

Ibn Khaldun

The True Founder of Sociology: His Theories and Contributions to Social Thought

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Abstract: Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), the Arab philosopher of history, statesman, judge, historian, and sociologist is considered as the true founding Father of modern sociology. However, there is a widespread assumption in the contemporary intellectual production that the science of culture and society originated solely in Europe. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to show how the classical sociological theories, methods, and principles are rooted in the remarkable contributions of Ibn Khaldun. Ibn Khaldun's theories and thought still prove their feasibility and applicability to current social issues. Bringing back Ibn Khaldun's thoughts into the classical social theories would acknowledge his remarkable contributions to the establishment and development of social thought.

Key words: Ibn Khaldun, Classical sociological theories, History of social thought, Discovery of sociology, Ibn Khaldun's theories, Ibn Khaldun's methods, Applicability of Ibn Khaldun's theories.

Introduction

Abu Ziyad Abdar-Rahman Ibn Khaldun, better known as Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), the Arab philosopher of history, a historian, statesman, judge, and sociologist is considered by numerous European and Arab scholars as the founding Father of modern sociology.

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Ibn Khaldun wrote many books in different fields of knowledge, but his greatest work by far is the *Muqaddimah*: “The Prolegomena” a three volume work that he intended to be an introduction to his major work “*Kitab Al-Ibar*,” “Lessons of History.” In this book, he laid the foundations for a new science, which he called “The Science of Human Culture” (علم العمران البشري). In the Science of Human Culture, Ibn Khaldun defined its scope and principles, describing its method and determining its purposes. In addition, he put forward the principles of the Philosophy of History.

In the “*Muqaddimah*,” Ibn Khaldun expressed his hope that someone else would start from the point where he ended and build upon it, but the fact remains that his work was the beginning as well as the end as no other scholar after him has fulfilled his dream. This was because the Islamic states were in the state of decline during the lifetime of Ibn Khaldun.

Many of the ideas of Ibn Khaldun are amazingly similar to those of Machiavelli, Vico, Montesquieu, Adam Smith, August Comte, Tarde, Durkheim, Tonnies, Gumplowicz and Karl Marx. Were they exposed to the thought of Ibn Khaldun? The answer remains uncertain. The name of Ibn Khaldun, as assured by Simon (2006: 39), was unknown in Europe until the seventeenth century, and it wasn't until the beginning of the nineteenth century that some sections of Ibn Khaldun's work become known in Europe. Schmidt (1926: 14), however, assured that the sociology was well known in Europe before the attempts of August Comte to establish this science.

The complete issue of the *Muqaddimah* was published in 1858 in Paris. Nevertheless, a Turkish translation of the first five sections of the *Muqaddimah* was published in the year [1143H] (1730/31 AD). It is possible moreover, that there were some unofficial translations of the *Muqaddimah* or parts of it in the European languages as was the case with some Arabic poetry and literature works (Rosenthal 1958: IXX).

Finally, dealing with the ideas and thought of Ibn Khaldun requires a lot of effort for the comprehensiveness of his work. Attempting to summarize his contributions to social thought in a few pages is not an easy job.

The Purpose and Scope of the Study

Although Ibn Khaldun's work is well known in the Arab region and Europe, he is still virtually unknown in North America, South America, and some other parts of the world. For example, the status of Ibn Khaldun in the intellectual production of the United States is strikingly disappointing. There is an obvious tendency to treat the history of social sciences as if it had its origins only in Europe. A glimpse of the status of Ibn Khaldun in graduate and undergraduate textbooks taught to the university students regarding the history of social thought or the field of sociological theory can easily lead to three observations. Firstly, many of the textbooks authored by American scholars have never mentioned Ibn Khaldun as one among many sociologists, let alone of being the founding father of sociology (see for example: Collinicos 2007; Strauss 2005; McGee & Worms 2003; Itzkowitz 2003; Craib 1997; Turner 1996; Lyder 1994; and Plamenatz et al. 1992). Secondly, few other general books or textbooks which mentioned Ibn Khaldun singled him out of the mainstream scholars of social thought and theories. In such books, Ibn Khaldun is cornered in a small section of the book under titles that indicate seclusion such as: The pre-modern sociological thought, or some thinkers from Third World countries, or Muslim thinkers of the fourteenth century (see for example: Lemert 2004; Kivisto 2007; Giddens 1995). The last observation is that few textbooks acknowledge Ibn Khaldun as the founding father of sociology except in small scattered places of the introductions of some textbooks. However, the contributions of Ibn Khaldun are largely ignored in the main body of such books. His remarkable contribution to the sociological thought is not only eluded to, but also there is no single chapter or thorough discussions pertaining to the main sociological theories, and/or works that have ever been devoted completely to Ibn Khaldun (see for example Tukur 2002; Ritzer 1997).

