The Science of `Umran: Its Origin, Role, and Function

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Abstract: The science of `*Umran* was introduced by Ibn Khaldun in the 14th Century for the purpose of development. In the context of Islam, the development starts from the management of the lowest level, that is, man`s spiritual level, to a much higher level encompassing the community, country, and the world. In terms of man`s spiritual level, the management of his heart, intellect, and desires are the basic prerequisite for an Islamic-based development to transpire. The objective of the study is to identify the origins, role, and function of the science of `umran for the purpose of Islamic-based development. The focus of the study is the definition of `umran its role and function in revitalizing nation prosperity based on spiritual, mental and physical aspects which have not been studied and known yet. For these reasons people still fall prey to materialistic life i.e. "urbanization*"* and "modernization" and are influenced by the old methods without making any changes.

1. Introduction:

In *Muqaddimah*, starting from the first chapter to chapter six and the last chapter, Ibn Khaldun has repeated the word *"`Umran"* for 225 times, including titles of clauses in the chapter. The repetition of the word itself shows that `Umran has two main branches, namely *Hadarah* (civilization) and *thaqafah* (culture), and the two branches `Umran is associated with the *tarikh* (history) experienced by humans. Although there are attempts to separate `Umran from *Hadarah*, *thaqafah,* and *tarikh*, as mentioned above, in reality, they are united in two stages, the first stage is cultured `Umran and the second stage is civilized `Umran. Both stages are interrelated and complementary to each other through the chain and events.

According to Ibn Khaldun, the human society is not static but moving and growing from small groups to larger groups, from primitive society (*Badawi*) to a civilized society (*hadari*), from civilized society to a prosperous society (`*Umrani*). A prosperous society is enjoyed in every aspect of physical, mental and spiritual matters.

The Badawi society is a small society that lived in rural areas in the desert without adequate basic needs. However, it is still `*Umrani* in the context of a culture that involves language, religion (in the form of ritual) and character that reflects our spiritual life. However, it is still `*Umrani* in the context of a culture that involves language, religion (in the form of ritual) and character that reflects our spiritual life. However, their situation could turn into a civilized society through their own efforts or through the help of people from outside who moved into their area. Civilized society in the view of Ibn Khaldun lived in an area which has developed in agriculture and industrial companies called *qaryah* (village) and *misr* (city). The combination of several *qaryah* and *misr* form a larger and advanced area and further described by him as *bilad* (domestic) or *dawlah* (state). The combination of all the countries is known as "`alam". Prosperity in the alami level is said to be *"`Umran al-`alam"* (universal prosperity) that Ibn Khaldun tried to introduce to the world in the book *Muqaddimah*. But before that, we first have to know the meaning, source, and history of the birth of `*Umran* designed by Ibn Khaldun to address the changes that took place in the society towards creating a society and prosperous country at the global level which he termed as "`*Umran al-`Alam"*. The information we obtained will be used as the base material and guidance in subsequent studies to understand better about the thoughts and ideas contained in `Umran al-`alam.

2. Definition of `Umran

From the aspect of language, `*umran* originated from the root word `*amara* which gives the meaning of "affluence" and "prosperity" due to dense population and abundance in business, industry, and agriculture (Muṣṭafā, 1972: 632; Lecomte, 1964*:* 643). From the same root word arise the terms `*amir* and *ma`mur* which refers to

the region in which *umran* possesses a large population, successful development, knowledgeable, highly cultured due to the existence of cooperation and consensus among society as well as a just ruler. Generally speaking, from the context of language it refers to a situation and atmosphere which possess peace, success, expertise, luxury, and affluence, large population and available job opportunities in which does not exist unemployment (Muṣṭafā, 1972: 633).

From the aspect of terminology, it has a varied meaning based on the examples shown in *Muqaddimah.* The meaning of the terms has been derived from the source called *al-Kitab al-Awwal* entitled *"fi tabi`at al-`umran fi al-Khaliqah"* (the law of `umran within the creation of the universe) (Abderrahman, 1993:27). Beginning with the word, "*tarikh*" (history) followed by "*ijtima` insani*" (cooperation and actions made by society) and finishing with "`umran" (prosperity).

