

IBN KHALDŪN A FORERUNNER OF MODERN SOCIOLOGY

Method and Concepts of Growth and Development

Magid Al-Araki

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**Method and Concepts of Growth and
Development**

By Magid Al-Araki

Oslo and Akershus University
College of Applied Sciences
2014

The author starts the Norwegian translation¹ of the Muqaddimah [vol. I: 688 and vol. II: 695 pages], with an *introductory essay* to explain the translation and the central concepts in the Muqaddimah, as for instance the two divisions of the science of al-ʿumrān, *i.e.* Social Organization (*al-ʿumrān al-basharī*) and World Society (*al-ijtimāʿ al-ʿinsānī*) as well as the methodology of Ibn Khaldūn.

The translation, published in two volumes in 1212, is still among the most sold books in 2013. The translation has an index of names, geographical places, towns and authors. However, it does not contain an index of words and concepts. Ibn Khaldūn's terminology and the index planned by the end of this proposal could help in deciphering the details in the *mentioned introductory essay*. In addition, it gives access to the details of Ibn Khaldūn's methodology.

¹ Khaldūn Ibn and Magid al-Araki, *Al-Muqaddimah : Boken Om Lærdommene, Med En Introduksjon Til Verdens Historie* (Oslo: Pax, 2012).



«Be not arrogant because of thy knowledge, and have no confidence in that thou art a learned man. Take counsel with the ignorant as with the wise, for the limits of art cannot be reached, and no artist fully possesseth his skill. A good discourse is more hidden than the precious green stone, and yet it is found with slave-girls over the mill-stones.»

PTAH-HOTEP
Egyptian Fourth Dynasty
(2900–2700 b.c.)

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IBN KHALDŪN: A FORERUNNER OF MODERN SOCIOLOGY – METHOD AND CONCEPTS OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The Muqaddimah: An introductory chapter

Arnold Toynbee describes the work of Ibn Khaldūn as being «undoubtedly the greatest work of its kind that has ever yet been created by any mind in any time or place.»² The 600th year commemoration of Ibn Khaldūn’s death was celebrated in different countries in the Middle East, United States and Europe. In Norway, he was heralded one of the most important 100 authors in the world. In July 2006, the Norwegian periodical *Sosiologi-i-dag* published a special issue entitled *Ibn Khaldūn*, where this author

² A. Toynbee, *A Study of History: The Growths of Civilization*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962).

contributed with two articles covering Ibn Khaldūn's life and work as well as excerpts from different chapters in his Opus Magnum, the Muqaddimah. The translation of the whole Muqaddimah into Norwegian is achieved in 2012.³ Since this translation does not include an index, the present work could help finding important concepts in English.

The focus of this research has been to specify and deduce for further use the method of analysis in Ibn Khaldūn's Muqaddimah, and to explain the body of concepts associated with it. The author has used text analysis to deduce the method as well as important keywords. This made useful the body of encyclopaedic knowledge embodied in the *Muqaddimah*. Important passages were then selected and analysed using the deduced method. The approach draws upon a thesis earlier presented to the University of Oslo in 1983.

The findings are original compared to existing interpretations of Ibn Khaldūn. 30 years of research underlined that earlier findings are still correct. The findings have since been revised and newer references added.

The Arabic concepts encountered in the text are limited to the most important key-concepts of growth and development with their methodological, sociological and economic derivatives.

General introduction

Ibn Khaldūn strove to discover the how and why that altered the course of Arab-Islamic civilization. His critiques of historians, their deficiencies and faults, made him adopt historiography as a vehicle for his thoughts.

The Muqaddimah that made him famous is the introductory volume to a much larger work entitled The Book of Lessons. The lessons in the Muqaddimah represent the body of knowledge (the science of *ʿumrān*: Social organization) and World civilization) and the method of analysis on which historians and researchers should base their writings.

It is important to remember that the concept of «social organization» encompasses the concept of «growth and development» within a limited local society where empirical studies can find place.

It is also important to remark the distinction between concepts like *al-ijtimāʿ al-basharī* (Social organization), and *al-ijtimāʿ al-ʿinsānī* (World civilization). These are important for understanding the socio-economic thoughts, considered in a local context and the environmental geographical influences, considered on a world level.

Ibn Khaldūn invented several new concepts for his *science of al-ʿumrān*. Most of them are dichotomous. They have an inherent meaning that conveys commonly accepted ideas, when they stand alone, but they also express specific or dynamic ideas when used in conjunction with other words or numbers. Thus, the concept of

³ Khaldūn Ibn and Magid al-Araki, *Al-Muqaddimah : Boken Om Lærdommene, Med En Introduksjon Til Verdens Historie* (Oslo: Pax, 2012).

al-ʿumrān expresses the idea of social prosperity when it stands alone. However, when used together with ordinal numbers, as for instance, *al-ʿumrān al-awwal*, i.e. the first phase of growth and development, it becomes a dynamic tool of measurement.

It is unfortunate that this key-concept of *al-ʿumrān*, often translated by the general term civilization, appears sometimes translated by population or agriculture. The loss of the distinction between the static and the dynamic levels of *al-ʿumrān* has led to a distortion of Ibn Khaldūn's ideas and deficient interpretations in Rosenthal's otherwise highly respected English translation. Therefore, neither the science of Ibn Khaldūn nor his methodology – which is of Aristotelian inspiration, or his differentiation between theoretical and empirical data, are properly detailed in books and articles consulted. His method is often extolled, but without any significant specification. Ibn Khaldūn announces his methodological components in few sentences at the beginning of the *Muqaddimah* and illustrates them extensively through examples. To deduce the method from these examples, also requires a correct translation of the key-concepts in the *Muqaddimah* (Prolegomenon), as mentioned below.

Integration of method and body of knowledge

Ibn Khaldūn states that the utility of a factual event can be derived from it, itself, and from external evidence by checking the conformity with the real world. This definition integrates knowledge and method in its dualistic perspective: the event-in-itself and, the event-in-its-context. None of the books and articles consulted uses this dichotomy to understand the writings of Ibn Khaldūn.

The thing in-itself is in fact a kind of definition that limits what the researcher intends to study. However, the analysis of a phenomenon in relation to essential extraneous factors refers to the context where the phenomenon belongs. A context implies change and offers innumerable variables. To Ibn Khaldūn, only knowledge of the *natural* or plausible modes of social organization (*ṭabā'īc al-ʿumrān*) makes critical investigation possible. When contextualised *al-ʿumrān* becomes the empirical field within which phenomenon can be analysed and from which *ṭabā'īc* can be deduced. The term *ṭabā'īc* refers to *plausible and persuasive arguments* to be considered as natural – either by creation or by habit, and within the context of social organization. There is the *true nature* of social organization, of conditions, of heat and cold, of all existent things, of attitude or particular quality etc. Thus, the contextual body of knowledge supports the interpretation of this term.

To Ibn Khaldūn, the two main purposes for social organization are first, to realise the comfort of companionship and, second, to satisfy material needs through co-operation. Patterns of community create two interdependent social systems: *World society* with its socio-economic geographical zones, and *Social organization* with its urban and rural segments. We intend to clarify the distinction between these two patterns of community. This makes the empirical context of *al-ʿumrān* more precise

and the methodology more applicable. This distinction is not apparent in articles and books written on Ibn Khaldūn due to the misinterpretation of this key-concept of *al-ʿumrān*. Ibn Khaldūn defines in fact his most important concepts. This happens around 85 times in the Muqaddimah using the expression *alladhī huwa* – meaning, «That which equates». Thereafter, comes the definition of the concept in question.

To Ibn Khaldūn, the rural society is an earlier stage of development than urban society. The conditions that affect human beings vary from the centre to the peripheries, or rural social organization, according to the proximity to or the remoteness from the centre. Conditions can later turn into customs (*ʿawāʿid*).

The term *aḥwāl* denotes in fact four main factors: Political authority (*mulk*); Surplus earnings (*kasb*); Crafts (*ṣanāʿiʿ*) and Sciences (*ʿulūm*). Each of these conditions affects socio-economic growth and decline. When conditions become firmly rooted, i. e. deeply entrenched, Ibn Khaldūn calls them customs (*ʿawāʿid*) that may be difficult to reveal or change.

The distinction between the two levels of *al-ʿumrān* (world and rural/urban) and the deduction of the four conditions of growth and development are central for understanding the socio-economic and methodological thought of Ibn Khaldūn. In connection with the analysis of a phenomenon, within each level of social organization, the empirical context should permit the study of underlying conditions and customs.

Any translation that does not differentiate between contextual meanings will lead to a defective understanding of Ibn Khaldūn’s science of *al-ʿumrān* and his method of analysis. Many of these contextual meanings are intermingled in Rosenthal’s English translation⁴.

The details of the method of analysis

Differentiation and integration constitute the bridge between the methodological and the socio-economic thoughts of Ibn Khaldūn. Chapters 1 and 2 discuss Ibn Khaldūn’s method of analysis that we have deduced and structured.

Knowledge, according to Ibn Khaldūn, is composed of two main categories: Perception, i.e. the thing pictured by the mind, and apperception, or the thing as awareness. The mind makes judgements that things are *so* and not *so*. This leads the conscious and self-aware mind to draw conclusions and make arguments. Three levels of intellect are applicable in this cognitive process:

The first is the discerning intellect.

The second is the experimental intellect.

The third is the theoretical or speculative intellect.

4 Rosenthal, F. (1958). *Ibn Khaldūn: The Muqaddimah: an Introduction to History*. Bollingen Foundation, Inc., New York

The application of these levels of intellect is not clear in the literature on Ibn Khaldūn, although they are central for understanding his methodology.

Consciousness has two levels: Perception of the world, as it appears in the pictures of the mind, and apperception, which is heightened self-awareness and judgements based upon the ordered and arranged pictures in the mind. The ability to think is the process that translates perception to apperception. The possibility of drawing faulty conclusions is always present, even after application of the maxims of logic.

Logic sharpens the mind in the orderly presentation of proofs and arguments, but logic is something abstract and remote from the human senses. Ibn Khaldūn points out that it can be difficult to reach unequivocal conformity with the facts one finds in the real world because things may contain something that does not allow logical conclusions or contradicts the canon of logic, as in matters of belief. Ibn Khaldūn states that it takes critical insight to discover the hidden truth; it takes knowledge to lay truth bare and polish it to apply critical insight to it. Concepts such as knowledge, consciousness, perception, apperception, thinking and logic are important for understanding the structure of Ibn Khaldūn's method of analysis.

As previously mentioned, Ibn Khaldūn does not discuss these methodological components in detail, but mentions them in some sentences. We deduce them from the examples and cases where they are illustrated. This is one of the major findings in this research.

Whenever confronted with a dubious piece of information, Ibn Khaldūn poses a question about the reliability of the source. He always begins his discussion by stating a hypothesis and ends it with arguments and proofs. His method of analysis consists of five steps:

- *Step 1:* To check events and reported stories against the constitutive principles underlying them
- *Step 2:* To compare events and reported stories with similar material
- *Step 3:* To probe more deeply with the yardstick of philosophy, i.e. logic
- *Step 4:* To probe more deeply by applying knowledge about the true nature of social organization
- *Step 5:* To probe more deeply with the help of speculation and critical insight. In the following, we comment these five steps.

Every event or phenomenon, according to Ibn Khaldūn, whether it comes into being in connection with some essence or as the result of an action (*zātan kāna aw fi'lan*), must inevitably possess a true nature or attitude peculiar to its essence (*fi zātih*) as well as to the accidental conditions that may attach themselves to it.⁵ This dual definition is in Aristotle's Ethics. Aristotle holds that the selection of pleasures is not with reference to pleasure itself, but with reference to accompanied activities.

⁵ This dichotomy seems to be a lasting methodological canon. See for instance today's discussion of the concept of autopoiesis (self-reference) that Niklas Luhmann borrowed to HR Maturana to build his Systems Theory.

The first methodological step above states that it is central to determine the dichotomy and the nature of the item to be analysed, disclose its most important attributes or constitutive principles.

The second step deals with analogy, primarily used when comparing related and familiar events. Comparison reveals similarities and differences. The reciprocal relations that exist in one's data can lead to the discovery of the unknown from the known.

The third step is to probe more deeply with logical argumentation. When we study the origin of a thing, its genus, specific differences, size, and strength, we can draw conclusions as to the possibility or impossibility of the data in connection with it, states Ibn Khaldūn.

The fourth step is to go further and probe more deeply by applying empirical knowledge, or knowledge of the true nature of what exists in social organization. Application of a specific type of knowledge stands here as a methodological tool. Knowledge about events, customs, and conditions within social organization provides a frame of solid reference. One looks for the conformity of the source material to reality and rejects what does not conform to what is already well established and known. The criterion of conformity is a key principle in the methodology of Ibn Khaldūn.

The fifth step is to probe more deeply with the help of speculation and critical insight. This methodological step returns us to the three stages of thinking above. To Ibn Khaldūn, when thinking intends to create something, it must, for the sake of the order that exists among the things; understand the reason or causes of that thing, or the conditions governing it.

Reason, causes and conditions are the principles that help to determine the length of a causal chain. Some are able to establish a causal nexus for two or three levels. Others may reach five or six, states Ibn Khaldūn. Combining perceptions and apperceptions occurs repeatedly, producing higher and higher forms of knowledge.

Considering the first dichotomy of the event or phenomenon to be analysed and the following steps of analysis, one finds that the criticism of a phenomenon is, in itself, a rational operation having its proper dialectics. When analysing, the researcher has to look for the beginnings of conditions and their order of priority. He must himself investigate the reasons behind the interpretation of conditions, or the reasons why conditions succeeded each other. He must search for a convincing explanation as to the similarities or the interrelations between these conditions. Methodology and body of knowledge are intermingled in the Muqaddimah. Ibn Khaldūn does not agree that the ability to think suits theological or metaphysical matters.

The socio-economic thought of Ibn Khaldūn

The quintessence of the socio-economic thought of Ibn Khaldūn lies in the operative

concept of *al-ʿumrān*. On the one hand, *al-ʿumrān* refers to an aggregated knowledge on human society in general and, on the other hand, it illuminates the dynamics of growth and development within a specific context. The literature on Ibn Khaldūn does not fully consider this duality of concepts, for instance, when translating *al-ʿumrān* by the general term civilization and sometimes by population, as previously stated. This has led to many distortions and misinterpretation of Ibn Khaldūn.

Environment and social structure

The six geographical introductions encountered in the Muqaddimah are not a repetition of knowledge from Ptolemy or al-Idrisi, as many think, but an economic geography that discloses the economic dependency between human kind and his environment. Growth and development (*kathrat al-ʿumrān*) in the third and fourth geographical zones are so highly multiplied and extend also to the fifth, sixth, and seventh zones.

However, geography and environment alone are not sufficient to explain economic dependency. Ibn Khaldūn states that there are things that affect social organization in as far as it is a social *gathering*. Thus, the aforementioned four factors of political power, surplus earnings, sciences and crafts and industry affect growth within its proper context and societal structure.

Within the previously mentioned societal structure, Ibn Khaldūn underlines that while the rural community needs the cities for their necessities of life, the urban population needs the rural community for conveniences and luxuries. Antagonistic feelings can lead to power transformation. To transform itself from rural to urban styles of life, a community must rely on *ʿaṣabiyyah*, a socio-psychological group solidarity that gives protection and makes possible mutual defence. Solidarity leads the group to pursue its goal, which is to attain royal authority depending on suitable strategic calculations.

Three generations incorporate the life and death of a state/dynasty. This happens within five different stages of power. The first stage is that of success, the second is that of complete control over the subjects and absolute royal authority for the leader. The third stage is one of leisure and the tranquil exercise of royal authority. The fourth stage is one of contentment and peace. The fifth stage is one of waste and squandering. It is in this fifth stage that the state/dynasty reaches senility. There is no cure for this ailment and, eventually, the strongest *ʿaṣabiyyah*-group destroys the state/dynasty.

It is therefore important with careful planning of the overall socio-economic policy of the state (section 4.3) to avoid collapse. This implies order in public finances, just assessments and imposition of taxes. To Ibn Khaldūn the strongest incentive for economic activity is to lower to an equitable level the amounts of individual impositions levied upon persons capable of undertaking economic

enterprises. Consequently, economic enterprises (*ʿiʿtimār*)⁶ grow and increase, impositions and assessments mount and the tax revenue increases. Taxation finances the machinery of the state and pays state functionaries. However, one should never levy taxation «beyond the limits of equity».

Books and articles on Ibn Khaldūn explain the previously mentioned five stages of growth and decline. However, to underline important economic concepts, to distinction between empirical and theoretical levels of *al-ʿumrān* (growth and development) and to detail the concept of *al-aḥwāl* (conditions), will add richness to Ibn Khaldūn's economic thoughts. The conception of the Laffer curve draws upon a short passage of *The Muqaddimah*, and reminds of Ibn Khaldūn's multiplier effect.

Arthur B. Laffer states that he did not invent the Laffer Curve himself, and says that Ibn Khaldūn, a 14th century Muslim Philosopher, wrote in his work *The Muqaddimah*: «[...] It should be known that at the beginning of the dynasty, taxation yields a large revenue from small assessments. At the end of the dynasty, taxation yields a small revenue from large assessments.» (Laffer, 2004: 3).⁷

To Ibn Khaldūn, injustice brings about the ruin of growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*). Business inactivity means that people would acquire what they need for their own consumption and would not be motivated to undertake any activity that might generate surplus earnings (*al-kasb*), i.e. the portion of one's earnings that are subject to taxation. Abundant growth and development as well as business prosperity (*al-ʿumrān wa wufūrih wa nafaq aswāqih*)⁸ depend upon productivity and human efforts in every direction in line with one's own interests and earnings.

On the other hand, solid growth and development entail sustainability. When a city is large and has a high degree of growth and development (*ʿumrānuhu kathīr*), and is unlimited in the variety of its socio-economic conditions, the loss it suffers from hostile acts and injustice is small, because such losses take place gradually. The consequences will become visible only after some time. Thus, the previous loss had remained concealed. This, however, happens only rarely. Here is a type of Khaldūnian Risk Analysis or Management of losses.

To Ibn Khaldūn, labour is the *sine qua non* of all and the principal source of value. There is primary and additional or surplus labour. Additional labour involves activities that creates surplus. One must choose skilful people to do them and be in charge of them. Therefore, labour Markets as well as crafts and industry thrive. The income and the expenditure of the city increase. Affluence comes to those who assume such tasks by their labour. When growth and development [not population as translated by Rosenthal] increase, productive labour in turn increases, and luxury increases in correspondence with the increase of surplus earnings. Crafts and industry are then created to obtain more products. The value realised from them increases and, as a result, surplus earnings are again multiplied in the town. Production thrives even

6 The term *al-ʿiʿtimār* includes economic activities that enhances growth and development. It is closely related to the term *al-ʿumrān* (Growth and development).

7 Laffer, Arthur B. (2004). *The Laffer Curve: Past, Present and Future*. In: Executive Summary Background. Washington: The Heritage Foundation. No. 1765:1–16

8 The concept *al-ʿumrān* is used here, and many times, as a measurement of growth and development.

more than before. And so it goes with the second and the third increase. Translating *al-ʿumrān* (Growth and development) by *population* has led many authors to conclude that for Ibn Khaldūn, the growth of population and the growth of civilization are ultimately synonymous, which is not correct.

Ibn Khaldūn discusses the rudiments of an economic theory similar to the one that was put forward in the West by J. M. Keynes (1883–1946), especially the so-called multiplier effect. Depending upon his analysis at the macro-economic level, Ibn Khaldūn observed the overall mechanisms of this multiplier effect, which is principally based upon consumption and production. The economic growth that is generated by the different phases of Ibn Khaldūn's multiplier effect continues until we reach the stage of opulence.

The first cycle in Ibn Khaldūn's multiplier effect, starts when productive labour is exploited for the first time. This generates a surplus in foodstuffs, etc. and the surplus is traded for products that cannot be produced by one's own labour. Thus, new markets are generated for the distribution of materials available. We now enter into a second stage of development that moves beyond survival. The new markets create new and greater consumption. The labour market expands to produce greater surpluses, more trade, and the growth in markets for consumer (luxury) goods. When we reach the end of this cycle, another stage of growth and development (*tawr al-ʿumrān al-ʿawwal*) occurs.

The surplus generated in the first cycle of production is put to work to generate trade, new products, new needs, new skills, and new consumers. Each successive cycle repeats this pattern until the society is opulent and begins to squander its wealth. The general opulence generates carelessness and waste and that is when the socio-economic decline becomes manifest. However, a new government could eventually be able to renew the economic infrastructure and produce a new cycle of growth and development (*yastajiddu ʿumrān akhar*).

To Ibn Khaldūn, all the surplus productive labour serves to create luxury and wealth, in contrast to the original labour that serves to provide the necessities of life. The city that is superior to another, by one stage of growth and development [NB! *al-ʿumrān* is here used as a unit of measurement], becomes superior by its increased surplus earnings and prosperity, and by its customs of luxury, which are not found in the other city. The more numerous and the more abundant the development in a city, the more luxurious are the conditions of its inhabitants.

Planning of towns and cities is thus an area of economic importance. Ibn Khaldūn is conscious the importance of the town's infrastructure for growth and development. It is important to choose the right site before building, to attend to the quality of the air, water, the fields, and the pastures and the need for woods to supply firewood and building material. One should also insure that the town is situated close to the sea, to facilitate the importation of foreign goods from remote countries. With regard to the amount of prosperity and business activity in them, cities and towns differ in accordance with the different size of their growth and development (*tafāḍul ʿumrānuhā bi-l-kathrah wa-l-qillah*). This aspect of planning is somehow neglected in books and articles written on Ibn Khaldūn.

Economic expansion and excessive urban culture and luxury could corrupt a city in respect of markets and development undertakings and lead to poverty. When the various classes of burghers leave a city, inhabitants of the city decrease and growth and development disintegrates in the city (*'ikhtilāl al-ʿumrān*). When Ibn Khaldūn compares two cities, he compares the judges of one city with the judges of the other, the merchants of the one with the other, etc. including artisans, small-businessmen, emirs and police officers. When he asserts that a city is superior to another by its stage of growth and development, he claims that the city is superior to the other city in all of the four socio-economic factors mentioned earlier.

Many other socio-economic concepts are less clearly explained in the literature about Ibn Khaldūn. There are for instance four to five concepts of profit that we underline in this research: *kasb*, *rizq*, *makāsib*, *muktasab*, *muktasabāt*, *mutamawwal and qinyah*. Articles and books on Ibn Khaldūn only use one of these terms, namely profit, to refer to all of them. The distinction between concepts like *«al-ijtimāʿ al-basharī»* (Social organization), and *«al-ijtimāʿ al-ʿinsānī»* (World civilization) are likewise important for understanding the socio-economic thoughts when considered in their proper context.

The primary value of this research lies in a completely new interpretation of the Opus Magnum of Ibn Khaldūn. In this sense, most of the earlier doubts about Ibn Khaldūn's Muqaddimah are given their place within a holistic structure.

The plan of research

The plan of this research proceeds as follows: This research begins by presenting a short account of the Historical Background in order to provide the reader with a glimpse of the 14th century. The focus is upon Ibn Khaldūn's place and time, the science he describes, his life and specifically, the work entitled *The Muqaddimah* – its conception and translation, as well as the author's own view of the work.

The main body of this research, however, concentrates on Ibn Khaldūn's Method of Analysis and on his Socioeconomic Thought. Ibn Khaldūn's method is central for the understanding of his writings. Much has been written about Ibn Khaldūn's method. It has also been highly praised. However, none of these studies has tried to specify or trace the methodological variables or the procedure of analysis that is followed by Ibn Khaldūn, nor do they recognise his pragmatic differentiation between the theoretical and the empirical fields of research.

Ibn Khaldūn's socioeconomic thought is theoretically conceived as aggregated knowledge that in principle can be applied universally throughout the human world. His empirical research findings are specific ones that speak about the developments within particular societies. In the latter case, Ibn Khaldūn's dynamic theory of socioeconomic development and change is illuminated.

Accordingly, this research follows two distinct lines of inquiry, which attempt to disclose Ibn Khaldūn's methodology and which will distinguish the building blocks that

he uses to construct a general sociology. The first involves an explanation of Ibn Khaldūn's method of analysis and its applicability for the science of al-*ʿumrān*. The second addresses his particular concepts of growth and development or his economic sociology, its structure and theories. This will establish the dialectical link between the method and the concept of sociology, and will restore to the Muqaddimah or Prolegomenon, its character of wholeness.

The method of research employed in this study is a combination of the techniques of content analysis and structural analysis applied to a comprehensive selection of important passages from the Prolegomenon.

Content analysis refers to the investigation of the content of a selected passage, and the definition of the main variables or ideas that it comprises. The passage is then understood both in terms of its antecedents, and as part of a logical sequence. The objective here is to discover the main structure of the Khaldūnian edifice of thoughts.

Ibn Khaldūn's most important concepts are, at first, identified in a preliminary way. Then their meanings are deduced, developed and structured, within the context of particular passages. Thereafter, the meaning is controlled through consulting other passages in other parts of the Prolegomena. This procedure aims at securing the coherence of the text as a whole and the reliability of the specific meaning of the concept as it is used in the particular passage.

The technique of *structural analysis* is closely related to that of *content analysis*. The structure is determined by Ibn Khaldūn's ordering of chapters and subchapters in the Prolegomena. Form and content are closely connected to one other. Discussing the text's structure helps to explicate the methodology that Ibn Khaldūn utilised.

Content and structural analyses were also found to be useful in regards to the re-translation of several central Khaldūnian concepts.

The English citations used in this research are taken from the translation by F. Rosenthal 1958, but with personal corrections based on the original in Arabic. These corrections are so many that we prefer that citations are located in the English translation of Rosenthal using the Arabic citations. The reader will be able to locate citations by checking the Arabic original in the margin of the English translation. Rosenthal consequently uses the Arabic original in the margin.

The Arabic manuscript referred to in this work is the edition prepared by Quatremère in 1858. The following notation is used when referring to Rosenthal and Quatremère: (QI: page; RI: page). The letter «Q» stands for the Arabic manuscript of Quatremère⁹. The letter «R» stands for the English translation by Rosenthal¹⁰. The Roman number stands for the particular volume from which the citation is taken. Whenever necessary, the transcription of Arabic terms will figure in brackets.

My retranslation should not be understood as a criticism of Rosenthal. Rosenthal

⁹ A. Ibn Khaldun, *Prologomènes D'ebn-Khaldoun*, Texte arabe publié d'après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Impériale par M. Quatremère ed. (Paris: Benjamin Duprat, 1858).

¹⁰ A. Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddimah*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, 2nd ed., Bollingen Series; 43 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967).

writes in the introduction to his translation of the Muqaddimah that Ibn Khaldūn uses «a new terminology that was largely his own» (RI: lxix). Rosenthal continues:

«Moreover, Ibn Khaldūn's particular terminology, which he evolved with great pains for his 'new science', had to be preserved as far as possible; to some degree, it must have impressed his contemporary readers as unusual. Therefore, at least the outstanding terms, such as *‘aṣabiyyah*, *badāwah*, were preserved in the translation by rather artificial loan renderings («civilization», «group spirit», «desert life or attitude»). This involved the occasional occurrence of expressions such as «large civilization». But any other procedure would irrevocably have destroyed the essential unity of Ibn Khaldūn's work, which is one of its main claims to greatness.» (RI: cv).

There is no doubt that Rosenthal has performed an outstanding scholarly achievement in his translation of the Muqaddimah. However, the terms he identifies are probably not the key ones to focus upon in order to properly interpret the work. The terms do not need to maintain an artificial distance from everyday usage in order to preserve «the essential unity of Ibn Khaldūn's work, which is one of its main claims to greatness» (ibid). On the contrary, the new terms need to be translated in ways that can cogently express and communicate Ibn Khaldūn's intended meaning in specific and differing contexts. That is the intended goal here.

The plan of this research is demanding and, therefore, there is no intention to compare Ibn Khaldūn's thoughts to those of other scholars. However, reference is occasionally made to similarities in his writings to concepts and positions that have been discussed by western sociologists who wrote hundreds of years later.

It took four years to complete the first version of this work, submitted to the University of Oslo in the year 1983. The years that have followed permitted the further development and restructuration of Ibn Khaldūn's methodological concepts to adapt them to modern teaching purposes. This second version has been adjusted and adapted, but the major structural constructs and the applications that were made in 1983 are still valuable today.

This edition also includes editorial changes and revisions. The most important change has been the assemblage of a glossary of concepts, which will probably be useful for readers who are unfamiliar with Ibn Khaldūn's work. Gathering central concepts in a glossary has enabled the consolidation of earlier findings. It will also make it easier for researchers, with knowledge of the Arabic language, to control the efforts of re-translation.

Ibn Khaldūn, his century, life and work

The best way to introduce Ibn Khaldūn (1332–1406) is to start with a short historical background of his age. Abu Saïd Abd ar-Rahman Ibn Muhammad Ibn Khaldūn al-Hadrami al-Ishbili is a remarkable man of the 14th century. Both his life and writings mirror the great breadth of his interests and the turmoil of his century.

What are then the principal characteristics of that century, both in the part of the

world to which he belonged and in neighbouring regions? In the following pages, will look at:

- Ibn Khaldūn's age – the 14th century and its two contrasting civilizations
- Ibn Khaldūn's colourful and agitated life
- The Muqaddimah or the Prolegomenon, its conception and translation
- The Prolegomenon: an appraisal
- Comments on Ibn Khaldūn's writings
- Ibn Khaldūn's view of his work
- Ibn Khaldūn's terminology

Ibn Khaldūn's age – the 14th century and its two contrasting civilizations

The 14th century was a century of reforms, wars and political crises as well as a century of intellectual and commercial developments. The Christian West was still sending Crusader armies to neighbouring foreign realms, although the movement to pillage and destroy non-Christian strongholds had peaked and began to wane in the course of several hundred years. The Mongol Empire in the East found its most zealous renovator in the person of Timur Lenk (the lame) or Tamerlane (1336–1405). The domination and supremacy of the Pope was being questioned and England and France were bogged down in the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453). The use of gunpowder for firearms spread in this century and the first mercenaries were hired under the leadership of the Armagnac.

The rudiments of an emerging understanding of the natural sciences were beginning to influence academic life. The century witnessed the establishment of many new universities in Europe. Especially in Italy, urban life witnessed the development of long distance trading activities, particularly for the acquisition of luxury goods, which resulted in a division of labour and the growth of cities. The rise and flourishing of trade corporations heralded the beginnings of capitalism and a moneyed aristocracy.

The growth and development of trade and cities and a greater interest in the exploration of the natural sciences would eventually lead to economic and military hegemony, at the expense of a stagnating Islamic civilization. The 14th century in Europe, with beginning transformations in a host of areas, prepared the ground for the blossoming later generations would name the Renaissance.

The Maghreb (North Africa) was the most accessible target for European merchants. Fez, Tlemcen and Bejaia, in the Maghreb, were favourable places for European expansion. Gold, arriving from the Sudan, was sent through Europe, even though it was destined for Oriental buyers. European militia chieftains were at the service of the Hafsid rulers of Tunis, but they were provided and under the direction of Le Roi d'Aragon.

The Maghreb had formerly been the core of the great empire of Almohades (1130–1269). This empire extended, during its heyday, to embrace the entire North

African coast, from the frontier of Egypt to the Atlantic, together with Moorish Spain. Western historians routinely refer to this period as a golden age (Nicholson 1969:432).

The empire of Almohades was an enlightened and tolerant seat of power. It made room for religious diversity and created conditions for harmonious interaction between religious communities. It was favourable to the expression and development of culture. Within its frontiers, one finds the great Aristotelian philosopher Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and the great Jewish philosopher Mose ben Maimon (Maimonides), among many others. Arabic and Islamic culture flourished in the cosmopolitan atmosphere that was allowed to develop. Social troubles were calmed and economic activities were prosperous.

The defeat of the Almohades was a result of Christian attacks, which culminated in the retreat of the Muslims from Andalusia (Southern Spain) and the emigration of a large number of prominent rich and intellectual families.

The arrival of these emigrants in North Africa played a role in the social transformations of society and had political repercussions. However, the Christian conquest of Andalusia weakened the Almohades Empire, which was unable to successfully resist a series of tribal attacks that resulted in the disintegration of the Maghreb.

A state of anarchy emerged with a slew of petty Berber dynasties that established themselves in North Africa. Similarly, petty Arabic dynasties sprouted up in other regions of the Maghreb, all the way to the mountains of Tartary.

North Africa was eventually reconstituted under the dynasties of the Marinides, in today's Morocco (1269–1420), the Hafsides, in today's Tunisia (1228–1574), and the Abdelwadides, in today's Algeria (1235–1393). These dynasties were in permanent conflict with one another. Each one wanted to reconstruct the great Maghreb of the Almohades (North Africa and Andalusia) under the auspices of their own leadership. They were unable to unify their resolve or agree upon a common plan. In addition to being in a continuous state of war with one another, there were other internal and external hindrances to any movement towards union.

Many factors played a part in the ongoing disarray. Of these, historians particularly mention the destructive role played by the Arab tribes of Suleym and Banu-Hilal, the change in the commercial gold routes,¹¹ as well as socioeconomic and political unrest, which many power-thirsty emirs exploited. When local tribes grew in size and strength, they posed a threat to central government, because ambitious emirs could easily manipulate them. These emirs were a constant threat to the central government. Stability depended upon tribal support. The affiliation of the many constituent tribes was gained by delegating tax collection to the stronger tribes, by land distribution, and by the provision of other economic and political incentives for securing tribal support. The machinations that were undertaken, in order to maintain the authority of the central government, lead to a state of constant instability.

The general economic situation, outside the urban centre, was dominated by

¹¹ Y. Lacoste, *Ibn Khaldun, Naissance De L'histoire Passe Du Tiers Monde* (Paris: Francois Maspero, 1978).

subsistence production, such as agriculture and pastoral herding. Although agriculture was clearly necessary, it was not seen as being a means for attaining wealth. It was the occupation of a socially inferior class, according to Ibn Khaldūn. The closer to the urban centres, the more diversified was the mode of production. In the centre itself, commerce and artisan activities were the main source of income. Commerce developed considerably in 14th century North Africa. In addition to taxes and levies from wars, commerce was another source of revenue for the Sultan. The support of the governing authorities was a prerequisite for the successful merchant.

Having reached its peak in preceding centuries, Islamic civilization had lost its creative drive during the 14th century (8th Islamic century). The greater political entities that were able to unite and maintain Islamic civilization had disintegrated. In the 14th century, Islamic civilization faced the attacks of the tartars, the loss of Andalusia, the political intervention of leaders from other civilizations, as well as the rivalry between Arab rulers. The result was a number of mutually belligerent and relatively autonomous states. A great civilization was in decline and had lost its momentum and bearing.

To this must be added the disastrous consequences of the Black Plague (that hit Tunis in 1348–49). Commenting upon the devastation, Ibn Khaldūn writes that civilization decreased with the decrease of mankind. Cities and buildings were laid waste, roads and way signs were obliterated, settlements and mansions became empty, dynasties and tribes grew weak. The entire inhabited world changed. The East, it seems, was similarly visited, though in accordance with and in proportion to its more affluent civilization (QI: 51).

The political and economic instability and the ravages of the Black Plague contributed to pervasive intellectual stagnation. Learning declined and was reduced to the blind and fruitless repetition of the works of previous centuries. Superstition increased and became widespread.

The situation was similar in other parts of the Arabo-Islamic civilization. Nicholson describes the age as an age of imitation and compilation and points out two exceptions, i.e. the historian Ibn Khaldūn and the mystic Shaʿrānī. Apart from these two, he writes «... we cannot point to any new departure, any fruitful ideas, any trace of original and illuminating thought. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries witnessed the rise and triumph of that wonderful movement known as the Renaissance, [...] but no ripple of this great upheaval which changed the whole current of intellectual and moral life in the West, reached the shores of Islam.»¹²

The preceding pages gives a brief synopsis of the situation during the 14th century, which was characterised by the effects of plague, economic and intellectual stagnation and by political decomposition in the Islamic world. At the same time, and in spite of similar declines that followed from the Black Plague and the Hundred Years' War, Europe was taking a more fruitful path. It was more fully developing its trade, evolving a division of labour and expanding its cities. It was establishing universities and searching for new knowledge, particularly in regards to the natural sciences. The West's comparative resilience and success is the framework for comprehending Ibn

12 R. A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969). 442–443

Khaldūn author, whom Y. Lacoste describes as being «...plus ou moins partiellement, le contemporain d'un Froissard, d'un Pétrarque, d'un Boccace, d'un Duguesclin ou d'un Bajazet, d'un Tamerlan.» He continues adding that «Ces noms cités parmi d'autres évoque à eux seuls un monde en plein éveil intellectuel pour certaines de ses parties, mais aussi un monde confus et violent en plein mouvement, caractérisé par de lentes transformations ou marqué par des renversements brutaux.»¹³

The cultural characteristics of the century influenced Ibn Khaldūn's intellectual development. He witnessed the loss of the creative force of the Arabo-Islamic civilization and he was, at the same time, conscious of the advent of a new power on the opposite side of the Mediterranean. This two-pronged recognition was undoubtedly a driving force behind his monumental work, the introductory volume, which is entitled the Muqaddimah or Prolegomenon, and the other volumes, that in all make up the entire Kitāb al-ʿibar or The Book of Lessons (or Instructive Examples). Ibn Khaldūn writes that there is need at this time that someone should systematically set down the situation of the world among all regions and races as well as the customs and sectarian beliefs that have changed for their adherents, doing for this age what al-Masʿūdī did for his. This should be a model for future historians to follow (QI: 52).

Ibn Khaldūn's colourful and agitated life

Ibn Khaldūn was born in Tunis on May 27, 1332. Muhammad Tawīt al-Tanji edited his complete autobiography, published in Cairo in 1951. That edition brings the account of Ibn Khaldūn's life to the middle of the year 1405, less than a year before his death. Rosenthal describes the autobiography as the most detailed in medieval Muslim literature.

Ibn Khaldūn locates his family origins in South-Arabia (Hadramout). His ancestors moved to Spain in the early years of the Muslim conquest. They first settled in Carmon and afterwards in Seville. In Seville, towards the end of the ninth century, his predecessors became known as political activists. Some of them were prominent in the administration of the city, and one of them distinguished himself in the first half of the eleventh century as a mathematician and as an astronomer. In the middle of the 13th century, the family migrated to North Africa. This migration occurred while Moorish Spain was gradually falling into the hands of Spanish Christians.

Reaching Tunis, the capital of the Hafsid, family members were granted landholdings and appointed to administrative posts. One family member wrote a handbook on administration for government officials. Ibn Khaldūn's great-grandfather was the minister of finance in the Hafsid kingdom of Tunis. His grandfathers occupied important political and religious positions in Andalusia and in Tunis. They were men of science and literature who were awarded positions of high rank and authority.

For a period, his father was politically active, but he chose to withdraw from the

¹³ Lacoste, *Ibn Khaldun, Naissance De L'histoire Passe Du Tiers Monde*.²¹

political scene when matters became too difficult. He retired from politics and devoted himself to diverse studies. He did not neglect to maintain the important family connections and relationships in Muslim Spain and throughout the Maghreb, and as a consequence, the family's social position continued to be a very prominent one. Ibn Khaldūn's father continued to study until his death in 1349, when the Black Plague was devastating the region, leaving Ibn Khaldūn an orphan at the age of 17.

Ibn Khaldūn's early education included the religious disciplines (the Qur'an, the collection of traditions, dialectical theology, jurisprudence and mysticism); the philosophical disciplines (logic, mathematics, natural philosophy, metaphysics, and politics, including ethics and rhetoric); and practical training for government service, including the arts of writing official court correspondence and handling administrative affairs (Mahdi 1972:53–56).

The Black Plague struck many of Ibn Khaldūn's teachers. One of his favourite teachers was al-Abili, who was a mathematician and philosopher. Ibn Khaldūn described al-Abili as the philosopher of the century in his autobiography. Al-Abili (1282/3–1356) entered Tunis in the year 1347 with the followers of the Marinids' Sultan Abu-l-Hassan, who tried to reunite the Maghreb. Al-Abili became a friend of Ibn Khaldūn's father (Nassar 1964).

With al-Abili, Ibn Khaldūn studied mathematics, logic and other philosophic disciplines. He was introduced to the major works of Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) as well as to the more contemporary philosophical and theological writings of the heterodox Shi'ites in Eastern Islam.

At the age of 18, Ibn Khaldūn was nominated for the position *ṣāhib al-ʿalāmāh* (master of the signature) at the court of the Hafsid rulers of Tunis. The holder of this post was responsible for sealing and dispatching outgoing correspondence and for registering incoming correspondence, a job that demanded a high degree of literary precision.

Shortly after his appointment, Ibn Khaldūn resigned, and then travelled westward across North Africa. He passed the years from 1354–63 at the Marinides court in Fez. There he continued his studies under the guidance of Moroccan masters. The development of a scholar was regarded as a lifelong process.

North Africa was divided into three kingdoms that were each suffering from further divisions due to internal strife. Ibn Khaldūn took an active part in the political turmoil and this led to his imprisonment from 1357–1358. The Sultan Abu ʿInān in Fez, first appointed him to the post of principal secretary, but he soon fell from royal favour.

In 1362, Ibn Khaldūn found it prudent to leave North Africa and he moved to Grenada, in Spain. There, cultural life was flourishing and the situation was still peaceful, in spite of the pressure coming from the Christians in the north and the Marinids in the south. Ibn Khaldūn was welcomed to the city by the ruler of the Nasrides in Grenada, and the ruler's vizier, the writer Lisān ad-Dīn Ibn al-khatīb became Ibn Khaldūn's friend.

In 1364, the Sultan of Grenada appointed Ibn Khaldūn to the position of ambassador to the court of Pedro el Cruel (1350–1369), king of Castille and León. He was empowered to negotiate a peace treaty between Pedro and the ruler of Muslim

Spain. Ibn Khaldūn's growing influence at the court of Grenada was resented by Ibn al-Khatīb and Ibn Khaldūn found himself obliged to return to North Africa in 1365.

In Bougie, he occupied the post of Hajib (Chamberlain or Prime Minister) under his friend the Sultan of Bougie, Abu Abdallah (a Hafside prince). While he was in charge of the city's affairs (1365–1366), Ibn Khaldūn was desperately attempting to consolidate his friend's rule. However, Abu Abdallah's severity and political incompetence, coupled with internal strife, led to his defeat.

The years 1365 to 1374 were the most difficult ones in Ibn Khaldūn's hazardous career. During this period, he was much involved in the tribal rivalries and in the dynastic crises existing in North Africa. His indecision and his inability to choose the *right* camp resulted in his changing from one side to the other (Meghrebī 1971).

A large part of Ibn Khaldūn's thoughts in the Prolegomenon refer to the problems of political leadership and to the antagonism between the diverse tribes and groups of North Africa, and to the tensions and conflicts between the centre and the periphery in political life.

From 1374–1378, Ibn Khaldūn retreated to Qal'at Ibn Salamah, a secluded pavilion in the province of Wahran (Oran), in Algeria. It was here, in 1377, that he completed the initial version of his monumental work at the age of 45.

The years 1378 to 1382 were spent, in part, by consulting the libraries of Tunis, in order to complete the necessary bibliographical references for his work. He was an extremely meticulous scholar and made a large number of amendments and revisions. The first manuscript of the work, completed in 1382, was dedicated to the Sultan of the Hafside of Tunis.

During this same period, while living in Tunis, Ibn Khaldūn, in addition to his research, was a teacher and a magistrate. In 1382, he asked for permission to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. This request facilitated his escape from the increasing political chaos in Tunis. He sailed to Alexandria in 1382 and then moved to Cairo in 1383, where, apart from occasional journeys within the Muslim World, he spent the rest of his life. At that time, Egypt was the most stable region in the Islamic world and was ruled by the Mamelukes. Ibn Khaldūn was able to continue his scholarly interests and to widen his circle of contacts, gaining new friends and new enemies in the process.

He lectured at al-Azhar University. Later, he was appointed professor of Maliki jurisprudence at the Qamhiyyah College. Soon after, he became the chief Maliki judge of Egypt. Once again, he occupied positions of great prestige and power. Being a judge afforded Ibn Khaldūn access to many diverse social circles within society.

In 1387, he went on his pilgrimage to Mecca. He returned to new academic appointments and honours. In 1400, he made pilgrimages to Jerusalem, to Bethlehem and to other cities that were holy for Muslims, Christians and Jews. That same year, Tamerlane threatened Syria. Ibn Khaldūn was sent to Tamerlane as a member of a peace delegation, in 1401, in order to negotiate on behalf of the authorities in Damascus. He performed the duties of judge and counsellor during the expedition. However, the city of Damascus was soon forced to surrender to Tamerlane's superior forces.

Tamerlane, knowing that Ibn Khaldūn was the greatest living expert of the Maghreb, the society and civilization of Western Islam that extended from Tripoli to

Grenada, expressed the desire to meet him. This is the last time that Ibn Khaldūn was to play a diplomatic role. At the time of their meeting, Ibn Khaldūn was nearly 70 years old and Tamerlane was about 65. Returning to Egypt, Ibn Khaldūn applied himself to his studies and to his official duties. Shortly before his death, he resumed the duties of the office of judge. He was then aged 74. He died in Cairo on March 17, 1406.

Ibn Khaldūn's eventful and agitated life provides the background for the comprehensive political and sociological studies that are incorporated in the *Prolegomenon*, a work that he claims traces and unveils the deeply hidden causes of events. The following pages will outline the work, its conception and translation. This will provide the reader with a glimpse of some of Ibn Khaldūn's more important research findings.

The Muqaddimah or the Prolegomenon, its conception and translation

The *Muqaddimah* or *Prolegomena* is the introductory volume of a much larger work that is entitled *Kitāb al-'ibar* or «The Book of Lessons» (A book of instructive examples, and a collection of historical accounts relating to the attributes of the society and civilization of the Arabs, the Persians, and the Berbers, and the great rulers who were their contemporaries).

Ibn Khaldūn divided *The Book of Lessons* into four parts, consisting of an introduction and three volumes.

The introduction deals with the great merit of historiography, offers an appreciation of its various methods and cites the errors made by well-known historians.

The first Book deals with civilization and its essential characteristics, namely, royal authority, government, gainful occupation, the differing ways of making a living, crafts and sciences, as well as with the causes and reasons thereof.

The First Book, together with the introduction, is called the *Muqaddimah* (*Prolegomenon*).

The second Book deals with the history, races and dynasties of the Arabs, from the beginning of creation to the contemporary moment in the day and age of Ibn Khaldūn. This book includes references to famous nations and dynasties contemporary with Arab dynasties, including the Nabataeans, the Syrians, the Persians, the Israelites, the Copts, the Greeks, the Byzantines and the Turks.

The third Book deals with the history of the Berbers and of the *Zanātah* who are part of them; with their origins and race and, in particular, with the royal houses and dynasties of the Maghreb (Dawood 1967:8).

Concerning his other literary productions, one reads that Ibn Khaldūn «...abridged a good deal of the books of Averroes. He put together a useful composition on logic for the Sultan, in the days when he studied the intellectual disciplines. He abridged the *Muhassal* of Imam Fakhr-ad-din ar-Razi ... He wrote a book on calculation ... What he has done already is so perfect that it cannot be surpassed» (Rosenthal 1958: xiv).

His friend Ibnu l-Khatib (1313–1374) also mentioned his promising bid for

recognition as a poet. Ibn Khaldūn has written a number of books that have only recently become known. These are:

- *Lubab al-Muhassal fi Usul ad-Din* (The Essence and Substance of the Compendium on the Principles of Religion), 1351; Tetuan (Morocco), Editoria Marroqui 1952.
- *Shifa' as-Sa'il li-Tahdib al-Masa'il* (A Guide for Those Who Try to Clarify Problems), ca.1373–1375; Istanbul: Osman Yalcin Matbāsi 1957/58.
- *Al-Ta'arīf* (Ibn Khaldūn's Autobiography), 1377–1406, Cairo: Lajnat al-Ta'lī 1951.

