empire” (p.33). Accordingly, the survival of Christianity as faith and institution was due to what it had devolved in the form of Christian Church.

The Christian Church also represented the community of Christian believers in the decaying Roman Empire, of the late fourth and early fifth centuries. He characterized them as “a society strongly organized and strongly governed”²¹¹ (p.34). The Christian Church as social system and society of believers, according to Guizot, was responsible for two important actions: it helped save the Christian religion from the already falling Roman Empire and it was also able to conquer the Barbarians (Goths and Franks) who came to destroy the empire and Christianity. In addition, as noted above, it was the Christian Church, which retained the municipal and administrative systems of the Roman Empire and transmitted it to Europe. In doing so, Guizot claimed, Christianity and Christian Church were playing the role of “the bond, the medium, and the principle of civilization between the Roman and barbarian worlds” (Ibid). It was after this period, especially in the middle ages, that Bishops and clergy assumed greater power and influence in the countries and societies which will subsequently makeup Europe, in the absence of a centralized system. Guizot observed that they were able to devolve “the municipal-ecclesiastic system” wherein “the preponderance of the clergy in the affairs of the city succeeded that of the ancient municipal magistrates, and preceded the organization of the modern municipal corporations” (p.37). It was through this way that

²¹⁰ It should not be confused with Toynbee’s “Universal Church” (which, in the words of Guizot, rather meant “popdom”). This later (Universal Church) was used by Guizot much earlier than Toynbee (See, for instance, Guizot, Vol.III, 1887; p.190).

²¹¹ This, again, is related to what Toynbee called “Creative minorities” who came out of the “internal proletariat” within the “Universal Church”. By the same token, Toynbee’s “external proletariat” are the Barbarians of Guizot (and perhaps to others as well). There is a substantial degree of correspondence of ideas between Toynbee and Guizot. I will address this in the last chapter.

“from that epoch, it powerfully assisted in forming the character and furthering the development of modern civilization” (Ibid).

Next to Christianity and the legacies of Roman Empire, it was the Barbarians who played an important contribution to the advent of European civilization. Although much less determinative in its role as compared to the first two elements, it had nevertheless helped by instilling a sense of individuality, freedom, and liberty. Understandably, these characters are by no means distinguishable from the very psychological and cultural attributes of what came to be commonly identified as barbarism. It was in the fifth century when already “the principles of civilization which Europe derived from the church and from the Empire” that the Barbarians found the Roman world (Ibid, p.39). Guizot pointed out that in their encounter with the Roman world they came with their barbaric characters:

the pleasure of individual independence; the pleasure of enjoying oneself with vigour and liberty, amidst the chances of the world and of life; the delights of activity without labour; the taste for an adventurous career, full of uncertainty, inequality, and peril. Such was the predominating sentiment of the barbarous state (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.40).

Of these characters, the “love of independence” was “a noble and moral sentiment” that they introduced into European civilization. According to him, this was something new to the Roman world, Christian Church, and “almost all ancient civilizations” (Ibid, p.41). Yet, this was not the only contribution that Barbarians made to the European civilization. A “spirit of military clientship” accompanied their love of independence and individuality. This spirit, for Guizot, helped establish “bond” between individuals and warriors, and this was so “without destroying the liberty of each”, and this bond functioned with a “hierarchical subordination”. This then, he argued, gave birth to aristocratic organizations, and in the course of time, “became feudalism” (pp.40-41). It was this way that these two elements that came “from the barbarians; it is from their manners that . . . passed into ours” (p.42). To summarize the three elements I have discussed so far: the institutional legacies of the Roman Empire; Christianity and

Christian Church; and finally, military spirit (and organization) and independence that make up the formative building blocks of European civilization.

The second important way through which Guizot saw the emergence of European civilization was how it evolved since the fourth century. European civilization went through three marked historical periods: primitive, metamorphosis, and modern. The primitive period (also called “the periods of origins”, “the periods of formation”) of European civilization covered the time elapsed between the fifth and twelfth centuries. In the years between these centuries, European civilization established a network among feudalism, Christianity, and Christian Church, and boroughs. I have dealt with the first two above, but boroughs came to have a significant role in the eleventh and twelfth centuries²¹². This period, he observed, was very important in the history of boroughs in Europe because it was then that they started “their development . . . the institution bearing all its fruit” (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.126). Apart from their struggle against upper classes and lords (which, according to Guizot was an important contribution, as he noted “Europe was born from the struggle of the various classes of society”), it was from two other sources related to Boroughs that European civilization benefited (p.138). They were “on the one hand, from the change introduced into the social condition of the burghers, and on the other, from their internal government and their communal condition, that all their influence upon modern civilization originated” (Ibid, p.129).

By the end of the twelfth century, therefore, Europe had already possessed “all the great elements of European civilization”. These were, again, Feudal aristocracy, Boroughs, and Christianity. In this primitive age of European civilization, Christianity came to recognize and strengthen the division between temporal and spiritual powers, and championed the “liberty of conscience”. The Boroughs made their manners, struggles, and associations available to the service of European civilization. Feudalism, as its originator, Barbarians, sustained and relayed their sentiment of individual independence to Europe (Ibid, pp.145-146). In short, Guizot put it as:

²¹² Boroughs were mostly working class people, primarily based in towns, and were church affiliated (characterized by “timidity” and “humility”). Guizot examined their struggles with various classes and other experiences in the different parts of Europe between the 11th and 12th centuries (c.f.Guizot, Vol.I, 1887, pp. 125-144).

From the fifth to the twelfth century, society contained all that I have described. It possessed kings, a lay aristocracy, a clergy, burghers, laborers, religious and civil powers in a word, the germs of everything which is necessary to form a nation and a government, and yet there was neither government nor nation (Ibid, p.149).

The second stage in the development of European civilization was a period of “metamorphosis”. This stage encompassed the years between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. According to Guizot, the second period was “ a time of essay, of trial, of 'groping; the various elements of the social order drew near each other, combined, and, as it were, felt each other, without the power to bring forth anything general, regular, or durable” (p.149). As the chaotic conditions characterized the different parts of Europe, it was also the period wherein one of the most defining experiences of Europe took place. It was by the end of the eleventh and throughout the thirteenth century, that Crusade-war took place. It was because of this war, for the first time in European history, the whole of Europe joined. Guizot continued, “Previously to the crusades, Europe had never been excited by one sentiment, or acted in one cause; there was no Europe” (Ibid). In this crusade, “all the Christian nations engaged in it. Nothing like it had yet been seen”²¹³ (p.149). The effect of the crusade was also felt within the nations that make up the Christen Roman world which is now slowly developing into Europe. In this connection, he pointed out that,

just as the crusades form a European event, so in each country do they form a national event. All classes of society were animated with the same impression, obeyed the same idea, abandoned themselves to the same impulse. Kings, lords, priests, burghers, countrymen, all took the same part, the same interest in the crusades. The moral unity of nations was shown a fact as novel as the European unity (Ibid, p.149).

²¹³ It is interesting to note here, like the Twentieth century Huntington’s Clash of Civilizations thesis, Guizot believed that “Since the end of the seventh century, Christianity had been struggling against Mahommedanism; it had conquered it in Europe after being dangerously menaced; it had succeeded in confining it to Spain. Thence also it still constantly strove to expel it” and the crusades “were the continuation, the zenith of the grand struggle which, had been going on for four centuries between Christianity and Mahommedanism” (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; pp.151-152).

Due to this significant implication, Guizot claimed, the crusade presented itself in Europe as “the heroic event of modern Europe”. In addition to unifying Europe, the crusade in the metamorphosis period functioned as a means to achieve two purposes. On the one hand, countries of Europe had the exposure to meet other cultures (in addition to encountering “Mohammedan civilization” and “mosluman”), through travels and visits, and this in the processes “enfranchised” mind and “the extension of idea”, and on the other, “the aggrandizement of existences”. Furthermore, due to the crusade “a large sphere opened to the activity of all kind” and “they produced at once a greater degree of individual liberty and of political unity”. It was also this period that European civilization “brought” in (or “directly imported from the East”) compass, printing, and gunpowder, which were already “known in the East” (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.160)²¹⁴. In short, Guizot summarized the role of the crusade in the transition from “metamorphosis” to modern European civilization as:

They [*Crusaders*] drew European society from a very straightened track, and led it into new and infinitely more extensive paths; they commenced that transformation of the various elements of European society into governments and peoples, which is the character of modern civilization (Addition mine, Vol.I, 1887; p.160).

However, this period was also characterized by chaos and stagnation in many places. The period after crusade was characterized by a situation wherein elements of primitive European civilization, such as “Royalty, nobility, clergy, bourgeoisie, all the elements of social order seem to turn, in the same circle, equally incapable of progress or repose”. It did not stop here, many of them “make attempts of all kinds, but all fail; they attempt to settle governments, and to establish public liberties; they even attempt religious reforms, but nothing is accomplished nothing perfected”. Due to these conditions, Guizot concluded, “If ever the human race has been abandoned to a destiny, agitated and yet

²¹⁴ Guizot also addressed additional issues as well, but since my purpose here in this discussion is only to show the advent of “European identity” (or more broadly “European” civilization) and particularly the role Christianity assumed in this evolution, I will not go far beyond this (For a further discussion, however, the second half of the first volume can be consulted).

stationary, to labour incessant, yet barren of effect, it was between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries” (Ibid, pp.148-149).

When we move on to modern European civilization, what we find is many of the elements of primitive and “metamorphosis” European civilization undergoing changes. Of these changes, the loss of Christian Church’s temporal power due to the rising monarchy is one. By the same token, in the centuries leading to the sixteenth century, the “nobility, the clergy, and the burghers, all these particular classes and forces, now only appear in a secondary rank” (Ibid, p.147). For Guizot, the sixteenth century is also an important turning point mainly because it was then the earlier “feudalism, the boroughs, and the clergy . . . we see them tending to approach each other, to reunite, and form themselves into a general society, into a nation and a government” (p.196). Besides, it was precisely then when modern society “really commenced”. Apart from this massive transformation, once the preparation for the centralization of Europe was done in the 15th century, it was realized in the next two consecutive years. By this time, Europe resembled a machine, for Guizot, with a higher degree of interconnection and unity²¹⁵. In his own words,

Conceive a great machine, of which the idea resides in a single mind, and of which the different pieces are confined to different workmen, who are scattered, and are strangers to one another; none of them knowing the work as a whole, or the definitive and general result to which it concurs, yet each executing with intelligence and liberty, by rational and voluntary acts, that of which he has the charge²¹⁶ (Ibid, p.197).

Finally, Guizot’s study of European history, culture and civilization cannot be attempted without the necessary and specific reference to France (and thus may be styled as

²¹⁵ Guizot was cautious in his claim for unity in European civilization in the subsequent periods. He made it clear that “. . . this unity is only visible in general actions and grand results . . . [and] when we quit general facts and wish to look into particulars, the unity vanishes, the diversities again appear, and in the variety of occurrences one loses sight of both causes and effects . . .” (Emphasis mine, Guizot, Vol. II, 1887; p.10).

²¹⁶ This was not, however, without the implied and expressed presence of religion, Christianity, or divine providence. The upcoming section furthers this point.

