Beyond Development: An Islamic Perspective

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The notion of development is deeply entrenched in an imperialistic and conflict-ridden world view of the west. It is totally unsuited to both the needs and requirements as well as the visions and aspirations of non-western cultures no matter how it is changed, modified and rethought. As such development would become obsolete in the future. The future itself will be dominated not by the single, global civilisation of the west, but by a number of different civilisations – most notably those of Islam, India and China. In a multi-civilisational world, the west would not only lose its power to define and enforce its own definitions of what it means to be free. civilised. rational etc. on the non-west, but each non-western civilisation would rediscover and put into practice its own way of knowing, being and doing. As such each civilisation will define its own notion of social transformation and produce its own unique method for moving forward to a more humane, economically viable and socially just society. This contribution briefly discusses the contours of this process in the Muslim civilisation. It illustrates how the notions of tazkiyah (‘growth through purification’) and fa{l}ah (‘human well-being’) are replacing the idea of development and how they can become the key concepts for a Muslim civilisation of the future.

DEVELOPMENT

The word itself contains a notion of superiority. Since its inception in the late 1950s and early 1960s, development has been synonymous with ‘progress’ and ‘modernisation’. But progress is always a movement away from something that is considered inferior: one progresses from a (perceived) lesser state to a (perceived) higher state of existence. The basic assumption of development, no matter how it is defined, is of a linear teleology vis-à-vis the standard yardstick of measurement: western civilisation. The western nations are thus the model of ‘developed’ states with their industrial policies, free market economies.

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technological advancement, political, social and cultural institutions providing the best examples of all that constitutes human endeavour: other nations and cultures are simply there to follow this example. 'progress' and 'development' along a straight incline with the goal of becoming as good as the west. The inferior baggage that the non-western nations are supposed to abandon, in the quest for development, is their cultural and traditional heritage, sacred and religious values which interfere with 'progress' and 'modernisation'.

However, the experience of over four decades of development reveals this baggage to be much more resilient then first imagined: and that there is something rotten at the core of the very concept of development. There is, as Claude Alvares [1992: 5] has argued so powerfully, an 'intrinsic link between development and himsa' (violence), and the 'intensity of himsa' seems to increase 'with the expansion of the development thrust'. The violence inflicted on non-western societies by development is both direct and indirect:

in the name of development more people are consciously deprived of their rights and livelihood in the South today than in colonial times ... people's rights are taken away and substituted by a litany of people's needs, which are defined by westerners. In the name of development, science and technology, modernisation and foreign exchange, a justification is provided for bartering one's dignity and self-respect, and the country's valuable resources; even while modern economic theory continues to preach that the people of the South can only be helped by catering first to the affluent of the planet [Alvares. 1992: 108].

Development strategies have devastated the agriculture of non-western societies (most notably by the 'Green Revolution' in India and Pakistan) [Vallianatos. 1994]: impoverished and further marginalised the poor in Africa and the Middle East [Jazairy. Alamgir and Panuccio. 1992]; and transformed independent states into serfdom's of international banks and multinational corporation [Kothari. 1993]. Relief from the violence of development has often come from traditional sources: from indigenous agricultural practices that produce better yields, are ecologically sound and far superior to imported, 'modern' methods [Congress on Traditional Sciences and Technologies of India. 1993]; from traditional and generic medicines that are accessible to poor rural folks, as well as cheaper and more effective in curing and preventing common diseases [Chowdhury. 1995]; from banking practices that rely on the traditional notion of communal trust rather than the imported idea of collateral [Institute of Policy Studies. 1994]; and from indigenous institutions, including religious institutions, that have not only provided support for the poor but defended their dignity and rights in the face of ruthless development policies.
UNDISCIPLINED DISCIPLINES

My aim here is not to provide a litany of development’s woes or to demonise development: a considerable literature already exists which does just that. Neither am I interested in listing the successes of indigenous resources and institutions and romanticising tradition. I intend only to point out that for the non-west development is largely a superfluous concept. It is like the imported ‘Banyan’ in the popular Punjabi poet Anwar Massod’s poem of the same name:

You go out to buy a vest; you come back with a vest
When you try to put it on, you can’t get it on
If you get it on, you can’t get it off
If you get it off, you can’t use it again.

No matter how you define and redefine development, it just does not fit non-western countries: and when it is imposed on them, it fragments, dislocates and destroys societies based on traditional world views. It is almost a truism to say that development is not a universal concept, applicable to all societies at all times. It is a product of a specific culture that happens to be the dominant culture in this particular phase of human history. But this truism, like much traditional wisdom that comes wrapped in self-evident maxims, is often forgotten. The dominance of western culture, and its globalisation through this dominance, is often confused with universalism. But just because a notion, or a particular discipline, is accepted or practised throughout the world, it does not mean that that notion or that discipline is universally valid and applicable to all societies. After all, burgers and coke are eaten and drunk throughout the world but one would hardly classify them as a universally embraced and acceptable food: what the presence of burgers and coke in every city and town in the world demonstrates is not their universality but the power and dominance of the culture that has produced them.

