EXPOSING THE RELIGIOUS WORLDVIEW FOR SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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The growing consciousness on environment value

- The modern scientific and technological culture has made man to realize the importance of ecological equilibrium and environmental health to his life.
- It is no doubt that the dawn of the environmental consciousness is arising throughout the global community.
- The basic question, however, is how to make this consciousness as permanent attitude towards nature for the betterment of future generations?
- The main objective of this paper is to investigate the mechanisms of sustainable development in the framework of religious worldview and scientific research method.
- Science and technology have been the major instruments of man to make the planet earth a better place for his survival and progress;
- The religious wisdom, on the other hand, have been the basic source of guidance to the right course throughout the human history. Science gives the power for better life, while religion gives meaning of life and purpose of life.
Inspirations from religious worldview for sustainable built environment

- Unlike the evolution theory of modern biology, the holy books inform us that mankind was originated in "Paradise" a place where man can satisfy all his basic needs and enjoy a comfortable live without considerable efforts.

وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَانَّةَ وَكُلَّا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ (البقرة:35)

- "O Adam! dwell thou and your wife in the Garden (Paradise); and eat of the bountiful things therein as you will; but do not approach that tree" (2:35)

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلََائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَليفَةٍ (البقرة:30)

- "Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: I will create a vicegerent on earth" (2:30).
Inspirations from religious worldview

- The above Qur`anic verses, inspire human intellect for many facts, as following:
  
  1. In Divine made paradise man had enjoyed everything, with no considerable efforts, including the endless life;
  2. Man has lost his privilege in Divine made Paradise for moral accounts, not due to lack of knowledge;
  3. In this new home, man must develop precepts of sustainable development to overcome the various challenges that will be posted by nature, such as limited resources, lack of food, diseases, sickness and death.
  4. Man descended into the planet earth to perform Khilafah task, therefore he needs both knowledge and Divine guidance.

- Throughout the history the religious wisdom has been the major source to discipline human behavior and guidance of his actions to the right course.
- In fact, the rationale and the historical background of “built environment” is found in the religious worldview of the divine scriptures.
- “Sustainability” or “Khulud” in Qur`anic term, is the characterizing feature of this Divine built environment.
How to make the planet earth a man-made ‘Paradise’?

- The capacity of nature to meet human needs depends upon both human ability to unfold the internal dynamics of natural phenomena, and his moral values that help to maintain and recreate such dynamics.
- With rabid growth of the world population and the increasing demand for resources, man must develop new ideas and new methods to maintain life on earth and to satisfy his basic needs.
- The idea of “sustainable development” is introduced as basic approach to interact with the natural environment.
- The core idea of sustainability is based on threefold: environment, social and economical development.
- Man equipped with green technologies can develop a peaceful built environment and great paradise on earth.
- The strategic method to create such environment is to introduce the religious wisdom as framework to articulate the growing consciousness on sustainable interaction with nature.
- The term “built environment” indicates to man-made “paradise”, which refers to human-made resources, versus natural resources, and infrastructure designed to support human activity, such as buildings, roads, parks, restaurants, grocery stores and other amenities.
The mechanisms of sustainable built environment

- Sustainable built environment is the method of interaction with nature that allows maintaining and extending quality of life through the generations.

- The major objective of sustainable built environment is well-being of mankind: body, mind, heart, and soul; it is about continuously enabling, maintaining, and enhancing the quality of life of people within families, communities, organizations, and society.

- To achieve this major goal, the sustainable built environment requires enabling four other elements:
  1. Availability of basic resource, i.e. natural, social, and economic capital;
  2. Established system of facilities and civil infrastructure;
  3. A healthy natural environment, i.e. air, water, soil, and biota;
  4. In addition, sustainability requires effective management of all above systems.
Towards eco-settlements

- Eco-settlements are known by various names, such as sustainable cities, smart cities, and others.
- The general characteristics of eco-settlements, towns, villages, or buildings are as following:
  1. They are designed to minimize ecological footprints;
  2. They are designed to maximize human potentials;
  3. They are designed to repair and support the processes that maintain life.
The scientific framework for sustainable development

- A significant improvement of global environmental conditions could be achieved through effective interventions at planning, design, construction and management of built environment.
- Various road maps have been suggested by modern studies for effective implementation of sustainable development.
- It has been suggested that the effective implementation of built environment sustainability begins with vision for sustainability at global, industry, and project levels.
- In fact, the scientific framework of sustainable development can be found, perfectly, in the UN Millennium development Goals.
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<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>2000-215</th>
<th>2015-2030</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</td>
<td>End poverty in all its forms everywhere</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Achieve universal primary education</td>
<td>End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Promote gender equality and empower women</td>
<td>Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Reduce child mortality</td>
<td>Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Improve maternal health</td>
<td>Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</td>
<td>Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Ensure environmental sustainability</td>
<td>Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Develop a global partnership for development</td>
<td>Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Reduce inequality within and among countries</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td><strong>Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</strong></td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</td>
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<td><strong>Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</strong></td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td><strong>Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</strong></td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development</td>
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Concluding remarks

- Responding to the challenges posted by nature, mankind has never ceased efforts to find ways to satisfy his basic needs.
- Giant cities, great walls, pyramids, and many wonderful things from the ancient civilizations are the concrete evidences that human has been capable of making considerable changes in the natural environment for his own interest.
- Science and technology have been the major instruments of man to make the planet earth a better place for his survival and progress.
- Science is description, explanation and understanding of the natural phenomena; while technology is application of scientific knowledge in practice.
- Due to their crude nature, the ancient technologies were safe and eco-friendly.
- But, modern science and technology must be associated with religious wisdom, because knowledge without value might be destructive.
Thank you for your attention

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته