

Property Rights According to Ibn Khaldūn

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Abstract

Ibn Khaldūn was a thinker who made significant observations on the subject of property and put forward pioneering views on the foundation of property. In a very early period, he expressed important views on the relationship between labor and property, the source of property and the acquisition of property. Although he did not define property precisely, he expressed that property was a Sharia ruling and that the earth was the common property of humanity (participation in benefiting) before private property was formed. Ibn Khaldūn emphasized the need to protect property, stating that labor alone cannot justify property, and for property to be stable, it must be recognized as a legitimate right by others and protected by a power. Ibn Khaldūn explained property with the concept of labor at a time when

Geliş/Received: 03.02.2026 | Kabul/Accepted: 30.03.2026 | Yayın/Published: 31.03.2026

Atf/Citation: Özdemir, Recep. "İbn Haldūn'a Göre Mülkiyet Hakkı". *Muamelat: İslam İktisadı Dergisi* 2/1 (Mart 2026), 93-112. / Özdemir, Recep. "Property Right According to Ibn Khaldūn". *Muamelat: Journal of Islamic Economics* 2/1 (March 2026), 93-112.

<https://doi.org/10.36657/muamelat.1880841>

İntihal/Plagiarism: Bu makale en az iki hakem tarafından incelendi ve intihal içermediği teyit edildi./This article has been reviewed by at least two referees and scanned via a plagiarism software.

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theoretical discussions on the origin of property had not yet been held. With this approach, he influenced John Locke, who grounded property in a similar way in later periods. There are close similarities between John Locke's labor theory and Ibn Khaldūn's views on labor. In addition, Ibn Khaldūn, who defended the inviolability of property rights, the understanding of private property and the principle of free market, made analyses that can be considered important in terms of the history and theory of property. This study will examine Ibn Khaldūn's thoughts on property, its origin, and its preservation, based on his work *Muqaddimah*, and will present findings that laid the groundwork for the formation of his "labor theory", which plays a significant role in the foundation of property rights.

Keywords: Islamic Law, Property, Labor, Ibn Khaldūn, Sustenance.

İbn Haldūn'a Göre Mülkiyet Hakkı

Öz

İbn Haldūn mülkiyet konusunda önemli tespitlerde bulunmuş, mülkiyetin temellendirilmesi konusunda öncü görüşler ileri sürmüş bir düşünürdür. Çok erken sayılabilecek bir dönemde emek ve mülkiyet arasında bulunan ilişki, mülkiyetin kaynağı ve mülkiyetin iktisabının sebepleri konularında önemli görüşler beyan etmiştir. Mülkiyeti tam olarak tanımlamamakla birlikte, mülkiyetin *şer'î* bir hüküm olduğunu ve özel mülkiyet oluşmadan önce yeryüzünün insanlığın ortak malı (ibaha ortaklığı) olduğunu dile getirmiştir. İbn Haldūn mülkiyetin korunması gerektiğini gündeme getirerek emeğin tek başına mülkiyeti temellendiremeyeceğini, mülkiyetin sabit olması için mülkiyetin diğer insanlar tarafından meşru bir hak görülmesi ve bir güç tarafından korunması gerektiğini belirtmiştir. İbn Haldūn, mülkiyetin kökenine dair teorik tartışmaların henüz gündeme gelmediği, teorik bir zeminde tartışılmadığı dönemlerde mülkiyeti emek kavramıyla açıklamış, bu yaklaşımıyla sonraki dönemlerde mülkiyeti benzer şekilde temellendirmeye çalışan *John Locke*'u düşünsel planda etkilemiştir. John Locke'un emek teorisi ile İbn Haldūn'un emeğe ilişkin görüşleri arasında yakın benzerlikler bulunmaktadır. Ayrıca mülkiyet haklarının dokunulmazlığını, özel mülkiyet anlayışını ve serbest piyasa ilkesini savunan İbn Haldūn, mülkiyet tarihi ve teorisi açısından önemli sayılabilecek analizler yapmıştır. Bu çalışmada İbn Haldūn'un *el-Mukaddime* isimli eseri temel alınarak onun mülkiyet, mülkiyetin kökeni ve korunmasına dair düşünceleri ele alınacak, mülkiyetin

temellendirilmesinde önemli bir yere sahip olan “emek teorisi”nin oluşumuna zemin hazırlayan bulgular sunulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İslam Hukuku, Mülkiyet, Emek, İbn Haldûn, Rızık.

Introduction

An important issue that concerns human beings as much as their relations with their fellow human beings is their relations with property. Humanity’s relationship with property has a dimension that determines the form of his relationship with other people. The content of the legal norm is mostly determined by man’s relationship with things and the debt relations arising from this relationship. The sharing, ownership and disposition of objects that are essential for human life and the nature of these dispositions have always been the subject of debate throughout history. It is in the essence of human beings to acquire objects, to benefit from them and to legally own them. In order to sustain his life and fulfil his basic needs, man has appropriated the objects existing in the universe and established dominion over them. Human ownership of objects and securing them has been and continues to be one of the main subjects of law. Property is one of the most complex issues of law and has been the subject of debate in many respects. The first basic problem about property is the problem of grounding it on a legal basis. Different theories have been put forward on how property first emerged and on what grounds the first human communities owned objects. The theories of property that try to justify property have generally explained property with elements such as occupation, labor, utility, usufruct and possession. Property has been the center of attention of legal systems, religions, ideologies, social and cultural institutions throughout history. Many thinkers have expressed opinions on issues such as the origin, distribution and change of ownership. Ibn Khaldûn is one of the thinkers who dealt with property at a theoretical level.