It is apparent from the complete title of the voluminous «Book of Lessons» that Ibn Khaldūn writes about history. There is no evidence, however, that Ibn Khaldūn had previously written about history. He was not originally a professional historian. His desire to write a history was strongly influenced by reading the historical works that were available in his own day and age. He found these works to be tainted with deficiencies and faults. He wrote: When I had read the works of others and probed into the recesses of yesterday and today, I shook myself out of that drowsy complacency and sleepiness. Although not much of a writer [meaning a writer of history], I exhibited my own literary ability as well as I could, and, thus composed a book on history (QI: 51–52).

While working on his book on history, the basic problem annoying him was how to handle the deficiencies and faults to which historians were liable. As Mahdi puts it, the basic problem was to understand the nature and causes of historical events and to do so it was necessary to have correct information. Ibn Khaldūn conducted a critical investigation of the works of previous historians and found that they were based upon faulty information. If the authors did have access to the correct information, they had been unable to formulate a correct and coherent account or presentation of that information. He surveyed disciplines other than historiography, especially rhetoric, political sciences and jurisprudence, and found that they, too, did not present a coherent account of the nature and causes of historical events (Mahdi 1972: 52–56). The only solution was to try to tackle the problem himself. He had to study the nature and causes of events and show how one could distinguish between veritable and false information, and that is how the Prolegomena was born.

At the end of the Prolegomenon, Ibn Khaldūn writes: I completed the composition and draft of this first part, before revision and correction, in a period of five months ending in the middle of the year 779 [November 1377]. Thereafter, I revised and corrected the book, as I added to it the history of the various nations, as I proposed to do at the beginning of the work (QIII: 434).

There are those who claim that Ibn Khaldūn does not respect the chronological order of events in history in his «Book of Lessons». He discusses each event as an isolated phenomenon. The reason for this procedure, which is also pointed out by Megherbi (1971: 38–39), has to do with the purpose he has for providing these examples and illustrations. His concern, here, is not to present a coherent history, but to demonstrate and explicate the method of historical and sociological analysis that is necessary for the creation of a veritable history. W. Fischel discusses Ibn Khaldūn's use

of historical sources in an article published in 1961.

Beyond the Prolegomena are the many other volumes of the «Book of Lessons» which have not been as meticulously studied and which are not as well known. Whether or not future studies will remedy this imbalance, is a matter that remains to be seen.

Translation of the Prolegomena: It is said that the name of Ibn Khaldūn was not mentioned outside the Islamic world until the year 1636. The first bibliography of Ibn Khaldūn's works in Europe appeared in the year 1697 at the Bibliothèque Orientale d'Herbelot. Copies of the Prolegomena in Arabic existed in many of the larger libraries, such as the Bibliothèque Nationale in France, long before the work was translated.

There are several complete translations of the Prolegomena: The French translation by W. M. de Slane: *Les Prolégomènes historique d'Ibn Khaldoun*, in three volumes, Paris 1862 ff., the English translation by F. Rosenthal, *Ibn Khaldūn: the Muqaddimah, An introduction to history*, 3 volumes, Princeton 1958; The Portuguese translation by J. Khoury and A. Bierrenbach-Khour and the new French translation by V. Monteil: *Ibn Khaldūn, Discours sur l'histoire universelle*, 3 volumes, Beirut 1967. In addition, there are Turkish, Hebrew, Hindi, Persian, Urdu, Russian and Swedish translations.

Apart from these complete translations of the Prolegomenon, there exist other translations of extracts in English, German, Persian, Portuguese, Swedish, Turkish and other languages, and the publication of a number of anthologies that include parts of this work in various languages. For example, the orientalist de Sacy (1758–1838) published translated fragments of the Prolegomena in 1806 and, in 1807; Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi wrote a review of those translated fragments. N. Schmidt writes that de Sacy published some more important passages from the Prolegomena in 1810. By 1812, Hammer-Burgstall was sufficiently impressed by these passages to call Ibn Khaldūn «ein arabischer Montesquieu». «Several extracts from the Prolegomena were published by Hammer-Burgstall in 1816 and 1818» (Schmidt 1978:4).

Beside the extracts translated by de Sacy and others, general accounts of Ibn Khaldūn appeared in the *Journal Asiatique*. Aziz al-Azmeh enumerates these in chronological order and says that they antedate the publication of the text and translation of the Prolegomenon:

1. Hammer J. von, «Notice sur l'Introduction à la connaissance de l'histoire, célèbre ouvrage arabe d'Ibn Khaldoun», in, *JA*, 1. sér., i (1822), 267–278
2. Garcin de Sassy, «Supplément à la notice de M. Hammer sur l'Introduction à la connaissance de l'histoire, célèbre ouvrage arabe d'Ibn Khaldoun», in *JA*, 1, sér.iv (1824) 158–161, supplements the above article by including an account of the contents of ch. vi of the *Muqaddima*
3. Schultz, F.E. «Sur le grand ouvrage historique et critique d'Ibn Khaldoun appelé 'Kitab-ol-iber we diwan-ol-moubteda wel-khabar, etc.,» in, *JA*, 1. sér., vii (1825), 213–226, 179–300, contains comments on and translations from the preface to the *Muqaddima*
4. Hemsoe, J. G. de, *Account of the Great Historical work of the African Philosopher Ibn Khaldūn*, n.p. [London], 1832, reprinted as (364.1) Hmsso, Graeberg af, same title, in *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic society of Great Britain and Ireland*, iii

(1835), 387–404. Italian translation printed as Hemsoe, J. Graeberg di. Notizia intorno alla famosa opera storica d'Ibn Khaldūn, filosofo Africano del secolo XIV. Florence, 1834 reprinted in F. de Bardi, Storia della letteratura araba, Florence, 1846 (Azmeħ 1981:268–269).

The following pages, will investigate some of the questions Ibn Khaldūn raised in relation to his method, as well as to his new science.

This investigation will support the thesis that the Prolegomena must be seen as being an integrated dialectical whole and a methodological edifice that was originally meant for understanding the general course of history.

The Prolegomenon: an appraisal

Ibn Khaldūn may never stop puzzling researchers and scholars in their continuous endeavour to understand his Prolegomenon, the masterpiece, which brought fame to his name many centuries after his death. He hoped that others would follow his lead, build upon, develop his ideas, and make them available for future generations. His ideas did not inspire followers in the Arabo-Islamic world.

Later, and only after being translated into several languages, the Prolegomena has been the subject of a vast amount of research. The rediscovery of Ibn Khaldūn began as early as the sixteenth century and gained momentum in the seventeenth. However, it was not until the Ottoman Turks interested themselves in his work that a fruitful understanding of Ibn Khaldūn's theories and ideas began to flourish. Rosenthal writes that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, European scholars joined with the Turks in studying Ibn Khaldūn. «Many ideas, discussed in the European West long after Ibn Khaldūn's time, were found, amazingly enough, not to be as new as had been thought, but to have been known, in their rudiments at least, to the northwest African of the fourteenth century who founded a 'new science' in his Muqaddimah» (Rosenthal 1958:xvi).

The amazement that Rosenthal identifies has in recent times developed into a more general recognition of Ibn Khaldūn's Prolegomena as a pioneer work worthy of meticulous scholarly attention. Arnold Toynbee, perhaps the leading historian of his own day, describes the Prolegomena by using superlatives that are rarely heard in academic discussion. He wrote that the Prolegomena was «undoubtedly the greatest work of its kind that has ever yet been created by any mind in any time or place» (Toynbee 1955/1962).

One finds that historians and philosophers of history, geographers, educators, sociologists, economists, theologians, psychologists, political ideologues (liberal and conservative), Arab nationalists and others - have all found something of great value in the writings of Ibn Khaldūn. Given this almost universal modern enthusiasm, it is not surprising that Ibn Khaldūn has been compared to a great number of diverse authors, both ancient and modern, including Machiavelli (1469–1527), Descartes (1596–1650), Montesquieu (1687–1755) Vico (1668–1744), Hegel (1770–1813), Comte (1798–1857),

K. Marx (1818–1883), and Durkheim (1858–1917).

Ibn Khaldūn and modern researchers

In the 19th century, European scholars, historians and orientalists, busily occupied themselves with the works of Ibn Khaldūn. They characterised Ibn Khaldūn as a philosopher of history, the founder of the science of history, as an Oriental Montesquieu, and as Kulturhistoriker der Islamischen Völker. August Mutter writes that Ibn Khaldūn is not only «eine echte Gelehrtennatur», but also «der letzte, der genialste Historiker der Araber überhaupt» (Schmidt 1978:14).

Articles and books have been published on different topics that were extracted from Ibn Khaldūn's work. In most cases, Ibn Khaldūn is seen as being a philosopher of history, or a historian, and the sociological aspect of his work is given less attention. The majority of these studies have rarely viewed the Prolegomena as an integrated entity and most of them have overlooked Ibn Khaldūn's thoughts about research and research methodology.

Those who have read Ibn Khaldūn's Prolegomena all seem to agree on certain qualities for which he is praised, such as a wholesome restraint, a readiness to question, and an unwillingness to go very far away from what is verifiable by reliable records or present experience and observation. This, apart from the attention given to his ideas, does reveal some of the methodological concerns that Ibn Khaldūn identifies in the Prolegomena. Perhaps Robert Flint's words best represent what has come to be the consensus. He recognised the genius of Ibn Khaldūn and writes: «the work he left is sufficiently great and valuable to preserve his name and fame for later generations» (Flint 1893: 157 & 171).

The important question is whether or not there is a system linking the many topics that Ibn Khaldūn addresses in an integrated edifice of thought. There are those who point out that Ibn Khaldūn writes about a scattered assortment of topics and that he seems to collect an encyclopaedic mass of information. It is obvious from their descriptions that these voices have not discovered any unifying principles to order or integrate the information that Ibn Khaldūn presents his readers.

In the 20th century, diverse social scientists began to interest themselves in the study of the Prolegomena of Ibn Khaldūn. The historians and orientalists no longer monopolised the scholarly interest and discourses about Ibn Khaldūn's achievements.

Helmut Ritter (1948) undertook an extensive socio-psychological study of Ibn Khaldūn's *ʿaṣabiyyah* (the phenomenon of social solidarity). Researchers have compared the economic teachings of Ibn Khaldūn to Karl Marx and lately to Joseph Schumpeter. They based their comparisons on the economic theories in section 1, chapter V of the Prolegomena. This includes passages that refer to the real meaning and explanation of sustenance (rizq) and profit and, specifically, that profit is the value realised from human labour (QII: 272).

Ibn Ammar al-Saghir (1969:88) writes that the research included in the

Prolegomena of Ibn Khaldūn might be relevant to economic sociology, because, just as he establishes a relationship between sociology and history, he also perceived a relationship between economics and sociology. In other words, it may be said that history can be understood with the help of *‘ilm al-‘umrān*, Ibn Khaldūn's science of social organization and world civilization, and that *‘ilm al-‘umrān* may be understood with the help of economics. However, Ibn Ammar al-Saghir does not develop a thesis about Ibn Khaldūn's methodology.

Al-Jabiri (1971) believes that Ibn Khaldūn's theories of the state and his thoughts about the phenomenon of social solidarity (*‘aṣabiyyah*) provide the links that integrate the many chapters and sections of the Prolegomena.

Megherbi, in his book entitled *La pensée sociologique d'Ibn Khaldūn* writes: «Notre premier souci, en conséquence, a été de tenter par notre étude de contribuer à la restitution exacte de cette très riche composante du patrimoine scientifique et culturel maghrébin qu'est la Mouqaddima qui constitue en fait, non une philosophie mais une sociologie totale» (Megherbi 1971:6).

Pines Solomon (1972) writes that the appellation of the Prolegomena as a «philosophy of history» is perhaps not a very suitable one.

In his critical notes on selected works that discuss the contribution of Ibn Khaldūn, Olivier Carré writes «Les ouvrages recensés ici invitent à lire et relire le texte même des Prolégomènes, à le commenter ligne a ligne, à dresser un relevé exhaustif de la carrière textuelle de chacun des concepts-clés comme le suggère V. Monteil (I, p.xxxII). Pourquoi, en effet, ne pas commencer par le commencement? Après quoi, les Prolégomènes serviraient en vérité d'introduction à la sociologie du Proche-Orient moderne, comme le souhaitait Y. Lacoste, mais dans une perspective sans doute différente de la sienna» (Carré 1973).

Olivier Carré seriously invites researchers to start from the beginning and to read and reread the text of the Prolegomena. His advice underscores the idea that it is necessary to consider the unity and integrity of Ibn Khaldūn's Prolegomenon.

Y. Lacoste (1978:17) writes that Ibn Khaldūn, in the Prolegomenon, presents his readers with a fundamental contribution to the history of developing countries. The Prolegomenon, he writes «...marque la naissance de l'Histoire, en tant que science, et elle nous fait déboucher sur une étape essentielle du passé de ce que l'on appelle aujourd'hui le Tiers-monde'» (Lacoste 1978).

Monteil (1978) writes, «In fact, Ibn Khaldūn is a forerunner in the realm of social and human sciences, i.e. in sociology. Even now, his Opus Magnum should be read as a modern author's whose ideas and thought remain valuable for all time» (Monteil 1978).

Schmidt writes that «the obvious significance of Ibn Khaldūn's contribution to certain question that are today intensely agitating the minds of scholars should also lead to a well considered estimate of him as an historian, a philosopher of history, a sociologist, and an historic personage» (Schmidt 1978:8).

Taha Hussain (1981), in spite of his harsh critical attitude towards Ibn Khaldūn, recognises that Ibn Khaldūn had discovered the law of causality long before Montesquieu.

The idea of looking at the thoughts of Ibn Khaldūn as they are expressed in the

Prolegomena as an integrated whole is now becoming an important one, ever since authors like O. Carré and V. Monteil have put this idea forward. The key to the integrated whole lies in Ibn Khaldūn's thoughts about methodology, and in his socioeconomic conception of growth and development.

Another question that one is tempted to ask is whether Saint-Simon (1760–1825) and Auguste Comte (1798–1857) had any kind of access to the writings of Ibn Khaldūn?

It is often pointed out that Saint-Simon's disciples inherited from their master a vague yearning for a mystical 'Orient'. Their careers, as his disciples, began in the year 1825. In 1833, they embarked for Constantinople and in the same year to the Egypt of Muhammad Ali. Some years later, they became involved in Algeria. Their involvement in Africa led to their appointments to important posts, to the carrying out of extensive research and to a great number of book translations from Arabic. These disciples developed an interest in Islam and in Muslims and they cultivated contacts with important personalities like Rifa'ah al-Tahtawi (1801–1873).

What can definitely be posited about Saint-Simonians is that they had close contact with the part of the world where Ibn Khaldūn belonged. «Les premiers socialistes que l'on rencontre dans l'histoire du monde musulman sont des étrangers, des Français membres de cette école saint-simonienne.» (Sfia 1971:63).

We also know that both K. Marx (1818–1883) and Fr. Engels (1820–1895) had a certain interest in Islamic civilization. The first, who had a particular love for Turkey, the country where most of the constructive research on Ibn Khaldūn was done, also visited Algeria. Bousquet had an interest in Ibn Khaldūn's sociological and economic thoughts (Bousquet 1965). In an article entitled «Marx et Engels se sont-ils intéressés aux questions Islamiques?» (1969), he envisages the possibility that Engels had read the French translation of the Muqaddimah by de Slane.

In «The Asiatic Mode of Production» (Kraeder 1975), we also read that K. Marx, in his «Excerpts from M. M. Kovalevskij», a Russian sociologist, refers to Ibn Khaldūn as the «historian of the Berbers». However, whether Saint-Simon, August Comte, Karl Marx, or others had direct or indirect access to the Prolegomena is still a matter for scholarly curiosity.

Rosenthal writes, in his article entitled «Ibn Khaldūn as a political thinker», that «Ibn Khaldūn's significance as the most original, imaginative Arab Muslim thinker can best be seen in his concept of the state as a necessary institution based on force and power» (Rosenthal 1979:2)

To summarise, the vast majority of books and articles that have been published about Ibn Khaldūn view his thought as being fragmentary rather than integrative. It is only after the middle of the twentieth century that a few authors have begun to view the Prolegomena as an integrative whole.

This research attempts to provide a more integrated interpretation of the Prolegomena of Ibn Khaldūn that is coherent with the body of knowledge that has become recognised as an edifice for the social sciences. Comparing Ibn Khaldūn's thoughts to those of other authors, while interesting, is of less importance for this research. Being able to coherently present an interpretation of the Prolegomena that unifies its many-faceted elements is, in itself, a very demanding enterprise. Perhaps

others will one day take interpretation a step further and use it to compare Ibn Khaldūn's thoughts to those of other prominent thinkers. The important concern here is to provide an interpretation of Ibn Khaldūn's thought in light of the method of analysis that he uses and promotes in the Prolegomena. Perhaps doing so will disclose the objectives Ibn Khaldūn had in mind when he composed this great masterpiece.

Ibn Khaldūn's understanding of the Prolegomenon

The principal characteristics of Ibn Khaldūn's *ʿilm al-ʿumrān* – i.e. the science of social organization and world civilization – resulted from an insistent need for the correction and verification of historical information. The historical errors and deficiencies referred to by Ibn Khaldūn were many, and he writes that only knowledge of the 'natural' modes of social organization (*ṭabāʿiʿ al-ʿumrān*) makes critical investigation of them (facts) possible (QI: 60).

The term *ṭabāʿiʿ* (singular *ṭabīʿah*) is translated by modes, true nature, attitude or natural quality. This is a methodological term. To understand it, it is important to read and reread the core Khaldūnian definition in the Muqaddimah, which depicts a dualistic perspective on all events: the event-in-itself and, the event-in-its-context (QI: 57).

Ibn Khaldūn points out that to establish the truth and soundness of information about factual happenings, a requirement to consider is the conformity (*muṭābaqah*), to other known facts. This is important because the utility of the factual happening can be derived from it, itself, and from external evidence by checking the conformity (QI: 60) with the real world.

Ibn Khaldūn goes on to argue that... If we do that, we shall have a normative law for distinguishing right from wrong and truth from falsehood in (historical) information by means of a logical demonstration that admits no doubts (QI: 61).

He praises his new science and says that it is an independent science. This science has its own peculiar object, which is Social organization and World Civilization. He continues by writing that this science also has its own peculiar problems - that is, explaining in turn the conditions that attach themselves to the essence of social organization. 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. (QI: 61)

The purpose of the endeavour and its peculiar problems are the essential factors that delineate Ibn Khaldūn's new science of *al-ʿumrān*. One might ask, has anyone else ever previously written about these same matters? Ibn Khaldūn raises this question and tries to answer it as well. He says: In a way, it is an entirely original science. In fact, I have not come across a discussion along these lines by anyone. I do not know if this is because people have been unaware of it, but there is no reason to suspect that people have been unaware of these matters. Perhaps they have written exhaustively on this topic and their work did not reach us. There are many sciences. There have been numerous sages among the nations of mankind. The knowledge that has not come down to us is greater than the knowledge that has (QI: 61).

He then demonstrates the similarities and differences between his new science and the writings of scholars and sages within mankind in an exhaustive discussion. Ibn Khaldūn concludes that his science is, in fact, an original one. If I have succeeded in presenting the problems of this science exhaustively and in showing how it differs in its various aspects and characteristics from all other crafts, this is due to divine guidance. If, on the other hand, I have omitted some point, or if the problems have got confused with something else, the task of correcting remains for the discerning critic, but the merit is mine since I cleared and marked the way (QI: 66).

He subsequently elaborates upon his plan. In this book and, we are going to explain the various aspects of social organization, which affect human beings in their social gatherings, as royal authority, surplus earning (*kasb*), sciences, and crafts. All in the light of various arguments that will show the true nature of the varied knowledge of the elite and the common people, repel misgivings, and remove doubts. (QI: 66).

Ibn Khaldūn discusses his work under six chapter headings:

1. On human society in general, its various kinds, and the portion of the earth that is civilised
2. On rural society (The translation «Desert civilization» by Rosenthal, is contextually incorrect), including a report on the tribes and savage nations
3. On dynasties, the caliphate, and royal authority, including a discussion of government ranks
4. On urban society (The translation «sedentary civilization» by Rosenthal, is contextually incorrect), countries, and cities
5. On crafts, ways of making a living, surplus earning (The translation «profit or gainful occupations» by Rosenthal, is contextually incorrect) and their various aspects
6. On sciences, their acquisition and study

Arguments follow to provide justification for the ordering of chapters. He says I have discussed rural society (*al-ʿumrān al-badawī*) first, because it is prior to everything else, as will become clear later on. The discussion of royal authority (*mulk*) was placed before that of countries and centres (*buldān wa amṣār*) for the same reason. The discussion of the ways of making a living (*maʿāsh*) was placed before that of the sciences, because making a living is necessary and natural, whereas the study of science is a luxury or convenience. Anything natural has precedence over luxury. I lumped the crafts (*ṣanāʿiʿ*) together with surplus earnings (*kasb*), because the crafts in some respects are the result of surplus earnings, but also the result of growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*) (QI: 68).

Rosenthal translates *al-ʿumrān* by the word civilization, but *al-ʿumrān* is an operative concept. It denotes *social organization as well as growth and development* when applied to any particular society. However, when the term refers to an aggregate body of knowledge, it denotes human society in general or world civilization (cf. figure 5 below).

Ibn Khaldūn also discusses the arguments he uses for the presentation and defence of a new discipline. These are, the utility of the discipline, its purpose, the subject matter

and its peculiar problems, the suitability of documentation for building the science, the originality of the work, its various aspects and main principles, and the reasons for the way in which he has organised the disposition of his arguments and the chapter headings.

At the end of the Prolegomenon, Ibn Khaldūn says: It is our intention to stop with this First Book, which is concerned with the true nature of social organization and the accidents that go with it. We have dealt - as we think, adequately - 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 detail than we did here. A person who creates a new discipline does not have the task of enumerating all the problems connected with it. His task is to specify the subject of the discipline and its various branches and the discussions connected with it. His successors, then, may gradually add more problems, until the discipline is completely (presented) (QIII: 433–434).

Even though the Prolegomena is the work in which Ibn Khaldūn fully reveals his genius, a comprehensive explication will also clarify both its methodology and, based on this, the contents of the other works in his «Book of Lessons».

The complete title of Book One of the Kitāb al-ʿibar is, On the true nature of civilization in the universe and the exogenous aspects that attach themselves to it: Rural and settled life, the achievement of superiority, surplus earnings, ways of making a living, crafts, sciences and all the other things that affects civilization. The causes and reasons thereof: *al-kitāb al-awwal fī tabīʿat al-ʿumrān fī-l-khalīqah wa mā yaʿriḍ; fihā min al-badw wa-l-ḥaḍar w-at-taḡallub w-al-kasb w-al-maʿāsh; w-al-ʿulūm w-ṣ-ṣanāʿiʿ wa naḥwahā wa mā liḥālika min al-ʿilal w-al-asbāb.*

Since Ibn Khaldūn dedicates his Prolegomena to historiography, this research attempts to differentiate between history and sociology, even though a clear distinction between these two adjacent disciplines is somewhat difficult.

History deals with single events in a particular sequence. Events, arranged in time, can give a particular picture characteristic to a particular age or generation. Historical pictures belong primarily to a distant past and are limited to a historical place or civilization.

Sociology, on the other hand, does not concentrate on single events, sequentially arranged, but describes general conditions, social, economic, political and cultural – of a society taken as a whole: its generations, regions, structures, stratification, groups and institutions. The actual or present moment is the point in time under discussion.

In most cases, history is about societies dealt with as units. The historian cannot collaborate directly with members of those societies, but must depend upon records and texts that have survived from the period in question or from works done later, all of which are before the historian's own.

Sociology, on the other hand, concentrates on the individual as an inseparable part of the group. The individual lives, cooperates, and interacts politically, economically, culturally, socially and psychologically with the group. The sociologist ordinarily lives in the same day and age together with the subjects he studies, and this shared quality allows for interaction, co-operation and a greater exposure to contemporary criticism.

How does Ibn Khaldūn approach the science of social organization, the field of growth and development, when concerning its dynamics? First, he focuses his attention upon the needs of individuals and groups, and he tries to clarify their relationships to proximate and distant fields of action. Ibn Khaldūn believes that the main concern for individuals and groups is the satisfaction of basic material needs, including the comforts of sociability and belonging. This implies a high degree of co-operation, consultation and participation within and between groups. In the second place, he focuses his attention upon the main conditions that influence the interaction between individuals and groups, namely, the political, the economic and the cultural conditions. In the third place, he is careful to choose appropriate methods and tools for sociological investigation.

Ibn Khaldūn posits that co-operation is natural to human beings, particularly when this tends to satisfy their needs. However, the human being is also a creature of social habit and a product of its environment. Ibn Khaldūn argues that the social context will determine whether individuals cooperate in order to insure a livelihood. They may not. Conditions dominating the social context may foster a different environment that will foment conflict, corruption, or revolt. Much will depend upon the context where the individual exists, i.e. within the centre, surrounded by power and authority, or at the periphery, where these forces are at a distance.

Within the proximate society, sociology studies the different social groups and institutions and the different types of relations regulating them, as well as the formation and development of social structures. The study of groups and institutions reveals the principles that regulate co-operation or antagonism, competition, the distribution of power, etc.

Ibn Khaldūn proposes four main principles or four socioeconomic conditions that, implicitly or explicitly govern the functioning of groups and institutions.

1. *The political field*, which, primarily, finds its expression in the exercise of power, or in the need to restrain influence and strong authority.

2. *The economic field*, which finds its expression in the means used for the generation of earnings and surpluses and for their distribution. The economic field also includes how labour manifests itself within society, how it is organised, divided and ranked. Economic growth informs about the conditions of a society and of its inhabitants. The economic yardstick is the appropriate tool to use in measuring a society's success or failure. In this sense, economics and sociology are inseparable, and the conception of sociology without economics is a deficient one.

3. *The cultural field*, which finds its expression in the complexity of relations between the individual and society. Education is a necessity in order for new generations to learn the customs and norms of society and its systems of values and roles. It is to cope with the demands of society, with its problems and its development, and the participation of its members in the development of sciences (human, natural, and applied).

4. *The field of labour, crafts and industry*. This reflects all the other three fields.

Change is an important factor in the sociology proposed by Ibn Khaldūn. The reasons and causes that lead to change disclose the conflicts and antagonisms within society, and help one to detect the ability of a society to meet its needs. When needs are not being met adequately, the possibilities for corruption and for revolt will predictably increase. The reasons and causes that inaugurate change also disclose social transformation; the birth, growth and stagnation of a society.

Ibn Khaldūn points out that in order to undertake sociological research, the acquisition of appropriate pre-knowledge, and an understanding of appropriate sociological methods of study, are necessary preliminaries. Studying a contemporary society implies gathering and analysing materials using quantitative and/or qualitative techniques. It implies interviews and empirical investigations, such as observation and comparison. There must be the awareness of a canon of logic, and the ability to apply that canon in practice. The aggregate must be co-ordinated in an objective endeavour to discover causal relations behind sociological problems and to formulate general conclusions. In this sense, the sociology of Ibn Khaldūn is an experimental science.

As a consequence, one must conclude that sociology, as a discipline, existed long before the day and age of August Comte, the founder of positivism. Various accounts of the history of sociology refer to August Comte as its putative father. In the 14th century, Ibn Khaldūn structured a science of sociology and pointed to appropriate methods for its study. He provided his readers with a terminology for the new discipline and he delineated a distinctly empirical field of study, differentiated from all others. He wrote that it is from the interrelations and comparisons between data that we discover the unknown from the known. He sub-divided his sociology into two distinct categories, world society and human local social organization with its urban and rural segments, centres and peripheries. Ibn Khaldūn's way of designating the science of sociology, his division of its fields, his discussion of its problems and institutions, and his language and terminology are still relevant for and applicable to contemporary sociology.

The hypothesis that inspired this research claims that there is very little in the consulted articles and books on Ibn Khaldūn's Prolegomena that provide a coherent or comprehensive understanding of Ibn Khaldūn's thoughts. Ibn Khaldūn's method of analysis, his operative concept of al-*umrān* (social organization, growth and development), and his new science of sociology have not been adequately explicated. The objective of the following chapters seeks to remedy this failure.

Chapter 1: Ibn Khaldūn's Method of Analysis

Historiography occupies a very important place in the cultural understanding of Ibn Khaldūn. Most of the arts and sciences produced within Islamic civilization originated from the attention given to history.

However, the quality of historical writing in the Islamic world had reached its nadir by the 14th century. Historians were satisfied to list the names of kings, without providing any genealogical or historical information, and with only a numerical indication of the length of their reigns. One should not give credence to what they say. According to Ibn Khaldūn, «They are not considered trustworthy, nor is their material considered worthy of transmission, for they caused useful material to be lost, and damaged the methods and customs acknowledged to be sound and practical by historians» (QI: 5).

Ibn Khaldūn's greatest challenge was to restore to historiography its proper place. His endeavours led him to the discovery of a new method of analysis and a new science. These, in turn, paved the way for a new conception of history, one that was reflexive and aware of its uses.

This chapter will first elucidate Ibn Khaldūn's sociological conception of history. Thereafter, it will provide a discussion of the method of analysis that he embodies in the new Science of al-ʿumrān (social organization and world civilization, the basic requirements of the method, its procedure and its originality. Ibn Khaldūn writes about his method of analysis in a rather off-handed manner. He does not explicitly explain his methodology or the thinking that underlies his work. However, the aggregate of his many scattered comments about the method of analysis that he uses makes it possible to deduce and to reconstruct the essential elements and procedures he used in his sociologically rich historical work.

Among the keywords that are encountered in this chapter are *social organization* (*al-ʿumrān*), *conditions and customs* arising in this social system; Ibn Khaldūn's theory of the mind, which comprises *the discerning intellect*, *the experimental intellect* and *the theoretical intellect* as well as *perception*, *apperception*, and *conformity with reality*.

[1.1] Ibn Khaldūn's sociological conception of history

The writings of Ibn Khaldūn's predecessors, at their best, could only reveal the surface meaning of history. «...on the surface, history is no more than information about political events, dynasties, and occurrences of the remote past, elegantly presented and spiced with proverbs. It serves to entertain large, crowded gatherings and brings to us an understanding of human affairs. It shows how changing conditions affected human affairs, how certain dynasties came to occupy an ever wider space in the world, and how they settled the earth until they heard the call and their time was up» (QI: 2).

This is only a superficial history, which aims at entertaining its listeners and readers. It animates the how-it-happened conception of history. This writing depends

upon the transmission of information and the description of happenings. Ibn Khaldūn, however, claims that he has managed to renovate this how-it-happened conception by adding to it a why-it-happened conception of history. This renovation is the product of a critical approach to the source materials and the application of his method of analysis before formulating the historical narrative.

Among the renowned historians to whom Ibn Khaldūn refers, we encounter al-Bakri (838–923) and al-Masūdi (deceased 956). However, even these two revered historians are criticised for the methods they used and Ibn Khaldūn tries to correct the conception of historiography that they passed on to posterity.

Al-Tabari is described as being «Modest, unselfish, and simple in his habits, he diffused his encyclopaedic knowledge with an almost superhuman industry. During forty years, it is said he wrote forty leaves every day. His great works are the *Tā'rikhu 'l-Rusul wa-'l-Mulūk*, or 'Annals of the Apostles and the Kings,' and his *Tafsīr*, or 'Commentary on the Koran'» (Nicholson 1969:351).

Al-Masūdi is known for his great historical work, *Murūju'l-Dhahab*. Nicholson writes that although we possess only a small remnant of Al-Masūdi's voluminous writings, it is known that his great erudition was not solely a product of book learning, but also was produced by his observations and experiences during long travels in almost every part of Asia. Masūdi declares that he wished to follow the example of scholars and sages and to leave behind him a praiseworthy memorial and imperishable monument. He claims to have taken a wider view than his predecessors (Nicholson 1969: 353).

Ibn Khaldūn praises Al-Masūdi for helping him to develop his own understanding of history. Al-Masūdi became the basic reference work for historians, their principal source for verifying historical information (QI: 52). Ibn Khaldūn further claims that Masūdi has commented upon the conditions of nations and regions in the West and in the East during his period, which was the three hundred and thirties (the nine hundred and forties c. e. in the West) (QI: 51).

Inspired and fascinated by Masūdi's authorship, Ibn Khaldūn believe that someone should systematically set down the situation of the world among all regions and races, as well as the customs and sectarian beliefs that have changed for their inhabitants and progeny. Someone should do for the contemporary age what Al-Masūdi did for his. Such a work should be a model for future historians. This is the project, which Ibn Khaldūn sets out to realise, as proclaimed in his *Prolegomenon*.

Ibn Khaldūn followed the example of Al-Masūdi, by equalling his encyclopaedic knowledge and panoramic vision, and by studying thoroughly the conditions prevailing during his own age. He depended upon his own observations of the actual societies within which he lived or visited. The information he collected and the outcome of his analysis not only helped him to reveal the inner or the why-it-happened-conception of history, but also constituted the cornerstone for his new science of *al-ʿumrān* (social organization and world civilization).

Ibn Khaldūn formulates his conception of the inner meaning of history. He says that this involves speculation and an attempt to get at the truth, subtle explanation of the causes and origins of existing things, and deep knowledge of the how and why of events

(nar wa taḥqīq wa taʿlīl lil-kāʿināt wa mabādiʾihā daqīq wa ʿilm bi-kayfiyyāt al-waqāʾi wa asbābihā ʿamīq) (QI: 2).

This conception of history complies with a similar one forwarded by Raymond Aron, who describes history as a dialogue between the past and the present in which the present takes and keeps the initiative (Aron 1961). Ibn Khaldūn also advises his readers to allow the present to take the initiative and in so doing, to enable the past to disclose its unreported explanations.

A dialogue between the past and the present is impossible without historical relics, preferably reliable ones. However, whatever the validity of these relics, it is necessary to have a solid understanding of the conditions prevailing in the present, in order to be able to deduce the differences and similarities between the present and the past.

Ibn Khaldūn's conception of history was a challenging one, in light of the understanding of history in his own era. He broke with the classical viewpoint, both within and outside his culture, by elevating history to the level of philosophy. He writes that history is firmly rooted in philosophy. It deserves to be a branch of philosophy. What is then the utility of this Khaldūnian conception of history? He says that history is a discipline that has a great number of different approaches. Its useful aspects are manifold. Its goal is noble. History acquaints us with the conditions of past nations as reflected in their national character (akhlāq). It makes us acquainted with the biographies of prophets and with the dynasties and policies of rulers. Whoever desires may thus achieve the useful result of being able to imitate historical examples in religious and worldly matters (QI: 8).

This is how Ibn Khaldūn conceives history. It is no longer simply an entertainment for large gatherings. As a branch of philosophy, history serves as a reference and guide and as a reservoir of experience. It is the ultimate teacher in the social evolution of society. It does not only convey an understanding of the conditions which once prevailed, but also how these conditions were seen as being a part of a specific culture and a reflection of national character. Social conditions must be explained and their relevance for an understanding of history be considered. Happenings occur and must be understood in their proper social context.

This is history resulting from the analysis of information and the search for the inner meaning of events. All the different aspects of society, each within its proper context, are useful when undertaking such an analysis. The geographical, the socio-political, the economic, the cultural, the psychological and many other aspects are useful in this conception of history.

Yves Lacoste considers Ibn Khaldūn's conception of history closely affiliated with ideas that developed in Europe, at the end of the 19th century. This affiliation is due to the efforts of historians of that era to include economic and social research into their historical narratives. Lacoste praises Ibn Khaldūn's conception of history as being a richer one than is found in the writings of Thucydides, Saint Augustin, Machiavelli or Montesquieu. He writes «...les oeuvres des autres anciens historiens, même s'il s'agit de celles des plus grands, Thucydide, Saint Augustin ou même Machiavel ou Montesquieu, traduisent des conceptions de l'histoire qualitativement beaucoup moins riches que celle d'Ibn Khaldoun (Lacoste 1978:14).

Ibn Khaldūn's sociological conception of history and some of his methodological practices emerge from the specific tradition of history and historical analysis within Arabo-Islamic culture. Still, the method itself is a new departure and an independent and insightful mental exercise. It is a curious fact that those who have studied Ibn Khaldūn's epistemology have not been curious about how the author himself applied his method of analysis in his writings. Aziz al-Azmeh raises this question in his annotated bibliography (1981:274–276).

In his bibliography and under the title «epistemology and method», Aziz al-Azmeh says, «Much is usually said about Ibn Khaldūn's method. It is generally assumed that his was a scientific method without very much specification. It is a curious fact indeed that, although Ibn Khaldūn's method is usually extolled, there are very few studies specifically devoted to this matter.» (Azmeh, 1981:274 – 276).

[1.2] The method: Basic requirements and originality

At the beginning of the Prolegomenon, Ibn Khaldūn writes «It takes critical insight (bīrah) to sort out the hidden truth; it takes knowledge (ʿilm) to lay truth bare and polish it so that critical insight may be applied to it» (QI: 63).

Critical insight refers here to his method of analysis. Knowledge refers to the information we acquire or deduce from a certain context and about a certain phenomenon. Critical insight and knowledge are complementary elements in Ibn Khaldūn's method of analysis and they are necessary and sufficient as a basis for the historian's speculative construction of a historical narrative. Critical insight helps in sorting out the hidden truth. One penetrates the material in one's possession. Meanwhile, critical insight will not be reliable unless combined with contextual knowledge, which allows us to lay the truth bare and to polish it.

Ibn Khaldūn was conscious of the importance of experience, observation and the analysis of the appropriate source materials before undertaking any sociologically informed historical analysis. He writes that the writing of history requires numerous sources and greatly varied knowledge. It also requires a good speculative mind and thoroughness (*husn nar wa tathbīt*). Possession of these two qualities leads the historian to the truth and keeps him from slips and errors (QI: 8).

The first requirement here is to have encyclopaedic knowledge, both of the past and present. The past alone would normally not suffice for the reconstruction of a meaningful history. Acquiring proper knowledge, also about the present, will indirectly lead to a clarification of the past. The acquired knowledge should apart from being comprehensive, be learned and structured from a critical perspective. It is knowledge that differentiates between the general and the particular. The general is that which constitutes the understanding that makes a scholar, whereas the particular is that which the phenomenon under study reveals.

The second requirement is the possession of a good speculative mind and thoroughness. In the citations above, the interchangeable terms *a good speculative mind*

and thoroughness, and *critical insight* specifically identify this second quality.

The use of one's *critical insight*, or more specifically, a good *speculative mind* and thoroughness, refers to what we more commonly identify as *reflexivity* in scholarly and scientific discourses held today (Pillow 2003). In figure 4, these terms indicate an important step in Ibn Khaldūn's method of analysis, namely step 5, i.e. to probe more deeply with the help of *speculation and critical insight*.

[1.3] Procedure of analysis

Ibn Khaldūn mentions eight principal reasons for the occurrence of deficiencies and faults in historical writing (QI: 56–58):

1. The spirit of partisanship
2. Blind confidence in the sources
3. Failure to understand the intention of the reports
4. Unfounded credulity
5. Ignorance about how to determine whether conditions conform to reality
6. Interest in gaining favour with the powerful and the influential
7. Ignorance of the true nature of conditions in social organization
8. The failure to understand events in their proper contexts, or simply, fail to understand the law of change

Ibn Khaldūn considers ignorance of the true nature of conditions that exist in social organization to be the most important cause of error, as discussed later.

Looking at Ibn Khaldūn's criticism as a whole, Vincent Monteil points out that Ibn Khaldūn is about a half century in advance of the European humanists of the Renaissance, to whom one generally attributes - with the *Declamatio de Orenzo Valla*, in 1440 - the merit of having founded modern historical criticism. (Monteil 1967:340).

Ibn Khaldūn illustrates his criticism by discussing different stories under the expressive title: The excellence of historiography; an appreciation of the various approaches to history; a glimpse of the different kinds of errors to which historians are liable; why these errors occur (QI: 8–55)?

The historical records that are criticised in this section are arranged in accordance with their contents, but also in accordance with principles of priority that are based on Ibn Khaldūn's categories of thinking, i.e. the differentiating intellect, the experimental intellect and the theoretical intellect:

1. The differentiating intellect finds some historical records which are generally acceptable, but where errors and fantasy affect the historical veracity.
2. The experimental intellect finds records or false stories, not considered as referring to actual events in the past. These records are false by reference to recognised historical relics and traditions.

3. The theoretical intellect finds other erroneous historical records and reports. These are primarily due to ignorance of the important and implicit principle of change. These are theoretically weak as narratives because they contradict the Law of Change.

Ibn Khaldūn uses these categories to illustrate his method of analysis. A meticulous content analysis of these historical records and stories not only bring to light Ibn Khaldūn's categories of thinking, but demonstrate, as well, his method of analysis, as illustrated in the steps of figure 4.

Whenever confronted with a dubious piece of information, Ibn Khaldūn poses a question about the reliability of the source. He always begins his discussion by stating a hypothesis. He follows the hypothesis with his arguments and proofs.

In this section, Ibn Khaldūn writes that scholars accepted the verity of events and reported stories in their transmitted form and without regard for their value. They did not check such events and reported stories against the constitutive principles underlying them (*al-ʿarḍ ʿala-l-ʿuṣūl*), nor did they compare them with similar material (*al-qiyās bi-sh-shabīh*). Further, they did not probe more deeply with the yardstick of philosophy (*al-sabr bi-miʿyār al-ḥikmah*), with the help of knowledge of the true nature of what exists in social organization, and with the help of speculation and critical insight (*taḥkīm al-nar w-al-bīrah*) in the information under scrutiny (QI: 8–9).

It is probably unnecessary to try to be more precise or clear in expressing Ibn Khaldūn's method of analysis. The citation above is illuminating to read and reread. The passage and its implications provide the core of his method of analysis. This is, in fact, the key citation for understanding Ibn Khaldūn's method of analysis. It consists of five steps:

1. To check events and reported stories against the constitutive principles underlying them
2. To compare events and reported stories with similar material
3. To probe more deeply with the yardstick of philosophy, i.e. logic
4. To probe more deeply by applying knowledge about the true nature of social organization
5. To probe more deeply with the help of speculation and critical insight

Ibn Khaldūn does not tell us how to check events, how to compare or how to probe. He does not describe his steps of analysis in the way we do today. Instead, he gives us examples and cases in point where these methodological principles are embodied. It is the task of the reader to understand these principles in their contexts, to envisage their different applications and to deduce their methodological components for further use.

[1.3.1] The first step: To check events and stories against the constitutive principles underlying them.

This is the most important step of Ibn Khaldūn's method of analysis. It is the base upon which he builds his methodology and structures his new science. The explanation of this step is to be found in the expression «constitutive principles (*'şūl*).» (QI: 43). What exactly does this term mean? Etymologically, the term refers to the origin and to the constituent parts that are at the core.

In another citation, we find a more detailed account. Ibn Khaldūn criticises historians who present their information as being ungrounded knowledge. When under scrutiny the information becomes unreliable because no one can say how much of it is extraneous and how much is genuine. The information concerns happenings (*ḥawāḍith*), the origins (*'şūl*) of which are not known or it concerns species, the genera of which are not taken into consideration and whose (specific) differences are not verified (QI: 4).

The term *'şūl* in the citation above refers to two categories of information: inherent and essential principles, i.e. the phenomenon *in-itself*, as well as essential but extraneous principles, i.e. the phenomenon *in its context*.

In a citation that appears later (QI: 57), Ibn Khaldūn gives a twofold definition of the phenomenon to be analysed. Figure 1 illustrates these two parts of the term *'uşūl*:

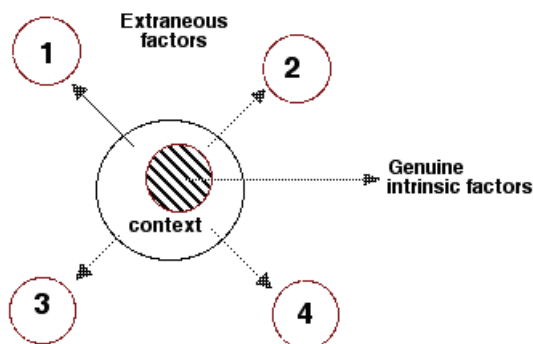


Figure 1. The two sets of factors or principles attributed to a phenomenon

There are two distinct ways to discuss *every* phenomenon. The first way to discuss the phenomenon demands abstracting it from its context. Discussing the thing *in-itself* discloses its essential and inherent principles and parts (*'uşūl dhatiyyah*) or the factors that constitute the phenomenon. The second way to discuss the phenomenon is to speak about the phenomenon in light of its essential extraneous factors or principles (*'uşūl ʿardiyyah*), i.e. by identifying the factors or principles attributed to it, as revealed by the context in which the phenomenon appears.

Suppose, now, that we want to analyse or verify a phenomenon called A. We would first discuss the phenomenon A as an isolated matter, without considering its

interaction with any context whatsoever. Second, we would analyse the phenomenon A within its proper context.

The following figure illustrates the two different ways to discuss phenomena.

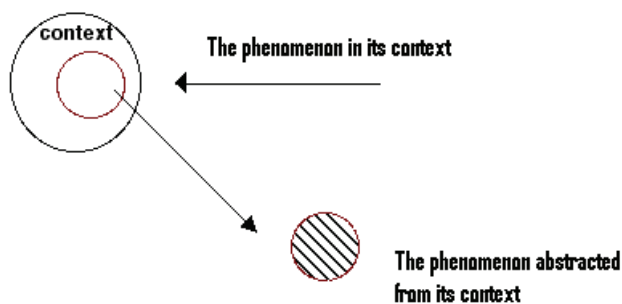


Figure 2. The phenomenon in-itself and the phenomenon in its context

When we abstract a phenomenon from its context, we are able to define its essential principles and the factors that constitute or are proper to the phenomenon itself. In this phase of analysis, we should not occupy ourselves with the extraneous principles that constitute the phenomenon in its context.

When we contextualise the phenomenon, by studying it in light of the context where it exists, we are able to begin to reveal its extraneous parts and principles. It is here that the analysis becomes interesting. It is here that truth and falsehood are uncovered, according to Ibn Khaldūn.

The differentiation between the parts of a phenomenon into the «thing in-itself» and the «thing in its context» is a distinction that is as old as philosophy. Discussing the thing in-itself conveys a primitive type of knowledge, in the sense that it does not necessitate any more than an appraisal of the phenomenon by listing its innate and constituent parts, while disregarding everything else as being extraneous to the discussion. In such matters, Ibn Khaldūn writes a person's appraisal is not inflected with analogy and generalisation. Most of his speculation stops at matters perceivable by the senses and he does not go beyond them in his mind (QIII: 269).

When the thing in-itself is the object of study, the analysis is based upon *al-'uṣūl al-dhātīyyah*, i. e. the essential factors that constitute the object. The only concern here is that one's choice of the constituent parts should appear to be as plausible as possible.

This produces a kind of definition that permits the researcher to limit precisely what he or she intends to analyse or to study. It is not a contextual definition and by itself it is insufficient for the formulation of a hypothesis. This definition depends primarily upon perception and the use of the senses. To be able to integrate one's perception and one's judgement one must depend upon one's previous learning or already acquired knowledge. However, the focus here is to concentrate on the «thing in

itself» as the fundament for further study.

Ibn Khaldūn ruminates over matters that hinder the human quest for knowledge. He points out that the large variety of technical terms, which are needed for purposes of instruction, can get in the way or hinder the human quest for knowledge (QIII: 248). It may be sufficient, here, to remind the reader of the complexity of the technological terminology in modern times.

Ibn Khaldūn had to invent new concepts in order to explain his new science of *ʿumrān*. Most of these concepts are dichotomous. They have a common, everyday meaning and usage that conveys generally accepted ideas when used in everyday speech. However, Ibn Khaldūn uses them further to build his science of social organization, growth and development. He links them to one another, constructing a new analytic foundation for understanding social growth and development, and the rise and fall of civilizations.

