

**The Material Base of Political Power
in Ibn Khaldun**

F. Sakri *

Political power is a key concept to the understanding of political phenomena, and yet, until now, there has been a great deal of disagreement and confusion among social scientists as to what political power really consists of, how it is sustained and what the mechanisms are through which it can operate.(1)

Ibn Khaldun, the Arab scholar of the fourteenth century, offers in his famous work, **the Muqaddimah (Introduction)**, an insightful and scientific theory that can help in dispersing the meta-physical fog that now obscures the understanding of the phenomenon of political power.

Ibn Khaldun's treatment of the subject is so scattered throughout **the Muqaddimah** that the existence of a power theory may be overlooked through a superficial reading of this large work. In this essay I shall try to synthesize Ibn Khaldun's scattered comments on the subject in order to present in a unified form his well-coordinated and systematic power theory. Though I shall take the liberty to occasionally deduce conclusions and express them in a terminology and style different from that of their author, I shall make certain that nothing of what will be said will deviate from Ibn Khaldun's general social theory and outlook.

Any careful study of Ibn Khaldun will reveal that man's life on earth is an endless struggle for survival, and that political power may be both an end sought for its own sake, and also a means to attain the human organization and cooperation necessary to provide for human basic needs, and to cope with the hostile forces of nature. The outstanding quality of the Khaldunian perception of political power is his full awareness, as in the rest of his social analysis, of the necessity of a material base for the sustenance of power; without such a base, he believes, any feeling of power is an illusion.

* Professor of Political Science at Kuwait University.

Perhaps one statement by Ibn Khaldun summarizes what he conceives to be the material base of political power : "It should be known that any royal authority must be built upon two foundations. The first is **might** and group feeling which finds its expression in soldiers. The second is **money**, which supports the soldiers and provides the whole structure needed by royal authority." (2) (emphasis added). It must be explained immediately to those who have been trained to view social phenomena in terms of independent and dependent variables that we are not talking here about two variables causing political power. What we are saying is that these are two indispensable ingredients for political power. Each one of these two ingredients is a composite of a great number of other ingredients, or, more accurately, a consequence of a great number of processes operating simultaneously. When we talk about might and money, we are talking about the consequences of a multiplicity of human activities involving the use of natural resources, manual and mental labor, intelligence, knowledge, skills, organization, cooperation, a unifying ideology, a perception of common purposes, etc. The control of money is a symbolic way of stating the amount of wealth one controls, wealth that is sought after by everyone. The control of soldiers is a symbolic way of stating the control of the means of harm and destruction that are avoided by everyone.

No one can control soldiers unless he possesses the economic means to supply them with livelihood and weapons.* It may be said then that wealth is the necessary base for armies, but since wealth is always sought after by others, armies become necessary to keep the wealth under one's control. No one can have political power unless he has the resources to punish and reward, and thereby enforce his will even when the others would rather refuse to obey.

*These basic facts are usually acknowledged by contemporary social scientists when dealing with inter-state relations. It is when studying political power relations within the state (particularly that of liberal democracy) that these basic principles are ignored and power is confused with authority and influence. It is usually the strong desire to split economic power from political power for ideological purposes that reduces political power to a metaphysical concept in contemporary Western analysis. But this is a complex subject that deserves a separate study.

The Power Relations Between Town and Country :

Perhaps Ibn Khaldun's best illustration of power relations lies in his dynamic presentation of the relations between the Bedouin tribes (who are forced to make their living through the raising of animals, or, as in the case of some settled rural groups, through the growing of vegetables as well), and the more civilized urban settlers who are no longer satisfied with the obtaining of sheer necessities. In our own days the relationship between these two groups may correspond to that between town and country, North and South, the developed or underdeveloped societies.

The Bedouin looks with envy at what the sedentary people possess. Ibn Khaldun states repeatedly that "desert civilization is inferior to urban civilization because not all the necessities of the civilization are to be found among the people of the desert." The basis of this inferiority, in other words, lies in the inferiority of the forces of production of the desert people. This situation produces by its very nature a kind of power relations in which the superior economic forces dominate the inferior ones.