Ibn Khaldûn, who lived in North Africa in the 14th century, is especially known for his work called *al-Muqaddimah*. He is one of the rare thinkers whose influences continue to be discussed intensively today. Ibn Khaldûn trained himself in many fields. He received his primary education from his father. He memorized the Qur’an and learned the science of recitation. He received lessons in Arabic language and literature from many teachers, especially his father. He memorized the poems of poets such as Abû Tammâm (d. 231/846) and Mutanabbî (d. 354/965) and some of the poems in *al-Ağānî*. He also read some parts of *Şaḥîḥ al-Muslim* and *al-Muwattâ’*

and other books of six hadith books (Kutub al-Sittah) from *Vadiāşī*. He studied *fiqh* from many scholars.¹

Ibn Khaldūn is a different thinker from the scholars who lived before him because he dealt with the problems of society through analysis. He did not simply preach, but described social events and facts with his own unique method. He analyzed the reasons underlying social events and researched the general laws that guide them. The main purpose is to know the society and to determine the conditions suitable for the structure of the society for its general improvement. In this respect, he is in the position of a doctor seeking solutions to social problems.

Ibn Khaldūn's views spread for many years, especially in the West.² In comparison to thinkers such as Ibn Rushd and Ibn Sina, he revealed his method in his work called *al-Muqaddimah* and systematized his scientific thought. Ibn Khaldūn is considered the founder of the science of *'umrān*, which has not been revealed before in the history of thought. In this way, he has introduced a unique method. In addition, he is considered the founder of modern sociology and historical philosophy. He was a historian and jurist with a wide range of interests.³

Ibn Khaldūn was a historian and jurist with a wide range of interests. In his introductory work to history, *al-Muqaddimah*, which he wrote in Oran when he was 43 years old, he included deep analyzes on many branches of science such as geography, history, sociology, economics and psychology. Ibn Khaldūn made important determinations regarding astrology, Arabic language, philosophy, classification of sciences and educational psychology.⁴ Today, the dimensions and effects of his scientific knowledge continue to be discussed.⁵

At the center of Ibn Khaldūn's thought system is the *science of 'umrān*, which he pioneered. The purpose of this science is to save people from imitation and to give them a perspective on understanding what has happened before and what will happen later. According to him, in order to reach the true knowledge of history and society, it is necessary to start from the objective observation of events and facts.

1 Süleyman Uludağ, "İbn Haldūn", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 1999), 19/ 538-543; Nihat Falay, *İbni Haldun'un İktisadi Görüşleri* (İstanbul: Pınar Yayınları, 1978), 45 vd.

2 For an evaluation see: Nurettin Nebati, "İbn Haldun düşüncesinde tarih, zaman ve döngüsellik", *Hitit Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 12/1 (Haziran 2019), 141-158.

3 Abdu'l-mun'im Nur, "İbn Haldūn ke-mufekkir ictimā'i 'Arabī", *Mihricān İbn Haldūn*, (Kahire: el-Meclis el-A'lā li-Ri'āyet el-Funūn ve'l-Ādāb ve'l-'Ulūm el-İctimā'iyye, 1962) 89.

4 Wali Uddin Abdirrahman 'Abdirrahmān b. Muamḥmad Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah* (Dimaşq: Maktaba Al-Hidāya, 2004), 2/320.

5 Gierer, Alfred. "Ibn Khaldūn on Solidarity ("Asabiyah") - Modern Science on Cooperativeness and Empathy: a Comparison". *Philosophia Naturalis* 38 (2001) 95.

The changes and types of civilizations and societies over time should be examined. There is a need for a scientific discipline to achieve this purpose. Ibn Khaldūn revealed that this scientific discipline is the science of *umran*. Thus he laid the foundations of both philosophy of history and sociology.⁶

Ibn Khaldūn touched upon many subjects, especially the *science of 'umrān*, in the introduction of his work, which he described as “the unique and outstanding work among its counterparts”. He explained at the beginning of his work that he discussed the changes that took place in the times and the lifestyles of the tribes who lived in those ages and the reasons why they took over the administration and the country. In addition, *asabiyyah*, the state of settled or nomadic life in cities and countries, migration, gaining power, loss of power, science, art, trade, profit and loss, are events which can occur in course of time. He explained many issues such as change of situations within the course of time, leaving nomadic life and settling down, the emergence and disappearance of civilisation, and emerging of new phenomena.⁷

Ibn Khaldūn discussed and analyzed many issues related to economics, as well as subjects such as history, philosophy of history, society, nomadism (*badāwah*), sedentarism (*ḥaḍārah*), state, politics, education, science. In *al-Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn deals with general issues such as the relationship between the economic situation and social structure, the effect of prosperity on the development and collapse of societies, as well as more specific topics such as sustenance, earnings, ways of earning, labor, wealth, distribution of wealth, and cultivation of the earth, which are within the scope of the right of property.⁸ In a period that can be considered early compared to modern economic research, Ibn Khaldūn dealt with issues related to economic events and systematized and regularized them.⁹ Although Ibn Khaldūn did not use the term economics to express the science of economics, he argued that economic formations have a very important position for humanity and are the essential factors for the emergence and progress of civilizations.¹⁰ His views on property, the source of property, the acquisition and distribution of property have been discussed from many perspectives.¹¹ The impact of his views on economic movements that have emerged throughout history has been discussed.

