The socio-economic development as a comprehensive civilizational process in the thought of Malek Bennabi

التنمية الاقتصادية والاجتماعية كعملية حضارية شاملة في فكر مالك بن نبي

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Abstract:

This study examines socio-economic development as a comprehensive civilizational process in Malek Bennabi's thought, emphasizing the interdependence of economic, social, cultural, and political dimensions. Bennabi's framework moves beyond material growth, stressing structural transformations in values, institutions, and human capital as the core of sustainable progress. Central to his vision is the triad of "Man, Time, and Soil," where human development, historical consciousness, and natural resources converge to drive endogenous advancement. The study critically analyzes Bennabi's critique of imported development models, advocating instead for self-reliant strategies rooted in local civilizational values. It highlights the necessity of equitable resource distribution, participatory governance, and moral-intellectual renewal as prerequisites for authentic development. Drawing lessons from East Asian economies, the research underscores adaptive reform and self-sufficiency over dependency on foreign aid or external blueprints. The study explores democratization as a catalyst for inclusive development, emphasizing constitutional legitimacy, civil society engagement, and institutional accountability tailored to societal contexts. Bennabi warns against superficial democratization, arguing that genuine political transformation requires intrinsic societal change rather than borrowed legal frameworks. The research presents Bennabi's vision as an alternative developmental paradigm—one that harmonizes material progress with civilizational identity, collective agency, and ethical foundations. Development, in this view, is an organic, value-driven process rather than a foreign imposition.

Keywords: Socio-Economic Development; Civilizational Process; Human Values; Democratization; Malek Bennabi.

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Introduction:

The issue of socio-economic development is not a new one in socio-economic thought; its trajectories have always stirred significant debate and occupied a part of economic and social theory. This importance is currently distinguished for developing nations, whose economies are characterized by general weakness and structural distortion, in addition to other negatives resulting from the total importation of Western development models. These models, when applied, failed to account for the factors of **Man, Time, and Soil**, which are essential for the development process to achieve a social development that considers the social human rather than limiting it to the economic human. Therefore, development must be seen as a comprehensive civilizational process that aims to achieve development in all aspects of life, not just one. Real development is the product of continuous interactions between the various factors and aspects of society and life. The role of each factor and the extent of its influence depend on the circumstances in which the development process takes place and the stage it has reached. From this perspective, the title of this research was formulated to consider development in its two main aspects, trying to find solutions to the current crisis, at least in the intellectual field. In other words, this is a presentation of the general principles that any socio-economic development process must adhere to, leaving the choice of mechanisms to specialists to achieve this goal.

Socio-economic development is one of the most important issues that has preoccupied human thought throughout the ages, especially in light of the challenges facing developing nations. The importance of this issue lies in its close link with the concept of civilization and progress, as the economic aspect cannot be separated from the social or cultural in any genuine developmental process. In this context, Malek Bennabi presents an integrated vision of development as a comprehensive civilizational process, based on the factors of Man, Time, and Soil, making it a unique model worthy of study and analysis.

The Significance and Objectives of the Study

The significance of this research lies in its examination of Malek Bennabi's thought, who is one of the most prominent thinkers to have presented an integrated vision of development, with a focus on the civilizational and human dimension. The research aims to:

- Analyze the concept of socio-economic development in Malek Bennabi's thought.
- Uncover the problems facing imported development models.
- Propose an alternative vision that relies on civilizational and social factors to achieve development.

The Research Problem and Its Questions

The research problem revolves around the main question: *How can sustainable socio-economic development be achieved within a comprehensive civilizational vision according to Malek Bennabi's thought?* Several sub-questions arise from this main question, including:

- What are the civilizational factors that the development process must consider?
- What is the role of human and societal values in achieving development?
- How can the problem of imported development models be overcome?

Previous Studies

Many studies have addressed the thought of Malek Bennabi and development, including:

- Studies that focused on the civilizational aspect of his thought, such as the works of Abdel Samad Dialmy.
- Research that discussed the problem of development in the Islamic world, such as the works of Mohammed Arkoun.
- Economic studies that analyzed and critiqued traditional development models. There remains a need for a comprehensive study that links the economic and social aspects in Bennabi's thought.

