

The Concept of Heavenly Mandate (*Tiānmìng*) through Lens of Ibn Khaldun's Civilization Cycle Theory (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*)

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Abstract

The concept of Heaven's Mandate (Tiānmìng) was a political ideology applied during the Chinese Dynasty era to legitimize the king's power. This concept relates to the theory put forward by Ibn Khaldun, namely the cycle of civilization (Tasyri' Al-Umran). This research aims to integrate historical, philosophical, and sociological perspectives to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of civilization through the lens of Tasyri' Al-Umran and Tiānmìng. The method used in this study is qualitative with a literature study approach. The Tiānmìng as the basis for the legitimacy of power in the Chinese tradition, turns out to have a striking similarity with the theory of 'asabiyyah (group solidarity) and the theory of Tasyri' Al-Umran. A great civilization usually arises from a society that has endured harsh conditions, poverty, and struggle. Aspirations to live a prosperous, trouble-free life, coupled with social solidarity, encourage them to work hard to achieve their goals. When this dream comes true, a new civilization is born. The emergence of this new civilization is often accompanied by the decline of other civilizations, which then await their turn to be conquered by the next social group.

Keywords: Tasyri' Al-Umran; Tiānmìng; 'Asabiyyah; Ibn Khaldun; Civilization

Introduction

Civilization can be interpreted as the level of social, cultural, and technological progress achieved by a community or group of humans. It covers various dimensions of life, including the system of government, art, science, religion, language, and infrastructure. The hallmarks of civilization are often demonstrated through advances in these aspects, as well as the ability of humans to build a complex and structured social order. In addition, civilization also includes the development of large cities, legal systems, and extensive trade networks. The term is often used to distinguish societies that have reached a certain level of progress from those that are still living simpler or more traditional lives. Civilization also reflects collective values, beliefs, and achievements passed down from generation to generation, shaping the identity and way of life of a group of humans.¹ One example of an advanced civilization is Chinese civilization.

Chinese civilization, one of the oldest and most sustainable in the world, originated in the Yellow River and Yangtze River valleys, where agriculture and permanent settlements began to flourish thousands of years ago.² This civilization is characterized by a series of successive dynasties, namely: (1) Xia Dynasty (2100 BC-1600 BC); (2) Shang Dynasty (1600 BC-1045 BC); (3) Zhou Dynasty (1045-221 BC); (4) Qin Dynasty (221 BC–206 BC); (5) Han Dynasty (206 BC–220 AD); The Three Dynasties (Wei, Wu, and Shu) (280-420 AD); Northern and Southern Dynasties (Northern Wei and Liu Song) (420–589 AD); Sui Dynasty (589–

¹ Gandhi Liyorba Indra, *Pasang Surut Peradaban Dalam Lintas Sejarah: Kajian Sejarah Peradaban Islam Dari Masa Klasik Hingga Kontemporer* (Malang, Indonesia: Literasi Nusantara, 2021), pp. 1-3.

² Ardi Tri Yuwono, "Perkembangan dan Pengaruh Dinasti Zhou Terhadap Kemajuan Peradaban Tiongkok Kuno Hingga Masa Modern (1045–221 SM)," *Prabayaksa: Journal of History Education* 4, no. 2 (2024): 119–32, p.120.

618 AD); Tang Dynasty (618–907 AD); Song Dynasty (907-1279 AD); Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368); Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), and; Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). Each dynasty made a distinctive contribution to Chinese culture, technology, and philosophy. From the invention of paper, gunpowder, and compasses to the intricate writing system and the philosophies of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, Chinese civilization has left behind a valuable legacy. Innovations in art, literature, architecture, and science have continued to flourish throughout Chinese history, shaping a strong national identity and exerting significant influence on East Asian civilization.³

One of the fundamental ideas in Chinese civilization is the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*), a philosophical and political doctrine that explains the legitimacy of a ruler's power. In this view, the power of a king or emperor is considered legitimate only if he obtains the support of the Heavens (*Tiān*), which reflects the divine will. The Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) emphasizes that a ruler must rule with wisdom, justice, and concern for the welfare of the people. If a ruler fails to fulfill this responsibility, he is considered to have lost the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*), which can lead to natural disasters, rebellions, or the fall of the dynasty. This concept not only serves as the basis for the legitimacy of power but also explains dynastic changes and maintains social stability in Chinese civilization.⁴ The Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) also has similarities with Ibn Khaldun's thought, specifically the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*).

