**National University of Computer and Emerging Science**

**Final Assignment:**

**Subject: Islamic and Religious Studies (IRS).**

**Title of Thesis: The contribution of Islam to Human Civilization.**

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**Introduction:**

We all know that every religion has a civilization. Every civilization has its ups and downs. A civilization is better (up) are what scholars often called its golden age. Indeed, every civilization has its golden age.

But it may have several golden ages:

* A golden age in certain domains of human life in one period of its history, another golden age in other domains, but in a different period.
* But on the other hand in Islam, its golden age in science, technology and intellectual culture about five centuries, from the ninth until the fourteenth centuries.

This is also the period of Islam’s dominance in world science and technology. During this period, Muslims made many important scientific discoveries and technological innovations, contributions to scientific culture, and advancements in intellectual culture in general. These Muslim achievements greatly influenced the European Renaissance in the 15th and 16th centuries, and the birth of modern science in the 17th century.

Moreover, given our current global situation when the worldwide focus is on Islam and the West, the subject of my thesis to remind us of things that can we contribute to a better appreciation of the civilizational significance of Islam to the West in the past and to a healthier climate for a dialogue of civilizations in our contemporary world.

“**If any religion had the chance of ruling over England, nay Europe within the next hundred years, it could be Islam.”(1)**

**“I hope the time is not far off when I shall be able to unite all the wise and educated men of all the countries and establish a uniform regime based on the principles of Qur'an which alone are true and which alone can lead men to happiness.”(2)**

**Civilization:**

It is define as “a state of human society that is very advanced and systematic. It is the flourishing of excellence of a civic idea, supported by peaceful blossom of the arts and pursuing of knowledge in which many nationality and religions may participate.

**Modern Western Civilization:**

Materialism is the core of the modern western civilization, but how this core can be protected from the aggression, that can be made to orbit in the form of discourses, issues and themes that seem humane, but actually trap. For example, the issue of human rights, democracy, gender, environment and so forth. These issues as a means to trap and hunt, where people who do not follow in his footsteps or trying to disrupt the status of social and political issue.

**Islamic Civilization:**

By Islamic civilization, we do not necessarily relate to such civilization improved by Muslims only. It is the civilization that came to be as a result of the efforts of Muslims and non-Muslims but which was based on Islamic laws.

Islam is not only a religion but also a civilization. It is an of, based on history material fact that has been on stage to do with man for over fourteen centuries. It’s about geography exert on top covers sizeable areas not only in Asia which is its motherland but also across African and European continents. Islam is also a spiritual reality which has been able to impart positively on the both the inner and the outer life of numerous human beings all over the world. Today over 1.2 billion people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds are Muslim, and historically Islam has played a important role in the improvement of certain aspects of other civilizations, especially Western civilization. Starting from the time of the Prophet Muhammad, Islam had been recognized as a power civilization capable of subjugate some other assumed insuperable powers yet oppressing weaker nations and societies.

Islamic civilization to be known not only in Arab-land but across the world. Today, Islam is not only a major religion to estimate with in today’s world, but its impact is also ostensive in the history of the Christian West, not to advert that of India and other regions of Asia and Africa. It was the fascinating and compelling social and the intellectual revolutions of Islam and not force as inaccurate claimed by some western historians that was responsible for the quick spread of Islam. Everywhere the religion spread to, it incorporated varied socio-cultural traditions of the people, sieved it to agree to the Islamic principles. Thus, many people of disparate culture and tradition favor Islamic civilization to their old civilizations.

In the eight century, there was mass conversion and migration into Islam, establishment of cities and administrative and monetary institutions as a result of the new social contract which Islam established with the Jews and the Christians.

