

Sunnatullah al-Ijtima'iyah as a Compass for Civilization: Reconstructing the Quranic Laws of History within the Paradigm of Modern Human Social Transformation

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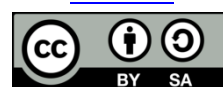
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ABSTRACT

Civilizations throughout history exhibit a recurring pattern of rise and fall, yet whether this pattern follows a discernible law remains a fundamental question. Previous thematic exegesis studies have mapped Quranic terms related to social transformation such as al-taghyir (change), al-ibtila' (trial), al-tamhish (purification/testing), and al-tamkin (empowerment/establishment)-but have not regularly linked them to Ibn Khaldun's classical theory of civilization or the multidimensional crises facing modern civilization. This research addresses that gap by reconstructing the concept of sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyah (divine social laws) into an integrated paradigm serving as a "civilizational compass" with three functions: diagnostic (identifying a civilization's stage of transformation), corrective (revealing causal factors requiring rectification), and predictive (projecting the trajectory of social change). This study employs a qualitative-descriptive library research methodology using the thematic exegesis (maudhu'i) approach. The findings indicate that sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyah operates through the stages of al-ibtila', al-tamhish, and al-tamkin, and that the rise and fall of civilizations adhere to strict principles of causality: collective faith, self-reform, and justice drive prosperity, whereas structural injustice, elite extravagance (mutrafin), and ecological exploitation precipitate collapse a pattern reinforced both theoretically and historically by Ibn Khaldun's concept of 'ashabiyyah (social solidarity) and by contemporary studies of the Mughal Dynasty. The research concludes that these Quranic laws of history remain theoretically and practically relevant, serving as a compass for guiding modern society's social transformation toward distributive justice, trustworthy leadership, a culture of knowledge, and ecological sustainability.

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INTRODUCTION

The history of human civilization is a long journey filled with alternating cycles of glory and destruction. The Roman Empire, Persia, Ancient Egypt, and even the Islamic civilization that was once the center of world science, all experienced the same pattern: birth, growth, reaching the peak of glory, then decline and collapse (Harahap, 2015). This phenomenon of ebb and flow raises a fundamental question: does the glory and destruction of a civilization occur randomly, or does it follow certain laws that can be studied and predicted? The Qur'an provides a comprehensive answer to this question through the concept of sunnatullah, namely the laws of God that are fixed, universal, and consistently applicable to all human civilizations throughout history (Shihab, 2009).

In the past decade, thematic interpretation studies have yielded a number of important findings regarding Qur'anic terms related to social change. (Maya, 2018) maps four patterns of social transformation in the Qur'an, namely al-taghyir (change), al-ibtila' (testing/selection), al-tamhish (sorting), and al-tamkin (confirmation of glory), and emphasizes that social transformation is inevitable because it is part of the sunnatullah in the reality of life. Similar findings are supported by (Roni, M., Anzaikhan, M., & Nasution, 2021), which shows that the concept of al-ibtila' functions as a moral-spiritual selection mechanism that leads society towards a more ideal transformation. Both studies have succeeded in mapping the linguistic and theological patterns of social transformation, but neither has systematically linked these patterns to classical civilization theories (such as Ibn Khaldun's 'ashabiyyah theory) or to the multidimensional structural crises of modern civilization: the ecological crisis, the leadership crisis, and the global justice crisis.

Ibn Khaldun emerged as a leading figure among 14th-century Muslim scholars and philosophers, widely known for his profound understanding of the nature of society and civilization. Central to his intellectual legacy is his seminal work, *the Muqaddimah*, completed in 1377 as the foundation for his social theory. Serving as an introduction to his broader historiographical masterpiece, *Kitab al- 'Ibar* (also known as the World History), *the Muqaddimah* is a comprehensive study encompassing historiography, sociology, economics, and political science. In this work, Ibn Khaldun outlines his theories on the cyclical nature of history, the ebb and flow of civilizations, and the crucial role of the 'a ṣ abiyyah in the development of society (Fuad, 2026).