In all his analysis, Ibn Khaldun never loses touch with the material base of all social relations. If man is "political by nature" as the philosophers have said, it is because every human being has basic needs, and without cooperation with others he cannot satisfy those needs. It is precisely those needs that make him political and determine the type of relations he would have with other human beings :

"Dealings with other people, when there is oneness of purpose may lead to mutual affection, and when the purposes differ, they may lead to strife and altercation. Thus mutual dislike and mutual affection, friendship and hostility originate. This leads to war and peace among nations and tribes."(4)

This basic principle is at the root of all Khaldunian analysis, and it becomes most important when portraying the power relations between Bedouins and a sedentary culture.

It is inevitable that some kind of economic relations must be established between the urban centers and particularly those agricultural and sheep raising Bedouins who do not penetrate deep into the desert. But the backwardness and poverty of the Bedouins puts the urban people in a position of dominance. This is the way it happens :

"They (Bedouins) do possess some agriculture at home, (but) they do not possess (all) the materials that belong to it, most of which (depend on) crafts. They do not have any carpenters, tailors, blacksmiths, or other (craftsmen whose crafts) would provide them with the necessities required for making a living in agriculture and other things.

Likewise, they do not have (coined) money They have the equivalent of it in harvested grain, in animals, and in animal products such as milk, wool (of animals), (camels') hair, and hides, which the urban population needs and pays the Bedouins money for. However, **while (the Bedouins) need the cities for their necessities of life, the urban population needs (the Bedouins) for conveniences and luxuries. Thus, (the Bedouins) need the cities for the necessities of life by the very nature of their (mode of) existence."**(5) (emphasis added)

In these few words, Ibn Khaldun puts his finger on the underlying determinants of power advantages in economic relations. The measurement of power used here is much more subtle and accurate than "the conflict of interest" criterion. For, quite often, it may be to the mutual interests of two parties to have a kind of relationship, but it is precisely that mutual interest that gives one party an advantageous power position over the other. In this case, the Bedouins do need the urban population and vice versa. But we must ask the further essential question : **Who needs the other more?*** Obviously in this case, to the Bedouin this be-

*In modern times, certainly workers need capitalists the same as capitalists need workers, and their relationship does not always have to be a zero-sum game. However, to measure power advantages, we must ask : **who needs the other more?** It is obvious that the worker as an individual, will lose his very source of livelihood if he loses his job, while the capitalist will only lose a little extra exchange value without the worker; and as long as there is surplus labor, he need not lose anything.

The same criteria may be applied to the relations between the rich and poor countries. Certainly, both sides gain from such a relationship, and we may call this "interdependence", but if we ask who needs the other more, it becomes obvious that to the poor countries, this may mean total dependence, while to the rich countries, this may only mean the obtaining of some raw material (cheap labor, markets, etc.) which could easily be obtained somewhere else.

comes a relationship of dependence for it involves the necessities for his livelihood. As a result of this basic need, it becomes very difficult for the Bedouins to disobey the demands of the city lords.

Economic dominance brings with it political dominance. The ruler in the city "makes (the Bedouins) obey him and exert themselves in behalf of his interests." To accomplish this, he may resort to either one of two classical methods of exercising political power : 1. The method of reward, which Ibn Khaldun calls 'persuasion' (and which we now call co-optation) by which he distributes money in the hands of some Bedouins, thus making them indebted to him; 2. the method of punishment by which he uses force against some of them to make them submit to his will. Sometimes, he may reward one faction to cause discord among the tribes, and then use such a faction to help him subdue the others. The Bedouins under these circumstances are helpless. They cannot go away to resettle somewhere else in the desert because the other territories have already been taken over by other tribes. Thus their only hope of survival is through submission and obedience.(6)

Such a situation of dominance - submission will persist as long as the forces of production are distributed so unevenly between the two groups. It is impossible for the Bedouins under these circumstances to develop their own crafts (forces of production), in order to fight economically. Therefore, just as Marx's workers must resolve the contradictions of their relations of production through the taking over of state power, so Ibn Khaldun's Bedouins can resolve their contradictions only through a take-over of royal authority. They must use the skill they know best, the use of their swords and their lances.

