THE NATURE OF ROYAL AUTHORITY (*MULK*) IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTINUITY AND MUTABILITY IN IBN KHALDŪN'S THOUGHT

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Abstract

The basic claim of Ibn Khaldūn in his *Muqaddima* is that there must be a theoretical frame that corresponds to facts about state and society *qua* they are state and society to make a correct analysis about a given state and society. What Ibn Khaldūn's theory of royal authority (*mulk*) provides is an accurate analysis of state and society as they exist. Accordingly the conceptual frame analyzes the essence of civilization and the accidental changes in a royal authority and state that occur at any time and space that do not change the essence of them. But the premises about the nature and the essence can be determined according to their matters, not to their reasonable consistencies of accuracy and fallacy. Ibn Khaldūn, thus, balances the constants and variables. In this article, after analyzing Ibn Khaldūn's theory of royal authority in its own philosophical context, I discuss the metaphysical assumptions of this theory.

Key Words: Ibn Khaldūn, royal authority (*mulk*), *ʿaṣabiyya, maṣlaḥa*

Ibn Khaldūn is one of the most studied Muslim thinkers, and modern academic research has focused on different aspects of him. Many researchers have written articles and books on his ideas about phi-

losophy, politics, society, economy, and the history of science.[1] Among those, writers such as Muḥsin Mahdī, Ahmet Arslan, ʿAlī al-Wardī, and Tahsin Görgün aim to establish the philosophical foundations of his political thought in relation to philosophers including Aristotle, al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. Writers such as Syed Farid Alatas, Aziz Al-Azmeh, M. Umer Chapra, Laroussi Amri, Johann P. Arnason, Dieter Weiss, Recep Şentürk, and Tahsin Görgün discuss the modernity of Ibn Khaldūn's theories on state and society and whether they are reproduced. Among those attempts to refer to Ibn Khaldūn's thought, Syed Farid Alatas considers the economical and political analysis of Islam in general and Asian societies in particular, and Recep Şentürk examines an alternative sociology of civilizations.[2] We can add to these names writers who compare Ibn Khaldūn's thoughts to the ideas of the pioneers of the modern social and political thought, including Karl Marx and Max Weber.[3] As Muḥsin Mahdī and Tahsin Görgün stress, philosophical theories, as in the works of al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, serve as a medium or tool by which Ibn Khaldūn expresses his ideas, but they also constitute the base for his social and political theories.[4] Ibn Khaldūn's social and political theory is a successful application of the metaphysics of Ibn Sīnā to the social level, using thinkers such as al-

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[1] For a short sketch of these studies, see Cengiz Tomar, "İbn Haldûn: Literatür [Ibn Khaldūn: Literature]," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (DİA)* [*Turkish Religious Foundation Encyclopedia of Islam*], XX, 8-12.

[2] Syed Farid Alatas, "A Khaldunian Exemplar for a Historical Sociology for the South," *Current Sociology* LIV/3 (2006), 397-411; idem., "A Khaldunian Perspective on the Dynamics of Asiatic Societies," *Comparative Civilizations Review* 29 (1993), 29-51.

[3] For a study that conveys this, see articles by Muhammad Dhaouadi, Recep Şentürk, Syed Farid Alatas, Faruk Yaslıçimen, Lütfi Sunar, Tahsin Görgün, and M. Umer Chapra that discuss the modernity of Ibn Khaldūn, see *İslâm Araştırmaları Dergisi* [*Turkish Journal of Islamic Studies*] 16 (*İbn Haldun Özel Sayısı II* [*Special Issue: Ibn Khaldūn II*]) (2006).

[4] Muhsin Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldûn's Philosophy of History: A Study in the Philosophic Foundation of the Science of Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), 63-131; Ahmet Arslan, *İbn Haldûn'un İlim ve Fikir Dünyası* [*Ibn Khaldūn's World of Thought*] (Ankara: Vadi Yayınları, 1997), 437-452; Tahsin Görgün, "İbn Haldûn: Görüşleri [Ibn Khaldūn: His Ideas]," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (DİA)* [*Turkish Religious Foundation Encyclopedia of Islam*], XIX, 543-555.

Ghazālī and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. We can discuss the necessary assumptions of a modern social and political theory produced from classical Islamic thought, depending on Ibn Khaldūn's theory of royal authority (*mulk*). After analyzing Ibn Khaldūn's theory of royal authority in its own philosophical context, I discuss the metaphysical assumptions of this theory.