“French Experience”). It may appear highly exaggerated, but if there is any uncontested recurrent theme and fact addressed in his three volumes, it is how French society, culture, and civilization gave fundamental shape to what came to be of Europe and European civilization. Interestingly, this “French exceptionalism” was not something unique to Guizot, but also shared largely by another French thinker, August Comte²¹⁷. However, what makes Guizot different is the fact that he went so far as to claim that “French civilization” was “the most complete, the most faithful image of European civilization in the aggregate” (Vol. II, 1887; p.32). Now, a close examination of the three volumes would reveal at least two major reasons behind Guizot’s French exceptionalism. For one thing, unlike all the nations of Europe, it was in France where the two core principles and the three foundational elements of European civilization gathered and perfected, before they went on to conquer Europe (and thus assume European civilization). In this connection, he argued that,

. . . we have seen that when the civilizing ideas and institutions which have taken their rise in other lands, have sought to extend their sphere, to become fertile and general, to operate for the common benefit of European civilization, they have been necessitated to undergo, to a certain extent, a new preparation in France; and it has been from France, as from a second native country, that they have gone forth to the conquest of Europe. There is scarcely any great idea, any great principle of civilization, which, prior to its diffusion, has not passed in this way through France (Vol. I, 1887; p. 3).

Similarly, compared to others in Europe, the two principles of civilization fairly interacted to make progress possible in France. In this regard, he posited, “the intellectual and social developments have never failed each other. Here society and man have always progressed and improved” (Guizot, Vol.II, 1887; p.18). Furthermore, it was in France, much earlier than others, where European civilization synthesized elements from “the Roman world, the Christian world, and the Germanic world; antiquity,

²¹⁷ See A. Comte’s view of “European civilization” under the historic-empirical trend.

Christianity, and barbarism” (Guizot, Vol.III, 1887; p.192). The second factor was that France was able to achieve moral, national, and political unity in its march for civilization much earlier than others in Europe. Considering these two factors and conditions, Guizot gave France the status of the “most civilized” of all nations in Europe, followed by England, Germany, Italy, and Spain (Vol. II, 1887; p.16). The inclusion of Spain in terms of civilization (and its contribution to European civilization) is almost negligible²¹⁸. Guizot’s reason was that,

Neither great minds nor great events have been wanting in Spain; understanding and human society have at times appeared there in all their glory ; but these are isolated facts, cast here and there throughout Spanish history, like palm-trees on a desert. The fundamental character of civilization, its continued and universal progress, seems denied in Spain, as much to the human mind as to society. There has been either solemn immobility, or fruitless revolutions. Seek one great idea, or social amelioration, one philosophical system or fertile institution, which Spain has given to Europe; there are none such: this nation has remained isolated in Europe; it has received as little from it as it has contributed to it. I should have reproached myself, had I wholly omitted its name; but its civilization is of small importance in the history of the civilization of Europe (Ibid, pp.17-18).

Comte, like Guizot, also classified countries of Europe in the advent of European civilization. Except for Italy, Germany, and England, Comte’s two of European countries remained the same as Guizot, and as such, France remained as the most civilized while Spain became the least in the list. Comte’s civilizational hierarchy begins with France, and then goes through Italy, Germany, England, and ends in Spain. This condition of Spain may need to be explored further in case there are other factors behind this characterization of Spain (as a least civilized and least contributor to European civilization), for instance, the Spanish close to eight centuries of Islamic experience.

²¹⁸ He mentioned that he included Spain only out of “consideration and respect for a noble and unhappy nation, than from necessity” (Ibid)

7.1.3. Christianity and European Civilization

In the last two parts addressing Guizot's study of civilization, attempts have been made to show the relative preponderance of religion and related ideas, institutions, and experiences. "Christian Church", Christian society, Providence, Soul, morality, God and related other concepts reappear throughout the three volumes. In addition to being used and recycled, I argue that they (religion in general and Christianity, in particular) also constitute the frame of reference within which he wrote about civilization, especially European civilization. To this end, I argue that there are at least three important ways and levels, albeit not mutually exclusive, through which Guizot situated religion in his study of civilization in general and European civilization, in particular. These are religion in general, Christianity, and Divine Providence. The first and more general way through which he approached the role of religion in the making of civilization was how it functioned in make civilization possible. Not only, thus, was religion taken as a springboard for civilization, but also religion and civilization assume a "subliminal affinity". It was with this seemingly axiomatic statement that he begun the first volume of his *The History of Civilization*:

At all times, in all countries, religion has assumed the glory of having civilized the people; sciences, letters, arts, all the intellectual and moral pleasures, have claimed a share in this glory; and we have deemed it a praise and an honor to them, when we have recognized this claim on their part. Thus, facts the most important and sublime in themselves, independently of all external result, and simply in their relations with the soul of man, increase in importance, rise in sublimity from their affinity with civilization (Vol. I, 1887; p.6).

The other important way through which he approached civilization, particularly European civilization, was in terms of how its specific thematic, philosophical, and historical elements and conditions embodied Christianity. Of the two philosophical foundations of Guizot's conception of civilization was the individual, inward, moral, or

intellectual aspect. Even though he employed these four interchangeably, it was nevertheless with the specific and necessary reference to religion in general and Christianity, in particular, that he framed them. Put differently, the four were various, and sometimes nuanced, expressions of Christianity. This was also reflected in the “intellectual development of modern European civilization”. Of the two foundations of European intellectual development, Christianity (“Christian theology” and “religious polemics”) played a significant role, followed by “pagan philosophy” (“classical learning” and “ancient literature”) (Guizot, Vol.III, 1887; p.166).

Similarly, of the three principal foundations of European civilization was Christianity, followed by Roman and Barbarian legacies (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.78). However, I argued earlier that Christianity assumed more than merely one element in Guizot’s characterization and definition of European civilization. In fact, it could be argued that if it had not been for Christianity, Guizot’s thesis for Civilization in general and European civilization, in particular, would have essentially become inadequate and meaningless. Interestingly, Guizot himself was conscious of this, and in that, he made it clear that “Had the Christian church not existed, the whole world must have been abandoned to purely material force. The church alone exercised a moral power. It did more: it sustained, it spread abroad the idea of a rule, of a law superior to all human laws . . .” (Vol.I, 1887; p.38). Accordingly, the role of what he called “Christian Church”, the Crusade experience, divine Providence, and so forth are very important²¹⁹. This is, however, in addition to Guizot being a practicing Protestant and head of the Protestant church in Normandy, France²²⁰.

Christian Church, according to Guizot, not only helped save Christianity from the falling Roman Empire and Barbarian invasion but also channeled them to the service of the emerging European civilization in the fourth and fifth centuries (Ibid, p.38). As the falling Roman Empire had political unity (and thus was in danger), Christian Church

²¹⁹ Providence is one of the most thoroughly used representations of Guizot’s Christian conviction in his engagement with civilization in general and European civilization, in particular. Accordingly, I will deal with it separately as the third way in which Guizot addressed the relation between religion and civilization in the context of European civilization.

²²⁰ It is noted in his biography that he made his wife, who was initially a catholic, convert to Protestantism (See, the preface in the first volume, Guizot, Vol. I, 1887).

was able to establish religious unity, which, in the subsequent periods, forged political unity. In this connection, he pointed out that,

This is a glorious and powerful fact, and one which, from the fifth to the thirteenth century, has rendered immense services to humanity. The mere fact of the unity of the church, maintained some tie between countries and nations that everything else tended to separate; under its influence, some general notions, some sentiments of a vast sympathy continued to be developed ; and from the very heart of the most frightful political confusion that the world has ever known, arose perhaps the most extensive and the purest idea that has ever rallied mankind, the idea of spiritual society; for that is the philosophical name of the church, the type which she wished to realize (Vol.II, 1887; p.239).

Apart from making religious unity possible following the fall of Roman Empire, it was Christian religious cause that actually brought to life Europe as we know it today in the world history. In his own words, it was in the crusade “the whole of Europe joined in them they were the first European event. Previously to the crusades, Europe had never been excited by one sentiment, or acted in one cause; there was no Europe” (Vol.I, 1887; p.149). For Guizot, the role of Christianity does not necessarily end here. He went on to point out that Christianity had an “immense service to humanity” (Vol.II; 1887; p.239) and its “. . . influence has been continued up to our own days [*nineteenth century*]” (Addition mine, Vol.I, 1887). And more generally, it is “The presence, then, of a moral influence, the maintenance of a divine law, and the separation of the temporal and spiritual powers, are the three grand benefits which the Christian church in the fifth century conferred upon the European world” (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.38). So far we have dealt with religion and civilization in general, and Christianity and European civilization, in particular. Now, I will turn to critically looking at the place of Providence, an important subset of Guizot’s Christianity, and how he related it to European civilization.

Guizot used Providence in various ways and multiple times in the three volumes. Essentially, however, Guizot used Providence to refer to God, supreme law, of “nature

of things”, God’s governance, or God’s plan. In defining and explaining the two core elements of civilization, for instance, he used Providence in such a way that it entailed God’s plan and the respective human thought, will, and action. In this connection, he argued that,

So is the plan of Providence upon the world executed by the hand of mankind; thus do the two facts which manifest themselves in the history of civilization co-exist; on the one hand, its fatality, that which escapes science and the human will and on the other, the part played therein by the liberty and intellect of man, that which he infuses of his own will by his own thought and inclination (Vol.I, 1887; p.197).

From the above note, a certain degree of divine providence (and fatalism) could be observed. Civilization is presented here as the outcome of divine providence realized, consciously or not, by the will and action of human beings on earth. The other way in which he deployed divine Providence was in terms of what he called the “Empire of truth” or “universal reason”. These expressions used, interchangeably, are directly related to what was mentioned earlier as supreme law and God’s plan. Again, since universal reason is of divine origin, it deserves “reverence” and since it is the ultimate end (of civilization), everything must be direct to-and-at it. In his own words, Guizot said,

The development of civilization must be accomplished hereafter under the simultaneous influence of a two-fold reverence; universal reason will be sought as the supreme law, the final aim; individual reason will be free, and invoked to develop itself as the best means of attaining to universal reason (Vol.II, 1887; p.243).

7.2. Karl Jaspers (1883 -1969)

Karl Theodore Jaspers was a German “Existentialist” philosopher and psychiatrist with significant influences in Christian theology. His inclusion in this research is, however, due to his later work on civilization and his “Axial Age”. Although much of his writings were mainly focused on major issues in philosophy, revelation, faith, and Christianity, he came to have significant influence in civilization studies through his “The Origin and Goal of History”. His writings, particularly, “The Origin . . .” unveils his close engagement with civilization studies, and he had perfectly tailored therein some of the most widely read thinkers in the field, such as Hegel, Spengler, Toynbee, Burckhardt, Alfred Weber, Weber, and others. Yet, it was Marshal G. Hodgson, it could be argued, who, in his “The Venture of Islam”, effectively utilized (and thus introduced Jaspers to debates in civilization studies) Jaspers’ Axial Age theory both in his scheme of world history and the spatiotemporal genesis of earlier civilizations in the Afro-Euro-Asia landmass and thereby paving the way for Jaspers’s ideas to have continuing importance in civilization studies.