6 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 1/ 285-286, 328, 331.

7 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 1/ 13-14.

8 See for example: Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 1-70.

9 Mehmet Onur, “İbni Haldun’un İslam Ekonomisi ile İlgili Görüşleri”, *Türkiye İlahiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6/1 (Haziran 2022), 37-59.

10 Onur, “İbni Haldun’un İslam Ekonomisi ile İlgili Görüşleri”, 37.

11 For more information, see: Rukiye Yiğit, “İbn Haldun ve İktisadi Görüşleri”, *Maruf İktisat İslam İktisadi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2/2012), 4-17; Eşref Davâbe, *İbn Haldun İslâm İktisadi Düşünce Tarihi* (İstanbul: İzü Yayınları, 2021), 599-625.

The main objective of this study is to analyze Ibn Khaldūn's views on property. Ibn Khaldūn is seen to have held significant opinions in the field of economics. Indeed, many studies focus on his views on economics. However, we have not come across a study that specifically focuses on Ibn Khaldūn's understanding of property. A large part of the studies is about the nature and causes of economic phenomena. However, property is at the basis of economic phenomena and events. A simple economic event, and even a small behavior, is guided by the fact of property. In this study, before moving on to Ibn Khaldūn's views on property, the views of philosophers and jurists will be included. Thus, Ibn Khaldūn's position will be determined with a comparative method. Ibn Khaldūn's fundamental work, *al-Muqaddimah*, will be taken as the basis in the study. In addition, the fundamental works of thinkers who shed light on the subject will also be referred to.

1. Definition and Necessity of Ownership

Ownership is generally defined as “a right that provides a person with sovereignty over things” or “the right that provides the broadest authority and dominance over things”.¹² The property rights include dispositions such as the right to possess the object, to use it, to authorize its usage, to pledge it, to transfer it, or even to destroy it, and the ability of any debtor to manage them freely without the need for the intermediary of another person.¹³

Ibn Khaldūn did not directly define property, but general outline of his understanding of property can be drawn by considering some of his thoughts. Ibn Khaldūn attributed man's ownership of property to man's authorization by God. This approach of his is reminiscent of the approach of thinkers such as Qarafi (d. 684/1285), Ibn Taymiyya, and Ibn Shat (d. 723/1323) and Ibn al-Humām (d. 861/1456) who define ownership as a religious authority or a religious rule.¹⁴ In this context, Ibn Khaldūn's evaluations overlap with Ibn al-Humām's definition. He defined ownership as “It is an authority provided by Sharia primarily for savings”.¹⁵

12 Fikret Eren, *Mülkiyet Hukuku* (Ankara: Yetkin Yayıncılık, 2016), 16.

13 Hüseyin Hatemi vd, *Eşya Hukuku* (İstanbul: Filiz Kitabevi, 1991), 9.

14 Şahâbaddîn al-Qarafi, *al-Furûk*, nşr. M. Revvâs Kal'aci (Beyrut: Dârü'l-ma'rife, ts.) 3/ 368; Siraj al-Dîn Abu al-Qâsim b. Abdillâh İbnü's-Şât, *İdrâru's-Şurûk alâ Envâri'l-Furûk*, thk. Halil el-Mansûr (Bayrût: yy., 1418/1998) 3/ 364 vd.; Takuyiddîn Ahmed el-Harrânî İbn Teymiyye, *Kavâidu'n-Nûrâniyye Fıkhıyye* (Riyâd: Dâru İbn-i Cevziyye, 1422), 218.

15 Kamal al-Dîn Muḥammad ibn 'Abdirrahmân al-Siwâsi al-İskandari İbn al-Humâm, *Takmilah Sharh Fath al-Kadir I-X*, (*Sharh Fath al-Kadir 'alâ Hidâya Sharh Bidâya Muḥtadî içinde*) (Bayrût: Dâr al-Kutüb al-'İlmayya, 2003), 5/ 456.