Ibn Khaldun, a Muslim historian and sociologist who lived

³ Jacques Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. xiii.

⁴ S. J. Marshall, *The Mandate of Heaven: Hidden History in The Book of Changes* (New York, USA: Routledge, 2001), p.3.

in the 14th century, put forward a theory of the cycle of civilization that describes the rise and fall of civilizations.⁵ Ibn Khaldun identifies five stages in the development of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*), namely: (1) The Formation Stage, in which a group of people, generally from nomadic or rural communities, unite under strong leadership to form a state; (2) The Consolidation Stage, in which the country reaches the peak of power and prosperity, characterized by political stability, economic strength, and cultural progress; (3) The Stage of Luxury, in which the attainment of prosperity leads to the emergence of corruption, laziness, and moral decline; (4) The Stage of Decline, in which the country experiences weakness both internally and externally, becomes vulnerable to attacks from outside and rebellions from within, and; (5) The Stage of Collapse, in which the state is destroyed and replaced by a new force that establishes a new state, starting a new cycle.⁶

In the context of Chinese civilization, Ibn Khaldun's theory can be used to analyze the process of changing dynasties. Dynasties that possess power and justice will gain the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) and reach the peak of glory, known as the consolidation stage. However, as time passes, luxury and corruption will run rampant, reaching an excess that, in turn, will lead to the dynasty's decline and collapse. At that time, the Mandate (*Tiānmìng*) will move to a new, stronger, and more just dynasty, marking the stage of formation and the beginning of a new cycle. Thus, the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) put forward by Ibn Khaldun provides a useful framework for understanding the dynamics of the Mandate of Heaven

⁵ Maeturi Irham, Malik Supar, and Abidun Zuhri, *Mukaddimah: Ibnu Khaldun* (Jakarta, Indonesia: Pustaka Al Kautsar, 2001), p.ix.

⁶ Ahmad Sunawari Long, *Falsafah Ibnu Khaldun* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Institut Terjemahan dan Buku Malaysia Berhad, 2015), p.101.

(*Tiānmìng*) in the concept of Chinese civilization. These two concepts highlight the importance of legitimacy, morality, and cycles of change in maintaining power and civilization.

Previous research on the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-umran*) has been carried out by several researchers, including: (1) Hasyim Nawawie who analyzed the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-umran*) in the context of Islamic civilization in the Middle East;⁷ (2) Yayan Sopyang who examines the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-umran*) from the perspective of state law and ideology;⁸ (3) Sudirman M. Johan, Nurhadi, Akhmad Mujahidin, Ahmad Rofiq, and Mawardi Muhammad Saleh who explored the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) related to economics and business;⁹ (4) Intan who researches the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-umran*) in the context of community empowerment,¹⁰ as well as; (5) Fauzul Hanif Noor Athief who researches the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) in the field of science and philosophy.¹¹ However, these studies have not examined the relationship between the concept of civilization cycle (*Tasyri' Al-umran*) and the Mandate of Heaven

⁷ Hasyim Nawawie, *Tarikh Tasyri'* (Surabaya, Indonesia: Jengala Pustaka Utama, 2014).

⁸ Yayan Sopyan, *Tarikh Tasyri': Sejarah Pembentukan Hukum Islam* (Depok, Indonesia: Rajawali Pers, 2018).

⁹ Sudirman M. Johan et al., "Konsep Hikmat Al-Tasyri' Sebagai Asas Ekonomi dan Keuangan Bisnis Islam Menurut Ali Ahmad Al-Jurjawi (1866-1961M) Dalam Kitab Hikmat Al-Tasyri' Wa Falsafatuhu," *Al-Fikra: Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman* 17, no. 1 (2018): 147–89, <https://doi.org/10.24014/af.v17i1.5338>.

¹⁰ Intan, "Penerapan Pemikiran Al Umran Ibnu Khaldun untuk Pemberdayaan Masyarakat," *Jurma: Jurnal Program Mahasiswa Kreatif* 3, no. 2 (2019): 67–71, <https://doi.org/10.32832/pkm-p.v3i2.470>.