**The Contribution of Islam to Human Civilization:**

Let us remember our great and imposing convention by briefly surveying what Islam has already contributed to the world's civilization, education, culture and to scientific development. Unlike Christianity where Religion and Science are two separate elements, the study of Science has always been agreeable with Islam. Many young Muslims are demoralized when they see the poor standard of living of Muslims throughout the world and their limited chances. They also know the unadvanced status of technology within the Muslim countries in comparison with the West. From these knowledge, they immediately leap to the conclusion that the Muslim countries are ‘backward’, because Islam cannot adapt itself to the changing condition; cannot compare new knowledge. Therefore some even go so far as to say that Islam is actually against progress and against scientific advancement. However, those Muslims who have studied the later part of Islamic history will know that this is a complete wrong concept.

Man is living, rational and cultured being; his life depends on alliance of other human beings. Man can’t attain the comfort of life even the demand of life without civilization, he needs a mode of life which will grant peace tranquility, every person tries to discover the way, acting on which difficulties will be removed from his life.

Muslims significantly contributed to human knowledge in various fields through their creations. This contribution was so great that Islamic civilization has been the earliest of the scientific, cultural genius for a long period of time, with the West benefiting from its great accomplishments.

The social lives of practically every nation endure from these incongruities bother and ups and downs. If we suppose that these differences and incongruity have no effect, here is the opinion of western experts of psychology.

The western world has a barrel of madness and other mental disorders caused by the contradictions apparent everywhere in western countries.

In this connection, communism superficially appears to be a complete code of life, but it does not provide mankind with spiritual bliss, therefore if there is any code of life today which guarantees peace and tranquility it Islam and only Islam.

Islam formed a unique bridge between the civilizations of the East and the West. Muslim scholars rescued knowledge that would have been lost for centuries, and brought something new to light each time. In these bursts of creativity, Muslims made their own contributions to the world over many centuries. Muslims saw the quest for knowledge as a religious duty. These contributions stemmed from the unique features of a religion that conferred dignity on human beings.

**Contribution of Muslim in Human Civilization:**

The immensity of the Muslims’ contributions can best be realized by recapitulating the most significant of theirs activities, considering its positive impact on Europe’s struggle to break the cult of barbarism—the Dark Ages.

* **Agriculture and Technology :**

Agriculture was a central element of Muslim trade and another determining factor in the economic and cultural expansion of the Muslim world. Little of this history is known in the West due to distorted and stereotyped notions of the world of Islam. In fact, Muslims were very knowledgeable and helped expand available agricultural products as well as introduce new ones, such as alfalfa. They implemented some worthwhile changes that increased output and strengthened economies. These innovations included the introduction of higher-yielding crops, more specialized land use, and upgraded irrigation systems. The major effects were in the production of fruit, vegetables, rice, grains, sugar cane, palms, and cotton

Muslims carried agricultural products and cultivation methods into Studies. Muslim Spain, leading to major economic growth and export to the Middle East and Asia. They brought fruit originating in Asia, such as citrus, bananas, and mangos, into other countries and farther west into Spain. They cultivated and spread the watermelon and introduced three vegetables in places beyond their origin: spinach, eggplant, and artichoke. Muslims contributed to the widespread cultivation of other food products such as hard wheat, sorghum, and rice, and in many cases to developing new varieties and increasing cultivation. Linguistics show a strong possibility that Muslims brought pasta to Italy. Muslims were responsible for extending rice consumption, helping it become a staple diet, and brought coconuts and dates westward. The strongest linguistic evidence of Muslims transporting an agricultural product to the West is the origin of the word “sugar,” which derives from the Arabic sukkar. The cotton industry was also developed in the Muslim world. The word ‘cotton’ comes from Arabic and cotton became a popular and important textile under the Muslims, with wide cultivation in most Muslim countries and into Europe. Its distribution grew into a major trade with a hub in Baghdad. Islamic civilization diffused them to many parts of the world. As demonstrated, Islam has engendered individual and community development and improvement, just as the earlier civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and China were devoted to growth rather than expansion. Muslim government also facilitated the movement of people and products with its laws, common currency, and weights and measures, as well as a network of roads and caravan routes. Muslim engineers advanced the development of irrigation systems as well as other technologies such as developing clocks and windmills, and perfume-making, carpets, and more. In all, the Muslim empire exerted a massive influence over the commercial lives of Europeans, Africans, Arabs, and Asians for many centuries. Muslim success in spreading religion and culture set the stage for economic expansion. Friendliness in trade dealings allowed Muslim techniques, products, and language to penetrate various areas of the world.