The first fundamental issue regarding ownership is the issue of grounding ownership on a legal basis. One of the ongoing debates about property throughout history is whether property is necessary and – if so – how it first arose. Different theories have been put forward about how property first emerged and why the first human communities owned objects. Property has been the focus of attention of legal systems, religions, ideologies, social and cultural institutions throughout history.¹⁶

Before explaining the means of acquiring ownership, Ibn Khaldūn emphasized its necessity and the importance of concepts related to ownership. According to Ibn Khaldūn, human beings by nature need things that will enable them to survive in their behaviors and states from birth to death. The owner of the property is truly Allah, who does not need anything. Man, on the other hand, needs what God has. Ibn Khaldūn said that it is inherent and necessary: “Allah is the free of need, while you are the needy.”¹⁷ He shows this verse as evidence. He stated that Allah created everything on earth for humans and authorized humans to dispose of it. This view of his is in line with the Qur’an’s stance on this issue. “Moreover, He has placed everything in the heavens and the earth at your disposal as a blessing from Himself.”¹⁸ “He put the sun and the moon at your service.”¹⁹ “He put the sea at your service.”²⁰ “He put ships at your service.”²¹ He put forward the verses as evidence to prove his view.²² Ibn Khaldūn argues that this principle is both inherent and necessary, citing the verse: “Allah is free of need, while you are the needy.” He further maintains that Allah created everything on earth for human use and granted humans the authority to benefit from it. This view is consistent with the Qur’an’s perspective on the matter, as reflected in several verses: “He has placed everything in the heavens and the earth at your disposal as a blessing from Himself,” “He has subjected the sun and the moon to your service,” “He has subjected the sea to your service,” and “He has subjected ships to your service.”²³

Ibn Khaldūn states that all people share in owning the objects on earth. According to him, all people have the authority to jointly venture in goods that have not yet come under human control. This freedom of enterprise has the potential to open

16 Recep Özdemir, *İslam Hukukunda Mülkiyet Teori ve İktisab* (İstanbul: Hiperlink Yayınları, 2018), 20 vd.

17 Muḥammad 47/7.

18 al-Ghashiyah 88/13.

19 Ibrahim 14/33.

20 al-Ghashiyah 88/12.

21 Ibrahim 14/33.

22 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65.

23 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65.

the door to chaos and the usurpation of owned goods in the future. Ibn Khaldūn states that a property owned first hand cannot be taken by someone else without paying a price (contribution/ivaz).²⁴ He offered a solution to this problem by stating that the first property would change hands by paying a price.

Ibn Khaldūn implies that before the right of property emerged, the earth was open to the common domination of all people, and indirectly, the earth was an ownerless property for people.²⁵ This approach brings to the agenda the situation of ownerless properties that do not have ownership rights, which is valid in Islamic law. Accordingly, all goods are permissible goods before ownership occurs. In Islam, it is accepted that the universe was given to humankind jointly by God. All people have ownership over objects that are not privately owned in the universe. Everyone can equally enjoy the benefits of these things.²⁶ All people acquire them through means such as invasion (istila'), domination (ḥiyaza), expulsion (ihraz), seizure (vaq'u'l-yad), and thus ownership is formed.²⁷ This also shows that Ibn Khaldūn accepted private property and that it was legally protected.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, property is an essential pursuit for humans. When a person overcomes the limits of being weak and achieves self-sufficiency, he begins to look for the things necessary to meet his basic and essential needs. The verse "Seek sustenance from Allah"²⁸ is the religious source of this.²⁹

Considering the verse he mentioned in *al-Muqaddimah* and his evaluations, can be concluded that although Ibn Khaldūn did not define ownership directly, he saw it as a religious provision and authority, and that he initially accepted the view that the earth was the common property of all humanity and that people acquired property through their own efforts.

2. Basis of Ownership

Many theories have been put forward regarding the basis of ownership throughout history. It has been questioned how property first emerged. Many debates have occurred regarding the legal and philosophical basis of the right to property. Alongside with the change of the means of production and the emergence of new legal

24 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65.

25 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65.

26 Karâfi, *Furûk*, 3/367; Zeynuddin Abdirrahman b. Ahmed el- Hanbeli İbn Receb, *Tekrîru'l-Kavâid ve Tahîrîru'l-Fevâid* (b.y: Dâru'l-İbn Affân, ts.), 2/288.

27 Abdüsselâm Dâvûd el-Abbâdi, *el-Milkiyye fi's-şer'i'ati'l-İslâmiyye* (Amman: yy., 1974), 1/ 360-371; Abdülkerîm Zeydân, *el-Medhal li-dirâseti's-şer'i'ati'l-İslâmiyye* (Bağdad: yy., 1976), 249-263.

28 al-`Ankabut 29/17.

29 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/65.

doctrines throughout history, different theories regarding the basis of ownership have arised. Thinkers who adopted the idea of natural law explained property in terms of nature and creation. Those who are against the idea of natural law explained property with labor benefit and will.³⁰

Before moving on to Ibn Khaldūn's views on the origin of property, it would be useful to discuss existing opinions on this subject.