Research Methodology and Structure

The research relied on a critical analytical methodology of Malek Bennabi's thought, using a case study approach to analyze different development models. The structure of the research consists of:

1. The nature and objectives of development.
2. The role of human values in achieving development.
3. The importance of self-development in achieving an efficient economy.
4. The democratization of systems and societies as a condition for development.

1. The Nature and Objectives of Development

The concept of development has been linked to many fields of knowledge, leading to cultural development, which seeks to raise the cultural level in society and elevate the individual. Similarly, social development aims to improve social interactions among members of society: individuals, groups, various social institutions, and non-governmental organizations. In addition, the concept of **human development** emerged, which focuses on supporting individual capabilities, measuring their standard of living, and improving their conditions in society. (AitBenali, 2025)

The concept of development also moved into the political sphere in the 1960s, appearing as a distinct field concerned with developing non-European countries toward democracy. Political development was defined as a multifaceted process of social change aimed at reaching the level of industrialized nations. This means creating pluralistic systems similar to European ones that achieve economic growth, electoral participation, political competition, and the entrenchment of concepts of nationality, sovereignty, and loyalty to nation-states.

Thus, we see that development is a socially intertwined process with many dimensions. Its success requires the positive participation and contribution of the entire society. Society cannot mobilize to participate in any policy without understanding and conviction, which in turn cannot be achieved without a system based on justice, democracy, and the guarantee of public and individual rights and freedoms. Development also requires profound changes in many concepts, mindsets, and social traditions, especially those related to family and women. (Bellour, 2023)

As a result of this importance, the concept of development has been considered one of the most important global concepts in the last two centuries. It was used to describe the process of establishing cohesive economic and political systems. This development process seeks to enhance individual competencies and unleash their creative potential, discover societal capacities, and work to use them optimally to establish a productive base capable of continuous output, thereby achieving human well-being and dignity. This highlights the importance of the concept of development in its multiple dimensions and levels and its entanglement with many other concepts like planning, production, and progress.

The concept of development first emerged in economics to denote a process of causing a set of radical changes in a specific society with the goal of giving that society the ability for **self-development** at a rate that ensures a continuously increasing quality of life for all its members. This means increasing the society's capacity to respond to the basic and growing needs of its members in a way that guarantees an increased degree of satisfaction of those needs through the continuous rationalization of the use of available economic resources and the distribution of the returns of that use. (BenBrahim, 2021)

In other words, economic development is "a planned process that means raising the economic situation and its components to a higher level through a continuous modification of the self-production base to increase real national income through a set of economic procedures, measures, and policies." (Boudersa, 2020)

Thus, the development process aims to change the structural frameworks of society in its different dimensions to provide a decent life for individuals or to work on distributing the gains of development among members of society to raise their level of well-being.

From this perspective, **economic development** is more comprehensive and general than **economic growth**; it means growth plus change. When we move to society, development means continuous change for the better over a long period. This change is in the production structure, in the development and exploitation of human and non-human resources, in the attitudes of individuals toward society and its problems, and in the administrative and organizational aspects required by the development process. All these changes are to achieve the fundamental goal of economic development, which is to provide a better life for the members of society. Growth, on the other hand, means "an increase in national income without a necessary change in all or some of these aspects." A clear example of the difference between development and growth is the large increase in the national income of oil-exporting countries due to the rise in oil prices. This increase in national income should not be interpreted as being due to a development process, but rather as growth. (العابد، التنمية في فكر مالك بن نبي، 2012)

It can be said that there can be growth in national income without development, because this surge in income did not result from a change in the various dimensions of society—economic, social, political, etc. The term "growth" applies to developed countries that have already achieved changes in their economic and social structures. Therefore, a high rate of growth in the gross or per capita national income can be achieved for these countries without a significant change. On the other hand, there can be development without growth, especially in a specific period of a society's development journey.

This is the case when structural economic change is taking its course successfully and the gains of development are being distributed more equitably, while the rate of growth in national output or income is relatively stable. This can also happen in the case of one sector growing at the expense of another. For example, the development of the industrial sector at a higher rate than the agricultural sector means a change in the production structure ("development"), (2023 ،بلهادي) but without growth in the national economy as a whole. This situation should not continue for long, because comprehensive economic development must consider the interdependence of sectors and regions, so that balanced development is achieved in the long term. Otherwise, the bottlenecks created by the backwardness of one sector relative to others may hinder the entire development process.