The purpose of this paper is to show how the classical sociological theories are rooted in the remarkable contributions of Ibn Khaldun. Despite the fact that there is no consent on how far the impact of Ibn Khaldun's thought on the development of the European sociology, Ba'ali (1988) believes that there is some evidence that early sociologists like Montesquieu and Gomplovicz were aware of Ibn Khaldun's writings and his sociological thoughts (Ba'ali 1988: 12-13, 25-26). Consequently,

bringing Ibn Khaldun's thoughts into the classical social theories would acknowledge his remarkable contributions and would address the post-colonialist critiques of Eurocentrism. Another goal of this paper is to shed the light on the intellectual, historical, and personal circumstances that led Ibn Khaldun to discover this new branch of science which he called "*Ilm Al-Umran*" (the Science of Culture and Human Society). This will not only introduce Ibn Khaldun as the first thinker ever who discovered the science of culture and society and the philosophy of history, but also help to recognize Ibn Khaldun as an outstanding figure in the history of social thought. Consequently, I believe that omitting Ibn Khaldun from the development of social thought is actually omitting the objectivity principle, which is considered as the cornerstone of any scientific endeavor.

In order to accomplish the task of introducing Ibn Khaldun as the founding father of sociology, I relied heavily on the writings and the literal words of Ibn Khaldun himself in the *Muqaddimah*. Moreover, I relied upon the English translation of F. Rosenthal published in 1958 because it is considered by many scholars as the most accurate and unabridged translation. Secondary sources are also used whenever there is a need to compare ideas, to refute or prove notions, or to illuminate some areas of discussions by citing some opinions of scholars in different fields.

The following sections of this paper include the main trajectories of this study: (a)-a historical background of Ibn Khaldun's personal and intellectual life which deeply affected his thought and his conception of social change and culture of his time; (b) the circumstances which led Ibn Khaldun to discover the new science of culture and the philosophy of history; (c), Ibn Khaldun's social methods, principles of the new science, and his sociological theories; and (d), the study is finalized by examples of the applicability of Ibn Khaldun's theories and ideas to the contemporary social issues in different areas of social research.

Ibn Khaldun's Life, and His intellectual Background:

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) was born in Tunis (Tunisia). He was the descendant of nobility and a very wealthy family, which traced its origin to a south Arabian tribe that entered Spain in the early years of the Muslim conquest. The family became known for its leadership of

revolutionary activities in Seville; some of its members were prominent in the administration of the city, and one of them distinguished himself as a mathematician and astronomer. About the middle of the thirteenth century, when Seville was threatened by the Christians, the family left for North Africa and settled in Tunis, the capital of the Hafsid Kingdom. The family was granted land holdings and its members held administrative posts. The household in which Ibn Khaldun grew up was frequented by the political and intellectual leaders of Muslim Spain and the Maghreb. Ibn Khaldun held court positions in what today is known as Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, and Granada in Spain. From the time he was young, he was involved in political affairs and showed interest in the revolutionary change of North Africa and Muslim Spain, a region which generally lacked political stability. The time of Ibn Khaldun witnessed sharp turning points in the Arab and Muslim history manifested in the confusion and decline in all aspects of life resulting from the Tatar invasion from Mongolia with its great devastating affects in the Arab civilization, and the dramatic affects of the Black Death in most of North Africa (Ibn Khaldun, 1952).

Ibn Khaldun began his political life in Fez; he was a successful adviser to the ruler of Morocco, an adviser and a teacher to the ruler of Granada, and a prime minister in Bijaya. He was imprisoned twice for political reasons. In 1375, he went into seclusion in "Qul'at Ibn Salamah"(a castle in Algeria today), taking four years to compose his monumental "*Muqaddimah*" the introductory volume for his massive and regional history book (*Kitab al-Ibar*). In 1382, he went to Mecca for a pilgrimage, and on his way back he stopped in Egypt where he was offered a chair at the famous Islamic University of Al-Azhar by the sultan of Cairo, who also appointed him judge (*qadi*) of the *Malikite* rite of Islam (Rosenthal 1958: IV). In 1400, he accompanied the sultan's successor to Damascus on an expedition to resist the invasion of the Tatar ruler, Tamerlane. Ibn Khaldun spent five weeks as Tamerlane's honored guest before returning to Cairo, where he died on March 17, 1406 (Fischel 1976).

Ibn Khaldun wrote his autobiography (*at-Ta'arif bi-Ibn Khaldun*), which did not contain many details about his personal life. He mentioned that the Black Death struck Tunis in 1349, and took away both his mother and his father. During his stay in Merinid court in Fez, between

the years 1354-65, Ibn Khaldun was already married. His wife was a daughter of Mohammed al-Hakim, the great Hafsid general and minister of war, and a member of a noble and scholarly family. Ibn Khaldun mentioned that he had children by her. It seems that he had five daughters and two sons. His wife and his five daughters perished in 1384 when a tragic accident befell Ibn Khaldun's family on a journey from Tunis to Egypt, and only his two sons Mohammed and Ali reached Egypt safely. One of his sons was the secretary to the ruler of Morocco. Ibn Khaldun married again when he was in Egypt (Ibn Khaldun 1952: 24, 45-57).