A. The Theory of Royal Authority

Ibn Khaldūn bases his social theory on several concepts, including Bedouin life (*badāwa*), settled life (*ḥaḍāra*), group feeling (*ʿaṣabiyya*), royal authority, and state, some of which can be considered to be the goals of others. By doing so, he aims to create a philosophical science that takes society as a subject and to determine universal rules to correctly and comprehensively analyze social facts. Ibn Khaldūn utilizes the peripatetic theory of matter-form. The basic reason for him to use this theory is to find necessary and possible situations defined at the material level, not the mental level. By starting from definite and unchangeable characters in human beings as actors in society, he thus tries to reach the necessary consequences of the human nature in material necessity. To follow such necessities, Ibn Khaldūn takes the peripatetics' definition of human as the base. Accordingly, man is a "rational animal." In this definition, "animal" indicates the near genus of man, while "rational" indicates the differentia that distinguish man from other animals that share the near genus. Both qualities are attributes of man inasmuch as he is man, and they do not change according to individuals, societies, time, and space. When Ibn Khaldūn talks about human nature, he means the quiddity of man, which essentially comprises the attributes of life and reflection. This nature or quiddity has common qualities in all animals inasmuch as they are animals. The most important of these qualities are feeding and defense, which are necessary for survival. While feeding is a direct necessity for animals, the need for defense occurs as a consequence of the quality of attack, which is also a direct necessity for animals. Ibn Khaldūn establishes these qualities as the final reason for the creation of communities constituted by humans. When stating that "the need for feeding and defense is the cause for the human communities to be formed," he means that these two situations are the final cause of society. Humans come together to reach this final cause, and "unity" happens among individuals. Therefore, *ʿumrān* is

the general name of the communities shaped by humans who come together and unite.

After meeting the needs of feeding and defense, man continues to be a social being, as this is the continuous need of man and his ever-lasting goal, although that goal may be contrary to the particular goals of specific men. Living together is a natural quality of man, and it is the meaning of the statement "man is civilized by nature." In social terms, something that is natural is something that is necessary for the human species in general. This necessity does not require that man maintains an autonomous existence, that is, he does not require additional elements to fulfill that necessity.

Another element is required to maintain the unity between indi-viduals to protect the endurance of the social being, and Ibn Khaldūn calls it "group feeling" (ʿaṣabiyya). Group feeling, which we can un-derstand as the "spirit of collaboration" in its broadest sense, allows the fulfillment of protection and defense in an organized manner. The function of group feeling becomes apparent when considering the condition of "offense," which causes the need for defense. Although offense, or the effort to seize others' commodities (muṭālaba), is one reason to form society, leading to a human condition called defense, it is not a situation that changes human beings and continues to exist. Offense, or *muṭālaba*, is thus found in any human community with its derivatives, protection, and defense. A human community formed to defend itself from outside attacks always has an offensive power directed against the outside. The conditions of offense and defense are not only outward-oriented situations in which two or more com-munities are assumed if they are considered at the social level. Con-versely, as in feeding, because both offense and defense occur at the individual level, these conditions occur inside a given community rather than between communities. The direct consequences of feed-ing and offense, in particular, happen inside the community. As a result of the need for feeding, arts, occupations, and multiple liveli-hoods emerge within the society, while the weapons industry and armaments emerge as a result of the character of offense and the need for defense. The group feeling is a nominal meaning that helps activate the defensive and offensive powers in the social level, not the individual, because private armament cannot meet the society's need for defense.

Ibn Khaldūn compares society and group feeling to the temperament of natural things. In natural things, elements that come together to form temperaments must be dominant over one another. The unity of disposition cannot be fulfilled when all elements are equal. As in the group feeling, one or several human elements must be dominant (*ghālib*) over others to form a truly united community.[5] Although the relationship between dominance and group feeling seems to be a mutual necessitating (*talāzum*) relationship at first glance, group feeling comes before dominance by essence and is the material cause of dominance. Group feeling, while acting as a form in relation to human communities, thus acts as a matter in relation to dominance; a community clarifies group feeling early, once the form of dominance becomes clear. In the thought of Ibn Khaldūn, the term that changes group feeling to a political term and provides the movement from social to political theory is dominance. A presidency that combines the meanings of hegemony and leadership, sometimes called "*suʾūda,*" only happens with dominance.[6]

The basic function of presidency is to control the powers of offense and extravagance and to govern a society so that it is closer to true unity, according to certain goals; we can call this form a "society" to distinguish it from the previous discussion. However, Ibn Khaldūn uses the word "*raʾīs,*" meaning a ruler who does not have sanctioned power. A president thus has followers but does not have the power to force them to act on demand. Moreover, presidency is the source of dominance, and it bears a deficient hegemonic power. A presidency denotes a situation in which an administration is not fully established with all necessary requirements. If the ability to apply demands forcefully is added to the definition of presidency, then royal authority emerges. Presidency thus corresponds to the matter of the nature of royal authority which is common among all governors, while "forcefully applying demands" corresponds to the differentia of royal authority. Royal authority is a type of administration that is one more degree privatized and more specific than presidency. Ibn Khaldūn uses the word "*mulk*" to mean "an authority which prevents the extravagance among people to meet wholly the need for defense and

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[5]   Ibn Khaldūn, Abū Zayd ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad, *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldūn* (ed. Darwīsh al-Juwaydī; 2nd edn., Ṣaydā, Beirut: al-Maktaba al-ʿAṣriyya, 1996), 124.