2. The Role of Human Values in Achieving Development

Economic development is a process that fundamentally aims to increase the efficiency of resource use or achieve the maximum benefit from human and material resources. This is done by prioritizing and directing resources toward sectors with the highest economic return. The development process also aims primarily to achieve **equitable distribution of resources** and provide social security that guarantees an acceptable minimum standard of living. (2021 ،بوشلاغم)

While increasing national output remains a primary goal of development, the equitable distribution of this increase in income among all citizens, and before that, the fair distribution of the burdens and costs necessary to achieve it, are undoubtedly fundamental conditions for any successful and lasting development process. There is no doubt that achieving successful development in this way should be viewed and evaluated from three angles:

1. The place of the individual in the development plan.
2. The extent of community participation in the development process, both in planning and implementation.
3. The role of civilizational values in achieving developmental momentum.

The human being is the focal point of development because he is its means and its goal at the same time. Therefore, developing the human being, or **human capital**, is the first practical step on the path to real development. It is necessary to avoid considering development as a purely economic

process, while it is fundamentally human and social. Industrialization, increasing agricultural production, developing infrastructure, increasing gross national product, or rising per capita income are not the final goals of development, nor are they indicators of its success or failure. Rather, they are manifestations and stages on the path to achieving the ultimate goal, which is defined in the process of **authentication** (*ta'ṣīl*). (بن-نبي، بين الرشاد والتيه، 2002)

For this reason, many scholars consider development not just an issue of establishing banks and building factories, but first and foremost, the building of the human being and creating new behavior in the face of all problems. Therefore, any economic renaissance or development must guarantee this educational aspect that makes the human being the first economic value as a means to achieve the development plan and as a meeting point for all the main lines in the programs presented for implementation. It is also good for those interested in this issue to look at it from a comprehensive perspective, so that economic things are linked to their deep social and cultural roots, at least in the minds of specialists. This way, their view of industrialization, which is necessary, includes a clear idea of the human values essential for the success of the project. If we think, for example, of what is called **project amortization** (*amortissement*), (Boutoura, 2021) we realize directly through numbers that the first value in the success of any economic project is the human being.

It can be said that, as much as we have benefited from the experiences of the Asian Tigers in the last decade, the neglect or disregard of the human issue is one of the things that deprived these experiences of the basic condition for their success, such as what happened to the Schacht plan in Indonesia after its independence. (بن-نبي، المسلم في عالم الاقتصاد، 2000)

From this, our observations on the position of East Asian countries toward this issue begin. We have seen some projects being established there for their economic advancement. Despite the financial poverty of these countries, the projects were, in fact, established on the basis of financial investment. Therefore, it was not surprising that a mere currency manipulation in the stock exchanges led to a financial and economic crisis in these countries. Despite these experiences, which can be learned from to build a sound development process, a mere contemplation of the intellectual readings of specialists in some developing countries on ways to confront economic problems shows that they limit the scope of their independent reasoning by implicit axioms that can be almost summarized as follows:

1. They first think on the basis that existing economic methods are the only ones that can be created. (Mansouri, 2023)
2. That economic activity is impossible without the intervention of money, either in the form of investment organized and supervised by private sectors, or investment dominated by a political authority in what is called the public sector.

This is the opinion reached by a senior specialist, Josué de Castro, in his study titled *The Making of Man is the Key to Development*, where he begins his thesis with an initial observation: "The world today recognizes the failure of the development strategy followed by different countries." The reason for the failure, in his view, is that "this strategy was based on principles and methods of thinking far from achieving effectiveness." The biggest mistake committed, in his opinion, is that "the plans were based on the principle of a uniform pattern of development everywhere." Therefore, Josué de Castro concludes from his reflections on the subject that "the problem presents itself to us in the form of an economic and cultural complex together, but unfortunately we have not yet gotten used to linking the relationship between these two words: economy and culture."(بن-نبي، بين الرشاد والتيه، 2002)

As for the extent of active community participation in the development process, both in planning and implementation, this is a condition without which development cannot be complete. Development requires that growth be the fruit of the work and evolution of the entire society. This is only achieved if development is a national or a popular approach that individuals interact with and that society, with all its classes, segments, and sectors, accepts. This makes contribution and participation in achieving development stem from a belief in that approach and a hope of reaching its ultimate goals. This happens when the feeling and bond of belonging to one nation-state become stronger than

the feeling and bond of smaller affiliations, and when understanding and cohesion are achieved between the authority and the society it leads. (Bougeffa, 2020) This is also when the authority realizes its role in decision-making and seeks to respond to the aspirations and ambitions of society, and when society is willing and able to play its role in participating in decision-making and its implementation.