Apart from this, a close evaluation of this book reveals that Jaspers was well aware of civilization theories proposed much earlier than him, especially those of Toynbee’s “A Study of History”; Spengler’s “The Decline of the West”; and others. Due to this encounter, I would argue, some of the conceptual tools and constructs (such as “universal empire”, “creative minorities”, “spirituality”, “prophets”,) he employed largely reflect a continuity of ideas and a certain degree of theoretical correspondences²²¹. This is, of course, despite the fact that had his own ways of dealing with the problem of civilization and how that related to the advent of Western civilization. Like all other thinkers examined in this dissertation, I will expose Jaspers’s view of civilization to three important questions. First, how did Jaspers define civilization, what are its elements and characteristics? The second question specifically addresses the origin and development Western civilization; and finally, the last question

²²¹ Jasper’s theoretical concepts and projections show marked resemblances with Toynbee and Marshal Hodgson. The following paragraphs note some of them.

concerns whether Jasper's idea of civilization in general and Western civilization, in particular, engages religion or religious ideas, institutions, and related other conditions and experiences? The following discussion will be organized around these major questions²²².

7.2.1. Civilization Defined: The Quintessence of “Axial Period”

Being a dedicated full-time philosopher, Jaspers's approach to civilization reflected his philosophical predispositions. Such notions as “Being”, “transcendence, the comprehensive”, and others reappear, and thus frame his discussion of civilization throughout the “The Origin and Goal of History”. This uniquely positioned Jaspers's approach to civilization in the broader civilization studies. Unlike many theories of civilization, Jaspers's nuanced theoretical stand, both in content and direction, took the individual(s) as a centripetal springboard. In other words, while many chose social and cultural (macro) level analysis to civilization, Jaspers preferred to approach it from an individual (meso-and-micro levels) perspective. Many of the constantly recycled themes of “The Goal of History” can be taken to justify this: the “Axial Period” (by-and-of “creative minorities”), “consciousness”, “faith” “spirituality”, “freedom”, “transcendence”, and a few others. Put in a slightly different way, Jaspers's study of civilization can be seen to involve two levels, a civilization of humanity, on the one hand, and Western civilization, on the other. Here the ideas of the “Axial Period” and his complete obsession with the “Unity of mankind” are very relevant. All in all, Jaspers's “Axial Period” and related ideas that underpin it constitute his original contribution to civilization studies, particularly Western civilization. In what follows, therefore, I attempt to reconstruct Jaspers's view of civilization on the basis of the aforementioned concepts and ideas.

²²² The forthcoming discussion mainly draws from Jaspers's “The Origin and Goal of History” (1953) and “Way to Wisdom” (1954).

Jaspers's discussion of civilization essentially begins with what he called the Axial Period. Although the events of the Axial period were already the cause of bewilderment before, for Jaspers, this period served as both theoretical as well as a conceptual anchor²²³. The period took place in the centuries between 800 and 200 BC, somewhere around 500 BC. In this period, for him, something transformative and "axial" happened in the world with borderless consequences, both in time and space. According to him, it was in this exceptional period when some of the most transformative human experiences took place. It was then when a few powerful figures of spirituality, religion, and philosophy emerged in the world. In his own words, he observed that,

The most extraordinary events are concentrated in this period, Confucius and Lao-tse were living in China, all the schools of Chinese philosophy came into being, including those of Mo-ti, Chuang-tse, Lieh-tsu and a host of others; India produced the Upanishads and Buddha and, like China, ran the whole gamut of philosophical possibilities down to skepticism, to materialism, sophism and nihilism; in Iran Zarathustra taught a challenging view of the world as a struggle between good and evil; in Palestine the prophets made their appearance, from Elijah, by way of Isaiah and Jeremiah to Deutero-Isaiah; Greece witnessed the appearance of Homer, of the philosophers Parmenides, Heraclitus and Plato of the tragedians, Thucydides and Archimedes²²⁴ (Jaspers, 1953; p.2).

These revolutionary figures, he observed, not only transformed the century when the Axial moment commenced, but also, and more importantly, more profound in the following centuries and continues to be so until today. For the first time in human history, "man becomes conscious of Being as a whole, of himself and his limitations . . . [and] Consciousness became once more conscious of itself, thinking became its own object" (Emphasis mine, Ibid). It was, again, in this "age were born the fundamental

²²³ He mentioned, inter alia, such thinkers as Lasaulx and Viktor Von Strauss (C.f. Jaspers, 1953; pp.8-9).

²²⁴ A similar tendency of appreciation (of "creative minorities") can be easily observed in his other work "Plato and Augustine" (Jaspers, 1957).

categories within which we still think today, and the beginnings of the world religions, by which human beings still live, were created. The step into universality was taken in every sense” (Ibid, p.2). It was, in short, this period that signaled and made possible the “modification of humanity” through what he called “spiritualization”. This implied,

Man is no longer enclosed within himself. He becomes uncertain of himself and thereby open to new and boundless possibilities. He can hear and understand what no one had hitherto asked or proclaimed. The unheard-of becomes manifest. Together with his world and his own self, Being becomes sensible to man (Ibid, p.3).

It was not only the moment of the revelations of philosophers, prophets, and spiritual figures but also the revelation of other things. Among others, “reason and personality were revealed for the first time during the Axial Period” (Ibid, p.4). Simply put, Jaspers argued that the Axial Period had four broader consequences in the world history and civilization. The first was that “The thousands of years old ancient civilizations are everywhere brought to an end by the Axial Period”; the second “Until today mankind has lived by what happened during the Axial Period, by what was thought and created during that period”; the third “The Axial Period commenced within spatial limitations, but it became historically all-embracing. Any people that attained no part in the Axial Period remained 'primitive', continued to live that unhistorical life which had been going on for tens or even hundreds of thousands of years”; and finally, “Between these three realms [*India, China and the West*] a profound mutual comprehension was possible from the moment they met. At the first encounter, they recognized that they were concerned with the same problems” (Emphasis mine, Jaspers, 1953; pp.6-8). For Jaspers, this fourth consequence is the beginning of the consciousness of the “Unity of mankind”. Before that, people were generally confined to their spaces, but this was broken with the advent of Axial Period with its spirituality, prophets, consciousness, religions, and philosophers of “transcendence” (beyond and above time and space confinements). For this very reason, he called the post-nineteenth century of science and technology as another Axial age, for, like the first Axial period, it has facilitated communication, and thus, made the unity of mankind possible.

The Axial Period was an important anchor through which Jaspers defined the past and emerging civilizations. In order to unveil, as he did not specifically provide any operational definition of the meaning of civilization, his conception of civilization, we need to examine his broader scheme of world history. There are four important periods of world history and the evolution of civilization. This, however, assumes that Jaspers's idea that a well-documented history was only possible since the sixteenth century, and that general history was conceivable as late as 10, 000 BC. Again, written, and to a larger extent, organized world history was conceivable only since between the centuries of 5000 and 3000BC. In this regard, he mentioned, "it is only for the last five to six thousand years that we have had a documented, coherent history" (Jaspers, 1954; p.98).

The first important formative period of civilization, for Jaspers, included what he called the "Promethean Age". This age represented "the foundation of all history, through which man became a man in distinction to a purely biologically defined human species, of which we can scarcely conceive" (Ibid). It was during this period that human beings thought to have first started using languages, kindled fire, and invented tools (Jaspers, 1953; p.24). However, after having taken a long span of time, Jaspers's core ancient civilizations emerged (Jaspers, 1954). These were Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Indian, and Chinese "ancient high civilizations". These civilizations, like those in the Axial Period, of 500 BC, were very few in number. This, accordingly, represented the second integral part of Jaspers's scheme for world history, the period of ancient high civilizations. Here, Jaspers spelled out what might be dubbed as the outward, external or social aspect of civilization. He observed that they have "central administration", "highly developed organization", "world empires" "high level of technical achievement", "exercising control over rivers and irrigations", "writing and intellectual aristocracy" "enforced centralization", "civil service", "culture and myth", "state formations", and "highly evolved mechanism for satisfying the needs of the community"(Jaspers, 1953; p.12, pp.45-46).

The third, and the very core of Jaspers's thesis of civilization, is the "extraordinary events" of Axial Period". The events constituting the Axial Period did not emerge in places different from those of Ancient high civilization. It did indeed emerge "From the

midst of the ancient civilizations, or from within their orbit” (Ibid, p.23). Although it emerged within the context of ancient high civilizations, it had nevertheless transformed them through assimilation, “melting”, and “sinking them” (Jaspers, 1953; pp.6-7). Other peoples, which did not “attain any part” in the Axial Period remained “primitives” (“representing the residue of prehistory”) for tens or even hundreds of thousand years, while others, due to their contact with this period, became extinct (Ibid, p.7). In this regard, he claimed that “We see the vast territories of Northern Asia, Africa, and America, which were inhabited by men but saw the birth of nothing of importance to the history of the spirit” (Ibid, p.22). Nevertheless, this period, as noted above, was exactly when “what it means to be human” started unfolding in history. For so long as there was no history “before” in the prehistory, what had gone before the Promethean Age is a prehistory, of history and of evolution, Jaspers concluded there is no history in the prehistory, and as such, there is no man and humanity (and thus no civilization). The biologically complete man appeared in the Promethean Age and made possible civilization in the later periods, in the form of high ancient civilizations in China, India, Mesopotamia, and Egypt.

It should be noted, however, that Jaspers’s take on evolution, much like Toynbee, is either partial or symbolic. This is mainly because both thinkers principally emphasized, and the very content and theoretical formulations of their studies (of civilization), issues hardly possible to be exposed to physical sciences or empirical verifications. Interestingly, they knew that they were doing so. For instance, even though at the very beginning Jaspers rejected the Christian formulation of history (Augustinian and Hegelian) and that it should be looked elsewhere empirically, what he proposed (“Axial Period”) itself can not dealt with-and-explained empirically. Again, as noted above, he is well aware that it cannot be verified empirically and that it was a “miraculous” (also used “enigmatic”, “mysterious”, “hidden”) event by itself. He even concluded that,

No one can adequately comprehend what occurred here and became the axis of world history! The facts of this break-through must be seen from all sides, their many aspects must be fixed in the mind and their meaning interpreted, in order to gain a provisional conception of the Axial Period,

which grows more *mysterious* the more closely we examine it. The fact of . . . [the] manifestation of the Axial Period is in the nature of a *miracle*, in so far as no *really adequate explanation is possible* within the limits of our present knowledge. *The hidden meaning* of this fact, however, *cannot be discovered empirically at all*, as a meaning somewhere intended by someone (Emphasis mine, Jaspers, 1953; pp.18-19).

It is also worth noting that except their symbolic acceptance of evolution in the prehistory, it has virtually no part whatsoever in their discussions within “history” (for this entails a conscious cultivation and making of history on behalf of a conscious man). He even went one-step to spell out of some of the inconsistencies and inadequacies of the idea of human evolution. This could be found throughout the text, but I will quote what he said about the non-zoological being of human beings. He, thus, pointed out that “Man cannot be conceived of as a zoological species, capable of evolution, to which spirit was one day added as a new acquisition. Within the biological sphere man must have been, from the very start, something different, even in a biological sense, from all other forms of life” (Jaspers, 1953; p.38). Moreover, both thinkers’ (Jaspers and Toynbee) formulation of world history relies heavily on spiritual and religious figures, despite their own different nuanced theoretical positions²²⁵. This will be expanded a bit further in the conclusion-last part of the dissertation.