Disciplines too are like burgers and coke: they are made not in heaven nor do they exist out there in some ‘reality’ but are socially constructed and develop and grow within specific world views and cultural milieux. Neither nature nor human activities are divided into watertight compartments. All those disciplines from which development is derived and obtains its sustenance – economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, history – are culturally specific: they are products of a particular culture and a particular way of looking at the world and are hierarchically subordinate to that culture and world view. They do not have autonomous existence of their own but have meaning largely in the world view of their origins and evolution. The division of knowledge into various disciplines as we find them today is a particular manifestation of how the western world view perceives reality and how
western civilisation sees its problems. For example, the discipline of orientalism evolved because western civilisation perceived Islam as a 'problem' to be studied, analysed and controlled. Anthropology emerged because non-western cultures had to be managed, controlled and kept subordinate. Economics is based on the vision of eighteenth century England, incorporating both the religious as well as the philosophical beliefs of the period which promoted a 'whatever is, is Right' world view. As Ali Mazrui notes:

Adam Smith took this optimism about the religious, philosophical universe and focused it on economics. If you let economical market forces operate unimpeded, all discord would in reality be harmony ... All partial evil would become common good. an invisible hand will see to that. This optimism about the benevolent consequences of unimpeded market forces (has) dominated economic thought in the west ...

[Mazrui. 1995: 35].

Economics has maintained the facade of a creditable discipline by pretending a value neutrality that is dangerously obsolete [Ormerod. 1994: Buarque. 1993; Henderson. 1991]. It has evolved within 'a paradigm that was explicitly modelled on classical physics' and has been 'a "normal" science in the sense articulated by Thomas Kuhn' [1962]. But it is no longer tenable to maintain 'the fiction of a "normal" economic science'. Complex situations involving ethical choices, ecological variables, and the goals and aspirations of traditional, non-western societies 'cannot be measured by simple analogy with the cloth fairs of Adam Smith's day. If the valued goods that give richness to our lives are reduced to commodities, then what makes those lives meaningful is itself betrayed' [Funtowicz and Ravetz. 1994: 197]. Development economics too has pretensions of being a 'normal' science; but, from the perspective of the South it is nothing more than a new apologia for the civilising mission [Sardar. 1977]. As Ashis Nandy writes:

development is not merely a process having historical parallels with the growth of science and colonialism, both of which reached their apogee in the 19th century. It is an idea contextualized by the ideological frame within which the social changes that we retrospectively call development took place between the 17th and 19th centuries in European societies. The ideology of development has come to faithfully mirror the key ideas of the colonial worldview and Baconian philosophy of science, as many in the South have come to experience these ideas, either as beneficiaries or as victims. The origins of development may be in the Judaeo-Christian worldview, in the sense that development has shown a historical correlation with the emergence of Protestantism, especially of the
Calvinist variety. But the idea of development is grounded in a concept of science, that promises not only absolute human mastery over nature (including human nature) but even human omniscience, and in an edited version of the white man’s burden vis-à-vis those living with ‘Oriental despotism’ and the ‘idiocy of rural life’ in the backwaters of Asia and Africa [Nandy. 1994: 7].

Indeed, western imperialism and notions and values of superiority and conflict are so deeply entrenched in economic, and therefore development, theory, that even the scholarly efforts to produce ‘new economic order’, or ‘rethink Bretton Woods’, or develop models of the much vaunted ‘sustainable development’, cannot expunge them. For example, the model of development offered by Alain Lipietz [1992: 2] in Towards A New Economic Order, involves an acceptance of ‘the logic and laws of macroeconomics’, adjustment of ‘the contradictory and conflictual behaviour of individuals’ and the ‘rules of the market’. Apart from assuming that economic activity in non-western cultures is dominated by adversarial behaviour on the part of the individuals, this sort of analysis presumes that we can tinker with the notion of development to produce a just economic order and that the notion itself is not fundamentally flawed. It takes the western values that form the axioms of development for granted and suggests that the problems of the Third World can be solved simply by introducing certain codes of conduct and legislation: indeed, the price mechanism would itself see to that! This kind of blind faith in the free market ignores the overwhelming evidence that it has not only failed to bring about equitable distribution of wealth in non-western countries or to protect their economies, but also to protect the planet. The idea that human behaviour is necessarily conflictual, that there is some inescapable logic of macroeconomics and the whole notion of ‘free market’, are all assumed to be universal norms of economic development, yet they are essentially western values that, in the guise of a discipline, are being imposed on non-western societies.