This is the same opinion reached by Alassane D. Ouattara, "Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund," in his talk about a plan for the twenty-first century for different countries. He believes "it is essential to establish a partnership with civil society to reach a consensus on reforms, along with providing checks and balances. To succeed in this, it is necessary for the governments of developing countries to actively encourage all parts of civil society to participate in economic policy discussions." (بوبياون، 2024)

- But what is the factor that leads to the interaction of individuals and other actors in the comprehensive development process?
- The answer to this problem leads us to address the third angle mentioned earlier, which is civilizational values and their role in achieving developmental momentum. It is unimaginable that an economic development plan would succeed without a link between the world of economics and civilizational values. In other words, one cannot be convinced by numbers, statistics, and material tools if their accomplishment does not take into account the value of the human being himself as the first economic value, on the condition that his will is a spark derived from a civilizational will.

Our emphasis on the importance of the human being, society, and civilizational values as the basis for the launch of developmental momentum does not negate the importance of money in creating this momentum. Money is constrained by the aforementioned foundations. In this context, any financial aid from abroad, similar to the Marshall Plan, must be presented as a step forward in the field of initial cooperation. It is worth noting that the success of such a project is not conditioned by the amount of money that will be spent by the countries providing it, but rather by its transformation into work in the hands of people driven by a will to survive, like the one that motivated the German people after World War II, and then after the reunification of Germany in the early 1990s. The aid was not the main reason for Germany's renaissance, but rather one of the stimulants for its tremendous work in that pioneering experience, which expressed a civilizational will, thanks to which the German people were able to regain their position and impose their presence in the world of economy in a way that made observers describe this experience as a miracle. (بن-نبي، المسلم في عالم الاقتصاد، 2000)

3. The Importance of Self-Development in Achieving an Efficient Economy

Development is a process that cannot be bought from abroad with foreign currency that does not exist in our treasury. There are moral, social, and cultural values that cannot be imported; the society that needs them must give birth to them. Development is one of those values that are not imported but are made in the same place. If the population increase in a backward country seems like a disaster, it is for one reason: economic backwardness is underpinned by intellectual backwardness. If there is a fear of increasing unemployment in such a country while everything in it awaits accomplishment, that is a sign that it first suffers from the unemployment of minds that refrain from moving and stop at the red light put in their way by the idea of investment. Any backward country must invest all its energies; it must invest its minds, its muscles, its every minute, and every inch of its soil. That is the huge wheel that must be pushed to create a social movement and maintain that movement. Only then, if a share from abroad is added to the public investment, it may be an injection that increases the strength of a body whose strength was built from within, when it discovered its true economic power. (Bougherrafe, 2023)

Furthermore, results, especially in the economic field, are achieved on the basis of purely social factors that give the applied ideas more or less validity. Therefore, the temporary reasons that characterize the behavior of developing societies and make their ideas less effective in the economic field must be eliminated in the shortest possible time, by the methods imposed by the element of accelerating history. In the economic field, this means that they should unify their possibilities and

needs to achieve **self-sufficiency** (*L'autarcie*) as quickly as possible. This is the economic loop that can close in on itself if internal and external necessities require it. (بن-نبي، المسلم في عالم الاقتصاد، 2000) For the economies of these countries to be effective abroad, they must have their own precise system at home, based on the importance of following effective national, monetary, and commercial policies to mobilize the necessary resources to achieve development. This means confronting the economic situation with its own means and the capabilities it has at hand. **Independent development** is about producing the people I want, who I have the raw materials for, and who cannot be directed by the global economy. Instead of building one massive factory whose technology is controlled by the West, I should build a thousand small factories with my own vision. (Boussad, 2021) In other words, true development is strengthening society, not strengthening the state, and strengthening the human being, not strengthening the institution.