But the divisions of Bedouins into a great many tribes, each having its own 'asabiya' (group feeling) poses a great obstacle in the way of their gaining royal authority. Their endless competition for the scarce resources of subsistence divides them into small warring groups who may succeed in destroying each other, or even occasionally succeed in plundering some richer sedentary communities and running away with their loot to their desert base. But all this does not help resolve the contradictions of their relations with the urban populations. Their rivalries make them more vulnerable for domination. Their lack of discipline, incapability to cooperate under united leadership, their destructiveness, their lack of arbitration about what belongs to who, their ignorance of

organization or of institutional rulership, etc. make them "of all nations the one most remote from royal authority".(7)

Ideology and Political Power :

What Ibn Khaldun is saying is that Bedouins do have the potential power to take over royal authority, but in their existing state, this is a fragmented power that is incapable of overpowering an organized force. This is why he reaches the conclusion that Bedouins can achieve royal authority only under the banner of a religious cause. They are the most receptive to religious propaganda, for their minds have not been tarnished by other corrupting beliefs that usually develop in a life of ease and luxury.*

Religion has a restraining influence because it offers punishments and rewards in this world and the next. Once people believe in it, they will obey the authority that speaks on its behalf. At first such an authority must depend on the 'asabiya' (group feeling) of the tribe to which he belongs. But, eventually, in order for the movement to become of political importance, it must join under its banner a great many tribes, and make them operate together as one unit. This calls for the creation of a new "greater group feeling" which becomes "stronger than all the other group feelings combined, that is superior to them all and makes them subservient, and in which all the diverse group feelings coalesce." (9) No other beliefs can achieve this in the case of Bedouins better than those with a religious coloring, for religion makes people look ahead of their immediate individual interests in order to serve their interests in the long run. "When people (who have a religious coloring) come to have the right insight into their affairs, nothing can withstand them because their outlook is one and their object is one of common accord." (10) It is as if unity of the fragmented forces is the main

*Ibn Khaldun describes man's basic mind as a tabula rasa : "In his first condition, before he has attained discernment man is simply matter in as much as he is ignorant of all knowledge. He reaches perfection of his own form through knowledge, which he acquires through his own organs. Thus his human essence reaches perfection of existence ... Man's nature and essence reveal to us the essential ignorance and the acquired (character of the) knowledge that man possesses." (8) Thus the Bedouin's mind, in its primitive environment is still innocent and open for all kinds of knowledge and beliefs.

goal that must be attained in order to create a potent political force, and the enemy can be defeated at a time when he, having reached a stage of degeneration and senility, fails to achieve his own unity.*

Though Ibn Khaldun was deeply religious, he was still able to analyze religion sociologically. He could see that in order for any religion to succeed in spreading its mission, it must depend on political power. It must, as a start, be adopted by a group with a powerful 'asabiya', a group which is willing to fight for it if necessary. If religion adds power to a group, it does so by joining together its concrete material forces, and not by the power of its abstract beliefs. Ibn Khaldun makes this clear when he tells about those religious and reforming individuals, who as often happens, revolt against unjust rulers and their evil practices, but without having much support among the people. These will perish, Ibn Khaldun assures us, no matter how noble and good-intentioned they may be. God, apparently, in His supreme wisdom, does not interfere on their behalf. Ibn Khaldun explains it this way :

"He (God) commands such activities to be undertaken only where there exists the power to bring them to a successful conclusion ... Rulers and dynasties are strongly entrenched. Their foundation can be undermined and destroyed only through strong efforts backed by the group feeling of tribes and families, as we have mentioned before. Similarly, prophets in their religious propaganda depended on groups and families, though they were the ones who could have been supported by God with anything in existence, if He had wished, but, in His

*Here again, Ibn Khaldun's materialist analysis may be compared to that of Marx who also gives a lot of emphasis to a unifying ideology in the case of working class revolution. Marx and Engels speak repeatedly of the necessity of "class consciousness" through which all workers of the world divided by different factions and nationalities must begin to identify themselves with a very large group, the working class. Marx and Engels speak of a working class ideology that is different and antagonistic to ruling class ideology, and which eventually becomes world-wide.