**The Establishment of the First Muslim Community:**

The first Muslim community was a melioristic society, in that Muslims changed their way of life in response to revelations of the Qur’an and the behavior of Prophet Muhammad. These elements influenced all areas of life. For example, the Qur’an emphasizes the importance of working in harmony with nature and enjoying the beauty of God’s world. Islam also gives humans a high status rather than sin at birth or reincarnation. The Qur’an describes the human body as a miracle that can acquire divine qualities. 6 In short, God elevated humankind.

The Qur’an states :

**“We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam” (17:70).**

The Prophet exemplified reason and creativity and the other teachings of the Qur’an. Muhammad, born in Makkah in 570 ce, earned a reputation for being trustworthy in his personal and business life. He received his first revelation in 610 ce and preached to his fellow Makkans, who persecuted him until his migration to the future city of Madinah. This event, al-Hijrah, marks the start of the Islamic calendar and the establishment of the first Muslim community. After several wars the Prophet and his people conquered Makkah and established it as the center of Islam. The Prophet’s vision guided this new civilization and jihad, or striving towards a worthy goal, was the tool to achieve that. The mosque became the center of community, education, and government, and a system of taxation and Muslim charity were developed to support the poor.

Prophet Muhammad was a humble and modest leader who lived normally and insisted that people, including women, be treated equally. This development was remarkable for its time, when fathers often considered the birth of a daughter to be a disgrace and frequently committed infanticide. The Prophet stated that women could keep their maiden names upon marriage and would not be under their husbands’ guardianship. Men were restricted from having innumerable wives and women were given the rights to divorce, alimony, 7 and child support. 8 Women could also own and control property and wealth. 9 These developments were far ahead of their time.

With the expansion of Islam in all geographic directions, there was a need for common understanding in the form of law. Four scholars were the original founders of Islamic law: Abu Hanifah, Malik ibn Anas, Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi and Ahmed ibn Hanbal. The first and most eminent, Abu Hanifah, used the Qur’an as the basis for his school of law, and he diligently determined which Traditions of the Prophet were authentic. His approach to Islamic law was humanistic, and his students became authorities on jurisprudence. Islamic law was established and came to form the foundation of Islamic civilization.

**Islamic Civilization in Europe and West Asia:**

The Muslim world expanded even further when the Islamic empire rapidly gained full command of the oceans. For centuries, Arabs had traveled in boats and ships and transported merchandise from port to port. Muslims developed their navigation skills and added the rudder, which the West encountered during the Crusades, and then improved the astrolabe, which they acquired from the Greeks. They also gained the magnetic needle from the Chinese and developed the compass.

Muslim navigation developed rapidly and a well-equipped navy by the time of **Uthman**, the third Caliph, resulted in eventual control of the Mediterranean. Muslim ships later moved to trade with India and China, and down the east coast of Africa. The English word admiral derives from the Arabic for commander (amir).

After Spain and Sicily, Muslims made no further efforts at major conquest and expansion. Islamic civilization had a significant impact on Sicily, in the arts, learning, and agriculture. Muslims ruled there for two hundred years. Under King Roger I, the island’s administration remained in Muslim hands, as did trade and agriculture, a fusion that created a Christian-Islamic culture. Sicily continued as a Muslim culture during the reigns of Roger II and Frederick II, and Muslim expertise in shipbuilding and sailing helped Sicily ascend as a leading maritime power during the reign of Roger II. Frederick II had an extraordinary relationship with the Muslim world to the east, and Muslim rulers were his close friends, an enthusiasm that brought him enemies in Europe.