These three words are unremitting and establish the meaning of the term. As Ibn Khaldun says the term 'tarikh' is: "khabarun` an al-ijtima` huwa al-human alladhi `Umran al-`alam" (history of the behaviors occurring in society that elicited the prosperity universe "). According to him, `Umran is built on these three principles, namely history (tarikh), the cooperation of the community (ak-ijtima` al-insani) and the universe (al-sawn) or in other words, human (*insan*), life (*hayat*), and nature (*al-kawn*). These three elements interact with each other and are driven by asabiah to produce Dawla and prosperity (`Umran). It is based upon this method that Ibn Khaldun defines `Umran as:

"Social phenomena which is moved by a group of society that cooperate and concede with each other within the city or village in a country with a ruler who is influential for the purpose of fulfilling the necessities of life to become prosperous and secure whether physical or spiritual based on the teachings of religion and good conduct as well as law and Humans are merely a creation of God (Abderrahman, 1993:33).

This situation is ensued through three levels: *daruri*, *hajji,* and *Kamali*. These terms were borrowed from the terms of the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence.

According to the jurists, *daruri* is a basic requirement of religion, life, intellect, heredity, and property. While *Hajji* is like qasar prayer and iftar for people who are travelers. *Kamali* is a complement to *hajji* and not required in human life, but if available then the phase of life will be more convenient and better; for example, it is a good tradition and beneficial. This method has been modified by Ibn Khaldun in the areas of the society of life which started from the life of *Badwi* across the desert, *al-'Umran al-Badawi* which *daruri* to the middle class of society life and after that to the upper class or the government, aristocrat, *al-'Umran al-hadari* that is *Kamali* (Abderrahman, 1993: 29).

After that Ibn Khaldun explained about the Scope of *'Umran* which is العمران البشري والاجتماع الإنساني which contains three things " *al-Umran* " (prosperity), "*ijtima'* " (cooperation) and " *al-- basyari al-insani* " (human). If all three are included, it will become " *'Umran* which is the result of cooperative society ". And the next thing he claims is the origin of *'Umran* and how the combination of all the terms can happen in order to establish *'Umran* and its function.

3. The Origins of Umran and Its Function

" Umran " is a new and complex term; new in a group of knowledge and "complex" in terms of linguistics and terms of languages ". It was first introduced by Ibn Khaldun in the 14 AD in the book of its *Muqaddimah.* Not many people know and it is rarely being used, in fact, it is never used in the language on a daily basis. It is assumed to be "complex" in terms of linguistics and the term for various meanings and the meaning that has been given.

Also in terms of the origin of words and the history of its origin are still not clear. Even Ibn Khaldun himself never mentioned the prefixed of words and the source uptakes, but simply compares it with the term of "*Madani*" that is applicable to the members of the philosophy for illustration to describe the meaning of *'Umran.* After that, he directly relates it to the definition of *tarikh, `Umran and Hadarah* (Abderrahman, 1993:29). However, a great title maintained in the first book (earlier chapters) of its *Muqaddimah* is the law of *'Umran* in the events of *"al-Kitab al-Awwal fi Tabi'at al-'Umran fi al-Khaliqah"*. Here again, we can see how *'Umran is* focused in the *Muqaddimah* and not *'assabiyyah* or *dawlah.*

The knowledge of *'Umran* is considered new knowledge and the terms are new and these matters have been raised by *al-Farabi* by using the term that is similar even though the meaning and interpretation is not equal to what is required by Ibn Khaldun.

Abu Nasr al-Farabi (870-951 AD) was a figure which was a very famous philosopher in the history of Islamic thought also discussed the reasons for the formation of a city or country in his famous work entitled *al-Madinah al-Fadilah*. According to him, the main reason is that there are cooperation and collaboration among the members of the public. The question arose a specific topic entitled "*al-Qaul ihtiyaj fi ila al-insan al-ijtima 'wa al-ta`awun*" (debate about the need for human society and collaboration). According to al-Farabi, cooperation and consensus should occur from the lowest level of *manzil* (family), followed by Sakkah (family gathering), *Mahalla* (village), *qaryah* (county), *medina* (city / town) *ummah* (nation) and lastly *Ma`murah* (world / global) or also called *Ahl al-Ma`murah* (citizens of the world). Citizens deemed to be citizens of this world is quite large, advanced and perfect (*al-Kamilah*). It consists of a variety of races, heredity, civilization, belief,

languages and various culture as well as possessing qualities of perfection such as United, mutual help, and consensus (Surah al-Rum 30: 9; Al-Farabi, 1968: 117-119; Zakaria, 1991: 33-74).

