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Nation-building, Belonging and Multiculturalism in Indonesia: Contextualising Ibn Khaldun's Theories and Beyond*

Endonezya'da Ulus Kurma, Aidiyet ve Çok kültürlülük: İbn Haldun'un Kuramlarının Kavramsallaştırılması ve Ötesi

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Abstract: This paper strives to reread and recontextualise the ideas of Ibn Khaldun on diversity, group feeling and political legitimacy, most specifically within the contemporary context of nation-state. Ibn Khaldun states, "A dynasty rarely establishes itself firmly in lands with many different tribes and groups". A high level of diversity (with no social cohesion), is regarded as a peril rather than a promise, most particularly to the stability of the state or dynasty. This paper address the following problems: (a) what societal cultures which contribute to the Indonesian nation-building; (b) how do the minority groups perceive their belonging to the nation and how do they respond to the nation-building.

Keywords: Nation-Building, Belonging, Asabiyya, Ibn Khaldun

Öz: Bu makale, İbn Haldun'nun çeşitlilik, grup hissiyatı ve siyasi meşruiyet üzerine fikirlerinin bilhassa çağdaş ulus-devlet bağlamı içerisinde yeniden okunması ve tekrar kavramsallaştırılmasını amaçlamaktadır. İbn Haldun, "bir hanedanın birçok kabile ve grubun olduğu topraklarda kendini kuvvetli bir biçimde tesis etmesi ender görülür" cümlesini sarf etmiştir. Yüksek seviyede bir çeşitlilik (sosyal bağlılık olmaksızın), vaatten ziyade tehlike olarak addedilir. Bu tehlike özellikle de devletin veyahut hanedanlığın istikrarına karşı bir tehlikedir. Bu makale aşağıda belirtilen sorunlara ışık tutmaya çalışacaktır: (a) Hangi toplumsal kültürler Endonezya'da ulus oluşturmaya katkıda bulunmaktadır? (b) Azınlık grupları, ulusa olan aidiyetlerini nasıl algılıyorlar ve ulus oluşumuna nasıl tepkide bulunuyorlar?

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ulus Kurma, Aidiyet, Asabiye, İbn Haldun

* This article is a review of the paper presented at the "4th International Ibn Khaldun Symposium" organized on 19-21 May 2017 in Istanbul.

1. State, Islam and Nation-Building

Up to now, the idea of the nation-state has not lost its enchantment, in the face of the courses of globalisation, supranational institution-building on a regional plane (e.g. European Union) and growing transnational cooperation. The project of nation-building is relevant for those states who obtained independence only lately as well as those who have been cautious of their independence ever since Derichs and Heberer (2006: 4).

Nation-building in the context of Asia, in general, and in Indonesia, in particular, is distinct to that in Europe. Gungwu points out:

“In Asia, we know that some of our nation-states are more artificial. This is true not only of Asia, but also in Africa and other places as well, places that have come out of recent imperial and colonial experiences during which borders were drawn by outside interests. These external factors have created conditions that have made the borders meaningless for some people and meaningful for others. Once there was the concept of borders, then you have, as scholars like Benedict Anderson have suggested, imagined national communities, or people seeking to re-imagine themselves as a nation within borders already drawn.” (2004: 4).

Even though Muslims are the majority, Indonesia does not install Islam as the basis of the state. The first president of the country Soekarno (r. 1945–1967) inaugurated Pancasila as the foundation of the Republic. This was due to the strong nationalistic aspirations among the founding fathers, who were of the opinion that installing one exclusivist ideology as the basis of the state would potentially jeopardize the unity of the nation, since Indonesia was plural in terms of religions and ethnicities (Hamayotsu, 2002: 2–3).

The Pancasila as state ideology accordingly marks Indonesia as “pluralist state”. The Pancasila comprises of five principles which include: (a) belief in one God, (b) a just and civilized humanitarianism, (c) national unity, (d) Indonesian democracy through consultation and consensus, and (e) social justice. It is worth remarking that the Pancasila state is not a secular state. This is because the first pillar of this ideology reads as ‘the belief in a single Deity’.

The Indonesian people assign the ‘Indonesian language’ as their national language. This language is a romanisation of Malay language. It is worth remarking that Indonesia did not choose Javanese as the national language, although Javanese

constitute the most dominant ethnicity in Indonesia and accordingly the Javanese people have high potentials to exert their language as the national language. It was however not the case. The romanised Malay, which was then called 'Indonesian language', was chosen as the national language due to the fact that this language is simple and has been used as *lingua franca* among the people in Malay-Indonesian archipelago. Indonesian language, accordingly, contributes to the nation-building and to the shared identity of the people across the country. The case of Indonesian language shows that it is not necessarily the dominant societal culture which exerts an influence in the construction of nation-building.

In the process of nation-building, the diversity of the nations could not be accommodated completely, and for that reason this should be domesticated. Schefold (1998: 261) reveals that ethnic 'primordial attachments' embody a natural emotional need for social self-assertion, and consequently these attachments continue to be sustained by way of all processes of modernisation. In the new and scarcely consolidated states, however, these attachments constitute an impending danger, as they menace to challenge national solidarity. The only pragmatic reaction consists in arranging to 'domesticate' them.

2. The Intricate Interplays Between Religion and Nationalism

Indonesian nationalism, according to Menchik (2014: 594) represents 'godly nationalism'. This type of nationalism is construed as "an imagined community bound by a common, orthodox theism and mobilized through state in cooperation with religious organizations in society". Menchik goes on to explain "as long as citizens believe in one of the state-sanctioned pathways to God, they become full members of civil society and receive state protection and other benefits of citizenship". In this sense, godly nationalism inhabits a middle position between secular and religious nationalism (Menchik, 2014: 600). The belief in one God, or monotheism, accordingly constitutes an important foundation of nation-building in Indonesia.

For Menchik (2014: 599) "Indonesia contains a form of nationalism that is neither Islamic nor secular, but rather exclusively and assertively religious. Active state support of religion did not die in 1945 with the failure of Jakarta Charter and the state's embrace of Pancasila.... The privileging of religion is made manifest through state support for religious orthodoxy over luminal and heterodox faiths".

The notion of 'godly nationalism' is grounded on the conception that "religious practice and discourse may be a constitutive part of national identity rather than

epiphenomenal or a smokescreen for hoary political interests". Menchik goes on to say that "Indonesian nationalism continues to be rooted in religious solidarities" although "it is not an Islamic state" (Menchik, 2014: 596–598). In this regard, we may understand that the Nahdlatul Ulama from the very beginning suggested that Islam did not run in counter with nationalism, and accordingly they brought forward the adagio of "hub al-watan min al-iman" (loving the nation is a part of Islamic faith).

The endurance of a godly nation necessitates privileging a certain beliefs and persecuting "acts of deviance as blasphemy". In this regards, the persecution of the Ahmadiyya in modern-day Indonesia is a logical consequence of this tendency and politics. (Menchik, 2014: 595). Menchik argues that the cases of violence against the Ahmadiyya demonstrate that "intolerance and nation building are part of a mutually constitutive process". He goes to elucidate that "the campaign against Ahmadiyya is part of a broader effort by civil society and the state to constitute the nation through belief in God. In that respect, contemporary intolerance to Ahmadiyya is merely the most recent manifestation of a longstanding effort to promote godly nationalism while dislodging secular or Islamic alternatives". For Menchik (2014: 595), "the debates over blasphemy are an attempt (by Muslim civil society) or disrupt (by liberals) norms and laws that help constitute the nation through belief in one God".

Menchik's survey implies that the degree of tolerance among the Nahdlatul Ulama is higher than that among the Muhammadiyah. Menchik (2014: 593) explains that "75 percent of Muhammadiyah leaders and 59 percent of Nahdlatul Ulama leaders said that no Ahmadiyya member should be allowed to become the mayor in Jakarta". Menchik brings forward this survey to support his argument that intolerance has been prevalent among contemporary Indonesian civil society organisations, on the one hand; and to reject the thesis that Islam in Indonesia constitutes a "marginalised and relatively unimportant in political sense and greatly overshadowed by a form of political thinking usually called secular nationalism".

Assyaukanie highlights three models of the relation between Islam and state: (a) an Islamic state governed by Islamic law, (b) a secular liberal democratic state, and (c) a religious democratic state. For Assyaukanie, A religious democratic state does not acknowledge the adherents of heterodox faiths (Menchik, 2014: 599).

The Indonesian constitution guarantees the people's freedom in practicing their respective religions. The government, however, restricts the number of recognised religions in this country. The first principle of state's ideology, i.e. 'belief in one

God', implies the obligation of every citizen to embrace a religion; accordingly the government regards those who do not attach themselves to any one religion as subversive. The government also compels some religions to modify their respective doctrines in order to conform to the principle of monotheism (Franke 2006: 61–82). The Buddhists, for instance, advocated the principle of 'Adibuddha' as the only Buddhist God that should be assigned to conform to the Pancasila principle of 'belief in one God'. The Balinese Hindus also formulated the principle of 'Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa' (the All-One God), which is identified with the principle of 'belief in one God'. This demonstrates that Indonesia adopted 'restricted pluralism' (Franke 2006).

In principle, each of the six recognised religious communities is granted equal rights before the law. These religious communities are granted equal access to public space and consent to build houses of worship within reasonable permissible limits (Adeney–Risakota 2009:19). The adherents of "local indigenous religions" and other unrecognised religions do not enjoy the same rights as the adherents of recognised religions.

3. Minorities, Belonging and Nation-Building

Kymlicka (2001) brought forward three characteristic phases of the discourse on minority rights. The *first stage* of the dispute is put within the circumstance of competition between communitarianism and liberalism. The *second stage* of the discussion is concerned with potential scope for minority rights within the structure of liberal theory. The *third phase* of the discussion revolves around the query how some minority rights claims constitute a reaction to, or are related to, nation-building policies.

Kymlicka (2001) points out that nation building is mostly based on dominant or majority 'societal culture'. Kymlicka goes on to explain that there are at least three varied strategies which the minorities may take in terms of majority nation-building: (a) admitting the integration into the majority societal culture; (b) striving to establish their own societal culture and contesting to state nation-building; and (c) accepting the enduring marginalisation.

3.1. Ethnic Minorities and Nation-Building

There are at least three discourses pertaining to the ways in which Chinese minorities has been accommodated in Indonesia. These discourses include assimilation, multiculturalism and hybridity. Under Suharto regime (1966–1998), **assimilation** was the prevailing discourse, which compelled the Chinese to integrate themselves into

the national body (Hoon, 2006: 149). Schefold (1998: 270) points out that all inhabitants of Chinese descent are under heavy pressure to give up their ethnic traditions and assimilate. In May 1998, Indonesia witnessed anti-Chinese riots which clearly demonstrated the disappointment of the policy of assimilation (Hoon, 2006: 149).

Post-Suharto Indonesian leaders were aware of the failure of the policy of assimilation, and accordingly sanctioned the policy of **multiculturalism** in order to rebuild the nation. This policy is believed to be in conformity with the national motto 'Bhinneka Tunggal Ika' (Unity in Diversity). Multiculturalism tries to challenge cultural homogenisation by recognising the coexistence and equal representation of varied peoples and cultures within a nation-state (Hoon, 2006: 149). Multiculturalism strives to allocate a space for the oppressed minorities and afford them a subjectivity, identity, and personhood by supporting individuals within that minority to 'narrate' their own experiences of repression.

There are nevertheless debates on multiculturalism in Indonesia. Some scholars criticise that in the politics of multiculturalism the frontiers of difference and the concept of plurality are still resolved by particular hegemonic and dominant group(s). They also disapprove of this policy since it assumes that each person enjoys only one distinct cultural identity. Multiculturalism accordingly does not recognise an individual who possesses more than one identity. These scholars argue further that by unconsciously setting obvious delineations and boundaries between cultures, multiculturalism has conquered its own intention the mono-cultural nation by way of an assimilation policy. People who do not fit into any of those defined cultural categories will be left with no choice but to 'assimilate' into the only officially 'prescribed' cultures that are available" (Hoon, 2006: 154, 159). This is in line with Amartya Sen's criticism (see: Ghoshal 2018) towards multiculturalism. Sen is of the opinion that what some people regard as multiculturalism is in fact 'plural mono-culturalism', in which every ethnic communities live in isolation from other communities.

The last notion, namely **hybridity**, is on the making. Hybridity is thought to substantiate the policy of multiculturalism. Hoon (2006: 163) points out that "multicultural conditions can only be lived out, regenerated and transformed with the recognition of hybridity". Hybridity in this sense is related to "the idea of cultural syncretism, which foregrounds complicated cultural entanglement rather than cultural difference by multiculturalism". It is explained that the politics of hybridity

has been inherent to the course of dislodgment and migration, and has been exercised by locals and migrants in their every day conciliation and production of their identities, deliberately or involuntarily (Hoon, 2006: 159–160).

It is worth noting that hybridity is an incessant and frequently convoluted course of cultural translation and negotiation. However it is worth remarking that hybridity does not inevitably lead to empowerment. In some instances, even where individuals take up the cultural features of their host society, they may still continue to be marginalised and othered as 'foreigners'. This can be observed for instance in the case of Chinese-Indonesians under the Suharto regime who never acknowledged as true Indonesian (Hoon, 2006: 161–162). Hybridity is accordingly in need of recognition from the state and culturally dominant groups.

The policy of hybridity would appreciate the people with multiple identities and consequently would help diminish the rigid line between 'pribumi' (natives) and 'non-pribumi' (non-natives) (Hoon, 2006: 161). In line with this, Homi Bhabha, as cited by Hoon (2006: 160) maintains that the endurance of cultural diversity will be grounded not on the multiplicity of cultures or the exoticism of multiculturalism or, but on the inscription and expression of culture's hybridity. In this regard, we may see that multiculturalism ideally should not only recognise the diversity of ethnicities and religions at macro-societal level, but also the plurality within each ethnic or religious group (Hoon 2006: 160). By acknowledging this diversity at the micro level, multiculturalism could be transformed into 'genuine multiculturalism'. This, according to Hoon would avoid being confined to exhibiting an assortment of mono-cultural individuals.

The Jakarta governor election in 2017 demonstrates the process of substantiating democracy and multiculturalism in the modern-day Indonesia. Basuki Tjajaha Purnama (b. 1966) and Anies Baswedan (b. 1969) were shortlisted to participate in the second round of the election. Purnama is Christian-Chinese, whilst Baswedan is Muslim-Arab. The discourses of 'native versus non-native' and 'Muslim versus non-Muslim' were prevalent during the election, and were most specifically aimed at maximising the votes. Although the final result of the election shows that Purnama only got 42%, it remains a significant number if we look at the fact that Purnama assigns a double minority (Chinese and Christian). He succeeded in attracting the votes and sympathies from rational voters, most notably from culturally dominant groups. The future of multiculturalism accordingly has still good prospects in Indonesia. During the Suharto-era (1967–1998) we could not imagine that a Christian-Chinese could be elected as a

governor candidate, and could obtain a significant number of votes. Chinese-Indonesians during the Suharto-regime were dominant in terms of economics but they suffered discriminations most notably in public service.

3.2. Religious Minorities and Nation-Building

The term 'religion' in the context of Indonesia is worth remarking. In 1952 the Ministry of Religion (which was dominated by Muslims) brought out a restricted definition of religion: a religion should possess a holy book and a prophet. This sort of definition rules out the "mystical movement" and "local indigenous religion" as legitimate religious expressions of the Indonesian people (Mulder 1998: 22). There are several terms subsumed under the rubric of "mystical movement," most notably *aliran kebatinan*, *aliran kepercayaan* and *kejawen*.¹

Some specialists believe that the state is in charge of directing the religious and mystical practices throughout the country. This can be seen in the inception of the PAKEM (*Pengawas Aliran Kepercayaan Masyarakat*, Inspection Body of the Mystical Sects of Society) under the Ministry of Justice in 1954. The Ministry of Religious Affairs under the "Surveillance Project of the Religious Activities and Sects" played a part in implementing this state policy as well. It was under this project that the government suggested that *kepercayaans* should return to their original religions (Stange 1986: 82).

In 1979 the administration of the *kepercayaan* was placed under the Directorate of the Maintenance of the Adherents of the *kepercayaan*, Ministry of Education and Culture (Stange 1986: 91). The *kepercayaan* has been administrated under the Ministry of Education and Culture since the People's Consultative Assembly thought it more suitable to subsume the *kepercayaan* into the category of culture than religion (Geels 1997: 83).

The 'heretic sects' of Islam like al-Qiyadah al-Islamiyah are also often included in the rubric of *kepercayaan*, and accordingly are placed under the surveillance of the "Inspection Body of the Mystical Sects of Society". One Indonesian newspaper reported that one adherent of Ahmadiyah was forced to swear not as a Muslim but as an adherent of the *kepercayaan* when he acted as a witness in the court.²

¹ *Aliran kebatinan* means a sect which is concerned with the inner self. *Aliran kepercayaan* literally means a sect of beliefs, whereas *kejawen* can be translated as Javanism (Stange 1986: 87).

² "Saksi Ahmadiyah disumpah di Luar Cara Islam", *Tempo*, January 10, 2013.

Religious minorities in Indonesia do not enjoy fully their civil rights, and accordingly could not contribute the process of nation-building in the country. Even, the activities of these religious minorities are often considered as threat to national cohesion, most particularly by those coming from conservative groups. This blaming and accusation increase preceding general and local election. It is political entrepreneurs who often exploit these religious minorities during the election. Such slogans are prevalent during the election: the Shiism is a threat to Indonesian Unitary State; the Ahmadiyya is a cause of the country's chaos and disunity, and the like.

Despite the strong opposition from the conservative groups, the religious minorities strive to sustain their existence in Indonesia. They undertake some legal efforts to maintain their civil rights in the country. Some progressive activists and civil society organisations take a part in supporting their struggles for attaining civil rights.

In this regard, we observe the significance of civil society in deepening nation-building and multiculturalism. Kamali (2006: 39) prefers to stick to the definition of civil society which is offered by Craig Calhoun, as "a civil sphere in which people can organize their daily lives without the intervention of the state". Kamali (2006: 39-40) rejects individualism and democratic institutions as the requirements for civil society. He would rather ground civil society on "the existence of influential civil groups and their institutions, which can, through established mechanisms, counterbalance state power".

4. Ibn Khaldun, State Formation and Nation-Building: Reflection and Contextualisation

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) maintains that, in his work *al-Muqaddima* (Prolegomena), he develops a new science, which he calls '*ilm al-'umran al-bashari* (the science of human social organisation) or '*ilm al-ijtima' al-insani* (the science of human society) (Alatas 2006: 782).

'*Asabiyya* (social solidarity, social cohesion) occupies a central position in Ibn Khaldun's theory. '*Asabiyya* is conceived by Ibn Khaldun as the "feeling of solidarity among the members of a group that is derived from the knowledge that they share a common descent" (Alatas 2006: 784). Ibn Khaldun (n.d.: 128) goes on to say:

"asabiyya results only from blood relationship or something corresponding to it... Clients and allies belong in the same category. The affection everybody has for his clients and allies results from the feeling of shame that comes to a person when one of

his neighbours, relatives or a blood relation in any degree of kinship is humiliated. The reason for it is that a client–master relationship leads to a close contact exactly, or approximately in the same way, as does common descent. In this vein, we may see that the ‘asabiyya is dealing with blood ties, clientelism and alliances.” (Lawrence 2015: 318).

According to Ibn Khaldun, *‘asabiyya* covers three dimensions: (a) “kinship ties”, (b) “a socially cohesive religion such as Islam that provided a shared idiom legitimising the chieftain’s aspirations” for royal authority, and (c) “the strength of the chieftain through trade, booty, pillage and conquest” (Alatas 1993: 31). The role of religion in strengthening social cohesion is explained by Ibn Khaldun (n.d.: 151–152) in the following words:

“When there is a prophet or saint among them, who calls upon them to fulfil the commands of God and rids them of blameworthy qualities and causes them to adopt praiseworthy ones, and who has them concentrate all their strength in order to make the truth prevail, they become fully united (as a social organisation) and obtain superiority and royal authority.”

Elsewhere Ibn Khaldun (n.d.: 157–158) argues:

Dynasties of wide power and large royal authority have their origin in religion based either on prophecy or on truthful propaganda. This is because royal authority results from superiority. Superiority results from ‘asabiyya. Only by God’s help in establishing His religion do individual come together in agreement to press their claims, and heart become united.

Ibn Khaldun is considered one of the theorists of social cohesion, alongside with the modern sociologists such as Emile Durkheim (1858–1917). Ibn Khaldun is concerned with two main problems: (a) “What is it that keeps men together in society?” and (b) “what is it that leads them to identify with a social group, to accept and observe its norms, to subordinate their own individual interests to it, in some measure to accept the authority of its leaders, to think its thoughts and to internalise its aims?” (Gellner 1975: 203). For Alatas (1993: 39), Ibn Khaldun’s notion of *‘asabiyya* shares much in common with Durkheim’s notion of mechanical solidarity. Both notions are concerned with “solidarity that arises out of similar states of conscience, duties and responsibilities, that is, a low level in the division of labour”.

Muhammed Talbi, as cited by Garrison (2012: 36–40), brings forward three constitutive features of *'asabiyya*. The first is “the cohesive force of the group, the bond needed to sustain and propel the group towards its goal”. The second is “voluntary individual subordination to a collective interest”. In this sense, Talbi conceives *'asabiyya* as the conscience that the group “has its uniqueness and its collective aspirations. Such a consciousness evokes a corporeal image of *'asabiyya* – of something more than a group *qua* group of individuals, but of a single self with its own interests, kinetic force and telos”. The third character of *'asabiyya* is the “dialectic tension animating and propelling the group to seek power through conquest”.

The dynasties are based upon the power of the dominant tribes (Alatas, 1993: 41). Ibn Khaldun (n.d.: 139–140) says: “The goal to which *'asabiyya* leads is royal authority. This is because... *'asabiyya* gives protection and makes mutual defense, the pressing of claims and every other kind of social activity”. Elsewhere he argues that “aggressive and defensive strength is obtained only through *'asabiyya* which means mutual affection and willingness to fight and die for each other” (Ibn Khaldun, n.d.: 154). He also stresses that “aggressive and defensive enterprises can succeed only with the help of *'asabiyya* (Ibn Khaldun, n.d.: 187–188).

The *'asabiyya* holds an important position in building and sustaining the dynasty. The *'asabiyya* is accordingly needed at two domains: (a) state formation, (b) sustainability of the state. The *'asabiyya* is perceived as social capital in both state formation and state sustainability, if we employ a modern theory.

State formation designates “the processes leading to the centralisation of political power within a well-defined territory”. The fundamental idea of state formation is “that societies organised as states will be more efficient externally and internally”. Another impetus of state formation is common defense abroad, as “the inhabitants of a state are in the same boat, sharing threats from the outside” (Osterud, 2011: 2507).

If we look into modern theories of political science, we begin to realise that Ibn Khaldun's notion of *'asabiyya* has its parallels with the notion of nationalism. It is worth remarking that the notion of nationalism came up within the context of modern nation-state. The formation of modern nation-state was mostly grounded on nationalism.

Ibn Khaldun highlights the role of religion in strengthening the *'asabiyya*. Such a strong social cohesion is need for the formation and sustainability of the dynasty. In modern times, ideology could also play as a glue to foster the social cohesion. In the case of Indonesia, for instance, Pancasila is thought to be ideology which binds the people together.

Nation-building in the context of Europe is mostly based on one societal culture. Most modern European states are rooted in one distinct identity. Asia is plural in terms of ethnicity and religion since the outset. Nation-building in postcolonial Asia was concerned most notably with drawing and imagining the boundaries of the nation. The dominant societal culture plays a great role in the process of nation-building in Asia.

Ibn Khaldun's was concerned mostly with the state formation and state sustainability in pre-modern times. Nevertheless we could see parallels between Ibn Khaldun's notion of *'asabiyya* and the modern conception of nation-building. Ibn Khaldun paid a great attention to the *'asabiyya*, most particularly from the dominant tribe, which plays a significant role in establishing and sustaining the dynasty. Ibn Khaldun (n.d., 132–133) explains:

"...leadership exists only through superiority, and superiority only through 'asabiyya, as we have mentioned before. Leadership over people, therefore, must, of necessity, derive from 'asabiyya that is superior to each individual 'asabiyya. Each individual 'asabiyya that becomes aware of the superiority of the 'asabiyya of the leader is ready to obey and follow that leader."

Elsewhere Ibn Khaldun (n.d.: 166–167) asserts the role of dominant *'asabiyya* in uniting the people: "One of the various tribal *'asabiyya* must be superior to all (others), in order to be able to bring them together, to unite them, and to weld them into one *'asabiyya* comprising all various groups". The modern concept of nation-building is also based on majority or dominant societal culture. Nation-building is accordingly not free from power, namely from the dominant group with its societal culture.

Ibn Khaldun (n.d., 164–166) points out "a dynasty rarely establishes itself firmly in lands with many different tribes and groups". He goes on to explain:

"The reason for this is the differences in opinions and desires. Behind each opinion and desire, there is 'asabiyya defending it. At any time, therefore, there is much opposition to a dynasty and rebellion against it, even if the dynasty possesses 'asabiyya, because

each 'asabiyya under the control of the ruling dynasty thinks that it has in itself enough strength and power.'

In this regard, a high level of plurality without social cohesion is considered as a threat rather than an opportunity, most specifically to the solidity of dynasty. It deserves mentioning that Ibn Khaldun did not see that ethnic plurality by itself as the menace to stability of the dynasty. His statement is to be comprehended within the framework of his major concept of 'social cohesion'.

Ethnic diversities could become a capital if these diversities are united by religion, for instance, and accordingly constitute a social organisation. This is observable from Ibn Khaldun's (n.d.: 163–164) words:

"Representatives of *'asabiyya* are the militiamen who settle in the provinces and territories of the dynasty and are spread over them. The more numerous the tribes and groups of a large dynasty are, the stronger and larger are its provinces and lands. Their royal authority, therefore, is wider. An example of this was the Muslim dynasty when God united the power of the Arabs in Islam."

