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Ibn Khaldun's Political Philosophy: Some Introductory Remarks on *'Asabiyyah*, *'Umran*, and the Sustainability of *Mulk*

Hüseyin Firat Şenol
Anadolu University, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Philosophy, Eskişehir, Turkey;
hfsenol@anadolu.edu.tr

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Abstract

When group solidarity (*'asabiyyah*) is understood as the prerequisite for state organization and, subsequently, for civilization (*'umran*), it can be said that solidarity provides the foundation necessary for the establishment of a lasting state and civilization, as well as for the governance of the human societies that constitute civilization. The following ideas drawn from the *Muqaddimah* indicate that Ibn Khaldun's suggestions to rulers, although not entirely systematic, provide significant clues about his model of an ideal society: 1. The power of the state can only be realized through the application of law, and law can only be enforced by a strong administration or state; 2. The state can increase its power only through the people (*ricâl*); 3. The people cannot survive without acquiring wealth; 4. Wealth cannot be acquired without development (*al-'imâre/'umran*); 5. Development cannot be achieved without justice; 6. The criterion by which Allah will judge human beings (*al-mîzân*) is justice, and it is the duty of the ruler to ensure justice. The responsibility of the ruler or rulers in ensuring justice is to make the behavioral rules established through *fiqh* enforceable in society through encouraging and deterrent practices. In Ibn Khaldun's view, if the abuse of power, luxury, and extravagance can be prevented, then the divinely grounded caliphate rooted in *shari'a* law can coexist with worldly sovereignty rooted in property ownership. This coexistence is possible through political sovereignty, that is, through a rational understanding of governance in which the rule of law prevails. Ibn Khaldun believed that a political authority based on justice was a prerequisite for long-lasting social life and settled culture, and he also argued that the two were intrinsically linked like matter and form. Property and civilization come into being through *'asabiyyah*; that is, they gain the possibility of existence through it, and likewise, they weaken and disappear with the weakening of *'asabiyyah*. In this case, justice, or justice-based governance, sustains not only property and civilization, namely social life and settled culture or customs, but also the *'asabiyyah* that constitutes that property.

Keywords: *'asabiyyah*, *'umran*, injustice, Ibn Khaldun, political philosophy

1. INTRODUCTION

This study, based on Ibn Khaldun's work entitled *Muqaddimah*, examines the stages of civilization, the relationship between the state and civilization, the contributions of the state to the development of civilization, and the reasons and ways in which the decline of dominions, which emerged in the form of property or dynasties and were the only model examined by Ibn Khaldun, is related to civilization. The following points may be stated regarding why answering these questions is useful: 1. The problems humanity faces in our age require renewed attention to the area of philosophy that questions values; political, state, and social philosophy, as extensions of this area, shape the fundamental concerns of this text. 2. Understanding the relationship between the state and civilization, together with its historical development, is useful for recognizing that most of the problems of our age center on justice or injustice, and for making suggestions to overcome these problems.

Ibn Khaldun gave *'umran* a special technical meaning by combining the elements of "belonging to humans" or human civilization and "social life and organization" [1, 2]. In this way, he used *'umran* to encompass certain fundamental events arising from human organization and social life, and, more importantly, institutions [3]. Apart from this technical usage, the basic meanings of *'umran* are as follows: 1. To reside or to live in a place; 2. To visit a place; 3. To construct a building, that is, to develop or build; 4. In relation to a place itself, to be inhabited by people and animals, to be frequently visited, and to be kept in good condition; 5. To maintain a place in good condition and to cultivate it [3].

The last of the listed meanings of *'umran*, namely "to maintain" or "to cultivate", allows *'umran* to be interpreted in terms of development. For Ibn Khaldun, this meaning of *'umran* also provides a basis for the idea that development and progress in civilizations are positive. This line of thought can be inferred from the following statements in the *Muqaddimah*: 1. Progress in prosperity motivates people to do their best [4, 2]; 2. If there is no development or progress, that is, if a place does not become prosperous, there will be no influx of scholars, artisans, labor, and capital from other societies to increase development in that place. This makes sustainable development difficult and may even lead to decline in the long term [4, 2]. In short, Ibn Khaldun did not view development in civilization as a process dependent solely on a single dynamic. Rather, he believed that development must be supported and sustained by elements such as morality, the state, society, and population.

2. *'ASABIYYAH* AS THE FOUNDATION OF *MULK*

For humans, once they began living in society, establishing *'umran* also became a necessity. Once this order was established, due to problematic traits inherent in human nature, such as aggression and injustice, there arose a need for a power capable of protecting people from one another [1, 2]. Ibn Khaldun describes this process as follows:

> "Therefore, there must be something else to prevent people from violating one another. This something else cannot be a living being outside of themselves. For all animals are deficient in perception and inspiration compared to humans. Therefore, this something else, namely the ruling and prohibitive authority, will be one of the people. However, this authority will have a dominant power, an overbearing hand, and a supreme sovereignty over other people. This must be so that one person cannot violate or harm another. This is the meaning of the ruler, namely the meaning of property and supreme authority." [2]

At this stage, it becomes inevitable to ask what lies at the foundation of the existence of property and the ruler. According to Ibn Khaldun, the most fundamental element that makes the existence of property, that is, the organization of the state, possible is *'asabiyyah* [1, 2]. Ibn Khaldun's observations during his political life point to the decisive role of *'asabiyyah* in civilization: 1. States, especially large states, rely on *'asabiyyah* based on lineage and/or alliance, that is, solidarity, for governance; 2. A great state is one in which rulers succeed one another over a long period of time; this is the fundamental rule in establishing sovereignty and remains so until its collapse; 3. Ownership rights are taken away from other rights holders through the *'asabiyyah* possessed [5]. These law-like conclusions drawn from Ibn Khaldun's own observations are directly presented in *Et-Ta'rîf* and appear in different formulations in the sections of the *Muqaddimah* dealing with politics.