For example, the concept of *al-ʿumrān* ' expresses the idea of social prosperity, when used in daily speech. However, when used together with ordinal numbers, as *ʿumrān awwal* ', i.e. the first phase of growth, the term becomes a contextual yardstick, which enables the measurement of socioeconomic growth and prosperity.

The analysis of a phenomenon in relation to essential extraneous factors refers to factors that originate from the context, where the phenomenon manifests itself. A context can offer innumerable variables. If we are content to identify four main categories of variables, this, in itself, could lead to an enormous chain of variables. Not all variables within a particular category are directly relevant for a discussion of the phenomenon under analysis. A precise selection of factors to investigate is the most essential thing to determine, whenever we plan well-tailored investigations. To appreciate the importance of this selection of factors, it will be sufficient here to use the Khaldūnian *four* main categories of conditions or contextual variables called *ahwāl* (see 1.3.4.4). Depending upon the richness of the context, numerous variables could appear within each category (see figure 3).

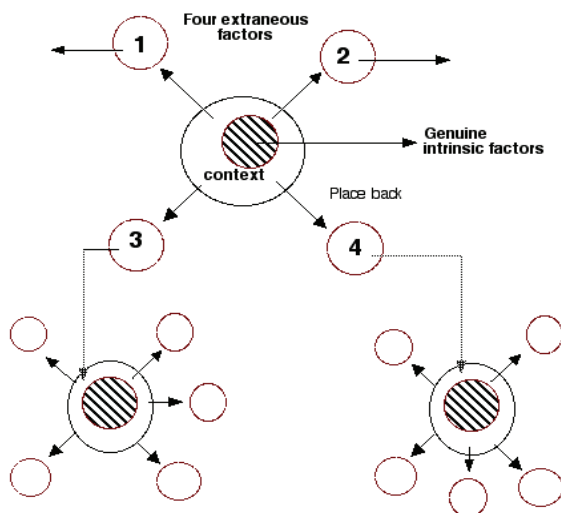


Figure 3. Khaldūnian contextual variables

The power of analysis lies in being able to choose correctly among the variables that constitute the context of the phenomenon under study. One must limit oneself to the most relevant and significant factors constituting the phenomenon under study. In all cases, the selection of such factors must be predetermined in order to limit investigation.

On the other hand, the order of things is also important, even though there may be variations from person to person. It is a curious fact that people, in their daily lives, learn to understand ideas about autonomy and about relationships of dependency. However, whenever one speaks about dependency among variables, difficulties in understanding will often arise and many students find their motivation for learning hindered. This is a common experience for those who teach, and it perfectly illustrates the fact that technical terminology can get in the way, or hinder, the human quest for knowledge.

When dependency among variables has to be theoretically decided, the possibilities are numerous and complicated. One has to reason, decide and choose the order of things, and determine dependencies between things.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that thinking perceives the order that exists among the things that come into being either by nature or through arbitrary arrangement. When thinking intends to create something, it must, for the sake of the order that exists among the things that come into being, understand the reason or causes of that thing, or the conditions governing it. (QII: 366).

Reason, causes and conditions are the principles (*mabādi'*) that help to determine the length of the causal chain. Ibn Khaldūn continues his discussion by pointing out that some people are able to establish a causal nexus for two or three levels, but are unable to go beyond that. Others may reach five or six (QII: 367). He writes that when man, in

his thinking, has reached the last principle on two, three, or more levels, and initiates the action that will realise a plan and bring something new into existence, he will start with the last principle reached by his thinking. Thus, that last principle will be the beginning of action. He, then, will follow things up to the last element in the causal chain that had been the starting point of his thinking activity (QII: 366).

Ibn Khaldūn borrows an Aristotelian example that illustrates this order of things. He writes that if a man thinks of bringing into existence a roof to shelter him, he will progress in his mind from the idea of the roof to the walls needed to support the roof, and then to the foundation upon which the walls stand. Here, his thinking will end, and he will then start to work on the foundation, and then go on to the walls, and then to the roof, with which his action will end. This is the meaning of the saying: «the beginning of action is the end of thinking, and the beginning of thinking is the end of action» (QII: 366). In this way, one distinguishes thinking and action from one another, and as practices, they proceed, or move in opposite directions. It is in this way that the order of things manifests itself, and human phenomena are distinguished.

Central to Ibn Khaldūn’s method of analysis is the determination of the nature of the item to be analysed. Ibn Khaldūn points out that even though social or historical phenomena do not possess fixed attributes (as in physics), one can disclose their attributes by the use of one’s reason. Care must be taken to single out those attributes that are most important. This demands the meticulous use of reasoning powers.

Once both inherent and extraneous constitutive principles (*‘uṣūl*) are selected and decided upon, as in Figure 3 above, the other steps of the procedure follow, as in figure 4 below.

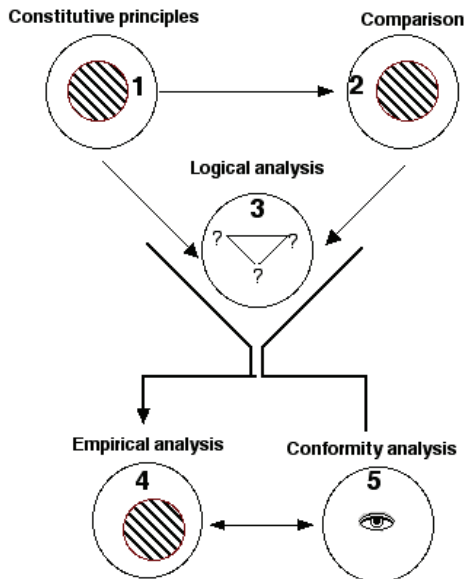


Figure 4. Procedure of analysis

[1.3.2] The second step: To compare events and reported stories with similar material

After disclosing the constitutive principles of the phenomenon under study, one should compare the phenomenon or the principles constituting it to similar materials.

Analogy (*al-qiyās bi-l-shabīh*) is primarily applicable when comparing related and familiar events. It can also provide clarity and understanding when utilised with non-parallel events, for example, one from the past and the other from the present. Ibn Khaldūn concludes one of his reports by underlying the fact that comparison with observable present day and well-known local facts proves the assumption and report to be untrue (QI: 11).

Comparison (*mumāthalah*) reveals similarities and differences between compared items. This may lead to further investigation that clarifies the causes behind similarities and differences and justifies or discredits the item analysed. In so doing, one may discover theories and general laws.

The scholar must therefore compare similarities or differences between the present and the past (or distantly located) conditions. He must know the causes of the similarities in certain cases and of the differences in others (QI: 43).

Data gathered from step 1 and step 2 become more comprehensible when using matrixes that visualise possible combinations and permit a multiplicity of relations and impacts. Ibn Khaldūn was familiar with such matrixes as helping techniques.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that it is obvious and clear that from the reciprocal relations (*tanāsub*) existing in one's data one is able to discover the unknown from the known. This, however, applies only to events occurring in the world of existence (*al-wāqī'āt al-hāšilah fi-l-wujūd*) or in science (QI: 219).

Ibn Khaldūn uses matrixes based on different geometrical figures of one dimension - the line, of two dimensions - the plane - or of three dimensions - the mathematical solid. These measurements and all what regard them (*ya'rid/yu'raḍ lahā*), either by themselves or in combination with each other (*min ḥaythu dhātihā aw min ḥaythu nisbati ba'dihā 'ilā ba'd*), are the concern of geometry (QIII: 87–88).

He further writes that geometry enlightens the intellect and sets one's mind right. All its proofs are very clear and orderly. It is hardly possible for errors to enter into geometrical reasoning, because it is well arranged and orderly. Thus, the mind that constantly allies itself to geometry is not likely to fall into error. In this convenient way, the person who knows geometry acquires intelligence (QIII: 102).

The use of such matrixes for the juxtaposition or combination of different factors and variables makes it easier to discover existing relationships. However, this manipulation of data depends upon speculation and insight. It is best applicable when used together with «reliable» information. Would it not then be unsuitable when applied to distantly located conditions in the past?

Ibn Khaldūn is not against the manipulation of data in order to secure clarity and the discovery of hidden arguments. He writes that a person should scrutinise his sources and rely upon himself. With a clear mind and straightforward, natural common sense, he

should be able to distinguish between the nature of the possible and the impossible. Everything within the sphere of the possible should be accepted, and everything outside it should be rejected.

Furthermore, he writes that he does not have in mind 'possible' in the absolute sense of what is intellectually possible. That application covers a very wide range and cannot be used to determine what is possible in actual fact. What he has in mind is the possibility inherent in the matter that belongs to a given thing (QI: 329).

This brings to mind Descartes and his Discourse de la Method (1637), where he writes: «N'admettre aucune chose pour vraie que je ne la connusse évidemment être telle.»

Ibn Khaldūn writes: When we study the origin (l) of a thing, its genus (*jins*), specific differences (*faṣl*), size (*miqdār al-ʿamṣamah*), and strength (*quwwah*), we can draw conclusions as to the possibility or impossibility of the data in connection with it. We adjudge to be impossible everything outside the sphere of the possible, in this sense (QI: 329).

[1.3.3] The third step: To probe more deeply (al-sabr) with the yardstick of philosophy

Verification with the yardstick of philosophy, (logic) also applies to the preceding steps. Here, it stands as an independent technique greatly relied upon for refuting doubt. The term «*sabr*» means «to probe more deeply».

The yardstick (*miʿyār*) of philosophy refers to logical principles, logical arguments and rational verifications that confirm or deny the testimony of source material. (The term yardstick is also encountered as being one of the appellations used for logic in the influential and widespread writings of al-Ghazali (1058–1111).

Logic, according to Ibn Khaldūn should confirm or deny testimony about the real world, and it is a tool for the historian who advances a sociological and economic perspective to history writing.

Among the intellectual sciences that are mentioned in the Prolegomenon, logic takes precedence. The rank ordering continues with mathematics, which begins with arithmetic, and is followed in succession by geometry, astronomy and music. Thereafter, come physics, and finally metaphysics. Ibn Khaldūn writes that logic is a science protecting the mind from error in the process of evolving unknown facts one wants to know from the available, known facts (QIII: 87). Further, he maintains that the use of logic enables one to distinguish right from wrong in the «...study of the essential and accidental perceptions and apperceptions» (QIII: 108).

The somewhat obscure and unverified awareness, which is attained by the help of perception, will become clearer when the state of apperception (*taṣḍīqāt*) is reached. That is why it is necessary to probe more deeply with the yardstick of philosophy. The science of logic, according to Ibn Khaldūn, concerns the norms enabling a person to distinguish between right and wrong, both in definitions that give information about the essence of things, and in arguments that assure apperception (QIII: 101).

The study of logic was widespread in the Islamic World. In its early phase of

development, it was distinguished from the philosophical sciences as a norm and yardstick for arguments and served to probe the arguments of the philosophical sciences as well as those of all other disciplines (QIII: 41).

Ibn Khaldūn writes: As far as we know, this science has only a single advantage, namely, it sharpens the mind in the orderly presentation of proofs and arguments, so that the habit of excellent and correct arguing is obtained (QIII: 219–220). He considers logic to be a science and a tool of argumentation. He does not accept the formal Aristotelian logic, which was adopted by other Muslim thinkers. Ibn Khaldūn rejects the basic presuppositions of the Muslim Neo-Platonists, essentially al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, on religious grounds. Their doctrines of emanation, their ontology, their theory of knowledge, and their theory of human felicity are entirely groundless.... insofar as they fly in the face of empirical evidence, which should guide us in our search for knowledge (Heyes 1976:61–62).

However, Ibn Khaldūn points out that logic cannot be completely trusted to prevent the commission of errors, because it is too abstract and remote from the sensibilia (*maḥsūs*). Logic considers the secondary intelligibilia (*al-maʿqūlāt ath-thawāwni*). It is possible that material things contain something that does not admit of logical conclusions and contradicts them, when one looks for unequivocal truth and conformity (*al-tathbīt al-yaqīni*) between them and the facts of the outside world. It is different with speculation about the primary intelligibilia (*al-maʿqūlāt al-ʿurwal*), which is less abstract. They are matters of the imagination and pictures of the sensibilia. They retain certain features of the sensibilia and permit verification of the conformity of the sensibilia to the primary intelligibilia (QIII: 270).

The application of logic, helps in sharpening the arguments and conclusions previously reached. Nevertheless, since logic cannot be completely trusted, we then have to concretise analysis and arguments. In other words, one must look for unequivocal conformity between theoretical findings and the facts of the outside world.

[1.3.4] The fourth step: To probe more deeply with the help of the knowledge of the true nature of what exists in social organization

Application of a specific type of knowledge stands here as a methodological tool. The term «true nature» (*ṭabāʿ al-kāʿināt*) means natural disposition, particular quality, either by creation or by habit. In the Khaldūnian terminology, it refers to something persuasive, plausible, credible or so well grounded that it can be taken as natural.

The expression what exists in social organization or the created things (*kāʿināt*), is a wide and general term which refers to all that exists in the world of creation. Ibn Khaldūn defines this term and writes saying that it should be known that the world of existent things comprises pure essence, such as the elements, the things resulting from their influence, and the three things that come into being from the elements, namely, minerals, plants, and animals. Animals here include human beings (QII: 365).

Ibn Khaldūn further writes that the world of existent things also comprises actions proceeding from living beings that happen through their intentions and are connected

with the power that God has given them. Some of these actions are well arranged and orderly. Such are human actions. Others are not well arranged and orderly. They are the actions of living beings other than Man (QII: 365). Compare this to his earlier dualistic definition of the event, phenomenon or action (QI: 57).

The further implication of the term *al-kā'ināt* (what exists in social organization), reveals that the term incorporates two main categories of occurrences in society: The first has to do with events (*al-wāqi'āt al-ḥilah fi-l-wujūd*) (QI: 219).

The second has to do with customs and conditions. Customs refer to ways of life, qualities of character, religious schools, sects and the like; whereas conditions refer to the socio-economic, political and secular cultural manifestations. A composite term for the two categories of occurrences is: events and conditions in the world of existence and their requirements (QI: 56–61).

When Ibn Khaldūn writes that one must know the true nature of what exists in social organization, he means that one must know the realities of things (*ma'rifat ḥaqā'iq al-ashyā'*) (QIII: 109). One must perceive (or picture) existence as it is, with its events, its customs, and its conditions (QII: 365).

How do we attain such a well-reasoned and structured knowledge of social occurrences? Either we acquire this from other sources (for example, from Ibn Khaldūn's science of social organization, growth and development, or we construct this coherence from observations, surveys or measurements. In both cases, obtaining such knowledge enables us to concretise theoretical analysis by making it conform to reality.

[1.3.4.1] The criterion of conformity

Ibn Khaldūn underscores the importance of understanding that in order to establish the truth and soundness of information about factual happenings, analysis has to conform to reality.

Knowledge about the events, customs, and conditions within social organization comprise a frame of reference. The methodological term Ibn Khaldūn uses here is *al-wuqūf 'alā ṭabā'ic al-kā'ināt* (cf. step four above) and examples are given at the beginning of the Muqaddimah (QI: 151). We can use this frame of reference to question the conformity of source material. If the material does not conform to that which is already well established and known, it can be rejected.

The criterion of conformity is a key principle in the methodology of Ibn Khaldūn. He writes that to establish the truth and soundness of information about factual happenings, a requirement to consider is the conformity (*muṭābaqah*), or coherence of the information in light of the large body of already verified knowledge (QI: 61 & QIII: Q268).

The scholar has to be armed with practical and plausible knowledge about the facts of the outside world in order to consider the conformity of new information and the coherence of one's understanding in light of what is already known. Ibn Khaldūn further stipulates that this criterion of conformity is more important than, and has

priority over, personality criticism (*al-jarḥ wa-t-ta'dīl*). The utility of the report about a factual happening can be derived from scrutinising the report itself and from external evidence by checking the conformity (QI: 61) of the report to what is already known or to facts of the real world.

It may well occur that we happen upon an analysis of some phenomenon that has reached us from the past, and that its substance does not conform to the facts of the outside world, because conformity has its proof mainly through observation and the study of existent things.

[1.3.4.2] From constitutive principles to the true nature of things

Once the analysis of the origins or constitutive principles (*'uṣūl*) (QI: 43) that underlie the dichotomously defined phenomenon has reached a certain degree of analysis and verification, the terminology of Ibn Khaldūn changes. At this point, he compares his data to verified knowledge and the search for the conformity with reality begins. The analysis proceeds from constitutive principles to the true nature of things (*ṭabā'ī'*).

The true nature of things refers to two types of principles: inherent (or essential) principles, and contingent (or contextual) principles. This means that the dichotomously conceived phenomenon, when tested by the preceding steps of analysis, should result in the knowledge of the true nature of things that underlie the phenomenon, i.e. we discover the factual principles that ground the phenomenon.

The distinction between «constitutive principles» and «factual conclusions» is a primordial one for understanding Ibn Khaldūn's thoughts throughout the entire Prolegomena. The factual and plausible knowledge underlying a certain phenomenon is a function of the analysis of the constitutive principles that earlier were deduced from and agreed upon as pertaining to that phenomenon.

In the Prolegomenon, one often reads that one of the primary reasons for the fact that historians were incapable of reliable interpretations is that they had no knowledge of the true nature of what exists in social organization.

The following story provides a good example. Ibn Khaldūn points out that genealogists who had no knowledge of the true nature of existent things imagined that Negroes were the children of Ham, the son of Noah, and that they were singled out to be black as the result of Noah's curse, which produced Ham's colour and the slavery God inflicted upon his descendants (QI: 151).

The acceptance of the source material and data referring to a curse upon Noah did not permit the genealogists to find other explanations. Ibn Khaldūn writes that if those scholars had knowledge of the true nature of existent things, they would not have dared to assume that Negroes were the children of Ham. He continues by writing that to attribute the blackness of the Negroes to Ham reveals a disregard for the true nature of heat and cold (*ṭabā'ī' al-ḥarr wa-l-bard*) and of the influence they exercise upon the climate and upon the creatures that come into being in it (QI: 151). Here, heat and cold are seen as being essential extraneous factors. These extraneous factors help to

determine the colour of the skin. The influence of climate is observed in its effect upon differences in skin colour, and these effects are not connected to genetic factors. Ibn Khaldūn does not make race the unique determinant of colour, and his thinking is in line with modern anthropological thought.

We notice here that having knowledge of the true nature of existent things is seen as being a methodological tool of the scholar. This implies that the concept of the true nature or the natural disposition is of many shades, depending on the nature of each phenomenon to be analysed. When investigating any phenomenon, we should discover its natural particularities. Hence, there is, according to Ibn Khaldūn, a true nature or attitude of the state; there is a true nature or attitude of various conditions arising in social organization; and there is the true nature of heat and cold. The Prolegomena provides the reader with many examples where the term the true nature of a thing or of a phenomenon is used.

It is important in this connection to examine carefully Ibn Khaldūn's dissection of the event or phenomenon to be analysed in the following clarification. He writes: «Every event (or phenomenon), whether it comes into being in connection with some essence or as the result of an action (*zātan kāna aw fiʿlan*), must inevitably possess a true nature (or attitude) peculiar to its essence (*fi zātih*) as well as to the accidental conditions that may attach themselves to it» (QI: 57). This dual definition can also be encountered in Aristotle's Ethics. Aristotle holds that the selection of pleasures is not to be made with reference to pleasure itself, but with reference to the activities they accompany (cf. step No. 4 above where this dualism is detailed).

The term event or phenomenon, in the preceding clarification, refers to every contingent reality, i.e. all that exists now but which did not exist at some former time and which may well cease to exist in the future. An awareness of contingent reality is composed of two things: the self, both corporal and non-corporal, as well as the action or the doing. Events or phenomena can therefore either originate from the world of essence or the world of action, and in both cases, each has its particular nature or attitude.

Taking contingency into account is an important step, whenever we attempt to integrate our findings to our understanding of what exists in the real world. We must notice that conditions continuously change and that new realities are born. This must be appreciated when we are searching for the true nature of what exists in social organization.

[1.3.4.3] From micro- to macro-consciousness

Ibn Khaldūn considers the practice of research and the researcher's consciousness as interacting elements in a continuous dialectical process that gradually generates information and permits the art of correct argument. The resultant micro-outcome illustrated in Figure 4 above denotes conclusions based on the analysis of a single phenomenon. This micro-outcome should permit knowledge of the true nature of that

phenomenon; the reasons and the true causes that produce the phenomenon, and the conditions supporting its existence (*'uṣūl*).

One can structure information accumulated from the analysis of different phenomena using, for instance, induction. This would permit the development of knowledge, from the particular to the general. It could reveal the knowledge of the true nature of all that exists in social organization. This macro-consciousness is, in a way, the aggregate of all micro-consciousness. Induction is necessary when knowledge about the true nature of what exists in social organization is available but unstructured, or when it is completely unavailable.

The true nature of what exists in social organization: A principal part of the new science of al-*'umrān*, the science of social organization, growth and development.

The concept the true nature of what exists in «social organization» in step 4 of figure 4, refers to analyses that conform to reality. At this stage, the science serves as a background for analysis, in the sense that reasoned analysis provides reliable and valid information that can be used to inductively furnish an idea of the true nature of phenomena in social organization.

The true nature of what exists in social organization is the final goal of social scientific analysis. The main task of the Khaldūnian science of *al-'umrān* is to discover the reality of existent things. This reality is discovered when studying the processes that underline or produce happenings, events and phenomena, i.e. the constitutive principles (*'uṣūl*), i.e.. Ibn Khaldūn provides a theoretical framework to structure the totality of his science of al-*'umrān*, a paradigm of constitutive principles upon which one can base one's analysis.

Knowledge about the true nature of what exists in social organization (*ṭabā'ir al-kā'ināt*) incorporates all customs and conditions in society. Conditions refer to the four fundamental categories used by Ibn Khaldūn to dissect or analyse society. These categories are *the political*, *the economic* (earnings and profit), *the activities* that promote creative production (handcrafts), as well as *knowledge* or the category aggregating cultural practices and beliefs.

This paradigm of civilised society posits the interaction between political, cultural, socioeconomic elements. Their interaction constitutes the essence of the paradigm underlying the Khaldūnian science of al-*'umrān*. His paradigm is comparable to the paradigms proposed by modern sociologists, particularly Talcott Parsons and Niklas Luhmann (Cf. Chernilo 2002).

[1.3.4.5] Inverse function

The relationship between the inherent and essential principles constituting a phenomenon and the essential extraneous principles that attach themselves to the

phenomenon, forming its context, are discovered anew in any research project. This means that the researcher's consciousness of plausible earlier findings and his consciousness of findings that concern the true nature of things – yield new information and new ideas. Deduction of the plausible analytical findings of an earlier phenomenon may underlie or be similar to those of the new phenomenon in which we are interested.

The awareness of this possible connection results from the analysis of the constitutive principles that underlie phenomena. Deducing the principles that ground an earlier phenomenon is a function of the understanding of earlier analytical findings. In addition, the true nature of things in their generality and those of a newer phenomenon in its particularity are collected in an interplay that contributes to deeper understanding.

The analysis of inherent and extraneous factors particular to a certain phenomenon can furnish us with historical data. When we intend to renew the data, or use it for comparison or for other research purposes, we need to discover similar and comparable data from an analysis of present day society. Our study, which may result in other micro-outcomes, may enable new types of awareness.

The fourth step, to probe more deeply by comparing our data to the knowledge of the true nature of what exists in social organization, is the most important step or the core of the methodology of Ibn Khaldūn.

[1.3.5] The fifth step: To probe more deeply with the help of speculation and critical insight

This is a general quality of research (cf. figure 4 above). It is deemed as being the continuing empirical-theoretical attitude or perspective. This quality of research is a continuous one in the sense that it is a primary perspective before and during all the steps in the method of analysis. However, this fundamental perspective particularly underscores the final step in the researcher's analysis, because its importance increases during the last stage of the research process. It allows us to evaluate the quality of the information received before and during analysis. It enables the deduction of the underlying constitutive principles from the facts of our investigation. In the final stages of research, the perspective leads us to formulate hypotheses, theories, and final conclusions concerning the event or the phenomenon under study.

Further discussion may be needed to clarify what speculation and critical insight mean for Ibn Khaldūn. In chapter VI, section 1 of the Prolegomenon, Ibn Khaldūn writes that man is distinguished from all other animals by his ability to think. He continues writing that consciousness is a kind of awareness (*idrāk*), finding place within the person who perceives (*mudrik fī dhātih*) of things that are outside his essence (*bimā huwa khārij ‘an dhātih*) (QII: 364). This is something «peculiar to living being to the exclusion of all other beings and existent things (*al-kā'ināt wa-l-mawjūdāt*). Man has this advantage over other beings. He is able to perceive things outside his essence through his ability to think (*fīkr*), which is a quality or characteristic beyond his senses.» (QII: 364) Ibn Khaldūn defines the ability to think and writes that it is the result of

(special) power placed in the cavities of his (man's) brain. With the help of these powers, man takes the *pictures* of the sensibilia, applies his mind to them, and thus abstracts from them other pictures. The ability to think is the occupation with pictures that are beyond sense perception and the application of the mind to them for analysis through deductions and synthesis (*'intizā' wa tarkīb*) (QII: 364). However, Ibn Khaldūn does not agree that this ability to think can be applied to theological or metaphysical matters.

The ability to think is divided by Ibn Khaldūn into three intellectual categories. These categories are related to one another and represent a movement from basic to higher stages in the thinking process. He writes: The first category is the basic one and incorporates man's intellectual understanding of the things that exist in the outside world, in a natural or arbitrary order, so that he may try to arrange them with the help of his own power. This kind of thinking mostly consists of perceptions. It is a function of the *Discerning Intellect* (*al-^caql al-tamyīzī*), with the help of which man obtains the things that are useful for him and his livelihood, and repels the things that are harmful to him. He continues by identifying the second category of intellect, which «... is the ability to think which provides man with the ideas and the behaviour needed in dealing with his fellow men and in leading them. It mostly consists of apperception (*taṣdīqāt*), which is obtainable one by one through experience until they are revealed as being useful. This category is called the *Experimental Intellect*.» (QII: 365).

The highest category of thinking is the third one, which he names the *Theoretical or Speculative Intellect* (*al-^caql al-naẓrī*). This category represents the ability to think which provides the hypothetical knowledge beyond sense perception (*warā' al-ḥiss*) without a practical activity going with it. This is the task of the speculative intellect. It consists of both perceptions and apperceptions, which are arranged according to a special order, following special conditions. This provides man with a similar kind of new knowledge, which is built upon the same processes that are used in previous categories, i.e. perception and apperception.

Combining perceptions and apperceptions occurs repeatedly, producing higher and higher forms of knowledge. The end of the process provides man with the perception of existence as it is (*taṣawwūr al-wujūd ^calā mā huwa ^calayhi*), with its various genera, differences, reasons, and causes (*ajnāsīh wa fuūlih wa asbābih wa ^cilalih*).

«By thinking about these things, man achieves perfection in his understanding of reality and becomes a pure intellect and perceptive soul (*naḥs mudrikah*). This is the meaning of human reality.» (QII: 365).

The third category, i.e. the speculative or theoretical intellect, is structurally in accord with the inner logic of the procedure of analysis (cf. figure 4 above). The speculative or theoretical intellect enables higher and better conclusions than those reached through the first and second categories of intellect. The goal of the theoretical or speculative intellect is to provide us with an understanding of existence, as it is, with its various genera, differences, reasons and causes. It should lead to a complete consciousness of the human reality. This is an active consciousness obtained from the co-ordinated use of discernment, practical research and theoretical dialogue.

When describing this third category of intellect as a higher combination of the two others, we discover that Ibn Khaldūn, in his methodological teachings, refutes the idea of a purely theoretical intellect. For Ibn Khaldūn, writing, which is mainly the task of the third category of intellect, is seen as being one of the crafts, because it develops (or should develop) from contact with the actual conditions in society. He writes that the transformation of the rational soul from potentiality into actuality is effected first by new sciences and perceptions derived from the sensibilia, and then by the later acquisition (of knowledge) through the speculative power (QII: 362). The writer always goes from one symbol to another, as long as he is wrapped up in writing, and the soul becomes used to the constant (repetition of this process). Thus, the soul acquires the habit of going over from the symbols to the things meant by them (min al-'adillah 'ilā al-madlūlāt). This is what is meant by intellectual speculation (an-naẓr al-'aqlī), by means of which the knowledge of hitherto unknown sciences is provided. As the result of being accustomed to this process people acquire the habit of intellection, which constitutes an increase in intelligence and provides an additional insight into affairs and a shrewd understanding of them (QII: 363).

Ibn Khaldūn ascribes the pure theoretical intellect to scholars who create universal ideas that only conform to the facts of the outside world in their own minds. They do not permit the facts of the outside world to participate in the formulation of their theories and conclusions. He writes that all their conclusions and views continue to be something in the mind. They come to conform to the facts of the outside world only after research and speculation has ended, or they may never come to conform to these facts (QIII: 268). (cf. QIII: 214 for his criticism of the philosophers).

Ibn Khaldūn differentiates between the facts of the outside world and the ideas of the mind. The facts of the outside world are merely special cases of the ideas of the mind. However, the religious laws are special cases derived from the well-known texts of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. In their case, one expects the facts of the outside world to conform to them. This is in contrast with the intellectual sciences, where, to prove the soundness of views, one expects those views to conform to the facts of the outside world (QIII: 268). Here Ibn Khaldūn clearly distinguishes between intellectual and religious matters. One can live in harmony with one's religious teachings because religion is simply a matter of belief. But belief does not prohibit finding out if the matters that are subject to research and speculation in fact conform to the facts of the outside world.

The three categories of intellect that Ibn Khaldūn proposes, i.e. the discerning intellect, the experimental intellect and, the speculative intellect, permit us to appreciate the specific contribution of speculation and critical insight (*taḥkīm an-naẓr wa-l-baṣīrah*). Ibn Khaldūn understands this function as being a continuous one, but emphasises the specific contribution of speculation and critical insight as being the fifth step in his procedure of analysis (cf. figure 4 above). Ibn Khaldūn's understanding of thinking affirms the continuous dialogue between practical, empirical research and theoretical speculation.

Ibn Khaldūn's procedure of analysis, which is outlined in figure 4 above, is composed of five steps. The steps are as follows: 1. Check events and reported stories

against the constitutive principles that ground those events or stories. 2. Compare the events and the reported stories to other materials that are similar. 3. Probe more deeply by using the yardstick of philosophy or logic. 4. Probe more deeply with the help of the knowledge of the true nature of what exists in social organization. 5. Probe more deeply by using the faculty of speculation and critical insight.

It should be clear that the first twofold step is intensified from one phase of analysis to the other. The term constitutive principles (*'uṣūl*), refers to the duality in its composition and to the distinction between essential inherent principles (*'uṣūl zātiyyah*) and contextual (*'uṣūl 'arḍiyyah*) or essential extraneous principles. This being so, the remaining steps of the procedure intensify the analysis and provide the fundamentals of a methodological discipline, even though the order of these four steps in the procedure of analysis is optional.

It is worth noting that the term constitutive principles, is a general one. Similar terms that are encountered in other places of the Prolegomena differ from this general term by their degree of precision. They are concepts that reflect the final-product of Ibn Khaldūn's analysis. Hence, the terms matters (*'umūr*), rules (*qawā'id*) or beginnings (*mabādi'*) express nuances in accordance with the essence of the item analysed and the certainty of analysis.

When Ibn Khaldūn analyses the causes of superiority in wars, we encounter an application of this important duality built into the concept of constitutive principles.

He writes that there is no certainty of victory in war even when the equipment and the numerical advantage that leads to victory exists. Victory and superiority in war are a consequence of luck and chance. This is explained by the fact that the causes of superiority are, as a rule, a combination of several factors. There are external factors (*'umūr Zāhirah*), such as the number of brave men, the skilful arrangement of the line formation, the proper tactics, and similar matters. Then, there are hidden factors (*'umūr khaḍiyyah*). These may be the result of human trickery, such as: Spreading alarming news and rumours, to cause defections in the ranks of the enemy. Occupying the high terrain, so that one is able to attack from above to surprise those below and cause them to abandon one another. Hiding in thickets or depressions and concealing oneself from the enemy in rocky terrain, so that one's own army suddenly appears when the enemy is in a precarious situation and must flee to safety instead of engaging in self-defence and other similar things. (QII: 76).

Here, the dichotomy is between the extraneous factors and the hidden factors. Varying Arabic terms are employed, in distinction to the term constitutive principles, and these terms point to subtle distinctions that depend upon the character of the phenomenon discussed and the outcome of analysis.

It should be noted that the dichotomous terminology of Ibn Khaldūn is used, not only before and after the investigation has taken place, but also in accordance with the nature of the analysed phenomenon's proximity to or distance from the ideally observable event.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, if one is not aware of the de-construction of the phenomenon to be analysed into its inherent and extraneous factors, one will

misunderstand the methodological function of his new science. This would result in a presentation of so-called knowledge, which is better understood to be ignorance.

The student, thus, has still to search for the beginnings of conditions and their order of priority. He must himself investigate the reasons why these conditions were interpreted as it appears, or the reasons why the conditions succeeded each other. He must search for a convincing explanation as to the similarities or the interrelations between these conditions (QI: 5).

When considering the first twofold step and its further analysis, one finds that the criticism of a phenomenon is, in itself, a rational operation having its proper dialectics.

[1.4] Originality of the method

At the time of Ibn Khaldūn, one method of critical analysis dominated. This was the method of personality criticism (*al-jarḥ wa-t-t ʿdīl*), which was employed by Muslim scholars both for religious and for worldly matters.

Aware of the misunderstandings that might arise regarding the application of his new method of investigation, Ibn Khaldūn compares and contrasts personality criticism with his own method of analysis. He characterises his method of analysis as being a superior one for all worldly investigations. He does not expect or recommend its use in religious matters.

When he writes about personality criticism, he points out that it should not be resorted to before one can ascertain whether a specific piece of information is deemed possible. If the information is absurd, there is no need to engage in personality criticism (QI: 60). Critical scholars of religious matters consider absurdity inherent in the literal meaning of the transmitted stories and any interpretation that is not acceptable to the intellect makes suspect the narratives upon which the interpretation is based.

For this reason, personality criticism should only be used in discussions that aim to determine whether or not particular religious information is sound. Since religious information mostly communicates injunctions that are assumed to be in accordance with the lawgiver's code, enjoining Muslims to act in particular ways, the way to achieve presumptive soundness is to ascertain the probity and the exactitude of those people who transmit religious information (QI: 60–61).

Ibn Khaldūn points out that religious injunction derives its utility only from itself (QI: 61), i.e. it has its own inherent religious value if the information is presumed to be sound.

Ibn Khaldūn proclaims that personality criticism is unsuitable for matters outside of the religious sphere. He breaks with the timeworn epistemic tradition and proposes a methodological separation between the spiritual domain and the worldly domain.

The method of personality criticism would normally not be applied until religious authorities acknowledged the information in question. This makes acknowledgement a prior step to analysis. In these cases, knowledge refers to matters of faith and adjudication by religious authority is a certification that the information in question is

not contradicted by articles of faith.

The method of Ibn Khaldūn, on the other hand, has its own proper field of application, i.e. worldly matters. It applies the criterion of conformity to reality or coherence to one's investigation. Ibn Khaldūn has borrowed from the natural sciences of his time to find the raw material for his method of study and this, in particular, includes the dichotomous definitions that he uses.

The old logicians used to define natural science as the science which explores the bodies of the universe and the conditions to which those bodies are exposed, i.e. motion, being at rest and change (al-Ghazali 1058–1111). There are two distinct elements in this definition. The first one explores the bodies of the universe as such; and the second one explores differences in the condition or behaviour of those bodies, apart from their inherent qualities. A body in the heavens may move because movement is inherent to it, or because it has been acted upon by some other body or by a force, which causes its movement.

Ibn Khaldūn proposes a new method that places matters of information about worldly matters on trial. A phenomenon or matter of fact is tested against many different criteria in an attempt to verify or falsify its claims. Whenever possible, Ibn Khaldūn does not hesitate to support his analysis with statistical or descriptive data. For example, he produced a list of taxes collected in the 9th century by the treasurer of Baghdad, and he records his own demographic investigations and interviews. In so doing, he was able to discuss phenomena, such as fiscal fraud and the diminishment of economic and social obligations, two matters that still concern us in modern society.

Ibn Khaldūn points out that empirical data needs to be gathered and analysed by using deductive and inductive processes in order to derive generalities from particularities. His socioeconomic historical studies are meant to facilitate the movement of thinking from discerning description to empirical and comparative research, and from there to speculative or theoretical insight. This process is then repeated and repeated in a spiralling continuum that Ibn Khaldūn believes will be able to produce true knowledge of reality.

The entire procedure, his method of analysis and its implications, point the reader to a way of performing social science. Ibn Khaldūn's methodology has two components that are important for investigation. The first is his insistence upon the necessity of acquiring encyclopaedic knowledge. The second is the importance of possessing a speculative mind and the habit of thoroughness. The Khaldūnian concept of knowledge will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: The acquirement of knowledge

«Would that I might know what thing was attained by him whom knowledge has escaped, and what thing has escaped him who has attained knowledge.» (al-Ghazali, *The Book of Knowledge*, p. 15).

The discussion begins by elucidating the fundamental ideas for a Khaldūnian concept of knowledge; appreciating the methodological contents thereof; and specifying the Khaldūnian law of change. This discussion will hopefully disclose the essence of al-ʿumrān, Ibn Khaldūn's science of social organization, growth and development; discover its dual aspect and its field of investigation. This chapter is closely related to the preceding one as well as to Chapter Seven, which addresses theories of science and instruction.

[2.1] The Concept of Knowledge

Knowledge is acquired through reading, instruction, experience and travels. Ibn Khaldūn writes that human beings obtain their knowledge, their qualities of character, and all their opinions and virtues either through study, instruction and lectures, or through the imitation of a teacher and personal contact with him. «The only difference here is that habits acquired through personal contact with a teacher are more strongly and firmly rooted. Thus, the greater the number of authoritative teachers, the more deeply is the habit one acquires.» (QIII: 267). He further adds that travelling in quest of knowledge is absolutely necessary for the acquisition of useful knowledge and perfection, i.e. the development of laudable qualities of character, through meeting authoritative teachers and having contact with learned and just personalities.

Armed with this general and prior knowledge, the scholar who desires to delve more deeply can undertake his own research and investigations. He will be able to direct and apply his knowledge in a suitable manner, so that it will conform to the actual society he chooses to study.

Ibn Khaldūn distinguishes between two kinds of knowledge. He writes that knowledge is a perception of the essence of things (*taṣawwur li-l-māhiyyāt*), and that it is either based upon a primitive kind of perception which is unaccompanied by the exercise of judgement, or that knowledge is apperception, the judgement that a thing is so... a proper and true assessment of the thing in its correct context.

Concerning the first, i.e. perception of the essence of things, he writes that man's ability to think (*fikr*) may lead him to obtain the desired information by combining universal conceptions with one another. This process results in a universal picture in the mind that conforms to the details of the outside world.

This universal picture is established in the mind when man's imagination deduces, from the individual objects that are coherently perceived by the senses, a picture conforming to all the observable individual objects. «Such a picture in the mind assures one of a knowledge of the being or essence (*māhiyyāt* literally means ...the what is) of the individual objects.» (QIII: 109).

Concerning the second concept, i.e. apperception, he writes that man's ability to think allows him to judge one thing by another and to draw conclusions. Thus, the thing is established in the mind. This is apperception and it ultimately leads to perception, because the only use of apperception is to achieve knowledge of the realities of things,

which is the required goal of apperceptive knowledge (QIII: 109).

The expression «to achieve knowledge of the realities of things» is thus more specific than the term «knowledge» per se. The first denotes knowledge about a thing as it is differentiated from another. This is realized after we undertake study, investigations and analysis. The expression, as such, equates the terms that are explained in the methodological step No. 4 above.

Knowledge is qualitatively distinguished (i.e. pictured perception versus apperception), and the ultimate convertibility from one form of knowledge to the other underlines its cumulative nature.

Knowledge derived from practical fields ultimately leads to the theoretical sphere and vice versa to maintain the continuous enrichment of knowledge from the dialectical exchanges between the two spheres. This dialectical process will, in turn, lead to higher and higher levels of consciousness until one apprehends the universal concept and, in so doing, a fully blossomed human understanding is developed.

Ibn Khaldūn hoped that his new science of al-ʿumrān would be enriched through a similar dialectical process engaging exchanges between theoretical and practical studies. But, it is almost as if he is predicting the failure of his successors, he points out that «man's ability to think may embark on this process in either the right or the wrong way.» (QIII: 110).

The wrong way would be to restrict thought to knowledge of the being or essence of individual objects, without constructing the dialectical bridge between those objects, enabling the stage of apperception. Without apperception, things are seen as being scattered and unrelated objects. There is no coherence and the relationships between objects go unnoticed. Ibn Khaldūn writes that «Selection of the way to be followed by man's ability to think, in its effort to attain the knowledge desired, requires discernment (*tamyīz*), so that man can distinguish between right and wrong. This process became the canon of logic.» (QIII: 110).

The individual object to be analysed is studied in order to discern its genuine and inherent qualities from its extraneous or context dependent characteristics. Then, the other steps of analysis follow, so that one can attain the state of apperception, as explained in chapter one.

[2.2] Knowledge about Social, Economic and Political Conditions

While striving to elevate the primary perceptual knowledge of individual objects to a higher level, to that of apperceptive knowledge, Ibn Khaldūn's research permitted him to construct the fundamentals of his science. To the scholar who wishes to write a history using this science, Ibn Khaldūn insists that the same fundamentals that are investigated historically should also be investigated contemporaneously.

When Ibn Khaldūn writes about the fundamental characteristics of social organization, he points out what the scholar in this field (i. e. history) needs to know. The scholar needs to know the *principles of politics*, the true *nature of existent things*,

and the *differences* among nations, places, and periods with regard to ways of life, character qualities, customs, sects, schools and all other *conditions* (QI: 43). He further needs a comprehensive knowledge of present conditions in all these respects.

What the scholar of history needs to know is, in one phrase, the new Khaldūnian science of al-ʿumrān. Ibn Khaldūn refers to the totality of the fundamental knowledge that is needed for this new science as being knowledge about the social, economic and political conditions of the society in question. The stability of these conditions creates, in time, what he calls customs. Changes in the existing *conditions* will eventually entail a change in *customs*.

In the previous citation, two sets of conditions are underlined. The dynamic interpenetration between them gives rise to changing conditions and changing customs. The first is knowledge about the principles of politics and the second is knowledge about the true nature of existent things. This second set of conditions encompasses all social, economic and cultural manifestations within a society. The discovery of those manifestations differs from one scholar to another depending upon the focus of research. According to Ibn Khaldūn's understanding, political matters are dominant and to a large extent they determine the direction of the other social, economic and cultural manifestations of society.

Ibn Khaldūn ascribes to the class of rulers a strong hand in the process of change that affects customs and other socioeconomic characteristics of society. The interdependency between politics, socioeconomic conditions and other cultural manifestations, including the evolution of new customs, are not seen as being equally potent forces for stability or change. The scholar must be aware of just how changes in the political order can effect and change all other aspects and manifestations of society.

In accordance with the two fundamentally different kinds of knowledge mentioned above, the scholar «must compare similarities or differences between the present and the past (or distantly located) conditions. He must know the causes of the similarities in certain cases and of differences in others. He must be aware of the different origins and beginnings of different states and religious groups, as well as of the reasons and incentives that brought them into being and the conditions and history of the persons who supported them. His goal must be to have complete knowledge of the reasons for every happening, and be acquainted with the origin of each and every bit of transmitted information.» (QI: 43).

The Arabic terms that are used in the preceding quote reveals the logical process in Ibn Khaldūn's well structured, detailed and reasoned epistemology. A scholar's task is not solely to acquire knowledge. A true scholar aims at building upon knowledge and strengthening it. His goal is to master and practically use the knowledge he gains.

Several important research perspectives are disclosed in the preceding citation. There is a clear regard for the importance of the notion of cause and effect. Perhaps as important, the practice of comparing and contrasting is highlighted. There is an important regard for relating the past to the present. There is a concern about origins and about the reasons and incentives for new developments. Human agency is in focus as a major determinant of social change. The researcher's aims must be very high ones, too. The scholar seeks complete knowledge of the reasons for every happening. He must

know the source for every fact of history that has been handed down to future generations.

Comparison and argumentation, or finding similarities and differences and being able to justify their verity and importance are central concerns for Ibn Khaldūn. These are practices that summarise several of the steps in the method of analysis that he proposes. Comparison is his 2nd step, and argumentation and justification of differences and similarities are steps 3, 4 and 5. The aim of his method of analysis, or of his methodology for social research, is to discover origins, beginnings, existing conditions, the reasons and incentives for change and, a coherent understanding of past and present, which subjects each period to the same kinds of scrutiny. The goal is complete knowledge of the reasons behind every happening and complete awareness of the origins of every event. In this way, acquired knowledge is subjected to analysis. The analysis strengthens the knowledge acquired, and the knower eventually develops complete mastery of the area under investigation.

[2.3] The Law of Change

Reference has already been made to the law of change in the previous discussion of Ibn Khaldūn's fundamental epistemology and in his two types of knowledge. The importance of this law manifests itself as acquired knowledge and at the level of methodology.

Formulating this law, Ibn Khaldūn writes that a hidden pitfall in historiography is the disregard for the fact that conditions within nations and generations change as time passes. This is a sore affliction and is deeply hidden, becoming noticeable only after a long time passes, so that rarely do more than a few individuals become aware of it (QI: 44). Ibn Khaldūn further writes that the conditions of the world and of nations – both as a whole and as limited social and historical entities – do not persist in the same form or in a constant manner.

The change he writes about is gradual, continuous, cumulative and, comprehensive, in the sense that it affects human life at all levels. It is comprehensive because it envelops all aspects of society. It is gradual, continuous, and cumulative because it is only noticeable after a long period of time has passed. There are differences that occur over a few days and differences that need long periods of time to be noticed, and there are changes from one condition to another. «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.» (QI: 44).

The law of change is not a visible phenomenon of society. Even though this is true, the law of change is a law of life and a basic quality of «living». As a consequence of gradual, continuous, cumulative and comprehensive change, things, matters and conditions slowly diverge until reaching complete dissimilarity. All that is needed to realise this law of change is an agreed upon point of departure.

Complete dissimilarity can also be the result of an exceptional event. The social consequences of the forces of nature can be devastating. A calamity like the Black Plague, which Ibn Khaldūn personally witnessed, is a good example. But exceptional events can also be actualised by human agency. A common example, repeated throughout history, is when a stronger nation conquers a weaker one.

Referring to historical sources, Ibn Khaldūn writes that the civilization of the ancient Persian nations, the Syrians, the Nabataeans, the Tubba's, the Israelites, and the Copts had all once existed and they were living and vibrant communities. «They all had particular conditions that prevailed in their dynasties and kingdoms, their own politics, crafts, languages, technical terminologies, as well as all their own ways of dealing with their fellow men and handling their cultural institutions.» (QI: 44–45). Their historical relics testify to that, writes Ibn Khaldūn. They have ceased to exist as social organization and were succeeded by the Persians, the Byzantines, and the Arabs. Political, socioeconomic conditions that prevailed in their day and age have changed. Former customs were transformed, either into something very similar, or into something distinct and altogether different. Then, Islam arose, inaugurated by the Mudar dynasty as a new social organization. Again, all conditions underwent change, and for the most part assumed the forms that are still familiar at the present time as the result of their transmission from one generation to the next.

In some cases transformation was successive and the changes were so extensive that entire nations ceased to exist. Their customs were effaced by other customs and their glories were forgotten, writes Ibn Khaldūn.