The lesson provided by the East Asian experience, particularly the Chinese experience, can be an important lesson for all developing countries. This country was able to launch development with its economic and social wings and relied on its own capabilities and energies to a great extent. It also tried to reform its socialist economic structures without destroying them. It reformed and wanted to deal with globalization with an open mind and from a position of strength. The Chinese economy's market became attractive to private and public foreign investments.

Therefore, we see that the distinguished economic experience of the Asian countries, specifically in Southeast Asia, which was called the "Asian miracle," is worthy of study and research. Their experience in development and achieving high growth rates that sometimes exceeded those of developed industrial countries was the result of a strategy focused on exploiting the gains from international trade and investments. This strategy enabled them to transform production structures according to the principle of interests and preferences, which earned their cheap exports huge amounts of foreign currency. (Chachi, 2022) This does not prevent us from saying that these experiences are not a model for the rest of the countries, especially since other factors that contributed to this development should not be overlooked.

After this, we can define a set of basic principles that should be taken into account to set an effective and actual development policy or plan. The most important of these is the **authentication of development**, especially after it has become clear that the experiences of importation have led to dire, even catastrophic, results. Authentication is not an easy and simple task, but it is a necessary and inevitable work that has no substitute. Authentication means searching for a new philosophy, goals, and models for development that are compatible and in harmony with the civilizational specificities of the developing society. (جقيدل، 2017) The burden of undertaking this authentication task falls on the intellectual and political leaders who have taken on the leadership and guidance of society. It is even stranger for backward countries to choose an imported development style, because it would be as if they had decided, in principle, to put their work for economic advancement at the mercy of others in the prison of global institutions. What is also important here is the practical-pragmatic contradiction when we see a poor country drawing up its economic renaissance plan based on money that it lacks, so it can only move slowly in implementing its projects or surrender to the management of foreign capital to provide it with suitable loans on its terms.

This way, the initiative to determine the nature of the step is handed over to the will of foreign experts who are not connected to the fate of the country they are planning for, like those who were entrusted with the Fourth Point after World War II, and applied it in the Global South in a way that did not achieve any result in the economic field because it did not move the natural capabilities in the countries. Not only that, but it even froze the financial capability allocated for its projects because it spent it on trivial administrative aspects when economic activity starts from scratch. Consequently, these projects had no result to be counted, either in terms of starting an economic activity that gradually lifts the burden of backwardness from these countries or in terms of forming some experience, which would be in the form of an economic awareness that grows even in failed experiences into a psychological asset from which other experiences start, and in which success is confirmed more and more. (ملوكي، 2010)

4. Democratization of Systems and Societies

The process of **democratization** is considered one of the most important reform processes that gives the authentic frame of reference its effective role in the life of society and provides a safe environment for development to achieve a socio-developmental economy. Because of its importance, the subject of democratization, or the concept of democracy, has become more than just a political necessity; it has become a constant civilizational demand that is almost transforming into a global historical inevitability at the beginning of the twenty-first century. We will try at the outset to reach a practical clarification of the concept of democracy through its literature, basic characteristics, and features, so that we can then determine the role of democracy in establishing a civilizational society and a just system based on dialogue and aiming for coexistence. (Faid, 2018)

We should first point out that the disagreement over the concept of democracy is not limited to the different points of view in society, but also extends to the feasibility and the benefit of working toward its achievement. There is no doubt that the disagreement among political forces and movements over the concept of democracy prevents the spread of a new political thought that leads to democratic intellectual, cultural, and political development based on dialogue, in which each party recognizes the existence of the other, accepts it as a full partner, respects its right to express itself, considers its interests, and guarantees its right to effective political participation. Among the most prominent manifestations of the disagreement over the concept of democracy is the disagreement over its essence. (Ferah, 2024) What is democracy? What is its form? What is its content? Is it the actual means to achieve dialogue and coexistence? And why is there talk about the democratization of systems and societies as if they are functionally separate?

These are some of the manifestations of the heated disagreement over the process of democratization, which we will try to answer in this presentation.

Democracy, like other great concepts and ideas, is ultimately a composite concept with many aspects and approaches. Among the basic attributes and characteristics of democracy is that it is "a practical method and a set of rules constrained by the provisions of the constitution and not absolute. Democracy is a relative practice and a historical process that begins when a minimum of the necessary conditions for its establishment is available, and it improves and its scope widens when its practice spreads outside political institutions." (Ghennam, 2018)

This multiplicity and diversity that characterize the concept of democracy should not be understood as a vague concept that accepts contradictory interpretations. Rather, it is a concept constrained by a set of conditions and restricted by a set of rules, principles, and institutions. Its goal is to achieve majority rule in a society where equality prevails among citizens and where public interest is governed.