His early education included religious disciplines (the Qur'an, the collection of traditions approved by the *Malikite* school of law which prevailed in Western Islam, dialectical theology, jurisprudence, and mysticism), the philosophic disciplines (logic, mathematics, natural philosophy, metaphysics, and politics, including ethics and rhetoric), and practical training for government service, such as the art of writing official court correspondence and handling administrative affairs. The teacher he admired most during this period was the mathematician and philosopher Mohammed Ibn Ibrahim al-Abili (1282-1356). Abili introduced him to the major works of the Greek philosophy tradition translated to Arabic, and the Muslim philosophers like Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Ibn Rushd (Averroes), al-Razi, and al-Farabi. Abili acquainted him with the more recent philosophic and theological writings of the orthodox Shiites in Eastern Islam (International Encyclopedia of Social Science: Ibn Khaldun).

How and Why Ibn Khaldun Established the New Science of Culture

To understand the way that Ibn Khaldun discovers the new science of culture and society, it is important to refer to the relationship between the Greek philosophical tradition and the Muslim philosophical tradition in the Medieval Ages. In addition, the personal reasons are also important to understand the practical aims of Ibn Khaldun's sociology. This understanding will shed light on the relationship between Ibn Khaldun's theory and praxis.

As has been mentioned previously, Ibn Khaldun became aware of the problem of history during his writing of his massive history, and this

feeling endured him to change the first draft of the “*Muqaddimah*” to include the new science of culture and the philosophy of history. He reached the conclusion that the link between history and political philosophy from one side, and the concrete social facts from the other side were missing. Thus, the science of culture is the real link between these disciplines. Mahdi (1964) explained these relationships:

“Historically, the relationship between political philosophy, and history and the science of culture and society which concentrates on explaining the nature and causes of human things as they actually are, has been extremely obscure... Many historians are known to have been followers of traditional political philosophy, but none of them actually elucidates the proper relation between history and the knowledge of actual conditions of society, and political philosophy....Ibn Khaldun seems to be not only a great thinker who recognized the problems of the relation of history and the science of society to traditional political philosophy, but also he attempted to develop a science of society and culture within the framework of traditional philosophy, which was based on its principles.... Ibn Khaldun even went further than this extent when he saw that the traditional philosophy demands a practical science of man and society which can predict social laws” (Mahdi 1964: 285-286).

Realizing these relationships for the first time in the history of philosophical thought, Ibn Khaldun arrived at the conclusion that he had to take the burden of constructing the new science of society and culture. Furthermore, Ibn Khaldun owed it to his predecessors of the Muslim philosophers who actually guided him to arrive at this conclusion. As it was mentioned previously, Ibn Khaldun studied religions and philosophy of the ancient Greeks, and the philosophy of the Muslims until his time. Some of these Muslim philosophers were Averroes, Avesenna, and al-Abili, who had presented a great contribution to Greek philosophy, they actually transformed the political philosophy from the form of utopian contemplation to be a practical science, they called it (*tadbir al-madina*) “the ordering of the city” and (*siyasat al-madaniyya*) or “the policies of political and civil matters.” In the Muslim philosophers’ views of

practical political philosophy, they were influenced by the advanced sciences of the Arabs especially medicine, astronomy, and sea-faring which they founded on practical experience, knowledge, and skills. From this point of view, Ibn Khaldun conceived the political philosophy, as useless knowledge if it is not connected with a practical science of culture and society, which guides the statesmen to understand the historical events and the social change which is necessary to reach the best regime. Ibn Khaldun himself asked and answered the question that, if this science is extremely useful for political philosophy, why did not the ancient Greeks who originated political philosophy construct this science? The answer of Ibn Khaldun was: the ancient Greeks judged the value of a science by its end or fruits. The value of this science is “feeble” and not practically “noble.” Therefore, the ancients did not concern themselves with it (Mahdi 1964: 290-291). From this aim, Ibn Khaldun conducted a critical investigation and surveyed most of the works of previous Greek and Muslim historians and philosophers. He investigated disciplines such as historiography, rhetoric, political science, and jurisprudence, and he concluded that even though these disciplines discuss some problems that are related to the social fact, none of these presented a coherent account of the laws and causes of historical events, or explained the social factors that directed these events. He had to be self-directed to undertake the burden and created a new “science of society and culture” and determined its nature, aspects, methods, theories, and purposes. Ibn Khaldun emphasized in the *Muqaddimah* that this science is completely new, independent from any other sciences or disciplines, original and highly useful:

“It should be known that the discussion of these topics is something new, extraordinary, and highly useful. Penetrating research has shown the way to it. It does not belong to rhetoric, one of the logical disciplines represented in Aristotle’s *Organon*, the subject of which is convincing words by means of which the mass is inclined to accept a particular opinion or not to accept it. It is not politics, because politics is concerned with the administration of home or city in accordance with ethical and philosophical requirements, for the purpose of directing the mass toward a behavior that will result in the preservation and permanence of the human species” (Ibn Khaldun, I, 76-78).

Ibn Khaldun also emphasized on the peculiarity of the new science. Ibn Khaldun states that:

“Such is the purpose of this first book of our work. The subject is in a way an independent science. This science has its own peculiar object- that is, human civilization and social organization. It also has its own peculiar problems- which is explaining the conditions that attach themselves to the essence of civilization, one after the other. Thus, the situation is the same with this science as it is with any other science, whether it be a conventional or an intellectual one...the subject here is different from that of those two disciplines which, however, are often similar to it, in a way, however, it is an entirely original science” (Ibn Khaldun, I, 77-78).

