

**THE 'UMRĀNIC THOUGHTS OF IBN KHALDŪN
AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STUDIES OF
ISLAMIC SOCIOLOGY AND CIVILIZATION**

***Abdul Qayyum Abdul Razak**, *S. Salahudin Suyurno*,
*Rawi Nordin***

Academy of Islamic Contemporary Studies. University of
Technology MARA. 78000. Alor Gajah. Melaka. Malaysia.

Email: *qayyum@uitm.edu.my

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Abstract

This study discusses the thoughts of 'umrān by Ibn Khaldūn and its contributions in the sociology and civilization areas. In addition, this study also analyses the 'umrān philosophy that was first introduced by Ibn Khaldūn in the 14-th century. This study was conducted using the deductive and inductive analysis methodology as well as history-search gathered from the *Muqaddimah* book and other related past studies. It was found that the 'umrān theory emphasises on the combination of humans and the nature as well as obedience towards God's laws, which is seen as the best lifestyle that needs to be practiced by all humankind. Ibn Khaldūn also emphasised on the aspect where humans should comprehend histories in developing the society in the future. In addition, the 'umrānic thought is seen as contributing and significance towards the studies of human sociology and civilization. This can be seen when the ideas of 'umrān have influenced later sociological theories such as Malik Bennabi, Arnold Toynbee and others. In addition, Ibn Khaldūn also established an Islamic sociological framework that included God as the lawmaker, man as generator and nature as the source

for utilization. Some scholars also pointed out that Ibn Khaldūn highlighted his ideas on the theory of Muslim revival and the rise and decline of civilization.

Keywords: *'Umrānic* thought; Ibn Khaldūn; *'Umrān*; Islamic sociology; Islamic civilization.

Khulasah

Makalah ini membincangkan pemikiran *'umrān* Ibn Khaldūn dan sumbangannya dalam bidang sosiologi Islam dan pengajian ketamadunan. Selain itu, kajian turut menganalisis falsafah *'umrān* yang mula diperkenalkan pada abad ke-14 Masihi. Kajian ini menggunakan metode analisis induktif dan deduktif serta analisa historis terhadap kitab *Muqaddimah* dan kajian-kajian lain yang berkaitan. Teori *'umrān* didapati menekankan kombinasi antara manusia dan alam serta pegangan kepada peraturan Tuhan, yang mana merupakan cara hidup sebenar yang perlu diterapkan oleh manusia sejagat. Ibn Khaldūn juga menekankan bahawa manusia perlu memahami sejarah bagi pembinaan masyarakat di masa hadapan. Selain itu, teori ini juga banyak memberi sumbangan terhadap bidang sosiologi Islam dan ketamadunan manusia. Ia dapat dilihat apabila pemikiran *'umrān* telah mempengaruhi teori ahli sosiologi selepas itu seperti Malik Bennabi, Arnold Toynbee dan lain-lain. Di samping itu, Ibn Khaldūn juga membentuk kerangka sosiologi Islam yang merangkumi Tuhan sebagai pembuat peraturan, manusia sebagai penjana dan alam sebagai sumber untuk dimanfaatkan. Beberapa pandangan sarjana turut menunjukkan bahawa Ibn Khaldūn mengetengahkan pemikirannya mengenai teori kebangkitan Muslim dan jatuh bangun tamadun.

Kata kunci: Pemikiran *'umrān*; Ibn Khaldūn; *'Umrān*; Sosiologi Islam; Tamadun Islam.

Introduction

There are many contributions from the thoughts of Ibn Khaldūn in his prolegomenon, the *Muqaddimah*. The crucial element from this prolegomenon is 'umrān, which is often translated as the science of society, the science of human and Islamic sociology from various scholarly views. In Mahayudin Yahaya's study, it was an important discourse which Ibn Khaldūn was trying to make, in which the word 'umrān was repeated 225 times in the *Muqaddimah*.¹ It would not have been considered important if Ibn Khaldūn did not repeat the word more than any other word. It is clearly seen here the importance to uncover the ideas and thoughts of 'umrān. Hence, this article aimed at his 'umrānic thoughts contributions towards the Islamic sociology and civilizational studies.

Background of Ibn Khaldūn

Before focusing on his 'umrānic thoughts, here is some background information about Ibn Khaldūn. His real name is Walī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥassan ibn Muḥammad ibn Jābir ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Khaldūn. He was born on 27th May 1332M in Tunisia and died on March 17, 1406M in Egypt.