Continuing Jaspers’s third period of world history, the Axial Age, he believed that it was around 500 BC what he called the “spiritual foundations of humanity” was laid. It took place in two major geographical areas, of Asia (India and China) and what he called “the West” (essentially encompassing Greek, Persia, and Palestine). He divided these civilizations into three, Indian, Chinese, and Western. He, then, concluded that whatever happened to these peoples in the centuries between 800 and 200 BC, out of all human kinds distributed throughout the habitable part of the world, instituted “the foundations upon which humanity still subsists today” (Jaspers, 1954; p.98)²²⁶. He characterized

²²⁵ For a further discussion of Toynbee’s general theoretical tendency pertaining to religion, see the concluding remark-part of the Historic-Empirical Trend in Islamic civilization, Chapter Three.

²²⁶ Jaspers’s idea of the West, East, and Europe is addressed in detail in the second part of this discussion.

these ancient civilizations as “. . . possessed of a unique character, brought forth creations during the millennium before Christ upon which the entire history of the human spirit has rested ever since” (Jaspers,1953; p.14). Simply put, Jaspers was claiming that many of the world civilizations in the later periods, including Islamic and Western civilizations, have their origins in the Axial Period and beyond in the high ancient civilizations. In short, he attributed significant and miraculous character with unprecedented consequences in the history of humankind.

By the end of Axial Period, “Universal Empires” arose in three major zones of civilization (India, China, and the West). This is due to the fact that the Axial Period started losing its “creative impetus”. This had, then, its own ramifications. He said, “When the age lost its creativeness, a process of dogmatic fixation and leveling-down took place in all three cultural realms” (Jaspers, 1953; p.5). One of the ways in which this unfolded was through the emergence of universal empires in the three center of civilization. It was in this post-Axial Period that arose “Mighty empires, made great by conquest, arose almost simultaneously in China (Tsin Shi Hwang-ti), in India (Maurya dynasty) and in the West (the Hellenistic empires and the Imperium Romanum)” (Ibid).He characterized the nature of these empires in the immediate post Axial period as:”whereas it [*empire*] originally constituted a culture-creating principle, it now becomes the means by which a declining culture is stabilized by being laid in its coffin . . . preserve a culture in icy rigidity (Emphasis is my addition, Ibid, p.7). In addition to this, he mentioned that,

The universal empires which came into being at the end of the Axial Period considered themselves founded for eternity. But their stability was only apparent. Even though these empires lasted for a long time by comparison with the State-formations of the Axial Period, in the end they all decayed and fell to pieces. Subsequent millennia produced an extraordinary amount of change. From one point of view the disintegration and re-establishment of great empires has constituted history ever since the end of the Axial Period, as it had constituted it

through the millennia during which the ancient civilizations were flourishing. During these millennia, however, it had possessed a different significance: it had lacked that spiritual tension which was first felt during the Axial Period (1953; p.6).

In the above note, the point what Jaspers trying to get across is the idea that, while Axial period owes its existence to spiritualization, the same or similar degree of propensity was lacking in the universal empires that came into being after it. In this regard, he said, “these civilizations are destitute of the spiritual revolution which we have outlined in our picture of the Axial Period and which laid the foundations for a new humanity, our humanity” (Ibid, p.44). For this very reason though, despite their long span of existence, they inevitably failed and disintegrated.

The last period in Jaspers’s scheme of world history is what he called the “Age of Science and Technology”. This, for Jaspers, was unique to Modern European Civilization. He accounted the peculiarity of this European experience as: “It was foreshadowed in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages; its theoretical groundwork was laid in the seventeenth century; at the end of the eighteenth century it entered on a period of broad growth, and in the last few decades it has advanced at headlong pace” (Jaspers, 1954; pp.98-99). According to him, this modern European civilization never “resembled” Asia, and even Greek to which, as I will be addressing in the next section, Jaspers alluded as one of the three foundational bedrock of Western civilization, it happened as something “foreign”. This “Modern European science and technology” developed this way since the sixteenth century. The nature of civilization in this age, however, was different from the ancient and axial-period civilizations. Unlike these, Modern Western civilization remained as devoid of faith, religion, spirituality, and as such, characterized by “apostasy”, “harsh utilitarianism”, and “nihilism”. Here Jaspers extensively dealt with this condition relying on such thinkers as Nietzsche, Burckhardt, and others.

In short, Jaspers, given the Axial Period, saw two major breakthroughs in the history of world civilizations. He called them “two breaths”. On the one hand, human civilization went from the Promethean Age through ancient civilizations to the Axial Period and its consequences. The second breath started off with the “scientific-technological” (which in essence is similar to the Promethean Age-outward, social, and political, and thus, he called it as the “New Promethean Age”) and this, Jaspers predicted, “may lead, through constructions that will be analogous to the organization and planning of the ancient civilizations, into a new, second Axial Period” (Jaspers, 1953; p.25). However, it should be noted that the conditional prediction (“may”) of Jaspers entails the absence and lack of spiritual and faith elements, which initially gave rise to and set in motion the first Axial Period and its consequences.

In addition to the spirituality, consciousness, transcendence, faith, and God, which, taken together, can be dubbed as the inner cores of Jaspers’s conception of civilization, he fairly addressed what can be called the outer most social and political dimensions of civilization, through state formation, universal empires, administration and centralization, the advent of writing-and-intellectual aristocracy, and others. Measured, therefore, by these two elements, Jaspers’s idea of civilization resembles Toynbee’s conception of Western civilization and Guizot’s appraisal of European civilization. However, he rejected all nature-deterministic approach to civilization and particularly named Spengler. The difference between Spengler and Jaspers (also Guizot and Toynbee included) is on the issue of unity or of interactions between cultures and civilizations. While Jaspers argued for the unity of humankind, by way of the Axial Age, Spengler argued for an independent cultural genesis, growth, decline, and death. All in all, so far the discussion has been about the idea of civilization in general in the context of the history of world civilizations. The forthcoming discussion specifically deals with Jaspers’s taken on Western civilization (I used Western-European civilization, as he used them interchangeability, and he employed “the West” more loosely and sometimes in reference to Europe).

7.2.2. Western-European Civilization: Origin, Nature, and Characteristics

Jaspers dealt with civilization in general and Western-European civilization, in particular. As the first part addressed the broader notion of civilization, here I attempt to examine critically the nature and elements of Western-European civilization. I will focus on, first, the two ways in which he deployed the “West”; second, nature and dimensions; and finally, the future of this civilization. To begin with the first, Jaspers used the “West” in two ways. One of the ways in which he used the “West” was in the context of the Axial Period. The events of the Axial Period took place in five zones of civilizations: China, India, Iran, Palestine, and Greece. Jaspers categorized the last three from this list under “the West”. Accordingly, the events of Axial Period took place in China, India and the West (Jaspers, 1953; p.2). This broader category also included Egypt and Babylonia, of the pre-Axial Period high ancient civilization (Ibid, p.57). In this connection, he said, “In comparison with China and India, there seem to be far more dramatic fresh starts in the West . . . The pyramids, the Parthenon, Gothic cathedrals-China, and India can show no such diverse phenomena as these appearing in historical succession”²²⁷ (Ibid, p.54). In short, thus, the west generally encompassed peoples of Greece, Palestine, Iran, Egypt, and Babylon.

However, as “the west”, since its inception, had been characterized by inherent “polarity”, it came to assume more defined geography, culture, and civilization in the later periods. For Jaspers, this polarity has two dimensions, internal and external. That is the “west” vis-à-vis the other external civilizations, such as India and China, on the one hand, and a polarity within itself, on the other. According to him, today’s West, however, came to into being after having gone through three historical epochs. In this first, ancient epoch, the West included the “Three thousand years of Babylonia and Egypt up to about the middle of the last millennium B.C”. In the second epoch, which runs through the first one thousand years of the Axial Period, the West was “consciously

²²⁷ However, he later excluded Egypt and Iraq, as Islam came to have its own religious, cultural, and political bearings.

constituted” encompassing Jews, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. This continued from the middle of the last millennium B.C. to the middle of the first millennium A.D. Yet, it was in the middle of the first century A.D. that the division took place between East and West. This may include, as alluded above, on the one hand, the advent of Orthodox Christianity spearheaded by Russia in the later years, and primarily Catholic (West) and Protestant Christianity of the West, and the Asian and Islamic world, and the Western-European civilization, on the other. The first appears to be what Jaspers dubbed as the internal polarity while the second as a “polarity within itself”. In other words, the birth of Christ (and thus the beginning of Christianity) was the formative moment for the evolution of today’s West (or Western-European civilization).

Finally, it was in the last epoch which runs from the first five hundred years A.D. to the tenth century A.D. that the new history of the Western world (Western-European) of the Romance-Teutonic peoples begun. Since then, today’s West has now lasted about one thousand years (1953; p.57). Accordingly, for Jaspers, the decomposition of the west took the form of “The Greeks and the Persians, the division of the *Imperium Romanum* into the Western and the Eastern Empires, Western and Eastern Christendom, the Western World and Islam, Europe, and Asia” in the subsequent periods (p.68). Yet, the third specific historical characterization of the advent of Western-European civilization was already spelled out by Spengler, who, as noted above, was already known to Jaspers. He, as Jaspers did, located the initial advent of the modern Western civilization in 900 A.D. and since then a thousand years old, seen in the nineteenth century. In a thousand years, according to Spengler, Western civilization moved from its culture to civilization stage.

Now, I will move on to discuss the nature and aspects of Western Civilization. Jaspers, as did argue Guizot, saw Western civilization in two important ways. The first broadly encompassed general process and characteristics of the nature of Western civilization. He accomplished this by way of comparison with other civilization, especially China and India. He mentioned close to ten peculiar characteristic features of Western civilization (Jaspers, 1953; pp.62-66).

The peculiarity of Western civilization included, among other things, its geography, in terms of “being rich” in its peninsulas, islands, areas of desert interspersed with oases, with Mediterranean climate, alpine region, extended coastlines, multiplicity of peoples and languages; its spiritual character expressed through political liberty (Western libertarian consciousness) and freedom originated in Greek “shines out through Western history”; the prevalence of rationality in terms of logically consistent conviction to all men everywhere, and in this regard, “Greek rationality laid the foundation for mathematics and perfected formal logic, unlike the East, since middle ages”; its “conscious inwardness of personal selfhood achieved, in Jewish prophets, Greek philosophers and Roman statesmen, a perennially decisive absoluteness”; the idea that the “Western man is continually confronted by the world in its reality as that which he cannot circumvent”, and as such, “The West knows, with unique forcefulness, the postulate that man must shape his world. In addition, he feels the meaning of the world's reality, which represents the unending task of accomplishing cognition, contemplation, and realization within and from the world itself”; the West accepted “a universal”, but this did not “coagulate into a dogmatic fixity of definitive institutions and notions”, neither into life under a caste system like the Indians nor into life under a cosmic order as Chinese civilizations, and as such, “In no sense does the West become stabilized” and rather remained with “continual dissatisfaction”²²⁸; the West is typified by “resoluteness that takes things to extremes, elucidates them down to the last detail, places them before the either-or, and so brings awareness of the underlying principles and sets up battle-fronts in the inmost recesses of the mind”; the unique character of “Autonomous personalities” as in “the Jewish prophets and the Greek philosophers by way of the great Christians to the outstanding figures of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries”; and finally, the West was distinguished for “personal love and the power of boundless self-irradiation in never completed movement” (Ibid, pp.62-66).

²²⁸Here, Jaspers included all monotheistic religions and their claim for “exclusive truth” as part of the West. Accordingly, the characteristics mentioned here are not necessarily restricted to Greco-Roman, Jewish, and Christian elements of the more refined “West”(which I called Western-European) in the post tenth century; rather, the comparison here, principally included the West, in the broader sense of the word, and Asian civilizations, India and China.