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Ethnic Violence and Conflict: The Dynamics of Ibn Khaldun's Theory of Asabiyyah (Social Feeling)

Etnik Şiddet ve Çatışma: İbn Haldun'un Asabiyet (Sosyal Duygu) Teorisi

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Abstract: What drives social change toward conflict? This is probably the main challenge in addressing what nurtures intra-state conflicts, and why sub-groups rebel and claim a separatist identity and politics in the pursuit of some ethnocentric needs. Throughout history, ethnic conflicts have long been a component of international politics. Even today, ethnic wars continue to be the most common form of armed conflicts around the world. The challenge of modernisation produces alienation which the ethnic groups are ill-prepared to withstand. Challenges to socio-cultural and political ties, values, orientations, institutions and hierarchical social order is often viewed or perceived by the elite of these ethnic groups as threats to identity. Moreover, the intensive and extensive competition created by modernisation generates social frustration and anger leading to social conflict and violence. In this backdrop, Ibn Khaldun's theory of 'Asabiyyah (social feeling) plays a vital role understanding the social bondage of these ethnic groups. He explained how this complex term encompasses both the cohesive force of the group, the conscience that it has its own specificity and collective aspirations, and the tensions that animate it ineluctably to seek power. Accordingly, 'Asabiyyah is what puts social groups on hegemonic steroids, and makes individuals feel powerful at a particular point in time. The paper attempts to explore and examine the contemporary ethnic conflicts and violence through Ibn Khaldun's theory of social feeling. It concludes that any cultural, social, political threat to an ethnic group leads to conflict. It advocates that providing proper democratic space and representation of ethnic groups in decision making and policy forming bodies would reduce the ethnic tensions.

Keywords: *Ethnic, Conflict, Asabiyyah, Ibn Khaldun, Social, Group, Feeling*

Özet: *Toplumsal değişimi çatışmaya iten şey nedir? Bu muhtemelen devlet içi çatışmaları neyin beslediğinin ele alınmasında ana zorluktur. Neden bazı gruplar bazı etnosentrik ihtiyaçların peşinde koşarken ayrılıkçı bir kimlik ve politika iddia ediyorlar? Tarih boyunca, etnik çatışmalar uzun zamandan beri uluslararası politikanın bir bileşeni olmuştur. Bugün bile, etnik savaşlar dünyadaki en yaygın silahlı çatışmalar biçimi olmaya devam ediyor. Modernleşme mücadelesi, etnik grupları dayanmaya hazır olmadıkları yabancılaşmaya itiyor. Sosyo-kültürel ve politik bağlara, değerlere, yönelimlere, kurumlara ve hiyerarşik sosyal düzene meydan okumalar, bu etnik*

grupların seçkinleri tarafından kimliğe tehdit olarak algılanmaktadır. Dahası, modernleşmenin yarattığı yoğun ve kapsamlı rekabet, sosyal hayal kırıklığı, toplumsal çatışma ve şiddete yol açan öfke yaratmaktadır. Arka planda, İbn Haldun'un "Asabiyyah (birliktelik)" kuramı, bu etnik grupların toplumsal köleliğini anlamada hayati bir rol oynamaktadır. Bu karmaşık terimin hem grubun birleştirici gücünü, hem de kendi özgünlüğüne ve ortak özlemlerine sahip olduğu bilincini kaçınılmaz bir şekilde güç arayışı uyandıran gerginlikleri kapsadığını açıklamaktadır. Buna göre, "Asabiyyah", sosyal grupları hegemonik steroidler üzerine yerleştiren ve bireylerin belirli bir zamanda kendilerini güçlü hissetmelerini sağlayan şeydir. Bu makale, çağdaş etnik çatışmaları ve şiddeti İbn Khaldun'un asabiyet (birliktelik) teorisi ile keşfetmeye ve incelemeye çalışmaktadır. Herhangi bir kültürel, sosyal, politik tehdidin çatışmaya yol açtığı sonucuna varmaktadır. Karar vermede ve politika oluşturma organlarında uygun demokratik alan ve etnik grupların temsil edilmesinin etnik gerilimleri azaltacağını savunulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Etnik, Çatışma, Asabiyet, İbn Haldun, Sosyal Grup, Duygu*

1. Introduction

The vast majority of contemporary societies are multiethnic and multicultural. Out of some 193 nation states listed in official sources, 150 such states have four or more ethnic groups within their boundaries. Most of these are increasingly confronted with minority groups demanding recognition of their identity and accommodation of their cultural differences. In a survey of such groups, Ted Gurr in his study in 1993 singled out 233 minority ethnic groups who are at "risk". By this he meant groups that, in the post-World War II period, have either taken political action on behalf of their collective discrimination or both. Hence they are actually or potentially engaged in inter-ethnic conflict. Of these 233 groups, only 27, or about 12 percent have no record of political organisation, protest, rebellion or other form of inter-communal conflict since 1945. Gurr also pointed out that, out of 127 countries in the world that he examined, 75 percent had at least one, and many had more, highly politicised minorities (Gurr, 1993, 3-4). As such ethnic tensions and movements have become a major source of violent and non-violent conflicts. If around the world, so many multiethnic states are in trouble, it is obvious that there is a need to understand the causes behind these movements and their nature and type. Such an understanding can also help in looking for means and mechanisms for conflict resolutions. Moreover, large-scale ethnic violence is an interesting and important topic both because of the enormous human suffering it causes and because it could be an important piece of evidence in the larger puzzle of how world politics and polities are now evolving. In view of the fact that the prospect for peace and war, the maintenance of national unity and the fundamental human rights in many parts of the world and in many ways depend on the adequate solution of ethnic tensions the way States deal with the question has become one of the most important political issues

in the contemporary world. A large number of scholars over the world are undertaking such studies. In this paper we will have a look at these. More importantly, this paper will offer a unique approach to examine and explore social problems by drawing on the method of the famous Arab philosopher, sociologist, historian, of the fourteenth century, Ibn Khaldun (AD 1332–1406).

The dynamics and relevance of Ibn Khaldun's study and understanding of societies represent a pattern in the changes that occur in man's political and social organisation. To the question: What causes differences in the size, quality, and influence of different human social organisations? Ibn Khaldun replies that there must be some factor, some incitement, for the desire for co-operation to exist on a large scale among some human beings than among others. Only thus can large and powerful states have originated. This factor he calls '*Asabiyyah*' or "solidarity", "group feeling", "group consciousness", a term which he borrowed from classical usage and to which he gave a new, positive meaning (Rosenthal, 1967: xi). Before we explore Ibn Khaldun's understanding of what drives social change towards conflict, it is essential to understand the concept of "ethnicity", and how it can be related with the "group feeling" having common traits and customs.

2. Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a contested and complex concept that is historically, socially and contextually based. The social relations are dynamic; their meaning changes overtime. Apple (1993: viii) refers to them as "place markers" operating in a complex political and social arena.

Historically, the term "ethnic" derives from the Greek *ethnos* which refers to Heathen nations or peoples not converted to Christianity. It was also used to refer to races or large groups of people having common traits and customs or to exotic primitive groups. In anthropological literature the term "ethnic group" is generally used to designate a population which (1) is largely biologically self perpetuating (2) shares fundamental cultural values, realised in overt unity in cultural forms; (3) makes up a field of communication and interaction; (4) has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order (Narang, 1995: 1–15). By ethnic group sociologists generally mean a relatively stable sociocultural unit performing an unspecified number of functions, bound together by a language, often linked to a territory, and derived actually or allegedly from a system of kinship. In this sense the ethnic community is an extremely old collective reality. *International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences* defines an ethnic group as "a distinct

category of the population in a larger society whose culture is usually different from its own. The members of such a group are, or feel themselves, or are thought to be, bound together by common ties of race or nationality or culture” (Sills, 1979: 167).

In modern political usage the term “ethnic” is generally used as a designation of social unity based upon common and separate language or dialect, historical living in a defined area, occupation and mode of life, cultural and social traditions, customs and folklore. It is also used for social class, racial or national minority groups and also for distinguishing cultural and social groups in society. To put it in other words, generally ethnicity is considered as the mobilisation of a group of people who share common attributes in terms of culture, language, religion, history, etc., and who are different from another group which also shares certain common attributes. This mobilisation can be on a single attribute or more. For example mobilisation on the basis of language, religion (known as communalism in the Indian context), language, caste or tribe is considered as ethnic mobilisation. Paul R. Brass is one of the examples who uses the ethnic mobilisation and the communal mobilisation interchangeably (Brass, 1974). Dipankar Gupta differentiates between the ethnicity and communalism. He argues that ethnicity necessarily denotes mobilisation of a group in relation to another with reference to the nation–state–the territory and the sovereignty (Gupta, 1997). An ethnic group either proclaims itself to be the real adherent of the faith in the territory of a nation or wants to set up a sovereign state or questions the loyalty of another group.

From the above it becomes clear that in the present day context those groups which, in given social context, consciously choose to emphasise their most meaningful primary, extra familial identity on the basis of religious, racial, cultural, linguistic, national characteristics, or a combination of any of them, are referred to as ethnic groups.

The situation is particularly significant in numerous new states that have achieved independence since the Second World War i.e. the post–colonial states in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. In most of the multi–ethnic states the world over, in recent years, there has been a resurgence of ethnic and cultural demands and group consciousness which is generally referred to as rise of ethnicity.

3. Ethnic Conflict and *‘Asabiyyah*

As has already been mentioned above, ethnic consciousness and conflicts are pervasive around the world. Pakistan, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia have already been disintegrated.

What drives these ethnic consciousness and conflicts can be explained in Ibn Khaldun's theory of *'Asabiyyah*. The theory of "*'Asabiyyah*" (meaning: 'tribalism', 'clanism', or in a modern context 'nationalism') is one of the best known aspects of the *Muqaddimah*.

According to the *Arab-English Lexicon*, the word *'Asabiyyah* emerged from the word "ta'asub" which literally means "...bounding the turban round (his own) head". *'Asabiyyah* is explained as the:

"...quality of an individual who is possessing 'Asabiyyah which refers to th action of ones in helping his people or his group against any aggressive action, the quality of a person who is angry for the sake of his group and protecting them, the action of ones who invites others to help his group, to combine or league with them in facing those who act hostility towards them whether they are wrongdoers or wronged, the action of an individual who associate with others or of him who protects others or partisanship and a strong association with holds numbers of person closely bound based on the same interest and opinion..." (Lane, 1984: 2059).

Interestingly, the term *'Asabiyyah* used by Ibn Khaldun in his theory of social development has been translated in various ways by recent scholars. For instance, Rosenthal has interpreted *'Asabiyyah* as "group feeling", which according to Lacoste is the closest meaning to this term (Lacoste, 1984: 99). Similarly, Mahdi views that 'solidarity' is the nearest meaning of *'Asabiyyah* which was also used by Gumplawicz and Issawi (Mahdi, 1957). However, some of the modern scholars have preferred to use the Arabic term without translating it, while others have defined *'Asabiyyah* as "sense of solidarity, group feeling, group loyalty and esprit de corps" (Rabi', 1967: 49).

Through his historical experience and meticulous understanding, Ibn Khaldun points that whenever there would arise any threat or difficulties to any social group, they would protect their social bond in whatever ways. Thus, based on Ibn Khaldun's explanation, the spirit of *'Asabiyyah* basically exists due to the primitive life possessed by certain groups or nations when they face difficulties or threats. These force them to stand together to protect themselves and their fellows from any danger outside their group. The spirit of group feeling or *'Asabiyyah* emerged because they had to fight for their basic need. The spirit of *'Asabiyyah* does not necessarily arise from the blood relationship, but have a common view from "...alliance or client (-master) relationship" (Rosenthal, 1967: 100).

4. Explaining Ethnic Violence

Now let us turn to the main part of our discussion: What drives social change toward conflict? This is probably the main challenge in addressing what nurtures intra-state conflicts, and why sub-groups rebel and claim a separatist identity and politics in the pursuit of some ethnocentric needs. In the post-Weberian period, the main question remains about how to “interpret the meaning of social action and thereby give a casual explanation of the way in which the action proceeds and the effects which it produces” (Cherkaoui, 2010). Until now, scholars and theorists have found partial answers only, and have not successfully answered the whole problem. This reduces the multi- and inter-disciplinary claim of Conflict Resolution with complex conflicts.

Tajfel’s theory of extreme (“social mobility” to “social change”); Parsons’s theory of Social Systems; Carl Schmitt’s theory of the “supremacy” of the “Political”; Giddens’s structuration theory, to name a few, provide unsatisfactory and/or partial explanation of the social change (Cherkaoui, 201).

As a reflexive thinker, wandering along the Mediterranean to explore “umran”—a new and independent “science” of society within the broader field of philosophical inquiry, Ibn Khaldun was reflecting on his dynamical systems theory of societies with a trajectory of their social, economic, and political decline. In other words, Ibn Khaldun sought nothing less than to discover and explain the basic laws and principles upon which all of human society operated. This theory is of course *‘Asabiyyah*.

Although, *‘Asabiyyah* was a familiar term in the pre-Islamic era; but it became popularized in Khaldun’s *Muqaddimah* (Introduction) where it is described as the fundamental bond of human society and the basic motive force of history. Ibn Khaldun understood *‘Asabiyyah* in much more dynamic terms. Ibn Khaldun uses the term *‘Asabiyyah* to describe the bond of cohesion among humans in a group forming community. The bond, *‘Asabiyyah*, exists at any level of civilization, from nomadic society to states and empires. *‘Asabiyyah* is most strong in the nomadic phase, and decreases as civilization advances. As this *‘Asabiyyah* declines, another more compelling *‘Asabiyyah* may take its place. Thus, civilizations rise and fall, and history describes these cycles of *‘Asabiyyah* as they play out.

Ibn Khaldun’s theories, as mentioned earlier, were based on his experience and his study of politics in the Mahgreb, where Berber nomads often swept out the desert to conquer

sedentary kingdoms, established themselves as rulers there, and were then in turn swept away by the next incursion from the wilds. Central to this cyclical vision of politics is the distinction Ibn Khaldun makes between *Umrān*, or “civilization”, and *Budawāh*, or “the Bedouins”. Ibn Khaldun compares the lives or cultures of civilized people (*Umrān Hadari*) in the city with the life of the Bedouin (*Umrān Badawi*) and tried to establish a relation between the two (Rosenthal, 1967: 91–122). He asserts that *‘Asabiyyah* importance within the tribal unit is not exclusive, but its application goes far beyond mere tribal life and is of an almost universal validity. Interestingly, Ibn Khaldun introduces *‘Asabiyyah* first in familial terms:

“Their [the Bedouins] defense and protection are successful only if they are a closely knit group of common descent. This strengthens their stamina and makes them feared, since everybody’s affection for his family and his group is more important (than anything else). Compassion and affection for one’s blood relations and relatives exists in human nature as something God put into the hearts of men. It makes for mutual support and aid, and increase the fear felt by the enemy. Those who have no one of their own lineage...cannot live in the desert, because they would fall prey to any nation that might want to swallow them up.” (Rosenthal, (1967, 97–98).

Mutual cooperation and kinship among these clans will naturally lead to a strong *‘Asabiyyah*. However, Ibn Khaldun also states that it is not necessary that common descent itself makes *‘Asabiyyah* possible. However, if different communities are tight-knitted in a common environment and circumstance would also lead a strong *‘Asabiyyah*. He states:

“The consequences of common descent, though natural, still are something imaginary. The real thing to bring about the feeling of close contact is social intercourse, friendly association, long familiarity, and the companionship that results from growing up together having the same wet nurse, and sharing the other circumstances of life and death. If close contact is established in such a manner, the result will be affection and cooperation.” (Rosenthal, 1967: 148).

Some scholars view that Ibn Khaldun’s *‘Asabiyyah* illustrates a willingness to die for an individual of a group. Therefore, it is maintained that “unless individuals are prepared to die for their group, the group itself will die” (Green, 2015). However, *‘Asabiyyah* does not end there:

“Once group feeling [*‘Asabiyyah*] has established superiority over the people who share in that particular *‘Asabiyyah*, it will, by its very nature, seek superiority over people of other *‘Asabiyyah* unrelated to the first. If the one *‘Asabiyyah* is the equal of the other or is able to stave off its challenge, the competing people are even with and equal to each other. Each *‘Asabiyyah* maintains its own domain and people, as is the case with tribes and nations all over the Earth. However, if the one *‘Asabiyyah* overpowers the other and makes it subservient to itself, the two *‘Asabiyyah* enter into close contact, and the defeated *‘Asabiyyah* gives added power to the victorious one, which, as a result, sets its goal of domination and superiority higher than at first.” (Rosenthal, 1967: 108).

What is the key point here is to note that those who have been allowed to join the conquering host slowly start to feel it’s *‘Asabiyyah* be subsumed as the two groups “enter into close contact,” sharing the same trials, foods, circumstances, and becoming acquainted with the others’ customs, but just as importantly, sharing the same set of incentives. Once the losers are forced together with the winners, defeat for the main clan is defeat for all; glory for the main clan is glory for all; booty gained by the main clan’s conquests becomes booty to be shared with all. Once people from a subordinate group begin to feel like the rise and fall of their own fortunes is inextricably linked to the fate of the group that overpowered them then they become willing to sacrifice and die for the sake of this group, for it has become their group (Green, 2015).

Moreover, religion also plays a crucial role in binding the members of a group through the spirit of *‘Asabiyyah*. The spirit of *‘Asabiyyah* is essential in spreading the teaching of a religion. Religion eliminates jealousy and imparts fellow being among the members of a group that possesses *‘Asabiyyah*. In Rosenthal’s words, “...religion is the most powerful cement that can hold together a large sedentary people...” (Halim, et. al., 2012: 1234). In addition, having a common sense of religion allows the members of a group to work together, “to the extent of being willing to die to achieve the objectives that they believe in. Accordingly, the physical aspect of hardship and the spiritual aspect which is the element of religion actually uphold a strong group feeling or *‘Asabiyyah* in developing their group or nation” (Halim, *ibid*). Ibn Khaldun also describes that having achieved a large mass of people, there should be some form hierarchy to run and coordinate their actions and leadership to resolve inner disputes. As such, it is the nature of the leader of the moment to try and make his authority permanent—a type of authority that Ibn Khaldun calls *mulk*.

Rosenthal translates *mulk* as “royal authority,” Isawii translates it as “sovereignty,” Baali uses “state,” and Goodman uses “kingdom.” However, Ibn Khaldun has distinguished

between royal authority or *mulk* and leadership. He noted that this power is different from which most clan chieftains or nomadic leaders possess:

“Human beings need someone to act as a restraining influence and mediator in every social organization, in order to keep members from fighting with each other. That person must, by necessity, have superiority over the others in the matter of group feeling [*‘Asabiyyah*].... Such superiority is royal authority (*mulk*). It is more than leadership. Leadership means being a chieftain, and the leader is obeyed, but he has no power to force others to accept his rulings. Royal authority means superiority and the power to rule by force [if necessary].” (Rosenthal, 1967: 108).

The increase in power of royal authority increases the incentives of his warriors, clansmen, and adherents face begin to change. Thus he writes:

“First, as we have stated, the royal authority, by its very nature, must claim all glory for itself. As long as glory was the common property of the group, and all members of the group made an identical effort (to obtain glory), their aspirations to gain the upper hand over others and to defend their own possessions were expressed in exemplary unruliness and lack of restraint. They all aimed at fame. Therefore, they considered death encountered in pursuit of glory, sweet, and they preferred annihilation to the loss of it. Now, however, when one claims all glory for himself, he treats the others severely and holds them in check. Further, he excludes them from possessing property and appropriates it for himself. People become too lazy to care for fame. They become dispirited and come to love humbleness and servitude.” (Rosenthal, 1967: 133).

This is the nucleus of the *‘Asabiyyah* cycle Ibn Khaldun is famous for. Though Islam generally condemns *‘Asabiyyah*: “a blind support for one’s group without regard for the justice of its cause” (Rabi, 1967: 49–50). As such, any show of *‘Asabiyyah* is deprecated as an atavistic survival of the pagan, pre-Islamic mentality. However, Ibn Khaldun was, of course, aware of this negative interpretation; but he distinguishes between his objectionable form and the natural *‘Asabiyyah* that is a part of being human. The latter is the affection one feels for others when they are treated unjustly or killed. Nothing can take it away. This form of *‘Asabiyyah* is not forbidden by Muslim religious law (Irving, 2007: 17).

Ibn Khaldun emphasises that only tribes held together by group feeling and loyalty can live in the desert. They have to be united because they are in a state of conflict, actual or potential, with other tribes due to the scarcity of pasture and water. Group feeling

results from “blood” ties, or something corresponding to it—the notion or fact of common descent. The advantage of such a notion or fact consists in the group feeling or solidarity that derives from it, and which leads to mutual affection, devotion, and aid—and unity against hostile external forces or difficulties.

In this background we can explain and understand the contemporary ethnic conflict and violence. Any deprivation to the ethnic groups could drive consciousness at par with *‘Asabiyyah* that would lead conflict. Therefore, the old paradigm that predicted that factors inherent in modernization including economic development, urbanization, growing rates of literacy and education as well as advancements in science and technology, would inevitably lead to the demise of the role of ethnicity, religion or culture in politics, stands changed.

5. Modernisation and Ethnicity

Modernisation means the attainment of relatively higher levels of variables, such as “education, per capita income, urbanisation, political participation, industrial employment, media participation” (Robert. 1973: 152). As stated, in early modernising theory, ethnic identity referred to traditional obstacles which were supposed to disappear in the course of development. However, David Brown argues that the experience of the last decades has shown that these theories of progressive integration of peoples were seriously flawed. While, to begin with, there was such developments and modernisation brought in uniformity but in the course of time, it threw up its own contradictions and divergent elements, of which national minorities were a principal expression, both in already developed and newly developing societies (Brown, 2000: 1025; Payne and Nassar, 2016).

Moreover, the colonial period had brought about a high degree of politico-territorial integration through an efficient, centralised way, coercive machinery of the government. However it also helped cultural and ethnic groups organise themselves politically. The nationalist movement also mobilised ethnic groups, both strategically and ideologically. The notion of self-determination, the prime mover of independence movements in the colonies, derived from the concept of freedom as much as it did from the conception of nation as a definable unit of a people with a common political “will” of forming a sovereign state of their own. But after independence various sectional groups sought due recognition. Thus modernisation, both in developed and developing societies, is *inter alia* a source of aggravation of aggravating stratificational inequalities, alienation of the individual and groups. Walker Connor points out that the available evidence about

the pattern of ethnic dissonance in the world, at various levels of modernisation, indicates that material increase in social communication and mobilisation intensifies cultural awareness and exacerbates interethnic conflict (Connor, 1994: 37).

Thus modernization leads to the strengthening of primordial community based ties. Modernisation sharpens differentiation, articulates group identity consciousness, and produces intra-group and inter-group competition which often results into ethnic conflict and violence.

5.1. Fear of Assimilation and Homogenisation

Ethnic groups feared assimilation and homogenisation of their distinct culture and identities by the majority/dominating community/group both regional as well as national. To counter such a possibility they articulated their demand for territoriality based on their distinctiveness to safeguard their identity (Salih, 2003: 115).

5.2. Fear of Marginalisation

Another cause of identity consciousness among the different ethnic groups/communities is the fear of marginalisation, because of the domination of an out group/community over the indigenous people. As Morten Boas notes, an out-community is one, which lacks a historical linkage with the territory they inhabit along with the indigenous people but become a part of it due to the voluntary migration or state sponsored project of demographic engineering (Boas, 2015: xv).. In this situation, inter-community competition becomes inevitable because it threatens the interests of the indigenous community.

5.3. Fear of Deprivation and Discrimination

Modernisation has also produced political and economic competition on an unprecedented scale whereby elite mobilise the members of their community to have due share in power and resources in competition with other groups. Denial of equality by the state in economic and political fields also creates a sense of discrimination and deprivation among the ethnic groups (Heath, et. al., 2013: 115). They have not got proper representation in national life and governmental institutions. It is perceived as internal colonialism by the victim community. Minority communities are always at the risk of deprivation in power, services and resources.

5.4. Loss of Autonomy

In the pre-colonial period, ethnic groups had small functional autonomous political entities. However, in the post-colonial era, this autonomous status of these communities came to an abrupt end. In the name of state-formation and to establish its complete sovereignty in its own territorial framework, the ruling elite started to take over centralisation of administration. Further the state imposed modern but majority oriented institutions over these communities at the cost of destruction of their own traditional natural and historical communal institutions. In such an atmosphere, as Ajay Patnaik writes, the autonomous life of the communities came to an end (Patnaik, 2016) which created a widespread discontent among ethnic groups especially among those which are small in size.

Therefore, the causes of the ethnic conflicts in the modern world can be understood through the concept social change as envisioned in Ibn Khaldun's theory of '*Asabiyyah*. This concept seems to anticipate modern conceptions of social capital arising in social groups, and contextualize social change in time, space, and human conscience. The core aspect of his theory involved the explanation of human cooperation and conflict. He wrote that men are incapable of complete self-subsistence as individuals.

6. Conclusion

The most obvious point to emerge from the above discussion is that it is important to understand ethnic violence by looking at a state-society relation through a structural analysis, which I argue is the most useful paradigm for studying these conflicts and problems. Thus, in his work on states and societies, Ibn Khaldun argues that the genealogy of the state and its structure can help explain its development and the way states treat their subjects. This structural paradigm helps explain ethnic violence by contextualizing its temporal, political, and materialist dimensions and addressing the weaknesses and limitations of the approaches. This framework contextualizes the policy of the nation-state toward its minority groups, native or non-native, through an analysis of the nature of the state and its historical development, taking into account which group were included and excluded from the national project at its origin. This focus helps ground the attitude of state's authorities toward those individuals or groups who are not included within the state's national agenda. In short, Ibn Khaldun's '*Asabiyyah* calls for the study of social change between aging and emerging political actors. It offers the ost dynamic and complex perspective that is warranted by dynamic and complex conflicts.

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Multiplexity in Civilization Studies: Insights from Ibn Khaldun and Said Halim Pasha*

Medeniyet Çalışmalarında Çoğulculuk: İbn Haldun ve Said Halim Paşa'nın Yaklaşımı

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Abstract: The study of civilization has always been approached from various perspectives. A closer appraisal of some of these pursuits reveals at least three major trends, especially in the contexts of Islamic and Western civilizations. The first trend employs more of a “historic–empirical” approach; the second emphasizes a “religiophilosophical” approach; and finally, the last trend adopts more of a “multiplex” approach to the study of civilizations. Whilst the first two trends are equally applicable in the study of Islamic and Western civilizations, the “Multiplex” trend is arguably more pronounced in the study of Islamic civilization. The paper argues that “Multiplexity”, subsuming multiplicity and complexity both in terms of content and methodological foundations, is best represented by the works of Ibn Khaldun and Said Halim Pasha. This approach to civilization studies, among other things, challenges reductionism both on methodological as well as epistemological grounds. Compared to the other two, it gives due attention to multiple factors, such as economic, political, cultural, religious, historical, philosophical, and physical factors, and the interlocking intricacies among them to account for the phenomenon of civilization. Therefore, it can present us with an alternative and more holistic approach to civilization studies through transcending the impasse posed by historical, economic, physical, racial, religious, and other determinisms and reductionisms.