According to *al-Ta'rīf bi Ibn Khaldūn*,² his family came from Ḥaḍramawt, Yemen and before they moved to Spain. The descendants of Ibn Khaldūn were involved with the reigns of the kingdoms that existed during that time. His father himself was a government officer. After a few years, his father focused himself to science field as Arabic literary

¹ Yahaya, Mahayudin. "'Umran al-'Alam dari Perspektif Ibn Khaldun: Suatu Anjakan Paradigma." *International Journal of West Asian Studies*, Vol. 3 No. 1, (2011), 13.

² Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Ta'rīf bi Ibn Khaldūn wa Rihlatuh Gharbān wa Sharqān* (Lubnān: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1979), 4.

to an expert.³ According to history, Banū Khaldūn (Ibn Khaldūn's family) was one of the most involved and important families of the kingdom of al-Moravids and al-Mohads in al-Andalus until the 11th century.⁴

During the reign of Sultan Abū Ishāq and his assistant Abū Muḥammad Ibn Tafragin, Ibn Khaldūn's position was as the Ṣāhib al-‘Allāmah. Then, he was appointed as a secretary under the reign of the Magi in Fas. After that, he went to Granada to serve under the reign of Sultan Muhammad, while Ibn al-Khatib was the minister in charge. But, after a misunderstanding and problem between him and Ibn al-Khatib, he returned to Africa. In 1375M, when he was 43, he took the approach of seeking refuge from Awlād ‘Arīf or Banī ‘Arīf in Qal‘ah Ibn Salāmah.

In 1382M, he migrated to al-Qāhirah, Egypt to gain knowledge and experience. There, he was also appointed as a lecturer at the leading institution at that time, al-Azhar University. When Sultan al-Zāhir Barqūq (1382-1399M) ruled in 1384M, he was appointed as a Professor at the Quahmiyah College and Barquqiyyah College⁵ and subsequently appointed as a chairman of Mazhab Maliki. According to his *al-Ta‘rīf*, he objected to accept the post because of the issues of clutter, corruption and breach of trust. However, Ibn Khaldūn tried to counteract these issues and problems as well. His good efforts in combating this social problem continued throughout of his life.

However, in 1400M, the Timur⁶ conquered Syria and killed most of its population. The Egyptians were worried of

³ Mohammad Abdullah Enan, *Ibn Khaldun: His Life and Works* (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1997), 6-7.

⁴ Syed Farid Alatas, *Ibn Khaldun: Makers of Civilization* (India: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2.

⁵ Che Zarrina Sa'ari & M Kamil Ab. Majid, "Epistemologi Islam menurut Ibn Khaldun," *Jurnal Usuluddin*, December (2000): 73-94.

⁶ Timur the Lame, also known as Timur Lang, a military adventurer at the end of 14th century. His conquests included Iran, northern India, Anatolia, and northern Syria. See Timur Lang, *The Oxford Dictionary*

the arrival of Timur terrorists would spread to Egypt, hence, Barqūq⁷ continued to direct his troops to Syria in order to face the Timur. This expedition became the history of Ibn Khaldūn when he participated in this military escort. Ibn Khaldūn became a diplomatic intermediary when he dared to meet the Timur to discuss and to turn away their rage, though he failed. After this great war, he returned to al-Qāhirah, in the year 1400-1401M where he was reappointed as a great judge there. That was his last position before his death on the 26 Ramadan 808H / 16 March 1406M.⁸

Etymology and Philosophy of 'Umrān

'Umrān from the perspective of language, comes from the word 'a ma ra (عمر), which means 'overflowing', prosperous, due to the large population and many business, industrial and agricultural enterprises. From the word 'a ma ra also, there are words of 'amīr and ma 'mūr which mean a prosperous and well-developed, knowledgeable, cultured population because of the cooperation among the people and a fair and equitable government.⁹

According to Muhammad Abdul Jabbar Beg,¹⁰ 'umrān means 'land or dwelling place, occupied by people, living in settled segments of the population and so on, in a prosperous state; which is behind the barren or idle dry

of Islam, edited by John L. Esposito, Oxford Islamic Studies Online, <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e2386>, accessed May 15, 2020.

⁷ Barquq is one of leaders in Mamluk Dynasty from a 784-801H/1382-1399M. See Wan Kamal Mujani, Sejarah Politik Mamluk (648-922H/1250-1517M): Suatu Pengamatan Berdasarkan Sumber Primer dan Sekunder, *International Journal of West Asian Studies*, 2(2), 2010: 17-45.

⁸ Alatas, *Ibn Khaldun: Makers of Civilization*, 13.

⁹ According to Mu 'jam al-Wasīf in Mahayudin Yahaya's study, 2015. See, Mahayudin Yahaya, *Ensiklopedia Negara Zikir*, 2 (Brunei: UNISSA Press, 2015), 243.