The first theory of the origin of property is occupation. Since the ideas put forward by Cicero, property has been explained by occupation. According to Cicero, the real owner of the properties acquired through occupation is God. Property was given to man by God.³¹ John Locke, who tried to explain the origin of property with an external reason other than nature and creation, argued that property arises from labor. Locke based his views regarding property largely on the idea of natural law. According to him, labor creates property, and property creates labor.³² Another view regarding the origin of property is the view that property arises from will. Ownership inherently includes freedom of will and sovereignty. In other words, property is a necessary consequence of will. This theory was put forward by Kant, Hegel and Thomas Hill Green.³³ Another emerging view on the origin of property is utilitarianism. Legal benefit prepares the ground for the formation of ownership. The idea that takes legal benefit as a criterion in establishing property was first defended by the English thinker David Hume. Later, this idea was adopted and developed by other philosophers.³⁴

Ibn Khaldūn's most important contribution to the concept of property is his view on how it first emerged. Ibn Khaldūn explained the origin of property with labor. He frequently touches upon the labor-property relationship.³⁵ He states that people can only survive through labor and work. Although it is possible for a person to benefit from some things without making any effort, they only have an auxiliary quality. For example, rain and similar objects that are necessary for plants and

30 Adnan Güriz, *Teorik Açıdan Mülkiyet Sorunu* (Ankara: yy., 1969), 135.

31 Sabriye Akoğlu, *Cicero'da Tanrı, İnanç ve Yazgı Özgür İstenç'te Assensio'nun Yeri* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi, 2006), 115; Fahri Demir, *İslâm Hukunda Mülkiyet Hakkı ve Servet Dağılımı* (Ankara: DİB Yayınları, 2003), 148.

32 John Locke, *Yönetim Üzerine İkinci İnceleme* (İstanbul: Eksi Kitaplar, 2016), 26; Akbay Muvaffak, *Umumi Amme Hukuku Dersleri* (Ankara: yy., 1951), 29; Sadri Maksudi Arsal, *Hukuk Felsefesi Tarihi* (İstanbul: yy., 1946), 183.

33 G.W.F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, çev. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 77 vd.; Güriz, *Mülkiyet Sorunu*, 252; Demir, *İslâm Hukunda Mülkiyet Hakkı ve Servet Dağılımı*, 150.

34 Güriz, *Mülkiyet Sorunu*, 198; Demir, *İslâm Hukunda Mülkiyet Hakkı ve Servet Dağılımı*, 157.

35 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65; Güriz, *Mülkiyet Sorunu*, 60.

animals can be counted. People are in need of labor to make a living with these auxiliary elements. God has put the universe, with all its elements, at the service of man. Human beings, in the first place, have common ownership of the universe by a Sharia provision. Allah commanded people to seek sustenance to survive.³⁶ A person acquires property by working hard. The first property consisted of some necessary goods that people acquired to survive. After the first ownership is established, the transfer of ownership from hand to hand is possible through means of exchange, which is the lineal form of ownership. After going through a period of weakness and gaining enough strength to benefit from objects on earth, man has to work to continue his life and acquire property.³⁷ Ibn Khaldūn accepts that there is a definite link between property and labor and that only labor has the power to create value. Earnings and property are obtained by exerting force and effort. Because if property is obtained through skill and industry, it is obvious that this gain requires effort. It is obvious that if profit can be made by utilizing animals, plants and minerals, this will be achieved through human power and effort. Without effort, nothing can be achieved and the opportunity to benefit does not arise. The value of an object is measured by the labor spent on that goods.³⁸

According to Ibn Khaldūn, there is a definite relationship between property and labor, and only labor has the power to create value. Every income and property is obtained by spending strength and effort. Because if property is acquired through craftsmanship and industry, it is obvious that this property requires effort. If property is acquired through the use of animals, plants and minerals, it is obvious that this will be achieved through human power and effort. Nothing can be achieved without effort and the opportunity to benefit does not arise.³⁹

According to his approach, the things created on earth for the benefit of human beings can only be made available for use through labor and work. Although it is possible to benefit from some things necessary for living things, such as rain, without labor, these are only auxiliary elements. Man has to make labor to sustain his life. According to Ibn Khaldūn, there is a certain relationship between property and labor. Earnings, wealth and property are obtained by spending force and labor, through skill and industry. This situation shows that property requires the

36 Muhammad 47/7; al-Ghashiyah 88/12-13; Ibrahim 14/33.

37 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65.

38 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65-66.

39 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65-68.

expenditure of labor. Property obtained through the utilisation of animals, plants and minerals is ultimately based on human power and labor.

Ibn Khaldūn explained the origin of property through labor, citing verses and hadiths as evidence. This attitude of his is in line with the approach of the Qur'an⁴⁰ and the Sunnah to property and human labor. As a matter of fact, there are many references to human work in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. In some hadiths, Prophet Muhammad invited people to work instead of begging.⁴¹ In some hadiths, it is stated that the previous prophets earned a living through their labor and had a profession.⁴²

Ibn Khaldūn, within the framework of his science of civilization (umran), which formed the systematic structure of his ideas, described property in his own unique way, using an interdisciplinary approach. He argued that the ultimate goal of Bedouin societies, which he used to describe their most primitive and underdeveloped states, was property, and thus presented property as a necessity of urban civilization (ḥaḍari). According to him, Bedouins were more warlike and assertive in acquiring property; therefore, they had developed themselves more in this regard. Similarly, in societies living in cities, having lost their combative characteristics due to the prosperity brought by property, they adopted a defense-oriented strategy by building walls and fortresses to protect their possessions.⁴³

According to Ibn Khaldūn, property is not only an economic concept but also a social one. Owning property increases individuals' social status and power. This also enhances the overall well-being of society because property-owning individuals participate more in economic activities, which in turn supports overall economic growth. Furthermore, since the protection of property is related to institutional factors such as the administration of justice and the rule of law, these factors play a significant role in maintaining social order and stability.

