Ibn Khaldun on Urban Planning: A Contemporary Reading of the Muqaddima*

İbn Haldun'da Şehir Planlaması: Mukaddime'nin Güncel Bir Okuması

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Abstract: Ibn Khaldun is better known as a philosopher of history and a sociologist rather that an urban or city planner (in a modern sense of the term). However, as part of his civilization discourse, Ibn Khadun has advanced some worth noting thoughts on the principles related to planning of urban environment in his Muqaddima. Although it was written over six centuries ago, our reading shows that his ideas on urban planning carry very much of modern flavor and therefore still relevant to the contemporary urban issues. He believes in the cyclical process where cities and urban development undergo a very much similar procedure. From his own observation, he portrayed the cultures, life styles, forms, structures and problems of cities in his time. He touched upon almost every facet, including human well being, physical development as well as environment and sustainability of the cities. In the context of urban planning, what can we learn from Ibn Khaldun? How can we relate his knowledge and principles to address current issues confronting our cities today? This paper also studies the principles of urban planning as put forward by Ibn Khaldun and tries to evaluate its interpretation in the context of contemporary city planning.

Keywords: Ibn Khaldun, City Planning, Urbanization, Urban Development

Öz: İbn Haldun modern anlamda bir şehir plancısından ziyade bir tarih felsefecisi ve sosyolog olarak bilinir. Ancak o, Mukaddime'de medeniyet anlayışının bir parçası olarak, şehir ortamının planlanmasına ilişkin bazı prensipler üzerine değerlendirmeye değer düşünceler serdetmiştir. Altı asır önce yazılmış olmasına rağmen, okumalarımız onun şehir planlamasına ilişkin fikirlerinin oldukça modern bir tat taşıdığını ve bunların güncel şehirleşmeyle ilgili konularda hala geçerli olduğunu göstermektedir. O, döngüsel süreçlere inanmaktadır ki şehirler ve kentsel gelişim de benzer bir sürece tabiidir. Onun gözlemlerinden aktararak kendi zamanının kültürünü, yaşam biçimlerini, yapılarını, ve şehirlerin problemlerini tasvir etmiştir. Şehirdeki insanın mutluluğu, şehrin fiziki gelişimi, çevre ve sürdürülebilirliği de dahil olmak üzere konunun neredeyse bütün veçhelerine

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değinmiştir. Şehir planlaması konusunda İbn Haldun'dan ne öğrenebiliriz? Şehirlerimizin günümüzde karşılaştığı güncel meselelerle onun irfanını ve prensiplerini nasıl bağdaştırabiliriz? Bu makale aynı zamanda İbn Haldun tarafından ortaya konulan şehir planlamasına ilişkin ilkeleri tartışmakta ve bunların güncele dönük yorumunu değerlendirmeye çalışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *İbn Haldun, Şehircilik, Kentleşme, Kentsel Gelişim*

1. Introduction

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) is not known as urban planner in a strict sense of the word. He is better identified as father of sociology and the proponent of the sciences of history, well respected for his great contribution into the analysis of the dynamic and cyclical process of civilization. In his discourse, Ibn Khaldun deals with all facets of civilization-physical and non-physical as well as spiritual. For him civilization is no other than manifestation of the dynamic transformation the human society has undergone i.e. from nomadic to sedentary, from simple to complex, from rural to urban and from badawi to hadhari (see, Ahmad: 2003). In consequence, this transformation would eventually result in the emergence of new settlements with the formation of towns and cities together with the creation of urban life and culture. In modern term, this process is called urbanization. In the context of civilization, towns and cities can be considered as the visible indicators that determine the level of achievement that a particular society has reached. In this sense, Ibn Khaldun is fully aware of the importance of the establishment of towns and cities as it would represent the faces and facades of a particular civilization. This is transpired in his civilization discourse namely section five of chapter four of the Muqaddima which deals particularly with the process of town and city planning and development.