Keywords: Islamic Civilization, Religiophilosophical, Historic–Empirical, Multiplexity, Reductionism

Öz: *Medeniyet çalışmasına her zaman çeşitli açılardan yaklaşılmıştır. Bu arayışların bazılarının daha yakından değerlendirilmesi, özellikle İslam ve Batı medeniyetleri bağlamında, en az üç ana eğilimi ortaya koymaktadır. İlk eğilim daha “tarihsel–ampirik” bir yaklaşım kullanıyor; ikincisi “din felsefesi” yaklaşımını vurgulamaktadır; ve nihayet, sonucusu medeniyetlerin incelenmesine daha fazla “çoğulculuk” yaklaşımı benimsemiştir. İlk iki eğilim İslam ve batı medeniyetlerine eşit olarak uygulanabilse de, “çoğulculuk” eğilimi, İslam medeniyetinin çalışmasında tartışmasız daha*

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belirgindir. Çalışma, metodolojik terimlerdeki çoğulculuk ve karmaşıklığı vurgulayan "Çoğulculuk"un en iyi İbn Haldun ve Said Halim Paşa'nın eserleri ile temsil edildiğini savunuyor. Medeniyet araştırmalarına yönelik bu yaklaşım, diğer şeylerin yanı sıra, hem metodolojik hem de epistemolojik gerekçelerle indirgemeciliği zorlamaktadır. Diğer ikisi ile karşılaştırıldığında, uygarlık olgusunu hesaba katma çabası içinde ekonomik, politik, kültürel, dini, tarihsel, felsefi ve fiziksel faktörler ve aralarındaki birbirine geçen karmaşıklık gibi birçok faktöre dikkat çeker. Bu nedenle, medeniyet çalışmalarına alternatif fakat daha bütünsel bir yaklaşım sunabilir ve bu sayede tarihsel, ekonomik, fiziksel, ırksal, dini ve diğer determinizmlerin ve indirgemeciliklerin ortaya çıkardığı çıkmazları aşar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *İslam Medeniyeti, Din Felsefesi, Tarihçi-Ampirik, Çoğulculuk, İndirgemecilik*

1. Introduction

A systematic study of civilization as a particular field of social science is of a recent phenomenon. Notwithstanding this, social scientists and philosophers have long been writing and theorizing about the nature and future of human civilization. From the fourteenth century North African Ibn Khaldun; the eighteenth century Mireabu and Rousseau; the nineteenth century Guizot, Comte, and E. B. Taylor; the twentieth century Ottoman Islamist thinker and statesman Said Halim Pasha; and to the twenty first century Toynbee, Hodgson, and other Western and non-Western thinkers, were all engaged in the very question of civilization, particularly, its genesis, crisis, decline and revival. Today also, it could be argued that there are many and increasingly sophisticated theoretical formulations engaging civilization and civilizations, past or present. The multiplicity and diversity of perspectives in civilization studies is not only confined to the general idea of "civilization", but also reflected in the discursive formations and proliferation of multiple historical civilizations.

In what follows, I respond to the question of "what are the most common trends and approaches that can relatively capture this multiplicity and diversity? I argue that there are at least three major trends in civilization studies, particularly among theories of Islamic and Western civilizations. Although "historic-empirical" and "religiophilosophical" trends and approaches are abundantly present among these civilizations, the "multiplexity" trend is arguably more pervasive among theories of Islamic civilization. Of the theories of Islamic civilization, I argue that, the works of Ibn Khaldun and Said Halim Pasha present relevant instances. The following paragraphs briefly expand on these core points. In an effort to shed some light upon the overall framework of the present study, and before moving on to the multiplex trend, I will provide a brief overview of the first two trends I have addressed above.

2. Emerging Trends in Civilization Studies

A closer scrutiny of some of the theories of civilization, particularly those of Islamic and Western civilizations, generally unveils at least some three major trends and approaches. Theories explaining Islamic and Western civilizations, due to ontological, epistemological or methodological foundations and tendencies, they either fall into the “historic–empirical” trend, “religiophilosophical” trend, or “multiplexity” trend. The first is more of historically–and–empirically oriented approach to civilization studies; the second draws primarily from philosophy and religious scriptures and sources; and finally, the last one generally involves the mixture of these and other factors and elements and I called this a multiplex trend¹. It should be noted, however, that this classification does not pretend to be strictly mutually exclusive nor does it assume exhaustiveness. But, again, this classification can still help us gauge, at least at macro level, the overall trend underlying the theories of civilization. Given space limitation, I will limit my discussion to the theories of Islamic civilization.

2.1. Historic–empirical Trend

I define the first trend (also used in a limited, methodological, sense as “approach”) as that which principally draws from historically–and–empirically charged approach to the study of civilization². Among other things, studies in this trend emphasis interpreting and explaining issues and factors embedded, for the most part, in particular time and space. Due to this, studies in this trend may argue, for instance, that in the context of Islamic civilization, Islam, starting in the seventh century, gave an ideological impetus or identity to what came to be called Islamic civilization. However, they assign significant roles to what may be called “time and space embedded factors”³. This in some ways reduces Islam into assuming a symbolic role in the making of Islamic civilization.

Islam might have triggered the emergence of a “civilization” through its “ideals” and gave it some “identity”. Yet, the civilization implied therein is not necessarily unique to Islam. Rather, it is seen as one having precedence in time and space. In this sense,

¹ Multiplexity is a commonly recycled concept in sociolinguistics and social network. However, it came to have a different connotation in civilization studies, particularly in the study of Islamic civilization. It was Recep Senturk (Professor and director at the Alliance of Civilizations Institute (ACI), Ibn Khaldun University, Istanbul, Turkey) who reintroduced it with a classic Islamic thought foundations(See, Senturk’s book *“Open Civilization”* (2010)). Multiplexity as used here, however, refers specifically to two key constructs which, I argue, are “complexity” and “multiplicity”. Senturk’s use, however, is confined to the later conception.

² It would be worth noting that the historically–and–empirically charged approach or trend does not necessarily function in a philosophical vacuum; rather, a great deal of emphasis is rendered to factors corresponding to a particular time and place.

Islamic civilization is seen as nothing but one part of a greater cultural process subsuming interactions, exchanges, and continuities in a wider context (historical, cultural, and geographical conditions). However, in light of some of its own certain peculiar characteristics which it developed through time, the origin of Islamic civilization is dated back to the seventh century in the Arabian desert, and as such, there was not an Islamic civilization before. However, many theories falling under the religiophilosophical trend argue that the initial genesis of Islamic civilization was started off with the creation of Adem.

Drawing from my ongoing doctoral research, I argue that Arnold Toynbee (1972, 1952) and Marshal Hodgson's (1993, 1974, 1960) theories of Islamic civilization present some important features that generally reflect the historic-empirical trend in the study of Islamic civilization. Among other things, both historians implied or expressively underscored the time and space confinement of Islamic civilization (particularly the seventh century as the point of genesis); both historians took evolution as something axiomatic (in the case of Toynbee, especially in the emergence of the first generation of civilizations); the absence of direct relationship between religion and civilization (particularly between Islam and Islamic civilization) (e.g., Hodgson, Vol. I, 1974; p.71); historicism and cultural relativism (Islam as a cumulative tradition, subjective in different parts of the Muslim world despite the symbolic unity it achieved); both historians believed in multiple civilizations and Islamic civilization as one of them (also both implied one "human" civilization); the Syriac world ("Syriac civilization" for Toynbee and "Irano-Semetic" civilization for Hodgson) was conceived as the religio-cultural springboard for the emergence of Islamic civilization; and Hellenistic tradition as one integral part of Islamic and Western civilizations.

2.2. The Religiophilosophical Trend

The second trend in the study of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular employs philosophical and religious sources, methods, and approaches. Emphasizing concepts and ideas having their roots in philosophy and/or religious scriptures, studies in this trend underscore, for instance, the revolutionary nature of Islam as a religion, dated either from the last prophet Muhammad (pbuh) or from the creation of Adem. In this trend, Islam plays significant role and to extent that it assumes determinative role over all things necessary for civilization. Here, Islam as a religion and "complete" way of life serves as a necessary fertile ground for the initial genesis and development of Islamic civilization.

Theories of Islamic civilization that fall under this trend would unequivocally underscore that the essence of Islamic civilization is Al-Tawhid (unity of God, monotheism) (Al-Faruqi, 1992; Qutb, 2006). Methodologically, therefore, Islamic civilization is conceived in such a way that its emergence owes to Islam as a religion, and thus, to prophets, Qur'an, Sunnah, Al-Tawhid conception (for God and unity of Ummah), Shari'ah, and revelation are defined as the very fundamental bedrocks of Islamic civilization.

The most dominant feature of this trend is religious determinism although it, to some extent, embraces philosophical, and historical⁴. This is a recurrent theme across many Muslim thinkers who wrote about Islamic civilization. The works of Seyid Qutb (see, for instance, his "*Ma'lim fi Tariq*" (2006) and "*Al-Islam wa Mushkilat al-Hadarah*", (1962); Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi (See his "*Tawhid and Its Implications for Thought and Life*" (1992) and "*The Cultural Atlas of Islam*" (1986); and Sezai Karakoc (see, for instance, his "*Dusunceler I*" (2015), "*Dirilisin Cercevesinde*" (2014), and "*Gunluk Yazilari II: Sutun*" (1989).

2.3. The Multiplexity Trend

The last trend generally encompasses studies encompassing philosophical, historical, and religious orientations and factors. These studies adopted the interplay of religious views, empirical evidences, and philosophical ideas in their conceptions of civilization. Accordingly, different real life-empirical realities, political movements, institutions, and developments are posited alongside with religious and philosophical ideals. Unlike empiricism and religious determinism, theories that fall under this trend tend to embrace methodological plurality and open to possibilities that may have bearings on civilization. This trend in civilization studies, among other things, challenges reductionism both on methodological as well as epistemological grounds. Compared to the other two, it gives due attention to multiple factors, such as economic, political, cultural, religious, historical, philosophical, and physical factors, and the interlocking intricacies among them to account for the phenomenon of civilization. It can, thus, present an alternative and eclectic approach to civilization studies, and in that, it transcends the impasse posed by other determinisms and reductionisms, historical, religious, or biological.

Here, civilization is conceived as the product of historical experiences, natural conditions, religious phenomenon, and more importantly, as lived human experience. In dealing with Islamic civilization, therefore, this trend assumes both complexity and

⁴ This, again, is drawn from my ongoing doctoral research, Alliance of Civilizations Institute, Ibn Haldun University, Istanbul, Turkey.

multiplicity. Put simply, the idea here is that civilization cannot be simply reduced to historical, religious, sociological or philosophical factor; rather, it is the outcome of an interlocking bond and synthesis of these and other factors. Apart from the multiplicity of methods employed, it assumes complexity as it draws from the lived experiences and the higher level of abstractions. In what follows, I argue that, among other thinkers, the works of Ibn Khaldun (and his “Muqaddimah”) and Said Halim Pasha (and his “Buhranlarimiz”) best reflect these characteristics.

2.3.1. Ibn Khaldun: From Reductionism to Multiplexity

The present study, unlike the reductionist tendency to down play Ibn Khaldun’s conception of civilization to a merely bio–psychological phenomenon called *assabiyah*, provides a relatively new insight. Of which, I argue that Ibn Khaldun’s idea of civilization or Umrans cannot be simply unlocked by stringing together bits of evidences scattered around in his *Muqaddimah* and surgically removing them from their contexts. Unfortunately, some studies of Ibn Khaldun’s thought appear to yield an ardent “realist–empiricist” while some others portrayed him as an honest follower of Aristotelian philosophy. Still others found at the core of Ibn Khaldun’s thought of civilization what he termed as “*assabiyah*”– determinism, a sort of bio–psycho–social solidarity dictating the nature and form of Umrans or civilization. For instance, some dubbed Ibn Khaldun as “secularist historian” (Turner, 1971: 43); “naturalist, empiricist” (Goodman in Kalpakian, 2008:367); “positivist” (Turner, 1971: p.45); “functionalist” (Gellner in Arnason and Stauth, 2004: p.29); “Cyclic theory of history”(Ibid, 45); and still others claimed he was the “founder of conflict sociology”(Ibid, 46).

No doubt that these appellations relegated Ibn Khaldun’s thought in general and civilization, in particular, to nature deterministic and empiricist theoretical formulations. This general academic tendency, among other things, clouds and downplays the role of religion in Ibn Khaldun’s venture into the social sciences. However, a well–known student of Ibn Khaldun, Muhsin Mehdi rejected the idea that Ibn Khaldun was an empiricist, historicist, determinist, positivist, or a pragmatist (See, for instance, Mahdi, 2015).

Contrary to these reductionist renderings of Ibn Khaldun’s thought, I argue that a systematic reading of Ibn Khaldun’s *Muqaddimah* reveals a greater degree of complexity and multiplicity. To this end, I argue for a more context oriented, eclectic, and multilayered reading of Ibn Khaldun’s *Muqaddimah*. This engagement, cognizant of the possibility of two dimensions in Ibn Khaldun’s imagination of umrans or civilization, presents a view that complimentarily draws from empirical realities and Devin providence aspects. In other words, the attempt to reduce Ibn Khaldun’s thought to

either of the extremes mentioned could prove misleading and inadequate. Accordingly, although a sort of nature deterministic approach to Ibn Khaldun's thought of civilization might be attempted, an equally Devine providence perspective is also another possibility⁵. This becomes more obvious when we realize Ibn Khaldun's allegiance to "Asha'risim", which is known in Islamic thought for a greater degree of God's providence in relation to human action.

In this connection, one would argue that Ibn Khaldun explicitly underscored that human nature and action, and more generally, human civilization as God driven state of affair, a kind of providence that God has bestowed up on his creations. As a result, human survival and preservation of life ends up the necessary task of God. However, a different approach or reading of Muqaddimah can potentially, at the same time, posit another side or face to human action and civilization. This later view of civilization can be considered a nature deterministic perspective. In this perspective, like many other social and natural scientists, Ibn Khaldun holds that human nature and action, and thus, civilization is nature deterministic process and geared towards survival and preservation of human species.

Notwithstanding these extreme renderings of Ibn Khaldun's thought, it is in light of the creative synthesis of these two perspectives where, I argue, Ibn Khaldun's contribution to the study of Umran or civilization lie. If a holistic reading of Ibn Khaldun's thought is attempted, then the emerging synthetic perspective would prove much safer, contextually sensitive, and thus, more meaningful. This third perspective, which I called above multiplexity, in Ibn Khaldun's thought signifies religious based ontological and epistemological orientations; historic-empirical realities and observations, and philosophical positions.

In addition, the synthesis of his religious predisposition needs to be contextually evaluated along with his own personal experiences in politics, religious activities and own philosophical and sociological projections⁶. In what follows, therefore, I flesh out two important aspect of Ibn Khaldun's thought about civilization ("Umran"). The first aspect examines what can be called nature-deterministic dimensions of civilization. The second aspect explores the role of divine providence and the concept of vicegerency

⁵ See, for instance, Busch, B.C. (1968). "Divine Intervention in the "Muqaddimah" of Ibn Khaldūn. *History of Religions*, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 317-329.

⁶ For Arnason and Stauth (2004, p.33), the religious dimension is in as much important as other aspects of Khaldunian understanding of civilizational analysis.

(“Khilafa”) of man on earth. Finally, I conclude that understanding Ibn Khaldun’s view of civilization demands both multiplicity and complexity in method and content.

I. Umran and the Natural World

Ibn Khaldun saw human settlement on earth as something closely related to the availability of oceans, rivers, and overall climatic conditions. In this way, he posited human civilization “umran” along with natural conditions. In this context, he noted “the part of the earth that is free from water and suitable for human civilization (“lilumran”) has more waste (“qafaar”) and empty (“khil’a”) areas than cultivated–habitable (“umranahu”) areas. The empty area in the south is larger (“akthar”) than that in the north” (Ibn Khaldun, 2013:100). Even though the part of the earth that is free from water is about one–half or less, the cultivated part covers only about one–fourth of it. Based on this observation, Ibn Khaldun, following Ptolemy and Roger, divided this part of the earth into seven zones (“Aqalim”). It should be noted that this classification assumes direct connection between Umran and geographical conditions. Specifically, his classification was based on the assumption that climatic conditions affect the ecosystem, human activities–social, economic and cultural, and thus, the level of Umran. Basically, Ibn Khaldun believed that in the cultivated part (“*juz’a al-ma’mur*”) of the earth, there are many rivers. The largest among them are four in number: Nile, Euphrates, Tigris, and River of Balkh, which is called Oxus (“Jayhun”) (Ibn Khaldun, 2013:103).

Employing his own observation (“*bil mushahadah*”) and verifiable reports (“*wal akhbar al-mutawatir*”), of the seven zones, Ibn Khaldun underscored that the first and second zones are less cultivated, and thus, have less (in cultivation, and thus, much less suitable for life) civilization (“*Aqal umranen mima b’adiha*”). These zones are less cultivated and habitable and its manifestations, among others, included that they have less nations (“umam”), population (“wa anasyhim”), cities (“amssaruhu”), and towns (“madinahu”). When it comes to the third, fourth and what comes after these, the condition of civilization is reversed. Unlike the first and second zones, the nations and populations are tremendous, and cities and towns are exceedingly numerous (“tajawaz al-had ‘adadin”) in zones after the first two. In these parts of the world, he believed that civilization remains to be much higher (“mundaraj”) while the south, the first and second zones, is completely empty (“*khil’a kulluhu*”) (Ibn Khaldun, 2013:105)⁷. This difference in the level of civilization is attributed to natural conditions. In other words, while the

⁷ In other place, he changes the vocabulary from “*wal junub khil’a kulu*” to “*kan al-umaran fi iqlim al-‘ula wa thaniya qalilan*” (Ibn Khaldun, 2013: p.105).

south tends toward hot, and thus, makes cultivation difficult, the north tends toward cold with the reverse effect.

Ibn Khaldun found that countries located more to south, of Africa are less moderate, and thus, unsuitable for civilization. He included such countries as Ghana, Slavs, South Sudan, part of Mali and others in the first and second zones (that is, countries in the North and South end of the earth). When it comes to certain parts of the second, the third, fourth and fifth zones, the condition was relatively moderate. He included such countries as North of Sudan, Christian Turks, Abyssinia, Persians, Arabs, France, Greeks, and others. However, the ideal climatic condition suitable for human cultivation and thus civilization was located in countries like Syria and Iraq.

While analyzing the Umran level of the seven habitable, albeit varying in degrees, part of the earth, Ibn Khaldun gave particular emphasis on certain attributes which, in turn, are very crucial to understand what he meant by Umran itself. Some of the factors he used as rubric included what he called “al Ahwal” (conditions). This condition (both material and non-material aspects) encompasses architecture (building styles, homes), subsistence (food), clothing style, economic transactions, character, prophecy and collective life. These are, among others, the most important themes that defined Ibn Khaldun’s discussion of Umran, both in specific and general contexts. I argue, therefore, that it is through these yardsticks and measures that he sought to differentiate between places and societies of higher (perhaps complex) level of Umran from those with less or lower level.

To begin with, in the first and second zones, Ibn Khaldun found, there were sufficient reasons to consider them assuming lower level of Umran than those of the third, fourth, fifth, and six zones. He argued that people in these climatic conditions tend to have buildings built on clay (“bi-tin”) and reeds (“wa al-qasab”); their subsistence on durra (“al-zirah”) and herbs (“wa al-‘ashb”); their economic exchanges (“*wa mu’ameletihim bi ghayr al-hajarayin al-sharifayin*”) on copper, Iron or skins not on the two noble metals; their characters are close to dumb animals (“*wa akhlaqihim qaribatun min akhlaqi al-haywanat al-‘ajm*”) and act savagely (“*wa’anahum mutawhishun*”) and eat each other (“*y’akulu ba’dhum b’adua*”); and finally, in their religious conditions, they are ignorant of prophecy (“*fela ya’rifuna nubuwala yadinun bisharia’h*”) (Ibn Khaldun, 2013:143). Due to these conditions, Ibn Khaldun concluded, zone one and two are remote from the state of being human and close to those of wild animals (“*wa jami’a ahwalihim ba’edatun min ahwal al-unsaya qaribatun min ahwal al baha’em*”) (Ibid,143).

Contrary to the first and second zones, the overall conditions of Umran, both in terms of habitation and cultivation, assume moderation in places like Maghrib, Syria, Hijaz, Yemen, Iraq, India, China, and Andalusia (lying between the second and the seven zones). Of these, both Iraq and Syria represent the most temperate and ideal of all places, and thus, higher level of Umran. Among other things, all of these places share important characteristics, such as houses built on stones and embellished by craftsmanship (“*ye tahizun al-buyut al-minjidah bilhजारah*”); undertake their businesses through the two precious metals—gold and silver; and they avoid intemperance in all their conditions (“*wa yeb’adun an al-inhiraf fi amah ahwalihim*”) (Ibid, p.142). In other words, these zones were endowed with all the necessary conditions for sustaining civilization (“*wa kafatu al-ahwal al-tabi’ah lil’etimar*”). In this regard, they could be distinguished by ways of making a living (“*m’ash*”), dwellings, crafts, sciences, political leadership (“*rayyasat*”), and royal authority. They have experiences of prophecy, religious groups, dynasties, religious laws, sciences, countries, cities, buildings (“*mabani*”), horticulture (“*furassah*”), and splendid crafts (“*sin’a al-fa’eqah*”) (Ibid, p.145).

Umran between Bedouin and Settled Societies

Ibn Khaldun’s view of human condition in general and among Bedouin societies, in particular, is based on empirical data, own observations, and reports (and thus rarely invokes religion). Here, it can be easily seen that he relied more on what has come to be called the “Great Chain of Beings” and nature deterministic perspective⁸. It is through this frame of reference that he conceived the nature and form of life (and thus Umran) among the Bedouins. In this regard, Ibn Khaldun argued that human beings generally occupied a place above animals, but below angels. He argued, by adopting Aristotelian “chain of beings”, that, “the animal world then widens, its species become numerous, and in a gradual process of creation, it finally leads to man, who is able to think and to reflect⁹ (Ibid, p.172).

In this world of humans, life is precarious, dangerous, and unpredictable. In order to succeed, and thus, preserve life in this Khaldunian ‘state of nature’, it is necessity to have certain unique survival basic instincts, skills, and generally, mechanism of coping and surviving. In this ‘state of nature’ human beings need, among other things, food and security to survive. However, the power of the individual human being is not

⁸ Traced back to Aristotelian philosophy of “scala naturae” also sometimes known as (“ladder of nature”). For further discussion see Arthur, O. (2001)’s *The Great Chain of Being*.

⁹ The Arabic version reads: “*wat-tasa alem al-haywanat wa ta’dadat anwa’aha wantaha fi tadaruj al-takwin il al-insan sahib al fikr wa ru’eya*” (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.172).

sufficient for him to obtain (the food) he needs, and does not provide him with as much food as he requires surviving (*"an qudrat al-wahid min al-bashar qasirah an tahsil hajatahu min zalik al-ghiza"*) (Ibid, p.97). Similarly, each individual needs the help of his fellow beings for his defense (*"fi difa'a an-nafsihi il al-isti'annah bi'abna'a jinsihi"*). However, the power of one individual human being cannot withstand the power of any one dumb animal, and therefore, unable to defend himself against them by himself. Consequently, these two conditions constitute the 'prime causes' of Khaldunian theory of civilization. The first is the need for economic institution and the second is for political institution. These social institutions are still impossible without the second 'necessary cause', namely, cooperation (*"al-ta'awun"*) and social organization.

At the heart of this is group feeling (*"assabiyah"*). This group feeling is the basis of mutual cooperation among fellow human beings for every mass undertaking, economic or political, by necessity requires group feeling (*"in kula amrin tahmil aleyhi al-kaafa'h fala bud laha min al-assabiyah"*) (p.279). Without, therefore, developing cooperation through group feeling, human beings' survival, feeding itself and security from any danger, could have been impossible. Likewise, when this "mutual co-operation exists, man obtains food for his nourishment and weapons for his defense" (*"fala bud fi zalik kulluhu min at'awun . . . wa maalam yakun haza al-ta'wun fala yahsil lahu quwa'h wala ghiza'a"*) (p.98). Apart from cooperation, human beings cannot exist in a state of anarchy (*"muqatalah . . . il-dim'a wa 'izhab al-nufus"*) and without a ruler (*"al-malik alqahir"*) who keeps them apart, restrain them and exercises authority (p.322).

Again, all these are only possible because human beings have unique qualities (*"ikhtassa biha"*) that distinguished them from other creatures. These qualities included the sciences and crafts resulted from the ability to think (*al'ulum wa sina'a alati hiye natijat al-fikr*) which exalts (*"tamayaza bihi . . . al al-makhlukat"*) him over all creatures; the ability to exercise restraining influence (*al-hukm al-wazi'e*) and strong authority (*"sultan al-qahir"*) of which man, compared to other creatures, cannot exist without (*"layumkin wujudahu duna zalik"*); man's efforts to make a living (*"ass'ay fil ma'ash"*); and at the end, civilization (*"al umran"*)¹⁰ (Ibn Khaldun, 2013: 95–96). In short, the sociopolitical and economic needs of human beings are met by means of adopting necessary survival basic instincts and skills, such as group feeling, cooperation, authority, and thus, civilization. In this Khaldunian 'state of nature', human beings are conceived to be in constant state of perfection, of which nature contributes both the physical and

¹⁰ Huntington, S.P. (1996, p.43) considers civilization as "the broadest cultural entity ... which distinguishes humans from other species . . ."

sociocultural ingredients. Human body color (p.142), body proportion (p.147), human personality, character, and courage (p.223–248), and religious conditions (p.150), and others are attributed to the physical environment.