The majority of these characteristics, however, were already spelled out, *inter alia*, in the works of Guizot. Guizot, as noted before, believed in the triple formation of European civilization. This included Roman legacies, Barbarians, and Christianity. When dealing with Barbarians, Guizot mentioned that their unique contribution to the advent of European civilization was related to “individual liberty” and “love for independence”. The remaining two aspects of Guizot’s European civilization also largely resonate with Jaspers construction of Western-European civilization²²⁹. Compared to other civilizations (such as those of Asian origin, for instance), Guizot believed that European civilization, in terms of its universal orientation and scope, as in Jaspers, was “neither narrow, exclusive, nor stationary” (Guizot, Vol.I, 1887; p.27). The role of the creative minority in the making of Western-European civilization is another area of correspondence with Guizot, Toynbee, and Hodgson (For individual assessment of these elements see the preceding chapters).

So far, I have provided Jaspers’s dualistic conception of “the West” and its inherent characteristics. Here in this section, I deal with some of the key foundational elements that constitute Western-European civilization. A close analysis of his “The Origin and Goal of History” reflects that he saw three aspects constituting the internal makeup of Western Civilization, since the tenth century. These are: Greek philosophical tradition, legacies of Roman Empire, and Jewish religious tradition in general and Christian Church in particular (of this, mainly Western Christianity, Catholicism). He summarized the peculiarity of the combination of these elements in Western-European civilization as,

These elements combine to make a whole which no one planned as such and which, on the one hand, is a remarkably complex end-product in the syncretistic world of the Roman Empire, while on the other, it is set in motion by new religious and philosophic conceptions (the most important representative of which is St. Augustine) (Ibid, p.58).

Accordingly, Western-European civilization is then the product the “religious impulses and premises” stemming from the Jews (as from a historical point of view, Jaspers

²²⁹ I dealt with Christianity in the third part of this discussion, under “Religion in Western-European Civilization”.

argued, Jesus was the “last in the series of Jewish prophets and stood in conscious continuity to them”); the philosophical “illuminative power of its ideas” from the Greeks; and finally, its “organizational energy and its wisdom in the mastery of reality” from the Romans (Ibid). However, for Jaspers, Western-European civilization was not simply evolved out of a coincidental amalgamation of different elements from the different parts of the world but took “cultural continuity” as its principle. It should be noted, however, the cultural continuity of the west is one of the most contested themes in Civilization Studies. Although thinkers like K. Jaspers, F. Guizot, A. Toynbee, and others took it as axiomatic, many recent thinkers argued otherwise²³⁰. As this does not constitute the purpose of my current research, I will leave it as it is here. Nevertheless, according to Jaspers, this is due to the fact that “The cultural continuity of the West was never lost, notwithstanding extraordinary ruptures, destructions and apparently total decay” (Ibid, p.59). While “China and India always lived in continuity with their own pasts”, Western-European civilization, on the one hand, “introduced its own originality into a continuity taken over from a foreign source, which it appropriated, worked over and transmuted” and on the other, it was rooted in its Christianity and Greek antiquity. Jaspers substantiated this cultural continuity by engaging Greeks and Christianity as follows:

The West founded itself on Christianity and Antiquity, both of them to begin with in the form in which late Antiquity transmitted them to the Germanic peoples; it then thrust back step by step into the origins both of the Biblical religion and of the essential spirit of Greece (Jaspers, 1953; p.59).

Apart from the above peculiar features and compositions of Western-European Civilization, the advent of science and technology fundamentally transformed the nature and future of Western-European civilization in many ways. To begin with the Age itself, Jaspers believed that it was essentially a European origin. In this connection, he claimed that “the European line of development alone led on to the Age of Technology, which

²³⁰ See, for instance, John Hobson’s “The Eastern Origin of Western Civilization” (Cambridge University Press, 2004) and Jack Goody’s “The Theft of History” (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

today gives the whole world a European countenance, and that, in addition, a rational mode of thought has become omnipresent, seems to confirm this preeminence” (Ibid, p.67). He rephrased this in another place as “The sole specifically new and radically different element, that bears no resemblance to anything that has come out of Asia, is entirely autonomous, and foreign even to the Greeks, is modern European science and technology” (Ibid, p.81).

The peculiarity of the Western-European age of science and technology, however, only emerged since the sixteenth century. Before that, as Hodgson argued in his “The Venture of Islam”, Jaspers believed there were cultural parities, interactions, and exchanges between or among various cultures and civilizations, Asia and Europe, in particular. However, once both science and technology came to assume a European character in the Middle Ages, they became decisive in the later course of world history. In this regard, he claimed that,

Modern science, which has developed since the end of the Middle Ages, became decisive since the seventeenth century, and reached full unfolding since the nineteenth century. At all events, this science distinguishes Europe from all other cultures since the seventeenth century (Ibid, p.82).

The advent of modern science and technology under Western-European civilization was not without consequences. Jaspers, like Rousseau, Spengler, Toynbee, and Izetbegovic, feared for the future of humanity in the increasing domination of science and technology, and the subsequent consequences. In his own words, the issue here is “the concern for Humanity itself” (Ibid, p.147). In this age, he observed, religion is “retained in a world which is no longer permeated by it” (p.131). In an attempt to detail the negative repercussions of Westerners pursuits of modern science and technology, he spoke in the mouths of Nietzsche and Burckhardt. They pointed out that,

Harsh utilitarianism will be the dominant pattern of life . . . In place of culture, mere existence will prevail; intoxication in place of reflection as

an element of life 'God is dead'. Nihilism is raising its head: The whole of our European culture has for a long time been moving, with a torment of tension that is increasing from one decade to another, in the direction of catastrophe; like a river that wants to reach its end, that no longer reflects, that is afraid to reflect . . . No shepherd, and one herd! Everyone wants the same; everyone is equal: he who hath other sentiments goes voluntarily into the madhouse . . . Man might lose himself, mankind might slip, partly unnoticed and partly as the result of stupendous disasters, into a leveling down and mechanization, into a life without liberty and without fulfillment, into a somber malignancy destitute of humanity (Jaspers, 1953; pp.142-153).

7.2.3. Religion, Axial Period, and Western-European Civilization

Religion, broadly used as encompassing spirituality and conscious engagement of transcendence beyond spatiotemporal confinements, is an important element in Jaspers's approach to history and civilization in general and Western-European civilization, in particular. In his view of religion, Jaspers distanced himself from the Christ-based scheme of world history and civilization propounded mainly by such thinkers as Hegel, Fichte, and Schelling. He complained that Christ-based formulation of world history (and thus Western-European civilization) has been the recurrent theme commonly recycled by many Western thinkers. However, he observed that since many, including among the people of the West themselves, are not necessarily Christians, and in light of other contrary evidences, the foundation for it must be sought somewhere else. He believed that this can be done empirically, so that it can be applied to all, including Christians. Accordingly, it was for this particular purpose that he came up with what he called the Axial Period. He explained the importance of this as:

This axis would be situated at the point in history which gave birth to everything which, since then, man has been able to be, the point most overwhelmingly fruitful in fashioning humanity; its character would have

to be, if not empirically cogent and evident, yet so convincing to empirical insight as to give rise to a common frame of historical self-comprehension for all peoples for the West, for Asia, and for all men on earth, without regard to particular articles of faith (p.1).

Yet, it is hardly possible that one finds any empirical explanations for the events of the Axial Period. Jaspers falls short of evidence for why should it happen in this period, as opposed to some other periods before, or even after. As noted above, his response was that the events of the axial period were “enigmatic”, “mysterious”, and that there could not be any adequate explanations for it. Still, he insisted that it was not coincidental either. It could be argued, however, that, in choosing the axial period and the events therein, Jaspers was looking for a way through which he could reach the entire humanity on the face of the earth, in a historical plane. He managed this challenge through what he called the “Unity of mankind”²³¹. Put differently, if the purpose of “The Goal of History” could be squeezed into one sentence, it would definitely be “the unity of mankind”, and it served as the principal foundation (and frame of reference) on which he built his scheme of world history and civilizations.

He accomplished this, first, by rejecting evolutionary explanation, for it fails to answer many valuable questions. Jaspers found the Axial period and all the associated events going against evolution in many ways: human spirituality, human consciousness, freedom (unlike animals), the exceptionality of creative minorities (spiritual figures, prophets, and philosophers), and others. Accordingly, Jaspers had to firmly ground his “the unity of mankind” thesis, and for this, he readily deployed what may be called a creationist explanation, but he did so “symbolically” (“symbols, not realities”) (Jaspers, 1953). He knew that this might not be “empirically cogent”, but more plausible (Ibid). In this regard, therefore, human beings were created by One God from Adam. This, again, required, as he is well known to have said, “a leap of faith”. He explicitly mentioned this precondition clearly as follows:

²³¹ The “unity of mankind” is also the underlying principle of Marshal G. Hodgson’s scheme of world history (See, esp. the preface and introductory chapter of “The Venture of Islam: The Classical Age of Islam” (Chicago University Press, Vol. I, 1974).

My outline is based on an article of faith: that mankind has one single origin and one goal. Origin and goal are unknown to us, utterly unknown by any kind of knowledge. They can only be felt in the glimmer of ambiguous symbols . . . All men are related in Adam, originate from the hand of God and are created after His image (Jaspers, 1953; p. xv).

Jaspers's "The Origin and Goal of History" moves from God as its origin to the unity of humankind as its goal. It is to argue that Jaspers's "symbolic" creationism, even though there are contradictory information about his faith (ranging from a believing Protestant, or existentialist Christian to Buddhist tendencies), actually underpins his reading and construction of world history and civilizations. At least, Jaspers could not be, however, accused of atheism. Apart from some of the points raised so far, he made it clear that "We need not accept the godless maxim that history is the last judgment. . . Failure is no argument against the truth that is rooted in transcendence. By making history our own, we cast an anchor through history into eternity" (Jaspers, 1954; p.109). The following paragraphs also provide additional instances to support this.

Apart from this general condition with which he theorized about world history and civilization, he believed in the indispensability of faith beyond the earthly and instinctual mere existence. Jaspers used faith in a more general sense, not necessarily confining to a particular dogmatic religion. Given this, he argued that,

Man is not merely a creature of instinct, not merely a point of understanding, but also a creature that is, as it were, above and beyond itself. He is not exhausted by that which he becomes as an object of physiology, psychology and sociology. He can win a part in the Comprehensive, through which he first becomes authentically himself. This Comprehensive we call idea, in so far as man is spirit; we call it faith, in so far as he is existence. Man cannot live without faith (Ibid, p.215).

Faith, being the exceptional quality of human beings, "is the fulfilling and moving element in the depths of man, in which man is linked, above and beyond himself, with

the origin of his being” (Ibid). Yet, it is not “a matter of the goals of volition, nor of the contents of reason that become purposes. For faith cannot be willed, it does not consist in propositions, between which one has to choose, it evades the program”. Faith, for Jaspers, provides a sense of guidance to humanity, and inter alia, it could be argued that his insistence on the unity of humankind is one expression of this. Without it, he concluded, there will be “chaos and ruin” (Ibid, p.214).