Ibn Khaldun explained his idea that solidarity is the foundation of a strong state as follows:

> "Struggle and resistance are only possible through solidarity. For it is through solidarity that rushing to the rescue and bravery become possible, and it is through solidarity that everyone involved voluntarily sacrifices their lives for one another. Furthermore, property is a pleasurable and honorable position that encompasses all worldly benefits, physical desires, and sensual pleasures. For this reason, competition often arises over it, and very few people surrender their property to their rivals, except in the case of defeat. Consequently, conflict and strife arise, leading to war, battle, and struggle. However, none of this can occur without tribalism (*'asabiyyah*)." [2]

The point to note in this statement is that Ibn Khaldun, while asserting that competition and war among people are inevitable when it comes to sovereignty, also substantiates his argument that the spirit of solidarity, that is, *'asabiyyah*, should be fundamental in this competition [1, 2]. Conversely, justice cannot be fully realized without *'asabiyyah*, because *'asabiyyah* creates the necessary environment for the fulfillment of demands beyond protection and mutual defense, and for the realization of human activities that are agreed upon, that is, considered beneficial to society by all [1, 2]. This situation contributes to the development of crafts and, consequently, the economy.

3. TRIBAL AND CAUSAL SOLIDARITY (*'ASABIYYAH*)

Understanding what tribal solidarity and causal solidarity are, and what content Ibn Khaldun ascribes to these concepts, will help clarify the integrity of solidarity and, as indicated above, will also assist in understanding Ibn Khaldun's views on the state and politics.

Ibn Khaldun presents *'asabiyyah* as an important prerequisite for Bedouin life. According to him, sustaining life in rural areas is only possible for tribes possessing *'asabiyyah* [1, 2]. *'Asabiyyah*, however, arises primarily from kinship, family ties, and similar bonds. One of the tendencies naturally present in human beings since ancient times is to rush to the aid of a person with whom one shares a blood bond, that is, a relative, when that person is in distress [1, 2]. What Ibn Khaldun emphasizes at this stage is *nasab 'asabiyyah*, which is based on blood ties and descent from the same family or lineage. However, lineages become mixed over time and through relations with different individuals. In such cases, it is still possible to see people rushing to one another's aid, although not to the same extent as in close kinship ties, because people feel discomfort when someone with whom they have some connection is treated unjustly and therefore rush to help them [1, 2]. What has been said so far points to a more primitive form of *'asabiyyah*, one based primarily on blood ties and descent from the same lineage. This also explains why Ibn Khaldun addresses lineage-based *'asabiyyah* before cause-based *'asabiyyah*; as mentioned above, once lineages have intermingled over time, and when the need for *'asabiyyah* arises, a unifying cause or causes become more important than blood ties.

Ibn Khaldun stated that elements such as patronage and alliance (*walâ'* and *hilf*) could also be seen as types of lineage. He argued that lineage was not necessary except for mutual aid and for coming to the aid of a relative in distress. He even suggested that lineage was based on conjecture, implying that belonging to a tribe was not determined solely by blood ties. Just as in patronage and alliance, adherence to the rules and conditions of a tribe could be considered as important as blood ties [1, 2]. The transition from one tribe to another in terms of lineage, or the intermingling of tribes, are events that occurred both before and during the Islamic period [1, 2]. This also indicates that *'asabiyyah* can be understood in two ways: as lineage or ancestry and as cause-based *'asabiyyah* [6]. In this case, it is necessary to answer the question of what the cause or causes that could form the basis of *'asabiyyah* might be.

Ibn Khaldun answers this question in the third section of the *Muqaddimah*, where he explains his view of the state and attempts to show that large-scale and dominant dynasties are based more on causal *'asabiyyah* [1, 2]. According to him, religion and prophethood lie at the root of this form of *'asabiyyah*:

> "Property is only acquired through conquest. Conquest, in turn, is based solely on tribalism and the convergence of desires and claims, that is, demands for rights. Bringing hearts together and uniting them is only possible with help from Allah in establishing religion... If hearts are drawn to false desires and worldly inclinations, competition arises and conflicts spread... If they reject falsehood and worldly desires and turn to Allah, their directions and goals unite, competition disappears, disagreements diminish, a beautiful form of cooperation and solidarity emerges, the scope of the word and cooperation in this regard expands, and thus the state grows." [2]

Ibn Khaldun provided a clue to this determination toward the end of the second chapter of the *Muqaddimah*. He argued that the call of religion and prophethood was effective even in nations where savagery had become a character trait, such as the Arabs. He further argued that even the Arabs, whom he described as the furthest removed from the concept of property, achieved unity when they had a prophet or saint at their head, and that after such a stage, domination and property became possible for the Arabs as well [1, 2]. To summarize, according to Ibn Khaldun, the type of *'asabiyyah* that ensures dominance over a large area is not lineage-based *'asabiyyah*, which is prominent in Bedouin life, but rather cause-based *'asabiyyah*, and that cause is religion.

The "religious color" at the core of tribalism directs the goals of tribal leaders, who compete with one another for power despite belonging to the same lineage, toward a single point. It brings all tribal leaders to the point of wanting the same thing and not hesitating to risk their lives for it [1, 2]. Once the holders of *'asabiyyah* reach this point, no matter how many members or subjects they wish to seize from a dynasty, and no matter how powerful that dynasty appears to be, they will prevail over it. This is because the members of the dynasty have developed characteristics such as avoiding death, which is brought about by prosperity, not rushing to one another's aid, and being unable to unite for a single purpose. These characteristics weaken their capacity to resist and defend themselves against a community ready to sacrifice its life

for a single purpose [1, 2]. From what has been said so far, it is possible to conclude that tribalism is a prerequisite for the existence of both state organization and civilization. Whether it is kinship solidarity stemming from shared ancestry or solidarity based on shared religious beliefs, solidarity provides the necessary foundation for the establishment of a lasting state and civilization, as well as for the governance of the human societies that constitute civilization.