On the sociocultural domain, human beings are viewed as the product, or as Ibn Khaldun himself calls it, the “child” of his sociocultural environment (*“in al-insan ibnu ‘awa’idahu wama’lufihi”*) (p.233). In fact, he went so far as to claim that man is not the product of his natural disposition and temperament. The conditions, to which he has become accustomed, until they have become for him a quality of character and matters of habit and custom, have replaced his natural disposition (*“la ibnu tabi’atehu wamizajihii . . .hata saara huluqan wamalakatan wa’adatan tunzalu manzilat al-tabi’at wal-jibilah”*) (Ibid). The customs, traditions, and various behaviors such as ‘habit of goodness and evil’ (p.227), ‘sociability’, ‘savagenes’, ‘bravery’ and ‘courageousness’ (p.232), ‘fear, docility and fortitude’ (p.233), friendliness, ‘levity’, ‘excitability’, and ‘great emotionalism’, and related other conditions of human beings are attributed to the socio-cultural environment. In this state of nature, being rational, human beings do not act individually for it has inherent risks and unsustainable, but collectively for its abundance, sustainability, and security. In what follows, I move onto the religious dimension of Ibn Khaldun’s appraisal of Umran.

II. Umran, God, and Man’s Vicegerency

Anyone reading Ibn Khaldun cannot help but notice the religious context, coloring, or aspects in any issue he discusses in his Muqaddimah. Umran, being the central organizing principle and science of Ibn Khaldun’s Muqaddimah, cannot be disentangled from this embedding context. Ibn Khaldun’s idea of Umran embodies such factors as nature (“empirical”)–biological, environmental; socio-cultural, and historical factors–and religious contexts–as in God’s providence and the vicegerency of man.

The religious corner of Ibn Khaldun’s Umran is in as much important as the nature-deterministic aspect. Here, it could be argued that Ibn Khaldun’s thought assumes God’s plan for Human beings on earth. In this plan of God, human beings are designated with His vicegerency (“Istikhlaf”) on earth (p.98). In order for this to happen, God provided everything for human beings, without which human being’s existence on earth would be impossible. As a result, God ‘gave everything its natural characteristics, and then guided it’ (Surah al-Taha, Ayah–50) (p.99). Human beings being part of the “every creation” are endowed with the necessary survival mechanisms and “guided” them in the right path that would enable them to preserve their species. In order to meet the needs and wants

of human beings, and thus, its preservation, God gave man of all that is needed. These divine providences also included natural and socio-cultural domains.

Addressing the natural environment, Ibn Khaldun argues that for the success of God's plan for the vicegerency of man and for civilization and for the preservation of life resulted in making part of the earth free of water. Not only did God give the natural conditions for the survival, preservation and continuation of human species, but also the socio-cultural conditions. One of which is a necessary ingredient of any social organization that marks Khaldunian thought of human nature, culture, and civilization is *assabiyah*, or loosely translated as "group feeling". This bio-psycho-social concept is a blood based relation and feeling towards a group or members of a group, is still a divine providence from God. For this, he says that compassion and affection for one's blood relations and relatives exist in human nature as something God put into the hearts of men ("*wa ma ja'alallahu fi qulubi e'ibadihi min al-ashafaqah wa na'arah ala zuwi arhamahum waqarabaa'ihim mawjudaha fi tab'a al-basher*"). It makes for mutual support and aid ("*al-ta'dhud wa al-tanassur*") (p.236). Group feeling and cooperation among human beings are from God; otherwise, he invokes God's promise that 'If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have brought their hearts together; but Allah brought them together' (Surah al-Anfal; Ayah-63)¹¹ (p.171).

Apart from group feeling and cooperation, God also ensured the security and safety of human beings on earth through facilitating authority. Ibn Khaldun, in light of Qur'anic verse that God saying "We led him along the two paths", points out that these 'paths' are those which "God put into man", namely, evilness and goodness ("*in Allaha subhanahu rakkaba fi tab'a al-basher al-khayr wa al-sheer*") (p. 235). These qualities represented, in human beings, wickedness ("fujur") and fear ("taqwa") of God. Since the evil quality of human beings included injustice ("zulm") and aggression ("udwan"), God enabled human beings with authority; otherwise, 'If God did not keep human beings apart, the earth would perish' (Surah al-Baqarah, Ayah-251) (p.254).

In this second aspect of Ibn Khaldun's conception of Uman, human beings generally acquire or achieve the plan of God. Human beings are represented in a way that resembles players in the field created by God. The players and the field is of God, but given the fact that human beings are shown both the right and wrong direction in their attempt to play the game, both in their physiological and psychosocial make up, they

¹¹ The Arabic book I'm using for this research mistakenly attributed this verse to "Surah al-Hijr" (see, Ibn Khaldun, "*Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldun*" Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah, Lebanon, 2013; p.171).

achieve ‘the plan’ of God. Owing to his weaknesses and inabilities inherent in his creation, human beings need God for the preservation of own species, and thus, the fulfillment of God’s original plan, man’s vicegerency on earth. Accordingly, human beings survive meeting their needs, primarily, economic and political needs. These needs, being the inherent weaknesses of man, God provides, besides creating them, all the necessary ingredients—the natural and social environment. Group feeling, cooperation, authority and civilization are, therefore, God’s ways of dealing with human beings on Earth¹².

In conclusion, it could be clearly seen that Ibn Khaldun’s approach to umran or civilization synthesizes different conditions and factors, on the one hand, and methods, on the other. In addition to the above two key aspects of Ibn Khaldun’s Umran, there are historical, philosophical and empirical dimensions to it. It is clear that he adopted examinations—historical (“tahqiq”), causations (“‘illa”), personal experiences (“tajrubah”), observations (“mushahadah”), and verified and continues reports (“al akhbar al mutawatir”), logic and others as methods. These methods helped him to triangulate and verify various assumptions, philosophies, myths, prior theories and others. This not only helped him reduce the chance of making erroneous mistakes, but also strengthened the power of his conclusions and deductions. In terms of content and focus, Ibn Khaldun’s study of Umran encompasses nature—biological and environmental aspects, historical accounts, religious notions and experiences, economics and trade, sciences, agriculture, pastoralism, rural and urban sociology, politics, human psychology, and others. This, consequently, makes Ibn Khaldun’s engagement of Umran or civilization multiplex, assuming multiplicity and complexity.

2.3.2. Said Halim Pasha

Another thinker that arguably falls under the multiplex trend in the study of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular is the Wazir of the late Ottoman Empire, Said Halim Pasha. Interestingly, like Ibn Khaldun, Said Halim Pasha was not an armchair speculator as is usually the case for many western theoreticians of civilization¹³. He was an active participant in the political as well intellectual scenes of the late ottoman era. Like Ibn Khaldun, the multiplexity reflected in his idea of civilization, particularly Islamic

¹² In fact, this is what Ibn Khaldun considers al-umran. He says “*al-umran . . . wa bayaanuhu inallaha subhanahu khalaq al-insan warakkabahu ala surat la yassih hayatiha wabaq’auha ila bilghiza’a wahadahu tamaassuh bifitratih*” (Ibn Khaldun, 2013; p.97).

¹³ It is very important to underline that Ibn Khaldun’s and Said Halim Pasha’s work are the necessary reflection of their lived experiences, not just students of “classical books”, and thus, arm chair speculators. Also, the multiplexity of their thought partly drives from this experience.

civilization and its ottoman off shot, draws significantly from his practical–empirical, political, philosophical and ideological experiences and thoughts. Being a dedicated Islamist, Said Halim Pasha’s (hereafter as “Pasha”) general thought resonates with the overall ottoman Islamic and political thought, which, in turn, cannot be detached from the influence of Ibn Khaldun (see, for instance, Ardic (2012)).

As I will discuss shortly, Pasha’s thought generally assumes multiplicity in the dimensions explored and the complexity of his account. In what follows, principally drawing from his book titled “Buhranlarimiz”(“Our Crises”)which encompassed seven of his earlier writings, I attempt to flesh out Pasha’s thought along three major issues: the first part deals with his view of Islam and Islamic civilization (and thus the ottoman empire as an important empirical reflection); the second part comparatively appraises how he views Islamic civilization in contradistinction to western civilization; and finally, the last part ends with highlighting what he considered to be the locus of crises in Islamic civilization.

I argue that these dimensions can serve us important anchors to decipher Pasha’s view of civilization in two important ways. On the one hand, the first two dimensions can collectively provide normative as well as philosophical vantage points to Pasha’s understanding of civilization. The third dimension, which is, in fact, the very purpose of Pasha’s writings in “Buhranlarimiz” can provide us with an understanding of empirical, historical, and sociological constituents and being of Islamic civilization, on the other. In other words, by dealing with aspects of the crisis of Islamic civilization, Pasha is to actually analyze the vital or secondary aspects of Islamic civilization where this crisis is conditioned. Put differently, by discussing the crisis and revival of Islamic civilization, Pasha is dealing with the very essence and being of Islamic civilization. As I will show shortly, this is the very reason why Pasha’s understanding of Islamic civilization merits to be examined under multiplex trend, subsuming and reflecting multiplicity and complexity, in the study of Islamic civilization.

2.3.2.1. Islam and Islamic Civilization

When Pasha wrote about civilization what he had in mind was Islamic civilization in general and Ottoman Empire, in particular. Although he viewed Islamic civilization in close proximity to Islam, he emphasized the challenges and prospects of Ottoman Empire. In either case, the frame of reference remained Islam. In fact, he made it clear from the outset that the crisis the Ottoman Empire experiencing in its latest stage was closely aligned with its general tendency to move away from Islam, both in theory and practice. It is for this very reason that a close assessment of Halim Pasha’s view of Islam and its relation to civilization and the Ottoman Empire is warranted. A critical reading of Pasha’s

“Buhranlarımız” (“Our Crises”) would reveal that there are some important ways through which he understood and deployed Islam. In what follows I deal with three of them, Islam and its ability to devolve a political society and civilization of its own; Islam and Shari’ah; and finally, Islam and “Akhlaq” (character, morality, etc)¹⁴.

Pasha was of the opinion that religion determines everything, every aspect of life. Religion encompasses both “material and nonmaterial domains of human individual and collective existence”¹⁵ (Pasha, 2015:148). Islam, unlike other religions, cannot be simply reduced to idealism or positivism as some would have us believe, he noted. In fact, Islam not only “encompassed these, but also entails other important elements beyond” (Ibid, p.186). As a religion, Islam is a “lived truth and ultimate reality” (p.170). Simply put these and related other factors made Islam the “perfect religion (of humanity) that encapsulated all aspect of human life on earth” (p.185).

However, Islam, for Pasha, did not confine itself to spirituality. It went far beyond it. It made civilization possible. Apart from these internal peculiar aspects of Islam, it has also produced political societies that in turn set in motion Islamic civilization, to which Ottoman Empire was the last political heir up until the first quarter of the twentieth century. Here Islam is appraised as the one which gave rise to many empires (“*her biri ayri imparatorluk*”) and political societies in the world (Ibid, p.150). Islam made this possible through its own principles underlying social and political systems. It was Islam’s basic principles of unity and brotherhood, unlike nationalism in Christian Europe, which facilitated political unity of Islamic civilization under Ottomans (p.67).

Other peculiar principles underlying (“*Islam inancindan dogan*”) Islamic civilization in general and during the Ottoman Empire, in particular, included freedom (“hurriyet”), equality (“esitlik”), justice (“adalet”), humanity (“insanlik”), and morality, character, or manner (“ahlak”) (p.60–69). Accordingly, the strength of Islamic civilization was the product of a “comprehensive understanding of Islam (and its principles) and systematic application of it taking into account changing circumstances” (p.64–67). Being the best of examples, it was Islam that gave rise to Islamic civilization from a desert; established borderless (“hudutsuz”) empires; and ultimately solved the problem of racism (“irk tedkiklerinde”) through a comprehensive sociopolitical system (p.108). However, Islam was not only responsible for the advent of Islamic civilization, but also “played significant roles in the later emergence of western civilization”(p.119).

¹⁴ “Akhlaq” is hereafter defined as morality.

¹⁵ Author’s translation and the same apply to forthcoming citations.

The second important way through which he approached Islam in his discussion of Islamic civilization with a particular emphasis on the Ottoman Empire was centered on the idea and practice of Shari'ah. In fact, it can be seen that Pasha saw Shari'ah as the very quintessential being of Islam lying somewhere between the ideal teachings of Islam and its worldly actual realization in terms of civilization, political system, social institutions, and various empires in Islamic history. The importance of Shari'ah for Pasha lies in its ability to devolve society, political society, and more generally, civilization.

He argued that Islamic societies are closely tied together with the idea of Shari'ah (*"Islam cemiyeti seriat'in hakimiyetine tabi ve baglidir"*). This means that these societies lived and were the expressions of the moral as well as social norms of Shari'ah (*"ahlaki ve sosyal kanunlari"*), and in so doing, it ascertains the fact that "there are certain fixed normative prescriptions of Shari'ah that order social and political conditions"(p.251). Founded upon the principles of equality, freedom, justice, brotherhood ("Islam kardesligi"), family ("Islam ailesi"), and ethics or morality, Islamic Shari'ah brought about a new society and civilization. It brought with it, "from nothing, a civilization characterized by science, wisdom, justice, enlightenment, happiness, and its social, spiritual and material conditions were never seen in the world" (p.231).

The third important frame of reference Pasha recurrently deployed throughout "Buhranlarimiz" (our crisis) is closely tied to the Islamic concept of "Akhlak". For Pasha, the importance of morality is very foundational that he viewed it as the key to explain the crisis as well as revival potentialities of Islamic civilization under the Ottoman Empire¹⁶. This is exactly what he meant when he argued that "morality should come before anything in an effort to rejuvenate and strengthen the Ottoman Empire" (p.137). It is not only the means for reviving Islamic civilization, but also one of the very purposes of Islamic society and civilization. In this connection, he pointed out that "the ideal society aims for cultivating and producing individuals of high moral character" (Ibid).

He went one step ahead and argued that it is morality that defines what it means to be an Islamic society, for it is this morality that produces that ideal Islamic society. Accordingly, the relationship between Islamic morality and society assumes two-way interactive dialogues although the influence of the former is more of foundational and constitutive than the latter, and thus, assumes the power to alter the nature and form of the latter. If

¹⁶ While discussing the crisis of Islamic civilization under the Ottoman Empire, he raised this very issue and argued that "the danger that caused crisis among citizens was due to the lack of sense of morality" (Pasha, 2015:124).

we, for instance, take Islamic morality, it determines the nature (foundation) of “justice, equality, freedom, and solidarity (and cooperation) between members in a given society” (p.190).

On the other hand, on the corner of Islamic society, the ideal society and individual members reach greater glory if and only if they properly understand and implement the basic teachings of Islam (including the percepts of morality). If this goes well, then the purpose of establishing Islamic political society becomes fulfilled. In other words, Islamic political society is impossible “without properly implementing Islamic morality and social system” (Ibid, p.193). Islamic morality, however, cannot be detached (and thus, does not have a life of its own) from Islamic religious belief, for it is Islamic belief that gave birth to Islamic morality (“*Islamin inancindan dogan cemiyet ahlaki*”) (p.190). Put differently, Pasha believed that societies’ level of morality and spirituality go hand in hand with levels of freedom, equality, and welfare (p.191). Finally, like Sezai Karakoc and Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi, Pasha underscored that the basis of Islamic morality is Islamic monotheism (otherwise known as al-Tawhid) (“*Islalm ahlakın kaynagi, hak olan tek Allah’a imandir*”) (Ibid, p.189).

Pasha’s Islamic Civilization: A Comparative Perspective

In attempt to show the relative merits of Islamic civilization, Pasha consistently employed comparative approach throughout “Buhranlarımız”. He specifically compared Islamic civilization, often exchanging it for the East, with Western civilization. I argue that Pasha’s comparison primarily revolved around three major themes. The first dimension explored issues closely related to the origin and nature of civilization. The second aspect analyzed social systems (particularly social structure and politics) in both civilizations. The third theme encompassed issue of change and progress in these two civilizations. Taking into account these three dimensions, he concluded that there were very fundamental differences between these civilizations. A brief comparative appraisal of these elements is in order.

When the origin and nature of civilizations is examined, he saw certain attributes that made western civilization distinct compared with Islamic civilization. He, for instances, argued that western civilization, with the advent of natural and positive sciences, detached itself from Christianity, and in the process, devolved philosophical speculations and materialism (p.147). It was then clear that western civilization, operating this way, had already invented a new religion at the expense of Christianity, this time not under prophets or priests, but under the leadership of scientists and philosophers (“*yeni ‘murisdler’ toplulugunun lehine olmustur*”) (p.147). The outcome of this was a western society that has cherished comfort and safety in the newly instituted secular order (p.176). The same

thing, however, cannot be said for Islamic society and civilization. In fact, to the contrary, Islamic societies acquired their peace and comfort from their Islamic faith and their Islamic morality and thought (Ibid). Unlike western civilization, Islamic civilization took its inspiration from Islam in general and Shari'ah, prophets, Islamic morality, freedom, justice, and solidarity, in particular (Ibid).

The second important comparative theme in "Buhranlarımız" of Pasha is the difference in the very idea of progress and change in civilization. He pointed out that since its initial genesis western civilization has been going through changes without any identifiable purpose. The change was very transformative that every aspect of life would be subjected to change ("*daimi olarak degistirmek ihtiyacini duymus ve duymaktadır*") (p.242). Making, then, itself busy with temporarily meeting needs that arise in its march for growth, it remained purposeless and without any lasting values ("*Belirli ve degismez bir gay eve hadef sahip olmayan Bati . . .*") (Ibid). Being realist and positivist by its very nature, it was not directed by certain unchanging values; rather, in the process of meeting and changing its material, emotional and technological needs, its existential purposes would change at the same time (Ibid).

The same is true for its sociopolitical organization as well. It started with Church playing the role of spiritual leadership. This then, through time, led to kingship, which helped garnering significant wealth. As the new bourgeois class amassed huge wealth and prosperity, it paved the way for the advent of democratic system. Due to this unsettling urge for change and transformation, western civilization, according to Pasha, "remained dissatisfied and unhappy" (p.243). However, for Pasha, this does not apply to Islamic civilization. This is because the "foundations of Islamic institutions do not change; not because they cannot change, but because they are in perfect condition that they do not need changes" (p.177).

Finally, the last important comparative theme in "Buhranlarımız" of Pasha is the difference in social system (social structure and politics, in particular) between Western and Islamic civilizations. While sociopolitical life among Muslims in Islamic civilization was the product of the Islamic system of morality—the root of which, again, is traced back to Islamic faith (p.185), the case in western civilization is something different. He argued that in history, western societies relied on "historical nobility" ("*tarihi asalet*") and the bourgeois ("*burjuva*") class to structure their socioeconomic and political activities. This class, according to Pasha, was unimportant ("*ehemmiyetsiz*") to Ottoman Empire. Although this class had very powerful power and role in western societies, it was never the case for Ottoman society. In fact, the most comparable position in Ottoman Empire was called

“memurlar” (civil servants) and they were held in higher regard and respect (p.62). Interestingly, every scholar and intellectuals in the Ottoman Empire would wish to become one of these civil servants (despite its negative implications for intellectual independence, neutrality, etc).

“Buhranlarimiz”

Said Halim Pasha, being a statesman of the Ottoman Empire era, had both the opportunity and experience to easily recognize and spot change trajectories characterizing Islamic civilization. Being a statesman of the Ottoman Empire, he was well aware of the crises of Islamic civilization, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The book “Buhranlarimiz” is the recollection of his practical experiences and insights into this very condition. It can be seen that he knew, much earlier than other thinkers and social scientists that Islamic civilization was going through periods of crisis and lagging behind world leadership (p.231). In spite of this crisis consciousness, there was not any satisfactory study into this phenomenon at the time. He believed that many of the causal explanations were not only inadequate, but also very far removed from Islamic civilization and its Ottoman context (p.150).

Under “Buhranlarimiz”, Pasha explored various and multifaceted causal factors behind the crisis of Islamic civilization. The causes he identified included such factors as various steps and actions taken against Islam; backwardness in the natural sciences; problems caused by reformers, statesmen, and thinkers; pre-Islamic and western influences; materialism; and others. Analytically speaking, a close analysis of “Our Crisis” engages three interrelated ingredients. The first dimension, and vast in its coverage and penetrative in its depth, is crisis factors closely posited with intellectuals.

The second ingredient encompasses local rulers, religious scholars and other internal conditions. The last aspect of the crisis of Islamic civilization, which mostly dealt in conjunction with the first two dimensions, is the multifaceted influence of the West. Although much of Pasha’s efforts were directed at understanding and explaining these causal factors, he did not ended the discussion at the level of description and explanation only. In fact, he went one step ahead and forwarded possible measures that he believed could facilitate the way for the rejuvenation of Islamic civilization in general and ottoman Empire, in particular. This later part is what he styled Islamization (“Islamlasmak”).

3. Conclusion

While many theories of civilization in general and Islamic civilization in particular fall under the historic–empirical and religiophilosophical trends and approaches, there are few theories, of Islamic civilization, that typically show certain degree of multiplicity and complexity in method and approach. Many, if not all, theories in civilization studies are confined to either historic–empirical, with extreme forms as in historicism and positivism, or religiophilosophical theoretical and methodological formulations. However, the multiplex trend, which has been appraised to subsume multiplicity and complexity, both in theoretical abstraction and methodological plurality, has been commonly employed among Muslim thinkers theorizing about Islamic civilization.

Of these thinkers, the present study examined the works of Ibn Khaldun and Said Halim Pasha. Apart from methodological plurality and eclectic focus, their appraisal of civilization in general and Islamic civilization, in particular, drives largely from their own lived experiences in their respective periods. It can be safe to conclude that, unlike those armchair speculators (determinisms, reductionisms, and etc), these two thinkers attempted to construct a theory of civilization they believed was too complex to reduce to any single aspect of human life and this meant that they needed to provide a wider theoretical foundation both in method and content.

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Khaldunian Techniques of Historical Criticism and their Place in Modern Debates on Naqd al-Matn (Content criticism) of Hadith *

İbn Halduncu Tarih Eleştirisi Teknikleri ve Bunların Modern Hadis İçerik Eleştirisi (Nakd'ül-metin) Tartışmaları Üzerindeki Yeri

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Abstract: Techniques of Historical criticism developed by Ibn Khaldun in his seminal work al-Muqaddimah are well-known. However, he himself admitted that they are not applicable as such to Hadith criticism instead it should be done by applying techniques of Jarh wa al-Ta'dil (criticism of chain of narration). Nevertheless he rejected many popular *ahadith* such as the *ahadith* on advent of Imam Mahdi and Pophetic Medicine. One of the major accusations of the western scholars such as Goldziher was that the early hadith scholars had not applied historical criticism in hadith rather they were exclusively sticking to *sanad* criticism. Many contemporary Muslim scholars are very much influenced with this criticism and stand for a free and open content criticism of Hadith which creates a tendency to reject several well-authentic *ahadith* of the Prophet. Here the researcher examines the possibility of applying techniques of historical criticism in hadith and it also examines why Ibn Khaldun differentiated between hadith and history whereas Historiography and *hadith* are both historical account reported through certain chains of narrators. As both are mainly known to us through narration, they are prone to misrepresentations and misinterpretations. It uncovers that to some extent the Khaldunian Techniques are applicable to hadith along with *sanad* criticism but unlike contemporary scholars they did not stand for an open and free criticism.

Keywords: Khaldunian Techniques, Historical Criticism, Modern Debates

Öz: *İbn Haldun'un ufuk açıcı Mukaddimesi'nde geliştirdiği Tarihsel Eleştirisi Teknikleri çok iyi bilinmektedir. Ancak, kendisinin de kabul ettiği gibi bunlar bu şekilde hadis çalışmalarına uygulanamaz. Bunun yerine, hadiste cerh ve tadil (isnad zincirinin eleştirisi) metodu*

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uygulanmalıdır. Bununla birlikte, İbn Haldun Mehdi'nin gelişi ve nebevi tıpla ilgili pek çok popüler hadisi reddetmiştir. Goldziher gibi Batılı alimlerin en büyük eleştirilerinden biri, ilk hadis alimlerinin hadislerde tarihsel eleştiri metodunu kullanmak yerine senet eleştirisini kullanmış olmalarıydı. Günümüz Müslüman alimlerden pek çoğu bu eleştiriden etkilenerek içerik eleştirisini savunmuş, bu durum da pek çok sahih hadisin reddedilmesi eğilimini yaratmıştır. Bu yazı hadislerde tarihsel eleştiri tekniklerinin uygulanabilirliğini incelemektedir. Yazıda ayrıca tarih yazıcılığının da hadislerin de tarihi beyanlar olduğu ve her ikisinin de uzun ravi zinciri ile aktarılıyor olduğu düşünüldüğünde neden İbn Haldun'un tarih ilmini hadisten ayırdığı sorgulanmaktadır. Oysa her ikisi de rivayet yoluyla bize ulaştığı için yanlış beyan ve yoruma açıktır. Sonuç olarak, İbn Halduncu metotların bir ölçüde senet eleştirisiyle birlikte hadislere uygulanabileceği ortaya konmakta fakat bunun günümüz alimlerinin iddia ettiği gibi bir eleştiriyi kastetmediği iddia edilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *İbn Halduncu Metot, Tarihsel Eleştiri, Modern Tartışmalar*

1. Different Nature of Hadith and History: Khaldunian Perspective

Everyone can easily understand Khaldunian opinion regarding the nature of a particular science, because he had elaborated on classification of knowledge in his seminal work *Muqaddimah*. Therefore, determining the differences and similarities between hadith and history, no doubt, it should start from his classification of knowledge. İbn Khaldun classified all sciences into two major divisions: philosophical and transmitted while history is among the philosophical sciences and *hadith* is among the transmitted.

What Khaldun meant by Philosophical and the transmitted is clearly understood from his own explanations. To him the former means “ones with which man can become acquainted through the very nature of his ability to think and to whose objects, problems, arguments, and methods of instruction he is guided by his human perceptions, so that he is made aware of the distinction between what is correct and what is wrong in them by his own speculation and research, in as much as he is a thinking human being”(İbn Khaldun, 1980, 436) Whereas he described the latter as depending “upon information based on the authority of the given religious law. There is no place for the intellect in them, save that the intellect may be used in connection with them to relate problems of detail with basic principles.”(*Ibid.*) In short there is no place for intellect in *hadith* rather we should depend upon narrations and chain of narrations as it is elaborated in the works of *hadith* criticism.