Of course Ibn Khaldun was neither socialist nor revolutionary, but his understanding of those basic principles of power relations are very similar to that of Marx and other materialist thinkers.

wisdom He permitted matters to take their customary course.”(11)

Ibn Khaldun tells about several cases of reformers from Arab history who failed, and, generally, he does not show much sympathy for this kind of adventurism, regardless of its noble intentions :

“... Many deluded individuals followed that example. They took it upon themselves to establish the truth. They did not know they would need group feeling for that ..”(12)

Ibn Khaldun's awareness that religious ideology may be substituted by other ideologies can be substantiated by his argument with those philosophers who seemed to think that prophecy was a necessity for human existence. He calls this proposition illogical, and that the existence of prophecy itself is “not required by logic”. “Existence and human life can materialize without the (existence of prophecy) through injunctions a person in authority may devise on his own or with the help of a group feeling that enables him to force the others to follow him wherever he wants to go.” People who have a (divinely revealed) book and who follow the prophets, he explains, are few in comparison with those who have none, but who, nevertheless, do have an organized society and are able to build a civilization.(13)

In all these passages in which political power is linked to ideology (law, customs, and others which the Marxists lump together as super-structure), Ibn Khaldun shows clearly the primacy of the former over the latter. “The sword” and “the pen”, he tells us, are both instruments of the ruler to use in his affairs. Men of then pen thus become the servants and agents of the ruler's power.(14) This is one of the reasons for the distortions in the writing of history and of which historians ought to become aware :

“... People as a rule approach great and high-ranking persons with praise and eulogiums. They embellish conditions and spread the fame (of great men). The information made public in such cases is not truthful. Human souls long for praise, and people pay great attention to this world and the positions and wealth it offers.”(15)

Power can also reflect itself in the ideas and customs of a defeated people. Such people cannot at first share any group feeling with their

conquerors. At this stage submission is imposed by the superior force of the conquerors. Victory in war, however, seems to impress the defeated and make them receptive to the propaganda of the victors. The soul of the defeated "erroneously assumes that its subservience to him (the victor) is not due to the nature of defeat but to the perfection of the victor." This can become a firm belief, and then the defeated will not only accept the ideology of the victor, but will try to imitate his customs and manners. "Therefore the vanquished can always be observed to assimilate themselves to the victor in the use and style of dress, mounts, and weapons, indeed in everything." Ibn Khaldun compares them to children imitating their fathers because they see perfection in them.(16)

Sometimes, if the victors (or any rulers) are too oppressive, the people may become apathetic, for, through enslavement, hope diminishes, together with the old group feeling; civilization decreases and business and other activities come to a standstill. The people may become so submissive that they are willing to accept any authority.(17)

But eventually, once a new dynasty is capable of maintaining itself in power for some time people get used to its rule, and submissiveness to it becomes a habit. After a few generations, the beginnings are forgotten, and its rule becomes a "firmly established article of faith ... It is as if obedience to the government were a divinely revealed book that cannot be changed or opposed."(18) In other words, legitimation would have taken place, and the religion of the rulers would have become the religion of the ruled.

It can thus be seen that Ibn Khaldun never considered abstract ideas, even the most sacred and undisputable ones as constituting power in their own right. This is only logical since ideas will not by themselves give their possessor the means to punish and reward. Ideas in relation to power may be compared to the string that ties together several sticks of dynamite. The string may be necessary to hold the sticks together but the real destructive energy lies in the dynamite itself. That is why Ibn Khaldun insists that for any religion or reform movement to succeed, it must be directly linked with a political power of some kind. A movement may start with a relatively small force at first, the same as a big enterprise may start with a small capital, but unless such a force gathers momentum and grows into a substantial material force in relation to the forces opposing it, it will be crushed.