¹¹ Fauzul Hanif Noor Athief, "Sejarah Munculnya Disiplin Ilmu Dalam Islam," *Jurnal Islamika: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 19, no. 2 (2019): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.32939/islamika.v19i02.386>.

(*Tiānmìng*). Therefore, this research aims to integrate historical, philosophical, and sociological perspectives to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of civilization from the perspective of Ibn Khaldun and Chinese society through the concept of civilization cycle (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) and Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*).

Method

The method applied in this study is a qualitative approach based on literature research.¹² The selection of literature is based on the main objective of this study, which is to understand and analyze Ibn Khaldun's thought, namely the concept of the civilization cycle (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*), and to associate it with the concept of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*). The researcher applies textual analysis through the following steps: (1) Examining classical Chinese texts that discuss the concept of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*); (2) Analyze the works of Ibn Khaldun to understand his theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*), as well as; (3) Seek similarities between Chinese texts that discuss the concept of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) and Ibn Khaldun's thoughts on the concept of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*).

The researcher also employed the historical-comparison method. This method is one of the approaches in qualitative research that focuses on aspects of social life that occurred in the past or in different cultural contexts.¹³ In this study, the researcher will carry out a comparative history through the following steps:

¹² Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison, *Research Methods in Education* (New York, USA: Routledge, 2007), p.17. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315158501-17>.

¹³ Rhoni Rodin, *Sejarah dan Perbandingan Perkembangan Perpustakaan di Dunia* (Kediri, Indonesia: Lembaga Chakra Brahmanda Lentera, 2022), p.1.

(1) Analyzing historical events in China, such as dynastic transitions, to understand the application of the concept of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) in the practice of power; (2) Compare these events with the examples described by Ibn Khaldun in *Muqaddimah* to identify the similarities in the pattern of the civilization cycle (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*), as well as; (3) Analyze how natural disasters, rebellions, and other factors can be indicators of the loss of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) and compare them with indicators of the decline of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) according to Ibn Khaldun.

Result and Discussion

Basic Concepts of Civilization Cycle Theory from the Perspective of Ibn Khaldun (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*)

The theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) put forward by Ibn Khaldun is rooted in an in-depth analysis of social and political dynamics. He noted that every dynasty or political power goes through a series of cyclical changes.¹⁴ According to Metin Yücekaya's explanation, this theory comprises several important elements:

1. **The Beginning of Power:** Ibn Khaldun noted that the emergence of a dynasty or power was often triggered by high spirit and determination. The first leader of the dynasty had ambitious plans to expand its territory, strengthen its power, and improve the welfare of its people.
2. **Peak of Power:** In this phase, a dynasty or power reaches its highest point. Their military, economic, and cultural

¹⁴ Murat Önder and Fatih Ulaşan, "Ibn Khaldun's Cyclical Theory on the Rise and Fall of Sovereign Powers: The Case of Ottoman Empire," *Adam Akademi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 8, no. 2 (2018): 231–66, p. 233. <https://doi.org/10.31679/adamakademi.453944>.

power developed rapidly. They were often the dominant rulers in the political arena of the time.

3. **Decline:** After reaching the peak of power, Ibn Khaldun observed that the dynasty tended to decline. The leaders who replaced the dynasty's founders may not have the same spirit and determination. They are more focused on personal satisfaction and implement fewer effective policies.
4. **Destruction:** At this stage, the dynasty or power undergoes a significant decline. Their power weakened, leaving them vulnerable to external attacks or internal rebellions. The dynasty could collapse and be replaced by a new power.
5. **New Cycle:** This process then begins again with the emergence of a new dynasty or power that has a strong spirit and determination.

Ibn Khaldun stated that there are other factors that play a role in the formation of the state (*daulah*), namely '*ashabiyah*'. It is this theory of '*ashabiyah*' that has raised its name among modern thinkers, making it different from other Muslim thinkers. '*Ashabiyah*' includes the concepts of group feelings, solidarity between members, tribal fanaticism, nationalism, and social sentiment. In other words, when one of the group members, whether a relative or a neighbor, experiences unfair or hurtful treatment, the group will unite to protect them to maintain the group's unity. In this context, Ibn Khaldun introduced two basic social categories: *Badawah*, referring to inland communities, primitive societies, or desert areas, and *Hadharah*, describing urban life and civilized societies. Both are natural and inevitable phenomena.¹⁵

¹⁵ Muh. Ilham, "Konsep 'Ashabiyah Dalam Pemikiran Politik Ibnu Khaldun," *Jurnal Politik Profetik* 4, no. 1 (2016): 1–13, p.5.