[6]   *Ibid.*

has the power of dominance, energy, and sanction over people"

فيكون ذلك الوازع واحدا منهم يكون له عليهم الغلبة و السلطان و اليد القاهرة حتى
لا يصل احد الى غيره بعدوان و هذا هو معنى الملك.)[7]

Because the source of the existence of this authority is the power of anger and offense, its main function is "to prevent the extravagance among people." There must be an energy that provides the force for this function. Force leads to the second function of royal authority: to make royal wishes be enacted by force. Using this definition, royal authority realizes a situation that is potentially included in the conditions of anger, offense, protection, assembly, ʿaṣabiyya, and leadership; royal authority is thus the goal of the human soul and ʿaṣabiyya. The possessor of ʿaṣabiyya, when he reaches a certain point, enforces the suʿūda and government, and afterwards, subjugation and coercion. When he achieves the subjugation and coercion, there is no new goal to achieve; the goal is only to protect the status quo (و أما الملك فهو التغلب و الحكم بالقهر).[8] If the royal authority formation process is carefully observed, then maintaining royal authority also means protecting the existence of humans and their communities. According to Ibn Khaldūn, royal authority is thus the natural character of man, and its fulfillment is not related to human choice. Conversely, in certain processes, the existence of society reaches the necessary level of royal authority and maintains it.[9] This is why royal authority is the final form of human gathering. The term "royal authority" in all its stages corresponds to the concept of state in all its stages and constitutes the most advanced form of ʿumrān (civilization).

Ibn Khaldūn states that royal authority is founded on two bases: The first is shawq (the power of enforcement) and ʿaṣabiyya. The concrete sign of this first base is an army. The second base is the commodity that provides for the maintenance of things needed by the army and royal authority, which can be called a treasury.[10] In this case, the matter of royal authority corresponds to all things governed by the possessor of royal authority. All material and spiritual beings

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[7] Ibid., 47.

[8] Ibid., 30.

[9] Ibid., 139, 189.

[10] Ibid., 269.

that can be regarded as part of the army and treasury constitute a matter of royal authority. In this context, royal authority belongs to the private or corporate personality over which there are no higher governing powers; he collects taxes, sends envoys, establishes borders, and has ultimate coercive power. If *ʿaṣabiyya* fails to provide some of these issues, the essence of royal authority is not accomplished.[11] The mentioned cases indicate the *ʿaṣabiyya*'s sphere of influence that is possessed by the royal authority. The possessor of royal authority only governs liable people who are his followers and whose taxes are collected in the land whose borders are protected by him. In this context, while the state and royal authority constitute the form of the civilization, citizens, cities, and other elements constitute the matter of the civilization.[12] The state and royal authority are those things that protect the civilization, and it is not possible for them to be separated from its matter. Whereas without civilization, the state and royal authority cannot be imagined, a civilization without a state and royal authority cannot exist (*mutaʿadhdhir*) because of human nature.[13] From this point, royal authority is thus a relative term because forceful sovereignty, which is the nature of royal authority, is a continuous quality for governing a person or group. Forceful sovereignty is something that exists between the governor and those who are governed, and its meaning is realized using these two elements. Maintaining royal authority does not mean maintaining one of the two sides, but both. While maintaining society is connected to maintaining the royal authority or state, maintaining the state or royal authority is also connected to maintaining society. To maintain the civilization, there should be an element related to both royal authority and the matter of royal authority that protects them.

To discover this element, Ibn Khaldūn again starts from the theory of matter and form. According to this theory, generation and corruption in bodies (*kawn* and *fasād*) involve re-gaining different and new forms. If one form corresponds to the essence of the thing, the thing that loses its unity of form changes into something else. The changed form, as it continues to be itself if it experiences an accident and not a changed essence, becomes subject to a movement that occurs in its quality, quantity, or another accidental category. This movement con-

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[11]   *Ibid.*, 175-176.

[12]   *Ibid.*, 343.

[13]   *Ibid.*, 349.

tains an accidental form or change in shape. If we consider civiliza-
tion as a quiddity made of matter and form, the form that provides its
species' unity is its royal authority. However, coercion and subjuga-
tion, which comprise the essence of royal authority, are consequenc-
es of the animal power of anger; therefore, royal authority in its pure
form leads to arbitrary tyranny. This case becomes concrete when the
royal authority is "forcing people in accordance with their wishes and
mostly to the works above their abilities," in the words of Ibn
Khaldūn, which corrupts the civilization in the short or long term,
depending on the given conditions. Using forceful power, which
provides for the continuation of government to the personal benefit
of one side, prevents both the continuation of cases coming from the
form (as benefits change depending on people or groups) and the
maintenance of the form's existence, destroying the matter that car-
ries the form. The nature of royal authority, as it leads to chaos and
death, is inclined to destroy itself.[14] This case sometimes causes the
destruction of the government of a certain ruler with royal authority
(the personal state) or the whole body of the state with the *ʿaṣabiyya*,
which is the protector of the royal authority (the universal state); this
is the real reason for the destruction of the civilization.[15] The nature of
royal authority is thus not suitable for the long term in its pure form,
and there must be an element that maintains and protects the rela-
tionship between the matter and form of a civilization. This element,
according to Ibn Khaldūn, is political law, that is, the affairs of both
sides forming the nature of the civilization are considered and subject
to general acceptance. The state, if it lacks such laws, cannot be con-
sidered functional or completely sovereign (a real state).[16]