As part of his civilization discourse, Ibn Khadun has proposed some worth noting thoughts and principles with regards to planning of cities and urban development. Although Muqaddima was written over six centuries ago, our reading shows that his ideas particularly on urban issues, planning and development carry very much of modern flavor and we find that the principles outlined by Ibn Khaldun are still significant in dealing with the contemporary urban issues. He strongly believes on the cyclical process where city and urban development undergo a very much similar procedure. Through his own observation, he portrays the cultures, life styles, forms, structures and problems of towns and cities in his time. He touches upon almost every component of city life, including well being, physical and spiritual development as well as environment, ecosystem and sustainability.

In the spirit of "lesson from the past", this paper will attempt to find out what Ibn Khaldun has to offer in terms of urban planning? How do the elements and principles proposed by Ibn Khaldun in his work, particularly related with the urban and city planning offer a perspective of knowledge for the city and urban planning today? What would be the lessons and principles that we can benefit from the Muqaddimah? How can we use knowledge and principles Ibn Khaldun has outlined to understand current problems confronting our cities today? Can these principles be of benefit in dealing with the questions related to the quality of life and sustainability of our cities? These are some the main concerns and questions this paper tries to highlight. It will also analyze the principles of urban planning as advanced by Ibn Khaldun and try to interpret in the context of contemporary urban and city planning. Lessons on managing and maintaining the sustainability of cities from Ibn Khaldun's point of view will also be highlighted.

To undertake out this sort of enterprise is not an easy job. Ibn Khaldun is a talented multiskilled thinker who is difficult to classify, more so to fully grasp the essence of his thought. His notion transgresses boundaries of contemporary disciplines, leaving gaps that make it even more difficult to clutch from a single discipline. It is for this reason that this paper is prepared by three authors from different backgrounds namely philosophy, town planning and psychology. With this combination, it is hoped that this approach will give us a better insight into understanding of Ibn Khaldun's notion with regards to urban planning and development.

Urbanization And Urban Population: An Overview

Before going further into khaldunian discourse regarding urban planning, it would be good to look at the current debates especially in relation to issues in contemporary cities and urbanization. This is important as it will give us ideas and background why we need to undertake this study. Apart from that, this overview of contemporary urban issues would enable us to establish link and contextualize out reading of khaldunian notions on urban planning.

Cities are the manifestation of human creation. A city emerges as a result of urbanization. As societies become more developed, cities play important roles as centers for settlement as well as centers of political, social and cultural activities. The more developed the society, and more people reside in urban areas. Currently, almost half of the world's population lives in cities. Cities are becoming larger and larger. Metropolis and megalopolis will be the future characteristic of modern human settlements.

Usually, the size of a city is identified by the size of its population or inhabitants. The population growth is generally determined by several factors namely, birth, death and migration. Natural increase of birth rates and decrease in death rates, together with the growing rates of in-migration, significantly contribute to growth of a city. On the contrary, the decline and net out-migration would certainly contribute to reduction of population. The balance of natural change and migration determines whether there is growth or decline. Cities become larger and larger when there is a rapid increase of population due to in-migration as well as natural increase.

An important impact of contemporary urban growth at the global scale is the rapid increase in the number of large cities and the increase in the size of the largest cities. Against the background of a general rise in the number of people who live in urban areas, it is the metropolitan centers that are proliferating and growing the fastest.

The United Nation's estimation indicate that the number of cities with over eight million people increased from ten in 1970 to 24 in 2000 (Table 1). The number and size of mega-cities are increasing most rapidly in developing countries. In 1950, the only mega-cities, London and New York, were both in the developed countries, while 18 of the 24 mega-cities in 2000 were in the developing countries (see, Table 1).

Now, the main question is that, what would be the impacts of this increasing number of large urban agglomerations on the quality of life of urban population? In most cases, it seems that the inability of many cities to sustain and accommodate the increasing number of population will point to a situation of over-urbanization. This will certainly have important consequences on the quality of life and social stability. Coping with the consequences of over-urbanization perhaps would be one of the biggest challenges facing the major cities today. This has sparked a wide-range debate about what would be the futures of those cities.