The overall development baggage, as can be seen from Lipietz’s analysis, comes complete with the basic maxims of the ideology of capitalism. The notions that the sole goal of economic activity is to maximise profit, that individual preferences are the most important aspects of human well being, that individuals should be given total freedom – unhindered by government or by collective value judgements, to pursue their self-interests, and that selfish individual self-interest will unselfishly end up serving the whole community, are central not just to capitalism but also to the discipline of development economics. This kind of unbridled individualism which is a fundamental component of the western weltanschauung is quite contrary to the communal outlooks of most non-western countries. Thus in the guise of development
policies. naked capitalism is imposed on the countries of the South. Elites of non-western societies often collaborate in this disciplinary imperialism for they stand to benefit considerably from a system that exploits their own people. Capitalism and development go hand-in-hand; and the globalisation of the former, including the cultural products of capitalism, is a product of the hitherto unquestioning acceptance of development by the nations of the South.

While the values of eighteenth century Europe and the ideology of capitalism continue unabated in the very axioms of economic and development theories, new western values are being constantly added to new models of development. For example, the well meaning ‘Rethinking Bretton Woods Project’ of the Washington, DC-based Centre of Concern, places strong emphasis on ‘development that is equitable, participatory and sustainable’ and that has ‘the empowerment of the poor and disadvantaged as one of its strategic aims’ [Griesgraber and Gunter, 1995: 24]. Development is now defined as ‘a healthy growing economy which (a) distributes the benefits widely, (b) meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of the future generations, and (c) provides for human rights and freedoms, effective governance, and increasing democratisation’ [ibid., 1995: 124]. ‘We are discovering’, wrote Jo Marie Griesgraber and Bernhard G. Gunter.

the essential truth that people must be at the centre of all development. The purpose of development is to offer people more options. One of their options is access to income – not as an end in itself but as a means of acquiring human well being. But there are other options as well, including long life, knowledge, political freedom, personal security, community participation and guaranteed human rights [Griesgraber and Gunter, 1995: 105–6].

Apart from the fact that the ‘essential truth’ that people matter above everything has taken some five decades to discover, this rethought model of development presents what non-western cultures took for granted as ‘development options’. So non-western people do not have an innate right to long life, personal security and community participation but these rights now come as ‘options’ under the umbrella of development! It is worth noting that all traditional societies enjoyed these rights: indeed traditional lifestyles are all about community participation, security within the framework of communal existence, and long life based on healthy and ecologically sound lifestyles. First, development undermines these rights by demeaning and suppressing tradition, breaking up rural communities by promoting urban development, increasing insecurity by displacing traditional agriculture and introducing debt finance; then, to add insult to injury, a rethought notion of development offers these very things as ‘options’. But there is another dimension to this new
notion of development that brings hitherto hidden western values right to the fore: the linking of ‘development’ with democracy and ‘human rights’.

The discourse of democracy and human rights, as so many non-western writers have argued, is the most evolved form of western imperialism [Panikkar, 1989; Kothari and Sethi, 1989; Lal, 1992; Parekh, 1993; Manzoor, 1994; Muqaffar, 1996]. Development now becomes a function of a particular type of political order and notion of what it means to be human: to develop non-western cultures have to accept that western style liberal democracies are the only type of good governance there is and that a society is nothing more than a collection of individual autonomous human beings, who have rights and absolute freedoms but no responsibilities. During the 1980s and 1990s, both democracy and human rights have been used by the west as a stick to beat the non-west and to force patterns of development that would ensure and encourage dependency of Third world economies. Griesgraber and Gunter [1995: 90] acknowledge that ‘in practice human rights rhetoric leads to the imposition of free-market and electoral ideology’: indeed the World Bank and the IMF have been doing just that. But this acknowledgement does not lead to a questioning of the link between development and human rights: on the contrary. Griesgraber and Gunter [1995: 90] argue that ‘new substantive and procedural standards for the realization of human rights by development finance agencies’ should be developed. Once again, faith is placed on codes of conduct and the fundamental flaws in the notion of development are overlooked.

One can make a similar critique of ‘sustainable development’. Here ‘sustainable’ codes of behaviour are appended to the notion of development. What turns development into sustainable development according to Richard Welford, for example, is the principle that it should meet ‘the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ [Welford, 1995: 6]. But this is, in effect, the essence of traditional lifestyles which are intrinsically future conscious: life enhancing tradition has always been about preserving resources for posterity. So what need is there for sustainable development: we should simply allow traditional lifestyles to continue. adjust to change according to their own criteria and thrive. But to do this would be to act against a cardinal principle of development: that it is the west which must dictate what the non-west should do and how it should do it, even if the non-west has been doing what the west is asking it to do for centuries.