Ibn Khaldun also believed in the accumulation of sciences:

“The discussion in the first book is concerned with the nature of civilization and the events that go with it. We have dealt- as we believe- with the problems connected with that. Perhaps some later scholar, aided by the divine gifts of a sound mind and of solid scholarship, will penetrate into these problems in greater detail than we did here. A person who creates a new discipline does not have the task for enumerating all the individual problems connected with it. His task is to specify the subject of discipline and its various branches and the discussions connected with it. These successors, then, may gradually add more problems, until the discipline is completely presented” (Ibn Khaldun, III, 481).

Some personal reasons also contributed to guide Ibn Khaldun to the development of sociology. As it has been mentioned previously, Ibn Khaldun was a statesman, an adviser to the ruler of Morocco and that of Granada, and a prime Minister in Bijaya. However, his political life was a complete failure (Mahdi 1964: 102). He failed to reform his community and guide it to prosperity and stability although he was guided by political philosophy. He attributed his failure to insufficient knowledge of history. Thus, he turned to studying contemporary history of his region hoping to gain some insight in what caused his failure only to find that no major historian had given

an account of history of North Africa and Muslim Spain in the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries. These historians only gave a chronological organization of the events, but they didn't explain the causes and the laws that govern these events. Ibn Khaldun had to undertake this burden and develop a new science of culture that depends on the studying of the reality of the society, and explains its social organization and phenomena through historical events (Mahdi 1964: 286-287).

Ibn Khaldun's Major Works:

Although Ibn Khaldun wrote many books in many disciplines, such as Islamic law, Arabic literature, formal administration, philosophy, and geography, his most famous book is (*Kitab al-Ibar*), "Lessons of history," which consists of seven volumes in print. The first part of this historical work consists of a voluminous introduction, the *Muqaddimah* (the Prolegomena). The other parts are significant almost exclusively as a detailed source of information on historical events. However, those parts are overshadowed by the immense significance of the "*Muqaddimah*". The "*Muqaddimah*" contains Ibn Khaldun philosophy of history and the new science of culture. The final form of Ibn Khaldun's major book "*Kitab al-Ibar*" is divided into a preface, an introduction, and books 1, 2, and 3. This work deals with the problem of history in general and presents his critique of historical method. Book 1 contains the new science, the preface, the introduction and it came to be known as the introduction or the *Muqaddimah*. Book 2 contains a universal history down to Ibn Khaldun's own time. Book 3 is the history of western Islam.

A. Philosophy of History:

Ibn Khaldun is considered by numerous Western and Arab thinkers as the founder of the philosophy of history. When he was writing his "*Muqaddimah*," his original intention, which he subsequently achieved, was to write a universal history. However, before doing so, he judged and evaluated all the resources of historical information in order to establish a historical method. His aim was to provide the criteria necessary for distinguishing historical truth from error. Ibn Khaldun conceived history as endless cycles of flowering and decay, with no evolution or progress except that of going from primitive to a civilized society. Cohen (1952: 88) and Bunge (1996: 543) argue that this view of history was dominant

over all of Ibn Khaldun's work including his new science of culture, including his views of the origin of society, the origin of states, and the various types of societies and cultures. Arnold Toynbee admired Ibn Khaldun's achievements in the field of sociology and the field of philosophy of history. The "Encyclopedia Britannica" mentioned that:

"This [achievement] led Ibn Khaldun to formulate what the 20th-century English historian Arnold Toynbee has described as a "philosophy of history." In this achievement, he considered Ibn Khaldun as the founding father of the philosophy of history. Arnold Toynbee described Ibn Khaldun's achievement as "it is surely the greatest work of its kind that has ever yet been created by any mind in any time or place" (Encyclopedia Britannica: Ibn Khaldun).

B. The Science of Culture:

While Ibn Khaldun was elaborating his philosophy of history, he constructed a new science of culture" *Ilm al-umran*." His deliberate search to discover the social laws that govern the social change and explain the historical events led him to see clearly a new science. History for Ibn Khaldun is not merely a chronological event; there must be laws that govern the events of history. These laws of history are not lying beyond the human beings who created and directed those actions of history. Hence, the historical events can be grasped and controlled rationally only if its laws are explained and understood. Simon (2006:56) pointed out that Ibn Khaldun constructed the science of culture and society in order to achieve this aim: "History is comprehensible if its laws are understood. The formulation of social laws, similar to those of natural laws, determines the historical process and the respective situation, has been attempted for the first time by Ibn Khaldun, and from here, history as a science begins."(Simon 2006:150).

Gellner (1961: 389), Baali & Al-wardi (1981: 67) and Simon (2006:23) believe that Ibn Khaldun outlined in the "*Moqaddimah*" a philosophy of history and theory of society and discovered the new science of culture that is unprecedented in ancient and medieval writings and that is astonishingly similar to the modern sociology of Machiavelli, Vico, Montesquieu, Adam Smith, August Comte, Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Tarde, Tonnies, and Gumpłowicz. Simon (2006:76) also believes that "The *Muqaddimah* is a

scientific achievement of high rank. In spite of its many deficiencies, the *Muqaddimah*, in conception and exposition, by far surpasses everything that had been said about human culture until the time of Ibn Khaldun; and it is of equal rank with modern works which are concerned with similar problems” (Simon 2006: 11).