It is apparent that cities, especially unplanned and over-populated, are currently facing massive problems like inadequate financial resources, lack of employment, increase of crime rates, poverty, spreading homelessness and expansion of squatter settlements, lack of employment opportunities, a widening gap between rich and poor, growing insecurity, inadequate and deteriorating building stock, services and infrastructure, lack of health and educational facilities, improper land use, insecure land tenure, rising traffic congestion, increasing pollution, lack of green spaces, inadequate water supply and sanitation, uncoordinated urban development and an increasing vulnerability to disaster (Habitat II, 2003).

Most of the cities that are currently experiencing rapid urbanization are in the less developed regions where the focus of development in these countries may not be directed towards city development only. This is a cause for concern, considering that cities are engines of economic growth; therefore, there is a need for these countries to really look into the urbanization and city development issues in order to manage the cities better.

Table 1. Urban agglomeration with eight million populations or more, 1950–2000

1950	1970	1990	2000
More developed regions			
New York	New York	Tokyo	Tokyo
London	London	New York	New York
	Tokyo	Los Angeles	Los Angeles
	Los Angeles	Moscow	Moscow
	Paris	Osaka	Osaka
		Paris	Paris
Less developed regions			
None	Shanghai	Mexico City	Mexico City
	Mexico City	São Paulo	São Paulo
	Buenos Aires	Shanghai	Shanghai
	Beijing	Calcutta	Calcutta
	São Paulo	Buenos Aires	Mumbai
		Mumbai	Beijing
		Seoul	Jakarta
		Beijing	Delhi
		Rio de Janeiro	Buenos Aires
		Tianjin	Lagos
		Jakarta	Tianjin
		Cairo	Seoul
		Delhi	Rio de Janeiro
		Manila	Dhaka
			Cairo
			Manila
			Karachi
			Istanbul

Source: United Nations, 2001

Contemporary Issues In Urban Development

As indicated above, one of the major issues facing today's urban development is to provide a conducive living environment and human well-being. This concern can be seen

for example with the establishment of United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN– HABITAT) and a series of conference organized by United Nation including Habitat I 1978 and Habitat II 1996.

In Habitat II held in Istanbul in 1996 for example, the conference came out with the themes to address two equal global importances: "Adequate shelter for all" and "Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world". To the Conference, human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development, including adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements and they are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature. The focus of city development is the people and not just the space. Hence, the space must be properly designed so that it will be able to fulfill the basic needs of the people and more importantly to ensure the sustainability of their living environment.

The HABITAT II Report proposed some recommendations on how to create a better living environment for the urban population. The proposal is in a same spirit with the Rio Summit in 1992 and the Copenhagen Social Summit in 1995 towards promoting an urban development that is socially and ecologically sound.

First and foremost, it is crucial to go back to the basic concept and purpose of urbanization. One of the most fundamental facets of urbanization is that, a city needs to be built in accordance with human nature, values and needs. After all, urbanization is about movement of people from the rural to the urban areas. Hence, in accommodating for the increasing number of urban populations, cities must be built and developed by the people for the people. In other word, cities should be humanized or carry human face. This means that city planning needs to look into the human nature and necessities, taking into account the economic strength (which is also the prerequisite of city development), as well as ensuring equitable access to various groups in the city such as the elderly, the women, the children and the poor. All these elements are among the things that need to be given due attention.

The process of urbanization means that diversity of its population is a natural process because one of the factors contributing to urbanization is rural to urban or even international migration. Hence, cities will be exposed to a population coming from various backgrounds, social class, ethnicity, culture and values among others. These groups practice different culture and will also be requiring different needs that the cities

will have to provide in order to ensure a just and sustainable life. Ismawi (2007), writes, a society that punishes the vulnerable but condones the transgression of the powerful is certainly heading for ruin.

Urban crisis is not just about concentration of urban population but it is also about the changing values and attitudes of the society (Duhl: 1987). However, the modernization of the cities are mostly along the views and values of the West where there may be a conflict between the Western and traditional values resulting in a cities that has no soul. The cities, then, just become a space void of spiritual vitality in the quest of its population to seek greater economic wealth and abundance.