According to Ibn Khaldun, the inhabitants of the city tend to lead a comfortable, luxurious life and often give in to their lustful desires. As a result, their morality is tainted by various reprehensible behaviors. On the contrary, the Bedouins, although also involved in worldly affairs, kept their lives within the limits of necessity without being trapped in luxury and pleasure. Fertile geographical conditions affect the religious aspect. The Bedouins, who lead a simple life and often fast and avoid fancy food, show a higher level of faith than the townspeople, who live in luxury. In cities, the number of religious people is very small because the environment is often filled with violence and indifference. Therefore, many individuals living in the desert tend to adopt a *zuhud* attitude (distancing themselves from worldly things).¹⁶

Bedouins show greater courage than city dwellers, who tend to be lazy and choose an easy way of life. The townspeople are trapped in pleasure and luxury and rely on the rulers to keep them and their possessions safe. Instead, Bedouins choose to stay away from society, living independently in remote areas that are unreachable by military surveillance. Therefore, they are responsible for their own safety without expecting help from others. In order to survive, rural communities need to have a sense of group solidarity (*'ashabiyyah*), which serves as a driving force in human history and becomes the foundation for a clan. Clans that have a strong sense of solidarity (*'ashabiyyah*) can develop into a country.¹⁷

Leadership traits are always possessed by individuals who have social solidarity. Each ethnic group is generally tied to a

¹⁶ Abdurrahman Kasdi, "Pemikiran Ibnu Khaldun Dalam Perspektif Sosiologi dan Filsafat Sejarah," *Fikrah* 2, no. 1 (2014): 291–307, p.295.

¹⁷ Ihsan Ali-Fauzi, "Ibn Khaldun dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial: Tentang 'Ashabiyyah, Negara, 'Sakralisasi' Ilmu," *Ulumul Qur'an* 9, no. 2 (2013): 46–54, p.49.

specific or general bloodline. Solidarity that comes from this particular lineage tends to be more profound than that from a general lineage. Therefore, leadership can only be implemented through power. Thus, the social solidarity possessed by a leader must be stronger than other forms of solidarity, so that he can gain power and lead his society effectively. Social solidarity is a prerequisite for power.¹⁸ In the context of leadership, there needs to be a form of social solidarity that transcends individual social solidarity. This is because, if individual solidarity recognizes the superiority of a leader's social solidarity, they will be better prepared to submit to and follow the leader's direction.¹⁹

Nations that live in wild environments tend to have greater control than other nations. Life in the desert is a significant source of courage. Therefore, it is not surprising that tribes living in harsh conditions show a higher level of courage than other tribes. This made them more able to seize power and take over what other nations had. The power they possess is often obtained through courage and acts of violence. If among this group there are individuals who are more skilled at adapting to desert life and have a wilder nature, then it will be easier for them to gain power than for other groups.²⁰

Ibn Khaldun's approach in this context is understandable, given that he analyzed Arab societies and tribes living in remote

¹⁸ Tamrin Fathoni, "Konsep Solidaritas Sosial Dalam Masyarakat Modern Perspektif Émile Durkheim," *Journal of Community Development and Disaster Management* 6, no. 2 (2024): 129–47, p.139. <https://doi.org/10.37680/jcd.v6i2.6402>.

¹⁹ Wildani Hefni and Rizqa Ahmadi, "Solidaritas Sosial di Era Post-Modern: Sakralitas Komunitas Salawatan Jaljalut Indonesia," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 17, no. 1 (2019): 59–76, p.66. <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v17i1.648>.