It is important to mention that Ibn Khaldun had not considered himself to be a philosopher since he intended to found a new science. Simon (2006: 134) pointed out that Ibn Khaldun sharply rejects philosophy and its representatives. In addition, he separated faith and knowledge in order to keep faith out of his study; he avoided metaphysical escalation by renouncing the reliance on a single explanation for the whole universe. By leaving the supernatural to religion, he remained formally faithful to the dogma, but he excluded this dogma from his scientific studies (Simon 2006: 155-157). Ibn Khaldun identified the nature of the new science, the methods, the aims, the purposes, and constructed its concepts and theories.

The New Science of Culture:

A. It's Nature

Ibn Khaldun believed that the science of culture is a universal and all-comprehensive science. Its material must be drawn from all known events. Further, the study must cover all aspects of social life and ascertain their importance regardless of their immediate practical relevance. For Ibn Khaldun, the new science is primarily practical more than that it is theoretical science. It is a rational science aiming at the explanation of the nature of social phenomena and understanding the actual aspects of social life as they really are. (Mahdi 1964: 290-291).

B. Principles of the New Science:

Issawi (1987: 69) details the basic principles in Ibn Khaldun's sociology as the following:

1. Social phenomena to obey laws. Although these laws are not as absolute as natural laws, they are sufficiently constant to cause social events to follow regular patterns; therefore, understanding these laws enables the sociologist to understand the trend of events.
2. These social laws operate on the level of the society not the level of the individual. Ibn Khaldun gave an example to illustrate this

principle: the attempts of reformers to change a corrupt state mostly failed because the individual's effort was submerged by the powerful social forces.

3. These laws can be discovered only by collecting facts and observing concomitants and sequences. These facts can be gathered from either records of the past events or observations of present events or from both.
4. Some set of social laws operates in societies with the same kind of structure even if they are separated by space and time. Thus, Ibn Khaldun emphasized that the remarks he makes about nomads equally apply to Arab Bedouins (pre-Islamic and contemporary), Berbers, Turkmen, and Kurds.
5. Societies are not static; social forms change and evolve. Social change follows an endless cycle of rise, maturity, and decay. This perspective can be applied on nomads and sedentary societies, civilizations, and states. This is also the cycle of history.

C. Ibn Khaldun's Methods and Purposes of the New Science of Culture

Ibn Khaldun believed that the knowledge of the actual state of society demands an empirical method through which data must be gathered from the field and organized. He used the historical method for the analysis of certain situations and cases of social phenomena. In addition, Ibn Khaldun believed that physical, geographical, and biological factors and the social factors such as political, economic, educational, and psychological factors are determined as conditions occur in the development of society and the character of culture. Schmidt (1926:31) pointed out that long before Montesquieu, Ibn Khaldun was the first thinker ever who adopted multiple causes to explain and understand the social phenomena.

Beside the establishment of the historical method, Ibn Khaldun presented a sophisticated comparative method in his major studies of the comparison and contrast between the nomadic and Bedouin societies and the urban and sedentary societies. This method was applied also in his comparative studies of various civilizations, nations, and dynasties. The scientific method of Ibn Khaldun is established in investigation, survey of the previous heritage, direct observation, and personal experience of the studied society (Mahdi 1964: 291). Simon (2006:178) stressed that Ibn Khaldun's originality lies in his partiality, objectivity, and his ability to

analyze his data by their actual causes, not by referring to theological or philosophical explanations.

The purposes that Ibn Khaldun was aiming at from establishing this new science are two-fold: immediate or direct purpose and indirect purpose. Direct purpose includes the discovery of the nature of social organization and laws that govern it. The indirect purposes include getting benefits from the social facts and social laws in correcting the historical events and providing the wisdom necessary to reform societies.

D. Ibn Khaldun's Sociology and Theories

1.) Theory of Physical Environment and its Social Effects

The first section of the six sections that the *Muqaddimah* consists of is “*On human civilization in general.*” In this section, Ibn Khaldun gave geographical information of his time. He believed in the profound influence of the natural environment such as zones, air, temperature, general climate, and nutrition upon the biological characteristics of people. He discussed the diversity of cultural conditions and civilizations as a consequence of abundance and scarcity of food and their effects on the human body and cultural character. Ibn Khaldun conceived the natural environment as a precondition for social life, especially with the analysis of economic factors that form the basis for intellectual production, way of life, taste, and morality. Ibn Khaldun discussed the relationship between the natural environment and the types of cultures and civilizations. He attributed some of the cultural differences among nations, such as life style, sciences, knowledge, religions, houses, clothes, crafts, economic mode, and civilization to the environmental conditions (Simon 2006:169). It is important to point out here that Ibn Khaldun didn't attribute group's differences to racial origins, nor to supernatural reasons; differences among groups are cultural and cultural differences are a result of the material environment and its effects on human life. Schmidt (1926) pointed out that there are many resemblances between the theory of Ibn Khaldun and that of the later sociologists like Montesquieu, Bodin, Bukle, Spencer and Ratzel (Schmidt 1926: 29-30).