Another issue is the principle of human rights. One of the basic fundamental rights is that all deserve equal treatment. As city dwellers, all should be allowed to enjoy their rights of life and security. One very common example is housing. The city dwellers need to be allowed to access to facilities and infrastructures that will assist them improving their quality of life. City managers should practice the right approach i.e. the sustainable approach of urban development. This means that the city managers should properly manage the urban resources while at the same respecting the needs of the urban folks.

The city should also act as the centre of educational opportunities. It is everyone's right to be given access to education. It is through education will urban folks be able to emerge as good citizens. Apart from this, it is also crucial that level of education be improved together with the development of the cities.

Good governance is another important element in city development. This is particularly important in giving human face to the city. Good governance involves the partnership between the agencies, the civil society as well as the residents. The HABITAT II report reads:

> "Three main challenges face the cities of the twenty-first century. The first is the introduction of democracy and the creation of an urban community bringing together all citizens; the second is the control of urban development and hence the governance of cities; and the third is the development and control of urban engineering". (HABITAT II, 1996:11)

An alternative point of view is that the urban problems in the developing world are matters for national governments and must be resolved domestically in line with local conventions and traditions. Urbanization takes different forms in different places and it

is for the countries of the developing world to work out their own solutions. Again, these views are very much in aggreement with discussions at the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements, held in Istanbul (HABITAT II) in 1996 and Vancouver (HABITAT I) in 1976, and on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002, which sought to build a global consensus on the ways forward for the urbanizing world (Clark, 2003).

In facing the current challenges, there is a need to look back into what was discussed in HABITAT II. This report gives special emphasis on humanizing the city as a response to the global urban development issues confronting our cities. As more cities become metropolis and megapolis, the rural environment is also affected because of the encroachment and this will cause a divide between urban and rural environment. Therefore, a balanced approach in urban and rural development is highly necessary.

According to the HABITAT II Report, the rapid social transformation observed in the cities today also brings about social and spatial segregation between the rich and the poor, exacerbating more divisions within societies (HABITAT II, 1996). As a result, UNESCO in the HABITAT II Report envisioned the concept of humanizing the city or giving a human face to the city.

Khaldunian Principles And Their Relevance In The Contemporary Urban Planning

We have depicted the current scenario regarding issues related to cities and urban planning. Now, let us come back to the main purpose of this discussion. We have the Muqaddima, written over six centuries ago, in which one of the sections also deals with similar issues. How can the khaldunian principles, transpired in the Muqaddima, be of use in addressing the crisis in urban planning facing the cities today? As indicated above, our aim is to look into principles set by Ibn Khaldun in his work with regards to the city planning and development.

First and foremost, Ibn Khaldun expresses his concern about the importance of governance. The governance or dynasty, as he calls it, is a prerequisite to establishment of towns and cities. Hence, towns and cities cannot be built without the presence and commitment of the authority or government. Cities emerge as the outcome of the policy and planning imposed by the authority. In this case, the dynasty is the single authority that will determine the form, image and characteristics of a particular city.

Generally speaking, the concept of "governance" is not new. It is a matter of fact that this concept has already been known since formation of human social organization. In political science, of course the more commonly used term is government. However, the term governance becomes more important now as we discussed the complexity of urban society and its problems. Simply put, "governance" means the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented. The term governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance.

In the Muqaddimah, Ibn Khaldun has emphasized the main principles in city planning namely the geographical and the impact of choosing the right location to ensure the safety of the city, the presence of basic provisions like housing, fresh air and water supply, the social institutions to support and sustain the human activities such as religious, administrative, securities and health institutions to ensure a better quality of life. Ibn Khaldun writes:

> "Towns are dwelling places that nations use when they have reached the desired goal of luxury and of the things that go with it. Then, they prefer tranquility and quiet and turn to using houses to dwell in. The purpose of (building towns) is to have places for dwelling and shelter. Therefore, it is necessary in this connection to see to it that harmful things are kept away from the towns by protecting them against inroads by them, and that useful features are introduced and all the conveniences are made available in them." (Muqaddimah, translated by Frank Rosenthal, 1990)