The transformation from one situation to another varies on a scale from nominal differences to complete dissimilarity. The variations depend upon a wide variety of factors that affect the former customs, including the strength, extent and type of the challenges being faced when new or foreign customs overwhelm the established ones.

The reason that change, particularly of customs, cannot be avoided resides in the nature of human beings and in their psychology. The difficulty of avoiding error and the art of imitation are both natural phenomena for human beings. Errors occur when customs are handed down from one generation to another. Imitation does not ordinarily produce identical practices. However, the reason for a particular change may have more to do with changes in power between neighbouring groups and differences in the mentalities, customs and norms of those who conquer others. Ibn Khaldūn also points out that other and more hidden phenomena can also effect change. Ibn Khaldūn writes «...analogical reasoning and imitation are well known to human nature. They are not safe from error. Together with forgetfulness and negligence, they sway man from his purpose and divert him from his goal.» (QI: 46)

Apart from natural calamities, one might say that the conditions of a people change in two basic ways, according to Ibn Khaldūn. Conquest and the defeat that is caused by external powers can radically change conditions, or they can be changed more gradually due to internal transformations.

When conquest and defeat is caused by an external power, broad cultural changes are inevitable. The vanquished imitate the victorious in their customs, beliefs and dress. The old ways lose their potency. We have many examples of this process in the history

of colonisation that continues even in modern times.

Concerning the internal transformation of societal conditions, one may posit that every living social organization constitutes an appropriate example. In the evolution from the simple to the complex, from agriculture and pastoral economies to sophisticated crafts and methods of commerce, growth and development embodies, in itself, a powerful and inevitable force of change.

Social transformation occurs primarily through the actions of the class of rulers, in Ibn Khaldūn's understanding. It follows that he considers the principles of politics to be the first priority for a scholar. He writes, «The widely accepted reason for changes in customs and conditions is the fact that the customs of each generation depend on the customs of its ruler. As the proverb says, 'The common people follow the religion of the ruler'.» (QI: 45).

He further writes that when politically ambitious men overcome the ruling dynasty and seize power, they inevitably have recourse to the customs of their predecessors and adopt most of them. At the same time, they do not neglect the customs of their own generation. This leads to some discrepancies between the customs of the (new) ruling dynasty and the customs of the old generation. This new power, in turn, is taken over by another dynasty, and customs are further mixed with those of the new dynasty. More discrepancies appear so that the contrast between the new dynasty and the first one is much greater than contrasts between the dynasties in between. The gradual increase in the degree of discrepancy continues from dynasty to dynasty. The eventual result is an altogether distinct set of customs and conditions. As long as there is this continued succession of different nations and generations to royal authority and government, changes in customs and conditions will not cease to occur (QI: 45–46).

The interpenetration of political, socioeconomic conditions and customs and the inevitability of their change over time are central tenets of Ibn Khaldūn's sociology. The changes in the political, socioeconomic conditions are directly observable whenever a dynasty changes hands. However, the change in the customs of the old regime by the new ruler is usually a gradual one and less observable. Customs refers to ways of life, qualities of character, clothing, beliefs, sects, language and systems in place for schooling the young, or, in a phrase, the cultural heritage of a society.

The scholar studying society must, according to Ibn Khaldūn, be aware both of the gradual nature of change and of the differences between a change in circumstances and conditions and a change of customs. Once a starting point has been agreed upon and the types of change differentiated, then historical transformations can be traced. Since analogical reasoning and imitation, which are natural practices in Ibn Khaldūn's understanding, continuously have their own effects, change can be simultaneously occurring due to gradual internal transformations and to more drastic and visible external events. It is therefore possible that the scholar, in spite of all his precautions, may engage in incommensurable comparisons and reach faulty conclusions. «Often, someone who has learned a good deal of past history remains unaware of the changes that conditions have undergone. Without a moment's hesitation he allies his knowledge of the present to the historical information and measures the historical information by the things he has observed with his own eye, although the difference between the two is

great. Consequently, he falls into an abyss of error.» (QI: 46).

The important law of change formulated by Ibn Khaldūn in the 14th century is a phenomenon that still escapes the attention of contemporary sociologists. Berger and Luckmann wrote: «Because they are historical products of human activity, all socially constructed universes change, and the change is brought about by the concrete actions of human beings. If one gets absorbed in the intricacies of the conceptual machineries by which any specific universe is maintained, one may forget this fundamental sociological fact.» (Berger & Luckmann 1976:134).

The same authors wrote: «Reality is socially defined. However, the definitions are always embodied, that is, concrete individuals and groups of individuals serve as definers of reality. To understand the state of the socially constructed universe at any given time, or its change over time, one must understand the social organization that permits the definers to do their defining.» (Berger & Luckmann 1976: 134). For those who are familiar with the contribution of Ibn Khaldūn, these passages and the well-known perspective that these two writers promote are remarkably in tune with (and evoke) Ibn Khaldūn's law of change.

The study of the phenomenon of change will be most effective when one limits the research efforts to a particular society; or segment thereof. Thereafter, care must be taken to insure the appropriateness of the researcher's methods of observation, investigation and analysis. Ibn Khaldūn was aware of these distinctions. His new science clearly distinguishes between social organization and world society. Ibn Khaldūn was conscious of the fact that creating a new science is inseparable from formulating an appropriate terminology, as the reader will soon discover.

[2.4] The Dichotomous Conception of al-ʿumrān

The term social organization is used by Ibn Khaldūn to denote the complex social phenomenon of al-ʿumrān. He uses the operative term *al-ʿumrān* in two different ways, sometimes referring to a universal level of meaning and sometimes to a more circumscribed or local level of meaning. When referring to the local level the concept of al-ʿumrān refers to the measurement of growth and development.

One might reserve the term social organization, growth and development for the more circumscribed reference. In this way the term world civilization can be used to refer to the more general and universal level of meaning. Whenever necessary, the distinction should be made explicitly in order to maintain the subtle interdependence between the two areas of research referred to by this same term al-ʿumrān.

Ibn Khaldūn is concerned to link local or regional social processes and developments with developments on the international level. In his view, the developments at each level will impinge upon the other and have their impact. His science of al-ʿumrān refers to both levels of meaning. His own contribution to that science is the sum of his teachings in the Prolegomena.

Ibn Khaldūn ardently defends the distinction between his new science of al-

‘umrān and history proper. He does this by differentiating between history, pure and simple, and what he terms the truth of history, which is the substance of his new science of al-‘umrān. About the truth of history, he writes that it is information about social organization, which itself is identical with world civilization (*al-ijtimā‘ al-‘insānī al-ladhī huwa ‘umrān al-‘ālam*) (QI: 56). Here, Ibn Khaldūn equates the essence of social organization and world civilization. This is the theoretical level of the science of al-‘umrān and for all practical purposes it may be understood as sociology of knowledge. Ibn Khaldūn postulates a ponderous equivalence and this section is devoted to clarifying his meaning.

In order to begin this clarification, it will be necessary to identify the various other concepts that are used by Ibn Khaldūn to illuminate the focal points of interest within his new science. He refers to «... savagery and sociability, group feelings and the different ways in which one group of human beings achieve dominance or superiority over another. This is information about how particular conditions generate royal authority and dynasties, with the various ranks that exist within them. It is information about surplus earning (*kasb*), ways of making a living (*ma‘āsh*), and differences between sciences (*‘ulūm*) and crafts (*ṣanā‘i‘*) that human beings pursue as part of their activities and efforts. It is about all that occurs in this social organization through the very nature of its conditions.» (QI: 56).

It is important to notice the distinction, in the citation above, between two closely related terms: *surplus earnings* and *ways of making a living*. The first term results from the second in the sense that most ways of making a living normally lead to surplus earnings. However, if the entire gains that are realised from a particular way of making a living are used solely for subsistence and personal needs, then these should not be counted as taxable surplus earnings. We will later return to this economic distinction.

Based on an understanding of the methodological and philosophical conceptions of Ibn Khaldūn, the expression *the truth of history* has a connotation that does not refer to what history proper was considered to be in his own time. The key word is truth, and the connotation points to the true nature, or the true essence of history or of its inner meaning. There is no history proper here, but *the essence of history*, which is a history that is saturated with social science and the realities embedded in diverse human material conditions. In its broadest sense, the truth of history is about *social organization* at every conceivable level. There are the particular truths that can be gleaned from the narrowest and most local relationships and developments. There are truths at a more intermediate level that may encompass an entire society or nation. There are higher-level truths that may incorporate many societies and peoples in a world civilization, which expands and dominates large regions of the globe. Finally, there are general and universal truths about social organization that are so pervasive and meaningful that one can readily speak about them as this or that social law.

The truth of history includes information about abstractions that concern levels of social growth and development and the qualities and stages of social organization. These abstractions include terms like savagery, sociability, group feelings and ways to achieve superiority (the connotation here being dominance or hegemony).

The truth of history can also embody recurring practices that are more concrete.

These include terms like economic earnings, sciences, crafts and industries. These are concrete and stable developments that affect the nature and course of social organization and result in royal authority and dynasties, or political power.

The interpretation of the phrase the truth of history that is posited here points to an encyclopaedic ambition for a general sociology, or an aggregate of social sciences that intends to incorporate the totality of developments that occur in social organization in the widest sense of that term.

The Arabic terms chosen by Ibn Khaldūn to describe his new science of al-*ʿumrān* are linguistically quite different from the Arabic term for history proper. However, he is conscious of the possible misunderstandings that can arise when the content of his new science of al-*ʿumrān* and history proper, as it has been written by generalist historians like al-Mas *ʿūdī*, are distinguished. Ibn Khaldūn clearly tries to make a decisive distinction between the two when he writes: «History is reporting of events peculiar to a particular age or generation. But, discussion of the general conditions of regions, generations and periods constitutes the historian's foundation. Most of his problems rest upon that foundation and his historical information derives clarity from it.» (QI: 50).

Herein lies the key to a differentiation between his new science and history proper. Proper historical narratives speak about the events of the past. These are unique and unrepeatable happenings. They have already taken place and can only be remembered if historians correctly write down those happenings in their proper order. These limitations make historians incapable of formulating general laws to apply to their subject. They can only try to construct a story about the past with the help of reliable materials that remain to be gathered.

On the other hand, the social happening is an observable phenomenon that is often repeated and the social scientist does not face similar limitations. It is possible for him to formulate general laws or theories that are revealed by those repeated social practices and by the observable conditions that occasionally change before his very eyes. But there is nothing, according to Ibn Khaldūn, which necessarily stops historians from social science in their perception of the historical happening. *ʿIlm al-ʿumrān* constitutes, in this case, a laboratory for the attention of the historian.

In the citation referred to above, the encyclopaedic character of the Khaldūnian science of al-*ʿumrān* is given expression by the words information about «social organization, which itself is identical with world human society (*khabar ʿan al-ijtimāʿ al-ʿinsānī alladhī huwa ʿumrān al-ʿālam*) At the end of the same citation, this comprehensiveness is again referred to by the expression: all that occurs in this social organization through the very nature of its conditions.» (QI: 56).

The new science of Ibn Khaldūn encompasses universal knowledge about world civilization in general. It is not restricted simply to gathering information about one society. Does Ibn Khaldūn assert that in order to gain information about world civilization, one must investigate all societies? No. On the contrary, he presupposes practical studies and observations on several levels within a society. These practical studies are to be undertaken in different societies. Aggregating the information from several societies will provide and constitute the necessary data to generate theoretical information. If a student or a scholar wants to undertake practical studies, the field of

investigation should be limited. This is what Ibn Khaldūn's general law of investigation clarifies.

A rather long, but very important citation is abridged below to discern and explain the meaning of Ibn Khaldūn's general law of investigation. He writes: «It should be known that since the truth of history is information about human social gathering, which itself is identical with world civilization (*al-ijtimāʿ al-ʿinsānī alladhi huwa ʿumrān al-ʿālam*) [...] and, since untruth by its very nature afflicts historical information. [...] then, if the student knows the true nature (or attitude) of events and of conditions in the world of existence, and their requirements, this will help him to distinguish truth from untruth in investigating the historical information critically. This is more effective in critical investigation than any other aspect that may be brought up in connection with it. [...] IF THIS IS SO, the normative method (or general law – *qānūn*) for distinguishing right from wrong in historical information on the ground of possibility or absurdity, is to investigate the human social gathering [of individuals] which itself is identical with social organization.» (QI: 56–61).

This second part of *ʿilm al-ʿumrān* which Ibn Khaldūn, pragmatically enough, presents as being his normative method (*qānūn*), should only be understood as social organization, identical to local society. The Arabic terms clearly distinguish between social organization on the local level and on the world level, i.e. world civilization. The student of history who intends to use the new science of social organization, growth and development as her foundation for understanding society, must have knowledge of both the true nature or attitude of events and the true nature or attitude of conditions and their requirements in the world of existence. Events refer here to historical events, while conditions refer to political and socioeconomic developments.

The implication of the Arabic terms in the abridged citation above also appear in the main title given by Ibn Khaldūn to his new science of *al-ʿumrān* (cf. figure 5 below). He uses two expressions for the two parts of *al-ʿumrān* and they are so clearly distinguished from one another that they cannot possibly be misunderstood. The one is conceived on the local level, i.e. social organization, growth and development. When the terms are combined with the Arabic word for world the reference is to the universal laws of human society. Constructed with the Arabic word for science the term refers to the entirety of the Prolegomenon, or to the science of *al-ʿumrān*.

In the illustration below we see that the term *bashar*, or men as a collective noun, is associated with social organization. This term is a concrete one and it can be used to refer to the human being in singular. On the other hand, we notice that the general term *insān*, which refers more generally to human beings, is associated with world civilization. The first construct comprises the first part of the title of the Prolegomenon, i.e. social organization. The meaning here includes growth and development. The second part of the title, which refers to the theoretical aggregate of the science of *al-ʿumrān*, is comprised by the expression world civilization.

In figure 5 we refer to the totality of this science by the term «social organization, growth and development». This means that the aggregate level of social organization, i.e. the level of world civilization, is implicitly rendered by the same appellation «social organization » considered in general terms. However, when considered in specific

terms, the term «growth and development» will be used. The added phrase is, in fact, the sine qua non of the new Khaldūnian science, which is the sociology of development. The figure below illustrates a thesis and an antithesis between the rural and the urban. Two syntheses are then deduced. The one on the top refers to world civilization. The one on the bottom refers to social organization, growth and development. This is how Ibn Khaldūn conceived his science of social organization, growth and development or ‘ilm al-‘umrān.

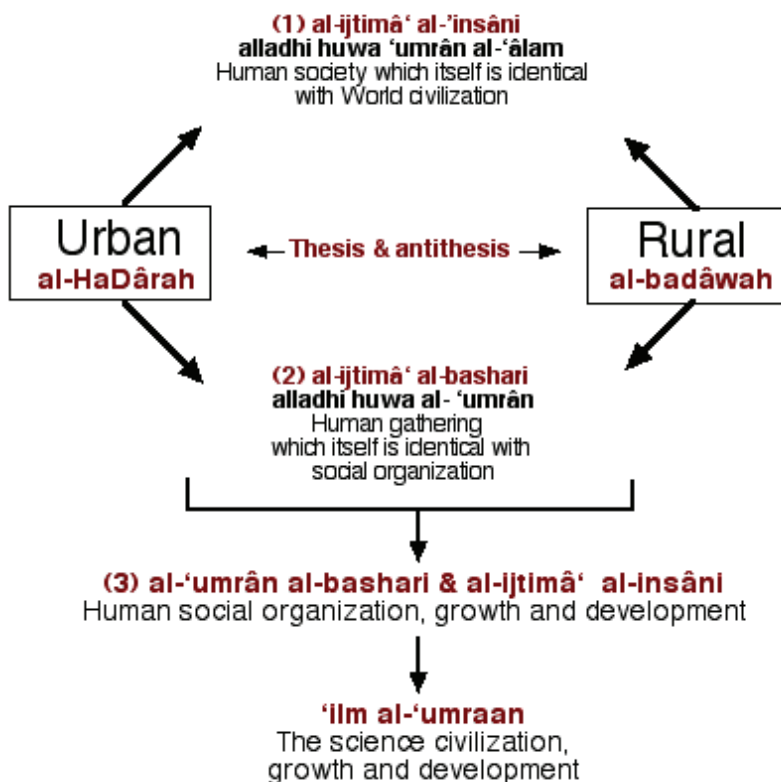


Figure 5. Social organization, growth and development

Ibn Khaldūn builds his general law of investigation on the practical level, i.e. the level of social organization.

[2.4.1] The Circle of Political Wisdom

The distinction between world civilization and social organization and their importance is also expressed in the eight sentences of political wisdom, which Ibn Khaldūn ascribes

to Aristotle, among others. He writes: «The world is a garden, the fence of which is the state. The state is an authority through which life is given to proper behaviour. Proper behaviour is a policy directed by the ruler. The ruler is an institution supported by the soldiers. The soldiers are helpers who are maintained by money. Money is sustenance brought together by the subjects. The subjects are servants who are protected by justice. Justice is something familiar and through it, the world persists. The world is a garden... – and the previous sentences are repeated.» (QI: 65).

The metaphor used at the beginning of these sentences does not literally mean that the state is the equivalent of the world, but rather that it is the most important unit within the world. A world without the concept of a state would be a difficult one for Ibn Khaldūn to imagine. A state should have a natural line of demarcation, a fence or frontiers within which it orders and protects residents from those on its outside. This is the meaning of the metaphor embodied in the statement that «The world is a garden, the fence of which is the state».

Ibn Khaldūn uses the logical sequence inherent in these eight sentences of sociopolitical wisdom as a background in many places in the Muqaddimah when undertaking socioeconomic and political analysis.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, practical research should be undertaken to illuminate human gathering or association, which is identical to social organization (*al-ijtimāʿ al-basharī alladhi huwa-l-ʿumrān*) (QI: 56–61).

Ibn Khaldūn writes that we must distinguish between the conditions that attach themselves to social organization, as required by its essence and its very nature (*li-zātih wa bi-muqtadā ʿibāh*) and the conditions that are accidental to social organization and which cannot be counted upon; and the conditions that cannot possibly attach themselves to it (QI: 61).

Concrete practical research must, according to Ibn Khaldūn, be undertaken in the present, even though the research is based upon information we have from the past. The discovery of conditions is dependent upon contextual studies of the social, economic, political and cultural aspects of society. This discovery of conditions makes it possible to have «...a normative method for distinguishing right from wrong and truth from falsehood in information by means of an irrefutable demonstration. Then, whenever we hear about certain conditions occurring in social organization (*al-ʿumrān*), we shall know what to accept and what to declare spurious. We shall have a sound yardstick with the help of which historians may find the path of truth and correctness where their reports are concerned.» (QI: 61). This is what one should discover when reading Ibn Khaldūn's science of *al-ʿumrān*.

[2.4.2] *The Structure of the Contents of the Prolegomenon*

Chapter 1 introduces the methodology of Ibn Khaldūn, which is closely related to chapter 2, where he talks about the acquirement of knowledge. When we consider the Prolegomena from this perspective, as simply being an aggregate body of information, we find that it consists of encyclopaedic knowledge about many different subjects. These include religious, political, philosophical, cultural, social and economic fields of knowledge and what was known in the time of Ibn Khaldūn about chemistry, astrology, and numerology. The overall theoretical structure of the contents of the Prolegomenon represents 6 chapters. In these chapters, teachings and theories about social organization are based upon his studies of different societies. Ibn Khaldūn studied Egypt and other societies in North Africa, as well as Muslim Spain.

The main title of the entire six chapters of the Prolegomena is «Book One of the Kitāb al-ʿibar, On the true nature of social organization in the universe and the exogenous aspects that attach themselves to it: Rural (*badw*) and urban life (*ḥaḍar*), the achievement of superiority (*taqallub*), surplus earnings (*kasb*), ways of making a living (*maʿāsh*), crafts and industry (*ṣanāʿiʿ*), sciences (*ʿulūm*) and all the other things that affect social organization; the causes and reasons thereof.» (QI: 56). The term *badw* is translated as rural society, but it is a term that refers to different types of rural societies, which exist outside the centre and its near surroundings. This term is the opposite of the term *ḥaḍar*.

A careful examination of this title above will lead to its division into two parts. The first part indicates that social organization in the universe, or world civilization, has its own peculiar nature, which Ibn Khaldūn wants us to discover. The second part indicates particular changing conditions that are attached to social organization, its growth and development.

This dichotomous de-construction of the main title of the Prolegomena contains a socioeconomic nucleus for all societies and a dynamic and general theory of society.

The first part of the title points to a socioeconomic core for all societies. This core will be discussed at a later point. However, it is important to know that the social and economic development of society is seen as being dependent upon geographical conditions. As we will see, a society's geographical environment plays an important role in its formation. Geographical knowledge, that is included in Chapter 3, reflects genuine and essential factors that underlie social organization. The social and economic core of every society must be viewed in light of the dynamic and changing phases of development for society.

The second part of the title informs us about the most important factors that affect social organization at a particular and limited level. We must, in the first place, distinguish between rural and urban society. Thereafter, we distinguish *at-taḡhallub*, or the achievement of superiority. Thereafter, the primary socioeconomic factors are taken into consideration, i.e. surplus earnings, and ways of making a living. This is followed by a discussion of crafts and industry, and finally, of the sciences.

These factors are the pillars upon which the general teachings and theories of development are built. The aggregate of all factors leads to a general theory of social dynamics, and the theory of the development of social organization, upon which the Khaldūnian sociology is based. This will be discussed in Chapter 4.

However, this theory is itself dictated by a socioeconomic conception of social organization. Human settlement within any given geographical area is preconditioned by natural needs. In particular, one must be able to provide the material necessities and satisfy the desire for comfort that only human companionship can provide. These factors will always be present no matter how transformations of society develop from one stage to another. The idea of a static society is fundamentally wrong from Ibn Khaldūn's perspective.

To recapitulate, the Khaldūnian science of *al-ʿumrān* possesses a socioeconomic core around which theories and principles of social organization, both general and particular, are arranged. Ibn Khaldūn writes, «In this book, now, we are going to explain such various aspects of social organization that affect human beings in their social gathering, as royal authority (*mulk*), surplus earnings (*kasb*), sciences (*ʿulūm*), and crafts and industry (*ṣanāʿiʿ*), all in the light of various arguments that will show the true nature of the varied knowledge of the elite and the common people, dispel misgivings, and remove doubts.» (QI: 66).

Following this, he provides an argument for justifying the selection of these specific factors. He writes: «we say that man is distinguished from other living beings (*ḥayawān*) by certain qualities peculiar to him, namely:

1- The sciences and crafts and industry which result from the ability to think which distinguishes man from the other animals and exalts him as a thinking being over all creatures.

2- The need for a restraining influence and strong authority, since man, alone of all the animals cannot exist without them. It is true, that something has been said in this connection about bees and locusts. However, if they have something similar, it comes to them through inspiration [instinct], not through thinking or reflection

3- Man's efforts to make a living and his concern with the various ways of obtaining and acquiring the means of life. These efforts and concerns are the result of man's need for food, to keep him alive and to subsist, which God instilled in him, guiding him to desire and seek a livelihood.

4- Social organization, which means that human beings have to dwell in common and settle together in cities and hamlets for the comforts of companionship, and for the satisfaction of human needs. This is a result of the natural disposition of human beings towards co-operation in order to be able to make a living.

5- Social organization may be either rural (*ʿumrān badawī*), as found in outlying regions and mountains, in hamlets (near suitable) pastures in waste regions, and on the fringes of sandy desert.

6- Or, it may be urban (*ʿumrān ḥari*), as found in cities, villages, towns, and small communities that serve the purpose of protection and fortification by means of walls.

In all of these different conditions, there are things that affect social organization, essentially, in as far as it is a social gathering.» (QI: 67).

Social organization is here divided into rural and urban categories. Social organization has a centre/periphery dimension. This is referred to by the concept *al-ʿumrān*. However, the concept also refers to the reasons behind the existence of such a structure. The first reason provided for the phenomenon of human social gathering is to satisfy the desire for the comfort of companionship. The second reason provided for this phenomenon is the desire to satisfy human material needs.

Even though Ibn Khaldūn posits that human beings have a natural disposition to cooperate, he does not claim that human social gathering occurs without problems. Human beings need a system of protection. Social organization must have a form that will allow for development. Both of these matters are seen as being necessary. Human social development should be seen in relation to four major factors within any society. These are political power, surplus earnings, sciences and crafts and industry. Here *al-ʿumrān* is referred to by the changeable conditions that affect its nature.

Social organization or *al-ʿumrān*, can be seen as being an operative conceptualisation which denotes the totality of the components of society. These include its super-structure and sub-structure. The first prerequisites for social organization are, human social gathering + the satisfaction of human needs. Then, we have the structure of *al-ʿumrān* into rural and urban categories. Thereafter, the four main conditions or factors that affect *al-ʿumrān* are considered, *mulk*, *kasb*, *ʿulūm* and *ṣanāʿi* (royal authority, surplus earnings, sciences and crafts) which are considered in their relation to the structure. This paradigm of four factors or conditions that Ibn Khaldūn uses in almost every analysis of socio-economic and political matters could also be deduced from the circle of political wisdom earlier mentioned. Ibn Khaldūn has also used these four factors to structure the contents of his *Muqaddimah* (See also Azmeh 2003).

Western historians frequently point to the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century as being characterised by the birth of economic thinking. But with reference to the *Prolegomena* of Ibn Khaldūn, this author maintains that as early as the 14th century, at least one writer gave considerable attention to the role of economics.

Spengler mentions in an articles from 1964, the background and the different sources on which Ibn Khaldūn bases his economic thoughts. He means that Ibn Khaldūn's understanding of economic behaviour results from his legal and administrative experience and his contact with the pool of administrative knowledge that was available to him.

In addition to writing a chapter in the *Prolegomenon* that is specifically devoted to a discussion of economic matters, Ibn Khaldūn considered all other aspects of social life to be dependent upon the economic factor. A careful study of the *Prolegomena* will reveal that the social and economic factors are present in a decisive manner throughout the work. In light of this quality, it is proper to identify and refer to the socioeconomic core of Ibn Khaldūn's thinking, because in his perspective, human social gathering and social life are inseparable from economic life.

The geographical introductions encountered in the *Muqaddimah* disclose growth and development (*kathrat al-ʿumrān*) in each geographical zone. This is an economic geography. However, geography and environment alone are not sufficient to explain economic dependency. Thus, the aforementioned four factors of political power, surplus

earnings, sciences and crafts and industry affect growth within its proper context and societal structure.

Chapter 3: The global economic geography of human settlement

Under the sub-title *al-ʿumrān al-bashari ʿal-al-jumlah wa fihi muqaddimāt* (Social organization in general; preparatory discussions), Ibn Khaldūn discusses the human being in the widest sense of the term, as a natural creature and as a potentially supernatural one. The human being is seen as being an inseparable part of the environment. The human being is a product of the environment and of social, economic and cultural developments that occur within society before and throughout its life.

There are six preparatory discussions in the Prolegomena. They disclose how Ibn Khaldūn relies upon the relationship between humankind and its environment in the expression of his social and economic theorem, which is at the core of his thinking.

[3.1] Man as homo socius: the first preparatory discussion

Ibn Khaldūn writes about the importance of authority in the life of human beings. Two important factors are mentioned. The first is co-operation to obtain food. The second is co-operation in order to provide protection. Ibn Khaldūn writes that social organization (*al-ijtimāʿ al-insāni*) is a necessity for human beings. The philosophers expressed this fact by saying: 'Man is 'political' by nature'. That is, he cannot do without social gathering (*ijtimāʿ*) for which the philosophers use the technical term 'town' (polis). This social gathering is what social organization (*al-ʿumrān*) means. The necessary character of social organization is explained by the fact that God created and fashioned man in a form that can live and subsist only with the help of food. He guides man to a natural desire for food and instilled in him the power that enables him to obtain it. (QI: 68–69).

Ibn Khaldūn writes that the power of the individual human being is not sufficient to obtain (the food) needed. It does not provide the human being with as much food as is required to live. Even when we assume an absolute minimum of food, that is, enough food for one day, (a little) wheat still needs to be properly prepared, and this involves grinding, kneading, and baking.

Each of these three operations, writes Ibn Khaldūn, requires utensils and tools that can be provided only with the help of several crafts and industry (*ṣināʿāt mutaʿaddidah*), such as the crafts of the blacksmith, the carpenter, and the potter. Assuming that a man could eat unprepared grain, an even greater number of operations would be necessary in order to obtain the grain: sowing and reaping, and threshing to separate it from the husks of the ear. Each of these operations requires a number of tools and many more crafts (*ṣanāʿiʿ kathīrah*) than those just mentioned. It is beyond the power of one man alone to do all that, or part of it, by himself. Thus, he cannot do without a combination

of many powers from among his fellow beings, if he is to obtain food for himself and for them. Through co-operation, the needs of a number of people, many times greater than their own number, can be satisfied (QII: 234–235).

The above citation argues that social organization, in the sense of *ijtimāʿ*— social gathering, has as its principal goal to provide sustenance through co-operation and the division of labour.

It is obvious that economic activities, in their rudiments, spring forth with the emergence of human social gathering or with the beginnings of *al-ʿumrān*, without which the existence of human beings would be impossible. Second to this need, individuals also need one another's help for their own defence. Ibn Khaldūn writes that when mankind has achieved social organization and civilization in the world has thus become a fact, people need someone to exercise a restraining influence and keep them apart, for aggressiveness and injustice are in the animal nature of man. The weapons made for the defence of human beings against the aggressiveness of dumb animals do not suffice against the aggressiveness of man against man, because all men possess those weapons. Thus, something else is needed for defence against the aggressive behaviour of other human beings. This cannot be provided by another type of animal, because all the other animals fall short of human abilities and lack the perceptions and the inspiration that characterise humankind. The person who exercises a restraining influence must be someone from the same community. He must dominate them and have power and authority over them, so that no one of them will be able to attack another. This is the meaning of royal authority (QI: 71–72).

Ibn Khaldūn believed that these two qualities, i.e. co-operation between human beings for the satisfaction of needs and co-operation between human beings for the establishment of a protective authority are the most natural qualities for any society. The existence of a restraining influence does not necessarily have to be codified by religious law. «People who have a (divinely revealed) book and who follow the prophets are few in number in comparison with the Magians who have none. The latter constitute the majority of the world's inhabitants. Still, they have possessed dynasties and monuments, not to mention life itself. They still possess these things at this time in the intemperate zones to the north and the south. This is in contrast with human life in the state of anarchy, with no one to exercise a restraining influence. That would be impossible» (QI: 72–73).

[3.2] The distribution of civilization in the world

The second preparatory discussion concerns the parts of the earth where civilization is found. Here, Ibn Khaldūn depends upon the geographical information that is available to him in his own day. As N. Schmidt writes, that Idrisi has furnished him (Ibn Khaldūn) with quite a respectable knowledge of the countries of Europe, Asia and Africa, including England and Scotland, Norway and Denmark (but not Sweden) (Schmidt 1978:13).

Ibn Khaldūn writes that the part of the earth that is free from water and thus

suitable for social organization has more waste and empty areas than habitable areas. The empty area in the south is larger than that in the north. The cultivated part of the earth extends more toward the north in the shape of a circular plane. It extends in the south to the equator and in the north to a circular line, behind which there are mountains separating (the cultivated part) from the elemental water. He writes that the part of the earth that is free from water is said to cover one-half or less of the sphere. The cultivated part covers one fourth of it and it is divided into seven zones. He points out that information about the cultivated part and about its boundaries, cities, towns, mountains, rivers, waste areas, and sandy deserts has been written down by men such as Ptolemy, in the field of geography and, after him, by Idrisi, the author of the Book of Roger. These men divided the cultivated area of the earth into seven parts, which they called the seven zones. The borders of the seven zones are imaginary. They extend from east to west. In latitudinal extension, they are identical, in longitudinal extension quite different. The first longitudinal zone is larger than the second one. The second is larger than the third, and so on. The seventh zone is the smallest. This is required by the circular shape that resulted from the withdrawal of water from the sphere of the earth.

According to these scholars, each of the seven zones is divided from west to east into ten contiguous sections. Information about general conditions and about the qualities and stages of social organization are provided for each section. Ibn Khaldūn is not interested in providing more detailed geographical information, since the same information can be found in the works of Ptolemy and in the Book of Roger, by Sharif al-Idrīsī. Meanwhile, Ibn Khaldūn's interest is focused upon economic geography, perceived from a universal point of view. This economic factor, in its broadest sense, confirms the Khaldūnian theorem that human social gathering, which aims at the satisfaction of needs, is also subject to environmental conditions. It is not a haphazard fact that civilization flourishes more in some parts of the world than in others, according to Ibn Khaldūn.

From his own observation of geographical facts and physical circumstances, Ibn Khaldūn concludes that the northern quarter of the earth has more growth and development than the southern quarter. He says that we know from observation and from continuous tradition that the first and the second of the cultivated zones (*al-aqālīm al-ma'mūrah*) have less growth and development (*al-umrān*) than the other zones. The developed area (*al-umrān*) in the first and second zones is interspersed with empty waste areas and sandy deserts and has the Indian Ocean to the east. The nations and populations (*'umam wa 'ajnās*) of the first and second zones are not excessively numerous. The same applies to the cities and towns there. The third, fourth and subsequent zones are just the opposite. Waste areas there are few. Sandy deserts also are few or non-existent. The nations and populations are tremendous. Cities and towns are exceedingly numerous. Civilization – *al-umrān*, in the sense of growth and development, has its seat between the third and the sixth zones. The south is all emptiness (QI: 82).

Ibn Khaldūn continues writing that many philosophers have mentioned that this is because of the excessive heat and the narrowness of the sun's deviation from the zenith in the south. Let us explain and prove this statement. The result will clarify the reason

why growth and development (*kathrat al-`umrān*), in the third and fourth zones is so highly multiplied and extends also to the fifth, sixth, and seventh zones (QI: 82).

Ibn Khaldūn writes: «the excessive heat causes a parching dryness in the air that prevents generation. As the heat becomes more excessive, water and all kinds of moisture dry up, and the power of generation (*at-takwīn*) is destroyed in minerals, plants, and animals, because generation depends on moisture.» (QI: 86) However, when the heat becomes more or less temperate, generation can take place. This goes on until the cold becomes excessive, due to the lack of light and the obtuse angles of the rays of the sun. Then generation again decreases and is destroyed. «However, the destruction caused by great heat is greater than that caused by great cold, because heat brings about desiccation faster than cold brings about freezing.» (QI: 86)

The geographical facts of the earth are decisive ones when concern is given to the possibility of partaking in traditional occupational pursuits, like agriculture and animal husbandry, which depend upon the exploitation of ground-elements, like minerals, plants and animals. This exploitation, together with human co-operation, is able to satisfy the simple necessities of life. Convenience and luxury are the result of a higher stage of economic development. Since the power of generation, as Ibn Khaldūn writes, is conditioned by the heat or cold, which differs from one geographical zone to the other, the economic basis for the satisfaction of the simple necessities of life will differ accordingly.

[3. 3] Climate and man's biological constitution and life pattern

Before the third preparatory discussion, Ibn Khaldūn gives a detailed account of the seven geographical zones included in the map of the earth as drawn at his time.

The third preparatory discussion concerns the influence of heat and cold upon human beings. Heat and cold influence skin colour and many other aspects of the human condition. Ibn Khaldūn writes that the cultivated region of the part of the earth that is not covered by water has its centre toward the north. There is excessive heat in the south and excessive cold in the north. The north and the south represent opposite extremes of cold and heat. There is a gradual decrease from the extremes toward the centre, which has a moderate climate. The fourth zone is the most temperate and cultivated region. The bordering third and fifth zones, which are adjacent, are far from being temperate and the first and seventh zones still less so.

As a consequence, Ibn Khaldūn writes that the sciences, crafts and industry, buildings, clothing, foodstuffs, fruits, animals, and everything else that comes into being in the three middle zones are distinguished by their temperate (well-proportioned) character. The human inhabitants of these zones are more temperate in their bodies, colour, character qualities, and general conditions. They are found to be extremely moderate in their dwellings, clothing, foodstuffs, as well as crafts and industry. They use houses that are well constructed of stone and embellished by craftsmanship. They rival each other in production of the very best tools and implements. Among them one finds

the natural minerals, such as gold, silver, iron, copper, lead, and tin. In their business dealings they use the two precious metals (gold and silver). They avoid intemperance quite generally in all their conditions (QI: 149). Such are the inhabitants of the Maghreb, of Syria, the two Iraqs, Western India, and China, as well as of Spain; also the European Christians nearby, the Galicians, and all those who live together with these people or near them in the three temperate zones. Iraq and Syria are directly in the middle and therefore are the most temperate of all these countries.

Ibn Khaldūn explains the impact of geographical location on man's biological constitution and on the economic conditions and developments that result from his occupational activities.

[3.4] Climate and human character

The fourth preparatory discussion focuses upon the influence of climate on human character. Being open or being sceptical, are phenomena of character, which influence human behaviour, according to Ibn Khaldūn. He writes that the Negroes are, in general, characterised by levity, excitability, and great emotionalism. They are found eager to dance whenever they hear a melody. They are everywhere described as being easily infuriated. The real reason for this behaviour, as has been shown by philosophers, is that «...joy and gladness are due to expansion and diffusion of the animal spirit. Sadness is due to the opposite, namely, contraction and concentration of the animal spirit. It has been shown that heat expands and rarefies air and vapours and increases their quantity. A drunken person experiences inexpressible joy and gladness, because the vapour of the spirit in his heart is pervaded by natural heat, which the power of the wine generates in his spirit. The spirit, as a result, expands, and there is joy.» (QI: 155).

After having discussed similar patterns of behaviour for other groups of people and races, Ibn Khaldūn writes, «If one pays attention to this sort of thing in the various zones and countries, the influence of the varying quality of the climate upon the character of the inhabitants will become apparent.» (QI: 157).

[3.5] The abundance or scarcity of food in the world and how these conditions affect the human physique and character

The fifth preparatory discussion points to differences in regards to the abundance or scarcity of food in the various inhabited regions of the world. Ibn Khaldūn believes that these differences affect the human body and character. Ibn Khaldūn writes that not all of the temperate zones have an abundance of food, nor do all their inhabitants lead a comfortable life. In some parts, the inhabitants enjoy an abundance of grain, seasonings, wheat, and fruits, because the soil is well balanced and favourable to plants and there is an abundant growth and development (*wufūr al-ʿumrān*). And then, in other parts, the

land is strewn with rocks and no seeds or herbs grow at all. There, the inhabitants have a very hard time (QI: 158).

The abundance or the scarcity of food, are conditions of the physical and geographical environment. These conditions decide not only the pattern of human social gathering – whether rural or urban, sedentary or mobile, but also the nutritional habits of those who reside in the different zones and many of the characteristics of their inhabitants. The desert people, who lack grain and herbs for seasoning, are, according to Ibn Khaldūn, found to be healthier in body and better in character than the hill people who have plenty of everything. Their complexions are clearer, their bodies cleaner, their figures more perfect, their character less intemperate, and their minds keener as far as knowledge and perception are concerned. This is attested to by experience in all these groups (QI: 158).

The reason for bodily and cognitive differences may be ascribed to a surplus in the amount of food eaten and in the moisture that excess food contains. Excess food generates pernicious consequences and produces a disproportionate widening of the body. It is responsible for corrupt and unpleasant states of mind and qualities of character. Ibn Khaldūn writes that the result of a great amount of food is a pale complexion and an ugly figure, because the person acquires too much flesh. When the moisture within excess food, with its evil vapours, ascends to the brain, the mind and the ability to think are dulled. The result is stupidity, carelessness, and the development of a generally immoderate temperament.

The superiority of scarcity over abundance can be exemplified, according to Ibn Khaldūn, by comparing the animals of waste regions and barren habitats, such as gazelles, wild cows, ostriches, giraffes, onagers, and wild buffaloes, with their counterparts among the animals that live in hills, coastal plains, and fertile pastures. There is a big difference between them with regard to the glossiness of their coat, their shape and appearance, the proportions of their limbs, and their sharpness of perception.

Ibn Khaldūn writes, «the same observations apply to human beings. We find that the inhabitants of fertile zones, where the products of agriculture and animal husbandry, as well as seasonings and fruits are plentiful, are, as a rule, described as stupid in mind and coarse in body.» (QI: 159).

However, Ibn Khaldūn posits these arguments tentatively, they are the results of his own personal observations and experiences. It may be difficult to accept his arguments today, but Ibn Khaldūn was keenly aware of the differences in the eating habits and in the nutritional consequences of those eating habits for sedentary and mobile societies of his day. He understood that differences in the habits of culturally divergent groups were related to differences in their environments. Elsewhere, he characterises the inhabitants of nomadic tribes and rural inhabitants as being more adaptable to changing conditions than their urban and sedentary counterparts. Ibn Khaldūn bases his developmental theory of society on the qualities of nomadic tribes and rural inhabitants, whose inhabitants, he insists, have a natural disposition for change.

Ibn Khaldūn is also conscious of the differences that exist within one and the same society. The abundance or scarcity of food will also influence the conditions of

inhabitants of a homogeneous society, where differences are enforced by human beings themselves and not by the physical and geographical factors alone. He writes, «the conditions of the inhabitants within a single city can be observed to differ according to the different distribution of luxury and abundance.» (QI: 161).

The distribution of luxury and abundance, about which Ibn Khaldūn writes, invites us to think about whether or not he had a particular class structure in mind, which might explain how and why luxury is differently distributed within a single city. We will return to this matter when we discuss Ibn Khaldūn's economic teachings.

3.6. Man as homo spiritus

The sixth and last preparatory discussion concerns various human beings that have supernatural perception. In Ibn Khaldūn's understanding, people can be naturally disposed or gifted with supernatural perception or those talents can be developed by rigorous exercise. Here, Ibn Khaldūn writes about prophecy and the possible influence of the spiritual world on human beings. This discussion should be understood from the point of view of Ibn Khaldūn's own day and age, where mystical traditions that were many centuries old were very widespread.

Ibn Khaldūn discusses the relationship between elements, creations, causes and things caused. He says that the whole of existence, simple and composite, is arranged in a natural order of ascent and descent, so that everything constitutes an uninterrupted continuum. The essences at the end of each particular stage of these worlds are, by nature, prepared to be transformed into the essence adjacent to them, either above or below them. «This is the case with the simple material elements; it is the case with palms and vines, (which constitute) the last stage of plants, in their relation to snails and shellfish, (which constitute) the (lowest) stage of animals. It is also the case with monkeys, creatures that combine cleverness and perception in their relationships to man, the being who has the ability to think and to reflect. The preparedness (for transformation) that exists on either side, at each stage of the worlds, is meant when (we speak about) their connection.» (QII: 373).

It is occasionally claimed that the citation above pre-envisions Darwinism, but it is more appropriate to connect the views here to the well-known and keenly structured Doctrine of the Brothers of Purity or Ikhwān al-Safā' (one who is pure or sincere), which flourished at Basra near the end of the tenth century (Nicholsson 1969:370).

Ibn Khaldūn recognises a spiritual world above the human world. The essence of this spiritual world is pure perception and absolute intellection. This is the world of angels. It follows from all this, concludes Ibn Khaldūn, that the human soul must be prepared to undergo an angelical transformation and become part of the angelic species in a single instant and thereafter resume its humanity.

In the overall structure of existence, humankind occupies a middle-ranking position. Humans are between two worlds: the world of creation, which is visible and comprehensible to humans, and the spiritual world, which is ordinarily invisible and

beyond the reach of human perception. Humans exercise an influence upon the visible world of creation (minerals, plants and animals) and that world influences and shapes human growth and development. The spiritual world can also exercise an influence upon humankind. While attention must be given to the existence of super-natural phenomena in society, Ibn Khaldūn warns his readers not to include them in any discussion of worldly matters. In his introduction to the translation of the *Muqaddimah*, Rosenthal points out that the philosophy of Ibn Khaldūn «...can be called secular, as scholars have occasionally described it. His secularism does not imply, however, any opposition to the supernatural world, let alone disavowal of it; to him its existence was as certain as anything observed by means of his senses. In his mind, the only matter for inquiry was the degree of relationship between man and the supernatural.» (Rosenthal 1958: plxxī).

To summarise, the six preparatory discussions are primarily concerned with the relationship between humankind and environmental influences and resources. Ibn Khaldūn maintains that human qualities are not only the products of social and cultural variables. The human being is decisively determined by its environment. However, the relationship between humankind and its material environment is primarily influenced by economic factors, i.e. the possibilities for making a livelihood induce humans to utilise and develop products from minerals, plants, and animals. In Ibn Khaldūn's preliminary discussions, the social and economic conditions are envisaged as a general theorem. They constitute a nuclear core for the discussions that follow. Still, nature itself is the principle actor within Ibn Khaldūn's conception of a global socioeconomic geography. Geography is a primary determinant for physique, the development of character, and the growth and development of social and cultural habits of mind and body.

In our own day, many social scientists will reject what they see as being any kind of over-emphasis upon the determinism of nature. This is so, primarily because of the modern advances in technology, which have opened our eyes to the influence that humans can have on their own environment and upon future generations. Humankind is still seen as being radically dependent upon the earth and upon the natural processes that science continues to discover and disclose, but the earth itself and its environment, and most recently, the biological constitution of the human genome, are seen as being impacted by human agency. The equation is no longer seen as being a unidirectional one. We no longer think about nature as being the sole determinant. Nature is the framework within which human activities, which are conditioned by developments in technology, take place.

Ibn Khaldūn could not escape a more thoroughly deterministic view of nature, restricted as he was to knowledge and experiences that were available in his own day.

In the next chapter, Ibn Khaldūn's general theory of social dynamics will be discussed. This theory is structured by a socioeconomic core understanding, expressed as a general theorem within his discussion of world geography.



Figure 6. A map of the world and of its seven geographical zones

The map: Information on the 7 geographical zones, which help to make Ibn Khaldūn's geographical understandings intelligible.

First Zone: Isles of the Blessed; the Niger; Nubia; sources of the Nile; Dongola; Abyssinia; Indian Ocean; Yemen; The land of the Waqwaq (usually Madagascar, but sometimes used to refer to Sumatra); Cylon; Southern China.

Second Zone: Sahara; Upper Egypt; Gulf of Suez; Hejaz; Najd; Persian Gulf; Bahrain; Indian Ocean; Scinde; The Indus; Kabul; Cashmere; China.

Third Zone: Atlas Mountains; Morocco; Mediterranean sea; Algeria; Tunisia; Tripolitania; Cyrenaica; Middle Egypt and the Delta; Palestine; Southern Cyprus; Syrian desert; Southern Iraq; Southern Persia; Afghanistan; Oxus; Bactria; Soghdiana; Tibet; Land of Khirgiz and Turkomen; Northern China.

Fourth Zone: Straits of Gibraltar; Portugal; Southern Calabria; Adriatic; Island of Peloponnesus; Crete; Cyprus; Syria; Mesopotamia; Southern Armenia; The Tigris and Euphrates; Yaxartes river; Persia; Kurdistan; Azerbaijan; territory of the Kaimaks; Turkestan.

Fifth Zone: The Atlantic Ocean; northern Spain; Pyrenees; Gascony; Poitou; Alps; Burgundy; North Italy; Lands of the Germans; Adriatic; Macedonia; Constantinople; Anatolia; Armenia; the Caspian Sea, mouth of the Volga; Georgia; Sea of Aral; Caucasus.

Sixth Zone: Atlantic Ocean; Brittany; England; Normandy; Flanders; France; Burgundy; Frisia; Lorraine; Saxony; Bohemia; Hungary; Carpathian mountains; Poland;

Russia; the Black Sea; Land of the Alans and Bulgars; Land of the Khazars and Bashkirs; Volga; Land of the Kipchaks Caucasus.

Seventh Zone: Atlantic ocean; Northern England; Iceland; Island of Denmark; Norway; Poland; Finland; Russia; Sources of the Volga; Land of Bulgaria; Land of Kipchaks; Wall of GOB and Maqoq Ocean. (Issawi 1950).