As the sphere of *'umran* expands, the ability to unite around a specific purpose becomes more important than sharing a common ancestry, and only religion can provide such a purpose around which all tribal members can rally. However, an invitation to religion cannot be realized without tribalism [1, 2]. The importance of *'asabiyyah*, which is clearly evident in the first stage of *'umran*, that is, Bedouin *'umran*, is presented in Ibn Khaldun's thought as the driving force and cause of state formation. The emergence of the state, in turn, facilitates urban life, prosperity, and comfort, thereby preparing the conditions for the emergence of urban civilization. All these are stages that *'umran* follows within itself.

4. THE STAGES OF *'UMRAN* AND *MULK*

After emphasizing that living in society is an inherent quality of human nature, Ibn Khaldun established, with the certainty of a law, that *'umran* occurs in two stages. These stages are essentially two fundamental lifestyles that vary according to the quantity and diversity of human needs. Ibn Khaldun called the rural lifestyle, in which basic needs are prioritized, without distinguishing between nomadic and settled life, "Bedouin". He called the lifestyle that developed in towns and cities, where needs increased, diversified, and gradually became luxurious, "*hadari*". He examined the elements of urbanization within the framework of these two fundamental stages.

Mulk, which owes its establishment to the tribalism that emerged in the Bedouin era, is the purpose of tribalism. Does the reason for the existence of tribalism cease to exist after the emergence of *mulk*? Following Ibn Khaldun's line of thought, the tendency to answer this question affirmatively at first glance prevails.

Is the transition to a settled order inevitable for societies governed by *mulk* and the concept of *mulk*? Can any dynasty maintain *mulk* only in cities and towns? Does state organization necessarily entail settlement in cities? Does Bedouin civilization inevitably lead to urbanization? The article aims to continue the discussion based on Ibn Khaldun's answers to these questions.

Does *mulk* require urban and rural settlement?

According to Ibn Khaldun, the establishment of cities is a tendency that emerges after the creation of prosperity and comfort and is seen in civilization [4, 7]. The fact that cities and towns consist of structures that emerge through the cooperation of many people requires a coercive power and an authority in this process. Therefore, the formation of cities and towns requires the existence of *mulk*, that is, state organization [4, 7].

Once urban life has taken shape in accordance with geographical and climatic conditions and the objectives of the *mulk* that establishes the city, the city's lifespan extends or shortens depending on the lifespan of the *mulk*/state [4, 7]. While the area of a city established by a long-lived *mulk* expands and life within it remains active, in cities established by short-lived states, "life also stops, civilization declines and the city falls into ruin" [4, 7].

After the collapse of the state that established a city, according to Ibn Khaldun, there are three possible scenarios for that city: 1. The surrounding mountains and plains possess resources that can continuously sustain the city's urban development and enable its continued existence; in this case, the city's existence persists even after the collapse of the state or empire that founded it. 2. The mountains and plains surrounding the city lack the resources and income needed to continuously sustain the city's urban development and enable its continued existence; the inhabitants of the city no longer derive any economic benefit from residing there; in this case, the city's urban development gradually diminishes, piece by piece, and the city collapses. 3. After the collapse, a second state settles in the city, makes it a center, even a capital, and thus avoids the need to build a new city; in this case, the city gains a separate and new life with the lifespan of the second state [4, 7]. Ibn Khaldun cited Morocco, Bicaye, and Persian Iraq in his own era as examples of the first situation; Egypt, Baghdad, Kufa, Kairouan in the Maghreb, and Mahdia as examples of the second situation; and Cairo and Morocco in his own era as examples of the third situation [4, 7].

Mulk directs people toward comfort, tranquility, and the completion of elements related to *'umran* that are lacking in the countryside or desert. In order to protect the established *mulk* from possible attacks by rival and hostile tribes, tribes and tribal leaders tend to seize cities [4, 7]. In fact, for these reasons, people who acquire *mulk* build cities in suitable areas where no cities previously existed [4, 7].

The reasons listed above and the examples given indicate that *mulk*, statehood, or dynasty finds more favorable conditions for development in an urban environment. Therefore, once *mulk*, that is, state organization, has begun, it becomes necessary for societies to live in cities.

In Chapter 18 of Book IV of the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun begins by recalling that *'asabiyyah* seeks to attain *mulk* and dynasty, and then goes on to state that *hadarah*, that is, settled culture and civilization, is also the goal of Bedouinism [4, 7]. The culmination of *'asabiyyah* in *mulk* and of Bedouin *'umran* in settled civilization marks the beginning of the

process in which these two elements lose their raison d'être and disappear. In other words, *'asabiyyah* and *'umran*, which are as mortal as human beings, complete their lifespans and disappear once they have achieved their goals [4, 7]. Ibn Khaldun explains this situation with the following words:

> "Whether it be of a nomadic or sedentary nature, whether it pertains to a ruler or his subjects, or to property and its market, all civilization has a tangible, material, and visible lifespan. Indeed, a specific individual entity, being one of the created tangible entities, also has a tangible and physical lifespan." [7]

However, just as solidarity (*'asabiyyah*) does not disappear when *mulk* emerges, settled civilization, as an aim of Bedouin civilization, does not complete its entire development as soon as it emerges. On this subject, Ibn Khaldun gives the example of a person who has reached the age of 40, stating, "based on rational and transmitted evidence", that a person who has reached the age of 40 has reached the final limit of the growth and development of all physical, intellectual, and spiritual capabilities. He then expresses that civilization, that is, settled culture, is in the same situation [4, 7]. In other words, it is not so much civilization itself that is enduring, but rather its product, settled culture. This endurance manifests itself not so much as finality, but rather as adaptation to the conditions of the time, that is, as transformation.