2.) Economic Sociology

In different places of the second volume of the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn

Khaldun presented his economic sociology. He presented his theory of "the labor and value":

"God created for man all that is in the world. And men possess in partnership everything in the world. Once, however, an individual possesses anything, no other person may appropriate it, unless he gives an equal value in exchange for it. Hence, once a man has acquired sufficient strength, he tries to earn an income in order to exchange it for the necessities of life... and this gain may come without effort, as when rain improves the crops and so on; but even then nature acts as an aid which cannot operate unless man co-operates with it, as will be shown. Gain therefore, can only come about by effort and labor... This is obvious in the crafts, where the labor is apparent. It is also true of income derived from minerals, agriculture, or animal husbandry, for without labor there would have been no produce of profit" (Ibn Khaldun: II, 272-273).

"The income which a man derives from the crafts is, therefore, the *value of his labor*;...in certain crafts, the cost of the raw materials must be taken into account, for example, the wood and the yarn in carpentry and in weaving; nevertheless, the value of labor is greater because labor plays in these crafts the dominant part".

"In other occupations than crafts, too, the value of labor must be added to the cost of produce; for without labor there would have been no produce".

"In many such occupations the part played by labor is apparent, and a greater or smaller share of the value is reserved for it. In other cases, such as in the price of foodstuffs, labor's share may not be apparent. Although the cost of labor affects the price of grain, as we said before, this not apparent, except to a small number of cultivators, in countries where agricultural costs are low. It is clear, then, that all, or most, incomes and profits represent the value of human labor". (Ibn Khaldun: II, 278-281).

Ibn Khaldun also discussed many economic issues in details in different places in the second volume. He discussed the role of demand

and supply of agricultural and urban production. Prices and the independence of prices are also discussed with the emphasis on the role of the state in the economic production. Wealth and the accumulation of capital is a social product. In addition, Ibn Khaldun discussed the relationship between money, prestige, social class, and “*asabiyah*-group feeling” in the process of the accumulation of wealth. His economic discussions extended to include: public finance, changes in the rate of taxation, distribution of taxation, state expenditure on social services, that a state reserve fund is unnecessary, that the government is a market for goods and services, the affects of state expenditures on the national income and tax receipts. (Ibn Khaldun:II,.93, 220-223, 240, 241, 244, 257,274, 276, 285-286, 301, 361). Taking into account that Ibn Khaldun lived in the fourteenth century, his valuable ideas of social economy, value of labor, the origin of social stratification, the accumulation of capital and national wealth, and the role of the state on the economy were very relevant to what have been presented by the modern European sociologists such as David Hume, Adam Smith, and Karl Marx (Weiss 1995: 33; Alrefai & Brun1994:43; Soofi 1995: 392).

3.) Political Theory of Ibn Khaldun:

The Third chapter of Ibn Khaldun’s *Muqaddimah* deals with the state and sovereignty “*On dynasties, royal authority, the caliphate, government ranks, and all that goes with these things.*” The central theme, in Ibn Khaldun’s theory of the state, is that the states follow an endless cycle beginning with the rise, youth and peak, then decline and disintegration, and then another state will replace it. Every state, when it reaches its peak of strength, contains the seeds of its dissolution. Ibn Khaldun states that “Like the silkworm that spins and then, in turn, finds itself amidst the threads it itself has spun” (The International Encyclopedia of Social Science: 1996: Ibn Khaldun).

Enan (1993: 45) pointed out that Ibn Khaldun conceived the whole history of states, human societies, and civilizations as an endless cycle of emergence, growth, and decline. In addition, AlAzmeh (1982:598) believes that Ibn Khaldun’s position is contrary to the religious tradition of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam which views history as a straight line that has a beginning and an end.

Furthermore, Ibn Khaldun conceived that the states are like human

beings. It begins by childhood and youth, and then reaches the peak of its strength, and then begins to decline and breakdown. The state is like man, it also has a natural age, and Ibn Khaldun estimated the life of the state with three generations, a generation being estimated at forty years. Thus, the life of the state does not generally exceed one hundred and twenty years except in rare cases (Ibn Khaldun, I, 142-143). Building on his personal observation and experience of the decline of Islamic states in Spain and North Africa, Ibn Khaldun believed that the state emerged and was strengthened by the support of both religious unifying roles and the bond of the group "*Asabiya*" or by one of them (Enan 1993:78). Ibn Khaldun concluded this chapter by speaking of injustice and despotism, which leads to the dissolution of the state and the destruction of civilization (Ibn Khaldun, I, 142-143).

Ibn Khaldun's political theory is very similar to that of Vico and Marx in terms of cyclical succession (Simon2006: 38). It also put the element of the organic approach which appeared later in the works of Montesquieu, Spencer, Comte, and Durkheim (Zaid 2003:221; AlAz-meh1981:55).