²⁰ Haryanto, *Elit, Massa, dan Kekuasaan: Suatu Bahasan Pengantar* (Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Universitas Gadjah Mada Press, 2017), p.45.

areas, especially those living challenging lives in the desert. The main goal of solidarity is to achieve sovereignty. Social solidarity serves to unite goals, protect oneself, and defeat enemies. When social solidarity achieves sovereignty within his group, he will seek to establish solidarity with other groups with whom he has no direct relationship. If social solidarity is equal, individuals within it will have a balanced position. If social solidarity can defeat other solidarities, the two entities will interact and together pursue a higher goal than mere sovereignty. In the end, when a country is old, and its leaders of social solidarity no longer support it, the new social solidarity will take over the country's sovereignty. In such conditions, the aging country will need new solidarity. In this situation, the state will incorporate strong supporters of social solidarity into its sovereignty and use them as a tool to strengthen the state. This phenomenon can be seen in the Turks who joined the Abbasid sovereignty.

Obstacles to achieving sovereignty are often caused by luxury. The higher the level of luxury and enjoyment enjoyed, the more likely they are to be close to destruction. Luxury can damage and eliminate social solidarity. When a country experiences destruction, it will be replaced by individuals or groups with stronger social solidarity.²¹ Ibn Khaldun argued that if a nation is wild, its sovereignty will be very vast, because it is better able to gain power and control effectively in conquering other groups.

The main goal of social solidarity, or 'ashabiyyah, is to achieve sovereignty. This concept of '*ashabiyyah*' is manifested in human characteristics that can vary, such as blood ties, similarities in terms of divinity, proximity to residence, alliances or alliances,

²¹ Sigit Riyanto, "Kedaulatan Negara Dalam Kerangka Hukum Internasional Kontemporer," *Yustisia Jurnal Hukum* 1, no. 3 (2012): 5–14, p.6. <https://doi.org/10.20961/yustisia.v1i3.10074>.

and the relationship between the protector and the protected.²² According to Ibn Khaldun, among the Arabs, a sense of godliness was a factor that enabled them to establish a dynasty. This is due to the nature of the Arabs, who tend to be reluctant to submit to one another, tough, arrogant, and ambitious, and who each want to become a leader. The '*Ashabiyyah*' that existed among them were more tribal or *qabilah*, which basically did not support the formation of dynasties because of these characteristics. It is only through the religion brought by the Prophet that they can finally be united and managed.

Motivation that comes from religion alone is inadequate, so group solidarity or '*ashabiyyah*' is still needed. Religion can strengthen the group's solidarity and increase its effectiveness, but other motivations rooted in factors beyond religion are still needed. Homogeneity also played an important role in the formation of a large dynasty. A dynasty can form in a region with a variety of tribes, but in such conditions, each tribe has distinct interests, aspirations, and views, making it difficult to build a large dynasty. Only through strong hegemony can solid solidarity be realized, which in turn allows the formation of great dynasties. In the context of '*ashabiyyah*', Ibn Khaldun argued that a king should come from the most dominant group. This is important because, to manage a country, maintain order, and protect it from both external and internal threats, a king needs strong support and loyalty from his people. This support can only be obtained if the king comes from a dominant group.

Heaven's Mandate (*Tiānmìng*) in the Chinese Dynasty Cycle

Heaven's Mandate (*Tiānmìng*) is a political ideology used

²² Muji Mulia, "Teori 'Asabiyyah Ibn Khaldun Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 3, no. 2 (2019): 400–417, p.404.

during the Chinese Dynasty to legitimize the power of Chinese kings.²³ The concept of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) was first used to support the rule of the Zhou Dynasty kings and legitimize the Zhou rebels against the previous Shang Dynasty.²⁴ Over time, this concept has continued to be used in Chinese history to legitimize the successful overthrow of old dynasties and the establishment of new dynasties. The Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) is considered the most important contribution of the Zhou Dynasty to Chinese political thought. The concept of Heaven's Mandate (*Tiānmìng*) was used until the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1912.²⁵

This teaching states that Heaven (*Tiān*) gives a mandate to a wise ruler. This ruler serves as the supreme king who rules under the heavens or the world (*Tiānxià*). When a ruler is deposed, it is considered an indication that he is unworthy and has lost his mandate from Heaven (*Tiān*).²⁶ At that time, Chinese society also believed that natural disasters, such as famine and floods, were a form of punishment from God *Shàngdì* (the supreme god in the concept of *Tiānmìng*), reflecting God *Shàngdì*'s dissatisfaction with the ruler. Therefore, there were often rebellions after major disasters, as the Chinese people at that time viewed natural disasters as a signal that the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) given to the dynasty had been revoked by the god *Shàngdì* and

²³ David Hazard, "From the Mandate of Heaven to the Modern State: The Nation According to Wei Xiaobao," *International Journal of Asian Studies* 1, no. 1 (2024): 1–16, p.2. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479591424000330>.