Chapter 4: a general theory of social dynamics

Our discussion of the Khaldūnian theory of social dynamics will, in this lengthy chapter, be elucidated in the following 6 main headings:

- A theory of transition
- Political leadership and the disintegration of urban social organization
- The overall socioeconomic policy of the state
- The macro-economic theory of development
- The micro-economic theory of development
- Theories of science and instruction

Ibn Khaldūn's General Theory of Social Dynamics is embodied in chapters 2 to 6 of the Prolegomenon, wherein he discusses the development of two societal systems, i.e. rural social organization (*al-ʿumrān al-badawī*), and urban social organization (*al-ʿumrān al-ḥaḍrī*). Rural social organization is primarily discussed in chapter two. Chapter three discusses the political structure and the transition from rural to urban life. In chapter four, Ibn Khaldūn discusses urban social organization in particular. Chapters five and six are concerned with economic and political questions. These matters are discussed in depth, and the cultural and scientific ramifications are given their proper due. The two final chapters describe the flourishing of social organization as well as the causes of its decline.

Some of the terminology used throughout these chapters is of the utmost importance for understanding the overall structure and the depth of thinking in the Prolegomena. The most important Khaldūnian term, in the whole of the Prolegomenon, is the multidimensional concept of *al-ʿumrān*. This is the most subtle Khaldūnian concept, and its varying usage reveals the author's creative endeavours when establishing his new science of *al-ʿumrān*.

The concept of *al-ʿumrān* is purposely combined with other concepts to express the universal, the rural, and the urban level of the social structure, as well as growth and development. Combined with an ordinal number, *al-ʿumrān* becomes a measurement for the social stages of development. Its usage also demonstrates the author's mastery of logic and language. When the concept is translated by the word civilization, as is often the case in many translations, the reader will only be able to grasp the general ideas or the major lines of demarcation in the Prolegomenon.

When Ibn Khaldūn writes about world civilization, he conceives it in its widest possible sense and as an aggregate body of knowledge. He argues that he does not have to write in detail about such a lengthy topic, since his main and specific concern is «...the Maghreb, the home of the Berbers, and the Arab home countries in the East.» (QI: 81). The limited focus of his own research does not dissuade Ibn Khaldūn from discussing world civilization. He relies upon the information that is available to the reading public of his day. Much had already been written about the many societies that one finds spread across the world. He adds to that information by providing his readers with examples from the Arab home countries in the East, as well as examples from the societies that populate the Maghreb region, where he lives. His discussion of the structure of society, both rural and urban, is based upon the studies he made of local tribes and cultures from the peoples inhabiting the Maghreb region of North Africa.

[4.1] A theory of transition

Ibn Khaldūn writes, «Both rural and urban people are natural groups». The differences in their conditions of life result from the different ways in which they make their living. Earning a living is the key to understanding social life and social organization. Ibn Khaldūn points out that social gathering enables people to cooperate toward that end [i.e. earning a living], and to start with the simple necessities of life, before they get to conveniences and luxuries.» (QI: 220).

The transition from a life based upon the economic necessities to one that includes conveniences and luxuries makes it possible for a transition from one form of social life to another. The most elementary economic transition is the one occurring in a household, when the struggle to survive is supplanted by a struggle to improve the quality of life. Ibn Khaldūn formulates a theory of social transition between rural and urban life-styles, and the theory is based upon the economic change from subsistence to affluence.

Ibn Khaldūn postulates a continuing antagonism between rural and urban peoples. The antagonism has a social and economic core but it also rooms problems that can be characterised as political. Badāwah, or rural societies, are always seen as having a potential for the development of urban social organization. The primary political goal for rural peoples is to make the transformation from rural life to urban life.

This important discovery leads Ibn Khaldūn to criticise Arab philosophy, and its leading proponent, Ibn Rushd (Averroes). The philosophers ignore their own peoples and their own surroundings. They have failed to see or value the dynamics and structures that are apparent in rural societies. Particularly, the distinctions between living in a desert, living in semi-arid environments, and the life of one who is sedentary and who has a permanent dwelling, are distinctions, which go unnoticed. The dynamic and antagonistic relationship between rural and urban peoples remains hidden. The Arab philosophers limit themselves to a discussion of social organization that is solely based upon the writings of ancient Greeks.

People of rural societies normally have to go through two different phases in their striving towards an urban life-style. The first phase is the struggle for survival, obtaining the necessities of life (*marḥalat aḍ-ḍarūrī*). The second phase begins when survival is relatively secure. Energy can be expended to develop conveniences and to enjoy luxuries (*marḥalat al-zā'id ʿala ḍ-ḍarūrī*).

Ibn Khaldūn writes that the achievement of improvements in the socioeconomic conditions of life leads to a life-style that emphasises the acquisition of more wealth and the satisfaction of more comforts than are needed. This enables people to rest and to live easier lives. «They then cooperate for things beyond the bare necessities. They use more food and clothes and take pride in them. They build large houses and lay out towns and cities for protection.» (QI: 221).

This stage is followed by a further increase in comfort and ease and the development of distinctive customs for the enjoyment of luxuries. At this point people take the greatest pride in the preparation of food and a fine cuisine, in the use of varied splendid clothes of silk and brocade and other (fine materials), in the construction of ever higher buildings and towers and in elaborate furnishings for the buildings (QI: 221).

The further development of crafts and industries are necessary in order to respond to the increasing needs for luxury. At this point, castles and mansions are built and they are supplied with running water. Towers are built higher and higher, and the new buildings must be furnished in the most elaborate manner. There is a greater differentiation in the quality of clothes, in beds and other furnishings, in the vessels and in the utensils that are employed in the luxurious households as well as at work. The transition is complete and the formerly rural people that once struggled for survival have now reached the stage of urban development and culture and there is opulence.

Ibn Khaldūn then writes: Here, now, we have urban people. 'Urban people' means the inhabitants of cities and countries some of whom adopt the crafts as their way of making a living, while others adopt commerce. They earn more and live more comfortably than the people of a rural community (*ahl al-badw*), because they live on a level beyond that of bare necessity and their way of making a living (*ma'āsh*) corresponds to their wealth (QI: 221–222).

Ibn Khaldūn attacked Arab philosophers for relying too heavily upon the ancient Greek texts. Still, his own writings make it clear that he too has learned something from the ancient Greeks. He is well armed with the phrases of logic that he appropriated from Aristotle and he uses them quite often throughout the Prolegomena. Ibn Khaldūn concludes his argument by writing, «It has thus become clear that the conditions of rural and urban people are natural and inevitable, as we have stated.» (QI: 222).

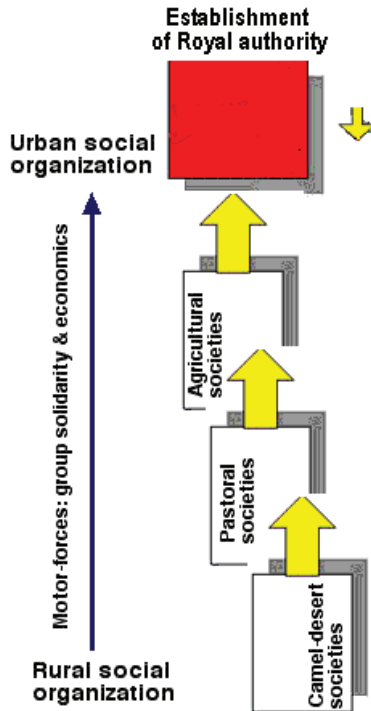


Figure 7. Social organization. A socioeconomic nucleus and a dynamic theory of transition

The urban way of life and the urban mode of production are goals for rural peoples. Ibn Khaldūn understands urban life as being the natural aspiration for all those who lead a rural life, be it nomadic, semi-nomadic or sedentary. Ibn Khaldūn's socioeconomic theory of transition develops from the characteristics of a rural social structure. The different patterns of settlement within rural societies are considered as being the basis and reservoir for the development of urban societies. (Cf. figure 7, above). The patterns of settlement within rural society differ according to the proximity or remoteness to a more urban centre.

The first pattern of settlement: For those who make their living through the cultivation of grain and through agriculture, it is better to be stationary than to travel around. Such, therefore, are the inhabitants of small communities, villages, and mountain regions (QI: 222).

The second pattern of settlement: «Those who make their living from animals requiring pasturage such as sheep and cattle, usually travel around in order to find adequate pasture and water for their animals, since it is better for them to move around in the land. They are called 'shepherds', that is, men who live on sheep and cattle. They do not go deep into the desert because they would not find good pastures there. Such people include the Berbers, the Turks, the Turkomans and the Slavs, for example.» (QI: 222).

The third pattern of settlement: Those who make their living by raising camels move around more. They wander deeper into the desert, because the hilly pastures with their plants and shrubs do not furnish enough subsistence for camels. They must feed on the desert shrubs and drink the salty desert water. They must move around the desert regions during the winter, in flight from the harmful cold to the warm desert air. In the desert sands, camels can find places to give birth to their young. Of all animals, camels have the hardest delivery and the greatest need for warmth in connection with it. Camel herders are therefore forced to make excursions deep into the desert (QI: 223).

These are the three social groups that comprise rural society, according to Ibn Khaldūn. Rural society is categorised by pattern of settlement, which is determined by geographical conditions and by the availing modes of production for each group.

The Arabic term used to describe these different societies and their distinctive ways of life is translated as rural societies or rural social organization (*al-ʿumrān al-badawī*), and the more limited expression «Bedouin or Desert civilization», as translated by Rosenthal, is avoided. Rural social organization denotes the rural society in its widest sense and includes all societal stratification. This is a pattern of social organization and it develops at a distance from the centre and in different ways, as distances from the centre vary. The central concept of social stratification will be made clearer during the following remarks.

Each periphery has its own physical, economic, social and political characteristics, which influence and make an impact upon the individuals living there. As a consequence, the term «*badw*» does not simply signify that people are nomads or that they inhabit the desert. On the contrary, the term also implies the idea that these people are in some sense settled. This settled quality is certainly true for most of the groups and for most of the rural societies that are discussed by Ibn Khaldūn.

Urban social organization (*ʿumrān ḥaḍarī*) is found in the centres (*amṣār*), villages (*qurā*), towns (*mudun*), and small communities that serve the purpose of protection and fortification by means of walls (*madāshir*) (QI: 67). Ibn Khaldūn writes that rural social organization is found in outlying regions and mountains, in hamlets near suitable pastures in waste regions, and on the fringes of sandy deserts (QI: 67).

4.1.1. Rural societies and how the root of social organization grows

Ibn Khaldūn finds social, economic and political qualities in the inhabitants of rural areas that enable them to give vent to a natural disposition for transition. He writes: The dwellers of rural areas are prior to urban people. Rural areas are the basis and reservoir of growth and development for centres and cities (*ʿanna-l-badw aqdam min al-ḥadar wa sābiq ʿalayhi w-anna-l-bādiyāh l al-ʿumrān w-al-amr wa madadun lahā*). We thus replace Rosenthal's translation: «Bedouins are prior to sedentary people. The desert is the basis and reservoir of civilization and cities.» (QI: 223).

Following this important conclusion about the origins of development in urban societies, Ibn Khaldūn refers to economic disparities. These are mirrored by the style of

life in rural societies, which is a limited one and restricted to the continuous struggle to acquire the bare necessities of life, and the style of life in urban societies, which is focused upon and concerned with the acquisition of conveniences and luxuries. He discovers a general social process that is at work in the relationship between rural and urban society and uses a striking metaphor to communicate his discovery. Ibn Khaldūn asserts that rural societies constitute the growing root of social organization. He recognises that human beings must first provide the bare necessities of life before they can address questions about how life can be made more convenient or how abundance can lead to the provision of luxuries. The bare necessities are basic. Conveniences and luxuries are secondary matters and an offshoot from the base. «Rural areas (*badw*), thus, are the basis of and prior to cities and urban societies. Man seeks first the bare necessities. Only after he has obtained the bare necessities does he get to comforts and luxuries.» (QI: 224).

Ibn Khaldūn has discovered that the characteristics and the requirements of one's environment affect and form human development. He understands that different socioeconomic conditions of life demand a life-style that in turn will form and effect the individual's social and psychological human characteristics. Courage and strength are the human characteristics that are needed to survive in harsh environments. The hardship of rural life precedes the ease of urban life. Urban life is the goal, the aspiration of all rural dwellers. Through their own efforts, rural dwellers can achieve that goal. When the rural dweller has acquired enough to be ready for the conditions and customs of luxury, he enters upon a life of ease and submits himself to the yoke of the city. This is the case with all rural tribes (QI: 224).

The goal of the rural community is the achievement of an urban life-style. The rural dweller wants the privileges that accompany urban social organization. This goal cannot be realised unless there are the necessary supports or means that can make the transition possible. Ibn Khaldūn makes the claim that rural dwellers benefit from their struggles for survival in a harsh environment. As a consequence of their style of life they develop courage and strength, and when those characteristics are properly utilised and organised, an appropriate adjustment can be made and the transition to urban life can be accomplished.

Courage and strength are the characteristic features for the successful survivors of a harsh environment, and the major difference between the individuals that make up rural and urban communities. This difference will be more carefully explained later in the text. In Ibn Khaldūn's view, the loss of courage and strength characterises all urban peoples. Since there are vast differences in the conditions of life for rural and urban peoples, urban people have no desire for the conditions of the rural areas, unless they are motivated by some urgent necessity or because of a shortage, which has befallen the conditions of their fellow citizens (QI: 224).

This relationship between rural and urban communities, when the differences in their socioeconomic conditions of life are clearly seen, led Ibn Khaldūn to claim that the rural community is prior to, and the basis for the existence of towns and cities, their growth and development. To validate this claim, Ibn Khaldūn points out that evidence «... for the fact that rural communities are the basis of, and prior to, urban people is

furnished by investigating the inhabitants of any given city. We shall find that most of its inhabitants originated among rural dwellings in the country and villages of the vicinity.» (QI: 224).

The fact that rural dwellers become urban dwellers, and that a transition from one life style to another occurs, does not mean that socioeconomic disparities are or will be eradicated, once the transition is effected. Ibn Khaldūn recognises the existence of disparities within urban and rural societies. He says that all rural and urban people also differ among themselves in their conditions of life. Many a clan is greater than another, many a tribe greater than another, many a city larger than another, and many a town more prosperous than another (QI: 224–225). The concept of *al-umrān* in this context denotes the socioeconomic measurement of development.

[4.1.2] Socio-psychological solidarity within the group

Ibn Khaldūn has identified an important social and psychological characteristic and he has attributed this characteristic to rural communities. It is a characteristic with the potential for effecting large-scale political developments. This characteristic is translated by socio-psychological solidarity within the group. It may well be an untranslatable conceptualisation. Others have suggested the following; esprit de corps, common will, Gemeininn, common sentiment, Gemeingefugl, sociability, irrational feeling of solidarity, rationalism, organic solidarity, and even collective conscious. This particular abstract conceptualisation has monopolised a great deal of the research done on Ibn Khaldūn's Prolegomena. In its rudiments, socio-psychological solidarity within the group is a natural and biological bond that is strongly prevalent within the tribal unit. However, when this bond is nourished by other social and political factors (i.e. common interests, common aspirations, and common understandings of group destiny), and when these bonds are properly organised, they may create the conditions for political action. The group becomes a force for protection and for change. This force can be used to achieve authority and control far beyond the tribal frontiers. It can even be used to establish a state.

This phenomenon can develop and grow from rudimentary tribal bonds, but it bears within itself the germ of its own decline and destruction. Ibn Khaldūn writes of the surrender to a life of luxury and convenience, to the loss of courage and strength, and of the forgetfulness of what is needed to nourish and develop or regain those lost characteristics.

The conceptualisation of socio-psychological solidarity within the group is *‘aşabiyyah*. This is a very complex conceptualisation because the quality can find so many different forms of expression. It is metaphorically envisioned as the heart that is deeply embedded in the group and which beats according to its own vitality. As a community transforms itself from rural to urban styles of life, *‘aşabiyyah* is expressed in different ways.

At its origin and core, *‘aşabiyyah* has three components: an ecological element, a biological element and an ethnic element. As it is transformed, it is affected by the

emergence of sociological phenomena whenever the biological element becomes differentiated. This heart that is so deeply embedded in the group may develop an economic and a political quality. The heart may evolve itself into the establishment of political parties (Maghrebi 1971).

Ibn Khaldūn writes, «the socio-psychological solidarity within the group (*ʿaṣabiyyah*) gives protection and makes possible mutual defence, the pressing of claims, and every other kind of social activity.» (QI: 252).

The socio-psychological solidarity within the group (*ʿaṣabiyyah*) leads the group to pursue the goal of royal authority (*mulk*). Royal authority has two meanings. It may suggest charismatic superiority or political responsibility. However, *ʿaṣabiyyah* is always coupled to economic factors (i.e. the differing economic conditions that exist in rural and in urban communities, or between the centre and the peripheries). Together, these elements comprise the dynamic force of change.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that rural society (*ʿumrān al-bādiyah*) is an earlier stage of development than urban society (*ʿumrān al-ḥawādir*) because not all the necessities for growth and development are to be found among the people of the rural areas. They do have some agriculture, but do not possess the pertaining materials, most of which depend upon crafts and industry. They do not have any carpenters, tailors, blacksmiths or other craftsmen whose skills would provide them with the necessities required for making a living in agriculture.

Likewise, they do not have coined money (dinars and dirhams). They have the equivalent of money in harvested grain, in animals, and in animal products such as milk, wool, camel's hair, and hides, which the urban population (*ahl al-amṣār*) needs and buys from the people of the rural areas. Ibn Khaldūn concludes. «However, while the rural community needs the cities for their necessities of life, the urban population needs the rural community for conveniences and luxuries. Thus, the rural community needs the cities for the necessities of life by the very nature of their (mode of) existence. As long as they live in the rural areas and have not acquired royal authority and control of the cities, they need co-operative relationships with the inhabitants of the cities. Rural people must be active on behalf of their interests and obey them whenever the inhabitants of cities ask and demand obedience from them.» (QI: 276–277).

The inhabitants of rural communities are industrially and economically dependent upon the urban communities, and they are politically subjected to the policies that are generated by the royal authorities that have established themselves in the urban communities. A political leader can enforce obedience and exert pressures to induce the rural communities to act in the king's interests. «He does so either by persuasion, in that he distributes money among them and lets them have the necessities to subsist; or, if he has the power to do so, he forces them to obey him, even if he has to cause discord among them so as to get the support of one party, with the help of which he will then be able to overcome the remainder and thus force the others to obey him, since they fear the decay of their socioeconomic development.» (QI: 277) These rural communities often cannot leave for other regions that are already inhabited by other communities who usurped them and kept others out of them. They hatch therefore no hope of survival except by being obedient to the centre (*miṣr*). Thus, they are of necessity dominated by

the population of the centre.

The royal authority must always find a way to decide upon one policy or the other. The question the king must answer is which policy will be favourable for him and for the development and continuation of his reign? Should he help the rural communities and enable them to subsist, or should he cause discord between them, gaining the support of one party and forcing the rest to obey him?

[4.2] Political leadership and the disintegration of urban social organization

Ibn Khaldūn writes that the state (*dawlah*) and government serve as the world's greatest market place, providing the substance for growth and development (QI: 92). He reasserts the same understanding only a few paragraphs later when he writes that «...the state is the greatest market, the mother and base of all trade, the substance of income and expenditures.» (QII: 93).

For Ibn Khaldūn, the state is the form that gives shape to the substance, i.e. the state shapes social organization and is responsible for the community's growth and development. The tremendous role of the state, forming a particular society by determining its geographic boundaries and by establishing its administrative centre, is underscored by his reasoning. The state is responsible for protecting the socioeconomic activities that nourish and maintain social life and social growth. If and when the policy of the state fails to live up to these responsibilities, the disintegration of the particular society in question will occur, and this may lead to the establishment of a new authority. These are the implications of his words when he writes: In sum, the primary natural reason for this situation is the fact that state (*dawlah*) and royal authority (*mulk*) have the same relationship to growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*) as form has to matter. The matter in its quality becomes the structure that preserves the existence of the form. It has been established in philosophy that the one cannot be separated from the other. One cannot imagine a state without growth and development, while growth and development without state and royal authority is impossible, because human beings must by nature cooperate, and that calls for a restraining influence. Political leadership is therefore obligatory (QII: 264).

From this deliberation, we are able to discover the understanding that Ibn Khaldūn has of the relationship between «*ʿumrān*», in the sense of growth and development, and the political authority that resides in the state. The state forms and gives structure to growth and development.

Ibn Khaldūn writes about two major political institutions in the Prolegomena. He distinguishes between rational politics (*siyāṣah ʿaqliyyah*) and religious politics (*siyāṣah sharʿiyyah*). The former does not include 'political utopias' and Ibn Khaldūn writes that the 'ideal city' of the philosophers is something rare and remote. They discuss it as a hypothesis (QII: 126–142). He also distinguishes between the integrated state (*al-dawlah al-kulliyah*) and the individual ruler (*dawlah shakhṣiyyah*).

When he writes about rational politics in the Prolegomenon, Ibn Khaldūn refers to state institutions and to royal and governmental positions, which he claims are required by the nature of social organization and human existence. A rational government is not one that is under the control of particular religious laws. Subjection to religious law in the field of political practice, he points out, is not his intention in this book (QII: 3–4). When he does compare political and religious institutions, and when he writes about the caliphate, he does so only in order to make the distinction between religious and governmental positions clear, and not in order to make a thorough study of their legal status (QII: 3–4). Political matters are seen as being necessary consequences of the nature of social organization in human existence (QII: 3–4). His separation of religion from politics does not imply that Ibn Khaldūn is against religion.

As Labica points out, Ibn Khaldūn's distinctions have no purpose other than to enable a thorough examination of society in its «spécificité sociologique», by affirming the priority of political factors (Labica 1965).

Rational politics for Ibn Khaldūn is, on the one hand, the regulation of the relations between the ruler and the ruled and, on the other hand, it is the regulation of the relations between the ruled among themselves, both as individuals and as groups. About the political leader himself, Ibn Khaldūn writes that it is a drawback for a political leader to be too clever and shrewd. Cleverness and shrewdness imply that a person thinks too much, just as stupidity implies that a person thinks too little. In the case of all human qualities, the extremes are reprehensible and the middle road is praiseworthy (QI: 341–342).

Ibn Khaldūn writes that scholars are, of all people, those who are least familiar with the ways of politics. Ibn Khaldūn differs by his pragmatism from Al-Fārābī (950 c.e.), a student of the Greeks and an idealist philosopher, and Ibn Baja (Avempace) (1138 c.e.), one of the initiators of philosophy in Spain who also wrote about politics (Waltzer 1963).

Ibn Khaldūn is conscious of the antagonisms that naturally exist between those that wield power and their subjects. He is as aware of the antagonisms that exist between rural and urban societies and of the socioeconomic forces that inhere in both of these relationships. Ibn Khaldūn asserts that political leadership, because of the great competition for it, is rarely handed over voluntarily, but that it may be taken away by force. For that reason, the development of group feeling and loyalties are necessary. He points out that a state or a dynasty rarely establishes itself firmly in lands with many different tribes and groups (QI: 295).

States can be firmly established by the use of force, by claims asserting the royal descent of its leaders, or by the binding powers of religion. However, developments can lead to the dissolution of socio-psychological bonds that are expressed in the phenomenon of group feeling. This is the very same substance that made it possible for the group leader to seize power. When the bonds of group feeling begin to dissolve, the state will maintain itself by relying upon the support of its clients and of its most faithful adherents. These are the parties that have benefited most and who have most to lose if state authority changes hands.

Once established, a state or dynasty will have jurisdiction over a certain amount of provinces and lands. Ibn Khaldūn points out that a state will be stronger at its centre than at its extremities. When it has reached its farthest expansion, it becomes too weak and incapable of going any farther. This may be compared to light rays that spread from their centres, or to ripples that widen over the surface of the water (QI: 291–292).

Meanwhile, the greatness of a state or dynasty, the extent of its territory, and the length of its duration depend upon the numerical strength of its supporters (QI: 293), and is not necessarily dependent upon the continuing force of the group solidarity that was established initially.

Royal authority (*mulk*) affects the development or the decay of civilization. Ibn Khaldūn writes that royal authority, by its very nature, claims all glory for itself and goes in for luxury and prefers tranquillity and peace (QI: 299). Meanwhile, when the natural tendencies of royal authority to claim all glory for itself and to acquire luxury and tranquillity have been firmly established, the state/dynasty approaches senility (QI: 302).

People become accustomed to having a greater number of things. Their appetites for luxury continue to grow. Needs eventually outgrow or become greater than resources. Inherited wealth and incomes prove to be insufficient. This imbalance becomes aggravated in the experiences of later generations. When income levels are insufficient to pay for the luxuries to which one has become accustomed, an imbalance in the situation occurs and this will finally affect the ruler and weaken him. The ruler, i.e. the government, must increase its provisions and allowances in order to remedy this unsound condition. Tax revenues are used to finance the general and growing need for new luxuries and greater expenditures, and as a consequence, the size of the militia decreases in number. The luxurious life-style continues and greater numbers develop larger appetites. As a result, allowances must increase and the size of the militia continues to decrease. This socioeconomic cycle continues for a third and a fourth time. The result is that the military defence of the dynasty is weakened and its power declines. Neighbouring states, or groups and tribes under the control of the dynasty itself, become bold and attack it (QI: 303).

The size of the militia refers to more than the number of military personnel. The militia is really a larger category that includes the ruler's own group of loyalists, family members, and other tribal allies. It is from this loyal group that he chooses the people to fill administrative offices, including his most trusted advisors and his tax collectors. These are the people that help him to achieve and maintain sovereign power. They are participants in the government. They have a share in all of his important affairs.

Ibn Khaldūn asserts that socioeconomic disorder generally begins at the top and is first spread within the political institutions of the state/dynasty. Since most of the economic problems in the state are caused by an unnecessary increase in luxuries, particularly at the top, the ruler's closest partisans and allies must take steps to retard this natural process of decline. The core group, the people of *ʿaṣabiyyah*, must not permit the tendency to allow in luxury to become firmly rooted. This admonition is directed to all those who fill government offices and to the allies and partisans who benefit most from the power of the dynasty. This is true for the ruler and for the core

group that supports and benefits from his leadership. Otherwise, the decadent life-style will cause the situation of the state/dynasty to decline.

Ibn Khaldūn uses the term senility as a metaphor in order to help us visualize the stages of decline. We are to imagine the state in the form of an old man, so diminished by feebleness that he is unable to properly care for himself. There is no real cure for senility. Whatever one does to temporarily improve the situation, the only true future we can foresee is one that will bring an even further decline and ultimately death.

Ibn Khaldūn writes: In a dynasty affected by senility as the result of luxury and rest, it sometimes happens that the ruler chooses helpers and partisans from groups not related to the ruling dynasty but used to toughness. He uses them as an army, which will be better able to suffer the hardships of wars, hunger, and privation. This could prove a cure for the senility of the dynasty when it comes, but only as long as God permits his command and this policy within the state/dynasty to be executed (QI: 305).

One can temporarily remedy or retard the developing senility of the state/dynasty, but at some point the condition will prove to be beyond remedy and the inevitable will transpire. Ibn Khaldūn does not believe that it is possible for a state to maintain its youth and vigour indefinitely. There is always an ageing process taking place and sooner or later it will lead the state to its demise.

Ibn Khaldūn makes the assertion that states/dynasties have a natural life span, much in the same way that is true for individuals. For states/dynasties, by and large, three generations can be seen as being a natural life span: Three generations last approximately one hundred and twenty years, in Ibn Khaldūn's calculations. As a rule, dynasties do not last longer than that many years, a few more or a few less, save when, by chance, no one appears to attack them. When senility becomes preponderant, there may be no claimant (for dynastic power), but if there should be one, he will encounter no one capable of repelling him. If the time is up, the end cannot be put off for a single hour, nor can it be advanced. In this way, the life span of a state/dynasty corresponds to the life span of an individual; it grows up and passes into an age of stagnation and thence into retrogressions (QI: 308).

Ibn Khaldūn explains the characteristics of the three generations that incorporate the life and death of the state/dynasty. He identifies five different stages of power.

The first stage is that of success (*tawr al-zafar*). The new force overthrows all opposition and successfully appropriates royal authority from the preceding state/dynasty. In this stage, the ruler serves as a model to his people.

The second stage is the one in which the ruler gains complete control over his people and claims royal authority for himself (*tawr al-istibdād*).

The third stage is one of leisure and the tranquil exercise of royal authority (*tawr al-faraj w-ad-di'ah*). The fruits of royal authority are fully enjoyed. The ruler expends all of his time and efforts collecting taxes, regulating income and expenses, bookkeeping and planning expenditures.

The fourth stage is one of contentment and peace (*tawr al-qunū' wa-l-musālamah*). The ruler is content to enjoy and maintain what his predecessors have built.

The fifth stage is one of waste and squandering (*tawr al-isrāf wa-l-tabzīr*). The ruler wastes his time pursuing pleasures and amusements and he squanders the treasures that were accumulated by his ancestors. It is in this fifth stage that the state/dynasty is seized by senility (*haram*). It is a chronic ailment, one that can be arrested and retarded for a time but which reappears when remedies begin to fail. There is no cure for this ailment and, eventually, the state/dynasty is destroyed. (QI: 314–317).

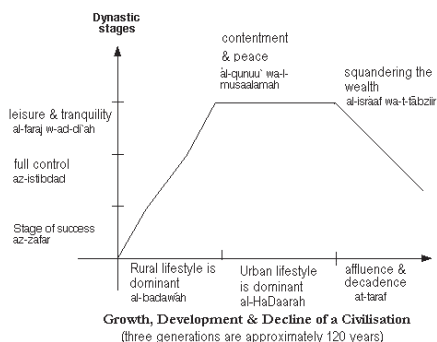


Figure 8. The rise and fall of a dynasty/state/civilization

In spite of the inevitable fate of any state/dynasty, the possibility of extending its life span does exist and should be the sublime goal for those who are responsible for the exercise of royal authority. Even though the state/dynasty must perish, the transfer of royal authority can and does occur. This makes it possible to continuously inhabit a region, to renew and reinvigorate social life and to recreate civilization. The state as a concept of power and social order is subject to the law of change.

[4.3] The overall socioeconomic policy of the state

We have already pointed out that Ibn Khaldūn believed that precautionary measures could be taken to temporarily remedy or retard the inevitable decline and fall of the state/dynasty. Senility within the state/dynasty can be arrested for a time.

Here, we must add that prohibitive measures against luxurious life-styles are not sufficient, on their own, to rescue the state from economic disorder. It is as important to be able to successfully plan and organise the overall socioeconomic policy of the state.

Ibn Khaldūn asserts that a good ruler will be kind to and protect his subjects. «The true meaning of royal authority (*mulk*) is realised when the ruler defends his subjects. To be kind and beneficent towards them is part of being mild to them and showing an interest in their ways of making a living. These things are important for the ruler in gaining the love of his subjects.» (QI: 341).

To have an interest in their ways of making a living is more precise than «to have an interest in how they are living» as in Rosenthal's translation. The economic element

is clearly underscored by the words «showing an interest in their ways of making a living» (*an-nazar lahum fī ma'āshihim*). This is a most important political activity for the successful ruler. To exercise political leadership, the ruler, together with his helpers, must defend and protect the community from its enemies, enforce restraining laws among the people to prevent mutual hostility and attacks upon property and to ensure the safety of roads. He must cause the people to act in their own best interests, and he must supervise such general matters involving their livelihood and mutual dealings as foodstuffs and weights and measures, in order to prevent cheating. He must look after the mint, in order to protect from fraud the currency used by the people in their mutual dealings (QII: 1). This assertion clearly shows that Ibn Khaldūn believed that the state had a role to play in the economy. The state should be actively involved in economic transactions and concern itself with fairness and justice in the conduct of business.

[4.3.1] Public finances

Ibn Khaldūn discusses public finances under the subtitle «Taxation and the reasons for low and high tax revenues». He points out taxes are normally low, when a new state/dynasty establishes itself, and high, when it is in its final stages. Tax revenues are high in the early days of the state, when taxes are low. Tax revenues are low when the state is in its final stages and taxes are high.

In the early stages, the state/dynasty is rarely inclined to appropriate property and tax assessments are low. When tax assessments and impositions are low, the subjects have the energy and desire to do business. Economic enterprises (*i'timār*) grow and increase, because the low taxes bring satisfaction. When economic enterprises grow, the number of individual impositions and assessments mount (naturally). In consequence, the tax revenue, which is the sum total of (the individual assessments), increase (QII: 80).

The term «*al-i'timār*» includes economic activities that enhances growth and development. Apart from being closely related to the term *al-umrān* (Growth and development), this term refers here to the activities of subjects, agricultural labourers, farmers, and all other tax- payers.

Ibn Khaldūn argues that when government becomes obsessed with prosperity and luxury, customs change and needs become more varied. This results in an increase in the tax assessments that are demanded from subjects. The idea is to increase tax revenues. Custom charges and duties are levied upon articles of commerce and at the city gates. He writes that heavy taxes become an obligation and a tradition, because the increases take place gradually and no one knows specifically who increased them or levied them (QII: 80–81).

This is the situation when tax assessments increase beyond the limits of equity. As a consequence, subjects lose interest in economic enterprise. Many refrain from economic activity. The revenue from taxes goes down as individual assessments go up.

Ibn Khaldūn writes: Often, when the decrease is noticed, the amounts of

individual impositions are increased. Finally, individual impositions and assessments reach their limit. It would be of no avail to increase them further. The costs of all economic enterprise are now too high, the taxes are too heavy and anticipated profits fail to materialise. Finally, growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*) is destroyed, because the incentive for economic activity is gone. The dynasty suffers from the situation, because it profits from economic activity (QII: 80–81).

Ibn Khaldūn writes that if one understands this process properly, it will be realised that «... the strongest incentive for economic activity is to lower as much as possible the amounts of individual impositions levied upon persons capable of undertaking economic enterprises (*muʿtamirūn*). In this manner, such persons will be psychologically disposed to undertake them, because they can be confident of making a profit from them.» (QII: 81).

Ibn Khaldūn is addressing an ideal situation when he refers to the «strongest incentive», which is one that every economic entrepreneur would favour. However, he is not proposing a tax-free society. He recognises the importance of revenue that is generated through taxation. It is needed in order to finance the machinery of the state and to pay state functionaries to fulfil their duties. However, taxation should never be levied «beyond the limits of equity». When those limits are reached and surpassed, the effects upon economic activity are disastrous.

Sometimes rulers that find themselves in economic difficulties try to engage in commercial activities. Ibn Khaldūn warns his readers of the dangers that follow from this path: Commercial activity on the part of the ruler is harmful to his subjects and ruinous to the tax revenue (QII: 83). Rulers sometimes believe that the market will be able to improve their own revenues and increase their own profits, in the same way that merchants and farmers use the market to increase revenues and profits. This, he writes, is a great error. The ruler has an overabundance of financial resources and the authority to impose laws. This will disturb the other entrepreneurs and eventually create great losses for the ruler. The intervention of the ruler in the marketplace will cause harm to his subjects in a host of ways. Competition between them already exhausts, or comes close to exhausting, their financial resources. Now, the ruler, who has so much more money than they, competes with them. Scarcely a single one of them will be able to obtain the things he wants, and everybody will become worried and unhappy (QII: 84).

Ibn Khaldūn provides an example in his argument. The ruler may appropriate a great deal of the agricultural produce and other merchandise by force or by buying things up at the cheapest possible price. Further, there may be no one who would dare to bid against him. Thus, he will be able to force the seller to lower his price (QII: 84). He continues: «this becomes an oft-repeated process. The trouble and financial difficulties and the loss of profit that it causes the subjects, take away from them all incentives to effort, thus ruining the fiscal structure.» (QII: 85).

If the ruler were to compare the revenue from taxes against the profits realised from his engagement in commercial activity, he would find that the latter is negligible in comparison with the former. This is true even when he imposes custom duties. When the subjects can no longer increase their capital through agriculture and commerce, these pursuits will decrease and disappear as the result of expenditure. This will ruin their

situation (QII: 85).

Ibn Khaldūn concludes his argument by writing:

« ... The finances of a ruler can be increased and his financial resources improved only through the revenue from taxes. This can be improved only through the equitable treatment of people with property and regard for them so that their hopes rise and they have the incentive to start making their capital bear fruit and grow. This, in turn, increases the ruler's revenues in taxes.» (QII: 86).

Equitable treatment also means that the ruler does not hold on to property and revenue nor squander or waste them. Furthermore, money circulates between subjects and ruler, moving back and forth. Now, if the ruler keeps it for himself, it is lost for the subjects (QII: 93). Less money in circulation would, according to Ibn Khaldūn, mean a decrease in the economic motivation of all subjects and negatively affect their activities. The consequence is a decrease in the revenues of the state.

The discussion in this section has inspired Arthur B. Laffer to conceptualize and develop the Laffer Curve. The author himself says:

«The Laffer Curve, by the way, was not invented by me. For example, Ibn Khaldūn, a 14th century Muslim Philosopher, wrote in his work *The Muqaddimah*: 'It should be known that at the beginning of the dynasty, taxation yields a large revenue from small assessments. At the end of the dynasty, taxation yields a small revenue from large assessments.'» (Laffer, 2004: 3).

[4.3.2] Injustice

Under the title «Injustice brings about the ruin of growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*)», Ibn Khaldūn writes that «Attacks on people's property remove the incentive to acquire and gain property. People then become of the opinion that the purpose and ultimate destiny of acquiring property is to have it taken away from them (QII: Ø93).

Matters are simply inter-related and changes in one sphere of activity can effect changes in other spheres of activity. Ibn Khaldūn writes that when attacks on (property) are extensive and general, affecting all means of making a livelihood, business inactivity (*al-quʿūd ʿan kasb*) too becomes general (QII: 93).

Business inactivity means more precisely that people would acquire what they need for their own consumption and sustenance and would not be motivated to undertake any activity that might generate surplus earnings (*kasb*), the portion of one's earnings that are subject to taxation. On the other hand, if the attacks upon property are but light, the stoppage of surplus earnings is correspondingly slight (QII: 93).

Surplus earnings compose the portion of production, which is necessary for growth and development, and the «well-being» of society.

Ibn Khaldūn further writes that abundant growth and development as well as business prosperity (*al-ʿumrān wa wufūrih wa nafaq aswāqih*) depend upon productivity and human efforts in every direction in line with their own interests and earnings (*mašāliḥ wa makāsib*) (QII: 94). When people no longer do business in order to make a

living and when they cease all gainful activity (*makāsib*), growth and development slumps and everything decays.

Whenever such a situation prevails, and business dealings are seriously disturbed or cease, people will scatter in every direction in search of sustenance to places outside the jurisdiction of their present government. The population of the particular region (*sākin al-qr̄*) becomes sparse. The settlements there become empty. The cities lie in ruins. The disintegration causes the disintegration of the status of state-dynasty and ruler (QII: 94).

Here one should notice that Ibn Khaldūn writes about the flight of productive capital, which is one of the most destructive processes curtailing growth and development. There are different degrees of growth and development and different degrees of injustice. This may make it difficult to perceive the effect of an unjust state policy on economic enterprise. As a consequence, one may not be able to predict the negative effects upon growth and development.

In this connection, one should disregard the fact that state-dynasties centred in great cities often infringe upon justice and still are not ruined. It should be appreciated that this is the result of a relationship that exists between such infringement and the situation of the urban population. «When a city is large and has a high degree of growth and development (*‘umrānuhu kathīr*)¹⁴ which is unlimited in the variety of its socioeconomic conditions, the loss it suffers from hostile acts and injustice is small, because such losses take place gradually. Because of the great variety of conditions and the manifold productivity of a particular city, the loss may remain concealed. Its consequences will become visible only after some time. Thus, the dynasty that committed the infringements of justice may be replaced before the city is ruined. Another state-dynasty may make its appearance and restore the city with the help of its wealth. Thus the previous loss, which had remained concealed is made up and is scarcely noticed. This, however, happens only rarely. The proven fact is that social organization inevitably suffers losses through injustice and hostile acts, as we have mentioned, and as a consequence, it is the state/dynasty that suffers (QII: 96).

Injustice is not simply limited to the economic sector. Writing about the different types of injustice, Ibn Khaldūn asserts «Whoever confiscates another's property, or uses his person for forced labour, or presses an unjustified claim against him, or imposes upon him a duty not required by the religious law, does an injustice to that particular person. People who collect unjustified taxes commit an injustice. Those who infringe upon property rights, commit an injustice. Those who take away property commit an injustice. Those who deny people their rights commit an injustice. Those who, in general, take property by force, commit an injustice (QII: 96).

Ibn Khaldūn continues by pointing out that it is the state-dynasty that suffers from all of these acts, inasmuch as growth and development (*al-‘umrān*), which is the substance of the state-dynasty, is ruined when people have lost all incentive. Here, Ibn

¹⁴ Rosenthal translates this phrase as densely populated. This is an unfortunate translation that conceals the true meaning of the passage. Growth and development refers to the level of productive economic enterprises and not to the numbers that populate a city. The citation includes also a kind of Risk Analysis that differentiates between strong and weak economic situations and the ability to manage losses.

Khaldūn relies upon his own legal training and finds his proofs in religious law. He writes that this is what the religious law quite generally and wisely aims at doing, in emphasising five things as being absolutely necessary. These are the preservation of (1) religion, (2) the soul (life), (3) the intellect, (4) progeny and (5) property (QII: 97). Human labour, as will be seen in the coming pages, is understood as being a form of property. After he discusses these general categories of injustice, Ibn Khaldūn defines what he really means by the term injustice with reference to both political and religious law. He comes to the conclusion that injustices are generally committed by those who cannot be touched, by people who have a free hand and who can act without fearing a rival power, and who, with their power and authority can bring about the complete ruin of growth and development in society.

Ibn Khaldūn identifies the greatest categories of injustice. He writes that the form of injustice which most contributes to the destruction of growth and development is the unjustified imposition of tasks and the use of subjects for forced labour. This is so because labour belongs to the things that constitute capital, as will be explained in the chapter on sustenance (QII: 98). Ibn Khaldūn points out that an injustice even greater and more destructive to growth and development and to the true interests of the state-dynasty is the appropriation of property, by buying merchandise as cheaply as possible and then reselling it at the highest possible prices by means of forced sales and purchases (QII: 98–99).

These two types of injustice are ones that can only be committed by those who have exclusive power and authority. They occur when the ruler himself becomes engaged in economic activities for his own profit. The destructive results that occur when the ruler unjustly appropriates property will affect other sectors of the market negatively. Ibn Khaldūn writes that this situation affects all merchants and all craftsmen who deal in the instruments and implements that are in general use. The loss affects all professions and classes quite generally. It causes capital funds to dwindle. The only remaining possibility for the merchants is to go out of business, because their capital is gone, as it can no longer be restored by profits. Merchants from other cities, who are engaged in buying and selling merchandise, will have no interest in travelling to the city because of the prevailing situation. Business declines and the subjects lose their livelihood because this generally depends upon trading (*al-shirā' w-al-bay'*). Therefore, if no trading is being conducted in the markets, there will be no livelihood earned and the tax revenue of the ruler will decrease... since most of the tax revenue comes from duties on commerce (QII: 99–100).

A third type of injustice occurs when property is seized outright. «If it is taken outright and if the hostile acts are extended to affect the property, the wives, the lives, the skins, and the honour of people, it will lead to sudden disintegration and decay and the quick destruction of the state-dynasty! The importance that Ibn Khaldūn attributes to the behaviour of authorities, limiting their engagement in economic matters to making sure that transactions are just, is justified by the conditions prevailing in his day and age. In the section entitled «How disintegration befalls dynasties» he writes 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. Disintegration befalls the dynasty at these two foundations.» (QII: 100).

Ibn Khaldūn concludes his discussion of the socioeconomic policy of the state by writing that growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*) requires political leadership for its organization (QII: 126).

Throughout his discussion, Ibn Khaldūn makes a clear and cogent case for the role played by the state regarding its socioeconomic policies and activities. Ibn Khaldūn is thoroughly pragmatic in his arguments. He points to concrete factors, which can be used to predict the fate and future of royal authority and the development that it upholds. This is done by studying the prevailing socioeconomic conditions that existed in his age.

The aspiration for development and progress has its roots in *ʿumrān badawī* - rural social organization (Cf. Ibn Khaldūn's theory of transition). It has its trunk in *ʿumrān ḥaḍrī* or urban social organization. The development of urban society permits the central government to choose and to plan a socioeconomic policy. Some policies and practices will further enhance the conditions for continued growth and development. Others will speed decay and ruin.

Chapter 5: the macro-economic theory of development (al-ʿumrān)

What are the phenomena that accompany or follow from the establishment of royal authority? Ibn Khaldūn constructs a theory of development in answer to that question. He provides a way of understanding just why and how cities are planned and built and how society is organised to accomplish these tasks.

The establishment of royal authority is concretely demonstrated and made visible by the building of towns and cities. These constructions reflect the power of political leadership and become centres of social organization. They give expression to centralised socioeconomic policy-making and to its exercise and make possible further developments in the society and in its culture.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that dynasties are prior to towns and centres (*amṣār*). Towns and centres are secondary products of royal authority. The explanation for this is that building and city planning are features of urban culture. Towns and centres come after rural life (*badāwah*) and the features that go with it. Furthermore, towns and centres, with their monuments, vast constructions and large buildings are constructed for the masses and not for the few. Therefore, united effort and much co-operation are needed for them. They are not among the things that are necessary matters of general concern to human beings, in the sense that all human beings desire them or feel compelled to have them. As a matter of fact, they 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 amounting to so large a sum that only a royal authority and a dynasty could raise the amount. Thus, state-dynasties and royal authority are absolutely necessary for the building of cities and the planning of towns (*ikhṭiṭāt al-mudun*) (QII: 201–202).

[5.1] Infrastructure

Since towns are the political and administrative centres, Ibn Khaldūn points out the necessity of careful planning when one is concerned about their establishment. Under the subtitle «Requirements for the planning of towns and the consequences of neglecting those requirements», he writes that the purpose of building towns is to have places for dwelling (*qarār*) and shelter (*ma'wā*). Therefore, it is necessary in this connection to see to it that harmful things are kept away from the towns by protecting them against inroads... and that useful features are introduced and all the conveniences are made available (*jalb al-manāfi' wa tashīl al-marāfiq*) (QII: 210).

Ibn Khaldūn's concern that the conveniences are available is a reference to the town's infrastructure. He is very conscious of the necessity for securing an infrastructure that can be maintained and which will allow for further development. A number of matters must be taken into consideration when a town is being planned. There is the water (problem). The place should be on a river or near springs with plenty of fresh water. The existence of water will be a general convenience to the inhabitants. Good pastures for the livestock are another concern in towns for which one must provide. Each householder needs domestic animals for breeding, for milk, and for riding. ...Furthermore, one has to see to it that there are fields suitable for cultivation, (since) grain is the (basic) food. Then, there also is the need for woods to supply firewood and building material (QII: 212–213). Ibn Khaldūn adds that one should also see to it that the town is situated close to the sea, to facilitate the importation of foreign goods from remote countries. However, this concern is not on the same level of importance as the aforementioned requirements.

It may be important to recognise that Ibn Khaldūn provides a strategy for town planning that reduces the town's economic dependency upon rural communities and rural development. The people living in towns must be able to maintain and produce livestock, agricultural products, wood and building materials.

Care must be taken when planning to insure a ready supply of the necessities that foster human life. If these necessities are not readily available, if natural resources are difficult to procure, then socioeconomic activity will suffer and the growth and development of urban culture will stagnate. Ibn Khaldūn realises that the natural and necessary resources will vary from place to place, but almost as important to successful town planning is the mentality and interests of the town planner or the founder of a town. Because of the difference in the mentalities of political leadership, from place to place, urban growth (*'umrān ḥaḍarī*) will vary and differ and these differences will particularly affect the degree of development.