Discussions regarding 'ashabiyah usually redefine its meaning according to its definition. As Rosenthal states, Ibn Khaldun used various terms to interpret 'ashabiyah and applied them to all aspects he studied, including social, political, and economic contexts. Ibn Khaldun himself only explained the source and function of 'ashabiyah in the *Muqaddimah*, without specifically mentioning its specific definition. Therefore, to understand the meaning of 'ashabiyah, it is necessary to understand the context in which the term is used. Ibn Khaldun did use this term in various social systems, but it was first used when referring to the Bedouin community. After that,

the term was used to refer to religious organizations, and then to the Hadlrah community (Arifin, 2020).

Herein lies the gap *and* novelty *that* this research attempts to fill. Rather than stopping at identifying terms or factors for the rise and fall of civilization separately as in previous studies, this research reconstructs the sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah as a complete paradigm of social transformation, which bridges the normative text of the Qur'an, Ibn Khaldun's empirical-historical theory of civilization, and the reality of the contemporary civilizational crisis. In other words, this research positions the Qur'anic law of history not merely as a theological account of the past, but as a normative compass that actively guides the direction of social transformation of modern society towards a more just, dignified, and sustainable civilization.

The metaphor of the civilization compass in this study is not merely a rhetorical decoration in the title, but rather an analytical framework used consistently throughout the discussion, with three interrelated functions. First, the diagnostic function: sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah is used to read the position of a civilization in its stages of social transformation, whether it is in the phase of al-ibtila' (testing), al-tamhish (separating between the strong and the fragile), or al-tamkin (confirming glory). Second, the corrective function: the cause-and-effect pattern in sunnatullah indicates concrete factors that need to be corrected so that social transformation leads to al-tamkin, not to destruction. Third, the predictive function: because sunnatullah is fixed and consistent (al-tawaququ'iyyah), the direction of a society's social transformation can essentially be projected if its cause-and-effect pattern is recognized early on. These three functions of the compass are the common thread of the analysis in *the Results and Discussion section*.

In recent years, numerous studies have attempted to interpret the Qur'an's message about social change and transformation using diverse approaches. (Maya, 2018), for example, explores four important patterns in the Qur'an: al-taghyir (change), al-ibtila' (testing), al-tamhish (sorting), and al-tamkin (affirming glory), then asserts that social change is not accidental, but rather part of the sunnatullah that inevitably occurs in human life. This finding is further enriched by (Roni, M., Anzaikhan, M., & Nasution, 2021), who show that al-ibtila' is not merely a test, but a moral-spiritual selection mechanism that slowly shapes society towards a more ideal direction. On the other hand, (Wazir et al., 2022) takes readers into the realm of civilizational history, by showing how the erosion of social solidarity ('ashabiyyah), elite luxury, and internal conflict were the main causes of the collapse of the Mughal Dynasty from Ibn Khaldun's perspective.

However, amidst the richness of these studies, there still seems to be a space that has not been fully explored: what if these Qur'anic patterns of social transformation were not only read separately, but were brought together with classical civilization theory and confronted with the multidimensional crisis experienced by modern civilization? This question then inspired this research to reconstruct the sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah not merely as a theological concept, but as a complete paradigm of social transformation, a "civilizational compass" that bridges the text of the Qur'an, the thoughts of Ibn Khaldun, and the reality of the contemporary crisis.

Based on the above description, this research is formulated in three main questions: (1) How does the concept of sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah shape the laws of the history of civilization and at the same time become the basis of social transformation from the perspective of the

Qur'an? (2) What factors cause the success and destruction of a civilization according to the verses of the Qur'an, and how is it correlated with Ibn Khaldun's theory of civilization? (3) How is the relevance and actualization of the laws of the history of Qur'anic civilization in responding to the dynamics of social transformation of modern human civilization? This research aims to analyze this concept through a thematic interpretation approach, identify the factors of the success and destruction of civilization, and formulate its relevance for the development of a just modern civilization. Theoretically, this research enriches the treasury of thematic interpretation studies on sunnatullah and social transformation; practically, it is expected to become material for critical reflection for society, academics, and policy makers in responding to the crisis of contemporary civilization.

METHOD

This research is a library research *with* a qualitative-descriptive approach, using the maudhu'i (thematic) interpretation method as formulated by (Al-Farmawi, 1996). The primary data sources are the verses of the Qur'an that contain the term sunnatullah and its derivations (QS. Al-Ahzab/33:62; QS. Al-Fath/48:23; QS. Fatir/35:43; QS. Ali Imran/3:137; QS. Ar-Ra'd/13:11), along with verses from the stories of previous peoples that explain the factors of glory and destruction of civilization (QS. Al-A'raf/7:96; QS. An-Nisa'/4:58; QS. Al-Isra'/17:16; QS. Al-Qasas/28:58; QS. Ar-Rum/30:41).