The view by al-Farabi above is similar in meaning to the definition of '*Umran* which is rarely used and almost never used in everyday language. It is considered "complex" in terms of language and terminology because various meanings and purposes have been given.

Similarly, in terms of the origin of the word and history of its origin remains obscure. Even Ibn Khaldun himself never mentioned where the words and source were taken, but he just compared it with the term "civil society" adopted by philosophers for the purpose of explaining the meaning of `*Umran*. After that, he maintained the definition of `*Umran* and *Hadarah* (Ibn Khaldun, 1993: 29). But that is the title of the book (chapter) in the first *Muqaddimah `Umran* law in the event of" *al-Kitab al-Awwal fi Tabi`at al-`Umran fi al-Khaliqah* ". Here again, we can see how `*Umran* became a focus of *Muqaddimah* and not `*assabiyyah* or *dawlah*.

`*Umran* theory is a new theory and term but this has been raised by al-Farabi using terms that are almost identical, although the meaning and interpretation are similar to that given by Ibn Khaldun.

Abu Nasr al-Farabi (870-951 AD) was a very famous philosopher in the history of Islamic thought also talked about the reasons for the formation of a city or country in his famous work entitled *al-Madinah al-Fadilah*. According to him, the main reason is that there exist cooperation and collaboration among community members. The question posed in the title of a special title "*al-Qaul fi ihtiyaj al-insan ila al-ijitima` wa al-ta`awun*" (the debate about the need for human society and cooperation). According to al-Farabi, cooperation and consensus should occur from the lowest level of *manzil* (family), followed by *Sakkah* (the set of the family), *Mahallah* (village), *qaryah* (county), *Madinah* (city / town) *ummah* (nation) and lastly, *Ma`murah* (world / global) or is also called *Ahl al-Ma`murah* (citizens of the world). Citizens in this world are quite large, advanced and perfect (*al-Kamilah*). It consists of a variety of races, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, and culture as well as some qualities of having perfection such as unity, mutual help, and consensus (Al-Qur`an al-Karim, Surah al-Rum (30):9*;* Al-Farabi, 1968:117-119).

The al-Farabi's opinion is almost identical with the meaning of the word `*Umran* that has been described in Arabic dictionaries and *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldun. The difference is only in terms of terminology. Al-Farabi used the term *Ma`murah*, while Ibn Khaldun used the word `*Umran*: both have the same goals and purposes that are towards progress and prosperity through unity. However, the approach or the methodology used by the two figures may be somewhat different. Al-Farabi was a

philosophical figure, and his activities are based on political purposes (Zakaria, 1991:33-74), while the social aspect is a side field. Unlike Ibn Khaldun, he is a sociological and historical figure, and more knowledgeable in his fields. He has managed to describe the concept of `*Umran* more clearly and in detail, and other associated terms with such as "*Madanniyah* and `*ijtima'* human.

Al-Farabi used the term "*Ma`murah*" to explain the meaning of "*madanniyah*" which has almost conveyed the same meaning as `*Umran*. But from Ibn Khaldun's own explanation, the term "*madanniyah*" was used by philosophers such as al-Farabi to explain life and development in the city which is not the same as what is to be conveyed through `*Umran* theory. Consequently, since the very beginning, he has said that the `*Umran* theory that has been introduced is a new theory, with a new and stand-alone approach which means it is not the same as the theories that were introduced earlier (Abderrahman,1993:29). For example, the word "cooperative society" *(ijtima`* human) in the city according to al-Farabi is limited to cooperation among the communities in the city, as for Ibn Khaldun such cooperation is not only limited to the community in the city but also with people outside the city, and not only among men but also to the environment. Therein lies the difference between the old theory of *Ma`murah* al-Farabi with the temporary knowledge of *Umran*.

The word `*Umran* is often paired with other words that are similar to the meaning of it. This has created some confusion among researchers of *Muqaddimah* Ibn Khaldun. Therefore, they have created a variety of interpretations and speculations. Some of the examples given to confusion are the incidence of the meanings of the two terms الإجتماع الإنساني (cooperative society) with العمران البشري(welfare society)which are equivalent to each other, between '*Umran* with *Hadarah*, madaniyah, and civilization on the other.

There are also some researchers that translate the word `*Umran* into humans and some who translate it into civilization and urbanization. Similarly, *Hadarah, madaniyya*, and *civilization* have been given a vast meaning so contentious that there is no end.

Similarly, the terms of *Khabar, ijtima`* and `*Umran* in the definition of history التاريخ أنه خبر عن الإجتماع الإنساني الذي هو عمران العالم (*tarikh*) often lead to the debate on whether history or society or `*Umran al-`alam* is worth the main focus of *Muqaddimah*. And what is the relationship between the three terms and why is history and society placed in line with `*Umran al-`alam?* Everything has a reason and a meaning of its own.

We all know that every word or term in any language, including the Arabic language, has its own meaning or *dalalah*. If they are all the same then what is the benefit of the words and terms that they form. If the

word *"Umran"* is synonymous with "*bahsari*" and it means the man, so what does it means when the two words are synonymous when paired in one sentence. Does it not make the meaning excessive or "double" (redundant) which is not supposed to happen?

Ibn Khaldun has coined the term *"Umran"* to distinguish the term "*madaniyyah*". Similarly, the term *tarikh*, ijtima' *insani* and 'Umran al-`alam is placed in one verse and certainly has a different meaning depending on the level of its appearance, the beginning of the past *(tarikh)* to the present *(ijtima`insani/sosiologi)* and future (`Umran al`alam).

The last example shows the difference between the meanings of history, sociology, and science of `*Umran* according to the sequence of events and the time of its origin. The sequence of events and time is *sunatullah* the creation of the world, and should not be construed or confused with the theory of "evolution" C. Darwin invention, because the sequence of events and time traversed by humans within the theory of `*Umran* only describe *sunatullah* which must be passed by every living creature such as human beings, animals and plants and not a change within the species of animals (monkeys) to the human species, as described in the theory of "evolution" Darwin.

In fact, the text *Muqaddimah* is compiled and presented in such a way as to reflect the ability and sharpness of mind and extraordinary thoughts of Ibn Khaldun's for addressing social issues as well as other complexities through science and his experiences are very broad and thus provides guidance and vast opportunities to researchers thereafter to re-think and translate the words *Hadarah, madaniyya,civilization* and `*Umran* according to the actual balance. Due to the sharpness of his wit it may cause many *remarks by researchers to* consider Ibn Khaldun, a thinker, creative, innovative and forward-thinking, who managed to describe these terms in a planned and organized method by instilling newfound elements to it so that it is presented as innovative and renewed and can differentiate Umran which has been said to be synonymous with the stated terms.

Prior to this, we have stated the relationship and difference between *'Umran* and *Hadarah*. Thus, here we will focus on how the relationship between *'Umran* and *tarikh* (history) and *al-ijtima' al-insani* (cooperation in society)?

According to Ibn Khaldun, *tarikh* is "the result of cooperation and action from a society which sparks *'Umran al-'alam* (prosperity of the world)" (Abderrahman, 1993:27).

Even though the definition of history has mentioned about the close relationship between the history (*tarikh),* cooperation in society (*al-ijtima' al-insani)* and prosperity of the world (*'Umran al-'alam)* to such an extent that they are inseparable, but this does not mean that they have the same meaning because the use of

terms above describes the development of '*Umran* in term of "integrated" according to phase; starting from the actions of society from the result of cooperation between them through cooperation and their spirit of loyalty (*assabiyyah*) which result in the history of culture and country. From the history of birth (of '*Umran*), peace in society and country. The cooperation from the state and international society result in the prosperity of the world (*'Umran al-'alam*). The objective of the definition of the history was made to show to us the proximity of the relationship between history, society, and prosperity of the world, or, in another context the relationship between mankind and God, amongst mankind and between mankind and the world.