Does *hadari 'umran* imply the decline of civilization?

The most prominent basis for propositions suggesting that urban civilization is the goal of nomadic civilization and heralds the decline of civilization is Chapter 18 of Book IV of the *Muqaddimah*. According to Ibn Khaldun's observations, in settled culture, various arts and crafts have developed to refine and embellish elements related to the home, such as food, clothing, buildings, utensils, and similar matters. However, once the process of refining and embellishing elements related to domestic life reaches its peak, people become preoccupied with physical pleasures and passions [4, 7]. The rest of the process is described as follows:

> "The human soul is colored in many ways by these customs and habits. Now, the state of the soul, painted with so many different things, cannot be at peace or on the right path, either religiously or worldly, in this situation. For the paint of customs and habits has settled deeply within it and cannot be easily removed. It cannot be on the right path in worldly terms either. Because many needs and burdens have arisen that are required by customs and habits related to prosperity, but which income cannot meet..." [7]

This quotation, and what had been said before it, allows for an interpretation that corruption and, moreover, moral decay arise from the tendency in human nature to indulge in consumption and pleasures as soon as economic comfort is achieved, and consequently to lose one's morals.

At this stage, it would be appropriate to ask whether there is a relationship between the economy formed in settled culture and the way morality is shaped in this type of society. According to Ibn Khaldun, the diversification and development of consumption habits have a negative effect on morality over time. In other words, there is a relationship between the maturation and diversification of human needs in settled culture and the tendency toward luxury, and this relationship is observed in the form of the former negatively affecting the latter. After describing the economic deterioration in urban civilization and linking this deterioration directly to certain habits brought about by settled culture and to economic excess, Ibn Khaldun described the personality disorders that emerged in individuals as follows:

> "They labor and strive to fulfill the needs arising from habits and customs, and to obtain them they resort to evil deeds and adopt wicked ways. Moreover, after obtaining them, they acquire yet another trait, a selfish disposition and quality, from the colors associated with luxury and comfort, thereby causing harm to the self. Therefore, matters such as sin, evil, deceit, and resorting to every kind of trickery and cunning to make a living frequently occur among them. Now the human soul is directed toward thinking about livelihood and sustenance. It becomes deeply immersed in it, resorting to all kinds of tricks and cunning to obtain it..." [4, 7]

Ibn Khaldun, who believed that human character is formed by acquired habits, stated that "people are human beings and are equal to one another", suggesting that people are not different from one another in terms of birth and essence, but were created in a single form and type [4, 7]. What, then, makes people's characters different? Based on Ibn Khaldun's thinking, the answer to this question can be stated as follows: people become superior and distinguished from one another in terms of the good habits and customs they acquire, the virtues they gain, and the vices they abandon. If bad habits take root in a person's character and that person has no sense of goodness left, then the lineage and *'asabiyyah* on which that person's roots are based also cease to have any significance [4, 7]. According to Ibn Khaldun, the proliferation and spread of people with corrupt character and morals in cities accelerates the demise of the civilization and nation in that city, because "permission is granted by God for the ruin and destruction of that city and its inhabitants" [4, 7].

Ibn Khaldun, who made the above observations regarding the decline of civilization, concludes the 18th chapter of the fourth section of the *Muqaddimah*, which describes settled culture, with an observation that points to a teleological

perspective. The purpose of civilization is settled culture, civilization, and economic prosperity. Just as living beings do in their natural lifespans, civilization also begins to decay and age after achieving its purpose [4, 7].

Explaining this determination, Ibn Khaldun states that "morality consisting of civilization and prosperity is the very essence of moral decay." According to him, what makes a person human is the ability to obtain one's interests, keep negative things away from oneself, and maintain one's character in a proper and stable manner in order to work toward this end [4, 7]. Consequently, a person raised within settled culture and its accompanying habits, unable to meet his own needs independently and requiring others for everything, has strayed from his essence both naturally and morally [4, 7]. People who succumb to the luxury demands that come with settled culture have also become corrupted in terms of religion. Excesses that disregard moderation corrupt the human personality and go so far as to eliminate the understanding of religion based on humility and contentment with little [4, 7].

Within the framework of the topics discussed, the following conclusions can be drawn: 1. Civilization, even in its formative stages, has the effect of diminishing human defensive reflexes and, over time, distancing people from their ability and habit of taking care of their own affairs. In this respect, it marks the beginning of a process in which people forget their inherent capabilities and fail to realize their full potential. 2. In settled culture, the sense of protection and security that develops and becomes established over time, together with attachment to the state and the comfort to which people become accustomed in proportion to the distribution of the state's wealth, means that once humans lose their ability and strength to cope with difficult living conditions, they cannot easily recover. 3. When civilized urbanization, which formed settled culture and influenced people, reaches a certain peak, that is, an upper limit, in terms of the increase and diversification of economic wealth and luxury needs, it degenerates, decays, and disappears as a result of both income failing to cover expenditure and people, despite this financial deterioration, resorting to immorality in order to satisfy their luxury needs and spreading this throughout society. In short, "the stage of *'umran* in its perfection is a period of stagnation for the life of the state and the realm of civilization" [4, 7].