Ibn Khaldūn's views on the origin of property have influenced John Locke, who tried to base property on labor in a similar way in later periods. Because John Locke's theory of labor largely resembles Ibn Khaldūn's views on labor.⁴⁴ According

40 al-Jumu`ah 62/10; al-Najm 53/39.

41 Ebū Abdillāh Muhammed b. İsmāil b. İbrāhīm el-Cu'fī el-Buhārī, *el-Cāmiu's-Sahīh* (Beirut: Dāru İhyā'it-Turāi'l-'Arabi, 2001), "Zekāt", 50, 53; Müsākāt 13; Ahmed b. Şu'ayb el-Hurasāni en-Nesāi, *es-Sünen*, thk. Halil b. Me'mūn Şeyhā (Beirut: Dāru'l-Ma'rife, 2007), "Zekāt", 85; Ebū Abdillāh Muhammed b. Yezid el-Kazvīnī İbni Māce, *es-Sünen*, thk. Yusuf el-Hāc Ahmed (Şam: Mektebetu İbn Hacer, 2004), "Zekāt", 25.

42 el-Buhārī, "Büyü", 15; İbni Māce, "Ticârât", 5.

43 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65.

44 Güriz, *Mülkiyet Sorunu*, 66.

to Locke, God gave the world to human beings in common.⁴⁵ His view is in full compliance with the principle in Islam that the world was created by God for the common benefit of humanity.

John Locke lived in a period after Ibn Khaldūn's death. He is the thinker of the seventeenth century. Moreover, thoughts similar to those of Ibn Khaldūn have emerged in the western scientific world since the sixteenth century. Although many thinkers such as *Macciavelli, Norbert Elias, Ernest Gellner, John Searle, Arnold Toynbee* were influenced by Ibn Khaldūn, Western intellectuals did not say anything about the relevance of their thoughts to Ibn Khaldūn.⁴⁶

In our opinion, the views of the above-mentioned thinkers on property are based on the basic principles of Islam on property. However, they learned these principles from *al-Muqaddimah*. In other words, Ibn Khaldūn influenced them with his work.

3. Preserving Property for Development

After Ibn Khaldūn based the right of property on labor, he put forward some principles regarding its protection. In fact, he states that labor alone cannot create property, and that in order for property to be fixed, it must be regarded as a legitimate right by other people and protected by a power. Claiming that property created through labor can only be transferred to others in exchange for a price or fee may be interpreted as reflecting his intent to ascribe a legal dimension to property.⁴⁷

He claims which legitimate labor that does not amount to tyranny may be the origin of property. He even states that it is cruelty for the state to interfere with people's property rights acquired through labor. According to him, if the state unfairly takes property rights away from people, then their desire to work and acquire wealth will disappear. When people stop working and owning property, production and the economic growth of society stop. Therefore, the basis of development is that the state protects people's property rights and does not take property away from people through oppression.⁴⁸

Ibn Khaldūn put forward the view that property should be protected and provided with legal security in order to increase prosperity and ensure development. The fact that today's development is conditioned on the legal guarantee of property

45 Locke, *Yönetim Üzerine İkinci İnceleme*, s.26

46 Ümit Hassan, *İbn Haldūn'un Metodu ve Siyaset Teorisi* (İstanbul: Doğu Batı Yayınları, 1998), 25-46

47 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/65-68.

48 Güriz, *Mülkiyet Sorunu*, 65

rights reveals the importance of Ibn Khaldūn's views in this regard. Ibn Khaldūn expressed the principle of legal guarantee of labor, which is an important component of the free market, in an early period. Ibn Khaldūn pointed out that the state should not intervene in the market, should not be a component of the market, and should provide legal security to property.⁴⁹ There is a close relationship between the level of development and welfare. As the level of civilization increases, the level of welfare increases. The structure and level of ownership play an important role in the formation, progress and extinction of civilizations.⁵⁰

Hançerlioğlu claimed that Ibn Khaldūn was the first thinker to advocate economic liberalism in history.⁵¹ It seems that this claim is not very unfair. As a matter of fact, when looked at the assumptions of the leading names of Classical Economics literature, it can be seen that the topics mentioned by Ibn Khaldūn are similar. For example, W. Petty (d. 1687) argues that the state has the right to intervene only in matters such as justice, defense, facilitating agriculture and transportation, ensuring security, combating unemployment and population growth. Adam Smith (d. 1790), the founder of Classical Economics, also argues that the state has no function other than justice, diplomacy and security.⁵² These ideas, which brought economic liberalism to the forefront, bear a strong resemblance to Ibn Khaldūn's economic thoughts.

4. Stages and Acquisition of Property

Ibn Khaldūn classifies property acquired through labor into different categories. These categories, which remind the theological debates around sustenance in the history of Islamic thought, are made according to the importance of property in human life. Ibn Khaldūn calls the essential things that people acquire by working hard to survive as "sustenance". He considers the economic assets spent for that person's essential needs such as eating, drinking, sheltering and dressing within the scope of sustenance.⁵³ He puts forward as evidence the hadith that states that a person has no possessions other than what he eats, wears and spends.⁵⁴ Ibn Khaldūn

49 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65-68.