He has reemphasized this difference while elaborating on historical critical methods. He says: “It is superior to investigations that rely upon criticism of the personalities of

transmitters. Such personality criticism should not be resorted to until it has been ascertained whether a specific piece of information is in itself possible, or not. If it is absurd, there is no use engaging in personality criticism. Critical scholars consider absurdity inherent in the literal meaning of historical information or an interpretation not acceptable to the intellect, as something that makes such information suspect. Personality criticism is taken into consideration only in connection with the soundness (or lack of soundness) of Muslim religious information, because this religious information mostly concerns injunctions in accordance with which the Lawgiver (Muhammad) enjoined Muslims to act whenever it can be presumed that the information is genuine. The way to achieve presumptive soundness is to ascertain the probity (ʿadalah) and exactness of the transmitters. On the other hand, to establish the truth and soundness of information about factual happenings, a requirement to consider is the conformity (or lack of conformity of the reported information with general conditions). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate whether it is possible that the (reported facts) could have happened. This is more important than, and has priority over, personality criticism.” (*Ibid.*, 18) Through this he stands for differentiating between nature of hadith and history. History tells how things were; *hadith* primarily tells how things should be. In other words, *hadith*, being part of revelation, has a legal binding to prescribe how things should be performed within the broad spectrum of history.

In other words one is divine centric to certain extent and the other is human centric. According to Ibn Khaldūn, history is an “information about human social organization, which itself is identical with world civilization.” In terms of its subject matter, “it deals with such conditions affecting the nature of civilization as, for instance, savagery and sociability, group feelings, and the different ways by which one group of human beings achieves superiority over another. It deals with royal authority and the dynasties that result (in this manner) and with the various ranks that exist within them. (It further deals) with the different kinds of gainful occupations and ways of making a living, with the sciences and crafts that human beings pursue as part of their activities and efforts, and with all the other institutions that originate in civilization through its very nature.”(*Ibid.*, 71).

His conception of *hadith* was introduced along with the discussion of revelation and the prophetic experience. As he explains, the prophets are humans but endowed with inspiration from God to guide their fellow human beings aright. According to him, the phenomenon of wahy (revelation) to prophets, attested by the *muʿjizah* (miracles)

which are not within the ability of human, indicates that “there exist things beyond the reach of man, that can be learned only from God through the mediation of these individuals.”(*Ibid.*, 184). In the state of *wahy*, prophets were endowed with the ability to slough off humanity and were immersed in spiritual kingdom, foreign to the ordinary human perception. As soon as this state is over, prophets would bring what they have learned back down to the level of human perception. (*Ibid.*, 185–199) Being an integral part of revelation, prophetic *ḥadith* then emanates from the same extraordinary experience.

2. Interplay between *Hadith* and History

Even though *ḥadith* and history are of different nature they have some common grounds. *ḥadith* could be considered as part of the history of the Prophet and his companions. It is within the compass of history that prophetic *ḥadith* unfolded, studied and emulated. History, i.e. the history of the Prophet (*Sirah*) was considered as part of *ḥadith* which is commonly defined as “what was transmitted on the authority of the Prophet, his deeds, sayings, tacit approvals, or description of his physical features and moral behaviour”. (Itr, 1990, 12) The Prophetic history was started by the birth of *ḥadith* and it developed within the domain of *ḥadith* until it was treated as separate discourse. However both have different scopes. While the *Sirah* is focused on the history “*ḥadith* compilation revolve not only around history but also and mainly around the religious and legal implications of the Prophet Muhammad.”(Uri Rubin, 1998, xxiv)

Likewise, Historiography developed in Islam along with the development of sciences of *ḥadith* and the early chronicler of the Prophet’s military engagements with his adversaries (*maghāzī*) were largely scholars of *ḥadith*. As a result, rules of *ḥadith* criticism to ascertain the authenticity of the report were equally employed to historical narrations, and the science of *isnād* or chains of transmission developed in the science of *ḥadith*, became central to historiography. It is then the curiosity of the early scholars to document the biography of the Prophets (*sīrah*) to collect his sayings, deeds and approvals, coupled with the historical accounts narrated in the Qur’ān aroused. It strengthened the interests of the early Muslim generations in studying the broader history of mankind of which the Prophetic history occupied a prominent segment.

3. HCM of Ibn Khaldun to Evaluate the Conformity of History

To pursue the critical investigation of historical information, Ibn Khaldūn proposes that one must distinguish (a) the conditions that attach themselves to the essence of

civilization as required by its very nature; (b) the things that are accidental to civilization and cannot be counted on; (c) and the things that cannot possibly attach themselves to it. Then we shall have normative method for distinguishing right from wrong and true from falsehood in historical information. (Ibn Khaldun, 1980, 77).

In the pre-Khalidunian era, history was considered as mere reports of the past events thus anything else rather than the personal criticism was not relevant to it. The Khalidunian new concept of history challenged this and by bringing history from the domain of the 'transmitted' knowledge he approached it as a speculative science that will make possible for historians to reach the truth itself and to avoid the many errors of historical research. Lack of such a scientific historiography has created many errors and fallacies in the historical accounts recorded by the historians prior to him. In an attempt to investigate these errors, Ibn Khaldun has listed the causes that often led historians to such kind of historical fallacies as follows:

Information that people accept without critical investigation due to their partisanship to a particular school or opinion causes historical fallacies and blunder.

One of the examples for such kind of fallacies, is the denial of historians the descent of the Ubaydid (Fatimids), the Shī'ī Caliphs in al-Qayruwan and Cairo from Imam Ismā'īl, the son of Ja'far al-ṣādiq. Ibn Khaldun observes that they base themselves in this respect on stories that were made up in favour of the weak Abbasid caliphs by people who wanted to ingratiate themselves with them through accusations against their active opponents. (Ibid, 40-43)

Reliance upon transmitters who were unaware of the purpose of an event. Many transmitters do not know the real significance of his observations or of the things he has learned orally.

The stories that historians recorded which accuse Yaḥyā ibn Aktham and al-Ma'mūn of drinking wine and having inclination for young men could be related to this factor. To Ibn Khaldun, this kind of recordings happened in history because the historians did not look to the motives behind this stories which perhaps were an invention of Yaḥyā's enemies, for he was much envied because of his perfection and his friendship with the ruler. Furthermore, Yaḥyā ibn Aktham was a transmitter of ḥadīth and was praised by Ibn Ḥambal and Judge Ismā'īl. Tirmidhī recorded aḥādīth on his authority. (Ibid., 38-39)

The information made public about high ranking persons may not be truthful because people, as a rule, approach such people with praise and encomiums. Human souls long for praise, and pay great attention to this world, positions and wealth instead of desire for virtue and virtuous people.

The stories of Tubba', As'ad Abu Karib, who lived in the time of the Persian Kayyanid king Yastasb could be considered as an example for fallacies occurred due to the above causes. (*Ibid.*, 21–25) Ibn Khaldūn was critical of this information relying on valid historical facts and geographical realities.

- 1) Another reason is the ignorance of how conditions conform to reality. Conditions are affected by ambiguities and artificial distortions. The informant reports the conditions as he saw them but on account of artificial distortions he himself has no true picture of them. The story of Alexander in which he was prevented Alexander from building Alexandria by Sea monsters which is recorded by Mas'ūdī has been considered as one of such fallacies. Ibn Khaldūn refuted this story for various reasons such as: rulers would not take such a risk; the jinn are not known to have specific forms and effigies. They are able to take on various forms; anyone who goes down deep into the water, even in a box would have too little air for natural breathing...(*Ibid.*, 72–74). Therefore, the incident could not have been possible within such socio–historical context.
- 2) Disregard for the fact that conditions within the nations and races change with the change of periods and the passing of days. This is the case with individuals, times, and cities, and, in the same manner, it happens in connection with regions and districts, periods and dynasties. (*Ibid.*, 56–57).

One of the examples of fallacies occurred in this way, is the historians' illustration of the father of Ḥajjāj as a school teacher. As Ibn Khaldūn remarks, teaching in the early days was a noble and commendable action, not how it came to be during the later time when it became profession of lower standard. Such are the patterns of Ibn Khaldūn's re–reading of the historical accounts. Some of these patterns can shed light on historical dimension of the Prophetic ḥadith or help in the right understanding of its import.

4. HCM of West in Content Criticism of *Hadith*

In the west modern methods to study the past is commonly referred to as Historical Critical Method (HCM) which emerged from Renaissance Humanism and critical

approach to the sources of history and religion that subsequently developed in Germany in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. That means to not approach what historical sources tell us without doubt and question. To them the default setting is scepticism and thus everything should be questioned. As the great German historian Leopold von Ranke declared "history is about looking behind the sources to find out what really happened".

This critical method took root in Europe and blossomed in the Universities of Germany in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The new German school of history assumed that the first step of studying any text was to question its reliability and establish its authenticity. In other words the default setting for scholars was to doubt the reliability of material transmitted about the past. Along with this priori doubt about textual reliability, the German school of history rested on other revolutionary methodological foundations. The European enlightenment had produced materialistic understanding of the world in which events proceeded according to natural laws and not according to divine intervention. As a result, history could not be explained by God's direct involvement or miracles. Instead, it was the immutable laws of human society that shaped human history. (Brown, 2010, 197–208).

The major difference is clear from here, that they included all religious sciences among the Philosophical sciences as part of history. They studied hadith within the sphere of history which is nothing but a philosophical science where HCM is easily applied.

Here the researcher would like to analyse few examples from Goldziher's seminal work, *Muslim Studies*. In the articles, he divided the *hadith* into two; political and non-political. By political he means the *ahadith* which directly or indirectly supports any of the following groups prevailed at the time of Umayyads and the early part of Abbasids who had a certain political position.

- 1) Those who insisted people to not fight against a government according to Goldziher the major portion of them were Murjites. "They did not consider the virtual rejection of religious laws by the Umayyads as sufficient reason to refuse obedience even theoretically or to brand them as *kafir* but it was sufficient to consider them as rulers that they professed Islam in general. He further argued that "they were expected to declare the opponents of the dynasty and the abettors as unbelievers". He further elaborated the loyal accommodation of Murjites with Umayyad rule.

- 2) The author brings evidences to prove that “the politico–religious opponents of Umayyads mainly adopted the party of Alids” and therefore they were the opponents of Murjites as well. He elaborated the enmity between these two sects.
- 3) Between these two extreme trends there is a middle party or mediating theologians. They spread the doctrine that obedience was in all circumstances due to the de facto rulers in the interest of the state and unity of Islam.
- 4) Khawarijites, who regarded it as their duty to fight against the rulers, but they were against appointing Ali and his successors as rulers.

He further argued that to sustain the power a lot of ‘calming hadith’ were invented to teach that even if a wicked government must be obeyed and it must be left to God to cause the downfall of the rulers whom he disapproves. Two major accounts of such narrations are *Kitab al-Kharaj* of Abu Yusuf and *Kitab al-Siyar* of Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani. Example of such narrations:

- 1) Prophet said: “Every emir is to be followed into war whether he be just or not and the salat must be performed behind any Muslim, be he just or wicked.
- 2) “Obey your superiors and resist not, for to obey them is to obey God, to rebel against them is to rebel against God.”
- 3) Likewise the narrations that exhorted not join any party in times of political rebellions and revolutions such as “The seated one is better than he who stands, the standing better than he who walks, the walker better than he who strives.”
- 4) To this belong those traditions which exhorts and comforts the believers by saying that “if it is not possible to alter prevailing evil with hand and tongue it is sufficient to protest with heart”

According to Goldziher, they endeavoured to find out practical examples from the ancient history of Islam to support the above mentioned theoretical views, such as:

- 1) Ahnaf ibn Qays I set forth in order to help this man (i.e. Ali before the battle of camel) I met Abu Bakrah and he said: Where are you going? ‘I want to go and help this man’ countered Abu Bakrah and I heard the Prophet say: ‘If two Muslims draw swords against one another, both the murder and murdered will go to the hell.’

After narrating this group of narrations he added that they “were listed without chronological order, since in the absence of chronological criteria of even relative certainty, it is impossible to establish one. It may be supposed, however, that the basic idea of this group of *hadith* goes back to the first century when the contrast between

the spirit. (Goldziher, 1969, 39–89) He further argued that the Muslim scholars did not do the content criticism as the west did with hadith.

5. How did Ibn Khaldun Applied HCM in Content Criticism of Hadith?

We have already explained that Ibn Khaldūn placed the ḥadith and its sciences among the transmitted sciences and he recognized the importance of the continuous chains of narration to ensure its authenticity due to the revelational nature of the prophetic discourse. However, it does not follow that all transmitted reports regarding the Prophetic life and commentaries upon the Qur’ān fall in the category of the sciences of divine nature. Rather, there are many reasons to suggest that fallacies may creep into these sciences through misunderstanding of the report. In such cases a critical eyes of historians is very much needed to remove these transmitted sciences from errors. From this point of view, the causes of historical errors discussed above could be extended to certain extent to the discourse of *ḥadith*. The following remarks and reservation of Ibn Khaldūn on certain *ḥadith* and its nature will show the relevance of his historical method to the ḥadith.

It must be made clear that Ibn Khaldūn when explaining the prophetic experience focused more on the supernatural dimension of prophethood. However, when discussing categories of different sciences, he identified very vividly other dimensions of prophets. He made it clear that while the divine revelations the prophets brought are unquestionably true, other things they do as required by their humanity could be the subject of historical examination. (Ibn Khaldun,1980, 184).

5.1. Prophetic Medicine

Major compilations of hadith such as *Sahih* of Bukhari and Muslim consist of chapter of Prophetic Medicine and many still regard it as methods of cure. However, in Ibn Khaldūn’s classification Medicine belongs to a category of sciences different from *ḥadith*. While the former is put under intellectual philosophical sciences, the latter is put under religious, transmitted sciences. From the outset, Ibn Khaldūn drew literally and accepted word by word the Prophetic *ḥadith* that proclaims “The stomach is the home of disease. Dieting is the main medicine. The origin of every disease is indigestion.” In his commentaries upon this ḥadith, he explained that the food one consumes compounded with air pollution is the main root of all illness. The people of the towns eat more food and do less exercise and live in an environment full of air pollution. As they become more vulnerable to illness, they need more medicine to cure their illness. Inhabitants of desert, by contrast, do not suffer a similar illness. They are

accustomed to scarcity and lead a simplistic life with less pollution. They eat natural food at their disposal and take their fresh nourishment from nature which is more agreeable to the body. Still they do more exercise as they race horses and go hunting in search for their livelihood. As a result, the frequency and complexity of illness is less; their need for medicine is also less. (Ibn Khaldun, 1980, 2/76–77) Therefore, medicine is more advanced in towns than in deserts; the advancement in medicine is proportionate to their respective needs. This analysis suggests that it will be inappropriate to measure the level of medicine in desert with the scale of towns.

Ibn Khaldūn placed prophetic medicine within the socio–historical need of the deserts in which the Prophet lived. He explained that the people of the deserts developed medicine which they based on limited experimentation in accordance to the limited illness at that time. While some of their prescription might be valid, they are not based on natural law. Prophetic *ḥadīth* was then placed within the socio–historical context of the Arabian Peninsula. According to him, such medicine has nothing to do with revelation because Prophet Muhammad was not sent to teach medicine but *Sharī‘ah*. The medicine mentioned in religious tradition is of the (Bedouin) type. It is in no way part of the divine revelation. (Such medical matters) were merely (part of) Arab custom and happened to be mentioned in connection with the circumstances of the Prophet, like other things that were customary in his generation. They were not mentioned in order to imply as religious laws. Muhammad was sent to teach us the religious law. He was not sent to teach us medicine or any other ordinary matter. In connection with the story of the fecundation of the palms, he said: "You know more about your worldly affairs (than I)." (Ibn Khaldun, 1980, 3/150).

In order to support his view, Ibn Khaldūn further compared the Prophetic ḥadīth on medicine to his advice on technical skill as reported in Sahīhi Muslim. There the Prophet himself made a distinction between the instruction he gave meant to be legal and binding and that which is merely based on his technical experience. The hadith reads as follows: Anas reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) happened to pass by the people who had been busy in grafting the trees. Thereupon he said: If you were not to do it, it might be good for you. (So they abandoned this practice) and there was a decline in the yield. He (the Holy Prophet) happened to pass by them (and said): What has gone wrong with your trees? They said: You said so and so. Thereupon he said: You have better knowledge (of a technical skill) in the affairs of the world." (Muslim, No. 2363).

While Ibn Khaldūn believed that such medical prescription of ḥadith can be used to seek for divine blessing in true religious faith, he did not believe that it is instructive, meant to be binding. It follows that if any of such ḥadith is found to be inaccurate, that should not cast any doubt to the authority of ḥadith. Prophet was human and did things as required by his humanity disposition or to conform to the Arab custom. It is then wrong to measure the past with conditions available to the present.

5.2. Evaluating the practicability of a *ḥadith* in the light of law of civilization

This is another example of applying HCM in hadith by Ibn Khaldun. The way Ibn Khaldūn treated the aḥadith related to the rise of Mahdī is an example for his above mentioned unique methodology. First he scrutinized and then discredited the chain of narrations that he knew and then he concluded that “These are all the traditions published by the religious authorities concerning the Mahdi and his appearance at the end of time. One has seen what they are like. Very few are above criticism.(Ibn Khaldun, 1980, 2/184).

Examining the Sufi understanding of the *ḥadith* on Mahdī, he observes that in some of them the time, the man, and the place are clearly indicated, but the predicted time passes, and there is no slightest trace of (the prediction coming true). Later he looks into the ḥadith in the light of the law of civilization and particularly *‘aṣabiyyah*. Earlier in his discussion about prophethood, Ibn Khaldūn enumerated signs by which prophets can be recognised and circumstances that nurture/sustain their emergence. One of these signs which is very central to Ibn Khaldūn’s theory of the rise and fall of dynasty is the prestige the prophets enjoyed among their people. That is what he refers to as *‘aṣabiyyah’* (group feeling) which enable him to convey the message and protect him from any harm from his adversaries. (Ibn Khaldun,1980, 1/188).

In his refute of ḥadith Mahdi, he invoked the principle and said that Mahdi ḥadith does not fit in. He says: “The truth one must know is that no religious or political propaganda can be successful, unless power and group feeling exist to support the religious and political aspirations and to defend them against those who reject them, until God's will with regard to them materializes. We have established this before, with natural arguments which we presented to the reader.”(Ibn Khaldun,1980, 195).

On the basis of *‘aṣabiyyah* concept, Ibn Khaldun predicts that “If it is correct that a Mahdi is to appear” it will not be from Fatimids, Talibids or Quraysh, as different groups believes, because their group feeling no longer exists. However, to him the

“only exception is a remnant of the Talibids–Hasanids, Husaynids, and Ja‘farites– in the Hijaz, in Mecca, al–Yanbu‘, and Medina. They are spread over these regions and dominate them. They are Bedouin groups. They are settled and rule in different places and hold divergent opinions.” So if a Mahdi is going to emerge then “he must be one of them, and God must unite them in the intention to follow him, until he gathers enough strength and group feeling to gain success for his cause and to move the people to support him.”(Ibn Khaldun,1980, 1/196)

Analysing these two cases the researcher believes that he does not tend to reject the *ahadith* of medicine found in authentic books of *hadith* rather he is against its applicability in his time and it is not conveyed to the humanity as divine law. But in the second case he tends to deny the hadith as he questioned possibility of events mentioned in history works. I think he dares to do it due to his understanding that most of the narrations recorded in this regard are inauthentic. It is different from that of west, who tend to deny authentic hadith due to the contradictions with HCM.

6. Conclusion

The west started study of *hadith* with their sceptic mind. The method they used was ‘historical critical method’ rather than the methods of hadith criticism developed by the Muslim scholars who firmly believe that the Muhammed is Prophet of Almighty Allah. Moreover, western criticism of hadith can be viewed as an act of domination in which one worldview asserts its power over the another by dictating the terms by which the knowledge and the truth are established. Therefore, western discussions about the reliability of the hadith tradition are not neutral. The authenticity question is part of a broader over the power dynamic between Religion and Modernity and Islam and the west. (Brown197–208).

The Muslim hadith tradition and the western academic study of Islamic origin have totally different methods even though to evaluate the authenticity of reports about the past. Muslim hadith scholars and jurists like Ibn Khaldun treated a report attributed to the Prophet *prima facie* as something he really said. A critical examination of a hadith was required only when a scholar had some compelling reason to doubt its authenticity. Furthermore, Muslim belief that the Prophet had been granted the knowledge of the unseen and intended his legacy to form the basis for the civilisation of Islam has meant that Muslims venerate the statements attributed to the Prophet before they doubt them. In short the scepticism towards hadiths was not their default setting. (*Ibid*).

Even though Ibn Khaldun has introduced the HCM, he never applied it as such to *hadith* because the miracles of the Prophet is beyond natural law and also most of the hadith are not about historical account but with binding nature. So his reading is reading of real believer in Allah who believes in the Prophet and their peculiarities. Moreover, he never denied the ahadith of medicine but he believe in it but disagree upon whether it could be used as such in present condition. However, the west questions the reliability of hadith itself. Regarding the *ahadith* related to Mahdi, the first preference he has given is to transmitter criticism and then only he goes to content criticism by using HCM.

Accusation of the west especially the Goldziher and his followers that the hadith scholars have ignored the content criticism is not true. We could find many examples of content criticism in classical text of hadith as Jonathan Brown noted in his article "How We Know Early Ḥadīth Critics Did Matn Criticism and Why It's So Hard to Find." Later Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah has elaborated on it. He explained the standards that could be used to identify false hadith with ease. He mentioned 13 standards for matan criticism that could be summarised as follows: First: Hadith that contradict the al-Qur'an Second: Hadith that contradict other authenticated hadith Third: Hadith that contradict the basics of the syarak Fourth: Hadith that have a severe, aggravated or grievous connotation Fifth: Hadith that contradict authenticated historical facts Sixth: Hadith that have illogical connotations Seventh: Hadith that contradict reality Eight: Hadith that does that reflect the words of the Prophet The first three standards can be combined and called the syarak standards because it is based on the al-Qur'an and hadith plus the deductions (*istinbat*) made from both these sources. The remaining five standards can be combined as logical and realistic standards because it is based on the elements of logic and reality. In fact, that does not mean their content criticism is similar to that of Goldziher. They were not sceptic, but good believers in Allah and they believed the close relation between Prophet and the God. They believed that prophethood and miracles could not be evaluated by law of civilisation. Rather it should be studied through its own methods developed by hadith scholars.

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Ibn Khaldun: Scientific Instruction as Prolonging the Polity*

İbn Haldun: Devlet'in Ömrünü Uzatmak Maksatlı İلمي Eğitim

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Abstract: At a time when various forces threaten the continued life of democracy, Ibn Khaldun's writings on education offer renewed importance to building longer lasting political regimes. In this paper, I argue that Ibn Khaldun views education as a crucial element for prolonging the polity and postponing the inevitable fall of dynasties. In the first part of the paper, I open with a discussion that situates his views within three broad debates in the literature: the first on Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima's* normative or descriptive nature; the second on its pessimistic or optimistic vision of human history; and the third on the role of statecraft. The second part of the paper identifies education as a crucial element for realizing the state's ultimate objective: securing the context necessary for achieving human perfection. It also shows how scientific instruction strengthens the political well-being of the state by educating future leaders as well as perfecting the intellectual and moral character of the polity. I conclude with a discussion of the ideal instructor and Ibn Khaldun's proposed teaching pedagogy. My paper has the potential to bring together Islamic and Western political thought and expands the political options available to Muslims within their own intellectual tradition. Ultimately, I contribute to the de-parochialization of western-dominated political theory by seriously contextualizing Ibn Khaldun within the Islamic tradition.

Keywords: Ibn Khaldun, Education, Scientific Instruction, Politics, Political Science

Öz: Demokrasilerin farklı amiller tarafından tehdit altına alınmış olduğu günümüzde, İbn Haldun'un eğitim hakkındaki görüşleri uzun dönemler boyunca sağlam kalacak siyasi nizamları tesis etmenin önemine dair mühim unsurları içermektedir. Bu makalede, İbn Haldun'un eğitimi devletlerin ömrünü uzatan ve hanedanların önlenemez çöküşünü erteleyen başlıca amillerden biri olarak gördüğünü savunmaktayız. Makalenin ilk bölümünde İbn Haldun'un görüşlerini literatürdeki üç hakim tartışmaya nispetle konumlandırıyoruz. Bu tartışmaların ilki, Mukaddime'nin normatif mi yoksa deskriptif (betimleyici) mi olduğu; ikincisi, eserdeki beşeriyet tarihinin seyrine dair tutumun iyimser mi yoksa kötümser mi olduğu; üçüncüsü ise müellife göre

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siyasetin rolünün ne olduğu soruları etrafında dönmektedir. Makalenin ikinci bölümünde, müellifin, eğitimi devletin en âlî maksadı olan içtimâ-i beşeriyyeyi kemale erdirmesi için gerekli olan ortamı sağlamaya giden en hayati yollardan birisi olarak kabul ettiğini tespit ediyoruz. Bu bölümde ayrıca, ilmi eğitimin devletin hayatiyetini hem devletin müstakbel idarecilerini yetiştirerek hem de devletin fikri ve ahlaki havasına kemal kuşandırarak nasıl desteklediğini izah ediyoruz. Makalemizin sonuç bölümünde ise İbn Haldun'un teklif ettiği eğitim pedagojisi ve ideal eğitmen modelini değerlendiriyoruz. Makalemizde İslam ve Batı siyaset düşüncesini cem ederek Müslümanlara kendi fikri geleneklerinde ne gibi siyasi teklifler bulunduğunu göstermeyi hedeflemekteyiz. En nihayetinde, İbn Haldun'un fikriyatını ait olduğu İslami gelenek içerisinde anlamlandırmaya çalışarak Batı-merkezci siyaset teorisi alanının ufkunun genişlemesine katkı sunmayı ümit ediyoruz.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İbn Haldun, Eğitim, İlmî Eğitim, Siyaset, Siyaset Bilimi

1. Introduction

Hailed as “one of the fathers, of modern cultural history and social science,” (Mahdi, 1968: 56), Ibn Khaldun is credited with writing “undoubtedly the greatest work of its kind that has ever been created by any mind in any time and place” (Toynbee, 1934: 372). His most famous work is the *Muqaddima* (“The Prolegomena” published in 1377 AD) in which he proposes a new science of culture as an auxiliary for historiography. In it, he demonstrates how the transition from primitive to advanced culture is the primary cause for the cyclical rise and fall of states. He famously writes that “as a rule, no dynasty lasts beyond the life (span) of three generations”¹ and adds: “If the time is up, (the end of the dynasty) cannot be postponed for a single hour, no more than it can be accelerated” (M3.12: 343). The new science of culture bleakly portrays the march of history as condemned to an inevitable cycle of human societies.