Ibn Khaldūn was very conscious of the importance of the town's infrastructure. He believed that the qualities of the town's infrastructure would eventually affect the level and depth of its socioeconomic activity. The town's vibrancy or its lack of growth and development, in either case, will strongly affect the economy of the state-dynasty - on the macro-level. Where he discusses the collapse of buildings erected by the Bedouins, Ibn Khaldūn ascribes the failure in part to their inexperience with the building crafts, but mostly, the failure is due to their lack of planning. More pertinent

than their inexperience as building technicians, is the fact that the Bedouins pay too little attention to town planning. They did not understand how important it is to choose the right site before building. They did not attend to the quality of the air, water, the fields, and the pastures. «Differences with respect to these things make the differences between good and bad cities.» (QII: 232–233).

Ibn Khaldūn asserts that cities which do not possess a natural site are cities which do not possess a source upon which to base development later on (*māddah tamuddu ʿumrānahā*). Such a source must exist if development is to continue, as we have stated before (QII: 233).

The term infrastructure generally refers to the underlying supports that are needed, that are in place, or that are put in place to insure that an installation can and will operate successfully. Ibn Khaldūn uses the term primary conveniences when referring to the essential natural resources that are needed to found or establish a city or town. He specifically names the quality of air, the quality and availability of water, and the suitability of fields and pastures when identifying the primary conveniences that he has in mind. But determining what aggregate of resources will lend themselves to the successful growth and development of a society and culture, requires an envisioning practice. This envisioning practice he identifies as being town and city planning. Someone must think about and make sure that the necessary primary conveniences are at hand before building should commence. The quality of city planning will eventually determine the quality, the breadth and depth of socioeconomic development and its particular expression in the process leading to urban social organization. The differences in the mentality and interests of rulers or of the city planners in different societies, explains, to a great extent, the differences one finds in the growth and development in those societies. Ibn Khaldūn writes: «With regard to the amount of prosperity and business activity in them, cities and towns differ in accordance with the different size of their growth and development (*tafāḍul ʿumrānuhā bi-l-kathrah wa-l-qillah*).» (QII: 234).

With regard to the amount of prosperity (*kathrat al-rifh*) and business activity (*wa-nafaq al-aswāq*) in them, cities and towns differ in accordance with the different size of their growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*) (QI: 224–225).

The socioeconomic development is a function of labour. Productive labour is the decisive factor determining the amount of prosperity and business activity. A suitable and successfully planned and executed infrastructure, one that enhances the labour force and lends itself to its productivity, will engender the necessary revenues for the state-dynasty and enable the further growth and development of urban society.

[5.2] Major Socioeconomic Aggregates

Discussing co-operation and the division of labour for the provision of the necessities of life, Ibn Khaldūn writes «...Productive labour, as the result of social gathering within a societal context, produces more than the needs and necessities of the workers.» This

labour, which presupposes an already existing society, i.e. rural or urban society, is productive labour, and not combined labour as translated in Rosenthal. The Arabic term *al-ijtimāʿ* that is used here refers to *al-ijtimāʿ al-basharī*, not to *al-ijtimāʿ al-ʿinsānī*. The context is limited to one society with its urban and rural divisions. If the labour of the inhabitants of a town or city is distributed in accordance with the necessities and needs of those inhabitants, a minimum of that labour will suffice. The productive labour provides more than is needed. There is a surplus. Ibn Khaldūn writes about this surplus and points out how it is customarily used. «Consequently it is spent to provide the conditions and customs of luxury and to satisfy the needs of the inhabitants of other cities. They import the things they want or need from people who have a surplus through exchange or purchase. Thus, the people who have a surplus put it to use and as a result acquire a great deal of wealth (QII: 235).

Ibn Khaldūn writes about an economy where the division of labour enables trade or exchange, either through barter or through the operation of markets. The wealth that is gained by this exchange is another indirect consequence of the productive human labour that produces a surplus. According to Ibn Khaldūn, this added wealth or surplus earning, which is subjected to taxation, benefits the labourer. He writes that it will become clear in the fifth chapter, which deals with surplus earnings (*kasb*) and sustenance (*rizq*), that earning (*makāsib*) is the value realised from labour (QII: 235). Labour is the sine qua non of all and the principal source of value. A decrease in productive labour leads to a decrease in earnings. This in turn results in a lower level or a decrease in growth and development. Ibn Khaldūn refers here to the additional or surplus products of labour. Contrary to primary labour, which only provides the necessities of life, surplus labour provides luxury and wealth and in this sense it is the generator of superior stages of development.

Ibn Khaldūn continues this line of reasoning by asserting that when there is more labour, the value realised from that labour increases among the people. Their earnings, by necessity will increase. The prosperity and wealth they enjoy leads them to lives lived in luxury and to the things that go with it, such as splendid houses and clothes, fine vessels and utensils, and the use of servants and mounts. All these involve activities that require their price and skilful people must be chosen to do them and be in charge of them. As a consequence, labour markets as well as crafts and industry thrive [Rosenthal: crafts and industry thrive]. The income and the expenditure of the city increase. Affluence comes to those who assume such tasks by their labour. When growth and development [not population]¹⁵ increase, productive labour again increases. [Productive labour = productive activities that produce surplus earnings] In turn, luxury again increases in correspondence with the increase of surplus earnings, as the customs and needs of luxury increase. Crafts and industry are then created to obtain (luxury) products. The value realised from them increase and, as a result, surplus earnings are again multiplied in the town. Production there thrives even more than before. And so it

15 The meaning of al-ʿumrān here is economic growth and development and not population growth. Again, Rosenthal has misunderstood this matter. This has led many authors to conclude that for Ibn Khaldūn, the growth of population and the growth of civilization are ultimately the same thing, which is not true.

goes with the second and the third increase (QII: 235–236).

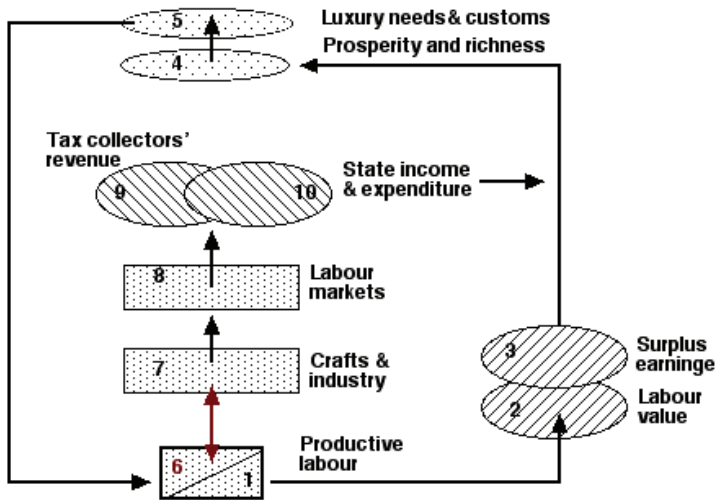


Figure 9. Ibn Khaldūn's multiplier effect

What Ibn Khaldūn discusses here are the rudiments of an economic theory. The theory his narrative incorporates is very similar to the one that was put forward in the West in the modern era by Keynes. (J. M. Keynes 1883–1946), i.e. the so-called multiplier effect in economic theory. Depending upon a dynamic analysis at the macro-economic level, Ibn Khaldūn observed the overall mechanisms of this multiplier effect, which is principally based upon consumption and production. The economic growth that is generated by the different phases of Ibn Khaldūn's multiplier effect continues until we reach the stage of opulence.

Using the dynamic concept of development (*al-ʿumrān*), Ibn Khaldūn counts and grades the different phases of development and growth. He presents a model for socioeconomic development and decline based upon a multiplier effect. We must not underestimate how central human labour is in the scheme of things effecting production in society. Ibn Khaldūn divides labour into two major categories, primary or essential labour and additional or surplus labour. The former category refers to what is needed to procure the necessities of life. No surplus income results from primary or essential labour. The latter category, additional or surplus labour produces surplus income which is put to work and which results in luxury and wealth.

Ibn Khaldūn has previously narrated an economic theory about the development of different stages of power that the state/dynasty passes through in its rise and fall. These include the initial stage of success, the second stage that establishes complete control, the third stage that is characterised by leisure and tranquillity, the fourth stage of contentment and peacefulness and finally the fifth stage that entails squandering and the inevitable decline and fall of power. Ibn Khaldūn uses his dynamic concept of

socioeconomic development (*al-ʿumrān*) to measure the phases in the rise and fall of urban civilization. The social, political and economic aspects of society are seen as being intertwined. The multiplier effect in economic and social development, helps to explain the movement from stage to stage and from rise to fall.

It is additional or surplus labour that generates economic growth. In Ibn Khaldūn's multiplier effect, the first cycle starts (*tawr al-ʿumrān al-ʿawwal*) when additional or surplus productive labour is exploited for the first time. The exploitation of surplus labour generates a surplus in foodstuffs, etc. and the surplus is traded for products that cannot be produced by one's own labour. Thus new markets are generated for the distribution of materials available. We now enter into a second stage of development that moves beyond survival. The new markets create new and greater consumption. The labour market expands to produce greater surpluses, more trade, and the growth in markets for consumer (luxury) goods. When we reach the end of this cycle, another stage of growth and development occurs.

As a consequence, each new cycle of production will now begin to register and respond to increases in demand and will engage additional labour, in order to produce more, either to fulfil the new needs directly or by increased trade. In both cases, the labour market will continue to expand and develop in order to continue to develop surpluses and to produce labourers with new skills. The economic cycle of production and consumption continues to produce surpluses. The surpluses are put to work and the economy continues to grow and develop as time passes. We have reached the stage of development where new markets appear, enabling new habits of consumption to establish themselves and the development of new ways to use labour and the need for a wide assortment of skilled labourers.

Put another way, socioeconomic thinking must distinguish between basic social and economic practices and those other socioeconomic practices that enable growth and development. The basic social and economic practices merely occasion survival, i.e. the production of foodstuffs that fulfil minimum requirements for maintaining and reproducing human life. Additional or surplus labour is needed to occasion growth and development. The socioeconomic practices that provide a surplus beyond the maintenance and reproduction of human life do so because additional or surplus labour has been exploited and the consequences will eventually effect socioeconomic change, i.e. staged growth and development. The growth is not primarily in the number of people, but in the material improvement of their circumstances.

Growth and development mean the establishment of new markets where luxury goods are distributed and where the conveniences of life can be acquired. These include new products and new services and these are made possible by the surplus labour that gets engaged in production, i.e. by the expanding labour market and by the continuing development of markets for skilled and specialised labour.

The surplus generated in the first cycle of production is put to work and generates trade, new products, new needs, new skills, and new consumers. Each successive cycle repeats this pattern, generating more and more surplus, greater and greater consumption, until the society is opulent and begins to squander its wealth. The cycles of growth and development begin to occur when the second stage of development is reached. Each and

every cycle of production and consumption leads to surpluses and eventually to new stages in the socioeconomic development of society. The stages continue until the general opulence generates carelessness and waste and that is when the decline in a civilization becomes manifest.

Ibn Khaldūn's discussion of the concept of growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*) gives great importance to the factors that support differentiation in the cycles of production and economic growth. These factors are identified as royal authority, sciences, crafts and industry, and surplus earnings. Any incentive or increase in any of these four factors will result in an increase in growth and development. But the overriding concept for Ibn Khaldūn is expressed in his notion of additional or surplus labour. When one finds a way to calculate and when one fixes suitable units of measurement, the possibility to grade and classify the different stages of growth and development becomes possible, by reference to four major socioeconomic aggregates. The public sector or royal authority's political and administrative entourage can be measured by its income and expenditure. The cultural sector can be measured by the number of cultural activities and the number of its institutions. The same applies to the sector for crafts and industry. All the activities within these sectors are measurable in monetary terms. Money, according to Ibn Khaldūn, is a means of exchange, a tool of measurement, and a mechanism that enables saving. Human labour (above and beyond what is called for to insure survival) is a necessary component for all of these sectors and is only measurable by (*kasb*) surplus earning or surplus profit. We are able to undertake quantifiable evaluations by counting the numbers. Were we to do so, we would be able to measure the stages of increase or growth in socioeconomic development.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that all the surplus productive labour serves to create luxury and wealth, in contrast to the original labour, which serves to provide the basic necessities of life. The city that is superior to another, by one stage of growth and development [NB! *ʿumrān* is here used as a unit of measurement], becomes superior by its increased surplus earnings and prosperity, and by its customs of luxury, which are not found in the other city. The more numerous and the more abundant the development in a city, the more luxurious are the conditions of its inhabitants (QII: 235–236).

When Ibn Khaldūn compares two cities, as in the example above, he will compare the judges of one city with the judges of the other, the merchants of the one with the other and so forth, for artisans, small-businessmen, emirs and policemen. When he asserts that a city is superior to another by its stage of growth and development, he claims that the city is superior to the other city in all of the four socioeconomic factors mentioned above. This superiority is the same as having a higher increase in earnings, which, in turn, creates an increase in the surplus productive labour for the realisation of higher and higher rates of growth. Comparing data on the revenue and wealth of different states, Ibn Khaldūn writes that a person who looks at this data should bear in mind the relative importance of the various dynasties. He should not reject data for which he finds no observable parallels in his own time (QI: 337).

He continues his discussion by pointing out that socioeconomic conditions are not the same in societies and economies that are only able to support survival and in

societies and economies that enable growth and development. Distinctions between these two types of society affect the ways they can be studied, i.e. have methodological importance.

[5.3] Market and Prices

The multiplier effect in Ibn Khaldūn's theory of development is based upon production and consumption. It necessitates a conception of the market where the fundamental forces of supply and demand interplay. Considering this, he discusses the movement of prices in towns, both in relation to the types of products available, and in relation to the differing socioeconomic structures that characterise towns. He writes that all markets cater to the needs of people. Some of these needs require the provision of necessities, while others lead to the production and provision of conveniences (QII: 239–240).

Ibn Khaldūn discusses the impact of the increase or decrease in the number of inhabitants in a big city). This increase or decrease will impact upon the prices for necessities and luxuries. He writes, «When a city is highly developed and has many inhabitants the prices of necessary foodstuffs and corresponding items become low and the prices for luxuries, such as seasonings, fruits, and the things that go with them are high. When the inhabitants of a city are few and its growth and development weak, the opposite is the case.» (QII: 239–240).

How is this explained? Ibn Khaldūn points out that the reason for this is that the different kinds of grain belong to the category of necessary foodstuffs. The demand for them, therefore, is very large. No one would neglect to provide for his own food or for the food needed for his household or for his establishments for a month or a year. Thus, the procurement of (grain) concerns the entire population of a centre or its greatest part, both in the centre itself and in its surroundings. This is inevitable. Everybody who procures food for himself has a great surplus beyond his own and his family's needs. This surplus can satisfy the needs of many of the inhabitants of that particular centre. The market comes after self-sufficiency. No doubt then the inhabitants of a centre have more food than they need. Consequently, the price of food is low, as a rule, except when misfortunes occur (QII: 240).

The determination of the price of necessities in a large or well-populated centre or town is mostly the consequence of the great size of its population. The largest part produces enough foodstuffs for its own needs and sells the surplus. Since this largest part produces much more than it actually needs, the surplus coming from their labour is sent to the market. In this way, supply quickly becomes greater than demand, resulting in lower prices for necessary commodities. This benefits the portion of the city's population that is not engaged in agriculture. If one does not understand that most of the inhabitants produce their own food and a surplus, one would find it puzzling that big cities with a large population and a highly developed society are able to offer necessary foodstuffs at low prices to its inhabitants.

The buyers of foodstuffs in such places are favoured so long as there are no

intermediaries between themselves and the producers. On the other hand, Ibn Khaldūn writes: All other conveniences, such as seasonings, fruits and whatever else belongs to them, are not matters of general concern. Their procurement does not engage the labour of all the inhabitants of a city or even the largest part of them. Thus, when a city is highly developed with abundant growth and development and it is full of luxuries, there is a very large demand for those luxuries and for conveniences and for having as many of them as a person can expect in view of his situation. This results in a very great shortage of such things. Many will bid for them but they will be in short supply. They will be needed for many purposes and prosperous people used to luxuries will pay exorbitant prices for them because they need them more than others. Thus as one can see, prices come to be high (QII: 240).

Development, according to Ibn Khaldūn, «consists of a mutual stimulation of supply and demand (2:277, 351) linked with the encouragement of science and technology (2:434–35). Ibn Khaldūn is aware that prices and values are determined by supply and demand (2:276–78).» (Weiss 1995:31).

As Weiss also says, Ibn Khaldūn emphasises the links between market forces: demand offers chances for profit and stimulates supply; purchasing power turns into demand, thus stimulating a cumulative development process (See Ibn Khaldūn's multiplier effect in figure 9 above).

Ibn Khaldūn then writes about surplus labour. Crafts and labour are also expensive in centres (*miṣr*) with abundant growth and development. There are three reasons for this. First, they are greatly needed because of the place luxury occupies in the city on account of its abundant growth and development (*ʿumrān akthar*). Again, the Arabic expression does not mean densely populated, as translated by Rosenthal.

Abundant growth and development refers to a stage of urban social organization that has an extensive flora of crafts, skilled occupations, productive economic activities, and an assortment of sciences, educational and cultural institutions.

Second, industrial workers place a high value on the services they provide. They charge more.

Third, the number of people with an abundance of money to spend is great and these people have many needs for which they have to employ the services of others. Thus, workers, craftsmen, and professional (*al-fuʿalah wa-l-ṣunnāʿ wa ahl al-ḥiraf*) people become arrogant, their labour becomes expensive, and the expenditure of the city for these things increases (QII: 240). This is how Ibn Khaldūn explains the level of prices in highly developed cities with many inhabitants.

Ibn Khaldūn also discusses the level of prices in markets existing in smaller centres and towns. In doing so, he maintains the distinction between necessities and conveniences or luxuries. He points out that foodstuff in small centres with few inhabitants are scarce because these places have fewer possibilities for employment and fewer needs for surplus labour. He claims that because the centre is small the people fear food shortages. Therefore, they hold on to the food that comes into their hands and store it. It thus becomes something precious to them and those who want to buy it have to pay higher prices. They also have no demand for conveniences because the inhabitants are few and their condition is weak. They do little business and the prices

there consequently become particularly low (QII: 241).

When Ibn Khaldūn begins to compare the prices of foodstuffs in larger and smaller urban centres with those found in the rural areas, an additional aspect of the total cost is included. He points out that custom duties, and other duties may be levied on foods in the market and at the centre gates (*abwāb al-miṣr*) on behalf of the ruler. Collected taxes enter into the price of foodstuffs. Prices in centres, thus, are higher than prices in the rural areas, because customs duties and other duties and levies are few or non-existent among the people of rural areas, while the opposite is the case in centres, especially in the later years of a dynasty. The cost of agricultural labour also enters into the price of foodstuffs. It is reflected in these prices (QII: 241).

Ibn Khaldūn concludes that «as a rule» prices of foodstuffs in big centres are low, but become high after including custom duties and taxes. The prices are higher than in rural areas. Products could probably be sold directly by the producers to avoid taxes and duties, although this is difficult when the ruler and his entourage are in need of income.

Ibn Khaldūn was studying a very difficult market with a large number of diverse and contingent phenomena. These include the unjust and non-systematic application of taxes and the heavy-handed intervention of the ruler in the market whenever greater amounts of income were needed. These matters provide very serious drawbacks to the structure and workings of the economy. This is one of the reasons why Ibn Khaldūn pays so much attention to a discussion of the socioeconomic policy of the state. His study of the market mechanisms at work led Ibn Khaldūn to conclude that cities were, in general, more expensive to live in than rural areas. He was concerned about the adverse social consequences of this situation and believed that inhabitants of big cities were most disadvantaged.

In the rural areas, the rural inhabitants are able to satisfy their needs with a minimum of labour, because they are little used to luxuries. It is not the same when they move to big cities. In a section titled «People of the rural areas», he makes the claim that rural inhabitants are unable to settle in a centre (*miṣr*), with a high level of growth and development. Ibn Khaldūn writes that the income of the inhabitants of the rural areas...is not large, because they live where there is little demand for labour, and labour is the cause of profit. Rural inhabitants, therefore, do not accumulate any profit or property. For this reason, it is difficult for them to settle in a big centre (*miṣr*), because conveniences there are expensive and things to buy are dear (QII: 243).

Ibn Khaldūn has studied the socioeconomic conditions of different countries and the socioeconomic conditions of the largest cities in those countries and makes an interesting observation. He writes that differences with regard to prosperity and poverty are the same in countries (*aqṭār*) as in centres (*amṣār*) (QII: 244). The differences between centres and countries are due to the differences in their amounts of productive labour. The centres and countries are in different stages of development (or decline), but the amount of productive labour can be compared and contrasted and in itself reflect the differences. Wealth is the consequence of productive labour, and if the amounts are in decline then growth and development will decline. Engagement in productive labour results in the condition that a great surplus of products remains after the necessities of the inhabitants have been satisfied. This surplus is in accordance with the size and

extent of growth and development and comes to the people as profit that they can accumulate (QII: 244).

Ibn Khaldūn is aware of the processes that are responsible for forming classes in society, and that awareness is made clear in his discussion comparing the socioeconomic conditions of great cities and countries. This awareness will be treated at a later point in this text, when Ibn Khaldūn discusses how rank can lead to the exploitation of others. Although Ibn Khaldūn was conscious of the formation of classes in society, the theme has not clearly crystallised in his studies. In accordance with the socioeconomic structures of the societies he studies, exploitation seems to have been a phenomenon particular to large entities within a country, as, for example, the exploitation of the rural areas by the urban areas or the exploitation of subjects by the ruler.

Ibn Khaldūn writes about the accumulation of estates and farms in centres and cities (*mudun wa amṣār*), their uses and yields, and how these are affected by market fluctuations. Even if prosperity were as great as possible, the acquisition and accumulation of (real) property would be gradual. It may come about through inheritance... Or it may be through fluctuation in the market (QII: 247).

Explaining how fluctuation in real estate prices occurs, he writes that when one state-dynasty ends and another begins, the militia vanishes. There is no protection and the centre collapses and is ruined. At that time, real estate does not provide its owner any satisfaction, because it is of little use in the general upheaval. Real-estate values fall and real estate can be acquired for low prices. By the time it passes through inheritance into the possession of someone else, the centre has regained its youthful vigour as the new dynasty flourishes and economic conditions excel. At that point, the possession of estates and farms provides owners with great satisfaction, because they will be very useful and very profitable. Their value increases and they assume an importance they did not have before. This is the meaning of 'fluctuation in the market'. The owner of real-estate now turns out to be amongst the wealthiest men in the city. That is not the result of his own effort and business activity, because he would be unable to achieve such a thing by himself (QII: 248).

This is the only way in which the accumulation of real estate is possible. In general, Ibn Khaldūn points out that the income from estates and farms is unable to pay for habits of luxury and the material things that go with them. As a rule, this income can only provide for the necessities of life.

Ibn Khaldūn asserts that sometimes the motivation for the acquisition of estates and farms is to provide for extravagant living or to accumulate capital. This is achieved only by a few and is achieved only rarely through market fluctuations. The acquisition of a great deal of real estate and the upgrading of real estate, as such, does enhance its value in some cities. However, if someone does become wealthy in this way, the eyes of emirs and governors are directed to him (QII: 249).

Those who manage to amass great wealth must also be able to protect themselves against emirs and rulers. In a passage entitled «Capitalists (*al-mutamawwilūn*) among the inhabitants of centres (*ahl al-amṣār*) need rank and protection», Ibn Khaldūn cautions those who harbour great ambitions. This is because a sedentary person who has a great deal of capital and has acquired a great number of estates and farms and become

one of the wealthiest inhabitants of a particular city, one who is looked upon as such and lives in great luxury and is accustomed to luxury, competes in this respect with emirs and rulers (QII: 248).

[5.4] The Realisation of Urban Culture (*ḥaḍārah*)

Urban culture (*ḥaḍārah*) is the stage of opulence and the level of development upon which one cannot improve. This stage of socioeconomic growth is characterised by great diversity in its labour force and in its cultural development. From an economic point of view, the great specialisation that characterises the labour force leads to refinement in a host of matters that change habits of living and standards of living considerably.

We must re-visit Ibn Khaldūn's theory for the development of urban social organization, as it was discussed in Chapter Four of this work. Doing so reveals that the appropriate moment for the development of urban culture arrives when the state-dynasty is very firmly entrenched and when it gives the appearance of being able to guarantee its own continuity. Ibn Khaldūn writes that the urban culture in cities, are a consequence of the state-dynasties. Urban culture is firmly rooted when the state dynasty is continuous and firmly rooted (QII: 250).

Ibn Khaldūn finds most of the qualities and characteristics of socioeconomic life related to the strength or weakness of royal authority. There is a quality of inter-dependency at work when he connects the strength or weakness of royal authority to the numerical strength of a nation or generation, or to the size of a town or city and to the amount of prosperity and wealth. Explaining this inter-dependency, Ibn Khaldūn writes that taxes which are collected by royal authority reverts back to the people. The wealth of the people in cities, as a rule, is derived from their business and commercial activities. If the ruler provides gifts and money to his people it spreads among them and reverts back to him, and again from him to them. It comes from the people through taxation and the land tax, and reverts back to the people through gifts and royal expenditures. The wealth of the subjects corresponds to the finances of the dynasty. The finances of the dynasty, in turn, correspond to the wealth and number of the subjects. The origin of it all is growth and development and its extensiveness (*al-ʿumrān wa kathratuhu*). If this is considered and examined in connection with the state-dynasties, it would be found to be true (QII: 254–255).

Ibn Khaldūn understands the role of government expenditure to be a central one in growth and development. The socioeconomic policy of royal authority and its consequences will generate development until the full capacity for growth and development has been reached. At that point no further growth is possible and change signals decline.

In a passage entitled «Urban culture is the goal of growth and development», Ibn Khaldūn asserts that there is a limit that cannot be overstepped. When luxury and prosperity come to sedentary people (*ahl al-ʿumrān*), it naturally causes them to follow

the various ways of urban culture (*madhāhib al-ḥadārah*) and adopt its customs (QII: 256).

According to Ibn Khaldūn, urban culture is the collection of habits and refinements that places luxury and its enjoyment front and centre in the minds of people. Luxury and its enjoyment become part of the everyday lives of more and more people. This demands the development of skills to refine and to further refine the quality of handicrafts and industries. Even something as everyday as cooking becomes an art. The same can be said of dressmaking, building, weaving of carpets, the production of vessels, and all other aspects of domestic economy. The idea of elegance spreads throughout the city. «When eloquence in domestic economy has reached the limit, it is followed by subservience to desires. From all these customs, the human soul receives a multiple stamp.» (QII: 256).

The socioeconomic developments that lead to diversity in the labour force affect the psychological make-up of urban dwellers. Ibn Khaldūn finds that urban culture reaches its zenith at the moment when royal authority is most secure and most deeply entrenched. When that moment is reached, the state-dynasty will levy additional custom duties to meet its large expenditures. The custom duties raise the sale prices for all products and services, because small businessmen and merchants will pass the cost increases to buyers and consumers. The added custom duties become part of the sales price. Costs grow for urban inhabitants and luxuries become less affordable. The people cannot escape this because they are dominated by and subservient to their customs. All their profits go into their expenditure (QII: 256).

Before this, some of the profits were used to make new investments. Now, economic expansion has become more difficult and this will eventually lead to poverty. All this is caused by excessive urban culture and luxury (*ifrāṭ al-ḥadārah wa-t-taraf*), which corrupt the city, generally, in respect of markets and development undertakings (QII: 257).

The psychological consequence of this development is the corruption of the individual. Corruption of the individual inhabitant is the result of painful and trying efforts to satisfy the needs created by the habitual consumption of luxury items and by a life devoted to leisure time pursuits. Corruption is the result of the bad qualities they have acquired in the process of satisfying those needs, and of the damage the soul suffers after it has obtained them (QII: 257).

The corruption of individuals spreads and is transmitted to following generations. The city then teems with low people of blameworthy character. They encounter competition from many members of the younger generation of the state-dynasty, whose education has been neglected and whom the state-dynasty has neglected to accept. They, therefore, adopt the qualities of their environment and company (QII: 258).

The underlying reasons for the deterioration of urban culture are a synthesis of economic, social and psychological effects. When the affairs of individuals deteriorate, one by one, the town becomes disorganised and falls into ruin. The fact that this applies only to towns and cities, the centres of growth and development, and not to rural areas, shows the tremendous weight Ibn Khaldūn attaches to the dynamics prevailing in urban environments and to the impulses that effect inhabitants there. He writes that the urban

person (*al-ḥaḍarī*) cannot take care of his needs personally. He may be too weak because of the tranquillity he enjoys, or he may be too proud because he was brought up in prosperity and luxury. Both things are blameworthy. In addition, he is unable to repel harmful things and harmful habits, because luxury has sapped him of his strength and courage. The impact of education and instruction are of little use, because they have been neglected in his upbringing (QII: 260–261).

It is clear that from Ibn Khaldūn's perspective, urban culture, in spite of its good qualities, corrupts the individual, weakens him, and makes him unfit to meet the challenges that life will inevitably bring. The individual wants to reach the highest possible level in order to realise his socioeconomic possibilities. But success will, in the long run, only corrupt his strength and character. The corruptive effects of leisure are devastating. Ibn Khaldūn's interest in leisure and the way of life that characterises those who can enjoy leisure time pursuits is a forerunner for the analysis many centuries later made by Thorstein B. Veblen (1857–1929). It is, however, important to point out that the disintegration of a civilization, after having reached its zenith, does not necessarily mean that every rich and powerful city is on the verge of complete ruin.

[5.5] The Process of Revival

Ibn Khaldūn writes that the stage of urban culture (*al-ḥaḍārah*) is the last stop in the process of growth and development. However, he also points out that this situation and its social and economic consequences might ultimately lead to a change of power and to the appearance of a new state-dynasty. If this happens, the new state-dynasty will be armed with a vigorous quality of socio-psychological group solidarity.

The disintegration of a state-dynasty occurs simultaneously with the ruin of its seats of royal authority. Centres (*amṣār*) that are the seats of royal authority fall into ruin when the ruling state-dynasty crumbles and falls into ruin (QII: 262). Ibn Khaldūn counsels the new regime to occupy the former seats of royal authority as soon as possible. Once that is accomplished the new regime must make every effort to stabilise its authority and to reverse the self-destructive socioeconomic development that has been inherited from the previous state-dynasty. There is only one treatment for the dangerous social and economic disease, and only a very careful and strict process of revival will succeed.

Ibn Khaldūn's plan of action begins with the economic root, now considered to be completely rotten. When a centre that was a royal capital falls into the possession of a new state-dynasty, that knows little of luxury, luxury will decrease among the inhabitants because people naturally follow the habits of the state-dynasty in power. They revert to the character of the state-dynasty, either voluntarily because it is human nature to follow the tradition of their master, or involuntarily because the character of the state-dynasty calls for abstention from luxury in all situations. It allows for little profit, which is what constitutes the material for customs (of luxury) (QII: 262).

Planning the new seat of government remote from the site of the former one is

also a valuable strategy in the process of renewal. Ibn Khaldūn writes that it is the nature of a new state-dynasty to wipe out all traces of the previous one. Therefore, it disintegrates the economic infrastructure by transferring the people and partisans of the previous state from their capital city to its own seat, which is firmly in its possession. «When the various classes of dignitaries (*aʿyān*) have left the city, its inhabitants decrease. This is what is meant by the disintegration of growth and development in a capital city» (*ikhtilāl al-ʿumrān*). (QII: 264).

Ibn Khaldūn considers the people who are partisans of the old state-dynasty to be the wealthiest and for that reason the most important class. The entourage of the ruler is important for the maintenance of economic and cultural activities, because of its strong purchasing power and its custom of keeping expenditures high. Once this group is captured and replaced by other people, various sectors of the economy, including social, cultural and educational activities and institutions will have to disappear. What will be left, according to Ibn Khaldūn, are solely the necessary sectors for economic activity. When this occurs the partisans of the old seat of power will be unable to compete with the partisans of the new regime. They are hindered socially, politically, culturally and economically. The new seat of government must eventually be able to renew the economic infrastructure and produce a new cycle of growth and development (*yastajiddu ʿumran akhar*). This leads to another urban culture corresponding to the importance of the state-dynasty (QII: 264).

Ibn Khaldūn underscores the fact that a major disintegration results only from the disintegration of the entire state-dynasty (QII: 264). This is a key matter for those who are engaged in the process of renewal. The power of a state-dynasty, the factor that generates social organization inheres in the solidarity of group feeling (*ʿaṣabiyyah*) and the inspiration it provides. This solidarity of group feeling and power remains within the individual members of the state-dynasty. Only when that bond of solidarity is destroyed and then replaced by another group with strong bonds of group feeling and solidarity, will the true disintegration occur (QII: 264).

In a passage entitled «The dialects of urban population», Ibn Khaldūn writes that the dialects of the urban population follow the language of the nation or the generation that has control of the cities or has founded them (QII: 269). In a related passage entitled «The existence of group feeling in cities and the superiority of some of the inhabitants over others», Ibn Khaldūn discusses a very general political phenomenon, which arises when senility befalls the state-dynasty.

The inhabitants of cities, who are generally motivated by the desire to protect their own place and affairs, may spend whatever they possess on the rabble and the mob. Every opportunist forms a political group with his fellows and one of them achieves superiority. The leader then turns against his equals and persecutes them with assassination or exile. Eventually, he takes away all executive power from them and renders them innocuous. He obtains sole control of the entire city. He then comes to believe he has created a realm that he may leave to his descendants but the same symptoms of power and senility to be found in a large realm are also to be found in his smaller realm (QII: 267).

The particular type of group solidarity referred to in the above passage is not as

real as the one to which great rulers who are masters of tribes and great families adhere. From the political world of his own day, Ibn Khaldūn writes as if he were an ideological advisor to contemporaries in the process of seizing power. His writings are presented in a manner that is reminiscent of Machiavelli. Both seem to have tried to influence powerful people of their own day, whom they believed to be the right people to renew the power and order of receding state-dynasties.

Chapter 6: the micro-economic theory of development

Ibn Khaldūn discusses his theory of microeconomics under the title «On the various aspects of making a living, such as surplus earnings (*kasb*) and the crafts and industry (*ṣanā'ī*), and the conditions that occur in this connection, including a number of problems that are connected with this subject». Ibn Khaldūn begins his exposition with the title «The real meaning and explanation of sustenance (*rizq*) and surplus earning. Surplus earning is the value realized from human labour (*al-a'māl al-bashariyyah*).» (QII: 272).

Ibn Khaldūn developed existing terms and used them in a general economic context and together with other social and economic aggregates. The term *kasb*, here translated as surplus earning, should only be understood as the profit that is realized from the exercise of a craft. Ibn Khaldūn distinguishes between surplus earning (*kasb*) and profit (*riḥ*). The latter is realized from commercial activities. Later, we will see the reasons behind this distinction. In the following, the term *kasb* will be translated as surplus earning, and this translation includes earnings that are paid in kind or in money. Surplus earning is usually realized by a craftsman and/or by one who possesses capital. Ibn Khaldūn begins by discussing the scarcity of resources in the world. Thereafter, he introduces his theory of value.

Man, writes Ibn Khaldūn, is the only animal interested in earning the means to meet his necessities. When man has control of himself, and is beyond the stage of his original weakness, he strives to make earnings (*makāsib*), so that he may spend what God gives him to obtain his needs and necessities through barter (QII: 273). The terms *makāsib* (earnings) and *kasb* (surplus earning) are therefore not synonymous.

In the citation above, the term *makāsib* means earnings or gainful activities, and it is different from the term *kasb*, which means surplus earning. [*kasb* stems from the verb *kasaba* = to collect wealth, to gain, acquire or earn wealth and the like.] *Makāsib* is the plural form of *kasb*, signifying earnings, gains or acquisitions, and also deeds, whether good or evil. Definitions are taken from Lane's Arabic-English Lexicon and others. From both the context and the other writings of Ibn Khaldūn, *makāsib* would be translated by earnings, in the sense gross or general income that represents the total flow of money or goods accruing to an individual.

Ibn Khaldūn writes further that man may obtain this (*rizq*) through no efforts of his own, as for instance, through rain that makes the fields thrive, and similar things. However, these things are only contributory (QII: 273).

More specifically, he writes that man's effort is the primary cause that leads to earnings. Man's earnings (*makāsib*) will constitute his source of livelihood (*ma'āsh*), if they correspond to his necessities and needs. They will be the accumulation of wealth (*riyāsh*) and of saleable articles and products (*mutamawwal*), if they are greater than his needs (QII: 273). Rosenthal translates these two terms (*riyāsh & mutamawwal*) with capital accumulation. The word capital denotes the stock of goods or money. For capital that is to be used for production, Ibn Khaldūn uses the words *Ra's al-māl*, which should be translated as financial capital (cf. p50 above).

The term *makāsib* or earnings refers to earnings that are consumed and to earnings that are saved. *Makāsib* is primarily realized by expending human effort. When earnings are consumed, they correspond to a source of livelihood (*ma'āsh*). However, if, after consumption, there is a surplus, this will eventually lead to *riyāsh* (luxury and wealth) or it will lead to *mutamawwal* (saleable or marketable goods and skills).

The question that springs to mind is how one can verify that this or that part of *makāsib* (general earnings) or its entirety, corresponds to one's necessities and needs, so that one can further calculate surplus earnings which support the accumulation of luxury and wealth (*riyāsh*) and/or the acquisition of goods and services (*mutamawwal*)?

In order to answer this question, Ibn Khaldūn writes that when the use of acquired earnings (*hāsil wa muqtanā*) reverts to a particular human being and he enjoys its fruits by spending it upon his interests and needs, it is called 'sustenance' (*rizq*) (QII: 273). The expression acquired earnings is equivalent to *makāsib*, to general or gross earnings. The expression is very clear in the Arabic text. It includes earnings that are acquired without effort – *huṣūl al-makāsib* – and earnings acquired by expending efforts - *iqtinā' al-makāsib*. The term *rizq*, at the end of the citation above, refers to something that cannot be obtained illegally. Hence, not all earnings can be called *rizq* and as a consequence, can be taxed. The sum of earnings that corresponds to necessities and needs can only be called *rizq* when tax-authorities have accepted them as such. The term *rizq* is that part of one's earnings (or the whole of it) that is actually consumed. This actual consumption leads one to believe that Ibn Khaldūn calculates taxes due based upon the period prior to the one being assessed.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that when a person does not use his accruing or acquired earnings for any of his interests and needs, it is not called *rizq*. The part of these accruing or acquired earnings that is appropriated by a person through his own effort and strength is called surplus earning (*kasb*) (QII: 273). Again, when we compare this to what is written previously, we find that the part of earnings that exceeds necessities and which was referred to by the terms *riyāsh* (luxury and wealth) and *mutamawwal* (saleable goods and services), is now referred to by the term *kasb* (and means surplus earning or surplus acquisitions).

Kasb includes *al-riyāsh* (luxury and wealth) and *al-mutamawwal* (saleable goods and services). This means that before the calculation of real consumption and precisely determining what should be called *rizq* and what should be called *kasb*, the non-consumed part is called *riyāsh* or/and *mutamawwal*. *Riyāsh* and *mutamawwal*, which are greater than necessities and needs, can be used for other investments or for the satisfaction of urges and cravings for luxury. Baring these two uses, they can also be

accumulated until the authorities intervene with tax assessments.

The key differentiation is real consumption or *rizq* in Ibn Khaldūn's terminology. That which cannot be counted as *rizq* should be counted as *kasb* (surplus earning). As a witness to injustice, corruption, decay and the decline of growth and development in his own day, Ibn Khaldūn was interested in finding a system of taxation that could help revive the socioeconomic development of his society. He found it propitious and practical to apply the well-known religious term *rizq* to social and economic discussion. This is not an unknown practice in the West. Hundreds of years later, Adam Smith wrote about the hand of Providence that is at work guiding the developments of a free market. Adam Smith published his *Inquiry into the Nature and the Causes of the Wealth of Nations* in 1776 (Weiss 1995).

Ibn Khaldūn writes that man needs food and security. After introducing the concept of sustenance (*rizq*) into socioeconomic discourse, he quotes the prophet. The only thing you (really) possess of your property is what you ate and have thus destroyed; or what you wore and have thus worn out; or what you gave as charity and have thus spent (QII: 273).

Then he illustrates his new distinctions where the estate of a deceased person is called surplus earning (*kasb*) with reference to the deceased person. It is not called 'sustenance' (*rizq*) because the deceased person did not use it. But with reference to the heirs, when they use it, it is called 'sustenance' (QII: 273).

And later, Ibn Khaldūn concludes by writing that what he has explained is the real meaning of *rizq* (sustenance) among orthodox Muslims. The Mu'tazilāh (a rationalist school of interpretation for Muslim religious law) stipulates that the use of the term *rizq* only applies to possessions that have been rightfully appropriated. Whatever is not possessed rightfully is not called *rizq*. Wrongly acquired property or anything forbidden was not admitted (QII: 273–274).

Throughout these citations, the word sustenance (*rizq*) denotes that which is utilized. Reference is made to materials that can be used up or consumed. Food and clothes are used and consumed and having these materials in sufficient quantity satisfies an individual's basic needs. By borrowing this term from the religious vocabulary and by referring to the Mu'tazilah, known for their liberal views, Ibn Khaldūn underlines his agreement with their explanations and distinctions.

Extending Ibn Khaldūn's application of the concept of rightfully possessed sustenance to our own day might open the door to the use of scientific and statistical measurements. We might speak about the calories needed to maintain health and well-being for a 200 pound adult male, or the building standards that are necessary to secure warm housing in colder climates, or the average costs that would be incurred from place to place. Ibn Khaldūn's use of the term sustenance in socioeconomic discourse opens a new horizon for conceptualising material needs. However, Ibn Khaldūn, himself, does not discuss variations in the material needs between one individual and another.

Surplus earnings (*kasb*) result from the efforts expended to acquire earnings and a livelihood. Sustenance requires work and effort even though there are diverse ways to properly earn a living. At the end of section I, chapter V, he seems to be satisfied with the clarity of his explanations: The meaning of the word 'sustenance' has become clear.

It is the part of earnings that are utilized. Thus, the meaning of the words surplus earnings (*kasb*) and 'sustenance' (*rizq*) has become clear. The meaning of both words has been explained (QII: 275).

This confirms that real consumption is what differentiates sustenance (*rizq*) from surplus earnings (*kasb*). Ibn Khaldūn had a keen interest in making these terms clearly distinguishable from one another. He believed that it was important to make a detailed analysis in order to determine all the earnings that accrue to man from his efforts and labours. But human labour, which is the basis for all earnings, can sometimes be obscure or concealed.

Labour is very obvious in the case of the craftsman who relies upon the exploitation of his knowhow. However, human labour may be concealed in the case of an individual who uses more of his capital than of his know-how to make a living. This is often true in agriculture. But Ibn Khaldūn insists that human labour is necessary for everything that is earned (*maksūb*) and for everything that is produced (*mutamawwal*). When the source of *maksūb* is work, it is in the exercise of a craft, this is obvious. However, when the sources of *al-mutamawwal* [saleable goods and services] are animals, plants, or minerals, human labour is not quite so obvious. Human labour is, however, still necessary. Without human labour, neither the *maksūb* can be obtained nor can the *mutamawwal* be advantageously used (QII: 274).

Human labour is necessary for every economic activity. This economic principle specifically includes all kinds of situations where man seems to be harvesting economic gains without expending efforts of his own, as when the rain falls at just the right moment, or when other fortuitous occurrences take place. Ibn Khaldūn measures value by using gold and silver. These are the measures of value for every unit of surplus in kind (*qīmah li-kull mutamawwal*), i.e. for every form of property that is quickly and easily converted into cash. He writes: «Gold and silver are what the inhabitants of the world, by preference, consider treasure (*zakhīrah*) and the value of acquisition (*qinyah*) to consist of. Even when, under certain circumstances, other things are acquired, it is only for the purpose of ultimately obtaining gold and silver. All other things are subject to market fluctuations (*hiwalat al-aswāq*) from which gold and silver are exempted. They are the basis of earnings (*makāsib*), the value of acquisition (*qinyah*) and treasure (*zakhīrah*).» (QII: 274).

In the final conclusion for his theory of value, Ibn Khaldūn affirms that labour know-how is the foundation for a craftsman's livelihood. It generates whatever he uses for his needs and whatever he acquires from the surplus value of his acquisitions (*qinyah*). The value of his labour consists of these two elements. This is the meaning of the value of acquisition (*qinyah*). There is nothing of value in the craftsman's world before human labour is applied. Ibn Khaldūn does point out that some crafts and industries are, to some extent, associated with valuable materials. Carpentry and weaving, for instance, are associated with wood and yarn. However, in the practice of these two crafts, the labour that goes into the craft is more important and its value is greater. But if earnings result from something other than a craft, then the value of the produce that is consumed or utilized [consumable and saleable] (*mifādāt*), and the value of the acquisition of this produce (*qinyah*), must also include the value of the labour by

which it was obtained. Without labour this (*qinyah*) would not have been acquired (QII: 274).

The labour Ibn Khaldūn refers to in this citation is the productive skill or know-how of a craftsman. Even when this labour is combined with capital goods, the human labour will still remain the predominant factor of production. Labour know-how, whether obvious, as it is in the case of the craftsman, or concealed, as it is in agriculture, constitutes the basis for realising earnings. A craftsman's energy and skills are the foundation for every economic calculation, whether that energy and skill is obvious and striking, or concealed and less prominent.

Ibn Khaldūn defines crafts and industries as those activities, which require teachers. The teacher is a craftsman and his teaching is the transfer of his skill or know-how to others. He writes: It should be known that a craft is the habit of something concerned with action and thought, in as much as it is concerned with action, it is something corporeal and perceptible by the senses. Things that are corporeal and perceptible by the senses are transmitted through direct practice more comprehensively and more perfectly (than otherwise) because direct practice is more useful with regard to them (QII: 306).

Agriculture, although it is important and prior to all other crafts, has inferior rank or status and is seen as being the way of making a living for weak people. Agriculture, the crafts and commerce... are natural ways of making a living. Agriculture is prior to all the others by its very nature, since it is something simple and innately natural. It needs no speculation or theoretical knowledge... The crafts are secondary and posterior to agriculture. They are composite and scientific, and thinking and speculation is applied to them. Therefore, as a rule, crafts exist only among sedentary peoples (QII: 277–178).

When the role that is played by human labour is obvious to all, a portion of a product's value, whether it is large or small, is attributed to that labour. But the role played by labour may be concealed. This is the case, for example, with the prices of foodstuffs. The labour and expenditure (*a^cmāl wa nafaqāt*) that have gone into them show themselves in the price of grain, as we have stated before. But labour is concealed in regions where farming requires little care and few implements. Thus only a few farmers are conscious of the costs of labour that have gone into their products (QII: 275).

Human labour, whether obvious or concealed, in crafts or in other professions, is still the predominant factor in economic activity. He re-asserts his opening argument by repeating the claim that «Surplus earning is the value realized from human labour» Consumable products that are really consumed (*mifādāt*) [consumable and saleable] and surplus acquisitions (*muktasabāt*) that are not, do constitute different categories for the calculation of earnings (*makāsib*). But Ibn Khaldūn's understanding is clear and consistent throughout his exposition. Consumable products and surplus acquisitions (*al-mifadāt - w-al muktasabāt*) in their entirety or for the most part are, in fact, value realized from human labour (QII: 275).