50 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 32.

51 Oktay Uygun, *İbni Haldun'un Toplum ve Devlet Kuramı* (İstanbul: On İki Levha Yayıncılık, 2008), 14 vd.

52 Adam Smith, *Ulusların Zenginliği*, çev. Mustafa Acar (İstanbul: Liberus Kitap, 2020), 23; Ali Gökhan Gölçek- Mustafa Alpin Gülşen, "İbn Haldun ve Serbest Piyasa Fikri: İbn Teymiyye ve Gazali'den Kanıtlar", *Akademik Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi* 5/57 (Kasım 2017), 576-590.

53 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65-68.

54 Ebu'l-Husayn b. el-Haccâc en-Neyşâbüri Müslim, *el-Câmi'u's-Şâhih*, thk. Halil b. Me'mûn Şeyhân (Bayrût: Dâru'l-Ma'rife, 2007), "Züh'd", 3-4; Ahmed b. Şu'ayb el-Hurasâni en-Nesâi, *es-Sünen*, thk. Halil

considers properties that meet essential needs and ordinary desires as subsistence, and those that exceed them as luxury.⁵⁵ According to his approach, sustenance falls within the scope of properties for subsistence. Those in excess of what is necessary for life constitute a person's wealth. In a state of abundance, people acquire wealth and live in luxury.

Ibn Khaldūn does not clearly state his opinion on whether sustenance is earned through labor or not. However, his distinction between sustenance and labor indicates that he does not present labor as a prerequisite for sustenance. His description of inheritance as gain for the inheritor and sustenance for the heirs is an example of his not seeing labor as a condition for sustenance.⁵⁶ Therefore, Ibn Khaldūn's views on the necessity of labor for earning a living need to be re-analyzed.⁵⁷ Because Ibn Khaldūn stated that labor and work are necessary to provide sustenance, citing the verse "Seek your sustenance with Allah"⁵⁸ as evidence, and also stated that in some cases, such as inheritance, sustenance can be obtained without labor. According to him, some of the sustenance is obtained with labor and some without labor. Therefore, labor is not a necessary condition for sustenance. According to the Qur'an, Allah determines sustenance according to His will.⁵⁹

Ibn Khaldūn discussed the acquisition of property in the context of professions that occur through labor. Ibn Khaldūn does not mention the distinction between "primarily acquiring ownership" and "transferring ownership" in the acquisition of property. He evaluated the acquisition of property according to the degree and form of labor and had a different attitude on this issue. According to him, making a living consists of seeking sustenance by making effort. Different professions are formed depending on the status of labor. Accordingly, taking something from someone legally creates the law of compensation, hunting animals on land and at sea creates hunting; cultivating the land creates farming and processing raw products creates industry and buying and selling goods creates trade. In summary, Ibn Khaldūn considers compensation, hunting, farming, industry and trade as means of gaining property. Considering his general approach, it can be said that labor is the most important means of gaining ownership.⁶⁰

b. Me'mūn Şeyhâ (Bayrūt: Dâru'l-Ma'rife, 2007), "Vesâyâ", 1.

55 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65-68.

56 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65-68.

57 Seyfi Say, *İbn Haldūn'un Düşünce Sistemi Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramı* (İstanbul: İlk Harf Yayınevi, 2011), 65; Güriz, *Teorik Açından Müllkiyet Sorunu*, 66.

58 al-`Ankabut 29/17.

59 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 66.

60 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 68.

Discussion and Conclusion

Property is one of the issues that has been discussed for a long time and has been at the center of interest of many thinkers. Ibn Khaldūn dealt with the issue of property as well as many other major issues concerning human history. In his important work *al-Muqaddimah*, we have reached important conclusions about property. His views are capable of forming the basis of current approaches to property. In this study, the following conclusions were reached in general terms:

Ibn Khaldūn put forward some views on the relationship between labor and property, the origin of property and the acquisition of property. He is one of the rare thinkers who deals with property at the sociological and philosophical level and establishes a relationship between property and power. Ibn Khaldūn supported his views with verses and hadiths. His views were shaped entirely within an Islamic framework. Although he did not directly define property, he said that property is a Sharia judgement. According to him, the ownership of the earth belongs to Allah. Before the emergence of private property, the earth was the common property of humanity. People have a similar initiative in accessing this common property.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, a large part of the ways of acquiring property is based on labor. In his theory of property, the undisputed and most important source of property is labor. Labor is a crucial factor because the resources of the earth only gain meaning through human touch and effort. The world is full of countless possibilities that humans can utilize. However, for these possibilities to become “usable value”, work and labor are absolutely necessary. While natural phenomena like rain are vital for life, they are not sufficient on their own; they are merely auxiliary elements that facilitate production. Humans must process the raw materials of nature to survive and meet their needs. Things obtained without labor are not considered true “gain”. A person’s true sustenance is the value they produce with their own hands and create through their effort. Ibn Khaldūn bases the legitimacy of property on labor. The acquisition of something as property is directly related to the labor and sweat expended on it. This also forms the basis of social order and justice. Before the acquisition of property through labor and work, the universe was offered for the common use of all human beings. According to him, by making people His caliphs on earth, Allah has given them the power to benefit from the whole universe and every being in the universe. The hands of individuals are stretched out to these beings, the beings are common among individuals, and everyone will benefit from them in proportion to their power.