Secondary data sources include classical tafsir books (Jami' al-Bayan by al-Thabari, Tafsir Al-Azhar by Hamka) and contemporary tafsir (Tafsir Al-Mishbah and Wawasan Al-Qur'an by M. Quraish Shihab), the work of Ibn Khaldun's theory of civilization (Muqaddimah), as well as supporting literature in the form of journal articles discussing Qur'anic social transformation and the theory of the rise and fall of civilization. Data analysis was conducted descriptively-analytical.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sunnatullah as the Law of History and the Basis for Social Transformation

Sunnatullah in the Qur'anic perspective is not only an epistemological principle that explains the physical world, but also a moral principle that regulates social change and historical events (Hashi, 2025). The laws of the history of civilization in the Islamic perspective refer to God's decrees that regulate the journey and dynamics of human life collectively in the course of time. This decree is known as sunnatullah, namely Divine law that is permanent, universal, and objective. In the context of civilization studies, the sunnatullah referred to specifically is sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah, namely the Divine laws that regulate the social, political, and civilizational dynamics of humanity throughout history (Shihab, 2007).

"(The punishment) is the sunnatullah which applies to those who have passed before you. You will not find any change in the sunnatullah." (QS. Al-Ahzab/33:62).

Hamka in Tafsir Al-Azhar interprets this verse as an affirmation that the historical laws that befell previous ummah are the same laws that apply to subsequent ummah (Hamka, 2015). Based on thematic studies, sunnatullah as a historical law of civilization has five characteristics: al-tsabat (fixed and unchanging), al-'umum wa al-syumul (universal and comprehensive), al-mawdu'iyyah (objective and impartial), al-tawaququ'iyyah (predictable and learnable), and al-

takamul (comprehensive and interconnected) (Abuddin Nata, 2011) , (Umar, 2014) , (Ma'arif, 2009) .

This characteristic of al-tawaqu'iyah makes the sunnatullah not merely a theological dogma, but rather a paradigm of social transformation whose patterns can be mapped. (Maya, 2018) identified three recurring patterns of transformation in the Qur'an: al-ibtila' (the process of testing or selection), al-tamhish (the process of distinguishing between right and wrong), and al-tamkin (the process of affirming and bestowing glory). Similarly, (Roni, M., Anzaikhan, M., & Nasution, 2021) asserted that al-ibtila' functions as a moral-spiritual selection mechanism that filters society toward a more idealistic and constructive social form. These two patterns demonstrate that social change in the Qur'an does not occur linearly, but rather through stages of testing, selection, and confirmation that are repeated throughout history.

"Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change the condition of themselves." (QS. Ar-Ra'd/13:11).

This verse is the pivot of the entire Qur'anic theory of social transformation: historical change is always correlated with the moral, spiritual, and social qualities of its society, not with unconditional deterministic destiny. Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406 CE) was the figure who most successfully formalized the Qur'anic sunnatullah into a scientific theory of civilization through his work Muqaddimah, especially the concept of 'ashabiyyah (social solidarity) as the driving force of the rise of civilization (Khaldun, 2011) . (Sardar, 1985) assessed that Ibn Khaldun's greatest contribution was the empirical-historical proof that the laws of Qur'anic history are indeed valid, thus bridging normative texts with historical reality. Thus, the sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah can be understood as a unified paradigm: it is a fixed and universal law, as well as an observable process of social transformation that can be studied through a thematic approach or empirical theory of civilization.

It is important to distinguish that the sunnatullah in the Qur'an covers two interrelated but not identical domains: sunnatullah al-kawniyyah, namely the laws that govern the physical nature and the cosmos (for example, the regularity of the orbit of celestial bodies), and sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah, namely the laws that govern the social-societal dynamics that are the focus of this study (Nata, 2011) . Both share the same basic characteristics, as emphasized repeatedly in the Qur'an, including in QS. Fatir/35:43 which states that sunnatullah will never experience change (tabdil) or shift (tahwil), and QS. Ali 'Imran/3:137 which commands humanity to "walk on the earth" to witness for themselves the consequences that befell those who denied sunnatullah in the past. This explicit command to carry out historical observation is the basis for the fact that sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah is empirical, verifiable across generations, and not merely a belief accepted blindly.