In this context, Ibn Khaldūn's analysis about continuing the civili-
zation is based on two terms: *maṣlaḥa* and law. Ibn Khaldūn uses the
concept *maṣlaḥa* as the opposite of a person or group's goals
(*gharaḍ*) and wishes (*shahwa*). In this regard, *maṣlaḥa* means social
benefits that maintain a civilization. The rules created to achieve the-
se benefits and prevent obstacles that eliminate these benefits consti-
tute laws. As *maṣlaḥa* and law are additional cases to the nature of
royal authority, Ibn Khaldūn calls those royal authorities that lack
*maṣlaḥa*s and law (and govern people according to their own wishes

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14 *Ibid.*, 177.

15 *Ibid.*, 349.

16 *Ibid.*, 177.

and goals) "natural royal authority." He distinguishes those royal authorities that govern people in accordance with rules created to achieve the *maṣlaḥa*s and prevent obstacles using the principle that determines the *maṣlaḥa*. Ibn Khaldūn's *maṣlaḥa* division is particularly dependent on the classification of knowledge and science made by later theologians and philosophers and follows his observations on the source of knowledge in the last section of the *Muqaddima*. Accordingly, if *maṣlaḥa* are worldly *maṣlaḥa*s, created by absolute intellect without concerning religious recommendations (and the rules are based on these *maṣlaḥa*s), then this constitutes political royal authority. This royal authority seeks to govern people in accordance with "reasonable thinking." If *maṣlaḥa*s are eschatological and worldly *maṣlaḥa*s are subordinate to and determined by eschatological ones, then the government is considered to be a caliphate. This royal authority seeks to govern people according to "religious thinking." Contrary to political royal authority, a caliphate denotes determining worldly cases according to the eschatological *maṣlaḥa*s in the eye of the Ruler; it basically involves being the viceroy of the Ruler in protecting both worldly and religious life.[17]

Ibn Khaldūn's analysis on the nature of royal authority indicates that there are two basic conditions to completely establish this nature. The first is that the external factor with enforcement power has the quality of compulsion. The second is that compulsion and enforcements are applied for laws made in accordance with worldly *maṣlaḥa*s or worldly-eschatological *maṣlaḥa*s. A third condition can be added to these two conditions, which Ibn Khaldūn mentions when he analyzes the period of the first four caliphs. There is neither any power of enforcement to achieve benefits and prevent obstacles nor any conscientious sanctions that allow the inclusion of outside agents. The sanctioning power that forces person to obey the *maṣlaḥa*s must be other factors beside the person.[18] In such a case, the first condition of royal authority, i.e., the condition that allows a

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[17] *Ibid.*, 178.

[18] The nature of royal authority did not achieve its complete form at the time of the first caliphs because, during that period, enforcement was religious (*waḍ'ī*) and everyone had the power of enforcement. However, after the time of Muʿāwiya, the *ʿaṣabiyya* was directed to royal authority, the religious enforcement weakened and "the *sulṭānī*" and "the *ʿaṣbānī*" enforcements were needed. See *Ibid.*, 196.

presidency to change into a royal authority, fails, and the laws actually become recommendations such that they are no longer orders. This condition shows that the state and royal authority are not equal. All royal authorities are states, but not all states are royal authorities. There was not a fully established royal authority in the first period of Islam, although there was a real state. Ibn Khaldūn contends that this is an exception in human history and that royal authority and states are equal if such exceptions are not considered. According to Ibn Khaldūn, our general experiments in human relations indicate that men obey laws not voluntarily but rather because of the lawmakers' commands and prosecutions, except in certain periods (such as in the times of the first caliphs). A government that lacks one of these three qualities is a government in which the nature of royal authority does not occur to perfection; instead, it is in the process of seeking perfection. These three qualities shape the essence and nature of royal authority, which has these qualities *qua* it is itself.