Democracy is a practical method for making decisions of a general nature by those concerned with those decisions. It is a method imposed by the requirements and necessities of modern social life among individuals and groups. Its application requires establishing principles and building institutions that enable the political expression of opinions, interests, and ideas in a peaceful and organized manner. This is achieved by restricting democratic practice with a constitution that considers the conditions agreed upon by social forces and on which the political class establishes sufficient consensus. (Marir, 2023)

Contemporary democracy has achieved great success in achieving the goals we mentioned thanks to its flexibility and dynamism, which enabled it to take root in different societies in terms of religion, culture, history, etc. This was achieved thanks to its practical and realistic nature, which takes into account the prevailing values, beliefs, and cultures in different societies and considers the historical stage these societies are going through, as well as the acceptable, reasonable, and realistic level of democratic practice in them, while taking into account the desired fruits and results of adhering to the democratic system. Under the democratic method, it is possible to find solutions and formulas for their application and to adapt institutions to suit the special circumstances of each society, without prejudice to democratic principles or disabling constitutional institutions, without which

democracy cannot be achieved.

Thus, contemporary democracy is, first and foremost, a method of governance by which society can control the authority within it to curb its impulsiveness and its desire to monopolize power and wealth and act without oversight or accountability. It also provides society with the opportunity to manage the contradictions of the forces and interests within it peacefully and to control the sources of violence and conflict that waste energies and destroy achievements. This is achieved by guaranteeing the right to effective political participation for all members of society, in accordance with a constitutional legitimacy that emanates from the free will of citizens and is based on democratic principles embodied in constitutional institutions that protect public freedoms. Therefore, the term "method" is more expressive of the reality of contemporary democratic practice and more indicative of it. (Ibrir, 2025)

While there is agreement on the necessity of establishing the rules of democracy and on the seriousness of the results that could result from the failure of the experience, there is also agreement that the fate of democracy is dependent on the availability of suitable conditions and circumstances that help it grow and continue and give it the opportunity to yield results.

The first fundamental condition for the establishment of any democratic experience is the existence of a suitable constitutional framework that explicitly and clearly states the well-known major principles on which democratic systems are based, such as the principle that the people are the owners of sovereignty and the source of authority, the principle of equality among citizens, the guarantee of their individual and collective freedoms and rights, the principle of separation of powers and the rotation of power, and other general principles that peoples and nations with a lead in this field have agreed to consider necessary rules for any democratic constitution. While a constitution is necessary for the establishment of genuine democracy, a set of other important and necessary conditions must be met to achieve this goal. (Khacha, 2025) The legal system adapted to the nature and requirements of the democratic system is one of these conditions, which we can summarize as: (أسعيد، 2018)

- The establishment of a real and effective civil society that can play the role of a counter-authority to the state's public authority.
- Freedom of speech and expression in all its forms and images, especially the freedom and independence of various media outlets from all types of executive authority, so that they can become the voice of the fourth estate.
- The availability of freedom to engage in public political activity under a real multi-party system, without discrimination or exclusion.
- The popular will expressed through free and fair elections is the only natural and legal way to access and leave power.

There are also three main dimensions that should not be absent in this field: (نايلي، 2022)

1. The necessity of restricting democratic practice with controls that ensure the establishment and continuation of consensus and agreement among the main forces of society.
2. The organization of state powers and the definition of the powers of each, according to the principle of separation of powers, and the establishment of mechanisms that ensure that the exercise of power is in accordance with laws and constitutional powers.
3. The guarantee of public rights and freedoms for individuals and groups.

The agreement of the effective forces in society on a formula for a democratic constitution is the necessary condition for democratic transition, because this agreement expresses the acceptance of the principle of equality and the recognition of the principle of citizenship. It also expresses the civilizational advancement, political maturity, and rational thinking of political leaders and their sense of responsibility.

On the other hand, two basic conditions must be met in this constitution:(وكيل، 2018)

1. The constitution must express the agreement and consensus of the active social and political forces and be accepted by them for its texts and articles, and they must agree to be judged by its legitimacy.
2. The texts, provisions, and articles of the constitution must respect the major and fundamental principles of democracy and contain the conditions, rules, and guarantees that ensure the work of the institutions arising from those principles.