One of the parameters of ecologically and environmentally sound sustainable development is recycling. It has now become imperative for the sustainable development lobby to exhort the non-western countries to recycle their resources, preserve the rainforests and be more environmentally conscious. But the idea that development can be attained through sustainability
only brings out the contradiction in combining the terms 'sustainable' and 'development' in the first place. This contradiction emphasises the fact that perpetual development has now become a necessary component of modernity. To be modern, one must develop, and continue to develop but how can one be sustainable at the same time? Either the non-western countries can become sustainable and move forward in their traditional lifestyles; or they can develop along the lines of the west, embrace free markets and its natural consequence, insatiable consumption.

Non-western societies were sustainable and ecologically aware centuries before the west discovered the notion of sustainable development. Even today, the people in the Third World are practising recycling on a much bigger scale than recognised. It is a common practice in India and Pakistan for people to return yesterday's newspapers to the newsagent and exchange it for today's paper at a discount: for the pile of old newspapers to be picked up by school-children on their way home for their mothers to convert them into paper bags to be resold to the grocers. This simple practice, and so many unconsciously carried out traditional activities, means that paper consumption in the Indian subcontinent is only five per cent that of Britain with a population that is 25 times larger than Britain! Walking through any bazaar one can find people making and selling small cartons and containers made of recycled coca-cola cans on which labels could still be seen: a container for a western drink often ends up as a vehicle for carrying water to the toilet! What this means is that non-western societies do not need lessons in sustainability from the west, one of the most unsustainable of all civilisations. What non-western societies need, and what post-colonial writers and thinkers and poets like Anwar Masood are now powerfully articulating, is for the imperialistic notion of development to be replaced by their own notions and categories of what it means to be a dynamic, thriving society. Masood's poem, 'Banyan', quoted earlier, continues:

Take my vest:
when you want to put it on, you can put it on;
when you take it off, you can take it off.
And when you take it off, you can use it again.
My vests are superb: my vests are top class
Authenticity speaks for itself
It catches the sun.
And sits like a new bride on the washing line.
You can wear them as long as you wish
Then turn them into nappies and knickers for the kids.

Cultural authenticity speaks its own language that addresses the deepest hopes and desires of a people and articulates ways and means by which these
hopes and desires can be realised. Any vocabulary is itself a system of analysis. As long as development remains the catchword for the dreams of non-western societies, they cannot articulate their own desires nor produce viable, authentic ways of moving forward. As long as non-western countries seek to ‘develop’, western logic and social grammar will continue to dominate them. Cultural authenticity, on the other hand, does not mean being glued to a romanticised notion of the past; on the contrary, traditional cultures are dynamic entities. They are constantly renewing themselves and changing, but they change according to their own logic and grammar. What cultural authenticity requires is a deep respect for norms, language, beliefs, knowledge systems, and arts and crafts of a people – the very factors which give richness and meaning to their lives. It requires appreciating the fact that traditional cultures are capable of solving their own problems within their own systems of beliefs and knowledge, with their own categories and notions and within their own civilisational parameters. This, I believe, is the wave of the future.

MULTICIVILISATIONAL FUTURES

The future, the century around the corner, will be a multicivilisational future. It will not be a world of ‘civilisation as we know it’. ‘Civilisation as we know it’ has always meant western civilisation: civilised behaviour and products of civilisation have been measured, up to now, by the yardstick of the west. But the twenty-first century will mark the end of civilisation as we know it: and herald the beginning of a world of civilisations – Indian, Islamic, Chinese and Western, to name the most obvious – as non-western civilisations rediscover and renovate themselves and enrich and enlighten each other with synthesis, mutual respect and co-operation. There are two fundamental reasons for the emergence of a multicivilisational world.

The first reason is provided by global demographic trends. At present only one-sixth of the world’s population is white – that is, lives in the North and forms the human capital of western civilisation. If present demographic trends continue, as predicted by Paul Kennedy [1993] in Preparing for the Twenty-First Century, by the mid-twenty-first century westerners will constitute around one to five per cent of the world’s population. What this means, and what western writers like Kennedy fear to articulate, is that within the next few decades, the white man will become an endangered species. So what happens to western civilisation? As Jim Dator [1992: 48] asks: ‘how will it – why should it – survive if the peoples who created it are such a tiny fraction of the future?’ The present dominance of western civilisation and the globalisation of the ideas and the cultures of the west is not just due to its undisputed technological and economic power. Its clearly superior imperialistic and subjugating culture, the centuries of colonialism and neo-colonialism
generated by it, its appropriation of most of the global resources both in history and the modern world, and its absorption of the histories of all other cultures. but also – and this is a vital point – because ‘there were so many westerners on the globe to spread their culture around’. But not for long! Even in the United States, as William Henry III [1994: 62] tells us so alarmingly, ‘sometime within the next fifty or so years, non-Hispanic white people will become demographically just another minority group. They will be collectively outnumbered by Hispanics of all races, blacks, Asians, Indians (in both vernacular meanings), and assorted other ethnic groups not associated with western Europe.’