However, Jaspers also used faith, transcendence, and what he called, “the Comprehensive” in specific reference to God, if not religion. This could be seen in his “Way to Wisdom”(1954). In reference to “the comprehensive”, he said, “Instead of the knowledge of God, which is unattainable, we gain through philosophy a Comprehensive consciousness of God” (1954; p.46). He went to substantiate that understanding what “God is” in this context requires that “we transcend, as we pass beyond the world of objects and through it discover authentic reality. Hence the climax and goal of our life is the point at which we ascertain authentic reality, that is, God” (Ibid, pp.46-47). This can be related to his thesis of the unity of humankind. Here, Jaspers brought faith, the comprehensive and God together. Similarly, he argued that faith without transcendence is “improbable” (Jaspers, 1953; p.218). Yet, he explicitly underscored the following, perhaps reminiscent of his Protestant cling, and quite similar to Hodgson’s take on faith (which I dealt with in Chapter three),

Hence faith in God . . . is not laid down in any definite articles of faith applicable to all men or in any historical reality which mediates between man and God and is the same for all men. The individual, always in his own historicity, stands rather in an immediate, independent relation to God that requires no intermediary. This historicity, which can be communicated and described, is in this form not absolute truth for all, and yet in its source it is absolutely true. God is reality, absolute, and cannot be encompassed by any of the historical manifestations through which He speaks to men. If He is, man as an individual must be able to apprehend Him directly. The reality of God and the immediacy of our historical relation to God exclude any universally compelling knowledge of God;

therefore what matters is not our knowledge of God but our attitude towards God (Ibid, 1954; p.147)

Accordingly, in the broader sense of the world, it could be argued that God, transcendence, prophets, faith, the comprehensive and related concepts constitute the non-dogmatic nature of Jaspers's religion. I should mention, however, that he did not only situate his scheme of world history and civilization and the unity of mankind through God but also other concepts issues such as human freedom. For him, human freedom and God are fundamentally linked. For instance, he said "The man who attains true awareness of his freedom gains certainty of God. Freedom and God are inseparable" (Ibid, p.45).

Now in specific reference to the origin and development of Western-European civilization, Jaspers gave a significant role to religion in general and Christianity in particular. Immediately after the axial period, in the third century A.D., "the great dogmatic religions", he observed, forged political unity. For instance, Zoroastrianism "became the bearer of the Sasanian Empire from 224 onward, the Christian religion the bearer of the Roman Empire from the time of Constantine, Islam the bearer of the Arab Empire from the seventh century". Christianity, Christian Church in particular (he used it in a similar fashion as Toynbee and Guizot), played a foundational role in the advent of Western-European civilization. Not only was it one of the three constituents of post axial Western-European civilization, in addition to legacies from the Roman Empire and Greek, it was the one which gave them unity despite their immense diversity. In his own words,

Christianity, in the shape of the Christian Church, is perhaps the greatest and highest organizational form yet evolved by the human spirit . . . [*the Christian*]Church proved capable of compelling contradictory elements into union, of absorbing the highest ideals formulated up to that time and of protecting its acquisitions in a dependable tradition (Addition is mine, Jaspers, 1953; p.58).

Western-European civilization achieved “universal crystallizations“ and achieved its current state of being, at least in the context of the nineteenth century with the leading hand of Christianity, by systematically synthesizing and bringing together elements from the Roman Empire and Greeks. It can be clearly seen that Jaspers took pride in Christianity and its role in Western-European civilization. He wrote, for instance, that “Christianity . . . is yet of all faiths the one with the incomparably most profound implications” (Jaspers, 1953; p.216); and that “the Christian Church, is perhaps the greatest and highest organizational form yet evolved by the human spirit” (Ibid, p.58). The crystallization of Europe was possible through working out mechanisms that embodied Catholic Christianity and Roman Empire. Both, in the course of history, according to Jaspers, make up “the basis of the European consciousness”. However, this crystallization and European consciousness were under constant threat. This, for Jaspers, like Guizot, came from Islam and the Islamic world (the crusade, the Mongol and the Turkish) which he called the “menacing stranger” (Ibid, p.60). Similarly, he pointed out that the interplay of Christianity and Greek antiquity also shaped the subsequent development of the Western world and Western-European civilization. He mentioned this complimentary historical trajectory as follows:

The period following the Italian Renaissance conceived of itself as a renewal of Antiquity, that following the German Reformation as the re-establishment of Christianity. In the sequel both of them, in fact, became the most penetrating recognition of the axis of world history. Both of them, however, were also and above all original creations of the new Western World, which had already set in with growing vigor before that recognition. The period of world history from 1500 to 1830, which in the West is distinguished by its wealth of exceptional personalities, by its imperishable works of poetry and art, by the most profound impulses of religion and finally by its creations in the fields of science and technology, is the immediate presupposition of our own spiritual life (p.60).

7. 3. Concluding Remarks

In the study of Western civilization, the religiophilosophical trend presents views of civilization different in many ways from those under historic-empirical trend. Unlike the latter, the former is largely characterized by methods, thematic focuses, epistemological foundations, and other presuppositions unique to it. This entails a visibly marked reliance on religious and philosophical ideas, conditions, experiences, and institutions. Although, as should be noted, there are differences among thinkers that can be considered to fall under the religiophilosophical trend (or, for that matter, the other two trends as well), the vast majority gave a considerable attention to religious and philosophical ideas, experiences, and institutions. The works of Guizot and Jaspers present good cases.

As noted above, while a certain degree of historical and empirical conditions and sources dominate Guizot's approach to European civilization, human consciousness, freedom, faith, and spirituality, and thus, more broadly philosophical orientation distinguishes Jaspers's study of Western-European civilization. Yet, despite this difference, as I have argued throughout the two cases, God, Providence, transcendence, and spirituality (and thus religion and closely related ideas, experiences, and institutions) brings them together. In other words, while institutional religion (Christianity in general and Catholic Christian Church in particular) is clearly visible in Guizot, a more loose sense of religion and closely related ideas and experiences (God, spirituality, consciousness, faith, and transcendence) dominate Jaspers's discussion of civilization.

Another important point that brings Guizot and Jaspers together is the idea of cultural continuity in the advent of Western civilization. For Guizot, European civilization was the product of three elements, traced as far back as to the end of the fourth century A.D. It included institutional and organizational experiences of the Roman Empire; Christianity and Christian Church; and German invaders (barbarians of Goths and Franks). Although, like Jaspers, Guizot observed that there were no dominant trends, ideas, institutions, ideologies, state formations, and social order in the history of Europe

for centuries, the above three elements, primarily under the greater role and influence of Christianity and Christian Church, Europe, and European civilization emerged. By the same token, Jaspers also believed that Western-European civilization came out of three foundations, from the legacies and experiences of Greeks, Roman Empire, and Christianity. A similar degree of theoretical orientation, as mentioned in chapter three, also characterizes Toynbee's approach to Western civilization. Yet, it remains that the idea of "the cultural continuity" behind (and of) Western or European civilization has been questioned by many anthropologists and historians. Among others, Jack Goody's "The Theft of History" (2008) and John Hobson's "The Eastern Origin of Western Civilization" (2004) reject this.

SECTION FOUR

CONCLUSION

In the last three sections, the study examined, on the one hand, the general theoretical connection between religion and civilization, and on the other hand, how this general link is expressed through trends, which were reflected in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations. The present chapter systematically highlights, firstly, some of the key findings of the research; and secondly, ends with a general conclusion. The first part, therefore, gives an analytical summary of the major issues and findings explored in the study. The second part provides a concise concluding remark pertaining to the present research.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ANALYTICAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

8.1. Analytical Summary

The study broadly explored the nature and form of relations between religion and civilization in the conceptions of Islamic and Western civilizations. This has been done through, first, reviewing researches and theories addressing civilization in general and Islamic and Western civilizations, in particular. This, in the course of engaging these literatures, developed into trends generally encompassing many of the theories dealing with Islamic and Western civilizations. While in the study of Islamic civilization, there were three dominant trends, two of these were also widely prevalent among those of Western civilization. These were historic-empirical, religiophilosophical, and multiplex trends.

Broadly speaking, the classification based, *inter alia*, on two major conditions. The first was about the methods and approaches employed by the theories addressing Islamic and Western civilizations. The second was about the degree of emphasis and focus given to certain aspects of civilization. This also includes studies into Islamic and Western civilizations which sometimes may generally assume a philosophical (e.g., Jaspers), religious (e.g., Karakoç, Qutb, Al-Faruqi), or historical character (e.g., Hodgson). It should be noted, however, that the aforementioned classification must be considered more as an analytical anchor trying to capture and deal with the vast amount of literature in civilization studies.

In a methodological sense, historicism (cultural relativism), empirical data and observations, ethnographic and ethnological, a relatively detached (“neutral”, “unbiased”) engagement, and others generally characterize theories of the historic-

empirical trend. Another core feature of this trend is the general tendency to assume evolution as something axiomatic (e.g., Hodgson, Toynbee, Freud, Tylor, Frazer, and etc)²³². Although evolution is taken as axiomatic among few thinkers (particularly of Western civilization) in religiophilosophical trend, it was found either partial or symbolic (e.g., Jaspers). In terms of content and focus, the historic-empirical trend is largely characterized by progress (e.g., Freud, Comte, Tylor, etc), deterministic-and-stage oriented (e.g., Toynbee, Spengler, Tylor, etc), nature-analogy (e.g., Tylor, Spengler, etc), macro-level social conditions compared to the micro level-inward individual tendencies of the religiophilosophical trend (virtually applicable to most), and processes oriented.

Finally, in the relation between religion and civilization, theories of historic-empirical trend, unlike the other two, find no direct relation between the two (e.g., Hodgson). The extreme (and more prevalent among theories of Western civilization) in this trend, however, goes to the extent that there is not only direct relationship but it even assumes an inverse form of relation. For this group of thinkers, the advent of civilization necessarily presupposes the demise of religion and religiosity (e.g., Rousseau, Tylor, Frazer, Comte, Freud, Spengler, etc.).

In the context of a religiophilosophical trend, religious texts (concepts, ideas, principles, personalities, and prophets, Providence, etc), and philosophical ideas (human consciousness, human will, freedom, faith, purpose, etc), experiences (individual and inner aspects), and institutions dominate theories. Unlike historic-empirical trend, this trend champions ideas and their consequences for individuals and civilizations alike. Whilst micro level individual conditions and experiences articulate civilization, macro level “high culture” and social level conditions and process dominates historic-empirical trend. The individual here is appraised as the universal individual-human being in a constant state of back-and-forth reflection engaging himself, his environment (human and natural environment), and transcendence (beyond spatial and temporal confinements of existence, of spirituality, consciousness, and God). Due to this, theories in this trend

²³² As noted in chapter four, Toynbee’s take on evolution, like Jaspers, appears more partial or symbolic. It stops its importance the point at which history begins (to unfold). This is also another point shared by both thinkers.

tend to assume a universal, unitary civilization while, at the same time, address different civilizations (particularly Islamic and Western civilizations).

It could be summarized, therefore, that theories in this trend tend to swing between, in the relationship between religion and civilization, religion (and closely ideas) deterministic (e.g., Karakoç, Qutb, Al-Faruqi, Allawi, Nadwi, etc) to a complementarity between the two (religion as a foundational element of civilization, e.g., Mireabu, Guizot, and Jaspers). In other words, civilization is inconceivable without the necessary and specific reference to ideas, experiences, and conditions above and beyond historicity and empirical observations. It should be noted, however, that despite a higher degree of emphasis on some of their own unique attributes, both in method and content, this, and for that matter, all the three trends, use elements which may not necessarily and primarily characterize their principal pursuits. What I am trying to do here is to show dominant tendencies and focuses of the theories and how these generally represent them and are related, or make them different, to other tendencies.