With the exception of the necessity of respecting these two conditions, democratic practice can be constitutionally restricted by the beliefs, values, and laws prevailing in society. The people, as the source of authority in a democratic system of government, can direct democratic practice in the direction that ensures the achievement of the results that society desires to reach through democratic practice.

The democratic system of government adheres to a number of principles from which constitutional institutions arise, which ensure the participation of members of society in the process of making collective decisions. There are no general conditions or specifications that define or regulate the content of the decisions themselves. That is a variable issue that is mainly related to the decision-makers and those concerned with them, in light of their values, beliefs, and ideas that are defined by constitutions in the light of the constants and values that society accepts and seeks to embody in its social, economic, moral, etc. life. Therefore, we find democratic systems constrained by constitutions that focus on the necessity of preserving the constants on which a sufficient consensus is built to achieve the stability and continuation of society. (Yeder, 2021)

Therefore, the democratic constitution must take into account reality and consider the special circumstances of each society and its civilizational, cultural, and religious specificities. Its consideration as a social contract among the various forces and actors of society cannot have any actual value or realistic meaning unless it finds social acceptance and authoritative respect for the spirit of its text. The legal texts and articles alone cannot achieve democracy, no matter how ideal they are, unless there is a voluntary acceptance by the active forces in society. This is only achieved if this constitution emanates from the will of the society, expressed through freedom of expression and choice, and is based on the democratic principles known and established by long-standing democracies.(أزروال، 202019)

It appears from the previous points that we focus on the constitution as an official document on the basis of which a social contract is established between the ruler and the ruled, enabling the ruler to know his powers and the ruled to know their duties and rights. This does not prevent the existence of long-standing democratic countries like England that enjoy an excellent democratic life without having a special constitutional text at its foundation that protects the rights and freedoms that the English people actually enjoy. Rather, they are protected by the traditions of the people themselves, their customs, their psychological conditions, and their social custom, i.e., they are protected by what we can call the English sense of self. (Tarek, 2023)

Democracy, therefore, is not fundamentally a process of handing over powers between two parties, the ruler and the ruled, as we mentioned earlier. Rather, it is the formation of feelings, emotions, and subjective and social standards, which together constitute the foundations on which democracy is based in the conscience of society, before any constitution stipulates them. The constitution is only the formal result of the democratic project when it becomes a political reality indicated by a text inspired by customs and traditions, and dictated by a feeling in certain circumstances. This text has no meaning if it is not preceded by the customs and traditions that inspired it, or in other words, the historical justifications that indicated its necessity. From this, the absurdity of those constitutional borrowings that some emerging countries today borrow to create a new situation in their countries, by analogy with the model they borrow from long-standing countries, becomes very clear. This borrowing is sometimes necessary, but it will certainly not be sufficient alone if it is not accompanied by the necessary and appropriate measures to instill what is borrowed in the psyche of the society that borrows it. (بن-نبي، تأملات، 2002)

In this aspect, we must work toward a democratic transition, considering that democracy is a

relative process and a gradual historical process. It begins when peaceful dealing prevails in resolving disagreements and disputes and managing contradictions between the different forces and interests within society. It also begins when the influential social forces reach an agreement and consensus to guarantee a minimum of effective passive participation for all citizens without discrimination or exclusion. The democratic process progresses and its quality improves through practice, by providing stability for the practice and by the spread of a democratic culture and its reflection on general behavior. (Saadou, 2024)

The starting point in the process of a genuine democratic transition is the acceptance of the other and taking his opinion and interest into account. This requires strengthening the conviction among society, individuals, and groups that they are equal citizens in all political rights and duties. "Democracy is nothing but the application of freedoms in social systems, political organizations, and the constitution of government." (بن-نبي، تأملات، 2002)

Thus, we see the necessity of institutional work as a framework for modernizing the state, exercising power, and building a modern civil society capable of organizing the various sectors of the people in institutions, associations, and links with general political, social, economic, and specific professional interests, away from traditional frameworks. This also means embodying democratic freedom as a societal value and a system of governance to define and achieve the right to individual and collective self-determination alike. This means respecting individual freedoms and the right of the masses to participate in governance, in addition to establishing the democratic idea as a social value that calls for tolerance and demands the resolution of problems at the individual, group, institutional, and international levels through rational dialogue and peaceful means.