Muslim merchants and sailors traveling worldwide produced another major Muslim contribution to geography: travel writing and records, also contributed by Jews and Christians traveling in Muslim lands. Meanwhile, Muslim conquests continued into Asia: India, southern Russia, and southwestern China. Muslims created a postal system to communicate with these farther reaches, and improved it during the Abbasids with Baghdad as its center. Such advances and explorations were in keeping with Qur’anic verses and the Hadith (sayings) of the Prophet. Muslims were open to other cultures and learned from them. Wherever it ventured, Islam initiated a milieu of civilized life. Muslim influence was seen in many towns and around the world. Pastoral regions across central Asia became Muslim owing to their proximity to trade routes. Central Asians and Sufis brought Islam to those living away from these routes, until the religion spread both north and east. Villages in the Muslim world were therefore not as isolated as those in other parts of the world. The most important contact with the cities was from teachers of religion. Islam’s conquests were not like those of other empires, for Muslim rule was largely benign. Muslims helped to enhance life in the countries where they settled, increasing trade and engendering learning.

**Divine Code of Life:**

##### Islam is the complete code of life for everyone. Everybody can readily understand the Quran and follow in the footsteps of the Prophet (P.B.U.H), to the best of his or her ability, assured by Allah that He will accept the deeds that each soul has the ability to offer (what means):

##### Allah Sated:

## **Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity. It will have [the consequence of] what [good] it has gained, and it will bear [the consequence of] what [evil] it has earned. "Our Lord, do not impose blame upon us if we have forgotten or erred. Our Lord, and lay not upon us a burden like that which you laid upon those before us. Our Lord, and burden us not with that which we have no ability to bear. And pardon us; and forgive us; and have mercy upon us. You are our protector, so give us victory over the disbelieving people."**

# **[Quran 2:286]** **Surat Al-Baqarah**

Islamic code of life is not based on fallible and limited human intellect but on the guidance of the omnipotent. The whole world acting in unison has no right to alter or to change His laws. He is maker of man and the universe.

The reformation of the soul and faith. The salient features are faith on the oneness of ALLAH, on the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) life after death. These beliefs on the basis of his thoughts and conviction. The other codes of life have the defeat of being based on external change, this is the reason why they are unable to bring about an internal revolution.

The unity of the world and creed. Islam has done away with the artificial difference between affairs of the world and affairs of faith, which we find in other religious. To be with the world is not impiety, in Islam there is no room for monasticism and forsaking the world.

Islam made clear that people should enjoy earth’s bounties within moral and ethical boundaries, and also sought to delegitimize social distinctions between classes and races. Islamic civilization transcended geographical and temporal boundaries from Europe to Asia, and thus achieved unity among divergent peoples. The position of women improved in its communities. The Islamic way of life was responsible for the creation of Islamic civilization in all

Kinds its achievements and influences.

The prime focus of Islam is to make sure that maximum of its followers rest in heavens in the afterlife. However, in order to do so, the followers have to [live this life according to the instructions of Islam](http://www.quranreading.com/blog/islamic-way-of-life-the-key-principles-to-success/) and follow the path of righteousness. Unlike other religions, the path of righteousness is not related to religious traditions and obligations only, rather righteousness is to be observed in every aspect of life and this is why Islam gives proper instructions to live life.

Before moving on to explaining how Islam gives complete code of life by giving some examples, the need is to understand the essence of being righteous or doing right deeds in this world. In Quran, Allah Almighty says:

My Everything is for AllahAllah Commands Me

**“Say: ‘Truly, my prayer, my sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. No partner has He: this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit to His Will.” (6:162-163)**

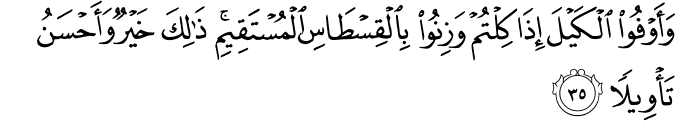
Allah Rewards on Good Deeds

**“For those who believe and work deeds of righteousness is a reward that will never (fail).”(41:8).**

* **Weighing And Measuring In Business:**

In addition to honesty in business, Islam also wants the followers to be fair especially when it comes to weighing and measuring the goods in business.