It is apparent that Ibn Khaldun accentuates housing as the important requirement of city development; hence, one of the important roles of city planners is to provide good quality housing for its residents. Certainly this is very much in line with the concept we mention above about humanizing the city, where housing is the fundamental basic rights of the people. Ibn Khaldun also expresses his concern about making the city safe by situating the city inside a protective wall. While this may not be feasible in the current context of city planning but the issue of safety in the city has always been of a universal concern. As cities become larger, they are also becoming more and more unsafe. As human becoming more advanced, the concept of safety and security would not be confined within the limited definition of facing the crimes and enemies, but also includes environment, health as well as mental well being.

As reported in the UN Conference on the State of Safety in World Cities in 2007, one of the most significant causes of fear and insecurity in many cities today is crime and violence. Between 1990 and 2000, incidents of violent crime per 100,000 persons increased from 6 to 8.8. Recent studies show that over the past five years, 60 per cent of all urban residents in the world have been victims of crime, with 70 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean. Clearly, crime, whether violent or not, is a growing and serious threat to urban safety all over the world. Another study on urban environment and mental well being by Guite et.al. (2006) shows that factors such as noise, overcrowded, dissatisfied with access to green open spaces, community facilities and feeling unsafe to go out in the day contribute significantly to the well being of urban population. The study, which involves 1012 Londoners proof that, if the city is not built according to requirement and need of human values, it will eventually become catastrophic to the public health. The fact that needle and syringes are lying everywhere makes the issues of safety and health more crucial in the city.

Another condition for the provision of a good environmental friendly city is the location of the cities. As Ibn Khaldun states:

> "In connection with the protection of towns against harm that might arise from atmospheric phenomena, one should see to it that the air where the town is (to be situated) is good, in order to be safe from illness. When the air is stagnant and bad, or close to corrupt waters or putrid pools or swamps, it is speedily affected by putrescence as the result of being near these things, and it is unavoidable that (all) living beings who are there will speedily be affected by illness. This fact is confirmed by direct observation. Towns where no attention is paid to good air, have, as a rule, much illness" (Muqaddimah, translated by Frank Rosenthal, 1990)

The importance of a suitable location, with ample fresh water supply and clean air will ensure that a city is far from harm. This supports the principle of the effective management of natural resources like water, air, land, and the green environment. The importance of clean water is clearly stated by Ibn Khaldun:

> "In connection with the importation of useful things and conveniences into towns, one must see to a number of matters. There is the water (problem). The place should be on a river, or springs with plenty of fresh water should be facing it. The existence of water near the place simplifies the water problem for the inhabitants, which is urgent. The existence of (water) will be a general convenience to them". (Muqaddimah, translated by Frank Rosenthal, 1990)

Recent study by Savard et. al. (2000) suggests the application of biodiversity concept on urban ecosystem. Again this is very much in agreement with the khaldunian principle on how a city should be developed. Expanding cities have such far-reaching and intractable effects both on social structures and on the natural environment that a resolutely forwardlooking approach should now be adopted, and the principle introduced of responsible urban development respecting the rights of future generations. As stated in the HABITAT II report:

> "An alternative is needed to an all too common model, particularly in the North, of sprawling cities that are heavy on energy consumption and largely given over to private cars. In the last quarter of a century, New York has thus seen a rise of 5 per cent in its population while the area it covers has increased by 61 per cent".

Apart from larger cities consuming more land and resources, Ibn Khaldun also highlights the impact of economic inequality that will become more apparent when the size of city becomes larger. While there will be more economically affluent groups getting the benefit of the wealth provided by the city, there will also be the emerging group of the poor taking the advantage of the expectation of wealth in the cities. These two elements will definitely create gap in social organization of the city which will lead towards the destruction of human attitude, life styles and values.

In making the cities habitable for all groups, a just and balanced development approach is a need to ensure that all will benefit from the city development. This is where the concept of sustainable city development where cities become the centers of democracy, culture and innovation should be promoted. The poor has the right to voice out their grievances and predicaments just as the rich and this is where the important role of the governance is very much needed to ensure justice is done for all.