Alas! The constellation of ideas derived from the myths and fears of western civilisation and its culture will be ‘imperilled by these demographic changes, and new ideas and projects based on the worldviews of different cultures, may leap forward’ [Dator, 1992: 48]. Thus the future is set to change by default. Such pronouncements as the much trumpeted ‘end of history’ and clarion calls for a return to ‘western elitism’ from writers like William Henry III are the last hurrah of the white man. The predominantly young populations of non-western civilisations will articulate their desires on their own terms, based on their own individual histories, and will shape a world that is distinctively different, markedly more diverse and multicultural than the one dominated currently by western civilisation.

The second reason for the emergence of a multicultivalisational world concerns the west’s source of power. The power that the western civilisation exercises over other cultures derives not from its military or technological might, nor even from its economic strength or political muscle and stability. The real might of the west resides in its power to define. The west defines everything – and the rest of the world is expected to accept and embrace these definitions. The west defines what is science, rationality, religion, civilisation, freedom, democracy, human rights, development and so forth. Other cultures must accept these definitions and the enslavement and cultural subservience that inevitably follows: they can only reject these definitions at the expense of being demonised, branded as fundamentalists and labelled as deviants, barbaric, uncivilised. But the west’s power to define is now being directly challenged. At present this challenge comes from Asia: but soon other civilisations will also begin to make their mark. As Richard Halloran writes, the turn of the century

will register the opening of an age in which the Rising East will acquire the political, economic, and military power to rival that of North America and Western Europe. That power, much of which has already been accrued, will enable Asians to exert influence not only in their own region but throughout the world. They will become peers with American
and Europeans in the high councils where decisions are made on war and peace. Asians will not only play in the center court but, as a Malaysian scholar put it, 'have an equal say in writing the rules'.

The twenty-first century will thus be shaped by new racial and cultural forces. For several hundred years, the world has been dominated by white European and Americans who hold to Judeo-Christian traditions. They will soon be obliged to accept as equals yellow and brown Asians who adhere to the tenets of Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism and Islam. Not only will Asian strength be felt on international decisions, but the way they exert influence will differ. Westerners, for instance, tend to be logical and analytical; Asians are more intuitive and sometimes more emotional. Westerners assert rights. Asians respond to obligations. In the West, the individual takes priority; in Asia, the community. Westerners, especially Americans, are governed by law and contract. Asians by custom and personal relations. In the West, decisions are made by voting; Asians decide by consensus [Halloran, 1996: 3-4].

Of course, Halloran is (unwittingly?) orientalising: they are emotional, we are rational: we do things by the book, they by the hook, etc. But the point he is rightly making is that the power shift towards Asia will introduce different non-western ways of doing things into the international arena; in other words, the definitions of the west will not be the only definitions around in the future. Indian, Chinese, Islamic and other non-western civilisations will redefine the globe according to their own notions and categories, and a genuinely multiculturisational will would be created: there will be more than one, dominant way of being human, of being free, and there will be more than one way to 'develop'.

The western idea of development is therefore set to become quite obsolete. In a multiculturisational world, each civilisation would produce its own notion of advancement, its own idea of movement forward to a desirable state, according to the principles of its own world view. This is not to say that each civilisation will exist in its own vacuum sealed space; of course, there will be constant and continuous interaction between civilisations. Civilisation boundaries will often become diffuse and there will be considerable synthesis and consequent emergence of totally new ideas. But the identity of each civilisation will be shaped by its unique epistemology, historiography, and philosophy of life. Substitutes for the idea of development will come from the effort and the struggle that each civilisation undertakes to define its own identity in terms of its own notions and categories.

THE DISCOURSE OF ISLAMISATION

The way in which the idea of development will give way to indigenous notions and categories of other civilisations can be illustrated by briefly examining the
discourse of 'Islamisation of knowledge'. This discourse, which has its origins in the early 1980s, is based on the realisation that all social science disciplines are cultural constructions of western civilisation and have virtually no meaning or relevance for Muslim societies [Al-Faruqi, 1982; Arif, 1987; IIT, 1988; Davies, 1988; Sardar, 1989; AbuSulayman, 1993]. The purpose of Islamisation of knowledge, which has now become a world wide movement and an international discourse, is to generate disciplines that are a natural product of the world view and civilisation of Islam; and hence use Islamic categories and notions to describe goals and aspirations, thought and behaviour and problems and solutions of Muslim societies [Davies, 1991]. The discourse of Islamisation has been led by Islamic economics which has now produced a vast literature on both the theory and practice of economics within the world view of Islam [Siddiqui, 1981; Khan, 1987]. Considerable work has also been done during the last decades on anthropology (which, according to Islamic criteria should not exist), sociology, psychology and political science. What Islamisation of disciplines has meant in actual terms for development can be judged by looking at the work of Muslim economists who first tried to undermine the western connotations of development by hedging it with Islamic terminology and ideas and then replaced it totally with Islamic categories.