The five characteristics of sunnatullah, al-tsabat, al-'umum wa al-syumul, al-mawdu'iyyah, al-tawaqu'iyah, and al-takamul, are thus not just separate theological taxonomies, but rather a unified, interlocking system. The nature of al-tsabat ensures that the causal patterns that prevailed in the civilizations of Saba', 'Ad, or Thamud in the past remain valid today; the nature of al-'umum wa al-syumul ensures that the law does not discriminate against the religious or ethnic identity of a nation; the nature of al-mawdu'iyyah emphasizes that what is assessed is the real condition of a society, not its formal label; while al-takamul explains that the factors of success (faith, justice, knowledge) and factors of destruction (tyranny, luxury, division)

do not stand separately, but form a complete cause-and-effect network. This systemic unity is the analytical bridge to the next sub-topic: because sunnatullah is al-takamul, the factors of the success and destruction of civilization cannot be understood as a list of independent causes, but must be read as a series of coherent stages of social transformation, from al-ibtala' to al-tamkin or destruction.

Factors of Success and Destruction as Stages of Social Transformation: between the Sunnatullah of the Qur'an and the Ashabiyyah Theory

If the previous sub-discussion mapped the sunnatullah as a conceptual paradigm of social transformation, then this sub-discussion places the factors of the glory and destruction of civilization as the concrete content of each stage of this transformation, namely the decision points that determine whether a society moves towards al-tamkin (confirmation of glory) or instead falls into destruction after failing to pass through al-ibtala' and al-tamhish. This is where the diagnostic and corrective function of the compass of sunnatullah works: the Qur'an does not simply record historical events, but explicitly indicates variables that need to be maintained or corrected. M. Quraish Shihab explains that these factors are presented in the Qur'an not to scare, but rather as a roadmap of how sunnatullah works in history (Shihab, 2007). As emphasized in contemporary studies of Ibn Khaldun's thought, 'asabiyyah functions as a universal principle of collective action and historical transformation that remains relevant for analyzing political and social dynamics across civilizations (O'g'li, 2025).

a. *Determining Factors for the Success of Transformation Towards Al-Tamkin*

First, collective faith and piety (QS. Al-A'raf/7:96) are the foundation of a country's blessings as well as the initial capital that determines the outcome of a society's test (al-ibtala'). Quraish Shihab emphasizes that the phrase *ahl al-qura* (people of the land) indicates that this blessing is collective, not the monopoly of a particular elite (Shihab, 2002). In Ibn Khaldun's framework, this condition correlates with the power of 'ashabiyyah which originates from shared spiritual values (Khaldun, 2011). Second, the spirit of self-change and work ethic (QS. Ar-Ra'd/13:11) are absolute requirements for social transformation to continue to the al-tamhish stage, namely the process of distinguishing between a society that truly changes substantively and one that only changes externally: a nation that is enthusiastic about striving for change will continue to experience progress, while a complacent one enters a phase of decline. (Khaldun, 2011). Third, the upholding of justice and trust (QS. An-Nisa'/4:58), which includes the trust of power, the trust of knowledge, and the trust of natural resources (Shihab, 2002), functions as a support that leads a civilization from al-tamhish to al-tamkin; Ibn Khaldun proves historically that the collapse of a dynasty is always preceded by a betrayal of the trust (Khaldun, 2011).

b. *Factors that Lead to Transformation Failure and Destruction*

On the other hand, the Qur'an also maps the variables that thwart social transformation midway, before it can reach al-tamkin. First, the tyranny and luxury of the elite that exceeds the limits (QS. Al-Isra'/17:16): the mutrafain (elite who are luxurious) forget their social-spiritual responsibilities to the point of bringing destruction (Az-Zuhaili, 2013). Ibn Khaldun called this phase a stage of excessive luxury that marked the downfall three to four generations after the founding of a dynasty (Khaldun, 2011). Second, pride in favors (QS. Al-Qasas/28:58) which appears in the story of Qarun, Fir'aun, and Haman, three symbols of arrogance and arbitrary