Ibn Khaldūn, by justifying property with labor in an early period, influenced John Locke, who similarly tried to justify property with labor in later periods. It can be said that John Locke, who is accepted as one of the justifiers of property, put forward his labor theory under the influence of Ibn Khaldūn. Because John Locke's labor theory is largely reminiscent of Ibn Khaldūn's views on labor. As a result of accepting the value of labor, Ibn Khaldūn accepted private property. According to him, the origin of private property is the special authority given by God to man to own the objects on earth. God created everything in the universe for man. All human beings have a common initiative in the first stage of acquiring property. Although he did not explicitly mention the method in this first stage, he conditioned the exchange of property on the payment of a certain price. Considering his view that property is under the protection of public authority, it can be concluded that he regarded the right to property as one of the fundamental human rights.

Ibn Khaldūn states that labor must be protected while justifying property. In fact, he states that labor alone cannot justify property, and in order for property rights to be secure, it must be seen as a legitimate right by other people and protected by public authority. He states that the state's interference with the property right that people acquire through labor is oppression. According to him, if the state unjustly takes away the right to property, then people's desire to work and acquire wealth will disappear. When people stop working and owning property, production and economic growth of society stop. Therefore, the basis of development is the state's protection of people's property rights and non-interference in property. Ibn Khaldūn often expressed the principle of legal security of property, which is an important element of the free market.

Ibn Khaldūn's distinction between the concepts of sustenance (*ar-rizk*) and wealth (*aṣ-ṣarva*) is remarkable. According to him, a person who reaches a certain power has to work to make a living. The things that man obtains by working for his life are called "sustenance". When he provides more than the necessary needs, he is in a state of prosperity. In a state of prosperity, man becomes wealthy. If the things obtained by man are spent for property, eating, drinking, dressing and charity, they are called sustenance. The goods that people obtain and collect by laboring are earnings. Ibn Khaldūn made an important contribution to the justification of property in Islamic thought by clearly and accurately revealing the difference between the concepts of sustenance and wealth.

Ibn Khaldūn evaluates means of earning a living from a different perspective, focusing on whether or not they are in accordance with human nature. According

to this approach, some professions are considered natural and positive, while others are characterized as contrary to human nature. Among the *halal* and natural means of earning a living, farming is seen as the first profession on earth, attributed to Prophet *Adam*, the ancestor of humanity. Craftsmanship, on the other hand, is generally considered a fundamental source of livelihood for settled people, acquired through effort and knowledge, and developing with urbanization after a nomadic lifestyle.⁶¹

Ibn Khaldūn does not consider certain professions as natural ways of acquiring property. The first profession he does not consider a natural way to acquire property is that of a ruler/administrator. Here, he is referring to rulers who forcibly seize the property of others using their political power. According to him, the forceful seizure of public property by rulers using their political power is contrary to the principle of justice. Such practices disrupt social order and negatively impact economic activity. In an environment where the security of public property is at risk, people hesitate to invest and engage in economic activities. This leads to economic stagnation and a decrease in state revenue. Furthermore, Ibn Khaldūn does not consider the service sector a natural means of livelihood. According to him, serving wealthy individuals who are incapable of even managing their own affairs is not a behavior befitting human dignity and honor. Ibn Khaldūn suggests that the service sector, due to the inability of wealthy individuals to manage their own affairs, does not give those who serve them a respected position in society. Human nature dictates that individuals should be independent and self-sufficient. Those working in the service sector, due to their dependence on others, cannot fully utilize their own talents and potential. Ibn Khaldūn argues that this situation undermines the individual's inner values and dignity, and is contrary to their nature. Another means of livelihood that Ibn Khaldūn disapproves of is the search for buried treasure. This is rooted in the idea of easy money or wealth without hard work. Furthermore, it wastes the time and effort people would dedicate to it. The risks to their lives and the damage they inflict on cultural heritage should also not be overlooked. These individuals, who spend days secretly digging and find nothing, are considered by Ibn Khaldūn to be lacking in intelligence because they cling to superstitious beliefs that the treasure is magical, sealed, or enchanted. Arguing that this is a futile endeavor, Ibn Khaldūn asserts that the material heritage of ancient nations, like their civilization, shifts and does not remain buried underground.⁶²

61 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65-68.

62 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 2/ 65-68; Mehmet Aksan, *İbn Haldun'un İktisadi Görüşleri* (Adıyaman: Adı-

Ethical Statement/Etik Beyan: It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited./Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.

Competing Interests/Çıkar Çatışması: The author declare that have no competing interests./Yazar, çıkar çatışması olmadığını beyan eder.

Funding/Finansman: The author acknowledge that they received no external funding in support of this research./Yazar, bu araştırmayı desteklemek için herhangi bir dış fon almadıklarını kabul eder.

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