The ideas of Jafar Shaykh Idris and Khurshid Ahmad are good examples. Idris equates development with ‘service to God’ and describes it as a category of a person’s existence and life [Idris, 1982]. For Islam, the essence of a human being is a faculty with which everyone is naturally endowed: to be a complete human being, an individual must direct all his or her activities towards the service of God. This internal reality of a Muslim, argues Idris, must be reflected in the external organisation of human society, the pursuit of which is seen by Idris as ‘development’. Within the framework of the Islamic way of development, material and spiritual aspects of life are complementary. ‘To be able to live the good life of devotion of God, we have, therefore, to make the best use of the material resources of our world’ [Idris, 1982: 16]. Talking about development without considering the spiritual side of people is meaningless: development must preserve the essence of our humanity.

The qualities which make (humans) human are the cement which binds them together in a human society, and which keeps them wholesome as individual persons. Once they are lost, the individual starts to disintegrate, and the disintegration of society follows as a matter of course. When the individual finds no meaning to his/her life...then the society of which those individuals are members is sure to decline and fall. Why should one who does not care for his/her own, care for others? Why should one who sees no meaning in life defend the people to whom he/she happens to belong? [Idris, 1982: 16].
Thus, for Idris, development is the pursuit of meaning in an individual’s life as well as the pursuit of material benefits: for him, the two go hand in hand. This approach to development, he argues, will free Muslim societies from being an annex of western civilisation where they have to borrow everything they have including ‘the worms in their intestines’ and allow them to flourish with their own identity and culture intact.

Khurshid Ahmad [1980] offers a much more conceptual analysis. He argues that the philosophic foundation of the Islamic approach to development is based on four fundamental concepts: tawhid (the unity of God); rububiyyah (divine arrangements for nourishment, sustenance and directing things towards their perfection); khalifah (a person’s role as the trustee of God on earth); and tazkiyah (‘purification plus growth’). Tawhid and khalifah are two of the fundamental concepts of Islam and define the basic relationship between God and person, person and person, as well as the person’s relationship to nature and his/her terrestrial environment. Rububiyyah is ‘the divine model for the useful development of resources and their mutual support and sharing’. Tazkiyah is the concept that relates to the growth and development of people in all their relationships: the ultimate goal of tazkiyah is to purify and mould an individual, that holistic aggregate of individuals which form a society, and the envelope of material things and products that constantly interact with the individual and collective elements of society.

Ahmad’s definition of tazkiyah focuses on individuals and relationships. Tazkiyah in all its dimensions, he writes, ‘is concerned with growth and expansion towards perfection through purification of attitudes and relationships’. In another essay, Ahmad [1970] isolated six ‘instruments’ of tazkiyah: dhikr or remembrance of God; ibadah or acts of servitude to God; tawbah or seeking the forgiveness of God; sabr or the spirit of perseverance; hasabah or criticism and self-criticism: and dua or supplication. All these instruments of tazkiyah essentially operate on the individual leading to his/her faalah – prosperity in this world and the hereafter. This understanding of tazkiyah leads Ahmad to identify five essential features of development within an Islamic framework:

(a) The Islamic concept of development has a comprehensive character and includes moral, spiritual and material aspects. Development becomes a goal- and value-orientated activity, devoted to optimisation of human well-being in all these dimensions. The moral and the material, the economic and the social, the spiritual and the physical are inseparable. It is not merely welfare in this world that is the objective. The welfare that Islam seeks extends to the life (in the) hereafter and there is no conflict between the two. This dimension is totally missing in the western concept of development.
(b) The focus for development effort and the heart of the development process is man. Development, therefore, means the development of man and his physical and socio-cultural environment. According to the western concept it is the physical environment – natural and institutional – that provides the real area for development activities. Islam insists that the area of operation relates to man, within and without. As such human attitudes, incentives, tastes and aspirations are as much policy variables as physical resources, capital, labour, education, skill, organisation, etc. Thus, on the one hand, Islam shifts the focus of effort from the physical environment to individual and communities in their social setting and on the other enlarges the scope of development policy with the consequent enlargement of the number of targets and instrument variables in any model of the economy. Another consequence of this shift in emphasis would be that maximum participation of the people at all levels of decision-making and plan-implementation would be stipulated.

(c) In an Islamic framework, development is nothing but a multi-dimensional activity. As effort would have to be made simultaneously in a number of directions, the methodology of isolating other key factors and almost exclusive concentration on that would be theoretically untenable. Islam seeks to establish a balance between the different factors and forces.