In order to reform a society then, we need power, and not just the right set of ideas, and Ibn Khaldun repeatedly warns against falling victims to such illusions. In a chapter discussing nobility, for example, he explains how some individuals in cities, who are the descendants of some noble family (house) continue to believe that because of this noble birth they possess some kind of superiority. "A certain delusion as to their former prestige remains in their soul and leads them to consider themselves members of the most noble houses." But these families, after a long sedentary life have lost the solidarity of the group that used to support them and make them strong in the past. "I should like to know," he argues, how anyone can gain prestige "if he does not belong to a group that makes him feared and causes others to obey him." He adds that rulers take "no notice of those who have no power." Rulers are not interested either in rhetoric or in the number of noble forefathers someone may have had, but in the number of people who are willing to stand by him and support him now.(19)

Political Power and Law

Ibn Khaldun also emphasizes the importance of material force when he discusses the law, even God-given law, which is useful in this world and the next. Here, resuming his debate with those philosophers who had considered prophecy as something intellectually necessary for mankind. He writes :

"One of its (this philosophers' argumentation) premises in that the restraining influence comes into being only through a religious law from God, to which the mass submits as a matter of belief and religious creed. This premise is not acceptable. **The restraining influence comes into being as the result of the impetus of royal authority and the forcefulness of the mighty, even if there is no religious law.**"(20) (emphasis added)

In another argument with those who want to dispense with royal authority by dispensing with the institution of the Caliphate (or the Imamate), he writes :

"You agree that observance of the religious law is a necessary thing. Now that is achieved only through group feeling and power, and group feeling by its very nature requires (the existence of) royal authority. Thus there will be royal authori-

ty even if no Imam is set up. Now, that is just what you wanted to dispense with.”(21)

He emphasizes this point further :

“Only he who has gained superiority over a nation or a race is able to handle its affairs. The religious law would hardly ever make a requirement in contradiction to the requirements of existence.”(22)

God’s laws, in other words, will not affect people’s behavior unless they are enforced by a political power, for God will not allow his own laws to contradict the observable laws of nature which He Himself had set up for this world.

Political Power Within The State :

Ibn Khaldun differentiates between political power as practiced by royal authority and leadership as practiced by the tribal chieftain. His differentiation is important for it shows his understanding of the difference between influence and power, a matter often confused by contemporary theorists. Power cannot be practiced by a position of prestige or status alone, because the person who possesses only those characteristics does not possess the resources for punishment and reward in cases of conflict. The tribal chief must rule by consent, for the armed people of his tribe can more often punish him than he can punish them, and he needs them more than they need him. We may also presume that the chief is not usually so much wealthier than the other members of the tribe that he is able to manipulate them through his economic power (though this may not always be the case). He cannot divide them against each other since they are usually small in number, and are always threatened by some external forces. Thus in the tribe, the chief is influential rather than powerful; he leads rather than rules because he does not personally control the necessary resources of power.

But the leadership of the tribal chief may change to power when he leads the tribal militia in the struggle against other tribes, and the eventual success of subduing them. Victory makes the group feeling of the victor a common group feeling for all. The gaining of political power can no longer stop at this point. It is as if once tasted, power makes those who gain it want still more :

"Now royal authority is a noble and enjoyable position. It comprises all the good things of the world, the pleasures of the body and the joys of the soul. Therefore, there is, as a rule, great competition for it. It rarely is handed over (voluntarily), but it may be taken away. Thus, discord ensues. It leads to war and fighting, and to attempts to gain superiority."(23)

Not only is power sought for its own enjoyment, however, but it is also a fact that power, particularly under unstable conflicting situations, needs more power in order to sustain itself. It takes long battles, alliances, plots, and a lot of propaganda for a new dynasty to gain full dominance and establish royal authority. But in order to crush the snake's head, it must crush the rival armies, and enter the capital of the urban center, the site of royal authority, and gain control of its treasury in order to rebuild a new economy and a whole new structure of power. This is the start of a new dynasty which will have to go through a new cycle of rise and decline as did its predecessor.