The concept of a royal authority with these qualities presumes that social and political processes are conflictive by nature. Those who are the possessors or bearers of the royal authority are those who are successful in their conflict processes, thanks to their *'aṣabiyya*. In this case, the direct consequence achieved by the royal authority is the hegemony of the bearers of royal authority over others. If we call "the hegemony" the power, the first and most important thing that royal authority gives to the bearers is the power. At the beginning of the possession of royal authority for subjugating others, power is a collective capacity and success between conflicting powers of the *'aṣabiyya*. However, this is contrary to assumptions in modern theories that perceive power as collective capacity and success. This does not depend on a balance between social and political relations, yet it depends on the continuity of conflict itself. The leader who possesses royal authority is inclined to take control of the power and discharge the *'aṣabiyya* in progress. After discharging the *'aṣabiyya* that allows the acquisition of royal authority, the royal authority exists in one person. This case that Ibn Khaldūn calls *infirād* is the "zero sum" in the words of today's sociologists and is the peak of the asymmetry that has been the basic quality of royal authority since it emerged. However, *infirād* does not allow monopolization, as the nature of royal authority requires mutual relativity between the bearers. When the royal authority achieves the level of *infirād*, the power of the bearer of royal authority represents a kind of relation to the

"effectuated" *'aṣabiyya* that occurs as long as bearer of royal authority has the ability to control others. Although this effectuated *'aṣabiyya* serves the will of and benefits the possessor of royal authority because the *'aṣabiyya* benefits are related to him, the possessor of royal authority himself "does fulfill their wishes" because his benefits are related to the effectuated *'aṣabiyya*. While this connection between bearer of royal authority and new *'aṣabiyya* strengthens, the power to achieve his own goal weakens, despite the powers of control or opposition. When control weakens, the power is divided between the possessors of royal authority. In every case, the power has the character of an unequal capacity to achieve the sources that both the bearers and all parts of the community consider valuable. The basic element of the power that emerges as a requirement of the nature of royal authority is to achieve a wish or goal. In short, power, according to the thought of Ibn Khaldūn, is a power directed toward a goal. The bearer of the power is either an individual who has taken the control of the royal authority or a group of individuals who have come together for certain purposes. Critical decisions and the ability to control capital are the consequences of royal authority and power. There must be observable conflict for royal authority and power to gain existence. At that stage, the authority for "citizens to fulfill the demands of the person who possesses the royal authority or the governing group" is an authority by force and a consequence of the power's essence. For a royal authority that depends on the *'aṣabiyya* before the creation of the effectuated *'aṣabiyya*, the authority of the possessor of royal authority over citizens is a derivative of the possessor's power. The authority of the possessor of royal authority over his own *'aṣabiyya* is not a derivative of royal authority in this stage. Because the royal authority is not completely held by one person before the effectuated *'aṣabiyya* emerges, the members of the founding *'aṣabiyya* claim the right to royal authority and power. This claim is legal if the process of the forming royal authority is considered because the source of the legality "in terms of holding the right in royal authority and power" is the power that fights and wins, and the fighting members of the *'aṣabiyya* share this power.

Conversely, in order for royal authority to be a correlation between the ruler and the ruled, and to depend on common benefits for survival, observable conflicts must be annihilated; then, the existence of the royal authority and power will be maintained. In this case, the royal authority and power cease to exist as much as the forceful sanc-

tions serve the benefits of an individual or a group. The bearer or bearers of the power maintain their existence if they make their personal or group benefits become part of the social benefits. With the help of laws, this situation allows the royal authority to assume the form of society in its real meaning by changing the bad, offensive side of power and royal authority into a good and cooperative character. Society and royal authority become a complete body that contains both matter and form, which deeply affects the civilization's borders and how the power and authority are shared. The quiddity comprising the matter and form receives some qualities that are free from the bearers of the power and authority. These qualities exceed even the goal and will of the person who controls the royal authority. The mentioned qualities are structural needs that arise with conscious or unconscious acts of a person or a group in the society. Similar cases include almost all spiritual beings that become the focus of the knowledge of civilization when Ibn Khaldūn calls them accidents added to the royal authority *qua* its essence. These cases necessitated by form are the hardest ones to explain because they occur in a civilization because of agents in that civilization. These convey the individual and social contributions of the bearers, and they convey most elements that constitute the matter of the civilization. A solution requires both distinctively analyzing the attributes of the matter and form and distinguishing the subjected limitations and situations required because the form can be found in a specific matter.

The actual unification of the social being and royal authority, achieved through laws dependent on benefits, is an additional case to be considered, and it involves privatization (unlike the previous cases); this case is also relevant for the bearers of power and authority. In this case, the royal authority is given to grant benefits. Although the benefit-granting degree differs among individuals with royal authority, this case adds to the natural goal of the royal authority certain volitional goals that aim to maintain the civilization. It replaces offense with defense, conflict with calmness, coercion with compassion, relative wildness with closeness, rudeness with elegance, and nuisance with peace. An important result of this situation is an increase in the number of bearers of authority, i.e., power by "controlling" and authority by "meeting the demands of someone else or a group." This numerical expansion can happen with the help of either civil institutions or actual institutionalized cases. The institutions, defined according to their benefits and necessarily gaining an existence

free from the bearers of royal authority (to maintain the nature of royal authority), acquire a systemic character and limit the power of the possessor of royal authority because they bear the nature of royal authority in their essence. Because they commonly fulfill their demands by force, they function as "controllers" of royal authority within certain limits. While the institutions represent the actualization of benefits, the authority is shared between those who determine, apply, and control the benefits. The power dramatically loses its function as a source of authority, and the knowledge, application, and control of benefits constitute a source of authority. Private and corporate rights are determined according to the benefits and laws, not the capacity of the force and its control. The legitimacy of power as a sustainable case in a political or religious royal authority, compared with a natural royal authority, is bound by laws and benefits, and it is explained in the framework of the notion of justice.