	Surplus acquisitions [al-muktasabaat]	Consumables & tradables [al-mifaadaat]
Gross earnings [al-makaasib]	Livelihood [al-maʿaash]	Source: Labour & efforts
	Sustenance, acquired or accrued [ar-rizq]	Source: Labour & efforts (taxation, agriculture & fishing)
	Surplus earning [al-kasb]	Source: Labour & intentions (industry, commerce & other businesses)
	Profit [al-ribH]	
	Earned articles [al-maksuub]	Source: Labour & intentions
	Accumulation of luxury & wealth [al-riyaash]	Necessities & surplus
Service or utility produce [al-mifaad]	Yield in kind or money [al-mutamawwal]	Source: Know-how labour [crafts & exploitation of elements. Include the value of raw materials & labour]
	Tradable produce	Source: Non-industrial production [include the value of labour or value of acquisition]
	Know-how labour [al-mifaad al-mughtana minhu]	Source: Labour intensive activities [The mere value is only labour = al- qinyah (value of acquisition)]

Figure 10. Labour in the theory of value proposed by Ibn Khaldūn

I hope that the re-translation of some important terms during the previous discussion will make the remainder of Ibn Khaldūn's economic ideas easier to understand. At the end of his economic discussion, Ibn Khaldūn writes that when the productive human labour in a city is exhausted or severely declines, due to a decline in growth and development, the consequence is that surplus earnings (*kasb*) cease. Centres with few inhabitants (*al-amṣār al-qalīlatu-l-sākin*) can be observed to offer little sustenance (*rizq*) and surplus earning (*kasb*), or none whatever because of the decrease in productive human labour (*al-aʿmāl al-insāniyyah*). Likewise, in centres with large quantities of productive human labour (*aʿmāl akthar*), the inhabitants enjoy more favourable conditions and have more luxuries, as we have stated before (QII: 275). The socioeconomic activities taking place within, and in the vicinity of the centre are an important aspect of Ibn Khaldūn's centre-periphery theory and his theory of political power. Many authors have based their own work and created Grand theories from this element within Ibn Khaldūn's work, including Arnold Toynbee and Frederik Barth.

In his theory of socioeconomic development, Ibn Khaldūn writes about productive human labour and not about labour as a general category. The decrease in socioeconomic growth (often translated as civilization by Rosenthal) that Ibn Khaldūn writes about, results from the decrease in productive human labour, because of the emigration of productive forces from small to large cities. This occurs particularly in

times when great calamities are experienced, when there is political disintegration or when taxation is unjust. The decrease in socioeconomic growth is a result of the qualitative decline in the labour force rather than a reduction in the number of labourers, although this too may also have an impact, since it is the *surplus labour* that provides luxury and wealth, in contrast to the *original labour* that provides the necessities of life.

Luxury and wealth require the productive human labour of skilled people, because affluent people depend upon those who work and produce luxury items and services through their labour. Rosenthal's translation provides the impression that a decrease in socioeconomic growth occurs because of the reduction in the total population and as a consequence, a decrease in the available labour. This is not correct. Ibn Khaldūn had a specific term, still in use today, for population or inhabitants, i.e. *sukkān*. The decline Ibn Khaldūn writes about is a decline in the socioeconomic development, not in the population. This decrease is caused, first of all, by the reduction in productive human labour. Ibn Khaldūn writes that great socioeconomic growth yields great 'surplus earnings' because of the large amount of productive labour, which is the cause of the 'surplus earnings' (*kathrat al-al-ʿumrān tufīd kathrat al-kasb bi kathrat al-aʿmāl allatī hiya sababih*). He concluded that this is the reason why the East enjoys more prosperity than all other regions (QII: 246).

[6.1] Evaluation of the different ways of making a living

Under the title «The various ways, means and methods of making a living», Ibn Khaldūn connects making a livelihood to his theory of value. Livelihood (*maʿāsh*), he writes, is the desire for sustenance (*rizq*) and the effort to obtain it.

There are different ways to secure a livelihood. Sustenance (*rizq*) may be earned and obtained by having the power to take it away from others. This is called impositions and taxation. Sustenance may also be earned and obtained from wild or domesticated animals or from plants. All this is called agriculture (QII: 276).

Beyond imposing taxes on others and agriculture, a third way of making a living is identified as the practice of a craft. Crafts are important for socioeconomic growth and development. Crafts are primarily established in urban areas and in enterprises that are profit oriented. Ibn Khaldūn asserts that surplus earnings (*kasb*) may be the result of human labour when it is applied to specific materials. When that occurs, the human labour is called a craft (*ṣanāʿi*).

The fourth way of making a living is when surplus earning (*kasb*) is derived from the exploitation of non-specific materials. This, then, includes all the other professions and activities.

The fifth way of making a living is when surplus earning (*kasb*) is derived from merchandise and its use in barter. Merchants can make a profit either by travelling around with their merchandise and selling it, or by hoarding it and observing the market fluctuations that affect its price. This is called commerce (*tijārah*) (QII: 277).

The five categories of enterprise are practiced in the centre and in big cities as

well as in peripheral regions. They are; impositions and taxation (political power), agriculture, crafts, the exploitation of non-specific materials and commerce.

Concerning agriculture, Ibn Khaldūn writes that agriculture is prior to all the other ways of making a living, by its very nature, since it is something simple and innately natural (QII: 277).

Concerning the crafts, Ibn Khaldūn writes that the crafts are secondary and posterior to agriculture. They are composite and scientific. Thinking and speculation are applied to them. Therefore, as a rule, crafts exist only among people of the urban community (QII: 277).

Concerning commerce, Ibn Khaldūn writes that commerce is a natural way of making surplus earnings. However, most of its practices and methods are tricky and designed to obtain the profit margin between purchase prices and sale prices. This surplus makes it possible to earn a profit. Therefore, the law permits cunning in commerce, since commerce contains an element of gambling. It does not, however, mean taking away the property of others without giving anything in return. Therefore, it is legal (QII: 278).

These aforementioned are the ways of making a living, which Ibn Khaldūn characterizes as being natural. As we have seen, each way has its own status or rank. The lowest status is reserved for agriculture even though it is of primary importance. The crafts and commerce are ranked higher as ways of making a living because they require more skills.

The title of section 3, chapter V of the Prolegomenon, reads as follows: «Being a servant is not a natural way of making a living». By servants, Ibn Khaldūn refers specifically to those who are employed to serve people who live in luxury. The reason for the existence of servants, who exist on a lower level than others in the household, is the fact that most of those who live in luxury are too proud to take care of their own personal needs or are unable to do so because they were brought up accustomed to indulgence and luxury (QII: 278).

In addition to servants, Ibn Khaldūn characterizes other occupations as not being a natural way to make a living. Included here are those people who try to make money from buried and other treasures, believing that all the property of the nations of the past were implements that were stored underground and sealed with magic charms and amulets. Ibn Khaldūn writes that in addition to having a weak mind, a motive that leads people to hunt for treasure is their inability to make a living in one of the natural ways to earn surplus earnings, such as commerce, agriculture or the crafts (QII: 280–281).

Business entrepreneurs, servants, treasure-hunters, and others, all struggle to make a living, but Ibn Khaldūn distinguishes between them by identifying some ways as being natural and other ways as being un-natural. The distinction implies that some ways are sanctioned or at least condoned, while others are frowned upon and deemed unworthy.

[6.2] Exploitation

Some people have the power to appropriate the labour of others. This is exploitation. Under the title «Ranks (*jāh*) are useful in securing property», we find Ibn Khaldūn writing that the person of rank, who is highly esteemed, is in all manners of earning a living more fortunate and wealthier than a person who has no rank. The reason for this is that the person of rank is served by the labour of others. Others approach those who have rank and offer them their labour. These are people who want to be close to a person of rank because they need the protection his rank can offer. People help him with their labour to satisfy all of his needs and desires. This includes fulfilling his basic needs and providing him with conveniences and/or luxuries. The value realized from all of these kinds of labour becomes part of his surplus earnings. For tasks that usually require providing compensation to the person who performs them, the person of rank employs people without giving them anything in return. He realizes a very high surplus value from their efforts and labour. This high surplus value is the difference between the value he realizes from the products provided by cost-free labour and the price he must pay for things that he needs. He thus makes very great earnings.

A person of rank receives cost-free labour, which makes him rich in a very short period of time. With the passing of days his fortune and wealth increase. It is in this sense that the possession of political power (*al-'imārah*) is one of the ways of making a living (QII: 287–288).

Ibn Khaldūn continues, by writing that the person who has no rank whatsoever, even though he may have property, acquires a fortune only in proportion to the property he owns and in accordance with the efforts he himself makes. Most merchants are in this position, according to Ibn Khaldūn. Therefore, merchants who have rank are far better off than those who lack rank. «People do farm work and business for these men who are at home and do not leave their domiciles. But still their property grows and their profits increase. Without effort they accumulate wealth to the surprise of those who do not understand what the secret of their affluence is, what the reasons for their wealth and fortune are.» (QII: 288).

This type of exploitation, writes Ibn Khaldūn, is encountered both in cities and towns as well as in rural districts. Ibn Khaldūn points out that it is unnatural for a man to provide his labour cost-free because his labour is his source of profit and livelihood. At the same time, it is unnatural to unjustly appropriate labour from any man by those who have power and rank.

[6.3] Rank and class structure

Ibn Khaldūn writes that people who approach the holders of rank do so because they are in need of protection. They do so in order to avoid harm and to obtain advantages. The labour and the property they provide him are given in exchange for the many good things they may obtain and the many bad things they may avoid with the aid of his rank.

Ibn Khaldūn goes on to write that rank is widely distributed among people, and that there are various levels of rank. At the top, rank extends to the ruler, above whom there is nobody. At the bottom, rank extends to those who have nothing to gain or to lose among their fellow men. In between there are numerous classes (QII: 289).

Ibn Khaldūn identifies a particular class structure where the individual is at the mercy of his superiors. Many people are basely used by those who rank higher and conditions can be so threatening that individuals voluntarily serve those with higher rank in order to curry their favour. The individual who successfully pleases someone of high enough rank can be rewarded with gifts of money or property or with employment in a paid position. The man of rank can make decisions that benefit those who curry his favour. But many are exploited and only a few are adequately rewarded. As a consequence, Ibn Khaldūn identifies two different types of rank. One type is used justly and the other type is used unjustly. The unjust use of rank is exploitation. Ibn Khaldūn remarks that rank means that some people have the power which enables them to be active among their fellow human beings. They can permit or forbid undertakings because of the forceful superiority over others that they can wield. This can be used to make those who are in an inferior position avoid things that are harmful to the person of rank and he can seize their advantages. People of rank may act in justice, and apply the laws of religion and politics, or they may follow their own purposes in everything. However, the just use of rank was intended by Providence as something essential, whereas the self-seeking use of rank enters into the world as something accidental (QII: 290).

Thus, rank affects people in whatever way they find to make their living, according to Ibn Khaldūn. Consequently, a person who seeks and desires (the protection of one who has high) rank must be obsequious and use flattery, as powerful men and rulers require. Otherwise, it will be impossible for him to obtain any rank (QII: 291).

There are people who have no use for rank because of their pride, writes Ibn Khaldūn. This is the case of a scholar who is deeply versed in his science, or a scribe who writes well, or a poet who creates beautiful poetry. People who know a craft well usually assume that others will need their services. Therefore, they develop a feeling of superiority to others. People of noble descent, whose forbearers include a ruler or a famous scholar, or a person perfect in some position, also share this illusion. In fact, they cling to something that is a matter of the past, since perfection is not passed on by inheritance (QII: 292).

Rank includes the power of its use. Rank can be used to promote justice, as it was intended by Providence to do, or it can be used for self-aggrandisement, which is an injustice identified as being exploitation. Rank can be bestowed upon an individual because of that individual's skills and capabilities. On the other hand, rank is also bestowed upon those who are obsequious and who flatter the ruler, his entourage and/or his family.

[6.4] Determination of wages

A person with no rank, even though he may have money, acquires a fortune only in proportion to the labour he is able to produce, or to the property he owns, and in accordance with the efforts he himself makes. The crafts that a man knows are his qualifications and these constitute the value he realizes from his own labour. This is the basis for determining wages in society as a whole, and it is a fundament that Ibn Khaldūn sanctions. He calls this relationship natural. Concerning government institutions, wages are assessed in accordance with laws and regulations. The ministry of taxation guards the rights of the state-dynasty in the matters of income and expenditure. It takes a census of the names of all soldiers, fixes their salaries and pays out their allowances at the proper time. In this connection, recourse is had to rules that are set up by the chiefs of operations and the stewards of the state dynasty (QII: 16).

Wages in the private sector are determined in accordance with the demand for the labour the individual offers. This means that the craft that a man knows or his qualifications are subjected to the mechanisms of the market. Since the profit human beings make is the value realized from their labour, then the value realized from labour corresponds to the value of one's labour as it is compared to the value of other labour, and the need for that labour by the people. The growth or decrease of one's surplus earnings, in turn, relates to skilled or qualified labour and not to the work that apprentices do. These are employed by craftsmen and will be issued their qualifications in due course (QII: 289).

Ibn Khaldūn includes a few passages concerning wages paid to religious workers. He asserts that people who are in charge of offices that deal with religious matters, including judges in religious courts, muftis, teachers, prayer leaders, preachers, muezzins, and the like, are not, as a rule, very wealthy (QII: 295). The reason for this is that surplus earning is the value realized from labour. This differs according to the varying degrees of need for a particular kind of labour. Common people have no compelling need for the things that religious officials have to offer. They are needed only by those particular people who take a special interest in their religion. Even if the offices of mufti and judge are needed in case of disputes, this is not a compelling and general need. Mostly, these positions can be dispensed with. Only the ruler is concerned about religious officials and religious institutions, since it is part of his duty to look after the interests of religion (QII: 295).

[6.5] The economic system: its structure and the functioning of its enterprises

The economic system is predominantly based upon personal enterprise. One's own human labour is the sine qua non, the indispensable condition or qualification for economic enterprise. This system cannot be completely appreciated unless its structure and the functioning of its enterprises are explained. Earlier in this chapter, the primary

categories have been identified as being agriculture, commerce and the practice of crafts and industries.

Agriculture, according to Ibn Khaldūn, is a way of making a living for weak people (i.e. people with no special resources) and for able-bodied dwellers of rural areas in search of subsistence (QII: 296). This is the case because agriculture is a natural and simple procedure. As a rule, urban people or people who live in luxury do not practise it. Those who do practise agriculture are characterized by their humility. Later on in the Prolegomenon, when he again discusses agriculture, he writes about it as a craft. There Ibn Khaldūn attributes to agriculture its proper value as being the indispensable craft for human beings. Agriculture is the oldest of all crafts, inasmuch as it provides the food that is the main factor in sustaining human life, since man can exist without anything else, but not without food (QII: 317). The fact that those who practise agriculture are humble may be the consequence of taxation and other means of domination. The person who has to pay tribute is humble and poor because a superior force takes his possessions away from him, explains Ibn Khaldūn.

Ibn Khaldūn also addresses commerce. Commerce means the attempt to make a profit by increasing capital. One buys goods at a low price and sells them at a high price (QII: 297). The attempt to make a profit (*riḥ*) may be undertaken by storing goods and holding them until the market has fluctuated from low prices to high prices. This will bring a large profit. Or, the merchant may transport his goods to another country where they are more in demand than in his own, where he bought them (QII: 297).

Ibn Khaldūn then presents his advice to merchants. Under the title «The transport of goods by merchants», he writes that the merchant who knows his business will only travel with goods that are generally needed. This will permit him to experience a great demand for his merchandise and it will not be necessary to restrict his sales to a few. Consequently, he must travel with medium quality goods, which suit most people. But, still more advantageous and more profitable for the merchant's enterprise is to bring goods from a country that is far away and where there is danger on the road. When goods are few and rare, their prices go up. On the other hand, when the country is near and the road safe for travelling, they will be found in large quantities and the prices will go down (QII: 298). These merchants will be better off than those who travel back and forth between the cities and counties of one particular region.

The hoarding of food grain to wait for high prices is a practice, which is prohibited by religious law. Thus, the person known to hoard foodstuffs is persecuted by the combined psychic powers of the people whose money he takes away (QII: 300). When such practices are encountered, the political authority may intervene with its measures in order to stop the hoarding. Merchants who are discovered are not allowed to wait for a better price before placing the foodstuffs on the market. Government measures may have an even harder effect on the merchants, if a low price policy is dictated for a long period.

Writing under the title «Continued low prices are harmful to merchants who have to trade at low prices», Ibn Khaldūn discusses economic cycles and their consequences for the economy. He writes that when the prices of any type of goods, food, clothing material, or any saleable goods and services (*mutamawwal*) remains low and the

merchant cannot profit from any fluctuation of the market affecting these things, his profit ceases if the situation goes on for a long period (QII: 301). The consequence is that business in this particular line slumps, no trading is done, and the merchants lose their invested capital (*fasadat ru'ūs amwālihim*), i.e. their financial capital.

Ibn Khaldūn then provides an example to show the consequences of economic depression. He writes that this may be exemplified in the instance of grain. While it remains cheap, the condition of all farmers and grain producers who have to do with any of the various stages of grain production is adversely affected. The profit they make is small, insignificant or non-existent. They cannot increase their capital (*al-namā' fī amwālihim*), or they find any such increase very small. They have to spend their invested capital (*ru'ūs amwālihim*). Their condition is adversely affected and they are reduced to poverty and indigence (QII: 301). He continues, this, in turn, affects the condition of millers, bakers, and all the other occupations that are connected with grain from the time it is sown to the time it can be eaten (QII: 301–302). Likewise, the income from taxation is adversely affected, writes Ibn Khaldūn.

Ibn Khaldūn does not give a prompt answer or possible remedies for this situation. He writes that prices that are too low destroy the livelihood of the merchant who trades in any particular type of low priced merchandise. The same applies to prices that are too high (QII: 301–302).

His appreciation of the fact that prices for grain must be low is clear because low prices for foodstuffs are of general usefulness, and food, as far as grain is concerned is more important than commerce (QII: 302). The solution that Ibn Khaldūn may have had in mind may be the one which is referred to in manuscript E. [manuscript E, p341, footnote 62] Here, he proposes that merchants selling food should receive some compensation for the profits that they do not earn because of the low prices.

Ibn Khaldūn then turns to a social and psychological discussion of commerce. Under the title «The kind of people who should practise commerce, and those who should not», he writes that in the attempt to earn the increase of capital that constitutes profit, it is unavoidable that one's capital gets into the hands of traders, in the process of buying and selling and waiting for payment. Now, honest traders are few (QII: 303). Consequently, cheating, tampering with the merchandise, delays in payment, non-respect of obligations incurred are all, to a considerable extent, unavoidable. Ibn Khaldūn points out that the judiciary is of little use in this connection, since the law requires clear evidence (QII: 303). All this causes the merchant a great deal of trouble. But, if he is not afraid of quarrels, if he knows how to settle an account and is always willing to enter into disputes and go to court, he stands a better chance of being treated fairly by traders. Otherwise, he must have the protection of rank (QII: 303). On the other hand, the person who lacks these qualities or lacks the support of rank should avoid commerce.

Ibn Khaldūn's social and psychological study of commerce enables him to establish personality-traits and personality types for merchants. Writing under the title «The character traits of merchants are inferior to those of leading personalities and remote from Manliness,» (QII: 304). He asserts that being a merchant requires cunning, willingness to enter into disputes, cleverness, constant quarrelling, and great persistence.

These are things that belong to the profession of commerce.

In Ibn Khaldūn's opinion, these are qualities that are detrimental and destructive to virtue and to manliness, because it is unavoidable that the actions one takes influence the soul (QII: 304). To support this opinion, he refers to a theory that we might call the theory of attitude formation. He asserts that whenever a person acts in contradistinction to a social norm, one that should be practiced, the action will have a negative effect upon that person's inner core. Not practicing the social norm creates dissonance and disharmony. Repeating the action creates a force, which resolves the dissonance by developing a habit of behaviour in opposition to the social norm. Ibn Khaldūn writes that if evil and deceitful actions come first and good qualities later, the former become firmly and deeply rooted and detract from the good qualities, since the blameworthy influence of the evil actions has left its imprint upon the soul, as is the case with all habits that originate from action (QII: 304).

But Ibn Khaldūn points out that these influences will differ accordingly, among the different types of merchants. Here, he refers to differences in personality. Personality is shaped by the reference group to which the merchant himself identifies, or by the social milieu that influences him. Ibn Khaldūn writes that those who are of a very low type (*sāfil al-tawr*) and who associate closely with bad traders who cheat and defraud and perjure themselves, asserting and denying statements concerning transactions and prices, are much more strongly affected by these bad qualities. In a worst case scenario, the personality trait that is most prevalent is deceitfulness. Deceitfulness becomes his main characteristic. Manliness is completely alien to him, beyond his power to acquire (QII: 305).

But not all merchants are necessarily deceitful. Other merchants have the protection of rank. These are spared from having anything to do with devious business manipulations. These are merchants that are associated with the holders of rank and power. They are interested in gaining prominence and their relationships to people of high rank and power makes them unfit for the devious and cunning practices that dominate commercial life. They have agents and servants to take care of their business transactions, and in case of trouble, it is easy for them to have the magistrates confirm their rights (QII: 304).

Ibn Khaldūn then directs his attention to the crafts. Under the title «The crafts require teachers», he writes that it should be known that a craft is the habit (*malakah*) of something concerned with action and thought. In as much as it is concerned with action, it is something corporeal and perceptible by the senses. Things that are corporeal and perceptible by the senses are transmitted through direct practice more comprehensively and more perfectly (than otherwise), because direct practice is more useful with regard to them (QII: 306).

He continues saying that a habit (*malakah*) is a firmly rooted quality acquired by doing a certain action and repeating it time after time, until the form of that action is firmly fixed. A habit corresponds to the original action, which is repeated until the habit is fully formed. The transmission of things one has observed with one's own eyes is something more comprehensive and complete than the transmission of information and things one has learned about. A habit that is the result of personal observation is more

perfect and more firmly rooted than a habit that is the result of information. The skill a student acquires in a craft, and the habit he attains corresponds to the quality of instruction and the habit of the teacher (QII: 306).

Ibn Khaldūn divides crafts into simple and into composite categories. Simple crafts are needed to provide necessities, while composite crafts are needed to provide luxuries. The simple ones are taught first and instruction in them is inferior. The composite ones, which depend on growth and its degree of development, are taught in accordance with that development, making room for further invention and diversification. He writes that the mind does not cease transforming all kinds of crafts including the composite ones from potentiality into actuality through the gradual discovery of one thing after the other until they are perfect (QII: 306). Continuing, he writes that the crafts are perfected only if there exists a large and perfect urban social organization (*‘umrān ḥaḍarī*) (QII: 307).

A large and perfect urban social organization refers to socioeconomic growth. It is this growth, which is meant here, and not civilization, construed to mean a complex social unit. Ibn Khaldūn uses an Arabic substantive to refer to the societal unit that is concomitant with this stage of development.

As mentioned and clarified in an earlier discussion, there are different stages of socioeconomic growth and development. Lower stages must first occur and they must then be superseded by higher stages before one can reach the stage of a perfect urban social organization. The stage of opulence is reached when social organization develops excessively and crafts and industry become excessive. Such a development, as mentioned before, carries with it the germ for the disintegration of socioeconomic growth and development, and hence, the disintegration of urban social organization. As a consequence, opulence or excessive luxury must be limited and controlled and constantly checked.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that the crafts are firmly rooted in a city only when urban culture is firmly rooted and of long duration. This is true because all crafts are customs and colours of social organization. Customs become firmly rooted only through much repetition and long duration. (QII: 309).

This coincides well with Ibn Khaldūn's requirements concerning the instruction in crafts. Once crafts are firmly rooted in a social organization, their traces will be difficult to remove even when the social organization, which created them recedes. Therefore, we find that cities with a highly developed urban culture, the development of which has receded and decreased, retain traces of crafts that do not exist in other more recently civilized cities (QII: 309).

If repetition and long duration are important to make sure that crafts become firmly rooted, the demand for them within the population is just as important.

Under the title «Crafts can improve and increase only when many people demand them,» (QII: 311), Ibn Khaldūn identifies the different factors, which favour the development of crafts in a social organization: First, there must be a great demand for the crafts. Second, and more important, the ruling state-dynasty must interest itself in the development of the crafts and in their demand.

But crafts are tied to conditions of luxury and are the first to disappear when the

conditions of a city weaken or when the ruling power is overthrown. Ibn Khaldūn writes that the crafts recede from cities that are close to ruin (QII: 312).

As we have noticed under the discussion of the different ways of making a living, Ibn Khaldūn attaches particular importance to crafts as a sector of industrial activity. This is because crafts are closely related to urban social organization (*al-ʿumrān al-ḥaḍarī*) and urban culture (*ḥaḍārah*).

In accordance with his theories on the growth and development of social organization, Ibn Khaldūn has similar and parallel phases in the development of crafts in society. He first divides crafts into distinct categories, necessary or luxurious, and speaks to the different levels of instruction necessary for each category. A second point correlates perfection in the crafts with the perfection of urban social organization. A third point correlates crafts becoming firmly rooted to the moment in time when urban culture becomes firmly rooted and of long duration. A fourth point correlates the increase and improvement of crafts in society with the increase in their general demand, and finally, the decline in the practice of crafts is correlated to the decline of cities in which these crafts were practiced.

After having traced this development, Ibn Khaldūn warns his reader that the person who has gained the habit of a particular craft is rarely able afterwards to master another (QII: 315). He writes that the reason for this is that habits are qualities of the soul. They do not come all at once. Further, we read that this is clear and attested by the facts of existence. One rarely finds a craftsman who, knowing his craft well, afterwards acquires skilful knowledge of another craft and masters both equally well. This extends even to scholars whose habit has to do with thinking (QII: 315).

Finally, and under the title «A brief enumeration of the basic crafts», Ibn Khaldūn writes that there are numerous crafts practised by the human species. They are so numerous as to defy complete enumeration. However, some of them are necessary in growth and development or occupy a noble position because of their object. We shall single these two kinds out for mention and leave all others. He then writes that necessary crafts are agriculture, architecture, tailoring, carpentry, and weaving. Crafts that are noble, because of their object, are midwifery, the art of writing, book production, singing, and medicine (QII: 316). After justifying his selection of noble crafts, Ibn Khaldūn writes: The other crafts are, as a rule, secondary and subordinate. The attitude toward them, however, differs according to the different purposes and requirements (QII: 316–317). A detailed discussion of the necessary crafts, mentioned above, including the noble ones, follows from section 23 throughout section 32 of chapter V in the Prolegomena (QII: 317–363).

In section 32, under the title «The crafts, especially writing and calculation, give intelligence to the person who practices them», Ibn Khaldūn writes that each kind of learning and speculation provides the rational soul with additional intelligence. The crafts and their habit always lead to the acquisition of scientific norms, which result from the habit. Therefore any experience provides intelligence. The habit of the crafts provides intelligence. Perfect urban culture provides intelligence because it is a conglomerate of crafts characterized by concern for the domestic economy, contact with

one's fellow men, attainment of education, by mixing with one's fellow men, and also the administration of religious matters and understanding the ways and conditions governing these. All these (factors) are norms, which properly arranged constitute scientific disciplines. Thus an increase in intelligence results from them (QII: 362).

Ibn Khaldūn connects the theory and practice of crafts to developments and increases in intelligence. He points to an inter-relationship between theory and practice and advances in intelligence and culture. If we envisage the craft of writing, this inter-relationship may be clarified. Writing in Ibn Khaldūn's day and age was a craft employed by individuals in order to make a living. The person who occupied himself with this craft was, at the same time, a kind of editor, acquiring besides his own practical experiences, theoretical ones. Ibn Khaldūn writes that calculation is connected with writing. Calculation entails a kind of working with numbers, 'combining' and 'separating' them, which requires much deductive reasoning. Thus, the person occupied in this process gets used to deductive reasoning and speculation and this is what is meant by intelligence (QII: 363).

Chapter 7: theories of science and instruction

Now, let us envisage the last of the four important pillars of growth and development in social organization. Ibn Khaldūn identifies this final pillar as being science and instruction (*al-ʿulūm*). The three others were *mulk* (authority or royal authority), *kasb* (surplus earning) and crafts and industries (*ṣanāʿiʿ*). Science and instruction are seen as being natural to social organization.

The first three sections in this chapter include Ibn Khaldūn's theories of thinking and perception. Under the subtitle «Man's ability to think» (QII: 364), he discusses perception and how it occurs. Three degrees of thinking are explained here: The discerning intellect, the experimental intellect and the speculative intellect.

Under the title «The world of the things that come into being as the result of action, materializes through thinking» (QII: 365), he explains how actions proceeding from human beings are ordered, contrary to those proceeding from other living beings, because of thinking.

Under the title «The experimental intellect and how it comes into being», Ibn Khaldūn writes that man by his very nature needs co-operation with his fellow men. Such co-operation, he adds, requires, first of all, consultation (*mufāwḍah*), and, then, association (*mushārakah*) and the things that result thereby.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that dealings with other people, when there is oneness of purpose, may lead to mutual affection and when purposes differ, they may lead to strife and altercation (QII: 368). This, he writes, does not happen haphazardly among human beings, because their ability to think helps them act in an orderly manner. The concepts

that bring this about are not completely divorced from sensual perception and do not require very deep study. All of them are obtained through experience and derived from it. They are particular concepts that are identified with the senses. Their truth or falsehood soon becomes apparent in the course of events. By studying events closely, the student of these concepts can learn their true meaning. Each human being can learn as much from them as he or she is able to do. One can gather knowledge with the help of experience by closely studying the events that occur in one's dealings with one's fellow men. Eventually, one learns what is necessary and what must be done. At the same time, one learns what one must not do. This knowledge becomes fixed in one's mind. Learning from experience will lead the individual to the patterns of behaviour or habits that are conducive to properly dealing with fellow human beings. Ibn Khaldūn adds «Those who follow this (experimental procedure) during their whole life become acquainted with every single problem; things that depend on experience require time.» (QII: 369).

This is the experimental intellect (*al-ʿaql al-tamyīzī*) and Ibn Khaldūn posits that it is only obtained by one who already has a discerning intellect. Only after these two distinctly different ways of thinking are obtained, can the speculative intellect then be obtained.

In a section entitled «The knowledge of human beings and the knowledge of angels», Ibn Khaldūn posits the existence of three distinctly different worlds. First, there is the world that is available to our senses. We perceive this world by using our senses. Sensual perception is a quality that human beings share with animals. Second, there is a world, which is beyond the reach of our senses. It is here that we become aware of our ability to think. Our ability to think discloses the existence of the human soul. This knowledge is necessitated by the fact that we bear within us scientific perceptions, which are above the perceptions of the senses. About the third world, Ibn Khaldūn writes the following: Then, we deduce the existence of a third world, above us, from the influences that we find it leaves in our hearts, such as volition and an inclination toward active motions (QII: 370).

This vision of the world, with its three divisions, is both pragmatic and spiritual. Ibn Khaldūn writes that «Of the three worlds, the one we can perceive best is the world of human beings, since it is existential and attested by our corporeal and spiritual perceptions» (QII: 371).

Ibn Khaldūn reminds us that human beings are ignorant by nature. We are born without any knowledge at all, and the knowledge we acquire as we live our lives is almost always tentative. We vacillate between one idea, or understanding, and another, and this vacillating quality affects all the knowledge that we do acquire. Human beings learn through acquisition of knowledge and technique, because they obtain the objects they seek by applying their ability to think according to technical rules. Only a few among us are able to reach a complete agreement between the knowledge that is acquired and the thing that is known. These few do not vacillate in their knowledge. These privileged few are discussed in a section subtitled «The knowledge of the prophets.» (QII: 372).

Ibn Khaldūn posits that above the human world there is a spiritual world. It is

known to us because of its influence upon us, in that it gives us the power of perception and volition. The essences of that spiritual world are pure perception and absolute intellect. It is the world of the angels (QII: 373–374). Ibn Khaldūn rejects what we today might refer to as a religious fundamentalist understanding of human existence. He rejects the idea that the spiritual realm can be referred to or used when one argues about worldly matters. After discussing these distinctions, Ibn Khaldūn writes that man is essentially ignorant and becomes learned by acquiring knowledge. He continues by writing that before man has discernment he has no knowledge whatsoever and is to be counted one of the animals. Whatever he attains subsequently is the result of sensual perception and the ability to think. Ibn Khaldūn believes that man reaches the perfection of his form through the knowledge that he acquires through his own organs. Thus his human essence reaches the perfection of its existence (QII: 375). This delineates Ibn Khaldūn's theory of human consciousness.

[7. 1] Instruction and educational institutions

Ibn Khaldūn makes an attempt to clarify the essentials of educational instruction. When he does so, he takes an Aristotelian perspective by claiming that «Scientific instruction is a craft». It previously pointed out that education, in general, is seen by Ibn Khaldūn as being a craft and that those who practice it are understood as being craftsmen. Their labour, similar to that of other craftsmen, is subject to the demand in society for that particular competency. Those who have read the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu will be pleased to find the habitus of scientific inquiry very competently expressed in Ibn Khaldūn's arguments for considering scientific instruction to be a craft. He writes: This is because skill in a science, knowledge of its diverse aspects, and mastery of it are the result of a habit (*malakah*) which enables its possessor to comprehend all the basic principles of that particular science, to become acquainted with its problems, and to evolve its details from its principles. As long as such a habit has not been obtained, skill in a particular discipline is not forthcoming (QII: 376).

What does Ibn Khaldūn mean when he refers his readers to the concept habit? He writes that habit is different from understanding and knowing by memory. Furthermore, he writes that the scholarly and scientific habit belongs solely and exclusively to the scholar or the person well versed in scientific disciplines. This shows that (scientific) habit is different from understanding (QII: 376). In following passages we read that all habits are corporal and that all corporal qualities are due to the workings of the body's senses (*sensibilia*) (*maḥsūṣah*).

A second argument for considering scientific knowledge and scientific instruction to be a craft, according to Ibn Khaldūn, is the fact that the various sciences all have their own different technical terminologies.

How is the habit of scientific inquiry acquired? Ibn Khaldūn insists that active participation (in the practice of scientific inquiry) and dialogue (with a master of scientific practice) are the best ways to acquire the habit. Ibn Khaldūn writes that the

easiest method of acquiring the scientific habit is by acquiring the ability to express oneself clearly in discussing and disputing scientific problems. This is what clarifies their import and makes them understandable. 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 memorising. Thus, they do not obtain much of a habit in the practice of science and scientific instruction (QII: 379).

Wherever there is abundant socioeconomic growth and development and a continuous social organization, one will find institutions of scientific instruction. These are places that have a tradition of teaching, where instruction in the skills and habits that are needed to practice a craft, is offered and where that offer is in very great demand. These places of scientific instruction have a great influence in areas of urban culture. They contribute significantly to the acquired intelligence of inhabitants living in urban communities.

People who live in such urban communities observe a particular code of manners in everything they undertake and do or do not do, and they thus acquire certain ways of making a living, finding dwellings, building houses, and handling their religious and worldly matters, including their customary affairs, their dealings with others, and all the rest of their activities.

All these are crafts that later generations learn.

Each craft has its proper place and each craft generates acquisition of additional intelligence. The intellect is thus conditioned for a quick reception of knowledge, (QII: 381) writes Ibn Khaldūn. The influence of the milieu is clear here. And we read further that the sciences are numerous only where growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*) is large and urban culture (*ḥaḍārah*) highly developed (QII: 383). Differences in environmental impulses condition the intellect in varying ways.

Under the title «The various sciences that exist in contemporary civilization», Ibn Khaldūn discusses a curriculum where these sciences are divided into two branches. The first branch comprises logical and philosophical sciences and the second branch comprises the traditional, conventional sciences. Ibn Khaldūn writes that it should be known that the sciences with which people concern themselves in cities and which they acquire and pass on through instruction are of two kinds: one that is natural to man and to which he is guided by his own ability to think, and a traditional kind that he learns from those who invented it (QII: 385).

Furthermore, he writes that the first kind comprises the philosophical sciences. They are the 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 perception, 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 (QII: 385).

Ibn Khaldūn categorises the philosophical sciences into four groups: Logic, Physics, Metaphysics and the study of measurements (Geometry, Arithmetic, Music, and Astronomy) (QIII: 86–87).

The second kind comprises the traditional, conventional sciences. All of these

depend upon information based on the authority of the given religious law (QII: 385).

The division that Ibn Khaldūn proposes, separating philosophical sciences and conventional sciences, is concordant with the secular nature of Ibn Khaldūn's science of social organization, growth and development. Ibn Khaldūn provides a detailed and lengthy exposition of these sciences, which he enumerates from section 10 throughout section 17, chapter VI of the Prolegomena. Thereafter, under the title «The various kinds of intellectual sciences», (QIII87–241; R111–280), Ibn Khaldūn proposes a general curriculum for these sciences, which he enumerates and discusses. In addition, he shares his opinions of some of these sciences, which include philosophy, astrology and alchemy. Section 44, chapter IV, throughout the 3rd. volume of the Muqaddimah is primarily devoted to an explication of the sciences concerned with the Arabic language (QIII: 279–433).

[7. 2] Processes that link perception, communication and literary composition

In the section «The purposes that must be borne in mind in literary composition and that alone are to be considered valid», Ibn Khaldūn discusses the process of perception, the types of communication and the purposes of literary composition. Writing about the process of perception, he posits that the storehouse of human science is the soul of man. In it God has implanted perception, enabling it to think and, thus, to acquire (scientific knowledge). (Human science) starts with perception (*taṣawwur*) of realities and is then continued by affirmation or negation of the essential attributes of the realities, either directly or through an intermediary (QIII: 241). He writes that man's ability to think eventually produces a problematic situation, which he tries to solve affirmatively or negatively. When a scientific picture has been established in the mind through these (efforts), it must, of necessity, be communicated to someone else, either through instruction or through discussion, in order to polish the mind by trying to show its soundness (QIII: 242).

Ibn Khaldūn then identifies the various types of communication, and points out that communication often takes the form of 'verbal expression' and is communication by speech. This is the first step in the communication of thoughts. As its most important and noble part, it includes the sciences. However, it comprises every statement, wish or command that in general enters the mind. After this first step in communication, there is a second. It is the communication of one's thoughts to persons who are out of sight or bodily far away, or to persons who live later and whom one has not met, since they are not contemporaries. This is written communication (QIII: 242).

Written communication, writes Ibn Khaldūn, gives information about the noblest part of thinking, namely, science and knowledge. Everywhere in the world written works are numerous. They are handed down among all races and in all ages. They differ as the result of differences in religious laws and organizations and in the information available about nations and dynasties (QIII: 243). These are the areas in which written communication can differ. However, Ibn Khaldūn points out that the philosophical

sciences do not show such differences. They have developed uniformly, as required by the very nature of thinking, which is concerned with the perception of existing things as they are, whether corporeal, spiritual, celestial, elemental, abstract, or material. These sciences show no differences (QIII: 244).

Ibn Khaldūn's distinction between those studies that legitimately produce real differences in our understanding of particular cultures and histories in the written communication of knowledge, what is generally known today as historical and cultural or humanist studies, and those studies that do not do so, but which attempt to disclose universal truths, what we generally consider to be science or scientific studies, seems to be precursory for the categories we find in our own day in higher education. A more evolved and concerned commentary, about those differences are expressed in the well-known essay «The Two Cultures», by C.P. Snow. Ibn Khaldūn's socioeconomic studies led him to propose a theory about the growth, development and decay of civilization. This theory was based upon empirical studies and was a thoroughly secular endeavour. Consequently, his contributions should be grouped with those other scientific studies that aim at disclosing universal truths. This would seem to place Ibn Khaldūn as a harbinger for the positivist camp in discussions that attempt to situate socioeconomic investigation as a kind of scientific investigation.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, differences in knowledge that are communicated by books in the first category are due to differences among the varying religions, differences in human organization, and differences in the peculiar histories of various peoples. These are all differences in the external characteristics of historical information. This understanding leads him to define the purposes for literary composition.

The first purpose, he writes, is the invention of a science, with its subjects, its division into chapters and sections and the discussion of its problems, or the invention of problems and topics of research which occur to a competent scholar and which he wants to communicate to someone else, so that they may become generally known and useful (QIII: 249).

The second purpose arises when one finds out that the discussion and works of ancient scholars are difficult to understand. There is the need to interpret their meaning. An interpretive approach to books on the intellectual and traditional sciences is needed (Chapter III, Q245; R285). What we might today call academic hermeneutics, seems to be identified in this second purpose.

The third purpose arises when some later scholar may come across an error or mistake in discussions by ancient scholars of renowned merit and famous authority as teachers. The purpose will then be the discovery of the mistake in writing, so that future student(s) may learn from the explanation of it.

The fourth purpose for engaging in written communication exists when a particular discipline is seen as being incomplete. When this occurs the purpose will be to supply these lacking problems, in order to perfect the discipline by having all its problems and details treated and leaving no room for deficiency in it.

The fifth purpose is disclosed when the problems of a particular science have been treated but when the treatments have not been arranged properly or ordered efficiently.

The purpose then will be to arrange and improve on the problems and put every problem in the chapter where it belongs.

The sixth purpose is disclosed when the problems of a particular science exist scattered among other sciences. The purpose will then be to collect its problems so that a new discipline will be able to make its appearance.

The seventh and final purpose in Ibn Khaldūn's clarification of the reasons for written communication in the development of sciences and in their transmission in education is the need for a precise and concise document. Something in the main scholarly works may be too long and prolix. One will then try to compose a brief and succinct abridgment, omitting all repetitions (QIII: 245–247).

These are the main purposes for written communication in the sciences and in the transmission of sciences in educational institutions, according to Ibn Khaldūn.

[7. 3] Methods of instruction

Under the title «The great number of scholarly works available is an obstacle on the path to attaining scholarship», Ibn Khaldūn writes that among the things that are harmful to the human quest for knowledge and to the attainment of a thorough scholarship are the great number of works available, the large variety in technical terminology needed for purposes of instruction, and the numerous and different methods used in those works. The student is required to have a ready knowledge of all that. Only then is he considered an accomplished scholar. Thus, the student must know all the works, or most of them, and observe the methods used in them. His whole lifetime would not suffice to know all the literature existing in a single discipline, even if he were to devote himself entirely to it. Thus, he must of necessity fall short of attaining scholarship (QIII: 248).

According to Ibn Khaldūn, education is the consequence of the human intellect's desire to discover, explore and know the world, everything in it and all that surrounds it. Efforts must be made to generate a process for acquiring knowledge and for mastering that process. The more the human being searches, the more knowledge and experience is acquired and accumulated. Research efforts are a product of the interactions the student has with society, its elite and its scholars. Education and the acquisition of knowledge are natural to human beings. The differences, in the quality and quantity of the knowledge acquired, is a factor of the environment of the individual student. The growth in educational achievement is dependent upon the continuing growth and development of society.

Too many books can hinder learning and educational development. Ibn Khaldūn warns his readers to be wary of an overproduction of concise handbooks. He writes: The great number of brief handbooks available on scholarly subjects is detrimental to the process of instruction. He points out that scholars often abridge the most important and most central scholarly works in order to make it easier for students to acquire expert knowledge of them. This has a corrupting influence upon the process of instruction and

is detrimental to the attainment of scholarship because it confuses the beginner by presenting the final results of a discipline to him before he is prepared for them. This is a bad method of instruction...It also involves a great deal of work for the student. In addition, the scholarly habit that results from receiving instruction from brief handbooks even when it is at its best and is not accompanied by any flaw is inferior to the habits resulting from the study of more extensive and lengthy works. The latter contain a great amount of repetition and lengthiness but both are useful for the acquisition of a perfect habit. When there is little repetition an inferior habit is the result. This is the case with the abridgments (QIII: 250–251).

The student, therefore, must, according to Ibn Khaldūn, be prepared for learning and information must be presented to him gradually, in the form of a dialogue between the teacher and the student. Thus, the latter must neither be encumbered with books nor be motivated to depend upon detrimental abridgements. In addition, the theoretical and the experimental aspects of learning must, as far as this is possible, be bound up together.

Under the title «The right attitude in scientific instruction and toward the method of giving such instruction», Ibn Khaldūn presents a method of education in three phases. The first phase requires the student to acquire the habit of learning (*iktisāb malakat al-taʿlīm*).

This is characterized as being a brief introductory phase. During the second phase, the goal is to improve the student's habits of learning (*tajwīd al-malakah*). Explanations are more precisely given, arguments are presented and countered, similarities and differences are distinguished. The third phase focuses upon research and the research process. In this phase, verifications are undertaken which lead to mastery of the habits of the science under study. He writes, it should be known that the teaching of scientific subjects to students is effective only when it proceeds gradually. At first, the teacher presents the student with the principal problems within each chapter of a given discipline. He acquaints him with them by commenting on them in a summary fashion. In the course of doing so he observes the student's intellectual potential and his readiness for understanding the material that will come his way until the end of the discipline under consideration is reached. In the process the student acquires the habit of the science he studies. However, that habit 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. The teacher then leads the student back over the discipline a second time. He gives him instruction in it on a higher level. He no longer gives a summary but full commentaries and explanations. He mentions to him the existing differences of opinion and the form these differences take all the way through to the end of the discipline under consideration. Thus, the student's scholarly habit is improved. Then the teacher leads the student back again, now that he is solidly grounded. He leaves nothing that is complicated, vague or obscure, unexplained. He bares all the secrets of the discipline to him. As a result, the student, when he finishes with the discipline, has acquired the habit of it. This is the effective method of instruction. As one can see it requires a threefold repetition. Some students can get through it with less than that depending on their natural dispositions and qualifications (QIII: 251–252).

Ibn Khaldūn continues by pointing out that preparedness for and receptivity to scientific knowledge and understanding grow gradually. At the beginning, the student is completely unable to understand any but a very few points. His understanding is only approximate and general and can be achieved only with the help of pictures (*muthul*) derived from sensual perception. His preparedness keeps growing gradually when he faces the problems of the discipline under consideration and has them repeated to him and advances from approximate understanding of them to a complete higher knowledge. Thus, the habit of preparedness and eventually that of attainment materialize in the student until he has a comprehensive knowledge of the problem of the discipline he studies. But if a student is exposed to the final results at the beginning, while he is still unable to understand and comprehend anything and is still far from being prepared to understand, his mind is not acute enough to grasp them. He gets the impression that scholarship is difficult and becomes loath to occupy himself with it. He constantly dodges and avoids it. This is the result of poor instruction and nothing else.

Ibn Khaldūn then advises the teacher. He writes: The teacher should not ask more from a student than that he understand the book he is engaged in studying, in accordance with his class age group and his receptivity to instruction. Furthermore, he adds that: The teacher should not bring in problems other than those found in that particular book, until the student knows the whole book from beginning to end, is acquainted with its purpose, and has gained a habit from it, which he then can apply to other books (QIII: 252–253).

Ibn Khaldūn insists that after acquiring the habit of one discipline, the student will be prepared for learning all the others, and that his interest will eventually motivate him to advance to higher levels of learning. The result can be the acquisition and complete mastery of scholarship in many fields. Furthermore, Ibn Khaldūn points out that it is also necessary for the teacher to avoid prolonging the period of instruction in a single discipline or book, by breaks in the sessions and long intervals between them. This causes the student to forget and disrupts the nexus between the different problems of the discipline being studied. The result of such interruption is that attainment of the scholarly habit becomes difficult. If the first and last things of a discipline are present in the mind and prevent the effects of forgetfulness, the scholarly habit is more easily acquired, more firmly established, and closer to becoming a true colouring.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that a good and necessary method and approach in instruction is not to expose the student to two disciplines at the same time. Otherwise, he will rarely master one of them, since he has to divide his attention and is diverted from each of them by his attempts to understand the other (QIII: 253–254).

Ibn Khaldūn then turns to the student himself and writes: You, student, should realize that I am here giving you useful suggestions for your study. If you accept them and follow them assiduously, you will find a great and noble treasure. As an introduction that will help you to understand them, I shall tell you the following: At times, thinking means the beginning of orderly and well-arranged human actions. At other times, it means the beginning of the knowledge of something that had not been available before (QIII: 254; R:III: 295).

Ibn Khaldūn tries to address the question «How does human thinking function?»