5. THE PROBLEM OF THE STATE AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN *'UMRAN* AND THE STATE

In this section, we will endeavor to understand the foundations of Ibn Khaldun's understanding of the state and politics. According to Ibn Khaldun, the state is a structure whose existence is necessary for human societies, which by their very nature tend toward prosperity and comfort, to be able to provide this comfort. Indeed, the following statements drawn from the *Muqaddimah* point to clues about Ibn Khaldun's model of civilization, though not entirely, and, to a significant extent, to the recommendations he made to rulers: 1. The power of the state can only be realized through the application of law; law can only be applied by a strong administration or state [4, 2]; 2. *Mulk* can increase its power only through the people (*ricâl*) [4, 2]; 3. The people cannot survive without acquiring wealth [4, 2]; 4. Wealth cannot be attained without development (*al-'imâre/'umran*) [4, 2]; 5. Development cannot be achieved without justice [4, 2]; 6. The criterion by which Allah will judge humanity (*al-mîzân*) is justice, and it is the duty of the ruler to ensure justice [4, 2]. The duty of the administrator or administrators in ensuring justice is to make the rules of conduct established through Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) enforceable in society through encouraging and deterrent practices [1, 2].

It has previously been stated that in the urbanization phase, needs diversify and population growth occurs in cities. The state is the most fundamental and comprehensive institution expected to focus on solving the problems arising in the urbanization phase, where the area expands, needs diversify, and the number of people living there increases. This is because the greatest priority of people seeking comfort is the protection of their lives and property against possible attacks from others, and the state provides this protection through institutions such as the army and the police force. People whose lives and property are secure, and whose earnings and/or acquired property are registered, turn to the arts and sciences. However, the arts and sciences cannot be organized or take root without the umbrella of the state, and the opportunity to pass on the accumulated knowledge, experience, and skills of past generations to future generations is lost. Furthermore, the policies implemented by states are also a matter of civilization. Problems arise in the political understanding produced by each civilization, which in turn affects the development of civilizations and the processes they undergo. In this case, the state becomes one of the indispensable subjects of the science of civilization. Ibn Khaldun's approach to relating the state and civilization in his *Muqaddimah* also confirms this assumption: according to him, the state and the ruler's situation are the form of civilization, and civilization is the substance of the state; that is, civilization is a necessary foundation for the existence of the state, and the state is necessary for the comprehension of the existence of a civilization [4, 2]. Therefore, it is understood that it would be a significant omission not to discuss the state in this section, which aims to understand how Ibn Khaldun addressed the issue of civilization, given that state organization is an indispensable element for meeting many human needs and even for the formation and continuation of civilization.

The relationship between the state and the economy, as one of the key factors in the emergence and disappearance of civilizations, is also one of the issues to be addressed and discussed in the following paragraphs. This issue is expected to be addressed primarily within the framework of the following questions: 1. Can a relationship be established between the

role Islam assigns to prosperity in economics and the role Ibn Khaldun assigns to prosperity in the collapse of states? If so, what kind of relationship is this? 2. Does the economic structure have an impact on the lifespan of states? 3. Does the limitation of consumer goods and needs have an effect on good morals? Is the variable and fluctuating nature of human morality a fundamental factor in the weakening of solidarity with the increase in prosperity and luxury? 4. What is the role of morality in the general view of the state in Islam and in Ibn Khaldun's view of the state? What examples did Ibn Khaldun provide regarding the lifespan of states?

In Ibn Khaldun's view, if the abuse of power, luxury, and extravagance can be prevented, the divinely based caliphate rooted in *shari'a* law can coexist with worldly sovereignty based on dominion. This is possible through political dominion, that is, through a rational system of governance in which the rule of law prevails [8]. Ibn Khaldun believed that a political authority based on justice was a prerequisite for a long-lasting civilization, and he also argued that the two were as intrinsically linked as matter and form [4, 2].

Mulk comes into being through tribalism, that is, it gains the possibility of existence through it, and likewise, it weakens and disappears with the weakening of tribalism. In Ibn Khaldun's thinking, the most important spiritual bond that holds people together is either belonging to the same lineage or family, or sharing the same faith [1, 2]. In short, wherever *mulk* and civilization are mentioned, the existence of tribalism is also a matter of course. However, *mulk* requires not only tribalism but also, at least at an initial level, a degree of prosperity and comfort. This prosperity and comfort become possible with the increase and diversification of economic activities that emerge toward the end of the more Bedouin stage of civilization. The remainder of this section will endeavor to examine how Ibn Khaldun understood and expressed the relationship between the economy and the state, particularly with regard to *mulk*, within the context of the state problem.

5.1. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE ECONOMY

Ibn Khaldun had previously discussed that human beings' means of earning a living, or subsistence, can be examined under two fundamental categories: natural and unnatural. How, then, does he relate economics and politics to one another? It is possible to suggest that some clues leading to the answer to this question are found most clearly in Chapter 5 of the *Muqaddimah*. Ibn Khaldun argued that wealth or riches are more prevalent among those who hold political office and prestige, that is, influence, than among those who do not hold office. In other words, holding a position is certainly beneficial for acquiring and retaining wealth [4, 7].

On the one hand, those in positions of authority take advantage of the labour of those who approach them in order to meet their needs. On the other hand, the wealth and property of those who do not hold positions of authority are generally limited to the labour they expend for work and the capital they invest in work; this is usually the case for those engaged in trade [4, 7]. In his *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun listed taxation as one of the important sources of income for states, and he even considered unjustly increased taxes as a sign announcing the end of a dynasty [4, 7]. States collect taxes not only from the people living in the cities under their sovereignty, but also from the tribes they are able to subjugate. Indeed, Ibn Khaldun reported that during his lifetime, most of the Arab tribes in the Maghreb were subject to taxation [9, 10].