4.) Social Classes and Stratification:

In the sixth prologue of the first book, of the *Muqaddimah*, and in many different places, Ibn Khaldun presented many valuable ideas about social stratification in society. Ibn Khaldun was assured about the economic foundation of the society including various resources, such as property, private property, the source of income, and the political positions on the formulations of ranks and classes:

"Rank means the power enabling beings to be active among the fellow men under their control with permission and prohibition, and to have forceful superiority over them, in order to make them avoid things harmful to them and size their advantages....Each class among the inhabitants of a town or zone of civilization has power over the classes lower than it. Each member of lower class seeks the support of rank from members of the next higher class, and those who gain it become more active among the people under their control in proportion to the profit they get out of it. Thus, rank affects people in whatever way they make their living. Whether it is influential or

restricted depends on the class and status of the person who has a particular rank. If the rank in question is influential, the profit accruing from it is correspondingly great. If it is restricted and unimportant, the profit is correspondingly small. A person who has no rank, even though he may have money, acquires a fortune only in proportion to the labor he is able to produce, or the property he owns, and with accordance with the efforts he makes coming and going to increase it. This is the case with most merchants and, as a rule, with farmers. It is also the case with craftsmen. If they have no rank and are restricted to the profit of their crafts, they will mostly be reduced to poverty and indigence, and they do not quickly become wealthy” (Ibn Khaldun: II, 329-330).

5.) Theory of Evolution

Ibn Khaldun in the last chapter of the first volume of the *Muqaddimah*, drew the lines of an evolutionary theory:

“One should then look at the world of creation. It started out from the minerals and progressed, in an ingenious, gradual manner, to plants and animals. The last stage of minerals is connected with the first stage of plants, such as palms and vines, is connected with the first stage of animals such as snails and shellfish which have only the power of touch. The word “connection” with regard to these created things means that the last stage of each group is fully prepared to become the first stage of the next group. 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 reflect. The higher stage of man is reached from the world of monkeys, in which both sagacity and perception are found, but which has not reached the stage of actual reflection and thinking. At this point, we come to the first stage of man after the world of monkeys. This is as far as our physical observation extends” (Ibn Khaldun, I, 195-221).

6.) Sociology of Population:

In more than five pages of the first and second volumes of the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun discussed the relationships between the

growth of population and society. He emphasized the economic and hygienic factors that affect the size of the population. Moral and social factors also affect the size of population. Ibn Khaldun's theory was very optimistic, he believed that the growth of the population will motivate people to work and cooperate, this will increase the surplus goods and expand and will lead to more prosperity and wealth (Issawi 1987: 92-98). Contrary to Malthus ideas of the growth of population, Ibn Khaldun believed that large numbers of population create wealth. Differences in income and market prosperity between districts and towns are due to differences in population (Schmidt 1967:174).

7.) Bedouin and Nomadic sociology:

In the second chapter of the *Muqaddimah*, which is entitled "*Bedouin civilization, savage nations and tribes, and their conditions of life*", Ibn Khaldun studied the Bedouin societies as the beginning of his book because he believed that Bedouins are prior to sedentary people. He showed that Bedouins and sedentary people are natural groups, and that Bedouins are closer to being good, and more disposed to courage than sedentary people. Ibn Khaldun held all his analysis of Bedouin tribes and societies by his central concept of "*al- Asabiyah* or group feeling." In this chapter, Ibn Khaldun presented the first sociological theory of social solidarity and social cohesion five hundred years before Durkheim; he presented the functional approach that was represented in the role of "*Asabiyyah*" in both Bedouin and urban societies. This chapter also carried the first model of the comparative method between the primary groups (Bedouins) and the sedentary, large, and urban groups (towns and cities). This model has been presented by most of the classical sociology such as Montesquieu, Comte, Durkheim, Tonnies, Sutherland, Cooley, and Parsons (AlAzmeh 2003:66).

8.) the Psychological Sociology.

In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun presented theories of psychological sociology. He analyzed the psychological motivations of behavior such as desires, ambition, competition, and "*Asabiyyah*" (group feeling), on the level of individual, small groups, and nations. He also presented a sophisticated theory of "imitation." The vanquished always wants to imitate the victor in his distinctive marks, his dress, his occupation, and all of his other conditions and costs." In this theory, Ibn Khaldun

referred the imitation to social and psychological origins, such as the belief that the perfection of the victor, and he refers to it in the social stratification as well: the people of lower ranks always imitate the people of higher ranks. Ibn Khaldun believed that the imitation is a sign of domination not only on the level of individuals (parents and children), but also in the level of nations and cultures, and he gave examples to support this observation. (Ibn Khaldun: I, 299-300).

9.) Urban Sociology:

The fourth chapter of the second book “*Countries and cities, and all other forms of sedentary civilization, and the conditions occurring there. Primary and secondary considerations in this connection*” deals with the urban sociology. Ibn Khaldun presented a profound analysis on many aspects of urban sociology such as: the origin of the urban society, the development of cities and towns, the condition of urbanization in Ibn Khaldun’s time, the erection and fall of cities, the culture of the cities and the sedentary people, and the roots, development, and decay of the sedentary culture. He analyzed also other aspects of urbanization and its relations to population, occupations, crafts, prosperity, states, and “*Asabiyyah*,” the group (Ibn Khaldun, II, 78-91).

10.) Additional Disciplines in Sociology: Religion, Education, and Law

In addition to the previous disciplines, Ibn Khaldun presented a valuable contribution to the sociology of knowledge, the sociology of occupation, the sociology of religion, the sociology of education, the sociology of socialization, and the sociology of law and jurisprudence, among many other sociological branches of the science of culture.