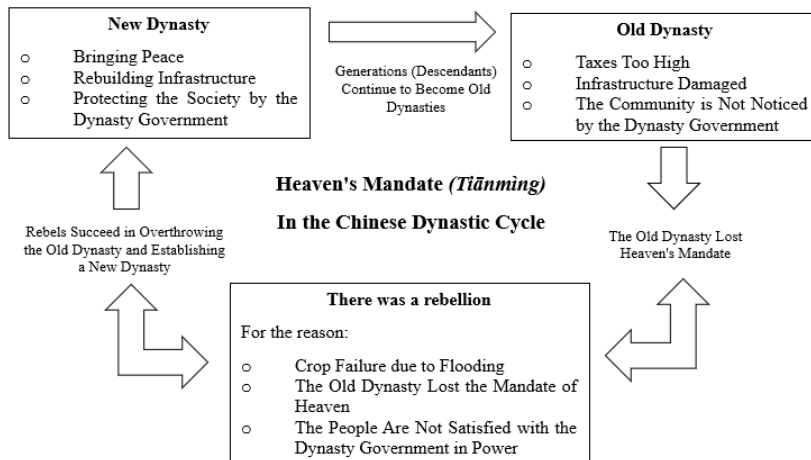
²⁴ Li Feng, "'Feudalism' and Western Zhou China: A Criticism," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 63, no. 1 (2003): 115–44, p.130. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/25066693>.

²⁵ Maria Khayutina; Yuri Pines; Kathryn M. Linduff; Constance A. Cook; Chen Zhi; "Landscape and Power in Early China: The Crisis and Fall of the Western Zhou , 1045–771 BC" 33, no. 2 (2011): 263–86, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0362502800000304>.

²⁶ Jiang Yonglin, *The Mandate of Heaven and The Great Ming Code* (Washington, D.C., USA: University of Washington Press, 2011), p.3.

transferred to the rebels. As a result, the rebels succeeded in overthrowing the existing dynasty and establishing a new dynasty.²⁷

Figure 1. The Concept of Heaven's Mandate (*Tiānmìng*)



Heaven's Mandate (*Tiānmìng*) is a concept often used by Chinese philosophers and scholars in the past to address the abuse of power by rulers. This was due to the absence of a supervisory institution in the Chinese Dynasty era.²⁸ Chinese historians of this period interpreted the success of the rebellion as an indication that Heaven (*Tiān*) had revoked its mandate from the ruling Dynasty. Throughout Chinese history, periods of poverty and natural disasters have often been seen as signals that Heaven (*Tiān*) judged the existing rulers unfairly, prompting the need for a new dynasty to replace them.²⁹

²⁷ Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China* (University of Cambridge, 1996), p.22.

²⁸ Jessica Rawson, "Statesmen or Barbarians? The Western Zhou as Seen Through Their Bronzes," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 25, no. 1 (1989): 71–95, p.86.

²⁹ Chen Shen, "Early Urbanization in the Eastern Zhou in China (770—

The mandate of Heaven does not require that the legitimate ruler come from the aristocracy, but rather that the individual possess the ability to lead or a good reputation in the eyes of the people. In the history of the Chinese Dynasties, the Han and Ming Dynasties were founded by people from peasant backgrounds, yet they established new dynasties because they had obtained the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*).³⁰ The possession of the Heavenly Mandate (*Tiānmìng*) is determined by the fair performance of a dynasty. Injustice in government can result in the collapse of the dynasty, as the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) will pass to the rebels.³¹

The Fall of a Civilization in the Romance of Civilization

The researcher identifies five phases that describe the cycle of emergence and decline of a country or civilization, based on the theory of the cycle of civilization (Tasyri' Al-Umran) and the concept of Heaven's Mandate (*Tiānmìng*), as follows.

1. **The Phase of Success or Consolidation:** In which state power obtains support from the people who succeeded in overthrowing the previous dynasty.
2. **The Tyrannical Phase:** In which the ruler acts arbitrarily towards his people. In this phase, the country's leaders tend to gather supporters and close access to **those** who want to participate in government. The ruler's main focus is on maintaining and strengthening his family's position.