The definition of "*Umran*" specifically, it was stated in *Muqaddimah* "First Book in stating the law of '*Umran* in the occurrence" (*al-Kitab al-Awwal fi Tabi'at al- 'Umran fi al-Khaliqah).*

In order to show the difference between the meaning of اجتماع and عمران is when Ibn Khaldun states in Clause 30 entitled "Handwriting and writing as one of the man-made crafts". In this clause, Ibn Khaldun said, "Handwriting is one of the advantages for humans which doesn't exist in animals…it was produced through the study of the weight of society (الاجتماع على قدر) and prosperity (العمران) (Abderrahman, 1993:328-329). Supposed the noun الإجتماع and the noun العمران convey the same meaning and mean one, as stated above, of course, it doesn't bring benefits. Another example shown by him is to differentiate *'Umran* with another term which was said as one meaning is, like the difference between '*Umran* and nauw' in which he said, "Tyranny can destroy *'Umran* and loss of ethnic" (Abderrahman,1993:30). المُفضِي لفساد النوع وأن الظلم مؤذن بخراب العمران If *'Umran* means human-like *nauw'* (ethnic) then this can also be considered as *redundant* and it doesn't bring benefits.

In conclusion, even though there is a clear difference between the three meanings of the term history, cooperation in society and 'Umran, but from the relationship perspective among the three of the terms are very strong and even cannot be separated from each other: like "the bamboo and the river bank" or "like rhythm and song". Which means, history happened because of society, and 'Umran happened because there is cooperation within the society. However, from the point of value and status of the three components, of course, they are different.

The value and status of history depend on the fact, value and status of facts depend on the society, value and status of society depend on the cooperation of society and the relationship between the society and the surrounded nature, and value and status of cooperation from society and its relationship with the surrounded nature lies on 'Umran which at once become a "benchmark" to the success of the society and country, which includes, socioeconomic and political aspects. Therefore, the way

of success for the society and country is dependent on the achievement of 'Umran "prosperity" of the country, "a country of 'Umran is like a lifeless creature" or "history without a fact is a myth and a legend". Here we can see once again how it is important for 'Umran to reflect peace and prosperity in the society and country.

4. *Umran*'s Source

Besides human and historical sources, says Ibn Khaldun, factors of physical environment such as climate should also be taken into consideration as a source of *Umran* and why it occurs ensuring its compliance with the community life so that the prosperity of the country is preserved.

The meaning of climate is the air, water, soil and pasture for the livestock. According to him, the city of Kufah, Basrah and Qairuwan ignore the need of the climate during its establishment. This was the reason behind the less prosperous situations of these three cities. Therefore, he suggested that the climate factor is needed for city planning for the prosperity of the state and society.

According to Ibn Khaldun, source and law (*tabi'at*) of *'Umran* starts from the natural creations (طبيعة العمران في الخليفة), and this occurrence built the source. The first source of *'Umran* is a physical nature such as air, water and soil, and both are socio-cultural resources including religion, morality and science. Society only acts like a stage actor or actress to create history. But they act about the sources in order to demonstrate the law and the truth of *'Umran*. Maybe this is the difference between civil interpretation by philosophers of ancient Greece with the *'Umran* by Ibn Khaldun. The philosophers of ancient Greece interpret history (*historia*) from the physical point of view for hadari and madani's purposes only, but Ibn Khaldun interpret history by taking both physical aspects of natural events and human events as the source of *'Umran*.

According to Ibn Khaldun, in general (referring to members of the ancient Greek historian like Herodotus and Thucydides) said the history (*historia*) is measured externally (*zahir*), like the events of the war and the rise and fall of a government and the state, but internally (*batin*) it is more than that, which includes the background of society, changes in society, the socio-cultural society that involves religious belief and thought that is the main reason why the event occurred.

The first and general forms are considered "apparent history", while the second form as a "spiritual history" which he described as "a true and real history". To understand the "inner history" requires a specific and profound study of the culture and the mindset of a society through a knowledge mentioned above which are علم العمران البشري والإجتماع الإنساني simply known as "Knowledge of *'Umran*".