Ibn Khaldūn sees this stage as one in which the characters of man are more visible, not because he is animal, but instead because he is a rational and reflective being. According to him, the qualities by which man maintains his existence as man are good qualities (*khilāl al-khayr*). Good qualities are complementary of the honor (*majd*) that is an extension of the *ʿaṣabiyya*. Because royal authority is the goal of *ʿaṣabiyya*, royal authority is also the goal of *ʿaṣabiyya*'s complementary qualities and extensions. Without good qualities, the nature of royal authority always stays imperfect, even if royal authority is realized.[19] These qualities are realized by obeying the individual, and social benefits and virtues (*faḍīla*) emerge. If these qualities are abandoned, the possessors of royal authority, power, and authority start to lose their ranks. The realization of the nature of the royal authority changes the offense and *muṭālaba*, which cause the *ʿaṣabiyya* to gain its royal authority into defense and self-protection in the process. If luxury, peace, and prosperity, which emerge with the perfection of royal authority, are not balanced with virtues, they will demolish the bases of royal authority that are the form of the civilization; with a new *ʿaṣabiyya*, the foundation of a new royal authority begins.

Observations made so far show that, according to Ibn Khaldūn, there is no sociological form of royal authority and power. When the concept of royal authority is considered in its pure state in the pro-

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[19]   *Ibid.*, 133-135.

cess that Ibn Khaldūn calls "natural royal authority," the theory of royal authority turns into a theory that explains dynasties. Royal authority in its pure state inclines toward the *infirād* by nature and requires power to be collected in one person. The changes to royal authority in the process and its two basic stages indicate that this theory is not unique to dynasties. One can understand the *ʿaṣabiyya* as providing social solidarity and the *infirād* as the centralization of power. The situation of "fulfilling the demands by force" that forms the nature of the royal authority and the changes that the power and authority undergo in the two stages are situations that can happen in every kind of regime. Ibn Khaldūn distinguishes terms such as *ʿaṣabiyya,* royal authority, hegemony, benefit, and law, all of which are the framework of the royal authority theory as terms that require mutual relativity (*taḍāyuf*) and whose realization degrees differ in some cases, although their definitions do not change. The human conditions indicated by these terms emerge at the social level and require each other, and these terms can only be understood in reference to each other. Conversely, realizing these situations at the social level has no form or quantity in the last instance. Anyone who analyzes the social structure in any society, before analyzing the forms and quantities of spiritual beings, must first state the existence of their meanings or definitions. This theory depends on the concept of power as a necessary consequence of the animal desires of man. In contrast, by relating the maintenance of power to the virtues that balance animal desires, the final perfection of power occurs in the concept of justice. Furthermore, the virtues required by Ibn Khaldūn to maintain both power and the state are seen as human conditions created by limiting the existence of the material beings of state and society. The form of social and political elements is necessarily in a position to produce its own virtues. These virtues arise because man is a rational being. They are not moral values that are tools to reach the metaphysical realities or requirements of God's orders. They are universal principles that are the result of the material being, and according to this definition, they are required for the creation of a social structure.

B. The Metaphysical Foundations of the Theory of Royal Authority

Ibn Khaldūn's theory of royal authority depends on the five principles of classical Islamic metaphysics, as seen in Ibn Sīnā. The first principle is that the existence of man consists of the soul and the

body. The second is that all bodies consist of matter and form, and the difference among bodies is due to new forms of matter. The third is the distinction between essence and existence, which Ibn Sīnā developed to explain the relationship between unity and multitude. The fourth is the Aristotelian principle of teleology. According to this principle, everything that exists has a final purpose, and everything is in movement to fulfill its purpose. The fifth principle is the general consequence of these principles: everything's perfection is included in its definition, and anything can reach its perfection as much as its definition allows. Ibn Khaldūn's success is his ability to apply these principles to the social level, which constitutes the focus of the knowledge of civilization, in accordance with the hierarchy of the philosophical sciences. He offers two statements that precede this application: the first is about the method of being and the second is about the scope of being.