Political power, according to Ibn Khaldun, is necessary for any large cooperative endeavor. Since individuals are usually busy seeking their private interests, they cannot, on their own initiative, be concerned with the building of public places, monuments and others for the enjoyment of everybody.

"Dynasties are prior to towns and cities." Urban civilization which demands the construction of large buildings, roads, and canals cannot become a reality without the social organization of royal authority. Apparently, left on their own, and without political compulsion, individuals are incapable of producing anything more than the individualistic Bedouin society :

"As a matter of fact, (human beings) must be forced and driven to (build cities). The stick of royal authority is what compels them, or they may be stimulated by promise of reward and compensation."(24)

This is another reference to the exercise of power through what is now occasionally referred to as "the stick and carrot" method. Public projects on a grand scale, it is explained, demand a great capital which can only be available to royal authority. This is not to mean that royal authority is necessarily guided by a superior wisdom, and motivated by a

far-sighted concern for the benefit of the whole society. Like everybody else, royal authority is motivated also by its own interests; it enforces laws, carries out public projects for the glorification, enjoyment, and survival of its own political power. Without stability, internal peace, and some public satisfaction, a dynasty cannot enjoy the fruits of its own superiority.

In Ibn Khaldun's world, the dynasty is the center around which all economic activity revolves. For, aside from its appropriating to itself the greatest share of the national wealth, taxes are collected on the subjects' shares and channeled in the direction of the dynasty and people of rank connected to it. Wherever there is wealth and circulation of it, there is sedentary culture. Therefore the capital city is where luxury exists. When the ruler changes his capital, the hub of activity moves with him. It is like a river that makes green everything around it. The further the communities are from the center, the more underdeveloped and closer to Bedouin life they would be. A basic proposition is that "the monuments of a given dynasty are proportionate to its original power..... they can materialize only when there are many workers and united action and cooperation". To achieve all this, the dynasty's domain must be far-flung, with many provinces, and numerous workers have to be brought together from various regions. This is how the great monuments of the past have been built, and they may be taken as a measure of the power of the dynasties when they were built, as well as the long established civilizations, and internal stability of those societies.(25)

At the beginning of the dynasty, when the ruler can still depend on the strong traditional group feeling of his own people who brought him to power, there is no need for excessive taxation. But when the original group feeling weakens with the development of sedentary culture, and with the inclusion of several heterogeneous groups, the ruler must now build a larger power base, a "greater group feeling" at the expense of the original one. He must depend on new individuals of high rank, who control the group feelings of a large faction. Ibn Khaldun describes a well-knit hierarchy, a rather gainful pecking order, except for those at the very bottom. Ranks are political titles distributed by those in power to selected individuals who can be the key to a popular power base. Such ranks are supported from above by the material force of political power, and fortified by the economic power that is obtained through the accumulation of other people's labor :

"Each member of a lower class seeks the support of rank from members of the next, and those who gain it become more active among the people under their control in proportion to the profit they get out of it."(26)

This is how Ibn Khaldun shows the interlocking of politics and economics, and how the state is the force of compulsion that protects a certain type of relations of production.

However, while the power of arms and money are the main pillars of rulership, Ibn Khaldun does not neglect the other supporting factors, for the ruler does not only rule, but he must also lead. For the ruler to exercise political leadership and make people obey him, it "requires an extraordinary measure of psychology."(27) Though the potential use of force must always be present, this does not mean that people have to obey only through fear. They must be convinced of the ruler's legitimacy, and get emotionally involved in whatever projects or wars he decides to carry out. The ruler impresses his subjects by his ostentatious living, by the pomp and ceremony of his court, by the numerous emblems that symbolize his authority and that of his government, and by the use of "men of the pen" (as was mentioned earlier) who glorify his achievements, and justify his regime. But it must be remembered that even these psychological measures cannot be undertaken without the financial capabilities of those in power.

In conclusion, to Ibn Khaldun, political power is indispensable for any society, essential for organized collective production, maintenance of order, protection of life and property, defense of the country, etc., but, it is equally important as a force that helps shape people's character, behavior, customs, and common shared beliefs, including their religion. All political power must have an economic and military base. Much more is required for the exercise of power, but it is only when this base is destroyed that such a power comes to an end.