(d) Economic development involves a number of changes, quantitative as well as qualitative. Involvement with the quantitative, justified and necessary in its own right, has unfortunately led to the neglect of the qualitative aspects of development in particular and of life in general. Islam seeks to rectify this imbalance.

(e) Among the dynamic principles of social life Islam has particularly emphasised two: firstly, the optimal utilisation of resources that God has endowed man and his physical environment; and secondly, their equitable use and distribution and the promotion of all human relationships on the basis of rights and justice. Islam commands the value of shukr (thankfulness to God by availing of His blessings) and adl (justice) and condemns the disvalues of kufr (denial of God and His blessings) and zulm (injustice) [Ahmad. 1980: 179–80].

These essential features of development in an Islamic framework lead Ahmad to define six goals of development policy in an Islamic society: human resource development, expansion of useful production, improvement of the quality of life, balanced development in different regions within a country, evolution of indigenous technology, reduction of national dependency on the outside world, and greater integration within the Muslim world.

Both Idris and Ahmad were writing in the early 1980s when it was still
thought that the western notion of development could be 'Islamised' – that is, changed and modified to fit the world view of Islam. But, as critics later pointed out, what was actually happening was that Islamic ideals were being unwittingly accommodated to certain implicit axioms in the notion of development itself [Sardar 1985]. Thus we find Ahmad’s analysis of tazkiyah to be rather limiting. Just as development economics emphasises individual producers and consumers, with supply and demand being the sum of their respective activities, so Ahmad confines tazkiyah to the role of personal piety and individual salvation: in his scheme, development is achieved through personal salvation rather than societal transformation. The focus of tazkiyah is not just the individual: Islam also seeks to build a society which enables its various elements and components to practise tazkiyah in a positive atmosphere.

The literal meaning of tazkiyah is purification. It is a process of purification that all Muslim individuals and societies have to apply if they seek to be in a constant state of Islam. However, tazkiyah is not a static state of purification: it is a dynamic concept that seeks to motivate individuals and societies to grow by a constant process of purification. The Islamic institution of zakah, purification of one’s earnings by giving a fixed proportion of it to the less fortunate or by using it to promote works of public benefit, which is regarded as the third pillar of Islam and is a religious duty incumbent on every Muslim, is etymologically derived from tazkiyah. The idea of growth through purification is particularly unique to Islam: it incorporates the strange notion (to western minds) of increasing one’s wealth by actually subtracting from it: that is, giving it away to less fortunate members of society. Moreover, the process of purification acts as a rein on unchecked growth which could indeed make it impossible for societies and individuals to practise the instruments of tazkiyah. On the other hand, static or declining societies which could not even meet their basic needs would be unable to practise tazkiyah in its totality. Tazkiyah, therefore, demands that individuals and societies should grow within particular limits which provide them with time, ability and the environment for self-reflection and introspection, criticism and self-criticism, promotion of values and cultural authenticity – the societal elements that give living form to the process of purification.

Tazkiyah, then, is that quality which ensures that Islamic society maintains critical variables within limits acceptable to its social and cultural values and its organisational and institutional structures. It is a steady, selective growth that requires Muslim societies to maintain their fundamental, internal balances while undergoing various processes of change. It requires Muslim societies to grow as far as is necessary to meet their basic requirements but it also demands a pace of change that makes it possible for people to match genuine needs with available resources and potentials and to find acceptable means for the
realisation and implementation of feasible alternatives. *Tazkiyah* applies growth with the consensus of the people (otherwise the process of purification would be nullified) allowing no change without the full backing from the entire society and without the firm conviction of its necessity. It requires preservation of the natural and cultural heritage of Muslim societies as a living, dynamic environment from which they can draw their sustenance and aesthetic pleasure: this is purification in total action.

Analysis of Islamic concepts such as *tazkiyah* brought Muslim scholars and economists who tried to ‘Islamise’ development during the 1980s – most notably, Umar Chapra, Nejetullah Siddiqi, Muhammad Abdul Mannan and Monzar Kahf – to the realisation that development could not be ‘Islamised’ any more than alcohol can be declared an Islamic beverage. The notion of development just could not be applied to Muslim societies, no matter how the coy Muslim academic redefined it to placate Islamic sensibilities. Without doing violence to the world view of Islam and placing Muslim societies in a linear teleology *vis-à-vis* the west. In a classical study, Lucian Pye [1966] defined development as being a multi-dimensional process of social change.