The use of the mechanisms of the democratic method in managing aspects of disagreement in peaceful ways is an expression of the existence of civilizational maturity and a readiness to accept diversity and difference and to achieve civilizational coexistence. This is only achieved if politics wants to instill its formulas and goals in the collective consciousness of society to make it a judge, who freely passes judgment on its formulas and goals. This policy might be able to take this judgment by surprise at some point, especially when it raises attractive slogans and makes tempting promises. But, as Abraham Lincoln said, "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time." (بن-نبي، بين الرشاد والتيه، 2002)

Therefore, the interests of the peoples must be the interests of the rulers so that they can enter the current century in unity and harmony and learn from other people's how the touches of the ruler can express the will and interests of the peoples, especially if other people's agree with them and share the will to enhance ways of internal and external dialogue to establish ways for effective coexistence.

Conclusion

Development requires a fundamental change in the individual's ideas, capabilities, and behavior. This change is both the means and the goal of development at the same time. Perhaps what the individual cared about from development was its direct material results, i.e., increased income, an improved standard of living, and an acceptable level of consumption, etc. But what he ultimately cares about, before anything else, is to live, work, and produce within the framework of his own personality and authentic civilization. The interaction of this element with the aforementioned elements is what qualifies the individual as a social person who works within the framework of his civilizational values to establish a strong and peaceful civilizational bloc that preserves the heritage and works to acquire the new and useful from others who do not belong to his civilization.

After this analytical presentation of Malek Bennabi's thought on socio-economic development as a comprehensive civilizational process, a set of conclusions and recommendations can be drawn that contribute to a deeper understanding of his vision and provide a practical framework for its application in contemporary reality.

1. **The comprehensive nature of development:** The study confirmed that development in Malek Bennabi's thought is not just quantitative economic growth, but an integrated process that includes material, spiritual, and cultural aspects, with a focus on the human being as the foundation of civilizational transformation.
2. **The importance of civilizational values:** It was shown that the success of development is contingent on the existence of a civilizational will based on moral and social values, not just on material tools or models imported from the West.
3. **The failure of imported models:** The analysis concluded that attempts to transfer Western development models without considering cultural and civilizational specificities lead to disastrous results.
4. **The Role of Democracy and Community Participation:** The study showed that genuine development requires the democratization of systems and ensuring effective community participation in decision-making, while emphasizing social justice as a fundamental pillar.
5. **Self-Development as a Radical Solution:** The idea of self-sufficiency and reliance on local resources emerged as an effective alternative to economic dependency. This requires building the capacities of local individuals to lead the development process.

Recommendations

1. **Adopting a Civilizational Vision for Development:**
   - Developing nations must adopt developmental visions derived from their own civilizational values, while considering the factors of "the human, time, and soil" as noted by Ben Nabi.
   - Strengthening education and scientific research to build a developmental awareness capable of efficiently utilizing local resources.

2. **Reforming Political and Economic Systems:**
   - Implementing the principles of good governance, including transparency, accountability, and community participation in forming development policies.
   - Activating the role of civil institutions to ensure a balance of power and protect economic and social rights.

3. **Enhancing Human Development:**
   - Investing in people through vocational training programs and empowering youth to lead change.
   - Supporting local innovation and encouraging entrepreneurship to achieve sustainable development based on self-creativity.

4. **Integration of Material and Moral Aspects:**
   - Avoiding the separation of economic development from cultural development, as both are two sides of the same coin in building a civilization.
   - Reinforcing ethical values such as hard work, cooperation, and social responsibility to ensure the sustainability of development.

5. **Regional and International Cooperation:**
   - Building development partnerships among developing nations to exchange expertise and avoid dependency on external powers.
   - Advocating for a fair global economic system that considers the interests of poor nations and reduces the gap between the North and the South.

Malek Bennabi's vision for development remains a rich theoretical framework that can be utilized to confront contemporary challenges, provided it is activated through practical policies that place the human being at the center of their concerns. True development is not merely about economic projects, but is a "civilizational process" aimed at reviving society and liberating it from dependency, allowing it to become an active participant in shaping its future.

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