Multiplexity, defined as the product of multiplicity and complexity both in method and content, has been appraised as the third trend in the study of civilization, especially of Islamic civilization. Except for principally including Ibn Khaldun, and to a larger extent, Said Halim Paşa, my library-and- internet based research and literature review could not uncover similar or closely resembling theories in the study of Western civilization. This could be perhaps attributed to the disciplinary knowledge production in the social sciences, especially in North America and Europe. This disciplinary orientation could have possibly limited the extent to which a given theory addresses social issues, eclectically and holistically, without being necessarily being confined to specialized fields of studies. Accordingly, Ibn Khaldun's study of civilization ("Umran" and/or "Hadhara") does not limit itself to a particular individual, social, biological, psychological, religious, economic, political, and environmental factors.

Unlike the first two trends, theories falling under this trend do not reduce civilization to a single or two conditions, processes or ideas; rather, the interplay of many interlocking dimensions, are explored. Another important characteristic of this trend, building on the multiplicity and complexity of methods and contents, is a marked complexity of the

degree of abstraction. This level of abstraction, unlike reductionist and deterministic tendencies, makes its engagement of civilization different, and thus, multiplex. To show this, an attempt has been made to deal with only two (nature and divine providence perspectives) of the dimensions of Ibn Khaldunian civilization. Due to this, it could be clearly seen that religion (Islam) is important, but not the only element in the study of Islamic civilization under multiplex trend (e.g., Ibn Khaldun and Said Halim Paşa). Contrary to this, in the religiophilosophical trend of Islamic civilization, Islam as religion assumes significant role and this goes to the extent of determining the nature and form of civilization, through the role of God, precepts, prophets, and other related ideas.

The second way through which the nature and form of relation between religion and civilization, in the very conception of Islamic and Western civilizations, has been examined through case studies. Under the above three trends in the study of civilization, particularly in the relation between religion and civilization, close to ten individual cases have been studied (Hodgson, Toynbee, Karakoç, Al-Faruqi, Ibn Khaldun, Said Halim Paşa, Spengler, Comte, Guizot, and Jaspers)²³³. The study of these individuals responded to three important questions: What is civilization? What constitutes Islamic or Western civilization? Finally, it examined how each of these theories dealt with the problem of religion-civilization relation. Following from this, therefore, the dissertation has been organized around these three core themes. Drawing from the overall research engagement, literature reviews and case studies, the following three core features, findings, and/ or themes emerged.

²³³ A tabular summary of these theories is presented at the end of the “Conclusion” section

8.1.1. The Indispensability of Religion

Religion and closely related concepts, ideas, experiences, and institutions remain as one of the critical factors in the study of civilization, especially in Islamic and Western civilizations. This could be observed in the various ways in which it is employed. In most cases, however, this takes either in the form of admittance to or negation. This means that many of the theories engaging Islamic and Western civilizations tend to fall into two major groups, those who relatively reject religion in the study, making, or future of civilization, and those who relatively give significant preponderance to religion. While thinkers like Freud, Comte, Rousseau, Tylor, and Spengler see irreligion as typical of civilization (of Western civilization), Mirabeau, Guizot, Jaspers, Toynbee, Hodgson, Ibn Khaldun, Said Halim Paşa, Karakoç, Al-Faruqi, and Qutb find religion playing the role ranging from being one important element to determining the nature and form of civilization (Islamic and Western civilization). Perhaps an exception to this, especially in the study of Islamic civilization, is the views of Ziya Gokalp and Alija Izet Begovic. Gokalp negated the idea that there can be any relation between religion and civilization, and thus, no Islamic civilization. He claimed that:

Civilization and religion are two different things . . . since religion consists only of sacred institutions, beliefs, and rituals, non-sacred institutions such as scientific ideas, technological tools, and aesthetic standards constitute separate system outside of religion. . . Thus, no civilization can ever be called after a religion. There is neither a Christian nor an Islamic civilization (Berkes, 1959; pp.271-272).

By the same token, Izetbegovic saw the nature of culture in general and religion, in particular fundamentally different from civilization. He found many things odd in a civilization that go against the basic precepts of religion, and as such, called civilization a “zoological” pursuit. In this connection, he made it clear that:

Culture began with the "prologue in heaven." With its religion, art, ethics, and philosophy, it will always be dealing with man's relation to that

heaven from whence he came. Everything within culture means a confirmation or a rejection, a doubt or a reminiscence of the heavenly origin of man. Culture is characterized by this enigma and goes through all time with the steady striving to solve it. On the other hand, civilization is a continuation of the zoological, one-dimensional life, the material exchange between man and nature. This aspect of life differs from other animals' lives, but only in its degree, level, and organization ... Culture is the influence of religion on man or man's influence on himself, while civilization is the effect of intelligence on nature, on the external world ... This is the opposite man-thing, humanism against chosism ... Religion belongs to life, arts, and culture; atheism belongs to method, science, and civilization (Izetbegovic, 1984; pp.44-57).

Interestingly, Izetbegovic's approach to civilization largely resembles those of Oswald Spengler and J.J. Rousseau. These thinkers, simply put, believed that civilization is inherently anti-religion, faith, God, or spirituality. I have fairly dealt with the views of Spengler and Rousseau in the previous sections.

Now when we closely engage the first group of thinkers, the way they manage the relationship between religion and civilization generally falls into two main streams. On the one hand, some of them display a certain degree of concern and sense of depression in the changing nature of civilization and its effects, particularly on religion, faith, character, and morality. Here, Spengler and Rousseau present good instances. In their views, civilization tends to be outward oriented and this, through time, undermines religion, faith, and morality. As mentioned above, the view of Alija Alia Izetbegovic is another example in the context of Islamic civilization. Civilization for them, therefore, represents hypocrisy, artificiality, materialism, anonymity, individualism, atheism, and apostasy.

On the other hand, there are some thinkers, particularly anthropologists such as Tylor and Frazer, sociologist Comte, and psychologist and psychiatrist Freud, tend to show a certain degree of disdain and contempt for religion, and as such, its connection with

civilization, especially in the context of Western civilization. In either case, however, religion remains to be a relevant constant that needs to be dealt (away) with whenever the question of civilization is a bone of contention. Whether as a necessary evil or blessing, this seems to depend on the “faith” or “religious” conditions of the theorists (for instance, Freud and Comte were typically known for atheism, and also as their writings reflect, more of “anti-religious” tendencies).

Although Freud, as discussed in chapter two, argued that religion initially gave rise to civilization by assuming the role of repressing instinctual tendencies, it is nevertheless inherently false and illusory. Due to this nature, the role of religion and its close connection to civilization, in the context “White European Christian Civilization” is only ephemeral and will certainly give way to the most enduring mechanisms of sustaining civilization, rationalism, and science. Civilization, against religion or religious tendencies, will be driven by science and reason is the view unequivocally shared and expressed by Comte, Tylor, and Freud. Unlike Rousseau and Spengler (basically, this includes the view of Toynbee, Jaspers, Guizot, and others), Freud, Frazer, Comte, and Tylor saw the role of science, rationalism, and technological advancement in positive terms (and thus, it does not make them worry about any “negative” outcomes).

The other group of thinkers generally argued that civilization necessarily entails religion, as one important element or as its maker. Many of the theories addressed in the context of Islamic civilization gave a greater degree of preponderance to Islam and its effects, both in the initial genesis and growth of Islamic civilization. Here the works of Karakoç, Qutb, Al-Faruqi, Nadwi, Allawi, and others present relevant instances. Here Islamic civilization is generally appraised as the outgrowth of the precepts and ideals of Islam. Others, including Ibn Khaldun and Said Halim Paşa, considered Islam playing a paramount role, but not the only factor in the advent of civilization. Accordingly, a number of conditions are explored to make sense of civilization. As I have mentioned elsewhere, apart from the multiplicity and complexity of method, content, and abstraction, this may have got something to do with their own lived experiences, as the time was when Islamic civilization’s shockwave was felt throughout the whole world.

While Hodgson did not necessarily deny the foundational role of Islam, at least indirectly, he made Islamic civilization part of a greater process, in time and space, in the “Syriac world and civilization” (Toynbee’s appellation) and exposed it to cultural relativism and historicism. In doing so, he relatively made Islamic civilization practically devoid of “concerned minorities” (Hodgson’s appellation) and specific “ideals” that, in some ways, set in motion Islamic civilization. These, he claimed, did not play any direct role in the advent of Islamic civilization.

Similarly, although religion, particularly Christianity and Christian Church (“universal church”, used differently from church, as Guizot and Jaspers) played a significant role in Toynbee’s conception of Western civilization, the same degree of religion-based analysis is literally absent in his study of Islamic civilization. Put in yet other words, Toynbee was comfortable in applying his Western civilization-based conceptual and theoretical constructs to Islamic civilization, which, by doing so, he essentially rendered his engagement of Islamic civilization inadequate and meaningless. His characterization of the universal empire, universal church, and Arabic and Iranic civilizations in his discussion of Islamic civilization, as noted in detail in chapter three, are highly underdeveloped and misconstrued.

By the same token, a significant degree of emphasis was also given to religion among some of the theories of Western civilization. For thinkers like Mireabu, F. Guizot, and K. Jaspers, religion and closely related ideas, experiences, and institutions assume a significant role in their respective studies of Western civilization. Of these, for instance, Mirabeau argued that religion was a principal driving force of civilization, and in that, “the first and most useful” constraint on human nature and action “without doubt” is a religion (In Mazlish, 2004, p.5). Similarly, Guizot also underscored that,

At all times, in all countries, religion has assumed the glory of having civilized the people; sciences, letters, arts, all the intellectual and moral pleasures, have claimed a share in this glory; and we have deemed it a praise and an honor to them, when we have recognized this claim on their part (Guizot, Vol. I, 1887; p.6).

In addition, in his historical examination of the origin of European civilization, one of the three foundational elements is religion. He gave Christianity (Christian Church in particular) a centripetal force, of bringing together the other two elements, legacies of the Roman Empire and Barbarians. This unifying role of Christianity and Christian Church is also a view shared by Jaspers, as discussed above. Guizot, however, went to the extent of claiming that if it had not been for Christianity under which brought Christians of the “pre-Europe” to a common cause, there would not have been Europe. Simply put, he made it clear that Europe did not exist before the crusade, which played this particular role. Similarly, Jaspers also made Christianity and Christian Church one of his three foundational elements of the making of Western-European civilization. Although Jasper, like Guizot, took legacies of the Roman Empire, he added own third foundational element, Greek antiquities.

8.1.2. “Creative” and “Concerned” Minorities

In the study of civilizations, especially in Islamic and Western civilizations, apart from the various elements and processes involved therein, many of the theories, in some ways, recognized the role of a particular group of people. These were, for Toynbee, “creative minorities” and for Hodgson, “concerned minorities”. A similar group of people was also equally recognized in the writings of F. Guizot, K. Jaspers, and S. Karakoç. The roles this minority group assumes vary among these thinkers. While creative minorities, mainly political leaders, prophets and spiritual leaders, and philosophers (and their close associates), assume a significant role in Toynbee’s articulation, Hodgson provided them with much less power.