Those who wish to come under the protection of a person in authority, or who aim to gain the favour of such a person, assist that person in meeting all kinds of needs by offering their labour and goods. Thus, a relationship of mutual interest appears to exist here [4, 7]. The reason for using the expression "appears to exist" is that this relationship of interest operates mainly to increase the wealth of the office holder. In other words, the office holder "exploits" the labour of those who wish to approach him, in the sense in which the concept has been used from the nineteenth century to the present day. In Ibn Khaldun's thought, the fact that the value of goods is equivalent to the value of labour can also be interpreted as Ibn Khaldun viewing the issue from the perspective of the "exploitation of labour", even though he does not use such explicit terminology.

The close relationship between economics and politics, particularly in terms of securing the protection of positions close to the ruler, actually stems from human nature. Ibn Khaldun expressed this idea with the statement that "the existence and survival of the human species cannot be realised without mutual cooperation in matters of interest" [7]. That is to say, people helping one another to meet their needs is a necessity for the survival of the human race. This necessity transformed into a relationship of mutual interest, particularly after the emergence of property, which is the purpose of tribalism, and after people began to live in cities in prosperity and comfort. Indeed, as will be discussed later in this section, it is even possible to say that during the formation and development of settled culture, relationships of interest replaced tribalism.

From Ibn Khaldun's remarks in various sections of the *Muqaddimah* concerning states and dynasties, settled culture, and their effects on people, it seems possible to infer that *asabiyyah* has the following relationship with economics: *asabiyyah* weakens with the emergence of prosperity, comfort, and settled culture, which are the goals of civilisation. It disappears as people become preoccupied with luxury needs and, as a result, become selfish when their income can no longer cover their expenses. Therefore, it becomes necessary to ask whether *asabiyyah* is related not only to economics but also to morality.

To summarise what has been said so far regarding economics, the relationship between economics and society, and

the relationship between economics and the state, the following can be stated: 1. If the value of labour determines the value of goods, then the need for a good to exist in a particular place and the demand for that good will increase its value; conversely, when demand or necessity decreases, the value of the good will also decrease. 2. Considering the natural and unnatural means of livelihood, as settled culture takes root, it is natural for people, especially those who wish to acquire wealth or preserve the wealth they have acquired, to lean on political offices, seek support from them, and thereby resort to unnatural means of livelihood. These tendencies accelerate the process of social corruption, because a society already weakening as a result of the disappearance of solidarity becomes increasingly structured around relationships that only increase the wealth of certain segments. At the same time, the constant increase in taxes to meet luxury needs produces discontent and weakens social cohesion. Such a society, already weakened by the disappearance of *asabiyyah*, becomes incapable of organised resistance against external attacks.

The most fundamental solution for delaying collapse or extinction appears to be religion, which regulates people's relationships with their Creator and with one another, and which emphasises justice in social life. A society and the state organisation governing it, where matters are not based on religious rulings, and where religious rulings are even adapted to suit the interests and pleasures of daily life, are, from a religious perspective, a "corrupt" state. Prosperity and comfort, which also lead people to become alienated from their innate characteristics, first prevent religious rules from being properly understood and applied, thereby corrupting the moral structure. This situation then transforms into inter-institutional relationships of interest, leading to the complete loss of the influence of *asabiyyah* in society, whether that influence has disappeared or perhaps transformed. Society is then no longer capable of defending itself against any external attack, and the property/dynasty that played a role in bringing society to this state cannot escape destruction. The replacement of the religious politics practised in the Caliphate with a politics that prioritises worldly concerns in the realm can be seen as the beginning of the end, both in terms of religion and the moral structure it defines, and in terms of the solidarity that holds society together.

According to the science of *umran* (*'ilm al-umrân*), solidarity (*asabiyyah*) is the fundamental reason for the formation of society and the state, while morality is the fundamental reason for their continuation. In fact, *asabiyyah* is the explanatory principle and driving force behind all productive activity and dynamism. Precisely for this reason, Ibn Khaldun attached particular importance to *asabiyyah*, arguing that people in the Bedouin stage of society could not live securely without it [1, 2]. The ability of society to maintain its dynamism, sustain its vitality, and thereby become more equipped in political, economic, and other respects depends on the existence of solidarity. However, solidarity itself is not static; it can weaken over time. Therefore, it too requires a form, perhaps even a protector. Morality comes into play precisely at this point as a protective principle. According to Lenn Goodman, only religion possesses the power to overcome the possibility of fragmentation, which can be seen as belonging to the "childhood" stage of *asabiyyah*, and to establish a political whole [11].

In the absence of moral principles to which people must adhere, individuals cannot preserve their integrity. More importantly, the very existence of society, that is, civilisation, is endangered. Nigel Lawson, in his article entitled *Some Reflections on Morality and Capitalism*, expressed this situation with the following words: "No political or economic system devoid of moral values can survive" [12].

Although *asabiyyah* and morality are distinct concepts by definition, these two notions are intertwined in practice. Ibn Khaldun employed *asabiyyah* as a concept that should be considered together with morality. In his view, a substance-form relationship can be described between *asabiyyah* and morality, similar to that between the individual and society. Within this relationship, it would be appropriate to interpret *asabiyyah* as matter and morality as form. However, establishing such a relationship also has its drawbacks, since it can lead to misconceptions such as reducing *asabiyyah* to morality or perceiving morality as identical with *asabiyyah*. If one of the fundamental qualities that makes humans human is living in society, and if society is held together by *asabiyyah* and morality, then, without departing from Ibn Khaldun's thought, it can be said that these two elements weaken or strengthen in direct proportion to one another. As a result of this weakening or strengthening, the phenomenon of society being harmed or strengthened can be observed [1, 2].