The dominant view in Western scholarship sees Ibn Khaldun as simply a fatalistic describer of the mechanistic workings of human societies who offers no legitimate hope of righting mankind and altering history.² However, recent political theorists have challenged this perspective and have argued that Ibn Khaldun, despite painting this unwelcoming picture of human reality, tries to show how humans might intervene to

¹ *Al-Muqaddima*, trans. Franz Rosenthal (3 vols., New York, 1958), Vol. 1, ch. 3, Section 12, p. 343.

Henceforth, references will cite chapter, section and page number (but not volume) as follows: M3.12: 343.

² See H.A.R. Gibb, “The Islamic Background of Ibn Khaldūn’s Political Theory”; British Cooper Busch, “Divine Intervention in the “Muqaddimah” of Ibn Khaldūn”; H.V. White “*Comparative Studies in Society and History*”

guide the process of their society's development.³ Nevertheless, few of these theorists have traced the link between the political and educational systems presented in the *Muqaddima*. To address this gap in the scholarship, I examine Ibn Khaldun's model of education as encompassing his perspective on the ultimate aims of statecraft (advancing the crafts and sciences). I argue that Ibn Khaldun view scientific instruction⁴ as a crucial element for prolonging the polity and postponing the inevitable fall of dynasties. In the process, I demonstrate the normative dimensions of the *Muqaddima*, provide support for an optimistic reading of his new science, and offer insights on the primacy of human agency in prolonging the dynasty's life.

In this paper, I open with a summary of Ibn Khaldun's new science. Afterwards, I discuss how the good state facilitates the quest for human perfection by providing the context necessary for the sciences and crafts (which includes scientific instruction) to develop. Then, I explain how instruction strengthens the political well-being of the state by educating future leaders. Finally, I explore the proper teaching pedagogy of the ideal instructor that is necessary for effective education. In the process, I demonstrate how instruction and politics both mutually support the growth of the other and thereby, illustrate the imperial importance of scientific education for a well-functioning polity.

The methodology employed is borrowed from Kathryn Leigh Jenco's work in the emerging field of comparative political theory (Jenco, 2007 and 2011). In consonance with her "methods-centered approach to cross-cultural engagement," the paper contributes to the de-parochialization of western-dominated political theory by contextualizing Ibn Khaldun seriously within his Islamic tradition.⁵ In this regard, the paper attempts to interpret Ibn Khaldun within his Arabic and Islamic epistemic context whenever possible by defining his concepts and explaining his problems according to

³ See Malik Mufti, "Jihad as Statecraft"; James Morris, "An Arab Machiavelli?: Rhetoric, Philosophy and Politics in Ibn Khaldun's Critique of Sufism"; Muhsin Mahdi, "*Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History: a study in the philosophic foundation of the science of culture*"; Lenn Evan Goodman, "Ibn Khaldun and Thucydides"

⁴ The term 'scientific' refers to all academic disciplines including the traditional sciences on the one hand and the rational sciences on the other.

⁵ For example, it would be extremely problematic to interpret Ibn Khaldun as one would Montesquieu without first situating his thought within the Islamic worldview, which is separated temporally and epistemically from its Western counterpart.

his tradition's independent epistemology.⁶ By using this approach, I provide a more faithful account of Ibn Khaldun's writings.

2. Ibn Khaldun's "New Science of Culture"

Ibn Khaldun is most recognized for his *Muqaddima* (Prolegomena) to his seven-volume *Kitab al-Ibar* (The Book of Instructive Lessons) in which he proposes a 'new science of culture' for effective historiography that is subsequently demonstrated in the *Kitab al-Ibar* (Butterworth, 2004: 445). The objective of Ibn Khaldun's new science of culture is to mitigate historiographical errors by providing "a sound yardstick with the help of which historians may find the path of truth and correctness where their reports are concerned" (*M*: 77). To authenticate historical material, the new science differentiates "right from wrong in historical information on the grounds of (inherent) possibility or absurdity" (*M*: 77). Its subject is human culture because for Ibn Khaldun, any study of history "is information about human social organization, which itself is identical with world culture" (*M*: 71). To determine the boundaries of the rationally possible, the new science distinguishes between three categories within the cultural domain: "the conditions that attach themselves to the essence of culture as required by its very nature; the things that are accidental (to culture) and cannot be counted on; and the things that cannot possibly attach themselves to it" (*M*: 77). The first category refers to the fundamental substance of an object that defines its identity. For example, the essence of a triangle is a shape with three sides since any increase in the number of sides changes its identity. The second category refers to essential properties and nonessential properties; the former are qualities that are necessarily associated with the object's essence and the latter are qualities that are *not* necessarily associated with its essence. An essential property of all triangles is that the sum of its angles is 180 degrees, whereas a nonessential property is its color or size, all of which can change without affecting its identity. Finally, the third refers to qualities that cannot be associated with the object because they do not rationally pertain. A triangle cannot be delicious or seductive because such qualities are not descriptively appropriate to its essence.

Ibn Khaldun identifies two 'first-principles' that form the essence of culture: first, humans are political by nature and second, different environments influence the

⁶ See as examples "Ibn Khaldun and Islamic Mysticism" by M. Syrier, See "Ibn Khaldun's understanding of Civilizations and the Dilemmas of Islam and the West Today" by Akhbar Ahmed. P. 25 See also "Theorizing from Within: Ibn Khaldun and His Political Culture" by Lawrence Rosen. P.596, Syed Hossein Nasr "Conditions for Meaningful Comparative Philosophy."

human body and character distinctively (Dale, 2006: 437). The reason for the first principle is that “human social organization is something necessary” for the most basic human subsistence because “the power of the individual human being is not sufficient for him to obtain (the food) he needs” (*M*, 1:1: 89). In addition, “each individual needs the help of his fellow beings for his defense” (*M*, 1:1: 90). Human society is therefore necessary. However, Ibn Khaldun is aware that different peoples possess different conceptions of social organization. To account for these variances, he introduces a second principle that different environments influence the human body and character differently. This is best illustrated in his famous dichotomy of the primitive Bedouins—which refers not just to nomadic desert dwellers, but also an intermediate group of herders and grazers who don’t live in towns or cities—on the one hand and civilized urbanites living in luxury on the other hand. The harsh environment of the former influences their social organization structure and thus, demonstrates how the form of social organization depends upon the natural environment. These two principles outline the basic underpinning of culture across societies that all historians should be aware of and serve as the foundation for the new science.

In addition to these two ‘first-principles,’ the essential properties of culture, as Stephen Frederick Dale writes, are “royal authority, government, occupations, crafts, and sciences” (Dale, 2006: 436). Of paramount importance to Ibn Khaldun is the state, which “constitutes the *form* of the world, and of culture, which, in turn, together with the subjects, cities, and all other things, constitute the *matter* of (state and royal regime)” (*M*, 4:17: 291). The state is needed to restrain aggressive tendencies and reconcile conflict that otherwise would lead to the dissolution of society. This is because “aggressiveness and injustice are in the animal nature of man” and will become manifest without a powerful restraining influence and neutral arbiter. Thus, “royal authority is a natural *quality* of man which is absolutely necessary to mankind” [italics added] (*M*, 1:1: 92).

3. Politics in Scientific Pursuit

The birth and subsequent growth of the sciences entails the establishment of a polity, for without it, humans “would be unable to have a complete existence” (*M* 6.3: 417). “When mankind has achieved social organization...and when civilization in the world has thus become a fact, people need someone to exercise a restraining influence and keep them apart” (*M*.1: 91). The state satisfies the most basic human needs for food, shelter, and defense by protecting the community against internal and external aggression. In addition to securing the necessities for basic human subsistence, the

state is also entrusted with a higher order: to contribute towards realizing society's normative vision for the "complete existence." The fundamental purpose of politics is to provide the context necessary for perfecting the intellect in its rational and spiritual dimensions. Its development leads to complete existence because "God distinguished man from all the other animals by an ability to think which He made the beginning of human perfection and the end of man's noble superiority over existing things" (*M* 6.1: 411).⁷ One way to measure intellectual development is society's contributions towards the sciences and crafts. This is because when intellectual development becomes a fact in society, it leads to the advancement of the sciences and crafts, "which result from that ability to think" (*M*. Introduction: 84 and *M*. 5.16: 347). Using the sciences as a measure, the state *should* facilitate the quest for human perfection by providing the context necessary for the sciences and crafts to develop (Mufti, 2009: 387; Mahdi, 1964: 173; Goodman, 1972: 250–70; Morris, 2008: 242).

Such a state must develop past primitive culture (*badawi*)—concerned only with securing the necessities for survival—to civilized culture (*hadhari*)—concerned with securing luxuries (Baali, 1988: 100).⁸ This entails advancing culture and achieving civilization because "the sciences are numerous only where civilization is large and sedentary culture highly developed" (*M*. 6.8: 434). Since civilized "culture in cities comes from the dynasties" and "is firmly rooted when the dynasty is continuous and firmly rooted," the advancement of culture requires a robust and stable state (*M*. 4.17: 286). This is because political stability provides the requisite time for the diversification of the crafts to become firmly rooted.

In addition to durability, advanced culture also entails economic prosperity (Mufti, 2009: 387). A surplus of wealth provides the possibility for leisure time and allows individuals to fully dedicate their time and labor to other ends beyond merely securing the necessities for existence. One of the central mechanisms by which economic surplus is secured and leisure time afforded is the development of simple crafts (*M*: 5.23: 357). During the early stages of society (primitive culture), the simple crafts are concerned only "with the necessary in food, clothing, and mode of dwelling, and to the other necessary conditions and customs" (*M* 2.2: 250) and "exist only in as much as they are needed, since all of them are means to an end and are not intended for their own sake" (*M*: 5.16: 348). As the culture advances, these simple crafts are refined as

⁷ The point is reiterated in *M* 1.Preface: 84; 6.16: 77; 6.22: 137

⁸ Also, see *M*, 4.17: "Sedentary culture is a condition that is the result of custom and goes beyond the necessary conditions of civilization."

“men learn to improve the methods of production” and eventually produce an economic surplus (Mahdi, 1957: 221). They thus eventually yield two key byproducts both of which are directly necessary for further advancing culture: (1) expendable wealth and (2) leisure time.

The availability of excess wealth and time brings about an increased demand for luxury. “When the city is organized and the (available) labor increases and pays for the necessities and is more than enough (for the inhabitants), the surplus is spent on luxuries” (M. 5.16: 347). The new demand for luxury spawns the “refinement and development” of several added crafts (which will be referred to as the ‘developed crafts’), each “perfected with every finesse...as luxury—customs and conditions demand” (M. 5.16: 348). But beyond the satisfaction of luxury—and indeed loftier—is the pursuit of knowledge and the development of the speculative intellect. Ibn Khaldun writes: “When civilized people have more labor available than they need for mere subsistence, such (surplus) labor is used for activities over and above making a living. These activities are man’s prerogative. They are the sciences.” Accordingly, scholarship requires a state that possesses a resource surplus and enjoys luxuries because the possibility of leisure ensures that scholars can fully devote their time towards research without worrying about making a living. It follows therefore that the refinement of the crafts, economic prosperity, and political stability lead to the advancement of culture and are therefore, central characteristics of the good state.

Among the developed crafts is scientific instruction.⁹ Like the other developed crafts, its existence, “depends on the greater or lesser extent of civilization in the cities and on the sedentary culture and luxury they enjoy” (M. 6.8: 434). In so far as craft development leads to the advancement of culture, it follows by logical extension that the state should secure the conditions necessary for the development of scientific instruction. This conclusion, however, presupposes that scientific instruction is equivalent to the other developed crafts, but this is not the case. According to Ibn Khaldun’s normative standard, scientific instruction is superior because it contributes to intellectual and scientific growth more than other crafts. Without instruction, man would remain perpetually confined to a natural state of ignorance (M. 6.6: 425)¹⁰ since

⁹ See M. 6.7: 426. “Scientific instruction is a craft.”

¹⁰ Ibn Khaldun mentions the task of perfecting the body first before working on the intellect. He quotes a passage from the Quran demonstrating the perfection of the body first, which of course includes the intellect (mind and heart) as a prerequisite for the perfection of existence (i.e. the internal state). Hence, the external precedes the internal. He writes, “He [God] let him acquire knowledge he did not yet possess, after he had been a clot of blood and a lump of flesh.”

he “is essentially ignorant, and becomes learned through acquiring (knowledge)” (M. 6.6: 424). According to Ibn Khaldun, the primary, if not only, method of advancing beyond the nescient tabula rasa is through education. Beyond childhood education, scientific instruction is also required for inculcating scientific habits and training scholars for scientific research. Ibn Khaldun emphasizes this point when he writes: “a tradition of famous teachers with regard to instruction in any science or craft, is acknowledged (to be necessary) by the people of every region and generation (race)” (M. 6.7: 426). The relationship between science and instruction is a relationship of dependency whereby the advancement of the sciences is dependent on instruction. Scientific instruction should therefore be accorded a higher status for its direct function in contributing towards scientific growth unlike any one craft.

From that preceding proposition, it follows that the state should be more concerned with cultivating instruction than the other developed crafts. The inevitable question that follows is: in what ways should the state be involved in education? Ibn Khaldun provides an answer when he discusses the reasons why scientific instruction persisted in Cairo “for many thousands of years.” He points to the actions of the “Turkish Emirs under the Turkish dynasty” and says:

“They built a great many colleges, hermitages, and monasteries, and endowed them with mortmain endowments that yielded income. They saw to it that their children would participate in these endowments, either as administrators or by having some other share in them. (This was their intention) in addition to the fact that they were inclined to do good deeds and hoped for (a heavenly) reward for their aspirations and actions. As a consequence, mortmain endowments became numerous, and the income and profit (from them) increased. Students and teachers increased in numbers, because a large number of stipends became available from the endowments” (M. 6.8: 435).

At face value, this passage describes the state of scientific instruction under the Turkish Emirs. Because of his normative preoccupation with intellectual and scientific advancement, Ibn Khaldun appreciates the Emirs’ financial support for scientific instruction. In funding the construction of scholarly institutions and providing endowments to support scholars working in them, the Emirs were doubly concerned with (1) the physical existence of schools as well as (2) the production of scholarship within those schools. Because of their support for scientific instruction, “people traveled to Egypt from the `Iraq and the Maghrib in quest of knowledge” because “the

sciences were very much in demand and greatly cultivated there.” Egypt thus became the center of learning under the Emirs’ reign.

This passage generally outlines the relationship between the statesmen and scientific instruction. The former should provide financial support for (1) the preservation of the sciences and (2) the establishment of institutions and scholars within them in order to advance the sciences.¹¹ In summary, as Muhsin Mahdi writes: the state must secure “the possibility of leisure, the continuity of a civilized tradition, the social demand for the services of the learned, and the appreciation and encouragement of the rulers of their profession as expressed in their generosity in establishing schools and founding endowments to maintain them” (Mahdi, 1957: 222). However, the state’s role in education should be limited to providing the context necessary for the development of the sciences (which primarily entails financial contributions). It should not influence the educational curriculum or how scientific development proceeds.

4. The Political Benefits of Instruction

The relationship between politics and instruction consists not only of the state securing the conditions necessary for a flourishing teaching tradition but also of instruction in strengthening and perfecting the state. Instruction contributes towards political well-being by educating future political leaders and thereby, perfecting the character of the state. Ibn Khaldun identifies three core components of political education for the statesman to rule successfully: (1) religion; (2) history; (3) and the practical sciences. The letter of Tahir b. al-Husayn addressed to his son ‘Abdallah b. Tahir comments upon all three components by discussing “all (important) political problems as handled by the religious law and all problems of power politics that he would have to know in his government and administration” and thus, will serve as the primary material of this section’s analysis.

The letter of Tahir b. al-Husayn, al-Ma’mun’s general, addressed to his son ‘Abdallah b. Tahir when he was appointed governor of al-Raqqah highlights three important components that should comprise political education. The first is instruction in the religious law; the second is an examination of history as well as current political leaders; and the third is knowledge of the different branches of rule and the proper

¹¹ It should be noted that Ibn Khaldun’s critique of the second righteous Caliph does not entail total disregard for his religious reign in the same way that his specific approval of al-Ma’mun’s attitude towards scientific preservation does not elicit wholesale support for the Mihnah (trial) where the Caliph violently persecuted any religious scholar resisting the Mu’tazili rationalist school of Islamic theology.

course of leading in each. Beginning with the statesman's religious education, Ibn Khaldun describes the letter as "advice concerning all religious and ethical matters" and discussing "all (important) political problems as handled by the religious law" (M. 3.50. 139). In fact, almost every paragraph in the letter exhorts 'Abdallah to develop an Islamic personality and follow the divine legislation. In one place, Tahir reminds 'Abdallah that "whatever you do, you should do for God and in God, and hope for a reward" (M. 3.50. 147) and in another place, he commands his son to "apply the punishments that God has ordained for criminals, according to their station and according to what they deserve" (M. 3.50. 144). Under the typical Muslim ruler in the Muslim empire, this heavy emphasis on exhorting political leaders to develop an Islamic personality and obey the divine law are to be expected. However, this letter was not written during the reign of a typical Muslim ruler; it was written during the Caliphate of al-Ma'mun, who is famed for criticizing literal obedience to the divine law and supporting the use of unaided reason for understanding theology as well as religious legislation governing social affairs. Despite his defiant stance towards observing the letter of the religious law, he nonetheless "ordered the letter to be sent to all officials in the various regions, so that they might use it as a model and act accordingly" (M. 3.50. 156). His actions here raise an important question: given the countless exhortations to follow the divine law and not unaided reason in Tahir's letter, why did al-Ma'mun approve its circulation? This question is further complicated since the family of Tahir also heavily supported al-Ma'mun's religious agenda of privileging reason as the final arbiter (Bosworth, 1969: 45-79). As Gutas states, they had always played an important role "in early 'Abbasid history both in furthering and executing the policies of those members of the 'Abbasid house" (Gutas, 1998: 98). Though no one can claim with certainty that Tahir believed in the Mu'tazili school (the rationalist trend in Islam that al-Ma'mun promoted), he nevertheless helped create "a cultural and ideological climate" favorable towards al-Ma'mun's religious policies (Gutas, 1998: 98). Given (1) the Caliph al-Ma'mun's personal approval of Tahir's letter and (2) Tahir's support for the Caliph's sanctioning of the Mu'tazili school as the official state doctrine and persecution of those who disagreed, the letter's emphasis on obedience to the religious law seems unusual. Why would supporters of the Mu'tazili school write and approve of a letter calling on statesmen to follow the religious law for social affairs when according to their theology, reason has the ultimate authority in the political sphere? The answer is straightforward; Tahir and al-Ma'mun saw a rational reason for obeying Islamic law in the political sphere. I argue that the letter's injunction to obey divine law can be explained using Ibn Khaldun's rational argument for why religion—especially Islam—is politically useful. To make this argument, I will first explore his discussion on religion and politics.

Ibn Khaldun argues that political authority requires group feeling (*asabiyyah*), which refers to tightly knit bonds of solidarity that exist between closely connected members of one group. It is a powerful force for political association such that “leadership exists only through superiority, and superiority only through group feeling” (*M.* 2:11: 269). Possessing the most political talent alone is not sufficient for obtaining leadership or power; rather, it requires enjoying a shared, ascriptive connection with the people, and this is only achieved through group feeling. Accordingly, the political leader must utilize this *asabiyyah* to gain legitimacy from his people as someone worthy of their loyalty and obedience.

In the Arab context, the strongest *asabiyyah* that led to political unity and military strength was their shared religious attachment towards Islam. Ibn Khaldun illustrates Islam’s power for political association by depicting its influence on the Arabs:

“When there is a prophet or saint among them, who calls upon them to fulfill the commands of God and rids them of blameworthy qualities and causes them to adopt praiseworthy ones, and who has them concentrate all their strength in order to make the truth prevail, they become fully united (as a social organization) and obtain superiority and royal authority” (M. 2.26. 305–06).

Here, Ibn Khaldun describes two ways that Islam promoted unity among the Arabs. On the one hand, its restraining influence mitigated those human qualities that are detrimental to the integrity of the community (like jealousy or envy). On the other hand, its communitarian message privileged the well-being of the believers above individual ambitions. Coupled with the collective religious obligation to spread the truth, Islam created an unbreakable group feeling (*asabiyya*) that transformed the Arabs from disparate tribes constantly engaged in petty squabbles to a strong, unified community. It was the primary impetus that led to rapid expansion, state development, and dynastic growth. In summary, Ibn Khaldun’s argument for Islam’s political utility is as follows: (1) political leaders must understand and identify with the group feeling to successfully rule; (2) the strongest *asabiyyah* in the Muslim world is their shared religious attachment towards Islam; (3) therefore, the political leader must understand and identify with Islam.

Ibn Khaldun’s rational reasoning for Islam’s political utility offers a guiding framework for understanding Tahir’s letter. Many of Tahir’s exhortations to ‘Abdallah stem from its potential to create a powerful *asabiyya*. He tells his son: “when people notice your (religious attitude) they will have respect for your rule and reverence for your

government. They will be friendly to you and trust in your justice.” In another place, he says: “have a good opinion of God, and your subjects will cause you no trouble.” Tahir connects the political leader’s zealotry for religion with receiving greater public support, but to have its effect, the people must notice his religiosity. Hence, the first quote is a conditional statement where receiving public respect depends upon visibly displaying his concern for religion. This is why Tahir not only commands the “unfailing fulfillment of the duty of the five daily prayers that God has imposed upon you” but also, “let people come to you to pray together with you, and perform (the prayers at the proper times) with all their rites.”¹² Tahir’s religious exhortations therefore suggest a concern with garnering political support through *asabiyyah* and thus, align with Ibn Khaldun’s views on the political utility of Islam.

The preceding discussion sheds light on why political leaders must be educated in religion. Since they must align their political agenda and methods of rule according to popular beliefs as much as possible, they must learn about *asabiyya*, its function in governance, and how to use it for political advancement. In the context of the Muslim empire, this means learning Islam, inculcating its virtues, and practicing what it mandates at the personal level. The statesman must also learn about the religious law and the customs of the people. His education should not only demonstrate how to develop an Islamic personality but in the context of politics, how to protect and mobilize the group feeling to achieve the political good. This is the first component of political education that Ibn Khaldun refers to.

The second component of political education found in Tahir’s letter is history. Tahir says: “Learn from the affairs of the world that you are able to observe personally, and from the persons in authority and in positions of leadership who lived before your time in past centuries” (M. 3:50. 154). Studying history offers lessons for statecraft because “the causes of action, and the reasons for the policies upon which action is based, remain constant or do not vary significantly from one age to another or from one people to another” (Mahdi, 1957: 70). By examining the actions of previous political leaders, the statesman learns lessons on how to administer the community’s affairs. In addition, the study of history provides rulers with political experience, a necessary characteristic of the good statesman. Tahir highlights the importance of political experience when he orders his son to “employ for them [the people] understanding,

¹² According to Ibn Khaldun, Islam is the best model for achieving political success because it fosters an unbreakable group feeling that incorporates communal and private worship. Zeal for communal worship represents an external indication of a person’s religiosity and thus, proves instrumental for demonstrating the political leader’s attachment towards Islam.

skilled, and *experienced* men, who have theoretical knowledge of, and are able to act with, political wisdom and moderation” [italics added]. The meaning of political experience here refers not only to personal experience but also experience derived from studying political history. Thus, teaching practical lessons about statecraft through studying history equips the statesman with political experience and thereby, makes history a central component of political education.

The political value of studying history is one of the fundamental reasons Ibn Khaldun wrote the *Muqaddima* and his *Kitāb al-‘ibar* (‘Book of Lessons’). In the title of his second work, Ibn Khaldun’s use of the word “Ibar” (translated as ‘Lessons’) captures how studying history is politically useful. According to Lane’s Lexicon, the definition of Ibar is to penetrate from the outside to the inside of a thing.¹³ In the context of history, it suggests delving beneath the surface of the particular events to extract timeless principles (Mahdi, 1957: 64–68). The imagery evoked here matches the distinction Ibn Khaldun makes in the *Muqaddima* between external and internal history. The first is “no more than information about political events, dynasties, and occurrences of the remote past, elegantly presented and spiced with proverbs” whereas the second is the “explanation of the causes and origins of existing things, and deep knowledge of the how and why of events” (M. Forward, 6). The latter describes the subject-matter of the *Muqaddima* and is also the only type that is politically useful because it provides enduring lessons for politicians. Moreover, in the larger title of *Kitāb al-‘ibar* (El-Rayes, 2008: 37),¹⁴ he qualifies the term ‘history’ to ‘dealing with political events,’ suggesting that his derived general laws have political value. Accordingly, the *Kitāb al-‘ibar* and therefore the *Muqaddima* become more than just general works of history but rather scholarship that instructs political statesmen. Ibn Khaldun’s writings are therefore examples of the types of historiographical scholarship future statesmen should study.

The third component of political education that Tahir’s letter to his son ‘Abdallah references is learning about the political, economic, and military systems. The future statesmen should understand how the state functions and what its division of offices are. Thus, Tahir orders his son to understand “the administration of [the people’s]

¹³ See Lane’s Lexicon (II), p. 1988–1991

¹⁴ See chapter 2 of “The Political Aspects of Ibn Khaldun’s Study of Culture and History” by El-Rayes for an extensive analysis of the full title *Kitāb al-‘ibar wa dīwān al-mubtada’ wa al-khabar fī ayyām al-‘arab wa al-‘ajam wa al-barbar wa man ‘āsarahum min dhawī al-sultān al-akbar* (*Book of Lessons and Archive of Early and Subsequent History, Dealing with the Political Events Concerning the Arabs, Non-Arabs, and Berbers, and the Supreme Rulers Who Were Contemporary with Them*)

affairs.” This includes “the land tax” because “it maintains the subjects,” setting “up houses for Muslims who are ill, to shelter them,” establishing “the office of judge” to apply the legal punishment, and supervising “the registers and contracts of the soldiers” (M. 3:50: 150–51). These subjects roughly correspond to political science, economics, community health, law, and military leadership respectively. They all are concerned with understanding the current context and directing man accordingly towards achieving his true end. In summary, political instructors are responsible for producing good statesmen that can lead and grow the polity. The three components of political education, namely religion, history, and the practical sciences, demonstrate how instruction benefits politics by strengthening the state and therefore, offer an additional reason for why the state should provide the context necessary for realizing a strong teaching tradition. By underscoring the mutual necessity of education for a well-functioning state, Ibn Khaldun also raises important questions about who the instructors should be. What qualities *should* they have and what methodologies must they employ? The next section will explore how Ibn Khaldun answers these questions.