The idea of social change, of movement of a society from one state of organisation, one system of ideas, beliefs and traditions and one stock of equipment to another, is central to the concept of development. Thus, Muslim scholars and economists have come to realise that to ask or motivate Islamic societies to develop is to ask them to abandon their system of ideas, beliefs and traditions for another system that is perceived to be higher up on the scale of development. There is just no way of shirking the issue: development can never have any meaning for Muslim societies. But the wrapping of development in Islamic terminology does perform a very important function for both traditional and modern elites in Muslim societies: it provides an Islamic justification for propagating capitalism (indeed, Islamised development has been uncharitably described as ‘capitalism minus interest’): it serves as a useful instrument to whip up sentiments and support for obscurantism: and it can be used to legitimise the power base of certain leaders with allegedly Islamic credentials.

Not surprisingly, concerned Muslim scholars are now becoming coy about Islamising western concepts and categories. In recent Islamic economics literature, the concept of development is conspicuous by its total absence. Muslim economists are now increasingly using Islamic categories to describe the process by which Muslim societies move from a dependent state to a fully self-sufficient one. The most common notion for describing this process is not *tazkiyah* but *falāḥ*, which is loosely translated as ‘human well being’. In his seminal work, *Islam and the Economic Challenge*, Umar Chapra [1992: 6] describes *falāḥ* as the fundamental goal of a Muslim society: the notion of *falāḥ*, he argues, gives utmost importance to brotherhood and socio-economic justice
and requires a balanced satisfaction of both the material and the spiritual needs of all human beings. Muhammad Akram Khan describes *falah* as a comprehensive state of spiritual, cultural, political, social and economic well-being in this world and God’s pleasure in the hereafter. Because of its eternal nature *falah* is primarily a state of bliss in the hereafter. But it is also applicable to conditions of survival, economic well-being and human dignity in this world. At the micro level, it refers to a situation where an individual is gainfully employed, free from want, enjoys freedom, participates in social and political life and has opportunities to grow spiritually and culturally ... At the macro level, a society can achieve *falah*, for example, if it is politically and economically independent, has institutional arrangements to establish economic justice, involves its people in decision-making and provides environments congenial to physical and spiritual health. Its GNP may not match any of the present-day industrially developed societies. It can still be at a state of *falah* [Khan, 1991].

It is important to note that *falah* does not incorporate the ideas of perpetual growth or continuous linear movement towards more and more material prosperity: indeed, overabundance and wastefulness would negate *falah*; and *falah* can be had without material prosperity. The idea of balance and harmony is deeply embedded in the concept of *falah*. Given the power of authentic Islamic notions such as *falah* and *tazkiyah*, it is not surprising that attempts to build a contemporary Islamic economics now rely exclusively on Islamic categories and notions not just for theory building but also for devising pragmatic policies and practical societal solutions.

The abandonment of the concept of development in recent Islamic economic and political thought is an indication not just of the confidence that Muslims are acquiring about their own culture and civilisation and about their own ways of knowing, but also of the re-emergence of a thriving, dynamic Muslim civilisation of the future. What is happening in Muslim civilisation is also happening in Chinese and Indian civilisations [Goonatilake, 1992]. It will be a few decades before we witness genuine plurality on a global scale. Before authentically different ways of knowing, doing and being human become the norm. But that future, as they say in Muslim societies, is written: written in non-western concepts and categories that are now coming to the fore. Of course, a multicivilisational world could lead, as Samuel Huntington [1993] has argued, to a ‘Clash of Civilisations’. But that, as Huntington’s own analysis shows, is purely a western worry. Our concern must be that such standard and hollow thought could lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. The only alternative is a determined commitment to overcome the fear that is inherent in the western psyche, to embrace the emergence of true diversity and plurality.
not as a loss of the west's own definitional power but as an opportunity for a new kind of recovery and expression of its better self. As Ashis Nandy has written:

the flip-side of any cultural self-expression outside the west has to be an archaeology of knowledge which excavates and fights for the lost or repressed west. Knowledge, too, like suffering, is an indivisible human experience. Self-aware, self-critical knowledge has to realise its own indivisibility by reaffirming the indivisibility of human and social choices in the matter of human happiness and suffering and human ends and means [Nandy. 1987: xvii].

The recovery of the ‘repressed west’ involves the abandonment of the concept of development with its embedded implications of a struggle for superiority and an onslaught of imperial aspirations. A development free multicivilisational world could generate a more companionable concept of distributive well being, of new kinds of growth that can be shared, or new alliances of interests and common aspirations that can collaborate across civilisational lines without demanding the denial of anyone’s identity either in the non-west or the west. Development-led imperialism required the west to stand behind it own, self made barricades of bravado. It has brought the west affluence, but it has also exacted considerable costs. A development free world of numerous big and small civilisations, each working out its distinctive way of knowing, doing and being, offers the prospect of discovering that the highest human aspirations are shared values, whose expression through difference makes their realisation more attainable for all people – in the non-west as well as the west. Humility is just as central to the western value system as any other, although it has seldom been employed. Beyond development, it might work wonders for us all.

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