Just as human life involves birth, growth, adulthood, ageing, and death, property also undergoes stages of emergence, institutionalisation, rise, reaching a certain peak in civilisation and then stagnation, followed by decline due to political, economic, and, most importantly, religious and moral corruption, and finally collapse, that is, disappearance. According to Ibn Khaldun, possessing glory alone, indulging in prosperity, and preferring comfort and tranquillity are qualities inherent in property. Once glory is possessed alone and prosperity, comfort, and tranquillity are achieved, property enters a process of extinction because it has now achieved its goal [1, 2].

The final step in this section, which addresses the question of the state, will be to seek the answer to the question of which factors enable us to understand the conditions under which the state enters these stages or moves from one stage to another.

5.2. THE STAGES OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF STATE/*MULK*

Ibn Khaldun develops his idea of property, as mentioned above, with the argument that empires and dynasties, like human beings, have a natural lifespan. According to him, dynasties, like humans, go through certain stages during their lifetime. In other words, dynasties are born, develop, reach a certain peak, then decline and disappear. Ibn Khaldun calls these stages that dynasties go through "phases" and suggests that these stages can generally be explained under five headings. According to him, in each phase, those who sustain the state acquire certain traits and characteristics specific to that phase, and these traits and characteristics are not found in any other phase [1, 2].

The following can be inferred from Ibn Khaldun's thoughts on the stages of sovereignty: 1. The extent to which *asabiyyah* exists throughout all the processes that the sultanate undergoes is the most important factor; once *asabiyyah* begins to weaken, it becomes inevitable to speak of the beginning of the end for the state or property that *asabiyyah* has created. 2. Since sovereignty based on the sultanate is one of the structures created by human thought and labour, it is inevitable that it will change and disappear, just like human beings themselves; for everything that is created changes and disappears, and not changing and not disappearing are qualities unique to Allah. To support this argument, Ibn Khaldun concludes the section describing these phases with the following verse from the Surah al-Anbiya: "Everything is transient, and the best of inheritors is Allah" (al-Anbiya 21/89) [1, 2]. In his autobiographical work *Et-Ta'rîf*, in which he recounts his experiences in government, Ibn Khaldun explains that there is a law governing the rise and fall of great states based on kinship and/or solidarity, that is, cooperation, as follows:

> "Great states... With their arrogance, they seize supremacy from other rightful owners. They take over the affairs of the previous state... Due to the difficulties they encounter, they are harsh and cruel in nature; their livelihood is meagre due to the persistence of the state of nomadism and their previous lack of wealth. Over time, as their taxes increase, so does their wealth. The desire to obtain worldly pleasures takes root in their hearts... Extravagance gradually increases, and circumstances reach their peak. Income no longer covers expenses... Furthermore, power diminishes among the state officials, in proportion to the loss of their harshness and the refinement and enrichment of their close circle... Those remaining from the state leaders, spurred on by the corruption they encounter, attempt to control the state... The property belongs to his tribe. It almost becomes a new state and survives for a while. Then it faces the same fate as the first. Another one takes control, and this continues until the state is completely destroyed and all the founding rulers are gone... This is the law of Allah among His servants." [5]

Ibn Khaldun cited the Ayyubids as an example of this law he explained, and he examined and described certain stages that the Mamluks, his contemporaries, had undergone from their founding to his own time on the basis of this law [5].

Ibn Khaldun's adoption of an expression that assigns a lifespan to the state and to the civilisation that develops within it raises a significant problem when it comes to Islam, a religion believed to have been sent down by God to rule the earth forever, and the state structure based on this religion. If the Caliph is the head of the Islamic state, then assigning a lifespan to the state would also imply assigning a lifespan to Islam, which is contradictory. Ibn Khaldun avoids such a contradiction, as mentioned in the section of this work dealing with the relationship between the Caliphate and the realm. He clearly states that, for the Islamic community, sovereignty is nothing more than "a path and style of governance adopted by infidels and enemies of religion", and that the main factor in the end of sovereignty is moral decay [1, 2]. However, his assertion that the transition from caliphate to statehood was an inevitable process stemming from human nature could be interpreted as meaning that the question raised at the beginning of this paragraph has not been fully resolved.

In contrast, considering that what Ibn Khaldun described was not the state itself but rather a form of state, namely dynasty or monarchy, the following fact also becomes clear: a monarchy, viewed negatively from the perspective of Islam as a form of government, emerges, undergoes certain processes, and then disappears. On the other hand, religion and religion-based society, the institutions created and sustained by this type of society, and in fact society as a whole and the continuity of the people who govern it, except for the change of individuals, have permanence. In other words, the collapse of property or the disappearance of a dynasty in a city does not mean that civilisation in that city will immediately disappear. In fact, no matter how many different dynasties are established in a city, the elements of the settled culture and civilisation that have taken root in that city will influence subsequent societies and dynasties. Referring to Ibn Khaldun's words on this idea, the following statement may be given as an appropriate example:

> "In our time, we only see science and education in the cities of Egypt, in Cairo. Because here, for thousands of years, there has been a civilisation like an ocean and a firmly established culture. For this reason, the arts have become well established here and have branched out into various fields. The teaching of science and teaching methods is also one of these arts..." [7]

The term "civilisation" referred to in this quotation, expressed as "a civilisation like an ocean" and "a firmly established culture", is many times longer than the lifespan Ibn Khaldun attributed to dynasties. This can be interpreted as an indication

that civilisation is a process that transcends the rise and fall of dynasties and is partly sustained by the change of these administrations. This is because every dynasty seeks to create structures and works commensurate with its power, thereby leaving its mark on civilisation and history.

As can be understood from the clues provided in this section, Ibn Khaldun has embarked on a search for the conditions necessary for a solidly founded and powerful state. According to him, a strong state must have a solid political understanding that meets the needs of the era and society, perhaps even more than a solid social cohesion. The implementation of a solid politics can exist and achieve continuity only if institutions perform their functions flawlessly; otherwise, the permanence of sovereignty is not possible. According to Muhsin Mehdî, research on *umran* inevitably led Ibn Khaldun to examine and question the phenomenon of government, which is both a part and a form of *umran*, namely its regulatory principle. With this examination of political issues, "the science of *umran* gained another of its complementary elements" [13].