5. The Four Principles of the Ideal Teaching Pedagogy

Ibn Khaldun provides a set of four principles necessary for effective instruction, all of which illustrate his pragmatic approach to education: (1) gradualism; (2) flexibility; (3) dialogue; and (4) leniency. Beginning with the first, gradualism is required because “teaching of scientific subjects to students is effective only when it proceeds gradually and little by little” (M. 6.36: 292). This is especially pertinent for habit cultivation, which needs consistent repetition over long durations of time. To illustrate this point, Ibn Khaldun divides scientific instruction into three distinct stages for effectively developing scholarly habits. In the first stage, the instructor summarily presents the principal problems of the subject. In the process, the student “acquires the habit of the science (he studies),” but it “will be an approximate and weak one. The most it can do is to enable the student to understand the discipline (he studies) and to know its problems” (M. 6.36: 292). In the second stage, the instructor explores some of its finer problems and nuances as well as “mentions to him the existing differences of opinion and the form these differences take” (M. 6.36: 292). Consequently, the student’s scientific habits are improved. Finally, in the third stage, the instructor details the entire subject leaving “nothing (that is) complicated, vague, or obscure, unexplained. He bares all the secrets (of the discipline) to him” (M. 6.36: 292). At the end, the student, “when he finishes with the discipline, has acquired the habit of it.”

The threefold repetition process is “the effective method of instruction” for habit cultivation (M. 6.36: 292). Without gradualism, instruction will overwhelm students having no prior familiarity with learning the sciences because it expects them to instantly understand challenging concepts. If immediately introduced to complex material, pupils will either spend more time learning the science than necessary or become overwhelmed and leave scientific learning on account of its difficulty. To avoid either outcome, the three-stage model gradually presents information in order to ultimately ensure that students intellectually progress and acquire scientific habits according to their capabilities.

The second principle, flexibility, requires instructors to alter their teaching pedagogy according to the students’ receptivity. This entails that the teacher “observes the student’s intellectual potential and his preparedness for understanding the material that will come his way until the end of the discipline under consideration (is reached)” (M. 6.36: 292). The word “observes” here suggests that instructors monitor their students to assess their intellectual potential. Ibn Khaldun mentions two conditions that they must consider. The first is ‘the classroom dynamic’ produced when students interact with one another. Teachers must understand how this interaction influences individual students and therefore, affects their learning. The second condition is each student’s individual receptivity to instruction. The teacher must intimately know each student, how they learn best, and their intellectual strengths as well as weaknesses. Taken together, both conditions comprehensively assess the individual and communal components of student learning. To understand both, the instructor should know about student psychology.

In assessing both conditions, instructors will find that each student possesses a different intellectual capability. Ibn Khaldun illustrates this point when he writes: “Some students can get through it [education] with less than that [three stages of instruction], depending on their natural dispositions and qualifications” (M. 6.36: 292–93). He identifies here “natural disposition” and acquired “qualifications” (the student’s upbringing and previous education) as influencing intellectual character. The former is rooted in nature and the latter in nurture; both significantly vary from student to student. Given this diversity, the instructors cannot impose a universal teaching methodology but instead must modulate their approach accordingly. This entails not only understanding each student’s capabilities but also the best way to maximize their intellectual potential. Moreover, unexpected situations may arise because of accidental

conditions. Given the diversity of subjects and the unpredictability of contingencies, instructors must therefore modulate their teaching pedagogy accordingly.¹⁵

The third principle, dialogue, requires original student articulation of the subject matter. Dialogical processes measure not only an understanding of the material but also the ability to critically evaluate information through discussion. On this point, Ibn Khaldun writes: “Some students spend most of their lives attending scholarly sessions. Still, one finds them silent. They do not talk and do not discuss matters. More than is necessary, they are concerned with memorizing. Thus, they do not obtain much of a habit in the practice of science and scientific instruction” (M. 6.7: 429). Without discussing what they learned, students will not fully comprehend the subject–material and therefore, will not firmly develop scientific habits. This is because “the easiest method of acquiring the scientific habit is through acquiring the ability to express oneself clearly in discussing and disputing scientific problems” (M. 6.7: 429). This quote highlights two forms of student articulation: first, discussion and second, disputation. The former ensures that students have a basic understanding of the material whereas the latter tests their critical thinking by forcing them to defend their views. Disputation thus comes after discussion and helps firmly solidify their knowledge.

Dialogue mutually benefits both educators and pupils because communication “either through instruction or through discussion” strengthen the ability to think (M. 6.33: 281). On the one hand, students must engage in discussion to cultivate their intellect. On the other hand, instruction also deepens the teachers’ comprehension because they present the material through various approaches. Moreover, classroom discussions can generate scientific insight beneficial to both teachers and students. Dialogical instruction thus represents a teaching model that maximizes instructional value for multiple actors.

Finally, the fourth principle, leniency, should be the norm because “severe punishment in the course of instruction does harm to the student, especially to little children, because it belongs among (the things that make for a) bad habit” (M. 6.39: 305).

¹⁵ It is important to emphasize that Ibn Khaldun’s conception of differences based on both nature and nurture entails that this diversity is respected and incorporated in teaching pedagogy. However, this is not suggestive of radical equality such that teachers restrict the development of more talented students to uplift others. Rather, should a student be considered more gifted than his peers, the teacher should cultivate that skill by giving him special attention. Equalization of opportunities thus does not entail sameness but rather that each student possesses the necessary means to effectively realize their intellectual potential.

Continuous harsh punishments destroy the children's fortitude and cause harmful characteristics to develop. Additionally, they sap their confidence in knowledge acquisition until they eventually leave the pursuit of science altogether. "Thus, they fall short of their potentialities and do not reach the limit of their humanity" (M. 6.39: 305). To perfect the student's potentiality, the teacher should tend towards leniency, preferring clemency over severity. Ibn Khaldun illustrates this point when he quotes Ar-Rashid saying: "Do not always be too lenient with him [the student], or he will get to like leisure and become used to it. As much as possible, correct him kindly and gently. If he does not want it that way, you must then use severity and harshness" (M. 6.39: 307). He urges the instructor here to begin with kindness in gently correcting the student; if it does not work, the instructor should subsequently resort to severity. Though punishment is the last option, it nonetheless is needed for stubborn students who refuse to accept the teacher's authority. Ar-Rashid's quote highlights an important balance that the instructors must maintain. On the one hand, they should not be overly lenient with obedient students because they "will get to like leisure." On the other hand, they should not be overly severe to obstinate students because they will develop bad habits. In both cases, Ibn Khaldun does not rule out using force in instruction but instead attempts to limit its use. He calls for a balance between severity and leniency, although tending more towards the latter in most cases.

Taken together, these four principles constitute Ibn Khaldun's pragmatic teaching framework. He does not put forth a universal teaching method but instead and like his approach to politics, expounds on the fundamental, unchanging principles that must guide every pedagogical model. Thus, his proposed outline is adaptable to diverse situations based on differences among students, local customs, as well as accidental conditions that may arise. It places considerable responsibility on instructors to find creative ways to maximize their students' intellectual potential and thus, privileges their human agency. Because conditions change constantly and unpredictably, such adaptation cannot be reduced to a universal formula. The imprecision of instruction requires the art of maintaining balances to sustain a flourishing teaching tradition. Ibn Khaldun's pragmatic approach to pedagogy ensures the continuity of effective education and therefore, prolongs scientific instruction's positive influence on political well-being.

6. Conclusion

At a time when various forces threaten the continued life of democracy, Ibn Khaldun's writings on education offer renewed importance to building longer lasting political

regimes. From the outset, his views on history seem to be a fatalistic description of the mechanistic workings of human societies. This cycle of the rise and fall of civilizations begins with the rapid growth of the first generation, which “retains the desert qualities, desert toughness, and desert savagery;” reaches its peak in the second generation, which “changes from the desert attitude to sedentary culture, from privation to luxury and plenty;” and rapidly declines in the third generation, which “has (completely) forgotten the period of desert life and toughness, as if it had never existed” and “becomes dependent on the dynasty and are like women and children who need to be defended (by someone else)” (M. 3.12: 344–45). Another ‘desert’ group seizes power after the third generation and destroys the dynasty.

Given this depiction of the almost mechanical cycle of states and dynasties, many Western scholars describe Ibn Khaldun as a pessimistic thinker who envisions no possibility for reform. However, I demonstrate in this paper that Ibn Khaldun, despite negatively portraying the course of history, tries to show how humans might intervene to guide the process of their society’s development. I focused on Ibn Khaldun’s conception of scientific instruction and argued that he views education as a crucial element for prolonging the polity and postponing the inevitable fall of dynasties. My analysis shows how he foresees the possibility for positive change through education and therefore, is cautiously optimistic in the potential to stave off civilizational degeneration and prolong the dynasty’s life.

In this paper, I demonstrated how instruction and politics both mutually support the growth of the other. On the one hand, the good state must facilitate the quest for human perfection by providing the context necessary for the sciences and crafts (which includes scientific instruction) to develop. This is because the fundamental purpose of politics is to contribute towards realizing society’s normative vision for the “complete existence,” namely, the development and perfection of the intellect. Since scientific instruction contributes to intellectual and scientific growth more than any other craft, the state *should* ensure the existence of a teaching tradition. On the other hand, I explained how instruction strengthens the political well-being of the state by educating future leaders. Additionally, I demonstrated how Ibn Khaldun’s science of culture provides a practical, *educational* handbook for political statesmen on what to do and not do in the future and therefore is an attempt to interfere in postponing the ‘inevitable’ decline of civilization.

Finally, my discussion on Ibn Khaldun’s teaching pedagogy demonstrates his realistic approach to instruction. His pedagogy places considerable responsibility on

instructors to maximize their students' intellectual potentials. By doing so, Ibn Khaldun attempts to ensure not only the permanency of effective education despite changing political conditions but also its continued positive influence on the state's political well-being. Thus, his realistic approach to education illustrates his general optimism in reforming society and thereby, in prolonging the dynasty's duration. A shrewd diplomat, expansive scholar, and pragmatic political theorist, Ibn Khaldun offers a realist picture of scientific instruction and through it, seeks to build longer lasting political regimes.

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İbn Haldun'a Göre Akıl ve Bilginin Oluşumu*

By Ibn Khaldun, the Formation of Knowledge and Intellect

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Öz: XIV. yüzyılda yaşamış bir İslâm filozofu olan İbn Haldun (1332-1406), Tanrı'nın, akılı sayesinde insanı, âlemdeki diğer varlıklardan üstün kıldığını düşünmektedir. Ona göre akıl, insanı insanlığın daha üst seviyelerine ulaştıran bir yetenektir. Aklın işleyişi konusunda kendisinden önceki İslâm filozoflarının görüşlerinden de etkilenmiş olan İbn Haldun, bilgi üretme sürecinde akılı, belli bir sıra düzeni içerisinde temyizî akıl, tecrübî ve nazarî akıl şeklinde isimlendirerek onlardan farklı ve oldukça özgün bir yaklaşım sergilemiştir. İbn Haldun insanın doğuştan bilgi getirmediğini ve edindiği bilgileri sonradan, çeşitli idrak vasıtaları ile elde ettiğini ifade etmektedir. Ona göre öğrenme yeteneği ile dünyaya gelen insan, çevreyle etkileşim içine girerek bir şeyler öğrenmeye başlar. Bu düşüncesiyle İbn Haldun, Fârâbî ve İbn Sînâ gibi İslâm filozoflarına ve Kur'ân-ı Kerim'deki bazı ayetlere uygun düşen bir görüş ortaya koymaktadır. Bilgi edinme ve öğrenme sürecinde duyu ve akıl verilerini bilgi kaynağı olarak gören İbn Haldun, duyular üstü ruhanî varlıkların (küllîler) hakikatlerinin yalnızca insanın bilme yetileri ile kavranabileceğini kabul etmez. Ona göre faal akıl ile ittisal ederek bu dünyada ondan hakikî bilginin elde edilmesi mümkün değildir. Aklın ötesine geçemeyeceği bir sınırı vardır ve insan felsefî idrakler aracılığı ile gerçek bilgiye ulaşamaz.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İbn Haldun, Akıl, Bilgi, İdrak

Abstract: Islamic philosopher Ibn Khaldun who lived in XIV. century thinks that God made man who through reason superior to other beings to universe. According to him, reason is the ability to bring man to the higher level of humanity. Ibn Khaldun, who was also influenced by the views of his previous Islamic philosophers on the functioning of the mind has shown them a different and quite unique approach calling the intelligent mind, the experiential and the intellectual mind in the process of producing information. Ibn Khaldûn states that people don't bring in information from nature and that they obtain information later on by means of through understanding. According to him, the person who comes to the world with his / her learning ability starts to learn something by interacting with the environment. With this thought, Ibn Khaldun presents, in some views in accordance with some of the verses in the Qur'an and Islamic philosophers such as al-Farabi and Avicenna. Ibn Khaldun, who sees sensory and mental data

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reasoning as information sources in the process of learning and getting knowledge doesn't accept that the truths of supernatural spiritual beings can only be comprehended by the ability of people to know. According to him, it is not possible to obtain true knowledge in this world by manipulating with Agent Intellect. There is a limit beyond rational can not pass beyond and human knowledge can not reach true knowledge through philosophical perceptions.

Keywords: *Ibn Khaldun, Mind, Information, Perception.*

1. Giriş

İslâm felsefesinin en önemli kavramlarından biri olan akıl, filozoflar tarafından çeşitli şekillerde tanımlanmış ve bilgiye ulaşma yollarından biri olarak kabul edilmiştir. Felsefî anlamda insana özgü bir düşünme biçimi olan akıl, İlk İslâm filozofu Kindî'de "varlığın hakikatini kavrayan basit bir cevher" (Kindî, 2006: 22) olarak tanımlanır. Kindî (ö. 866)'ye göre akıl, insan nefsinin temel bir işlevi olarak, duyu organları tarafından algılanamayan şeyleri (tümelleri) algılayabilen bir güçtür. Fârâbî (ö. 950)'de ise nefs-i nâtika olarak isimlendirilen akıl, güzel ve çirkin, yararlı ve zararlı olan şeylerin bilinmesini sağlayan özel bir güç olarak kabul edilmiştir. Fârâbî'ye göre insanın insan olmasını sağlayan ve ondaki en değerli özellik olan akıl, ilim ve sanatların elde edilebildiği bir melekedir. (Fârâbî, 2001). Fârâbî'den sonra İbn Sînâ (ö.1037) da tıpkı onun gibi aklın, insanın hakikati kavrayabilen yönü olduğunu düşünmüş ve deneyden yola çıkarak akıl ve sezgi ile devam eden bir bilgi şeması ortaya koymuştur. (İbn Sînâ,)

Meşşâî gelenek içinde yerleşip geliştirilen bir bilgi teorisini benimseyen İbn Haldun ise kendinden önceki Meşşâî filozoflara benzer şekilde akli, insanı diğer canlılardan farklı kılan ve onu insanlığın en üst seviyesine ulaştıran bir yetenek olarak görmektedir. Ancak İbn Haldun'a göre insanı diğer varlıklar arasında ayrıcalıklı kılan aklın bir takım sınırları vardır. Filozof aklın bu sınırlarını belirtmek amacıyla onu bir teraziye benzeter. İbn Haldun'a göre akıl, altın tartmak amacıyla yapılan fakat bazen suistimâl edilerek dağları tartmada kullanılan terazi gibidir. Aslında akıl doğru bir terazidir hükümleri de yakîndir ve asla hatalı değildir. Ancak bu terazi Tanrı'nın birliği, ahiret, nübüvvet gerçeği, ilahî sıfatların mahiyetleri gibi kendi seviyesinin üstünde kalan problemleri tartmada kullanılmamalıdır. Çünkü bu, muhal olanı istemek demektir. (İbn Haldun, Mukaddime, C. III, s. Nasr-Leaman, 2007: 421).

İbn Haldun'dan önce Gazzâlî de onun düşüncesine benzer bir şekilde akli kendi sınırları içinde kullanıldığı zaman, adil bir terazi olarak görmüştür. Nitekim aklın

insanın herhangi bir gücünden daha üstün bir güç olduğunu ifade eden Gazzalî aklın, duyuyla birlikte insanın bilgiyi elde etme güçlerinden biri olarak düşünür. Ancak ona göre hakîkî bilgiye ulaşmada duyu ve akıl yetileri yetersiz kalmaktadır. Özellikle akıl, makûlatı elde etme konusunda bir bilgi kaynağı olmasına rağmen metafizik sahada başarısızdır. Dolayısıyla o, dinin yol göstermesine tüm bilgilerin ve doğruların kaynağı olan Tanrı ile ittisal ederek bilgileri tahkik etmeye ihtiyaç duyar. Duyu bilgilerinin doğruluğunu tartan bir teraziye benzeyen akıl, fizikî âlemde güven duyabileceğimiz bir bilgi kaynağı olmasına rağmen inanç konularında ölçü olarak kabul edilemez ve onun sunduğu bilgilere güven duyulmaz. Buradan Gazzalî'nin İbn Haldun gibi akılı sınırlandırdığı sonucunu çıkarabiliriz. Gazzalî aklın dinî bilgileri elde etmede konusunda Tanrı'nın yardımına ihtiyaç duyan bir güç olduğunu düşünmektedir. Aynı şekilde İbn Haldun'a göre de gayb âlemine ve dolayısıyla imana ilişkin bilgiler insanın akıl gücünün sınırlarını aşmaktadır. (Taylan, 2013: 82).

İbn Haldun, Fârâbî ve İbn Sînâ gibi Meşşâî filozofların aklın sınırları konusundaki görüşlerine karşı çıkmaktadır. Ona göre insan, duyuyla vasıtasıyla elde ettiği bilgiler üzerinde aklî yetileri ile tasarrufta bulunarak bir takım bilgilere ulaşır. İnsanın "ilk akledilirler" denilen bu bilgileri elde etmesi mümkün iken tümel ve soyut kavramlar olan ikinci akledilirlere ulaşması imkânsızdır. (İbn Haldun, Mukaddime: 1247-1250/ C. II).

İbn Haldun'a göre Tanrı, aklının düzenli işleyişi sayesinde düzenli fiiller meydana getiren insanı, âlemdeki diğer varlıklardan üstün kılmıştır. Kabiliyetlerini içinde yaşadığı toplumsal şartlar çerçevesinde kazanan insan, melekler ve hayvanlar âleminin ortasında bir yerdedir ve onlarla ortak bazı özelliklere sahiptir. İnsanı bu iki âlemden ayıran en önemli özellik onda irade, kasıt ve fikir gücünün olmasıdır. Hayvanlar âleminden fikir gücüyle, melekler âleminden de irade ve kasıt kuvvetiyle ayrılan insanda bu kuvvetler, ona hislerin oluşturduğu geçici izlenimlerin sınırları ötesine geçerek kalıcı olanı tespit etme imkânı sağlar. (Görgün, 1999: 546).

İnsanın diğer canlılarda mevcut olmayan iki önemli özelliği bir akla ve bir ele sahip olmasıdır. İbn Haldun'a göre insanın düşünme kabiliyeti yani akıl gücü ve bunun yanında elinin olması aynı zamanda ilimlerin ve sanatların ortaya çıkmasını sağlamıştır. Fikir gücüyle üstün fakat fizikî güç bakımından zayıf olan insan, düşünce kabiliyeti ile birleşen el sayesinde kendini en güçlü vahşi hayvanlardan dahi koruyabilir ve diğer canlılara üstün gelebilir. (Kozak, 1999: 96).

İbn Haldun, aklın kullanımı konusunda insanlar arasında da fark olduğunu belirtir. Tıpkı satranç oyununda bazılarının iki üç hamleyi önceden düşünüp daha iyi olabilmeleri gibi bazı insanlar da düşüncelerinin daha düzenli işlemesi sayesinde insanlığın daha üst seviyesine çıkabilirler. (İbn Haldun, 1993: 370; trc. Uludağ, C. II, s. 768). İbn Haldun bu görüşüyle aklın bütün insanlarda eşit ölçüde bulunduğunu düşünen filozoflardan ayrılmaktadır. O bu konuda Gazzalî'nin düşüncelerine yakın bir yaklaşım sergilemiştir. Çünkü Gazzalî de akıl gücünden yararlanma bakımından insanların birbirleriyle eşit olmadığını düşünmektedir. Eserlerinde aklın birkaç farklı anlamını veren Gazzalî'ye göre ilk doğuşu sırasında az parlak olan güneşin giderek daha parlak hale gelmesi gibi akıl gücü de ergenlik çağında oluşmaya başlayarak insan büyüdükçe gelişen bir özelliğe sahiptir. Akıl, ergenlik döneminden itibaren insanın nefesine yansıyan bir nurdur ve 40 yıl boyunca insan kemale erene kadar artmaya devam eder. Bu nedenle insanlar arasında aklın kullanımı ve gelişmesi konusunda fark meydana gelir. (Taylan, 2013: 79). Ayrıca Gazzalî, insanların tecrübe ile elde ettikleri ilim anlamında da akıl bakımından farklı olduklarını ifade etmiştir. Yalnızca bir kişinin aynı anda iki yerde birden olamayacağı veya iki sayısının bir sayısından büyük olması gibi zorunlu bilgilere sahip bir akıl seviyesi hariç tüm insanlar akıl gücünden faydalanma konusunda birbirinden farklıdır. (Gazzalî, İhyau'l Ulumu'd-Din, C. I.).

2. Fiille İlgili Olaylar Âleminin Ancak Düşünce İle Tamamlanması

Varlıklar âleminin iki varlık türünden oluştuğunu belirten İbn Haldun'a göre bu varlıklardan birincisi unsurlar, eserleri ve bunlardan oluşan üç sınıf varlık maden, bitki, hayvan gibi saf zatlar, diğeri de bu zatların meydana getirdiği fiillerdir. Bu fiiller, Tanrı'nın o canlılara vermiş olduğu güçle oluşur. Bu fiillerden bazıları, insanın yaptığı fiiller gibi düzenli, bazıları da hayvanların fiilleri gibi düzensizdir. Hayvanların algılaması ve kavrayışı yalnızca duyularla olduğu için onların fiillerinde düzen yoktur. İnsan ise akli sayesinde olaylardaki sebepler zincirini düzenli bir şekilde kavrayabilir. Bu da insanın fiillerinin düzenli olmasını sağlar. İnsanda akıl, ilk önce olaylar arasındaki düzeni kavrar, daha sonra bir şey gerçekleştirmek istediğinde önce onun sebebini düşünür. Çünkü sebep (illet) önce, eser (malul) sonra gelir. Bazen sebep ya da o şeyin gerçekleşmesi için gereken şart, birden fazla olabilir bu sefer akıl bu sebepleri teker teker kavrayarak en üst sebebe ulaşır. Olayı meydana getirmeye ise ulaştığı en son sebepten başlar. Örneğin; insan bir bina yapmak istese, düşüncesi ilk önce duvarlara, sonra çatıya en son temele yönelir. Daha sonra insan binayı yapmaya giriştiğinde işe en son düşündüğü şey olan temelden başlar. Bu yüzden "*son*

düşünülen şey ilk yapılan iş, son yapılan iş ilk düşünülen şeydir denilmektedir. (İbn Haldun, 1993: 370; trc. Uludağ, C. II, s. 767; a.mlf, trc. Kendir, C. II, s. 649. İbn Haldun burada, eylem ile düşünce arasındaki güçlü bir ilişkiden bahsetmektedir. İbn Haldun, aklın dinî sorumluluğun ön şartı olduğunu belirtir. Ona göre akıl ruhun bir özelliğidir ve akıl demek insanda olması şart olan bilgiler demektir. İnsan, akıl sayesinde dünya işlerini ve ailesini idare edebilir. Tanrı işlerini yürütebilen ve düşünen akıl sahibi insanlardan bir takım sorumluluklar vermiştir. O, eğer aklını kaybederse tabiatına uygun olan mertebenin altına düşer ve bir hiç olur. Dolayısıyla onu ahiretle ilgili hükümlerle mükellef kılmak yanlış olur. (İbn Haldun, 1998: 185–187).

3. İnsan Düşüncesi

İbn Haldun, bir an bile olsa insanın düşünmeden duramayacağını belirterek düşünme yeteneğini ilim ve sanatların kaynağı olarak görmüştür.

İbn Haldun'a göre Tanrı, insanı biri cismanî diğeri ise ruhanî olan iki ayrı varlık türünden yaratmıştır. İbn Haldun insanın ruhanî parçasının dinî literatürde bazen akıl bazen ruh bazen de nefis olarak isimlendirildiğini belirtir. İbn Haldun, bu kavramların insanın ruhanî tarafına işaret etmesine rağmen her birinin delalet ettiği başka manaların da mevcut olduğu görüşündedir. O, bu konuda geniş bilgi için kendisinden önce onunla aynı ifadeleri kullanan Gazzâlî'nin eserine başvurulmasını tavsiye eder. (İbn Haldun, 1998: 83–84).

İbn Haldun'a göre insanın ruhanî parçası olan nefis aynı anda idrakin, fikrin ve fiilin kaynağıdır. İnsan, birtakım idrak vasıtalarıyla eşyayı tanır. İdrak, kişinin kendi dışındaki şeylere karşı zihninde oluşan şuurdur. Bu özellik, hayvanlar ve insanlarda bulunabilen bir özelliktir. İdrak iki türdür. Hayvanlar ve insanlar işitme, görme, koklama ve tatma gibi duyularla eşyayı tanırlar. Bu dış idraktır. Fakat insanda bunun yanında beş duyu ile tanıyamadığı şeyleri, akıl (fikir, düşünce) ile tanıma gücü vardır ki, bu da iç idraktır. İç idrakin müşterek his, muhayyile, vahime, hafıza ve mütefekkiye gibi kuvvetleri vardır. Müşterek his, dış duyuları içerir ve algılanan şeyleri olduğu gibi idrak eder. Muhayyile, duyulur bir nesneyi dış maddesinden soyutlayarak olduğu gibi algılayan bir kuvvettir. Vahime, soyutlara ilişkin anlamları algılayan bir kuvvettir. Hafıza, tüm idrakleri kendisinde saklayan bir kuvvettir. Mütefekkiye (fikir ve düşünebilme kabiliyeti) sayesinde ise insan, eşyanın sûretleri üzerinde analiz ve sentez yoluyla birtakım işlemlerde bulunur. Malûm idraklerden örnekler çıkarır. (İbn Haldun, 1993: 368–370; trc. Uludağ, C. II, s. 766; Satî el Husrî, :

278–280). Dolayısıyla İbn Haldun, hayvanların yalnızca duyular ve içgüdüyle hareket ettiğini, insanlarda ise buna ek olarak fikir ve irade gücünün olduğunu düşünmektedir.