Allah Almighty says in Quran:



**“Give full measure when you measure, and weigh with an even balance. That is the best (way) and best in result.” (17:35)**

Thus, Islam wants the followers to be just in dealing and whenever it comes to weighing or measuring goods for selling and buying purposes, one needs to be fair and just in that occupation as well.

* **Individualism and Collectivism:**

Islam strikes a balance between in Individualism and collectivism and every person is individually answerable to Allah. We are enjoined to live together, not to forsake other, to help others and not to create difficulties for them.

There is no matter of life about which Islam has not spoken either in the form of verses of Quran or in the form of traditions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Therefore, whenever there is guidance required by a Muslim regarding any aspect of life, he or she must consult both these resources before going for any other book or worldly rule.

**Complete Balance:**

ISLAM has kept a complete balance between different aspects. Outside the pale of Islam, there have been numerous reformers and philosophers but their presentation is generally one sided. Some of them has stressed the spiritual aspect at the cost of the ethical but in Islam presents all aspects of life in an all embracing balance of approach.

**Simple and Logical:**

ISLAM is a religious in which there is no room whatsoever for the worship of any being other than ALLAH, its teachings are very simple and practical, and unlike other religious no one has any exclusive rights in Islam.

**Stability and Change:**

Nothing in this world is stationary, Islam is the only religion which strikes a balance in between constancy and change which proves beneficial even with passage of time.

Islam provides remedies for the problems created by the natural change every society undergoes. Islam has given such principles to mankind that are for all times and which are not affected by the passage of time or the change of climate.

**A Revolutionary and Reformative Movement:**

The Islamic view of life is not a mere adventure of the mind, it is rather a revolutionary and reformative movement. This is the reason why the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) did not confine himself so delivering the message of ALLAH, but for the welfare of man, he organized Muslims in a society, strengthened its roots in their personal lives, and made it obligatory that the creed should be propagated all over the world.

**Salient Features of Islamic Civilization:**

Main characteristics that distinguish Islamic civilization from other civilizations and give it a unique position can be discerned as

* It is based on the Islamic faith. It is monotheistic, based on the belief in the oneness of the Almighty Allah, the Creator of this universe. It is characterized by submission to the will God and service to humankind.
* It is a civilization with a universal dimension. It is not associated with a particular geographic region, race or historical era. It is predicated on the idea that man has precedence over the rest of the creatures of Allah. All human activities should lead to the happiness and welfare of man. Any action intended to serve this goal is a God-blessed action indeed.
* It is an open civilization and is not shy of deriving and drawing niceties of other civilizations in the past, provided they do not run counter to the spirit of Islam. Islam is the most pluralist religion, it conflicts with other religions.
* It is a well-balanced civilization. It insists on equilibrium between the material and the spiritual code of life. In fact, this moderation is the essence of Islamic thought and civilization.

**The Progress of Islamic Civilization:**

Under Islamic teachings and due to their turning to sciences, Muslims progressed quickly in all different aspects of civilization including the arts, architecture, fine arts, textile industry, geography, shipbuilding, seafaring, trade, exploration, discoveries, physics, chemistry, medicine, astronomy, botany and agriculture, irrigation, calligraphy, urban development, book and library, religious sciences, and so forth. Through this, they searched the brilliant Islamic civilization so amazingly that orientalists admitted to the astounding progress of Muslims in various sciences.

**“I hope the time is not far off when I shall be able to unite all the wise and educated men of all the countries and establish a uniform regime based on the principles of Quran which alone are true and which alone can lead men to happiness.”(3)**

**Islam, An Enlightened Influence Not Coercive:**

Islam was largely responsible not only for the creation of a world civilization in which people of many different racial backgrounds participated and played a central role in developing intellectual and cultural lives of theirs on a scale not witnessed before.

For nearly one thousand years Arabic remained the important intellectual and scientific language of the world. For centuries, Islam was the source of new ideas to the Greek East and Latin West. Between the 7th and 12th centuries, Islam became the center of an amazing civilization and of a great scientific, philosophic and artistic culture. Islam absorbed and added its culture to the heritage of Greece, Rome, Judaism, Christianity and the Near East.