221 BC): An Archaeological View,” *Antiquity* 68, no. 2 (1994): 724–44, p.727. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003598X00047438>.

³⁰ Qinghe Xiao, “The Christian Interpretations on the Nature of Heaven’s Mandate in Late Ming and Early Qing Dynasties,” *HTS Theologese Studies/ Theological Studies* 80, no. 3 (2024): 1–10, p.2. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i3.9994>.

³¹ Benny Suwito, “Pemahaman Bonum Commune Dalam Filsafat Cina,” *Jurnal Filsafat* 1, no. 1 (2015): 53–66, p.60.

3. **The Welfare Phase:** When **sovereignty** has been felt. In this phase, the ruler's attention is focused on the state's development.
4. **The Phase of Contentment:** In which peace and tranquility are created. In this phase, the ruler is satisfied with the **achievements** of his predecessors.
5. **The Phase of Extravagance and Excess:** In which the ruler begins to undermine the legacy left by his predecessors, is trapped in the gratification of lust and pleasure. In this phase, the state is in a vulnerable position and awaits its destruction, which will be taken over by the next social group.

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that three generations will emerge, according to the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) and the concept of Heaven's Mandate (*Tiānmìng*), as follows.

1. **The Generation of Builders**, who with simplicity and sincere solidarity, obeyed the authority of the power they supported.
2. **The Connoisseur's Generation**, namely individuals who get economic and political benefits from the power system, so that they become less sensitive to the interests of the nation and state.
3. **The Generation that Loses Emotional Ties to the Country**, because they feel free to do whatever they want without regard to the fate of the country.

The researcher made a table of the difference of the concept of the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) and the mandate of heaven (*Tiānmìng*) as follows.

Table 1. Difference in the Concepts of *Tasyri' Al-Umran* and *Tiānmìng*

Aspects	Cycle of Civilization (<i>Tasyri' Al-Umran</i>)	Heaven's Mandate (<i>Tiānmìng</i>)
Legitimacy of Power	from social solidarity (<i>ashabiyyah</i>)	from Heaven (<i>Tiān</i>) or religious teachings
The Role of Morality	based on the number of followers of the ruler based on the magnitude of the influence of social solidarity	based on justice made by the ruler
Factors of Decline or Dynasty Change	lack of support from social solidarity and loss of followers from the rulers	natural disasters, crop failures, rebellions

When a nation has reached the third generation, then the collapse of the state becomes a natural thing in the cycle of life, as well as according to Ibn Khaldun's view and the concept of the mandate of heaven (*Tiānmìng*), this process lasts for about a hundred years or about three hundred years. A great civilization usually begins with a society that has experienced severe life challenges, poverty, and persistent struggles. The aspiration to live a prosperous life and be free from difficulties, coupled with solidarity among social groups, encourages them to fight hard to achieve their goals. When this dream comes true, a new civilization is born. The emergence of this new civilization is often accompanied by the decline of other civilizations. The civilization continues to grow, and perhaps the next generation does not want to continue the struggle of the previous generation, so that the civilization becomes regressive and destroyed. This led to the civilization being replaced

by a new one. This research is expected to provide leaders and policymakers with insights for designing more sustainable strategies, grounded in the concept of the mandate of heaven (*Tiānmìng*) and the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*), so that the civilization we manage does not suffer setbacks or collapse.

The Relevance of the Theory of the Cycle of Civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) and the Concept of Heaven's Mandate (*Tiānmìng*) in the Context of the Contemporary Era

The *'ashabiyyah*, which refers to social solidarity, as well as the concept of the mandate of heaven (*Tiānmìng*) can serve as a key driver in driving social change related to the global movement in the contemporary era. Various global movements, such as climate change, gender equality, and social justice, often rely on social groups' ability to build social networks at both local and global levels that contribute to the development of civilization. However, solid social solidarity can be threatened by the rise of luxury and individualism. The relevance of this concept is increasingly evident in the face of modern challenges, such as increasing political polarization and social fragmentation in various countries, which often hinder the creation of collective solidarity in dealing with global issues.

The theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) and the concept of the mandate of heaven (*Tiānmìng*) provide an in-depth understanding of the current changes in global power. Civilization has experienced phases of birth, glory, and decline, each influenced by power, economic, and moral dynamics. This theory is particularly relevant for analyzing world phenomena such as the emergence of new economic powers, including China and India, that challenge the hegemony of Western countries.³² Success

³² Oswald Spengler, Arthur Helps, and Charles Francis Atkinson, *The*

in the economic or political field that is not managed properly can lead to stagnation and regression. In this context, global challenges such as economic inequality, declining industrial competitiveness, and political stagnation can be understood as part of a broader cycle of civilization's development.

The theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) and the concept of the mandate of heaven (*Tiānmìng*) offer a deep understanding of the interaction between economics and power. In his study, a solid economy serves as the basis for political stability, but exploitative economic policies, such as excessive taxation or widespread corruption, can undermine the foundations of power itself. In the modern context, challenges such as the global debt crisis, income inequality, and technological disruption that change work patterns can be analyzed through this perspective. Morality is a crucial element in the sustainability of a civilization. The morality of society, especially among the ruling elite, has a significant role in maintaining social solidarity and political legitimacy. In the current context, issues such as corruption, distrust of institutions, and moral decline across various strata of society indicate that today's global civilization faces challenges similar to those identified by Ibn Khaldun and the concept of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*). This concept teaches that the sustainability of civilization depends not only on material factors but also on the integrity of the underlying moral values.

The theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) and the concept of the mandate of heaven (*Tiānmìng*) are highly relevant to analyzing the influence of technology on civilization. Although these two concepts do not explicitly discuss technology, the ideas they contain about social and economic changes triggered by external factors can be applied to the current technological

Decline of the West (Oxfordshire, UK: Oxford University Press, 1991), p.70.

revolution. Digital developments, artificial intelligence, and automation have changed the way we work, socialize, and power dynamics. Therefore, these changes need to be carefully managed to avoid instability and inequality that can undermine social cohesion.

Conclusion

The Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*), which is the basis of the legitimacy of power in the Chinese tradition, has a striking similarity with the theory of *'asabiyyah* (group solidarity) and the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*). Ibn Khaldun argued that power and civilization develop through solid group solidarity, but will eventually suffer setbacks due to the loss of *'asabiyyah* (social solidarity) and fall into luxury and corruption. Within the framework of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*), power was given by God *Shàngdì* to a ruler who was just and fulfilled his moral responsibility. However, when the ruler behaves corruptly and negligently, God *Shàngdì* will revoke the mandate of heaven (*Tiānmìng*), leading to the dynasty's fall. This phenomenon aligns with Ibn Khaldun's theory, in which power, initially supported by strong social solidarity and morality, eventually collapses due to moral decadence and a loss of legitimacy.

The concept of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tiānmìng*) and the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*) highlight the pattern of rise and fall of power. In this view, the legitimacy and power of rulers tend to fade over time, influenced by internal factors such as corruption and moral weakness. Both concepts emphasize that morality and justice are important foundations for the legitimacy of power. When these moral values begin to fade, power will collapse. Civilization can be understood as a human effort to build a more orderly, advanced, and meaningful order of life. However, the survival of the civilization depends heavily on

society's ability to adapt to change and maintain a balance between progress and sustainability.

The implications of this study have the potential to deepen understanding of how two different cultures, China and Islam, developed similar views of power and civilization. This research also provides insight into universal patterns in human history, including the dynamics of power and the role of morality in sustaining civilization. By understanding the factors that contribute to the decline of civilization, such as corruption, loss of social solidarity, and injustice, modern society can take preventive measures to maintain stability and prosperity. It can be applied in a variety of contexts, including governments, organizations, and corporations, to avoid potential destruction. However, in the implementation of this research, there are limitations that may affect the results, namely a narrow focus on the concept of Heaven's Mandate (*Tiānmìng*). There are still many other concepts when associated with the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*), such as the Concept of *Kalatidha* (Raden Ngabehi Ranggawarsita), The Decline of the West (Oswald Spengler), The Network Society (Manuel Castell), The Medium is the Message (Marshall McLuhan), The Burnout Society (Byung-Chul Han), The Post-Normal Times (Ziauddin Sardar), and so on. Therefore, the researcher hopes that further research can explore these concepts in relation to the theory of the cycle of civilization (*Tasyri' Al-Umran*).

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