power, is a form of failure to pass al-tamhish because society fails to separate the temptation of luxury from its moral responsibilities (Az-Zuhaili, 2013) . Third, the sunnatullah as an unchanging law (QS. Al-Fath/48:23) emphasizes that victory and defeat are subject to Divine law that applies consistently regardless of religious, ethnic, or geographical identity, meaning that this stage of social transformation applies universally, not only to certain groups. Fourth, ecological damage due to the denial of the role of the caliph (QS. Ar-Rum/30:41): damage on land and sea due to human actions is not intended to punish, but to raise awareness so that misguided social transformation can be corrected before it reaches a point of no return (Shihab, 2002) ; Ibn Khaldun linked this phenomenon to the weakening of the moral authority of leaders so that the exploitation of natural resources becomes uncontrolled (Khaldun, 2011) .

c. *Science and Unity as Determinants of the Direction of Transformation*

The Qur'an also places knowledge and the unity of the people as variables that determine the direction of social transformation. A strong scientific culture becomes a support for society to pass through the al-tamhish phase safely, because knowledge allows a nation to read and correct its own errors before it is too late; conversely, the weakening of the spirit of thinking and innovation from within society is almost always an early sign of decline (Rahman, 1982) . In line with that, unity ('ashabiyyah in Ibn Khaldun's term, or ukhuwah in Qur'anic term) functions as a glue that maintains the solidity of a society in facing trials (al-ibtila'); conversely, division (tafarruq) accelerates the selection process (al-tamhish) in a destructive direction, because the collective energy that should be used for construction is instead drained by internal conflict (Ma'arif, 2009) . These two factors explain why a nation that is materially strong can still collapse if it loses its scientific basis and social solidarity, and conversely why a society that is relatively simple materially but strong in knowledge and unity can survive long historical tests.

The pattern of factors of success and factors of destruction above does not stand as a list of separate causes, but is observed as a whole in one story that is repeatedly mentioned in the Qur'an, namely the story of the people of Saba' (QS. Saba' /34:15–19). Initially, the land of Saba' is depicted as a civilization that has achieved al-tamkin: a good land (*baladun thayyibatun*) with two fertile gardens on the right and left as symbols of collective blessings resulting from faith and work ethic. However, when its inhabitants turned from gratitude to arrogance over prosperity, the sunnatullah worked through the stage of al-tamhish: the Ma'rib dam that was the backbone of their economy collapsed, and the once prosperous land was scattered until it remained only as a story for those who would learn a lesson. This story is a brief but complete illustration of the overall thesis of this sub-topic: glory (al-tamkin) that is not maintained with gratitude, justice, and knowledge will be tested again (al-ibtila'), and failure to pass this test leads to al-tamhish which ends in destruction, exactly as mapped out in the characteristics of al-takamul that have been described in the previous sub-topic.

The correlation between the stages of Qur'anic social transformation and Ibn Khaldun's theory of 'ashabiyyah' has also been empirically proven in contemporary studies. Wazir, Dawar, Khan, and Khalid (2022) show, through a study of the Mughal Dynasty in South Asia, that the erosion of 'ashabiyyah, stemming from the weakening of social solidarity and the spread of elite luxury, was a determining factor in the decline of a great power even though it appeared to remain materially and militarily strong (Wazir, A., Dawar, S., Khan, H., & Khalid, 2022) . This finding empirically confirms the diagnostic-corrective function of the sunnatullah compass: the

destruction of civilization is not a sudden event, but rather the cumulative consequence of failed social transformations, namely the denial of justice, trust, knowledge, and social solidarity that is allowed to continue for a long time without improvement.

All of the historical factors and illustrations above confirm that the diagnostic and corrective function of the compass of sunnatullah is not merely a framework for reading the past, but rather a causal model that applies across time as emphasized by the characteristics of al-tsabat and al-'umum wa al-syumul in the first sub-discussion. The remaining question, and the focus of the next sub-discussion, is to what extent this same pattern can be recognized in modern civilization, so that the third function of the compass of sunnatullah, namely the predictive function, can be tested for its relevance to the social transformation of today's society.