One of the main points that Ibn Khaldun emphasizes in his writing, which current urban planners and city authorities should pay a particular attention is the impact of sedentary life associated with the lifestyles of urban population on the deterioration and destruction of a city. He gives example that, just as man has his life span, a city also has its physical limit. As he puts it, a city will be destructed when corruption becomes rampant among members of the society. He further writes:

> "Sedentary culture differs according to the differences in civilization. When a civilization grows, sedentary culture becomes more perfect. We have stated before that a city with a large

civilization (population) is characterized by high prices in business and high prices for its needs. (The prices) are then raised still higher through customs duties; for sedentary culture reaches perfection at the time when the dynasty has reached its greatest flourishing, and that is the time when the dynasty levies customs duties because then it has large expenditures, as has been stated before. The customs duties raise the sales (prices), because small businessmen and merchants include all their expenses, even their personal requirements, in the price of their stock and merchandise. Thus, customs duties enter into the sales price. The expenditures of sedentary people, therefore, grow and are no longer reasonable but extravagant. The people cannot escape this (development) because they are dominated by and subservient to their customs. All their profits go into (their) expenditures. One person after another becomes reduced in circumstances and indigent. Poverty takes hold of them. Few persons bid for the available goods. Business decreases, and the situation of the town deteriorates". (Muqaddimah, translated by Frank Rosenthal, 1990)

He adds that the culture of pleasure (or hedonistic in modern term), opulence and indulgence amongst city dwellers will be the reason for the city's downfall. The attitude of the residents will be the main cause of the city's destruction.

"All this is caused by excessive sedentary culture and luxury. They corrupt the city generally in respect to business and civilization. Corruption of the individual inhabitants is the result of painful and trying efforts to satisfy the needs caused by their (luxury) customs; (the result) of the bad qualities they have acquired in the process of obtaining (those needs); and of the damage the soul suffers after it has obtained them, through acquiring (still) another (bad luxury) quality. Immorality, wrongdoing, insincerity, and trickery, for the purposes of making a living in a proper or an improper manner, increase among them. The soul comes to think about (making a living), to study it, and to use all possible trickery for the purpose. People are now devoted to lying, gambling, cheating, fraud, theft, perjury, and usury". (Muqaddimah, translated by Frank Rosenthal, 1990)

This is not very far from the truth as we can see today. Cities are filled with people who earn their living through immoral activities like drug trafficking, money laundering and white collar crimes amongst others (in contemporary term this is called underground economy). Hence, the physical limit of the city is affected by various factors like the physical aspects of quality of building materials and technology used to build the city, the social aspect like the size of the population and the level of education of its population, the environmental aspect such as the availability of natural resources and economic aspect of the gap between the city dwellers. A study conducted by Matheson et. al. (2006) shows that 'stressed' neighborhoods have higher levels of depression. In this study he argues that the daily stress of living in a neighborhood where residential

mobility and material deprivation prevail is connected with depression, women was also found to be more reactive to chronic stressors manifested in higher risk of depression. Study as early as 1939 by Faris and Dunham (in Matherson et.al., 2006) on the issue of environment and mental health showed that psychiatric admissions in Chicago varied by location within city with higher rates for those living in the innercity center than in outlying areas. Social disorganization such as poverty was found to be an important chronic stressor among inner-city population (Latkin & Curry, 2003). In relation to khaldunian discourse, all these symptoms are no other than the manifestation of corruption of the individual inhabitants. Ibn Khaldun particularly stresses on the misbehavior of the people that became the major source of disaster in cities. All these can be seen in contemporary cities if the planners lose sight of controlling the urban sprawl as well as providing alternative strategies for the future development of the city.

Lessons From Ibn Khaldun's Thought On Urban Development

What are the lessons that can be obtained from Ibn Khaldun's writings? What are the conclusions that we can put forward in our attempt to figure out the characteristics and principles of city planning as transpired from the Muqaddima? Here are some of the principles that can be derived from our reading of Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddima.