Toynbee’s creative minorities are mainly prophets and spiritual leaders (also included political leaders). He characterized them having “creative and superhuman ability” which he identified with “personality” whose possessor is “impelled” by his own nature to try to “transfigure his fellow men by recreating them in his own image” (Toynbee seems to have Jesus in mind). These creative personalities are always, however, in a

minority and always find themselves surrounded by the uncreative mass of the great majority of a society. These creative individuals and minorities follow a process which Toynbee identified as “withdrawal-and-return”. They must withdraw from society’s field of action (which is the society itself) in order to make their achievement of “inspiration” or “discovery” and then they must return back to the field of action in order to try to convert the society to the new way of life they have envisioned in their withdrawal. Accordingly, Toynbee concluded that “the future of a civilization lies in the hands of this minority of creative persons” (Toynbee, 1972; p.127).

Similarly, Hodgson employed “concerned minorities” in his study of what he called Islamicate civilization. In his own words, he defined them as “peoples among whom a few privileged men shared such masterpieces and discoveries . . .” (Ibid, p.90). The same class of people is also mentioned in another place as “. . . in general all the more imaginative activities among the more cultivated of the population (p.92). Again, more precisely this time, defined them as peoples of “concerned minority for whom cultural or spiritual ideals are a major driving force” (Ibid, p.93). As Burke noted “Hodgson's theory of civilizational studies suggests that an inherently conservative culture will be offset by the periodic interventions of the men and women of conscience in each era, whose insights forge new strands in the ongoing cultural dialogue” (Burke, 1979; p.256). However, Hodgson’s creative minorities, unlike Toynbee’s creative minorities, do not have whatever it takes to facilitate the emergence of a new civilization. They just simply play some key roles, particularly in the development of a religion but not necessarily in the culture. In this connection, he argued that,

A fresh sense of impact from whatever it may be in the cosmic presence that is seen as transcending the natural order may be felt strongly by only the concerned minority. But if these take it seriously, it can touch every point in the natural order of human affairs: it can reorient people's aesthetic sense, their political norms, their whole moral life, and with these everything else that can be seen to matter. A religious commitment, by its nature, tends to be more total than any other (Hodgson Vol. I, 1974; p.94).

This minority group, defined and remolded in different ways, also appeared in the writings of F. Guizot. His characterization of this group mostly resembles Toynbee's features. Guizot defined and characterized his minorities as follows:

When a moral change is operated in man, when he acquires an idea, or a virtue, or a faculty, more than he had before in a word, when he develops himself individually, what is the desire, what the want, which at the same moment takes possession of him? It is the desire, the want, to communicate the new sentiment to the world about him, to give realization to his thoughts externally. As soon as a man acquires anything, as soon as his being takes in his own conviction a new development, assumes an additional value, forthwith he attaches to this new development, this fresh value, the idea of possession; he feels himself *impelled, compelled*, by his instinct, by an inward voice, to extend to others the change, the amelioration, which has been accomplished in his own person. We owe the *great reformers* solely to this cause; the *mighty men* who have changed the face of the world, after having changed themselves, were urged onward, were guided on their course, by no other want than this (Emphasis mine, Guizot, Vol. I, pp.14-15).

Karl Jaspers and Sezai Karakoç also employed their own respective creative minorities. For Karl Jaspers, what he called “a process of becoming and self-transformation” took place in prehistory. This happened in two ways, one of them concerns his creative minorities. He believed that they played a transformative role in human history. In his own words, he said: “the emergence of men to be emulated, in the shape of rulers and sages, whose deeds, achievements, and destinies were in full view of the masses this was the first step toward setting men free from the apathy of self-awareness and the fear of demons”. It should not be forgotten, as I discussed this in Chapter four, that Jaspers's Axial Period is all about creative minorities and how they changed the face of the world for good. They are principally religious and spiritual leaders, and philosophers, although the first two constitute the fundamental essence of the events making up the age. When it

comes Sezai Karakoç, (and this applies to Al Faruqi as well), he believed that prophets were responsible for making civilizations (“*Medeniyet Kurucuları*”).

8.1.3. One Culture, Three Visions

One interesting finding of the present study was related to convergence and divergence in the broader civilization studies. What makes the following thinkers exceptional is the fact that even though all of them belong to the French society, they present views of civilization in many ways different. This difference principally concerns the nature and future of civilization, particularly of European civilization. While Rousseau (1712-1778) saw all problems in the very idea of civilization, Comte (1798-1857) championed the advent of civilization based on reason and science. Guizot (1783-1874), however, feared for the tendencies of European civilization in the late nineteenth century. Even though civilization goes to undermine religion (expressed through faith, morality, and “the Master of the universe”) for Rousseau, Guizot made religion an integral aspect of European civilization. Yet, it cannot be claimed that Rousseau’s negative view of civilization emanated from the same disdain for religion as Comte. To the contrary, he appears more concerned about the future of religion under the “negative” effects of civilization.

In spite of these, there are also other interesting correspondences, especially between Comte and Guizot in their studies of European civilization. For instance, both thinkers believed in the idea of progress in the concept of civilization. Although Guizot argued for what can be called “conditional progress”, of protecting and nurturing faith and morality grounded in Providence, Comte completely embraced progress in its all facets. The other and quite interesting similarity between Comte and Guizot is the idea of European civilization and the role of French society assumed in it. Both unequivocally made it clear that French civilization was the center of Europe and its civilization. Both made France at the top of their “civilizational hierarchy”, while, at the same time, made Spain the least civilized (or contributor to) European civilization. Although researches

might be needed, Guizot went to the extent of assuming that Spain had almost nothing to contribute to European civilization. In this connection, he pointed out that,

Neither great minds nor great events have been wanting in Spain; understanding and human society have at times appeared there in all their glory; but these are isolated facts, cast here and there throughout Spanish history, like palm-trees on a desert. The fundamental character of civilization, its continued and universal progress, seems denied in Spain, as much to the human mind as to society. There has been either solemn immobility, or fruitless revolutions. Seek one great idea, or social amelioration, one philosophical system or fertile institution, which Spain has given to Europe; there are none such: this nation has remained isolated in Europe; it has received as little from it as it has contributed to it. I should have reproached myself, had I wholly omitted its name; but its civilization is of small importance in the history of the civilization of Europe (Vol. II, 1887; pp.17-18).

8.2. Conclusion

Based on a close survey of literatures in the social sciences, it is at least safe to point out that ideas having origins in religion, institutional, monotheistic, spiritual or so, assume important role in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations. As the aforementioned discussion tried to flesh out, this general tendency is the leading trend in the study of Islamic civilization. In other words, even the historic-empirical trend in the study of Islamic civilization generally take it axiomatic, despite having differential degree of analysis and focuses, the role of Islam in the study of Islamic (ate)civilization. This applies not only to the *study* of Islamic civilization, but also in the *making* of it. That is, the advent and expansion ("growth", "maturity") of Islamic (ate) civilization owes its ontology to its religious foundation. Again, thinkers took own nuanced positions in this regard but the ideas and contexts of Islam remain as an inseparable elements generally recycled by many, if not all, in the studies of Islamic civilization.

When it comes to Western civilization, two seemingly mutually exclusive approaches generally dominate the knowledge production. Although religion of some sort dominated earlier scholarships in the field, many thinkers in the later periods, realizing either the diminishing role of religion in the post-nineteenth century West or arguing for the inevitability of the advent ("progress") of Western society and culture (through the lending hand of modern science, rationalism, naturalism, philosophy, technology, and art), generally projected "religion-free" Western (modern) civilization. Put differently, although some studies argue for the religious-based, or at least one integral part of the, origin of Western civilization, especially considering those falling under the religiophilosophical trend, the overwhelming knowledge production tend to view Western civilization barely having religious dimension (particularaly christianity), institutional, spritual or so.

Lastly, the present study into the nature of relation between religion and civilization in "civilization studies" with a particular focus on Islamic and Western civilizations revealed some important issues in the study of civilization. One is the study of

civilization generally moves from the pure and theoretical conception of “civilization” to the empirical, historical, and sociological “civilizations”. The difference in the presence of many civilizations owes to many factors, both in the study of a civilization (from within) and (across) civilizations. This depends largely on the ontological, epistemological, and methodological preferences of the studies and thinkers. Similarly, this can be appraised as a bias or precommitment of the students of these civilizations. Due primarily to these conditions, it was also possible to unveil some of the most dominant theoretical and methodological trajectories characterizing the study of Islamic and Western civilizations. While religiophilosophical, historic-empirical and multiplex trends remain the most common currents in the study of Islamic civilization, only the first two trends overwhelmingly characterize the study of Western civilization.

The second point relates to the role of religion in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations. As the aforementioned discussion showed, it could be argued that religion remains as an important aspect of the study of civilization, mainly Islamic and Western civilizations. This may involve engaging religion in civilization studies, through either accommodation or outright negation or rejection. While the former largely characterizes the study of Islamic civilization, the later characterizes the theories of Western civilization, especially in the modern period. Finally, both in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations, the role of religious personalities and reformers, philosophers, spiritual leaders and reformers, politicians and elites constitute a principal frame of reference. In other words, ideas, which could be religious, philosophical, or spiritual, having transformative effects at a societal or high culture level were spearheaded by “torch bearers”, “concerned minorities”, and “creative minorities”. This class of people, the present study finds, are very important in the study of civilization in general, and in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations, in particular.

Table 1.1. A Brief Summary of the Trends and Theories

Trends in Civilization Studies: Islamic & Western Civilizations	Ontological, Epistemological, and Methodological Features (applying to most of the theories in “Civilization Studies”)	Studied Theories of Islamic and Western Civilizations		Religion vis-à-vis Civilization: Nature of Relations	
		Western	Islamic	Islamic Civilization	Western Civilization
Historic-Empirical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Historicism, cultural relativism, empirical (1) (2) -Indifferent to or against ideals/ideas (1) -Ethnologic-ethnographic(2) -Evolution (2) -Predeterministic, stage oriented, (1) (2-Toynbee) -Racist (Euro-centric) (1, Comte) -Positivism, natural philosophy(1) 	Spengler & Comte (1)	Hodgson & Toynbee (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Religion as an important analytical tool -No direct relation²³⁴ -Symbolic and identity related role of religion -Influence of precommitments (stated or not) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“Essence of civilization is irreligion” - Opposite direction - Civilization by reason and science
Religiophilosophical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Religious-spiritual figures, philosophers, (3) (4) -Phenomenological, (3) (4) -Religious ideas institutions, (3,4) -Human freedom, purpose, & faith (3) (4) -Man’s vicegerency (4) -Monotheism, holy texts (4) 	Guizot & Jaspers (3)	Karakoç & Al-Faruqi (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Religious determinism -Prophets as torch bearers of civilization -Monotheism or Al- Tawhid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Religion as the main organizing principle, but not the only Complimentary -Pessimistic about the future of religion
Multiplex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interplay of ideas and approaches (5) -Multiplicity-complexity in methods & abstraction (5) -Lived experiences (5) -Nature, religion, and empirical realities(5) 	—————	Ibn Khaldun & Halim Paşa (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indispensability of religion Complimentary 	—————

²³⁴ Here I should mention, as I have in the main body of this dissertation, Toynbee made significant effort to make Western civilization closely aligned with Christianity (teachings and the “Christian Church”). However, as I made it clear, in Toynbee’s study of Islamic civilization, it is hardly possible to find any conceivable alignment, comparable to Christianity to Western civilization, between Islam and Islamic civilization, either in Arabic or Iranic forms.

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