İbn Haldun'a göre, Tanrı'nın insan vücuduna sunduğu bir takım özel kuvvetler vardır. Bu kuvvetlerin her biri yaratılışının ve kendi tabiatının gerektirdiği şeyi elde etmek ister. Buna göre aklın tabiatında fitratının gereği olan ilim ve marifeti elde etme isteği mevcuttur. Akıl bu isteğine ulaşmak için düşünceyi harekete geçirir. Akıl Tanrı'dan daha yüce ve daha mükemmel bir varlık olmadığını düşünerek en yüce kemal olan yaratıcını bilme isteği duyar. O, hiçbir gevşeklik ve usanç hissetmeden birbiri ardınca gelen fikir ve tasavvurlarla Tanrı katındaki şeylere vakıf olmaya çalışır. Onun bu yöndeki hareketleri birbirini kuvvetlendirir. (İbn Haldun, 1998: 68–69).

İbn Haldun'un insanda bilginin meydana gelişi ve akıllar konusundaki bu düşünceleri, büyük Türk filozofu Fârâbî'nin düşünceleriyle tıpatıp örtüşmektedir. Çünkü İbn Haldun, buraya kadar anlattığımız görüşlerinde Aristoteles (ö. M.Ö.384–322)'in nefis hakkındaki düşüncelerinin bir uzantısı olan ve İslâm filozoflarının da benimsediği düşüncelerini devam ettirmiştir. Bu konuda Fârâbî'den örnek verecek olursak ona göre de doğuştan boş, fakat bilgi kaydetmeye uygun nitelikte olan akıl, duyular sayesinde ilk yazılımları ve bilgi kayıtlarını kaydeder. Fârâbî, dış duyuların yaptığı bu işleme duyusal algı demiştir. Dış duyular, nesnenin sûretini maddî bağlantıları içerisinde algılarlar ve o şeyin yok olmasından sonra onu tanımlayamazlar. İşte bu noktada iç duyular devreye girer. Bilgi edinme sürecinde gelen verilerin muhafaza edilip değerlendirilmesi bakımından, iç duyuların önemli bir yeri vardır. İşlevlerine göre dört bölüme ayrılan iç duyulardan ilki, ortak duyu'dur. Bilginin oluşum sürecinde, dış duyular ile iç duyular arasında bir nevi çift yönlü köprü görevini üstlenen ortak duyu, bir yönüyle de duyulardan gelen ham bilgi verilerini algılanır hâle getirirken, diğer yönüyle dış duyulara duyulmama gücünü aktarır. Diğer bir güç ise fizikî hiçbir uyarının yardımı olmadan bilgiyi zihinde yeniden canlandırmayı sağlayan mütehayyile gücüdür. Mütehayyilenin en önemli icraatı da faal akılla iletişim kurabilmektir. Bir tür anlama ve bilme gücü olan vehim ise Fârâbî'nin daha çok hayvanlarda aktif ve fonksiyonel olarak kabul ettiği güçtür. Vehim gücü, mütehayyiledeki algıları çerçevesinde iyiyi ve kötüyü yararlı ve zararlıyı bilebilir. Hafıza gücünü "*vehmin idrak ettiği şeylerin toplandığı yer*" olarak tanımlayan Fârâbî'ye göre bu güç, bir nevi bilgilerin saklandığı bir depodur. Hafıza gücünün bir görevi de sakladığı bu bilgileri düşünme gücü olan akıl istediğinde ona sunmasıdır. Bilgi edinme sürecinde duyulardan sonra devreye akıllar girer. Akıl, duyulardan elde

edilen bilgi verilerini işleme tabi tutan en yetkin güçtür. (Fârâbî, Aydın, 2003: 87–105).

İbn Haldun'a göre, insan düşüncesinin çeşitli dereceleri vardır ki bunların her biri aklın özel bir türüne işaret eder. İlk derecesi temyizi akıl'dır ki bu akıl doğal olarak düzenlenen durumları kavrar. İnsan bu akıl sayesinde geçimini sağlayabilir, zararlı olan şeylerden sakınıp faydalı şeyleri bulabilir. İkinci derecesi de tecrübî akıldır. Bu da insanın toplum içinde diğer insanlarla iyi ilişkiler kurmasını sağlayan, toplumsal kuralları düzenleyen akıldır. Üçüncü derece nazari akıl olup, insanın belli bir konu hakkında bilgi ve düşüncelerini oluşturmasını sağlayan akıldır. Bu aklın ulaşmak istediği son amaç, sebepleri ve tüm özellikleriyle varlığı olduğu gibi kavramaktır. Bu şekilde akıl kendi gerçeği konusunda olgunlaşır. (İbn Haldun, 1993: 374; trc. Uludağ, C. II, s. 766–767; Satî el Husrî, : 281).

İbn Haldun'dan önceki birçok filozof akıl konusunda birbirinden farklı ayırımlar yapmıştır. Örneğin, ilkçağ filozoflarından Aristoteles, akli etkin akıl ve edilgin akıl şeklinde iki ana gruba ayırmıştır. İlk İslâm filozofu el Kindî, akli, faal akıl, bilkuve akıl, bilfiil akıl, müstefad (kazanılmış) akıl ve beyanî (veya zahir) akıl şeklinde dört kısımda değerlendirmiştir. (Şulul, 2003: 126–128). Fârâbî, akli, amelî ve nazarî olmak üzere ikiye ayırmıştır. İbn Sînâ ise ilk İslâm filozofu Kindî'ye benzer bir ayırım yaparak akli, bilkuve, bilfiil, müstefad ve faal akıl şeklinde ayırmıştır. (Kuşpınar, 2001: 105). İbn Rüşd (ö.1198), Fârâbî'ye benzer şekilde akli, amelî ve nazarî akıl olmak üzere iki mertebede değerlendirmiştir. (Sarioğlu, 2003: 92, 93).

İbn Haldun, bu konuda kendisinden önceki Aristoteles yorumcularından etkilenmişse de bilgi üretme sürecinde akli, belli bir sıra düzeni içerisinde temyizi akıl, tecrübî ve nazari akıl şeklinde isimlendirerek oldukça özgün bir yaklaşım sergilemiştir.

4. Tecrübî Akıl ve Bu Aklın Meydana Gelişi

İbn Haldun, insanı, bireysel bir varlık olmasının yanında aynı zamanda toplumsal yönü de olan bir varlık olarak görür. Ona göre toplum içinde yaşama ihtiyacı, insanın doğuştan gelen fitrî bir özelliğidir. İnsan için “*O medenî bir varlıktır.*” denmektedir. Burada *medenî* kelimesinden kastedilen şey, insanın şehirli oluşu değil, onun toplum içinde yaşayan bir varlık olmasıdır. İbn Haldun, insan için toplum hayatının zorunlu olduğunu belirtmiştir. Ona göre gerçekten de insan, ihtiyaçlarını karşılayabilmek için toplum içinde yaşamaya ve diğer canlılarla yardımlaşmaya ihtiyaç duyar. Ancak insan,

diğer insanlarla ilişkilerini sürdürürken arada bir bazı hususlarda anlaşmazlıklar çıkabilir ve bu durum kavgalara ve düşmanlıklara sebep olabilir. İnsan, kendisine aklının kazandırdığı düzenli fiiller sayesinde bu anlaşmazlıkları hayvanlardan farklı olarak çeşitli kurallarla çözüme yoluna gidebilir. O, yaşamında edindiği tecrübelerle tekrar yanlışa düşmekten sakınır ve hayatını öğrendiği doğrulara göre yönlendirir. İşte insan, bu tür özellikleriyle hayvanlardan farklı bir hâle gelir. Her insan kapasitesi kadar insanlar arası ilişkilerinde elde ettiği tecrübelerle hayata dair bir şeyler öğrenir, iyi ve kötü hakkında bilgi edinir ve bu durum onda bir meleke (alışkanlık) hâline gelir. Ancak Tanrı, bazı insanlara bu bilgiyi daha kısa sürede öğrenmesini sağlayacak şekilde kolaylık sağlar. İnsan, eğer büyüklerinin sözlerini dinler ve onların tecrübelerinden faydalanırsa bilgiyi daha çabuk elde eder, bilgiyi elde etme konusunda çok uzun zaman harcamak ve birçok sıkıntıya katlanmak zorunda kalmaz, kolayca öğrenir. Bu konuda şöyle söylenir: “*Babasının terbiye edemediği kimseyi zaman terbiye eder.*” Bu sözle insanın büyüklerinin söz ve tavsiyelerine uymadığı zaman hayata dair her şeyi kendi tecrübeleriyle uzun bir sürede ve yaşayacağı birçok zahmetten sonra öğrenebileceği anlatılmaktadır. İnsanın, düzenli fiillerinin ortaya çıkmasını sağlayan temyizi akıl’dan sonra gelen ve tecrübelerle kazanılan tecrübî akıl budur. En son da nazarî akıl gelir. (İbn Haldun, 1993: 371; trc. Uludağ, C. II, s. 769–770).

İbn Haldun’a göre ilimler sosyal şartlarda gelişen tecrübî aklın mahsulleridir. Tabiatında bilgisiz olan insan, kazanma suretiyle bilgilidir. Dolayısıyla İbn Haldun’a göre bilgi a posterioridir, sonradan elde edilir. Bu konuda İbn Haldun’un, realizme daha yakın olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Çünkü realizme göre insan zihni boş bir levha gibidir, doğuştan hiçbir bilgisi yoktur. İdealizmde ise, idealar âleminden gelen ruh orada gördüklerini hatırlamaktadır. (Sönmez, 2005: 39, 72, 81). Dolayısıyla İbn Haldun, idealizmdeki gibi insanın doğuştan birtakım bilgiler getirdiğini düşünmez. Ona göre, doğuştan getirilen ideler yoktur. İbn Haldun, insanın doğuştan bilgi getirmediğini söylemekle de, Fârâbî ve İbn Sînâ gibi İslâm filozoflarına ve Kur’ân-ı Kerim’deki bazı ayetlere uygun düşen bir görüş ortaya koymaktadır.

5. İnsanların ve Meleklerin Bilgisi

İbn Haldun, varlıklar dünyasında üç âlem olduğundan söz etmektedir. Bunların birincisi, duyu organlarıyla idrak ettiğimiz maddî âlem yani duylar âlemi; ikincisi, tekvîn âlemi yani düşünce ile idrak ettiğimiz düşünceler âlemi; üçüncüsü de insanı birtakım hareketlere yönlendiren içindeki sesin kaynağı olan melekler ve ruhlar

âlemidir. Uyurken gördüğümüz rüyalar ve uyanırken kalbe ilham gelmesi, bu son âlemin var olduğunun kanıtıdır. Ancak bu âlem, genel özellikleriyle bilinmesine karşın ayrıntıları konusunda kesin bir bilgi yoktur. Dolayısıyla ruhanî varlıklar tecrübe sahamızın dışında olup, onların tabiatları tamamen meçhuldür. Bunlara ulaşılması ve hatta maddesi olmayan şeyler üzerinde aklın delil getirmesi mümkün değildir. İbn Haldun, bu âlemlerle ilgili ayrıntılı bilginin ancak dinî kaynaklardan elde edilebileceği görüşündedir. Ona göre, ruhanî varlıklar hakkında hüküm vermek için tek dayanağımız, kendi nefislerimizde özellikle mistik tecrübeyle birleşen batınî keşf şeklinde müşahede ettiğimiz şeye kıyastır. Bu kıyaslanmanın ötesinde söz konusu türdeki varlıkları tavsif ve tarif etme gücümüz yoktur. Ancak İbn Haldun, Fârâbî ve İbn Sînâ gibi filozofların akıllar olarak isimlendirdiği bu âlemdeki varlıklarla ilgili açıklamalarının tamamen keyfi olduğu ve bu bilgilerin bir kesinliğinin bulunmadığı kanaatinde. (Arslan, 1997: 433). O, *Mukaddime*'nin altıncı bölümünde "*Felsefe ve Filozoflara Reddiye*" başlığı altında ruhun idraklerinin sınırlı olduğu görüşünü savunur.

İbn Haldun'a göre filozoflar, hem duyulur hem de duyular üstü hakikatin bilgisinin nazarî düşünce ve istidlâl vasıtasıyla mümkün olduğunu ve özellikle iman konularının vahyin yardımı olmadan bu vasıtalarla bilinebileceğini iddia ederler. Fakat sırf akıl olduğu ifade edilen insanın bu nihaî mutluluğu vahiyden yardım almaksızın gerçekleşemez ve biz yalnızca akıl sayesinde bu âlemlerle ilgili bilgi sahibi olamayız. En çok bilgi sahibi olabildiğimiz âlem, beşer âlemidir. Çünkü bu âlem, hem cismanî hem de ruhanî algılarımızla görüp şahit olduğumuz âlemdir. Cismanî ve ruhanî (veya aklî) olmak üzere iki kısımdan meydana gelen insan, idrakin süjesi ruhanî cüz ile bazen cismanî objeleri beyin ve çeşitli duyu organları gibi cismanî organlar vasıtasıyla idrak ederken ruhanî objeleri doğrudan aracısız idrak eder. Bu doğrudan idrak sırasında ruhani nefis en yüksek zevki tadar. İşte tam da bu noktada İbn Haldun, diğer İslâm filozoflarından ayrıldığı görüşünü ortaya koyar. Ona göre bu zevke akıl yürütme yoluyla değil, duyuların tamamen aşıldığı ve duyu organlarının terk edildiği mistik tecrübe yoluyla ulaşılır. (Fahri, 1992: 294). Hakikatin bilgisine vahyin yardımı olmaksızın ulaşma konusunda İbn Haldun'un Fârâbî ve İbn Sînâ gibi filozofların görüşlerine karşı çıkarken başta da belirttiğimiz gibi bu konuda Gazzalî'nin yaklaşımını benimsediğini söyleyebiliriz. Ona göre insanın en üstün özelliği olan aklın kavrayışı sınırlıdır ve o bazı alanlarda aklın idrak gücü zayıf kalmaktadır. Meşşâî filozofların akıl sayesinde ruhanî âlem ile ilgili bilgi sahibi olabileceğimiz ve gerçek mutluluğu bu dünyada elde edebileceğimiz konusundaki görüşlerinin aksine İbn Haldun, aklın böyle bir bilgiye sahip olamayacağını ve gerçek mutluluğa bu dünyada

ulaşılamayacağını savunmuştur. Duyu ve akıl güçlerinin görünür âlem ile ilgili bilgiyi elde etme konusunda Aristotelesçi yaklaşımı benimseyerek meşşâî filozofların görüşlerini kabul eden İbn Haldun, gayb âlemine dair bilgi konusunda ise Gazzalî'nin düşüncelerine benzer bir görüş ortaya koymuştur.

Beşer âleminde insanların cismanî varlıkları hayvanlarla, ruhanî varlıkları da meleklerle ortaktır, yani aynı cinstendir. Melekler ise, zat olarak saf akıl durumunda olan ruhanî varlıklardır. Onlarda düşünce, düşünen ve düşünülen birdir. Dolayısıyla meleklerin ilmi, hatasız ve eksiksizdir. İnsanların ilmi ise sonradan elde edilen (mükteseb) bir ilimdir. Başlangıçta boş bir cevherden ibaret olan nefis, varlığa ait suretleri yavaş yavaş alarak elbise gibi giyinir. İnsan, sûretleri elde ettikçe, yani bilgi sahibi oldukça kendini geliştirir ki bu durum onun ölümüne kadar devam eder. Dolayısıyla insan, yaratılışı itibarıyla cahil, kesb itibarıyla de âlimdir. Ancak insan bazen bilgiyi elde ederken bilinen akıl yürütme yollarını kullanmadan bilgi kalbine ilka olur. Ona bilginin perdesi açılır. Bu perdenin açılması ise yalnızca üç şey ile olur. Birincisi namaz kılmak, ikincisi oruç tutmak, üçüncüsü ise ihlas ve samimiyetle Tanrı'ya yönelmekle gerçekleşir. (İbn Haldun, 1993: 372; trc. Uludağ, C. II, s. 770–772).

6. Peygamberlerin Bilgisi

İbn Haldun insanların üç kısma ayrıldığını ifade eder. Birinci kısım hissi ve düşüncesi maddi âlemin ötesine geçemez. İkinci kısım, bâtinî müşahede ve vicdan denilen bir idrak vasıtasıyla gayb âlemine ulaşabilir. Onlar din ilimlerinde âlim olanlar ve Rabbanî irfana sahip olan velilerdir. Üçüncü kısım bedenî ve cismanî varlıktan sıyrılmaya ve melekler âlemine yükselme kabiliyetine yaratılıştan sahip olanlardır. Bunlar resul ve nebi ismi verilen peygamberlerdir. (İbn Haldun, 1998: 187–188).

İbn Haldun'a göre peygamberler, şehvet, öfke gibi bedenî hallerden uzak duran, Tanrı'ya ibadet ve onu zikretme gibi davranışlara yönelen, insanları Tanrı'nın yoluna çağıran kimselerdir. Onların bilgilerinde küçük de olsa bir yanılma ve hata yoktur. Bilgileri görülüp, şahit olunan açık seçik bir bilgidir. Peygamberlerin meleklerle iletişimi sırasında gayb perdesi ortadan kalktığı için onların bilgileri gerçeğe uygundur. İbn Haldun, peygamberlerin meleklerle olan bu iletişimini onların beşerî âlemden ruhanî âleme geçişi (insanlıktan meleklığe geçiş) olarak yorumlamıştır. O, bu konuyu öncelikle şöyle açıklar: İçinde maden, bitki ve hayvanların bulunduğu maddî ve cismanî âlem, içinde insanların bulunduğu beşerî âlem ve içinde melekler ve diğer

ruhanî varlıkların bulunduğu ruhanî âlem gibi türlerden oluşan varlıklar âleminin tüm varlıkları yukarıdan aşağıya ve aşağıdan yukarıya doğru bir düzen içerisinde sıralanır. Ve her âlemin en üst basamağındaki varlık, kendinden sonra gelen âlemin en alt basamağındaki varlığa geçiş özelliğine sahiptir. Örneğin, bitkiler âleminin son basamağında bulunan üzüm ve hurmanın hayvanlar âleminin en alt basamağındaki salyangoz karşısındaki durumu, ya da hayvanlar âleminin en üst basamağındaki maymunun insan karşısındaki durumu gibi. Dolayısıyla İbn Haldun'un görüşüne göre insanda bir anlık da olsa insanî özelliklerinden sıyrılıp melek olma özelliği vardır. Peygamberler böyle bir özelliğe sahiptir. (İbn Haldun, 1993: 373; trc. Uludağ, C. II, s. 773-774).

Peygamberlik ve vahiy konusunda belirtmiş olduğu İbn Haldun'un bu görüşü evrim teorisini çağrıştırmaktadır. O, burada epistemolojik bir meseleyi antropolojik bir temele oturtmaya çalışmış ve yaratılışı tedricî bir sürece bağlamıştır. Tam olarak Darwin'de görüldüğü şekilde bir evrim teorisi olmasa da İbn Haldun, elementlerden meydana gelen varlıkların, madenlerden başlayarak aşamalı bir şekilde ortaya çıktığını belirtir. Ancak o, bunu canlı türleri arasındaki yakınlığı anlatmak, canlıları benzer özelliklerine göre gruplandırmak için de yapmış olabilir. Onun bu görüşlerinde evrimi savunduğunu düşünenler varsa da İbn Haldun'da bunun tam olarak bir çoğalma yasası olup olmadığı meçhuldür. (Tatlı, Adem, Evrim ve Yaratılış, Nesil Yayınları. 2008: 274).

Uludağ'ın ifadesiyle, bu ilmî bir nazariye değil, yalnızca onun derin bir sezgisinden ibarettir. Çünkü dikkat edilmesi gereken bir nokta da şudur ki, varlıkları sıralayarak meleğe kadar gelen İbn Haldun burada durmakta ve meleklerle ulûhiyetin çeşitli mertebeleri arasında herhangi bir inkılap, ittihat ve ittisal olayına eserlerinde yer vermemektedir. Bu düşünce vahdet-i vücud yakın bir görüş olmasına rağmen İbn Haldun gerçekte bu anlayışa karşıdır. Ona göre vahdet-i vücud, yabancı kaynaklardan gelerek daha sonra İslâm medeniyeti içerisinde İslâmî bir şekil almış olan bir görüştür. (İbn Haldun, 1998: 28-30).

Aristoteles ve onu yorumlayan birçok İslâm filozofu gibi İbn Haldun da varlıkları aşağıdan yukarıya doğru belli bir düzene göre sıralamış, yine filozoflara benzer bir şekilde her varlık sınıfını ruhanî âlem, cismanî âlem gibi ayrı bir âlemin içine yerleştirmiştir. İbn Haldun, her bir âlemin en üst seviyesindeki varlığın bir sonraki âlemlerle bağlantısı olduğunu belirtmektedir. Aynı görüşün Türk İslam düşünürü İbn Sînâ'da da var olduğunu görmekteyiz. İbn Sînâ'ya göre, örneğin, yeryüzünde aklın tek

sahibi olan insan, taşıdığı nefs-i natika ve onun kuvvesi, nazarî akılla meleklerle bağlanırken diğer iki nefsi, -bitkisel ve hayvansal- ile de madde dünyasına bağlanır. Yine İbn Sînâ'ya göre en mükemmel insan, akıllı faal olarak en zirvede olan peygamberlerdir. Çünkü onlar sahip oldukları bu akıl sayesinde Tanrı'nın kelâmını işitir ve meleklerini müşahede eder. İbn Sînâ'nın anlayışında hem normal insan hem de peygamber için faal akıl, bilginin ve vahyin kaynağıdır. Ancak normal insanın faal akıldan bu bilgiyi alabilmesi için önce duyu verileri üzerinde zihnini yorması gerekir, peygamber ise bunların hiçbirine gerek duymadan sahip olduğu hads (ilâhî feyz, ilham) ile bilgiyi kısa zamanda aniden ve doğrudan alır. Ayrıca peygamber, faal akılla sürekli ilişki içinde olduğundan aldığı bilgi düzenli, toplu bir bilgidir. (Kuşpınar, 2001: 145-155).

İbn Haldun'un bazı insanların bilgiyi elde ederken birtakım akıl yürütme yollarını kullanmadan kalbine ilka olur demesi, İbn Sînâ'nın peygamberlerin bir özelliği olarak gösterdiği hads kavramıyla örtüşmektedir. Çünkü hads olayında da gayb perdesi ortadan kalkmakta ve kişi bilgiye doğrudan ulaşmaktadır.

Fârâbî ve İbn Sînâ'nın, insanın mutluluğunun faal akıl'la ittisal edip ondan hakikatin bilgisini elde etmekle gerçekleştireceği iddasını İbn Haldun, dinî kaygılarla reddetmektedir. Onların ittisal ile kastettikleri nefsin doğrudan aracısız idrakidir. Ancak İbn Haldun'a göre nefsin bu idraki sırasında duyduğu zevk, Kur'ân'ın nefse vaad ettiği mutluluğun çok altındadır. Çünkü Kuran'ın vaad ettiği mutluluk, felsefî burhanların çıkarabileceğinden veya ahlakî dürüstlük hayatının temin edebileceğinden daha üstündür. (Arslan, Ahmet, s. 440; Fahri, Macit, s. 294). İbn Haldun'un eserlerine eleştiriler yazdığı bir düşünür olan İbn Rüşd'e göre ise ittisal, nazarî bilginin büyük ölçüde artması ve aklın son yetkinliğine ulaşmasıdır. İbn Rüşd, böyle bir durumun insanda ancak öğrenim ve nazarî inceleme ile gerçekleşebileceğini, aynı zamanda bunu yaparken insanın nefsanî arzu ve eğilimlerini kontrol edebilecek bir irade gücüne sahip olması gerektiğini söylerken İbn Haldun'un gerçek bilgiye ulaşmasının yalnızca namaz kılmak, oruç tutmak ve temiz bir kalp ile Tanrı'ya yönelmesi gibi üç şey ile mümkün olduğunu savunması dikkate değer bir durumdur. İbn Rüşd'de dinî ibadet ve uygulamaların bu konuda önemli bir katkı sağladığı gerçeğine işaret eder, fakat ona göre bu konuda en önemli husus ilmî çabadır. (Sarıoğlu, 2003: 131,132). İbn Haldun ise bilginin kalbe ilka olmasını yalnızca dinî çabaya bağlayarak ilmî çabayı ikinci plana itmiştir.

Sonuç olarak İbn Haldun insanın doğuştan bilgi getirmediğini ve edindiği bilgileri sonradan, çeşitli idrak vasıtaları ile elde ettiğini ifade etmektedir. Ona göre öğrenme yeteneği ile dünyaya gelen insan, çevreyle etkileşim içine girerek bir şeyler öğrenmeye başlar. Bilgiyi elde etme konusunda İbn Haldun, hem duyular hem de duyular üstü akıllar'ın varlığını kabul eder. Ancak İbn Haldun'un, Fârâbî ve İbn Sînâ gibi diğer ilahiyatçı filozoflardan ayrıldığı nokta, Tanrı ile aynı olan ilk aklın bilgisinin, yani gerçeğin bilgisinin Tanrı'nın yardımı olmadan nazarî düşünce ve istidlal yoluyla elde edilemeyeceğidir. Ona göre aklın idraki, sınırlı olup duyuların ötesinde kalan tevhit konuları, ahiret halleri ve ilahî sıfatların mahiyeti gibi ruhanî meseleleri kavramaktan acizdir ve konularda dine başvurmaktan başka çare yoktur.

İbn Haldun, özellikle vahiy ve peygamberlik konusunda Fârâbî ve İbn Sînâ'yı reddetmektedir. O, akıl güçlerin ortak duyuda (hissi müşterek) bir formu görmesi biçiminde tanımladıkları bir vahyi kesinlikle kabul etmemiştir. (İzmirli, 1995: 375). Ayrıca onların hiçbir şeyi açıklamadan her şeyi akla indirgeyen görüşlerini tabiatçı (materyalist) görüş ile aynı değerde görür ve açıkça Meşşâîlerdeki akılcı dogmatizmi reddederek yerine şüphecî ampirizmi koymaktadır. (Ülken, 1957: 238). akıl veya deney ve gözlem yoluyla elde edilen bilgiyle vahyî bilgi arasında bir çatışma görmeyen İbn Haldun'un görüşleri daha çok Gazzalî'nin görüşleri ile paralellik arz etmektedir.

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