The Relevance and Actualization of Historical Law in the Social Transformation of Modern Civilization

If the diagnostic and corrective functions of the compass of sunnatullah have been tested in past civilizations, this sub-topic examines the third function, namely the predictive function, by projecting the same causal pattern on the dynamics of social transformation of modern civilization. Modern civilization has achieved unprecedented scientific and technological progress, but on the other hand is hit by serious crises: economic inequality, environmental damage, international conflict, moral-spiritual crisis, and leadership crisis marked by corruption and abuse of power (Harahap, 2015) . This fact confirms that material progress alone does not guarantee the sustainability of a civilization.

Muqowim and Lessy (2019) in their study of the decline of science in the contemporary Muslim world found that the determining factors of decline are not merely limited resources, but also the weakening of structural support, the loss of scientific networks, and the fading of the scientific ethos that was once supported by Qur'anic values (Muqowim, & Lessy, 2019) . This finding strengthens the thesis that the sunnatullah works across time: the factors of the rise and fall of civilizations during the golden age of Islam are exactly the same factors that operate in the dynamics of modern civilization (Shihab, 2007) .

The relevance of the Qur'anic historical law to modern civilization can be seen from three successive transformations: understanding, applying, and building. At the level of understanding, the causal pattern taught by the Qur'an helps unravel the roots of the leadership crisis, global economic injustice, and international conflict as repetitions of old patterns, not new phenomena (Rahman, 1982) . These crises, when read through the compass of sunnatullah built in sub-topics 1 and 2, can be diagnosed as symptoms of neglecting the same pair of factors of justice-injustice, knowledge-ignorance, and unity-disunity that destroyed the civilizations of Saba', 'Ad, and Thamud.

At the level of implementation, social justice is the first Qur'anic value that is most urgently needed to be actualized amidst the ever-widening global economic gap. The mechanism of zakat, the prohibition of usury, and the encouragement of sharing are not merely fiqh rituals, but rather instruments of social transformation that are structurally designed to prevent the accumulation of wealth in a handful of elites, precisely the mutrafin factor that has been identified as a trigger for destruction in sub-topic 2 (Al-Qaradawi, 1997) . A thematic study of Surah An-Nisa' can be used as comparative material in this discussion, which shows that the Qur'an offers

transformative principles of justice, rejects oppression, and maintains the balance of social relations, which is in line with the corrective function of the compass of sunnatullah in diagnosing the structural injustice of modern civilization (Mas Zahrotul Firdaus, Mohammad Mas'ud Ubaidillah, 2026) .

The second value is leadership as a mandate: in the midst of the crisis of public trust that is currently affecting many countries, the principle of mandate emphasizes that the sustainability of a civilization depends on the extent to which its leaders avoid betraying the mandate of power, the mandate of knowledge, and the mandate of natural resources, three dimensions of mandate that have been described in the previous sub-discussion (Shihab, 2002) . The third value is the spirit of science: as shown by Muqowim and Lessy (2019) above, the decline of a civilization is almost always preceded by a weakening of the culture of thinking and innovation, so that the strengthening of the scientific ecosystem is an absolute requirement for modern society to pass from the al-tamhish phase to al-tamkin.

The fourth value is ecological responsibility: the global environmental crisis, from climate change to ecosystem damage, is a contemporary manifestation of the damage to land and sea due to human actions as described in QS. Ar-Rum/30:41, which demands that modern humans re-actualize their role as responsible caliphs, not as owners who are free to exploit. It can also be seen in the study of Islamic ecotheology on the Tafsir al-Qur'an ṭub i showing that the concept of khal i fah, ' im a rat al-ar ḍ , and the prohibition of fas a ḍ form an environmental ethical framework that emphasizes *stewardship*, sustainability, and intergenerational justice, which is in line with the predictive function of the compass of sunnatullah in diagnosing the modern ecological crisis as a contemporary form of damage to land and sea due to human actions (Khasani, 2025) .