First and foremost, as we mentioned earlier, Ibn Khaldun differentiates the differences in the life style of the city inhabitants and its rural counterparts by using the term sedentary (umran hadari) as opposed to nomadic (umran badawi). In terms of social cohesion or "asabiyyah" in Ibn Khadun, he implies that the urban population has a weaker 'asabiyyah' as compared to the rural one. This weakness makes them vulnerable to attack by fresh waves of pre-urban people who have stronger asabiyyah (Syed Farid Alatas, 2008). Apart from that Ibn Khaldun also dwells with the rise and falls of the various Muslim dynasties as examples or become the basis of what he has claimed. This is particularly those of the North African states dues to the different social organizations and different lifestyles. In the current context of urbanization, this can be interpreted as the issues of urban an agglomeration that has a detrimental effect on the overall quality of life of the population and eventually may lead to the destruction of the city if any parts of the system in the cities stop functioning.

> **Cities have its own life span**: While Ibn Khaldun does not specifically spell it out that there is a limit to the size of the city, his writings on the forces that may influence a city's destruction is a cause for concern for urban planners. In fact, the ecological

footprint ideology by William Rees in 1992 is in congruent with Ibn Khaldun's writing of the optimum size of a city, economically, socially, physically and environmentally.

Cities should be safe and secure: A safe city is a much needed environment in the contemporary world. Safety is not just about reducing crimes. A safe city should also be one that can provide its inhabitants with a decent way of life. It should provide all the basic necessities like clean air, water and infrastructure, accessibility to education, housing and health facilities. This will provide the population with a sense of pride and dignity that a human being deserves to get.

Good governance: A just city is one which provides a voice for the marginalized, socially excluded and the minorities. This can only be achieved with good governance and a representation from the government, the civil society and the public at large. Good governance will also ensure an equitable distribution of wealth and efficient management of resources. These are issues badly needed in the new millennium where the resources are becoming scarce and yet the population is booming and cities are becoming more urbanized.

The destruction of the city is caused by the population themselves: Cities will experience the periods of rise and fall, just like civilizations. In fact, the cities are no other than the mere products of human civilization. Hence, the cyclical nature of civilization is very much influenced by man's attitude towards his environment. If he manages the city well, new civilizations will be built upon the ruins of the current civilization as can be seen in many cities nowadays. However, if he fails to manage the city in accordance with the prescribed principles of justice and balance, the city will eventually fall into destruction. Certainly, the rise and fall of cities are consequence of the act of mankind. Greed and corrupt practices are a definite way to destroy a city. This can be seen that from khaldunian's notion on city and city development, the sedentary nature of urban dwellers may result in negative impact for the residents. This is when people become too sedentary, their sense of social cohesion will become weaker.

Conclusion

Ibn Khaldun is a far sighted, brilliant philosopher whose writings amaze many scholars from various disciplines. He writes on many issues but one section is particularly devoted to the issue of civilization and city planning. He discusses topics concerning the

sedentary or urban society of his era, but his concerns and principles are still realistic and carry very much of modern flavor. Today, as cities becomes larger and larger, problems facing urban dwellers become more complex. However, Ibn Khaldun remarkably shows us that some of the problems facing modern cities are actually not new. He has seen that occurred in cities during his time.

What he proposes over six hundred years ago seems to be carrying something that modern cities are still lacking. On this basis, our attempt to relook into what was written over six hundred is basically an attempt to dig and unveil what Ibn Khaldun has to offer to our modern life today. This short study of Ibn Khaldun supposes to catch our attention that there is a need to revisit and understand thoughts and ideas of this great man as we approach a new dimension in the crisis faced by urban planners all over the world. There are much more to learn from Ibn Khaldun's treasure. However in the context of city planning, his notion that city must be developed in accordance with human nature. This evident when the issue of humanizing the city as proposed in the HABITAT II in 1996 is still very important today because the extent of the size of the city nowadays are segregating and alienating the groups in the city further. Hence, in confronting the myriad of urban problems faced by city planners and managers, it is not too late to look into what has been written in the past so as not to repeat the same mistakes again in the future which may be causing the destruction of our cities.

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