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FOOTNOTES

1. The contemporary literature on the concept of political power is voluminous. Suffice it to mention a few samples :

Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan : *Power and Society, A Framework for Political Inquiry*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1950.

Marvin E. Olsen, ed. : *Power in Societies*, MacMillan, New York, 1970.

Roderick Bell et al, ed. : *Political Power*, The Free Press, New York, New York, 1969.

David V.J. Bell : *Power, Influence and Authority*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1975.

2. Ibn Khaldun : *The Muqaddimah, An Introduction to History*, 3 Volumes, trans. by Franz Rosenthal, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1967, Vol. 2, Book III, Chap. 45, P. 118, 119.

The Muqaddimah from now on in this article will be referred to as "Q" followed by volume, book, and chapter numbers. The page number will be referred to only in case of a direct quotation.

3. Q. 1 : II : 28, P. 308
4. Q. 2 : VI : 3, P. 417
5. Q. 1 : II : 28, P. 309
6. Q. 1 : II : 28, P. 309, 310
7. Q. 1 : II : 27
8. Q. 2 : VI : 6, P. 425
9. Q. 1 : II : 16, P. 284
10. Q. 1 : III : 5, P. 320
11. Q. 1 : III : 6, P. 323, 324
12. Q. 1 : III : 6, P. 326
13. Q. 1 : 1 : First Prefatory Discussion, P. 93

72.

14. Q. 2 : III : 23, P. 46, 47
15. Q. 1 : I : Preliminary Remarks, P. 72
16. Q. 1 : II : 22, P. 299
17. Q. 1 : II : 23,
18. Q. 1 : III : 2, P. 314
19. Q. 1 : II : 13
20. Q. 1 : III : 24, P. 390
21. Q. 1 : III : 24, P. 392
22. Q. 1 : III : 24, P. 402
23. Q. 1 : II : 1, P. 313
24. Q. 2 : IV : 1, P. 235
25. Q. 1 : III : 16, Q2, IV : 3
26. Q. 2 : V 6, P. 330
27. Q. 2, III : 32, P. 3.

القاعدة المادية للقوة السياسية

عند ابن خلدون

د. فريد صقري *

مع أن مفهوم القوة السياسية هو من أهم المفاهيم الأساسية لعلم السياسية فما زال يكتنف هذا المفهوم حتى الآن الكثير من التشويش والغموض والـميتافيزيقية .

نجد في مقدمة ابن خلدون (التي كتبت في القرن الرابع عشر م) نظرية علمية دقيقة ومتكاملة حول هذا المفهوم باستطاعة علم السياسة الحديث أن يستفيد منها الشيء الكثير .

يحاول هذا البحث أن يجمع آراء ابن خلدون حول ظاهرة القوة السياسية وممارستها ، والتي وردت مشتتة في فصول عديدة من المقدمة ليبين نظامها المتناسق كنظرية علمية متماسكة ، فالقوة السياسية ، بالنسبة لابن خلدون ، ان داخل الدولة او في علاقاتها الخارجية ، يجب أن تركز على قاعدة مادية مكونة من قوة السلاح أو قوة الاقتصاد اذ ان السيطرة على احدى هاتين الدعامتين أو كليهما تهـيء لصاحبها السيطرة على الآخرين عن طريق القدرة على العقاب أو الثواب .

ومما يعالجه هذا البحث علاقة القوة السياسية بالايديولوجية ، وبالدين ، وبالقانون ، وامكان سيطرتها على الانتاج الفكري ، والعادات الاجتماعية ، والتقاليد . ويغطي البحث ايضا نظرية ابن خلدون حول تبعية المجتمع المتخلف للمجتمع المتقدم والتي تنشأ من العلاقات الاقتصادية غير المتكافئة . وينتهي المقال بشرح ضرورة وجود القوة السياسية لبنية الهيكل الاجتماعي ، لحفظ النظام ، ولتنفيذ الشريعة ، ولانجاز المشاريع العمرانية الكبرى .