First, Ibn Khaldūn is aware that there is no complete overlap between the philosophical sciences, which are divided into theoretical and practical sciences and the scope of being, which these main divisions are supposed to examine. Al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā divide beings into those who exist by human will and those exist without human will, and they consider the philosophical sciences. The things that exist with humans are assigned to the practical sciences, including morality, home management, and politics. These sciences have two sides: theoretical and practical. In the theoretical aspect, the universal rules about the examined subjects are stated and investigated, while the volitional acts that should be performed or prevented are stated and investigated in the practical aspect. Although the theoretical side is accepted as a part of the practical sciences, it is actually included in the theoretical sciences.[20] According to Ibn Khaldūn, as a practical science, politics seems to examine the human communities shaped by human individuals that come together. If examined more closely, however, the case is not so, as the situation of being about something is completely different from examining that thing, as it is that thing.

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[20] For further information, see al-Fārābī, Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṭarkhān, *Kitâbu'l-Burhân* [*Kitāb al-Burhān*] (translated into Turkish by Ömer Türker and Ömer Mahir Alper; Istanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2008), 48-51; Ibn Sīnā, Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAlī, *Kitâbu'ş-Şifâ: Mantığa Giriş* [=*Kitāb al-Shifāʾ: al-Madkhal*] (translated into Turkish by Ömer Türker; Istanbul: Litera Yayınları, 2006), 5-9.

The science of politics considers how human communities should be governed. In this case, politics, which is a practical science, considers society because it is subject to governments, not because it is a society. The same applies to the science of rhetoric, which is a sub-branch of the art of logic and "consists of convincing talks that make people accept a view or deny it."[21] Ibn Khaldūn states that there is a methodological difference between the science of civilization, politics, and rhetoric because the science of civilization addresses statements and analysis, while the other two are both nominative sciences. Ibn Khaldūn implicitly observes that the social being not only unexamined by sciences of politics and rhetoric in its pure form but also not explored by them. He must therefore prove the existence of the social being, which is the focus of the science of civilization.

Ibn Khaldūn bases the existence of society on the traditional definition of the Muslim philosophers about man. According to this definition, man is "a rational animal." This definition constitutes the foundation of the theory of civilization and royal authority. While animalness is the source of man's needs, which come from a human individual and his acts directed to meet these needs, rationality is the source of his moral, political, and social values. This principle changes into a strong explanatory frame when combined with the other assumptions mentioned above. Accordingly, the definition indicates human nature's requirements do not change, although its subject and qualities change according to individuals or societies. Following the Avicennian tradition of functionalizing definitions, Ibn Khaldūn determines the nature and goal of man according to this definition. Ibn Sīnā, in "metaphysizing" the concept of essence and existence, which was a logical division in the Aristotelian tradition, distinguished between the requirements of existence and essence. He re-interpreted the principles of causality and purpose. Ibn Khaldūn, following Ibn Sīnā, sees the definition of man as the essence of man, i.e., an unchangeable self and personality. As this essence gains its existence in the external world, the genus and differentia in the definition (animal

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[21] For a detailed analysis of Ibn Khaldūn's views on this subject, see Ahmet Arslan, *İbn Haldûn'un İlim ve Fikir Dünyası*, 81-83; Şenol Korkut, "İbn Haldûn'un 'es-Siyâsetü'l-medeniyye' Teorisini Eleştirisi [Ibn Khaldūn's Critique of the Theory of 'al-Siyāsa al-madaniyya']," *İslâm Araştırmaları Dergisi* [*Turkish Journal of Islamic Studies*] 15 (*İbn Haldun Özel Sayısı I* [*Special Issue: Ibn Khaldūn I*]) (2006), 115-140.

and rational) become the matter and form of man. Although it is impossible for matter and form to exist without each other or be separated in the outside world, they have their own requirements. As mentioned above, the requirements of matter cause the social being to emerge in human communities, whereas the requirements of form reveal the cases related to civilization *qua* civilization. The theory of matter and form suggests that the requirements of form occur and are shaped according to matter. The matter and form of anything determine its goal and the limits of its perfection. A wheat germ contains its transformation, first to a wheat seed, then to a wheat ear and finally to a fully grown wheat kernel. These stages are the goal of this germ and the perfections it can reach. These perfections are the limits of its essence, and it is impossible for it to exceed these limits. A careful reader may notice that all observations about the spiritual cases of civilization are made according to these principles. Just like all perfections of a wheat germ are potentially included in itself, all perfections of human communities are included in the matter and form of man. These perfections are the goal both of man as individual, if material conditions allow, and of human communities. All things strive for perfection as long as their matter, and the causes and conditions that move their matter allow for it. Likewise, societies strive for perfection, which is also included in the definition of man. Although the necessary requirements for matter are a sort of perfection, the final requirement of the species is realizing all requirements of its form. The final perfection of a society is realizing the rational power of man, which means realizing the requirements of his soul as an abstract being as much as possible. Ibn Khaldūn places laws, sciences, and arts that depend on benefits at the end of the developmental stages of royal authority, which arises from his interpretation of man's social experiment in line with its definition.[22] Just as a germ completes its perfection by becoming a grown ear, civilization achieves its goal and leaves its place to another civilization after becoming as grown as its matter allows. Ibn Khaldūn's idea of history is thus circular, not progressive. Ibn Khaldūn does not say that all perfections potentially included in the human soul can be realized fully in a society. Howev-