His answer is that, the ability to think is directed toward some objective whose two extremes it has perceived, and now it desires to affirm or deny it. In almost no time, it recognises the middle term, which combines the two extremes, if the objective is uniform. Or the ability to think goes on to obtain another middle term, if the objective is manifold. It thus finds its objective. It is in this way that the ability to think works (QIII: 254–255).

What then is the role of logic? Ibn Khaldūn seems to be answering that question when he writes that the craft of logic is knowledge of the way in which the natural ability to think and speculate operates (QIII: 255). Logic, he adds, helps us to distinguish correct operations from erroneous ones. To be right, though, is in the essence of the ability to think. However, in very rare cases, it is affected by error. This comes from perceiving the two extremes in forms other than are properly theirs, as the result of confusion in the order and arrangement of the propositions from which the conclusion is drawn. Logic helps to avoid such traps. Thus, it is a technical procedure, which parallels man's natural ability to think and conforms to the way in which it functions. Since it is a technical procedure, it can be dispensed with in most cases (QIII: 255). Because the rules of logic parallel the ways in which our thinking occurs, many excellent thinkers can dispense with logic and use their own natural abilities to think matters through.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, the student must pass through many veils that lie between him and his objectives. He points out that not everyone is able to successfully pass through the veils that hinder one's view, and that the process of instruction itself can be a hindrance for some. He asserts that whenever the student finds his materials to be too difficult and too disturbing for his mind, he should cast off the rigid technical procedures and find his refuge in his own natural ability to think. This, for Ibn Khaldūn, is the natural means for the perception of the truth. The rules of logic, in and of themselves, for the most simply describe the process of thinking and parallels thought processes.

Under the title «Study of the auxiliary sciences should not be prolonged and their problems should not be treated in detail», (QIII: 258), Ibn Khaldūn writes that teachers of the auxiliary sciences ought not to delve too deeply into them and increase the number of their problems. They must advise the student concerning their purpose and have him stop there. Those who have the mind to go more deeply into them and consider themselves capable and able to do so, may choose such a course for themselves (QIII: 259). These are sciences which are auxiliary to other sciences, writes Ibn Khaldūn. He is referring to topics like philology and logic.

Under the title «The instruction of children and the different methods employed in the Muslim centres», (QIII: 260), Ibn Khaldūn explicated the pedagogical techniques that were popular in his own day. He particularly attacks memorisation as a method of instruction for children learning about their own religion. This is especially damaging when the memorisation is emphasised at the cost of deeper understanding. Memorisation, he asserts, exhausts the human body in the process of learning. He is in tune with more enlightened ideas about the functions of an education. The general objective of an education, according to Ibn Khaldūn, is not solely to transfer customs, norms, and an understanding of the sciences from one person to another or from one

generation to another. It is to polish the innate qualities of humanness in the youth.

Under the title «Severity to students does them harm», (QIII: 264), he writes: This comes about as follows. 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. Students, slaves and servants, who are brought up with injustice and tyrannical force are overcome by it. It makes them feel oppressed and causes them to lose their energy. It makes them lazy and induces them to lie and be insincere. Thus, their outward behaviour differs from what they are thinking because they are afraid that they will have to suffer tyrannical treatment if they tell the truth. Thus, they are taught deceit and trickery. This becomes their custom and character. They lose the quality that goes with social and political organization and makes people human (*ma ʿāni al-insāniyyah*). That is the desire to protect and defend themselves and their homes and they become dependent on others. Indeed, their souls become too indolent to attempt to acquire the virtues and the qualities of good character. Thus, they fall short of their potentialities and do not reach the limit of their humanity. As a result, they revert to every nation that fell under the yoke of tyranny and learned through it the meaning of injustice. One may check this by observing any person who is not in control of his own affairs and has no authority on his side to guarantee his safety. One will thus be able to infer from the observable facts how things are (QIII: 264).

Ibn Khaldūn understands the role of education in a manner that is precursory to the writings of Montaigne and the new educationalists of his day. They, too, were against the idea of filling up the student with prescribed doses of information. Ibn Khaldūn recommends mild discipline and a step-by-step advance in the acquisition of knowledge. Learning must start with easy and simple tasks. Educational endeavour should aim at finding a proper balance between the abilities of students and the tasks involved in their learning. Explanation improves when examples are provided. There is a practical recourse to dialogue, to argumentation, and to other structured means for increasing interpretive skills, while paying attention to individual differences among students.

One of the most important elements of Ibn Khaldūn's pedagogical approach is the way in which education is linked to aspects of the individual's personality and to human psychology, and at the same time is linked to prevailing social conditions and the stage of development of the encompassing civilization. He points out that the human intellect receives different impulses, and that its abilities to acquire knowledge will vary depending upon the stage of development reached in society. The best environment for learning occurs in a civilization that is still growing and developing, one that is mid-way in the cycle of birth, growth, increased growth, full development, decline and demise. The ideal educational setting exists before a civilization has completely come to fruition. This setting provides many types of crafts, diversified educational opportunities and institutions, and a multitude of possibilities that are still looming in the near horizon. In this environment the acquisition of knowledge occurs by joining theory and practice with participation. The practical goal for education and learning is to help human beings fully develop their consciousness so that they are able to participate in creating better lives.

CONCLUSION

The hypothesis that inspired this research claims that there is a need to reinterpret and represent the ideas contained in Ibn Khaldūn's Prolegomena. The available translations and interpretations do not coherently and comprehensively afford the modern reader enough guidance. Ibn Khaldūn's method of analysis, his new Science of al-ʿumrān, and his conception of socioeconomic development have not been properly explicated.

Ibn Khaldūn's Science of al-ʿumrān is composed of a twofold body of social sciences, presenting conceptions of growth and development of local and urban social organization and a method of analysis. The science he delineates and the method of analysis he posits are internally consistent and well adapted to one another. In addition, they provide their readers with perspectives that can be utilized more generally. This is what the present research claims to have demonstrated.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that the world of existent things is comprised of two main categories. First of all, there are pure and essential substances, which he calls the elements. The world of existent things is comprised of the elements and the results of their interaction. A subdivision in this first category posits that when elements interact, the result is one of three manifestations. These are named minerals, plants and animals. But the world of existent things also has a second category. Actions proceed from living beings and happenings occur due to the intentional actions of those living beings. While some of these actions are well arranged and orderly, as a great deal of human action is, other actions are not well arranged and ordered, such as the actions of other species. This secondary category reveals a comprehensive explication of human social action, of all intentional events and happenings, and of other phenomena and occurrences that are not characterized by intentionality.

When we apply Ibn Khaldūn's law of change to this explication, and consider its workings in different times and places, the result – is a complex network of social phenomena, the creation of customs and other social conditions. Imitation and repetition colour human action. The disposition to act in one way or another becomes internalized. Intended and accidental consequences of human action result in social and economic, political and cultural manifestations.

The goal of Ibn Khaldūn's Prolegomena is the discovery of the true nature or the reality of social phenomena and social happenings. The discovery of the true nature of what transpires in society comprises the predominant part of his new science. His exploration of this true nature results in a network of conclusions that he believes can be considered to be «true» or plausible. These conclusions are based upon his own peculiar mixture of reflexive thought, observation, speculation, comparison and argumentation. These skilled practices are used together to address specific causes, differences and similarities, and the conformity of empirical findings to the existing knowledge of reality. The results he obtains do not merely provide the reader with a simple picture or perception of reality. His results are also the product of his keen arguments, and as such are apperceptions or perceptions that are enriched by organizational or structural ideas.

The methodology of Ibn Khaldūn stems from a particular philosophical dualism in

defining objects. He distinguishes between the thing in itself and the thing in its context. For Ibn Khaldūn, every event or phenomenon becomes actualized in accordance with its essence, or as the result of human action.

A phenomenon is defined isolated, then studied in its context. First, we consider the phenomenon or the event as an isolated matter and extract from it its true nature or what is peculiar to its essence – in other words, we find out the plausible endogenous principles or variables underlying it. Second, we consider the phenomenon or event in its context and discover the accidental conditions or exogenous principles and variables that may attach themselves to it. The first step gives inherent descriptions and definitions. The second uncovers causal relations.

Within this context the researcher should concentrate on factors of power, earnings, activities and knowledge. Thereafter comes comparison with similar phenomenon to find differences and similarities. The third step is to probe more deeply with logic (the yardstick of philosophy), using analysis and synthesis, paradigms and logical examples (as the eight sentences of political wisdom in 2.4.1 above). The fourth step is to look for conformity of one's findings to the existing knowledge of reality. The last step is to probe more deeply with the help of speculation, reflexivity and critical insight.

Ibn Khaldūn's methodology for discovering the true nature and the plausible reasons that structure and order events, happenings, and phenomena, requires definitions that are adequate and proper to the task. Ibn Khaldūn's method of analysis is predominantly sociological. His analysis does not stop with the investigation of any particular phenomenon. Results and data gathered from the analysis of different phenomena are brought together and structured, to enlarge our knowledge about the development and growth of world society as a whole. Ibn Khaldūn discussed the centres and the peripheries of the societies of his day, and in particular, the variations within North African societies. He discloses the reciprocal influences and the causes of antagonism between the different segments of those societies, based on an evolutionary model of equilibrium and conflict.

Similar to his dichotomous definition of the phenomenon or event under study, he initially examines two interdependent spheres of human social action. These are what he calls rural social organization and urban social organization, and their respective socioeconomic qualities of development and phases of growth. The phases of growth and development in society are conceived as being dependent upon developments in political life and in the technological know-how impacting upon crafts and industries, economic surpluses, and the spread of knowledge and learning.

Ibn Khaldūn's apperceptions of society reflect a unified construction that is composed of three system elements: the particular phenomenon or event in focus, the local society of which it is a part, with its own peculiar class-structure at its core, and the division of society into different domains of activity. Building upon his own research, his own observations and concrete studies of North African societies, he developed a theory of sociology in its widest sense.

Ibn Khaldūn posits that the *raison d'être* of any socioeconomic development is the realization of the comfort of companionship and the satisfaction of human needs. This

results from the co-operation that is necessary in society for its people to be able to make a living. Co-operation between people is, for Ibn Khaldūn, a natural disposition and quality in the social life of human beings. The satisfaction of human needs or the conditions that promote pursuing a livelihood are materialized through trade, i.e. the buying and selling of goods and the trading of human labour for money or goods. Livelihood is the desire for sustenance and the effort to obtain it. Co-operation is also materialized when labour and goods are traded, either by barter or within a market system.

Social organization is divided into rural and urban categories. The division into a split between central and peripheral spheres of activity provides Ibn Khaldūn's thinking with a social, an economic and a political dimension. Society should primarily satisfy the conditions necessary for its continued existence by securing a just economic system. If this is hindered, the use of force, manifesting group solidarity or *esprit de corps* will emerge and intervene to change the course of politics. When *esprit de corps* is activated, the comfort of companionship and the satisfaction of needs are no longer limited to human co-operation within the context of a small social group, a tribe, or a one-system/one-market society. Antagonism develops between a central force and a plurality of peripheries at varying distances from it. This may give rise to new political power and a new course of socioeconomic development. The economic factor is coupled to political factors in order to represent and characterize the driving force behind change.

Ibn Khaldūn's system for explaining socioeconomic development is built upon four major governing conditions. Each one of these governing conditions incorporates theories that can explain why the existing structure of society remains stable, or why there is a visible and dynamic development leading to structural changes in society. The four major governing conditions in society are:

- 1) The political context;
- 2) Human labour and earnings;
- 3) Crafts and industry or industries; and
- 4) The sciences.

Societies differ because of the interaction that occurs between these four major governing conditions. The interaction is best seen from within the centre of a society, where the co-ordination of these four vital arteries can be planned and executed, in accordance with an overall socioeconomic policy.

The first fundament is power, which is expressed in group feeling, patron-client relationships, and *esprit de corps* or socio-psychological solidarity. Political power is the first and most important –but not necessarily the decisive – aspect. Political authority is most powerful when it can serve as a secure device for social stability within society and as the arm that protects society from aggressive neighbours beyond the borders of the realm. Policies must aim at the co-ordination of socioeconomic interests, and in securing a just economic system, one that can profit subjects and holders of power.

The second fundament is economic, and this refers to the material ways in which the subjects of the realm support themselves. Political and economic conditions interact

and when both aspects properly function the state is manifested. Ibn Khaldūn posits that public finances can be increased and financial resources further developed solely from the revenues accrued from taxation. But these developments depend upon the equitable treatment of the subjects of the realm. This includes protecting their economic activities, so that their capital will bear fruit, and as a consequence, there will be an increase in revenues from taxation. If this is not the policy of the state, then the whole system of power, which is based upon political and economic fundamentals, may disintegrate.

Surplus earnings accrue when the political and the economic spheres function properly. In his theory of value, Ibn Khaldūn defines surplus earning as the value realized from human labour. This theory of value, being of interest in the calculation of state revenue from taxation, is elaborately explained in order to clearly distinguish surplus earning from sustenance. Surplus earning can result from agricultural pursuits, commerce, professional practices, from crafts, and from other ways of making a living.

The third fundament is activities resulting from human labour. According to Ibn Khaldūn, labour is mankind's most valued possession. He writes that man cannot afford to give away his labour because it constitutes the source of his surplus earnings and is the source of his livelihood (QII: 311). In his theory of value, Ibn Khaldūn posits that surplus earning is the value of human labour. His understanding of the value of labour includes the incorporation of skilled labour. He writes that a craftsman also earns money and acquires capital in kind from his labour. The labour of a craftsman is more valuable than elementary forms of labour because of the knowhow embedded in the labour that is expended in the performance of a craft. This is the meaning of the value of acquisition. There is nothing here originally except the labour (QII: 274).

Ibn Khaldūn points out that human labour produces wealth for others. He writes: We find that the person of rank who is highly esteemed is in every material aspect more fortunate and wealthier than a person who has no rank. The reason for this is that the person of rank is served by the labour of others. They try to approach him with their labour, since they want to be close to him and are in need of the protection his rank affords. People help him with their labour in all his needs, whether these are necessities, conveniences, or luxuries. The value realized from all such labour becomes part of his surplus earnings (QII: 287). For Ibn Khaldūn, labour is the *sine qua non* for all distinctions. He writes: It should be known that differences of socioeconomic conditions among people result from the different ways in which they make their living (QI: 221).

Ibn Khaldūn further writes that the conditions of the inhabitants within a single city can be observed to differ according to the different distribution of luxury and abundance. Furthermore, he writes: It should be known that treasures of gold, silver, precious stones, and utensils are no different from other minerals and acquired capital, from iron, copper, lead, and any other real property or ordinary minerals. It is growth and development that causes them to appear, with the help of human labour, and that makes them increase or decrease in value. All such things in people's possession may be transferred and passed on by inheritance. They have often been transferred from one region to another and from one dynasty to another, in accordance with the purposes they were to serve and the particular growth and development that required them. Such things are merely means (*ālāt*) and acquired capital. It is growth and development that

produces them in abundance or causes them to be in short supply (QII: 285–286).

Among the different ways of making a living that are «natural» to human beings, agriculture and commerce are primary. Many other «natural» occupations are seen as being corruptive to the human spirit or to developments in society. Other professions are seen as being «unnatural». Ibn Khaldūn says that being a servant, for example, is an unnatural profession. The distinction between «natural» and «unnatural» occupations is one that is made from the perspective of the employee. Crafts and industry are occupations that are secondary to agriculture. As a rule, they exist only among urban people, because they are resource-based and scientific. Thinking and speculation are applied to them.

The fourth fundament refers to the sciences, their instruction and methods. Ibn Khaldūn considers scientific instruction, in itself, to be a craft, because of the dominant role played by the authoritative scholar or by the teacher-craftsman. In Ibn Khaldūn's day and age, these people were relatively independent. Their laboratories and workshops were institutions where practical instruction was undertaken alongside abstract education. Workshops and laboratories were places where the habits of learning were transmitted along with the existing theories of science. Learning the science meant learning how to do things in the way that the authoritative scholar or the teacher-craftsman did them.

The development of social organization has, as its final aim, the achievement of a fully developed urban culture. The pinnacle of urban culture is the stage of opulence. However, when the stage of opulence is reached, an extravagant lifestyle prevails. This extravagance not only blossoms amongst entrepreneurs. It encompasses the state and state expenditures, which grow beyond reasonable limits. High taxes and other impositions are levied in order to cope with the situation and, as a consequence, economic expansion declines. This is, generally speaking, the beginning of the end. When high taxes are levied in order to tackle the unreasonable expenditures of the state, the economy is undermined and the decline of growth and development begins to take root. Unless a process of revival is undertaken, the social organization will be doomed to disintegrate. Ibn Khaldūn argues that the excesses of urban culture and luxurious lifestyles corrupt social organization. The markets are threatened, business undertakings lose their incentives, and social life disintegrates.

From the previous discussion, we can identify what might be called a dialectical method of analysis. A comprehensive theory of society has been presented. The theory has structural components that interact and evolve. Societies can be measured and evaluated in light of the theory of development that is posited. A social and a historical process is revealed that encompasses the generation, the development in specific phases, and ultimately, the decline of a society and its replacement by another, which will undergo a similar structural and developmental social history.

Ibn Khaldūn's perspective constructs new dichotomies. He writes about world civilization and compares and contrasts this concept to local civilization or to social organization. He distinguishes between rural and urban social organization and identifies their common interests and the areas of conflict between these two complex social constructions. There is a clear explication of the importance of economic factors

for a society's growth and development.

Ibn Khaldūn's new Science of al-*ʿumrān* is a unique contribution to humanity's self-understanding. His ideas give expression to what later generations would identify as a coherent developmental economic sociology. It is a theory that puts forward a materialistic conception of society. By making economy the nucleus, the motivation and the foundation for all social activities, Ibn Khaldūn is a precursory voice that resonates in the social and economic ideas of Proudhon and Marx.

Ibn Khaldūn has influenced and inspired many of the 19th century sociologists. His work has been seen as being a forerunner for a great many Western scholars, including Machiavelli, Bodin, Comte, Durkheim, Herder, Hegel and others. In this author's personal opinion, however, the modern Western thinker with the closest affinities to Ibn Khaldūn is Karl Marx. Be that as it may, it is not this author's intention to compare or contrast Ibn Khaldūn's ideas with the ideas of other authors. The genealogy of Western thinking that is concerned with the interplay between social and economic factors and the role of that interplay in the development of society has been influenced by Ibn Khaldūn's thought, but others must determine how deep or how broad that influence has been.

Ibn Khaldūn's thought encompasses past, present-day, and future societies and civilizations. There are elements that we would categorize as being sociological, and other elements that would better fit in contemporary political science textbooks. His writings identify composite fields of study, political economy, in particular, but also what we might call psycho-cultural fields of study and history, as well. Ibn Khaldūn, himself, presumed that his studies would be seen as being an ordered whole and a foundation for future historical research.

For Ibn Khaldūn, a social phenomenon should always be placed in its historical and geographical context, and every social phenomenon should be understood in light of and in relation to other relevant and pertinent social facts.

The interdependencies between sociological knowledge and historical knowledge necessitate a shared understanding by sociologists and historians in two fundamental areas of knowledge. The first fundament is knowledge about the principles of politics and the second fundament is knowledge about the true nature of existent things.

Ibn Khaldūn distinguishes between two aspects of knowledge. He writes that knowledge is either a perception of the picture of things – a primitive kind of perception not accompanied by the exercise of judgement – or it is apperception, that is, the judgement that a thing is so, i.e. an argued, reasoned and plausible conclusion. Criticizing his contemporaries, Ibn Khaldūn writes that they did not verify their statements or clarify them with the help of plausible arguments and proofs, nor did they substantiate them with arguments from the world of existence. However, he continues to write, if the researcher knows the plausible or true nature of events, and the conditions that prevail in the world of existence, and their requirements, this knowledge will help him to distinguish truth from untruth in investigating the historical information critically. This position gives clear expression to a materialistic conception of history.

Ibn Khaldūn writes that man is essentially ignorant. He can imitate others and his initial learning is the result of imitation. Man is endowed with the ability to think.

However, he needs disciplined study and teachers to acquire knowledge and qualities of character. Man is primarily the product of the conditioning of his environment. Man is the child of the customs that are habitually practiced and of the things that are habitually used in his environment. He is not the product of his natural disposition and temperaments, writes Ibn Khaldūn (QI: 229).

Ibn Khaldūn fully considers the impact of the ideas and practices of the social and political elite on others. He writes that the «State and government serve as the world's market place, attracting to it the products of scholarship and craftsmanship alike. Whatever is in demand in this market is in general demand everywhere else.» (QI: 34). However, he points out that the intelligent critic must judge for himself, as he looks around and observes the workings of that market place.

The complete title of the Prolegomena reflects the understanding that social organization, in itself, is envisaged as having economic and geographic determinants. But Ibn Khaldūn's text constructs another context for the study of any particular society. Specific societies are determined by the interactions that produce particular stages of growth and development within its rural and urban segments. This context is focused upon political, social and economic interactions, and is represented by structural components that are common to all societies. These structural components are identified as being: political authority, earnings, crafts and sciences.

The subtitle of each chapter of the Prolegomena posits a theory that is then discussed with reference to observable political, socioeconomic conditions. That is the reason why these subtitles also include particular concepts, including the concept basic or constitutive principles, and rules or basic propositions, which are less important, and questions (*masā'il*) or problems that need further discussion. This way of constructing the new Science of *al-ʿumrān* illustrates that the subject matter has been planned in a way that harmonises well with the methods that are used to verify the truth or plausibility of the knowledge posited in each chapter. Ibn Khaldūn writes that whenever a researcher investigates social organization (*al-ʿumrān*), he must distinguish between the conditions, which attach themselves to the subject, whether they are endogenous, exogenous or in some other way conceived. This makes it possible to have a law or a normative method (*qānūn*) for distinguishing right from wrong and truth from falsehood. This is the quintessential methodological concern in research and Ibn Khaldūn writes, «Such is the purpose of this first book (i.e. the Prolegomenon) of our works».

Plato had political ambitions and he hoped that his own conception of the ideal organization of society, as he portrayed it in his book, *The Republic*, would be applied. Abu Nasr al-Fārābī (+ 950 A. D.) took the same path as Plato did, in his *al-Madīnah al-Fādilah* (*The Model City*). Ibn Khaldūn, by contrast, did not construct an ideal society in the abstract, or a political path that he hoped others would follow.

Ibn Khaldūn made studies of the societies he visited and observed. He took an interest in other societies, too. Those were societies of which he had no personal experience but came to know through the studies and narratives of others. He collected a great deal of data and spent a considerable amount of time reflecting upon that data. He saw familiar patterns when he compared one society to another. This resulted in his

efforts to posit theories and laws of socioeconomic development. He believed that social phenomena could be explained by describing the interactions of various core elements common to every society's structure. His goal was to better understand the present, to explain the past and to predict the future. The genius and the monumental achievement of the Prolegomena is still a source of wonder, six centuries after Ibn Khaldūn's birth. Its brilliance suggests the value of undertaking a detailed and protracted study of his other works. Doing so, this author is convinced, will firmly establish Ibn Khaldūn in the tradition of great sociologists.

Ibn Khaldūn's terminology

The pages that follow will attempt to illuminate some of the most important concepts in the Prolegomena. These are concepts that may help the reader to better appropriate a general understanding of Ibn Khaldūn's methodology and of his socioeconomic thought.

Famous authorities establish their own terminologies, writes Ibn Khaldūn. If technical terminology were a part of science, it would be the same for all scholars. Distinctions in terminology should not be too great or too numerous so as not to harm the human quest for knowledge. Technical terminology should be based upon what is generally accepted, so that the inherent meaning is generally understood. Language is a habit of the tongue. Its purpose is to express ideas. The function of technical terminology is to express the ideas we wish to express in a coherent and useful way.

Ibn Khaldūn had to invent many new concepts for his science of *ʿumrān* – the science of social organization, growth and development. Most of these new concepts are dichotomous. They have an inherent meaning that conveys commonly accepted ideas when they stand alone. However, they also express specifically new ideas when they are used in conjunction with other words or numbers. Thus the concept of *al-ʿumrān* expresses the idea of social prosperity when it stands alone. But when the term is used together with ordinal numbers, as for instance, *al-ʿumrān al-awwal*, i.e. the first phase of growth and development, it becomes a tool of measurement.

The following are retranslations of the terms that are central for understanding the Muqaddimah of Ibn Khaldūn. The Arabic transcription is added as a *cadre de référence*.

- World society (*al-ijtimāʿ al-ʿinsānī*)

The socioeconomic growth of urban and rural societies is measured by reference to the stages of growth of *al-ʿumrān*, as a function of demand, labour and market. But when it comes to the growth of world society, Ibn Khaldūn relies on comparisons and economic geography. Human beings, their nature, their patterns of life, and many of their general characteristics are discussed by referring to the environmental variations from one geographical zone to another. The principles of companionship and the satisfaction of needs are based upon deductions and not upon factual findings.

The world of existence is comprised of two very different kinds of phenomena.

* Pure essences which refers to the elements, the things resulting from their influence, and the three things that come into being from elements, namely, minerals, plants and animals.

* The actions taken by living beings, which are intentional, i.e. their ways of life, qualities of character, customs, sects, schools and the like. Actions are either, well arranged and orderly, i.e. as human actions are or can be, or not well arranged and orderly, i.e. as the actions of other living beings appear to be.

- Social organization/growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*)

Al-ʿumrān both denotes the idea of inhabiting a habitat and that of prosperity. There are two main purposes for belonging to a social group or settling together in cities and hamlets. The first purpose is to realise the comfort of companionship. The second purpose is to satisfy material needs through co-operation, which is a natural disposition for human beings. Inhabiting creates two social structures or two social systems: 1. World society, and 2. Social organization. The interdependency between rural and urban societies, with respect to their prosperity, is more visible in the second social system. *Al-ʿumrān* also denotes the socioeconomic conditions, which must be accounted for when assessing Social organization. Each stage of growth of «*al-ʿumrān*» is a unit that measures the extent of the prosperity achieved.

- Social organization (*al-ijtimāʿ al-basharī*)

Social organization denotes local society, including the centre and the periphery and their structures of inter-action. The satisfaction of human needs, the comforts of companionship as well as the conditions that affect human beings vary from the center (*al-ʿumrān al-ḥaḍrī*) to the peripheries (*al-ʿumrān al-badawī*). The socioeconomic growth of any society is measured by reference to the stages of growth of *al-ʿumrān*, as a function of demand, labour and market.

- Rural social organization (*al-ʿumrān al-badawī*)

Rural society exists outside the centre and consists of provincial regions including hamlets near suitable pastures or on the fringe of the sandy desert. The internal societal structure is constituted by the proximity to or the remoteness from the centre: Two sub-types of rural society are camel-desert societies and pastoral, agricultural societies. Rural society is the basis and reservoir of towns and cities. It is prior to everything else, says Ibn Khaldūn.

Labour is the cause of profit, but people in rural areas do not normally accumulate profit or property because in these societies there is generally no great demand for surplus labour. People are engaged in primary labour for the satisfaction of their needs. The scarcity of crafts in these societies makes them dependent upon the centre for their tools of production.

Theory of transition

Ibn Khaldūn defines two phases of development that enable rural people to realise their final aim, which is to attain the life-style of urban societies.

- * The first phase entails securing the necessities of life
- * The second phase leads beyond securing necessities and extends to higher stages of growth and development. This is only possible from within the centre.

Transition from the first to the second phase can only be realised with the force of

group solidarity.

- Urban social organization (*al-ʿumrān al-ḥaḍrī*)

Urban social organization is found in cities, towns, and small communities, all of which must have their own centres. The socioeconomic conditions here allow for the development of crafts and sciences. Growth is a function of demand, labour and the market. When development beyond securing necessities does not conflict with political power and the demand for luxuries and conveniences continues to spread, the process of civilization (*ḥaḍārah*) will move from one stage of development to another until the development is complete and cannot be more fully unfolded.

People who live in an urban culture (*ahlu'l-ḥaḍārah*) diversify their luxuries and addict themselves to sophisticated crafts. Elegance reaches its own limits and is followed by the subservience to unquenchable human desires. Conditions turn into customs (*ʿawā'id*). The human soul receives a multiple stamp until opulence can no more avail. Prosperity and poverty creates classes.

Conditions

The term *ahwāl* denotes essential and accidental conditions prevailing in a society as a consequence of four main factors: Political authority (*mulk*); Surplus earnings (*kasb*); Crafts (*ṣanā'ī'*) and Sciences (*ʿulūm*). Each of these conditions affects social organization, its growth and decline. Crafts – in most cases – are rational pursuits and they necessitate sciences that are important to growth and development. When practices are continuously repeated over a long period of time, this leads to conditions becoming firmly rooted. When conditions become firmly rooted, i. e. customs (*ʿawā'id*) become deeply entrenched, they may be difficult to reveal or change.

To be able to identify change over time and the true nature of things, one must distinguish between internal, external and relevant conditions affecting growth and prosperity.

- Political power (*mulk*)

From the point of view of rational politics, there is no state without growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*) and no growth and development without a state and political authority. Those holding power have a strong hand in the process of changing conditions and customs. Political authority is expressed when the ruler defends his subjects and shows an interest in their ways of making a living. It is built upon two foundations:

- 1) Might and group feeling, and
- 2) Money, which provides and maintains the structure needed by political authority and paves the way for the stages of growth.

Stages of power

Within three generations, the state goes through five stages of power:

- 1) The stage of success when the new dynasty is established. (*zafar*)

2) Establishing complete control over the people and claiming complete authority (istibdād)

3) Enjoying leisure and tranquillity (*faraj wa di'ah*)

4) Enjoying contentment and peacefulness (*qunū' wa musālamah*), and

5) Wasting and squandering (*isrāf wa tabdhīr*)

After the fifth stage, the state -as an institution- needs to be changed and re-established by others, if growth and development is to regenerate itself. Political power, by its very nature, claims all glory for itself and pursues a life of luxury and tranquillity and seeks peace, which can lead to the decline and to the disappearance of the dynasty in power.

- Livelihood (*ma'āsh*)

Livelihood refers to goods and money that are intended for consumption. Ibn Khaldūn uses this term in reference to agriculture, crafts, commercial activity and power holders. Livelihood is generally secured through buying and selling, and it constitutes the reservoir for sustenance (*rizq*).

- Sustenance (*rizq*)

Sustenance is a specific type of *consumption*. It refers to the physical process of having used, possessed, or acquired goods. Sustenance (*rizq*) is that particular part of livelihood (*ma'āsh*), which is eaten and thus destroyed, worn and worn out, or given away and thus spent.

The condition for calling something *rizq* is that a particular person has enjoyed its fruits by spending it upon his own needs or interests.

The measurement of *rizq* was important for the imposition and collection of taxes in the day and age of Ibn Khaldūn. Government officials had to first differentiate between *kasb*, *ma'āsh* and *rizq* before determining any particular tax assessment.

- Earnings (*kasb*)

Ibn Khaldūn writes that *kasb* is the value of human labour. These are earnings that are due to a person's own physical efforts and they depend upon his physical strength and skills and the intention to work for pay. *Kasb* is realised by expending one's own strength and efforts (*nafaqāt*) and is not due to the workings of one's capital, as is the case with profits from commerce.

When human labour is the major activity, whether it is in the service of agriculture, one of the crafts, or one of the sciences, the term *kasb* is properly used. When human labour is not the major activity, as is true for commerce, for example, the term *kasb* is not used and the word used is *ribh* meaning profit. In the case of agriculture and the crafts, *kasb* is defined as the part of accrued or acquired earnings which a person does not use to satisfy his basic needs or use to maintain his own economic interests.

Luxury or the accumulation of money (*riyāsh*) is a surplus that exceeds the true satisfaction of one's needs or securing the necessities of life. It denotes money, or treasure (*zakhīrah*), which is measured in gold and silver. The saleable or marketable

goods and skills (*mutamawwal*) are also a surplus (*maksab*) that exceeds needs and necessities. It refers to goods and properties (estates, farms etc.), which can, potentially, be converted into money or into gold and silver. See also under Capita goods.

- Gross earnings in money and kind (*makāsib*)

The terms *makāsib* is a general term. It includes calculations that incorporate income, expenditure, consumption and savings. Labour is the main foundation and source of *makāsib*. According to Ibn Khaldūn, gross earnings are determined by calculating what is left over once expenditures (*nafaqāt*) are paid and costs that are due to satisfying the necessities of life, provided for by one's livelihood (*ma'āsh*), are made part of the equation. The remainder are savings that can lead to: the accumulation of money (*riyāsh*) and/or to saleable or marketable goods and skills (*mutamawwal*). Gross earnings, writes Ibn Khaldūn, are measured in gold and silver.

- Profit (*ribh*)

Profit results from buying merchandise and goods at a low price, storing them and holding them until the market has fluctuated, or transporting them to another country where they are more in demand and selling them for a high price. Payment can also be made by using an instalment plan (*'ājāl*). Profit is the result of one's livelihood and the equivalent of earnings for those who are engaged in commerce. Profit depends upon the size of capital, the fluctuation of the market and commercial practices. It also leads to accumulation, or to the growth of money (*nimā' al-māl*). Commerce is the attempt to make a profit by increasing capital. The accrued amount is referred to as profit. Ibn Khaldūn uses the term profit to denote all types of economic growth that are generated when human labour is not the predominant factor in the activities taking place. All types of profit lead to the growth of money or its accumulation.

- Market fluctuation (*hiwālat al-aswāq*)

The acquisition and accumulation of real property, writes Ibn Khaldūn, is a gradual process. This may come about through inheritance or because of the fluctuation in the real estate market. Ibn Khaldūn frowns upon those that use market fluctuations in commerce to provide for their livelihood. This practice is an indecent one for satisfying one's needs and for providing the necessities of life. This is particularly true when this form of commerce is practiced by those who hold political power. Ibn Khaldūn makes one exception. He can approve of the practice of taking advantage of market fluctuations if and only if this constitutes a source of livelihood for orphans, the handicapped or for aged people. However, even when this is legitimately a source of livelihood for orphans and the handicapped, utilising market fluctuations should not be employed to finance an extravagant style of life.

- Economic enterprise (*i'timār*)

This term refers to productive activities, to activities that yield surplus earnings. These earnings may emanate from the activities of agricultural labourers, farmers, craftsmen,

capitalists and all other taxpayers. Economic enterprise (*iʿtimār*) results from a combination of ambition and incentives. Business activities stop when they are not stimulated by the hope and incentive of making a profit. Ibn Khaldūn writes that man has natural creative abilities and possesses the ability to lead others, but that these abilities disappear and the man will become apathetic if incentives are removed or if he is not allowed to provide leadership and to act upon his creative ideas. Those who undertake such activities are called entrepreneurs (*muʿtamirūn*). They are engaged in productive activities and use their own labour in the production process and are to be distinguished from capitalists (*mutamawwilūn*) who do not actively participate in a productive effort.

Labour

Labour is the sine qua non of all, the source of value. It belongs to the things that constitute capital. One's value, writes Ibn Khaldūn, is embodied in one's labour and this cannot be realised without payment. Labour constitutes and grounds one's sustenance, livelihood and surplus earnings, and is divided into two categories, primary and additional labour.

Additional skilled labour generates surplus earnings. The increase in demand creates new types of crafts and this creates the need for more skilled labour. When there is an increase in demand the market flourishes and the surplus earnings of entrepreneurs increase. The income and expenditures of the state increase and economic growth and development (*al-ʿumrān*) occurs. The cycle repeats itself and there is an increased demand for luxury goods. *Al-ʿumrān* increases for the second time. The cycle leads to higher and higher stages of growth, until one reaches the final stage of *al-ʿumrān* where growth cannot be overstepped. [Here lie the rudiments of the Multiplier Effect and of the measurement of GNP]

- Utility produce (*mifād*, pl. *mifādāt*)

The value of an acquisition that results from the additional labour needed in the performance of a craft is obvious for the purchaser and can be readily determined. This is not true for produce where the labour involved is unseen or hidden for the purchaser. In this case, Ibn Khaldūn uses the term «utility produce». Here, the value of an acquisition (*qinyah*) is not directly apparent in the article produced, i.e. its value cannot easily be calculated. The value of the product must be seen to inhere in the product itself.

Agricultural products, for instance, have an inherent value. The human labour is hidden. Its value must therefore be estimated and included in the price of the product, according to Ibn Khaldūn. Ibn Khaldūn points out that when we buy anything produced, we do not simply buy something concrete (the thing in itself), but we buy, in fact, the amount of labour, which is spent to create the produced article that we purchase. Since labour differs in its quality, the price of produced articles must also differ. Ibn Khaldūn expresses this qualitative distinction by the term value of acquisition (*qinyah*).

- Saleable utility produce (*al-miḥād al-muqtanā minhu*)

This is one of the important terms of Ibn Khaldūn's theory of value. This concept refers to additional labour, which leads to the demand for and the creation of more useful and more complexly made products. The product of additional labour creates value through exchange of services and useful products.

- The value of an acquisition (*qinyah*)

This term primarily refers to the amount and the quality of labour spent to produce an article. Ibn Khaldūn applies a scale of nobility when referring to the quality of labour. Some types of labour are described as being noble and beneficial to social organization because the labour engenders economic growth. Other forms of labour are less noble or not noble at all, because they may engender the decline of social organization. As a consequence, the labour consumed by pursuing different crafts needs to be graded.

- Surplus earning in money and kind (*muktasabāt*)

This denotes all types of surplus earnings where the product of human labour is visualised or can be visualised and is contrary to utility-produce (*miḥādāt*) where the effects of human labour are invisible to the ordinary viewer or generally seen as being non-existent.

Considering the two terms together, Ibn Khaldūn wrote that both *miḥādāt* and *muktasabāt* for the most part or in their entirety are values that are realized from human labour. Human effort and labour are necessary for every unit of surplus in money and every unit of surplus in kind. Human labour may be concealed or obvious in the products at issue, but no surpluses can be realized without the imposition of human labour.

- Capital goods (*mutamawwalāt*)

The term *mutamawwalat* refers to every type of product, whether the product results from the practice of a craft or from other activities. These are saleable or marketable goods and skills. The common denominator is that the product can be traded for or converted into money, gold or silver. This ability to be converted into money, gold or silver is what makes these goods a source of capital.

Capital (*ra's al-māl*). In contemporary Arabic terminology, the term *ra's al-māl* denotes the idea of capital in general. But Ibn Khaldūn uses the term *ra's al-māl* only in relation to commerce. The term *ra's al-māl*, as Ibn Khaldūn uses it, includes basic capital (*aṣl-ul-māl*) as well as its growth (*nāzzu-l-māl*). The Arabic verb he uses to denote the growth of capital in commercial transactions has the meaning of the English verb «to ooze». This type of capital «oozes profit» (*riḥ*), because human labour is not a predominant part of it. It is also exposed to risk because commercial transactions are at the mercy of fluctuations in the market. Growth, according to Ibn Khaldūn, corresponds to the size of an investment: large capital investments yield great profits, because many times a little is much.

- Capitalists (*mutamawwilūn*)

The term *mutamawwilūn* refers to people who possess a great deal of capital. These are individuals who have acquired great estates and farms. They are considered to be amongst the wealthiest inhabitants of a particular city. Their capital is generated by fluctuations in the market, by the imposition of taxes and by commercial transactions. Capitalists appropriate the labour power of other people in return for providing those people with protection and other non-material services. Ibn Khaldūn writes that these people live in great luxury and are accustomed to living their lives in luxury. They compete in this respect with emirs and rulers. Emirs and rulers are able to use their power to undertake similar activities, but this is something that Ibn Khaldūn does not recommend.

Class structure

There are, according to Ibn Khaldūn, three major classes:

The upper class consists of rulers. It is made up of people who hold power. Capitalists are included in this class. Next, we find the middle class. This is the class that is in-between the capitalist and ruling class and the lower class. This class is composed of entrepreneurs (*mu^ʿtamirūn*), i.e. those who are engaged in highly skilled activities and who practice craftsmanship and leadership in the production of goods. At the bottom there is the lower class. Ibn Khaldūn describes people in the lower class as those who have nothing to gain or lose.

- Knowledge (*ma^ʿrifah*)

The acquisition of information is a process that is derived from perception and is due to the application of bodily senses and to the use of reasoning powers and powers of speculation. New knowledge is acquired by the adept co-ordination of these abilities. Ibn Khaldūn classifies knowledge into two main categories:

1) Perception

Perception is the mind's own 'picture' of things. Perceptual knowledge is an almost immediate experience and it is not accompanied by the exercise of judgement.

2) Apperception

The mind collects and can remember its own 'picture' of things. The mind is aware of itself in a way that is not true for perception. The mind stores a collection of 'pictures' and these are ordered and placed in relationship to one another. Doing so, the mind makes judgements about the things of the world that are based upon its own 'pictures' of those things. Things are "so" and not "so" and that leads the conscious and self-aware mind to draw conclusions about the things one finds in the world.

Consciousness (*idrāk*) has two categories: Perception of the world as it appears in the pictures of the mind (*taṣawwur*) and apperception, which is heightened self-awareness and judgements about the world and the things found in it which are based upon the ordered and arranged collection of pictures in the mind.

- Logic (*manṭiq*)

Logic sharpens the mind in the orderly presentation of proofs and arguments, so that the habit of excellent and correct reasoning is obtained. It concerns the norms that enable a person to distinguish between right and wrong, both in definitions that give information about things, and in arguments that assure apperception. Logic distinguishes right from wrong in both the study of the things in-themselves and the things in-their-context and helps the mind to order and arrange perceptions and to draw conclusions from apperceptions.

Logic is something abstract and remote from the human senses (*maḥsūs*). It is lodged in the intelligence (*maʿqulāt at-tawāni*). Discernment (*tamyīz*) is required to be able to select the method to be followed. The human ability to think is the process that translates perception to apperception and in every case one may embark upon this process in either the right or the wrong way. The possibility of drawing faulty conclusions is always present, even after the maxims of logic have been applied.

- Thinking (*fīkr*)

Thinking perceives the order that exists among things that come into being either by nature or through arbitrary arrangement. When thinking intends to create something it must understand the reasons or causes of that thing or the conditions governing it. Thinking is something beyond the senses.

The ability to think is the result of a special power placed in the cavities of the brain, writes Ibn Khaldūn. The ability to think functions as follows: The mind uses the ‘pictures’ of reality that were created by sense perception (*maḥsūs*). The mind applies its intelligence to them, and abstracts from them other pictures. The mind orders and arranges the ‘pictures’ of reality it has stored and the new ‘pictures’ it has abstracted. The mind occupies itself by analysing and synthesising its storeroom of ‘pictures’, and using the logic inherent in the intelligence, it makes judgements and draws conclusions. The judgements and conclusions of the mind will differ from one level of thinking to another and from one mind to another.

Ibn Khaldūn divides thinking into three qualitatively different levels:

- 1) The discerning intellect
- 2) The experimental intellect, and
- 3) The theoretical or speculative intellect.

The discerning intellect (*al-ʿaql al-tamyīzī*) provides the mind with an understanding of the outside world by arranging the ‘pictures’ of the things of the world in a natural or in an arbitrary order, and this arrangement is a quality of the discerning intellect’s powers. This level of thinking consists, in most cases, of ordering one’s perceptions (*idrāk*). With the help of the discerning intellect, man obtains those things that are useful to him and he avoids those things that are harmful to him, as he engages himself in the activities that provide him with a livelihood.

The experimental intellect (*al-ʿaql at-tajrībī*) conveys apperceptions. Apperceptions

are obtained, one at a time, by the mind's examination of experience. The process leads to useful knowledge. Useful apperceptive knowledge takes the form of ideas, which are needed to successfully deal with fellow human beings and to lead them. Knowledge about social interaction, in itself, is insufficient for this purpose. One must experience new situations and discover the adaptability of one's own social intelligence to the different situations that are experienced. Apperceptions are obtained by interaction with other human beings.

The theoretical or speculative intellect (*al-ʿaql an-naẓarī*) provides knowledge or hypothetical knowledge of an object beyond sense perception. It consists of both perceptions and apperceptions. When perceptions and apperceptions are arranged in a particular order by following specific methods and in accordance to specific conditions, we are provided with theoretical knowledge. This knowledge can then be combined and re-combined with other knowledge and the end of this process will provide us with the perception of existence as it truly is, with its various genera, differences, reasons, and causes. The thinking that occurs in the theoretical or speculative intellect can lead man to a perfect understanding of reality, as it truly is, and when this is achieved man becomes pure intellect, according to Ibn Khaldūn.

- Intellectual speculation (*naẓr ʿaqlī*)

The process of writing and the repetition of that process can accustom the writer to the habit of transferring his attentions from the symbols themselves to what is meant by them. Similarly, the man that can transfer his attentions from “what might be” to “what is”, and from “what is” to “what might be”, habituates himself to speculative thinking. The movement from perception to apperception, and the ability to combine and adapt ideas to new situations will lead to the development of sciences. Repeating this process, over and over again will habituate the practitioner to the habit of intellection. This increases knowledge and the abilities to know more and provides the practitioner with a shrewd understanding of human affairs. By constantly combining ideas with perceptions, understandings are corrected and conform to the real world.

- Perception (*taṣawwūr*)

Perception is awareness within the person who perceives. Perception may or may not be accompanied by judgement. The perception of things in their pure form (*taṣawwūr al-mahiyyāt*) is a kind of awareness that is not accompanied by the exercise of judgement. When perception is accompanied by sound judgement, it becomes apperception.

- Apperception (*taṣdīq*)

Apperception is realized when the ability to think is used to order perceptions and to judge one thing by another and to draw conclusions. Thus, a new idea is established in the mind. The objects of apperception are of different kinds. Some concern things that are certain by nature. Others concern things that are hypothetical in various degrees. Apperception ultimately reconstitutes itself in perception (*taṣawwūr*), because the only purpose of apperception is to achieve a more complete knowledge of the realities of

things. The process of the mind continuously moves from perception to apperception and back again to perception. This is how knowledge and consciousness are enriched and renewed.

- The true nature... (*ṭabā'īc*)

This term is of methodological importance. It denotes natural attributes or research findings that reveal the hidden qualities of social organization. Ibn Khaldūn uses the term when he writes about; the various conditions that exist in social organization (*ṭabā'īc al-aḥwal fi'l-umrān*) or in the state (*ṭabā'īc al-dawlah*), and when he writes about the natural attributes of heat and cold (*ṭabā'īc al-ḥarr w-al-bard*), of living beings (*ṭabā'īc al-kā'ināt*), or of existing things (*ṭabā'īc al-mawjudāt*).

Ibn Khaldūn points to a principle of validation when he writes that only knowledge of (*ṭabā'īc al-umrān*) the true nature of the various conditions that exist in social organization makes critical investigation possible, by means of establishing the conformity (*muṭābaqah*) of this theoretical knowledge with the empirical facts of the outside world.

- Conformity (*muṭābaqah*)

Conformity is the concept he creates to clarify the method he uses for establishing the validity of ideas. Confronting ideas with the facts of the outside world validates these ideas. The utility of factual occurrence, events or social phenomena, can be derived from the occurrence itself and from external evidence by checking conformity. These provide external evidence for the posited ideas. Ibn Khaldūn believes that the facts of the outside world are particular cases of the ideas that can be developed in the mind. One creates a 'picture' of the relevant facts at hand with one's mind. When different 'pictures' are combined, plausible information is revealed. Relations between the varieties of data one can collect will lead the scholar to deduce the unknown from the known. This applies only to events occurring in the real world of existence or in the development of a science.

The conformity between ideas of the mind and facts in the world establishes the soundness of information and the validity of theoretical knowledge. It helps the scholar to distinguish theoretical knowledge from practical knowledge. Ibn Khaldūn's aim is to acquire knowledge of the true nature of the conditions that exist in society.

Ibn Khaldūn points out that it can be difficult to reach unequivocal conformity between the ideas of the mind and the facts one finds in the world because things may contain something that does not allow logical conclusions or contradicts the canon of logic as in matters of belief.

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