The discussions in this section, in terms of expressing the structure upon which *umran* is founded, can be seen as a prelude to the idea that *umran* is a structure woven from institutions and inter-institutional relations, a concept that had been widely explored in Book III of the *Muqaddimah*.

Ibn Khaldun was aware of the fact that institutions had replaced *asabiyyah* and tried to explain the view that institutions form the basis of the state and the people by saying, "After the state is established and the affairs of the institutions are in order, tribalism may not be needed" [1, 2]. But this situation is actually the beginning of the end in terms of property, because property and a powerful dynasty are possible only through *asabiyyah* and tribe [1, 2]. This can be interpreted as Ibn Khaldun not preferring to sacrifice *asabiyyah* in favour of institutions.

After summarising the areas of authority and duties in the dynasty/*mulk*, Ibn Khaldun touched upon the differences between the duties and powers based on the sword and the pen in various states. He then pointed out the characteristics of the king or sultan, the wars and methods of war used by various states, the tax system in the final period of the state, the harms of the sultans' involvement in trade, and the increase in oppression as a sign of the end of *umran* [4, 2]. Ibn Khaldun, who believed that the sultan's involvement in trade would offend the subjects engaged in agriculture and trade and would harm the tax system, is also in line with the framework Plato envisioned for rulers in the *Republic* [4, 2].

The increasing number of people living in cities and the diversifying and increasing needs of urban life lead to a proliferation of institutions and jurisdictions. However, while Ibn Khaldun described the institutions, positions, and ranks of his time, along with the authority and duties of each institution, and traced their history back to his own time, he was careful to remain within the framework of forms of property and sovereignty as phenomena related to the essence of *umran*. The institutional structure that comes with *mulk*, which is based on domination through force, also requires strong sovereignty. However, if this sovereignty is based on institutions themselves rather than *asabiyyah*, it will not last long. According to Ibn Khaldun, *asabiyyah* exists in cities just as it does in rural areas, and those who possess it, especially during periods of dynastic decline and collapse, are prone to power struggles against one another [4, 7].

While Ibn Khaldun points out with this view that *asabiyyah* does not disappear but merely weakens during the period of *umran*, *asabiyyah*, the driving force, the dynamo, and the reason for the existence and maintenance of both *mulk* and *umran*, effectively disappears after the settlement of cities and the establishment of institutions. By definition, the need for the spirit of solidarity and the unifying power inherent in it is met by institutions, especially the legal mechanism. Having fulfilled its function as the dynamo that initiated the state and *umran* process, *asabiyyah* becomes institutionalised and established; it then gives way to a community of interests that also influences the law as the state becomes more firmly established and as *umran* develops. The ability to execute legal rules is possible through the just administration of the state. In other words, when those who govern deviate from moral principles for their own interests, they prepare the collapse of the state, that is, the dynasty, in the short term, and the collapse of *umran* in the long term. Therefore, one of the two foundations upon which justice in society rests is moral values, namely the sum of rules of conduct informed by *fiqh*, religion, and religiously based views, while the other is institutions consisting of the total division of labour that enables and sustains the smooth functioning of the state and legal mechanisms. Corrupt institutions in state administration, together with the poor, disharmonious, and inefficient functioning of these institutions, negatively affect state governance. According to Ibn Khaldun, the state should ensure the implementation of *fiqh* and serve the purposes of promoting human development and welfare [1, 2].

The absence or dissolution of *asabiyyah* also indicates that *umran* has reached its goal and that the end of its life is approaching [4, 7]. In Bedouin *umran*, that is, in rural life, social solidarity, which is necessary to endure difficult conditions and survive, first weakens with settlement in cities and the formation of property as a result of the desire to attain prosperity and comfort. This also begins to weaken the state. Ibn Khaldun explains this phenomenon with expressions such as "when the creation of prosperity and comfort becomes a habit in the state, the state begins to age" [1, 2] and "states, like people, have natural lifespans" [1, 2].

6. CONCLUSION: THE FOUNDATION OF THE SUSTAINABILITY OF *ASABIYYAH* AND *UMRAN* CAN BE FOUND IN JUSTICE

The main phenomenon Ibn Khaldun pointed to when assessing the lifespan of civilisations and the states that enabled them to survive was the failure of institutions, whose *raison d'être* is the orderly conduct of affairs in society, to fulfil their functions, that is, their loss of their *raison d'être*.

The question of whether the lifespan of civilisation can be discussed in the same way as that of the state is the last of the questions addressed in this article. The answer to this question can be given as follows: the state and civilisation are essential characteristics inherent in human nature and will continue to exist as long as humanity exists. As civilisation itself transitions from nomadism to urbanisation, perhaps then back to nomadism, and then back to urbanisation, the individuals who govern the state and its institutions, as well as the duties they assign to these institutions in accordance with their interests, are also in a state of constant change. Therefore, it is possible to say that, like the state and civilisation, institutions will continue to exist as long as human beings exist. This is because institutions are a problem-solving mechanism created by humans in an environment where needs have increased and diversified. The approaches of institutions to solving problems, their relationships with one another and with the state under which they are organised, provide clues about the qualities and lifespan of civilisation. While a civilisation in which institutions can produce fundamental solutions to societal problems may be long-lived, a civilisation with corrupt institutions that generate new problems rather than solving them may weaken very quickly without contributing much to the settled culture. This provides a compelling reason to consider that the foundation of civilisation lies in institutions, but particularly in the justice that must be upheld in the functioning of these institutions.

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