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[22] Ibn Khaldūn's observations about the perfection of the human species lead him to contradict himself in evaluating theology and philosophy. He loses his temper when evaluating the relationship between theology and philosophy, yet he is confident in evaluating other cases of royal authority.

er, he is aware that matter is the only tool to perfect the soul, even though it is passive. He thus thinks that natural borders surround a society and state like they surround individuals. The natural borders determine the amount of perfection of the human species that can occur in a society. Because natural borders are changeable, the observations about a given state or society should depend on the experimental data about that state or society. Even if an analysis of the relationship between the matter and form of a civilization provides information about the general cases that might emerge in all civilizations or a theoretical frame about the civilization, the knowledge about the specific qualities and quantities of these cases and their theoretical frame can only be achieved with an experimental search.

Conclusion

The conclusion from the above remarks is thus: In the mind of Ibn Khaldūn, there is a theoretical frame abstracted from time and space, in accordance with the theory of essence about the social being. He assumes that the conceptual frame that presents the nature of civilization analyzes its essence. He also assumes that the accidental changes in a royal authority and state that occur at any time and space do not change the essence of them. To be content with the theoretical frame means falling into the case for which Ibn Khaldūn criticizes philosophers. The most creative aspect of Ibn Khaldūn's readings of philosophy is his transference of metaphysics' explanatory power to social theory, knowing that the general concepts (*al-umūr al-ʿāmma*) should be specified according to some items. Ibn Khaldūn thus materializes the pure logical explanations about the possible, necessary, and impossible for human communities. This situation allows him to form a relevant theoretical frame about human nature, society, and even a meta-time. This theoretical frame can only be functionalized with experimental data about a given society. Ibn Khaldūn states the possibility, necessity, and impossibility of the premises depending on their matter. If the genus, distinction, class, and quantity of the potential cases of a thing are known, then the impossible, possible, and necessary qualities of that thing can also be known. Observations

about a specific civilization can thus only be determined according to its matter.[23]

On the one hand, that he depends on the nature and the essence, on the other, that he thinks that the premises about the nature and the essence can be determined according to their matters, not their reasonable consistencies of accuracy and fallacy, gives Ibn Khaldūn the possibility of making the social being a subject of science and balancing the constants and variables. The basic claim of Ibn Khaldūn in his *Muqaddima* is that there must be a theoretical frame that corresponds to facts about state and society *qua* they are state and society to make a correct analysis about a given state and society. What Ibn Khaldūn's theory of royal authority provides is an accurate analysis of state and society as they exist. When the theoretical frame that allows this analysis is abstracted from Ibn Khaldūn's philosophical assumptions, it does not lose its power to state and depict facts. Determining and depicting facts are only possible with the questions that come before the philosophical assumptions. Even if we accept that the theory comes before the observation, we can understand this as a correlation between the questions and the things known because of the questions, as in the *Kitāb al-Burhān* of Ibn Sīnā.[24] In this case, the theory loses its analytical power and basic claims because the concepts of nature, essence, and goal, as Ibn Khaldūn uses them, are closed to progressivism and evolutionism. His theory differs from the modern social progressive and evolutionist theories. This is the essentialist side of the theory. If we deny the distinction between soul and body, most of Ibn Khaldūn's remarks in the spiritual cases of civilization lose their importance and become simple observations. Ibn Khaldūn explains the social virtues that occur in society, the sciences, the arts, and situations, including magic, prophecy, dream, and revelation, according to this principle.

Thanks to its essentialist and dualist characters, the science of civilization depends on the metaphysical traditions of Islam. This theory has the possibility of alternative thinking, as its dualistic side depends

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[23] For Ibn Khaldūn's views on the basic concepts of metaphysics, see Ömer Türker, "The Perception of Rational Sciences in the *Muqaddimah*: Ibn Khaldūn's Individual Aptitudes Theory," *Asian Journal of Social Science* XXXVI/3-4 (*Special Focus: Ibn Khaldun*) (2008), 471-472.

[24] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitâbu'ş-Şifâ: II. Analitikler* [=*Kitāb al-Shifāʾ: al-Burhān*] (translated into Turkish by Ömer Türker; Istanbul: Litera Yayıncılık, 2006), 201-209.

on the assumption that the soul is an intellectual substance. It might be possible to re-interpret the concept of essence while considering the modern criticisms of essentialism. However, if we abandon the existence of the soul and its being an intellectual substance, it is impossible to keep in touch with the post-Ghazālian philosophy, theology, and mysticism of Islam, of which Ibn Khaldūn is a successor.

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