At the constructive level, the Qur'an offers an ethical foundation for science and technology, placing knowledge not as an end in itself but as a means of realizing benefits (Auda, 2008) . This maqasid al-shari'ah framework is relevant for correcting the direction of contemporary technological progress, especially artificial intelligence and automation, which if developed without a clear moral direction has the potential to repeat the pattern of *mutraf*in destruction in a new form, namely the inequality of technological control between a handful of corporations and the majority of the world's population. The Qur'an also offers a model of civilization that balances material progress with moral responsibility, and encourages a culture of dialogue between civilizations as a way out of global polarization, rather than the domination of one party over another (Nasr, 1981) , (Sardar, 1985) . The maqa ṣ id i approach to social verses shows that Qur'anic justice has normative, relational, and structural dimensions, which are in line with the demands of sunnatullah al-ijtima ' iyyah that modern social transformation be directed towards distributive justice and protection of human dignity (Akmal Rizki Gunawan Hsb, Abdul Aziz Harahap, 2026) .

Thus, the sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyah functions as a compass of civilization: it not only explains why past civilizations rose and fell, but actively guides the direction of the social transformation of modern society towards distributive justice, trustworthy leadership, a culture of knowledge, and ecological sustainability, as an answer to the multidimensional crisis of contemporary civilization.

The three sub-topics above ultimately form a single, coherent argument, not three separate discussions. Sub-topic 1 establishes the sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyah as a conceptual

framework and compass with three functions (diagnostic, corrective, predictive); sub-topic 2 fills the framework with empirical-historical content in the form of concrete factors of glory and destruction, which are tested both in the Qur'anic story of the Sabaeen people and in contemporary studies of the Mughal Dynasty; and sub-topic 3 projects the same pattern to modern civilization, proving the predictive function of the compass while also confirming that modern crises can be diagnosed and corrected using variables identical to those applicable to previous civilizations. This coherence is proof that *sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah* is not just a series of separate doctrines, but a complete paradigm of social transformation as promised in the title and objectives of this study.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes with three main findings. First, *the sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah* is an objective, definite, and universal divine social law, as well as a paradigm of social transformation that works through the patterns of *al-ibtala'*, *al-tamhish*, and *al-tamkin*, so that it is not merely a theological doctrine but an analytical framework that can be studied and predicted. Second, the causality of the rise and fall of civilizations works through a strict cause-and-effect principle: collective faith, an ethos of self-transformation, and justice drive success, while structural injustice, elite luxury (*mutrafin*), and ecological exploitation drive destruction, a pattern reinforced theoretically and historically by the lens of Ibn Khaldun's *'ashabiyyah* as well as contemporary studies of the collapse of great powers. Third, the Qur'anic law of history has strong theoretical and practical relevance as a compass for the social transformation of modern civilization, because material and technological progress do not guarantee the sustainability of a nation without an ethical foundation, distributive justice, trusted leadership, a culture of knowledge, and ecological sustainability.

As a novelty, this research offers a synthesis that has not been widely explored before: integrating the linguistic-theological mapping of Qur'anic social transformation with Ibn Khaldun's theory of civilization and contemporary research data, thus producing a civilization compass model that is applicable to the analysis of modern crises. Its theoretical contribution lies in explicitly placing Ibn Khaldun's theory as a secondary-theoretical lens, rather than empirical evidence, thus clarifying the epistemological limits of literature-based *thematic interpretation research*. Its practical contribution is the availability of a three-function reflective framework (diagnostic, corrective, predictive) that can be used by the public, academics, and policymakers to read the contemporary civilization crisis.

This research is limited to text and literature studies (*library research*) so it has not been empirically tested on case studies of specific civilizations or policies, and the correlation with Ibn Khaldun's theory and the study of the Mughal Dynasty is illustrative-interpretative, not a test of primary data. Further research is recommended to apply this *sunnatullah al-ijtima'iyyah framework* to empirical case studies, for example, analysis of sustainable development policies or comparative studies of the collapse and rise of contemporary nations, in order to test the explanatory power and predictive power of this paradigm more concretely.

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The first author (J) was responsible for conceptualization and writing the original draft, as well as writing, reviewing, and editing the article. The second author (F) and the third author (AA) contributed to the review and editing, validation, and formal analysis of the content of the article. The fourth author (AAB) provided project support and administration to ensure the article was well-written and suitable for publication. All authors have read and approved the published version of the manuscript.

USE OF AI TOOLS DECLARATION

The author declares that Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools were used solely for language editing, grammar checking, and clarity enhancement. AI was not used to generate core ideas, analysis, data interpretation, or scientific conclusions. The author is solely responsible for the originality, accuracy, and academic integrity of the content, and AI is not credited as an author or contributor.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article.

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