Muslims respected religious minorities within the areas they conquered. Of course, these minorities were required to recognize Islamic political rule, pay taxes and refrain from conspiracies against the Muslims.

Islamic civilization dominated much of the Southern and parts of the Western Hemisphere between 10th and 16th centuries. However, with the rise of industrial age and the beginnings of age of colonialism, Islamic civilization suffered a serious setback. Muslims found themselves victims to the coercive and creeping Western encroachments on their culture and civilization.

**The Civilization:**

* **Historical Landmarks :**

The history of Islamic civilization spans centuries. From 6th to 7th centuries onward till date, the growth and progression of the Islamic civilization can be determined with different landmarks, since the foundation of the metropolitan Islamic polity in Median in Arabia horizontally outside to Africa, Asian and Europe.

**Islam, Epistemology and Knowledge:**

The search for rational foundations in Islam may be regarded to have begun with the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) himself. His constant prayer was:

**“God! Grant me knowledge of ultimate nature of things.”**

Islam lays equal stress on accession and revelation knowledge. Accession or scientific knowledge is required for the best of the world. Whilst, revelation knowledge, that is the knowledge of the ends and ideals of life, required for the best of the world Muslims are advised not to sacrifice one for the other. So long as Muslims were able to maintain this balance. The moment we lost this balance, we lost our leadership role in this world.

Islam is a religion based upon knowledge for it is ultimately knowledge of the Oneness of God, combined with faith and total commitment to Him. The Quran is calling on man to use its intellect, to ponder, to think, to know and to investigate to discover the truth. Truth according to Quran is none other than worshipping God.

The Sunnahtoo is full of references to the importance of and insistence on knowledge. Accordingly: **“Seek knowledge even if you have to go to China;”** **“Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave,"** and “**Verily the men of knowledge are the inheritors of the prophets.”** He had urged on Muslims to seek knowledge. That is why every traditional Muslim city possessed public and private libraries and some cities like Cordoba and Baghdad boasted of libraries with over 400,000 books. Scholars were held in the highest esteem in Islamic society.

**Contribution of Islam to the world's civilization:**

Let us remember our great and glorious heritage by briefly surveying what Islam has already contributed to the world's civilization, education, culture and to scientific development.

Many young Muslims are discouraged when they see the poor standard of living of Muslims throughout the world and their limited opportunities. They also know the undeveloped status of technology within the Muslim countries in comparison with the West. From these observations, they immediately leap to the conclusion that the Muslim countries are ‘backward’, because Islam cannot adapt itself to the changing conditions; cannot assimilate new knowledge. Some even go so far as to say that Islam is actually against progress and against scientific advancement.

However, those Muslims who have studied the later part of Islamic history will know that this is a complete fallacy and misconception.   
  
Let us do a brief review of the contribution of Islam to civilization as we know it.

1. **Trigonometry, Sine, Tangent, Co-Tangent :**

The Arabs developed these functions in trigonometry and Ibn Moosaa's work Hisaab-Al Jab-Wal Muqaabala

1. **Algebra and Geometry :**

Muhammad bin Moosaa Al-Khawaarizmi is considered to be one of the founders of Algebra.

**There are many other contribution of the Muslims towards world’s civilization**

**in Physics, Chemistry, Geography, and Paper making etc…**

**Abstract:**

This topic describes the progress of Islamic civilization. Its impact on western civilization. It demonstrates how Muslims were able to achieve a remarkable civilization and benefit other societies, particularly the western world.

Islam, as a complete way of life, is a unique religion in the sense that it addresses itself to every sphere of human’s life. Arabic, which is the language of Islam, is equally unique if the position it played in establishment and consolidation of Islamic civilization is considered. Islamic civilization was able to unite numerous groups of people who ordinarily could not have related with one another in life. The performance of holy pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia, which is one of the cardinal principles of Islam, is one of the living legacies which Islamic civilization has established for mankind and which has impacted so much on the social life of man. Pilgrims converge on holy lands in their millions on yearly basis to perform the hajj rites. This thus strengthens the cord of unity in the world.

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