5. Formation Of '*Umran*

According to Ibn Khaldun, '*Umran* happened and worked after the "movement and placement of (communities) around the town or village to mingle and discuss living and working among themselves to fulfil their needs of life as law or nature (*tabi'at*)."

'Umran was formed in accordance with the laws of the universe, whether with animate nature like human beings, animals and plants or matter such as water, soil and air. Ibn Khaldun divides *'Umran* into two types, first being in the city of العمران الحضري and second being outside the city of العمران البدوي. Both types of *'Umran* were formed in accordance with the laws of different events.

The Bedouin *'Umran* was formed according to the law of the situation and atmosphere in the desert. The living conditions in the desert experience deprivation that cause occupants to be more brave and courageous to face life's challenges such as dealing with the enemy in battle. They are more ethical and more sincere.

Different from life in a city where living conditions are more comfortable and luxurious with its abundant wealth that cause the population's lack of courage to face the enemy in a war because of their fear in losing property and lives. This abundant luxury also causes them to become negligent with no spare time to fulfil religious obligations as they were busy collecting treasures. There was less morality because they were influenced by the city which was filled with cultural elements of entertainment. Due to these factors, they lose their religious and moral norms. When this happened, there existed an imbalance between the physical and spiritual aspects of life of the Hadari's society.

The Bedouin still maintained the characteristics of the desert life as long as they were in the Bedouin's atmosphere. These norms will be brought to the city to fill the void experienced by Hadari even though their physical development is intact and very strong.

The combined results of the norms of the Badwi community with the norms of the Hadari society, together with the cooperation and consensus within society and the state and camaraderie (عصبية) a strong lead in the integration of people in the city became stronger and stronger (Al-Husari, 1953:348).

The role and requirements of "assabiyyah "in society and the state have been discussed quite extensively by Ibn Khaldun and has been covered extensively within his book *Muqaddimah*, beginning of Chapter 2 (Clause 7 to Clause 21) (Abderrahman,1993: 101-116). Then again in Chapter 3 (of Clause 1 and Clause 9) (Abderrahman,1993:122-131). However, the strengths and weaknesses of "` Umran " are not associated with the effect of asabiah, although it is stated that "religious propaganda is not complete without asabiah (الدعوة الدينية من غير عصبية لا تتم)" (Ibn Khaldun,1993:126).

In general, when compared to the effect of the influence of religious influence, asabiah appears much more pervasive. Sati` al-Husari has been quoted by Ibn Khaldun that, "Indeed, the general state of the ruling and the ruled was originally developed from religion, whether stemming from either prophetic or missionary right" (Al-Husari, 1953:348). For example, in the battle of al-Qadisiyah and Yarmouk during the time of Caliph `Umar ibn al-Khattab in 14H and 15H, it is mentioned that the Muslim army had defeated the enemy (Sasanian) in the battle of al-Qadisiyah and the Byzantine army in the battle of Yarmouk even more enemy troops. This was due to the religious zeal which had overcome the *asabiah* (Al-Husari, 1953: 348).

By not associating asabiah with `*Umran* alone, it was enough to prove that the law of asabiah was not the same as the law of `*Umran*. Asabiah was a racially based law, while the law of `*Umran* was more religious and patriotic. This difference should be made to avoid the confusion that might arise from asabiah racist narrow interests of certain people with `*Umran* religious and patriotic (*hubb al-watan*) wider in the interests of religious and national unity.

The collapse of `*Umran* caused by the loss in the spirit of patriotism, abandoning religion and morality are greater risks compared to the loss of asabiah (Abderrahman, 1993:316) For example, even if a city has lost many of its inhabitants (due to loss of power and asabiah), the previous `*Umran* (*al-Qadimah al-`Umran*) that was built and was still be able to stand firm. For these reasons, the Ibn Khaldun does not associate the collapse of the *Umran* with the loss of asabiah at the same level as the loss of religion and morality.

6. Conclusion:

In summing up, religion and morals, were the coves of `*Umran* (prosperity), was not asabiah. In other words, despite the camaraderie or asabiah causing people and nations to become stronger and stronger, without religion and morals, sooner or later, the people and the country will become weak and collapse.

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