Applicability of Ibn Khaldun’s Sociology to Contemporary Social Research

In the field of political sociology, for example, Gellner (1961) used the foundation of political theory of both Ibn Khaldun and Karl Marx in Morocco as a case study. Kalpakin (2008) discussed Ibn Khaldun’s influence on contemporary international relations theory. Furthermore, Dallmayr (1997) discussed the location and the status of Ibn Khaldun’s political theory in the comparative political theories from a global perspective. Salloukh (1996) also used Ibn Khaldun’s perspective of the origin of the states and the elements of their growth, and the political-

social analysis of Ibn Khaldun's sociology of tribal societies in Jordan as a case study.

In the field of economic sociology, Dunn and Cordes (1994) discussed the recent increase in upper-bracket income tax rates and the future of supply-side debates over taxes in the light of the root of these phenomena in the economic theory of Ibn Khaldun. Kuran (1996), Hazbun (1994), and Warner (1993) discussed the Islamic Economy and its cultural features and relationship with the western-global economy; the authors cited Ibn Khaldun's economic theory in the aspect of the protection of the Islamic identity.

In the field of urban sociology Ismael and Ismael (1997) discussed the civil society in the Arab region. They discussed Max Weber's perspective on the Arab region and Ibn Khaldun's perspective of the civil societies in the fourteenth century. Leontidou et al. (1990) in their book about the "Mediterranean City," discussed the cultural features of the Mediterranean cities in the vision of pre-industrialization and post industrialization conditions. They refer to the analysis and the description of Ibn Khaldun of the Mediterranean cities and the conditions of living in these cities. Hamzed (1994) discussed the political dispute in Lebanon on the light of Ibn Khaldun's political perspective. Strange (1995) also used the economic and political perspectives of Ibn Khaldun in her article which discussed the nature of states and their behavior.

Conclusion

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), the Arab philosopher of history, historian, statesman, judge, and sociologist is considered by numerous European and Arab scholars as the founding Father of modern sociology. However, Ibn Khaldun's legacy and his remarkable contributions to social thought are excluded from the mainstream of intellectual production. This paper has been devoted to clarifying the outstanding contributions presented by Ibn Khaldun in formulating the subject matter, methods, concepts, various sociological branches, and theories of the new science of culture.

Ibn Khaldun sought to discover the laws that govern the social change and can predict and control the fate of societies. This necessity led Ibn Khaldun to discover (*Ilm Al-Umran*), so as to furnish the road into

an adequate understanding of history and social change. Until today, no European or Arab sociologist has been able to discover the laws that govern history and social change in human societies in the same fashion of natural science. Moreover, the dream of Ibn Khaldun is still open to the future, which is for others to build upon and enhance a greater understanding of the various aspects of sociology and its role in society.

As much as the burden of establishing the new science was undertaken entirely by Ibn Khaldun, no Arab sociologist has continued what Ibn Khaldun has begun. Social Science had to wait for several centuries until the European philosophers claimed the discovery of the science of culture and sociology.

As much as the Arabic sociology is indebted to Ibn Khaldun and his contributions to sociological theories, I would see one of the duties of Arab sociologists is to return Ibn Khaldun to the intellectual production around the world. This would reflect his contributions and acknowledge the status that he deserves in the fields of social sciences and the philosophy of history.

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ابن خلدون: المؤسس الفعلي لعلم الاجتماع، نظرياته وإسهاماته في الفكر الاجتماعي

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ملخص: ابن خلدون (1332-1406) عالم عربي رائد في فلسفة التاريخ، مؤرخ، ورجل سياسة، وقاض، وعالم اجتماع. يعتبر ابن خلدون بحق الأب المؤسس لعلم الاجتماع الحديث. وعلى الرغم من ذلك هناك افتراض شائع كثيراً في الإنتاج الفكري المعاصر مفاده أن علم الاجتماع قد نشأ حصرياً في أوروبا وحدها، ومن هنا كان هدف هذه الدراسة هو تبيان المساهمات الثرة التي قدمها ابن خلدون للنظريات الكلاسيكية، وللبادئ علم الاجتماع ومناهجه، وكذلك تبيان الطريقة التي اكتشف بها ابن خلدون علم الاجتماع كعلم جديد. وكذلك إلقاء الضوء على مدى تجذر النظريات الحديثة وارتباطها بما قدمه ابن خلدون من فكر متميز. كما تتعرض هذه الدراسة على قابلية نظريات ابن خلدون للتطبيق على مختلف الشؤون الاجتماعية المعاصرة. إن وضع فكر ابن خلدون في مكانه الصحيح ضمن مجال النظريات الاجتماعية الكلاسيكية لا شك سيضيف نوعاً من الاعتراف بالمساهمات المميزة التي قدمها ابن خلدون باعتباره المؤسس الأول للفكر الاجتماعي العربي بشكل عام ولعلم الاجتماع بشكل خاص.

المصطلحات الأساسية: ابن خلدون، النظريات الاجتماعية الكلاسيكية، تاريخ الفكر الاجتماعي، اكتشاف علم الاجتماع، نظريات ابن خلدون، منهج ابن خلدون، تطبيقات نظريات ابن خلدون.

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