¹⁰ Muhammad Abdul Jabbar Beg, "Konsep Tamadun Islam Menurut Tamadun Islam dan Barat," *Islamiyyat*, 2 (1978), 39.

conditions or perish; land area ruled, planted or planted well; a home in a state of preservation'. Philosophy is a branch of knowledge that discusses the reality of a particular matter. In the context of 'umrān's presence, Ibn Khaldūn has his own philosophy which is seen when he formed this special terminology that is further explained in detail in his *al-'Ibar*.¹¹

Hence, Ibn Khaldūn's terminology, which is 'umrān, has its own philosophy in terms of etymology and the aim of its existence. As generally known by many, Ibn Khaldūn is an Islamic scholar and thinker, also a judge and a politician who was directly involved in the country's administrative process which had enabled him to observe and understand political situations during the particular period. He had also given numerous comments and ideas in addressing issues related to these areas hence 'ilm 'umrān that he produced is meant for rectifying the deteriorating conditions of the society towards prosperity and glory.¹²

According to him, the direction of the society's life is to reach prosperity and not on advancement per se as being practiced by the Western society. If a society reaches

¹¹ Philosophy of 'umrān is comes from his *Kitāb al-Awwāl: fī ṭabī'at al-'umrān fī al-khalīqah wa mā ya'ruḍ fihā...* see Ibn Khaldun, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn: al-'Ibar wa al-Dīwān al-Mubtada' wa al-Khabr fī Ayyām al-'Arab wa al-'Ajam wa al-Barbar wa man 'Aṣarahum min Dhaw al-Sulṭān al-Akbar* ('Ammān: Bayt al-Afkār al-Dawliyyah, n.d.) 23.

¹² In the context of historiography, for instance, an author or historian has his own philosophy and views in identifying the direction or objective of their write-ups. Historians like Ibn al-Athīr in his *al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, which means 'The Perfection of History', writes by informing his readers and future researchers that he had completed historical writing since the Prophet's times until the Dawlah Zankiyyah (throughout Ibn al-Athīr's life). While for Ibn Khaldun, his *al-'Ibar* contains its own philosophy. The title *al-'Ibar* which means 'lessons' is Ibn Khaldun's views of informing and educating future researchers on history and 'ilm 'umrān and other theories such as 'aṣabiyyah, the fall-and-rise of a dawlah etc.

prosperity where everyone lives in quality society that is filled with happiness, no economic pressure, minimal social issues as well as high cooperation among the society members in strengthening the country, the country will continue to be in a peaceful and prosperous situation for generations. Nonetheless, if the aim of developing a society and a country is to achieve 'advancement', the philosophy of 'prosperity' might be left out. Being advanced is not a wrong practice but if it is placed as the aim, it will somehow become wrong.

Contributions of the 'Umrānic Thoughts of Ibn Khaldūn to the Studies of Islamic Sociology and Civilization

i. The Framework of Modern Historical Thoughts Through the Cyclical Theory

Ibn Khaldūn initiated a historical theory that is cyclical in nature which means a history has a repeating feature where it is the opposite of linear philosophy practitioners who deem history as something antique. A cyclical process is further defined as, in a particular society, there is a group of authorities such as the government which will become stronger and reach its glory and after a certain period of time, they will lose their strength and finally be replaced by a new government or another stronger power.

In its initial concept, which is the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn explained how a society that was initially powerless would work hard to gain power and influence until they finally developed a government and civilization. Their strength depends on the 'aṣabiyyah spirit (esprit de corps) they possess in achieving all their missions. Hypothetically, when the 'aṣabiyyah spirit becomes stronger, the government will also become stronger and vice versa. Then, as time passes, a particular government will be replaced by their next generations and this will form a 'comfort' zone in their society where a new and stronger power will take over them, whose 'aṣabiyyah spirit would

be much stronger among the latter. This cyclical theory in practiced by thinker such as Arnold Tonybee, Malik Bennabi, Mahayudin Yahya and others.

Ibn Khaldūn further explained that the life development of a government and a civilization is the same as the life of a human; being born, becoming an adult, old and finally will pass away. Later on, humans will be re-born and repeating the same process.¹³ A government has a lifespan of approximately 120 years, and this happens due to the next generations' lack of *'aṣabiyyah* and strength as compared to their first generation. This theory depicts the reality and philosophy of history and humans in a particular society. Ibn Khaldūn observed this scientifically the conditions and growth of the civilization in his era and formed the *'ilm 'umrān* which is the science of *'umrān*. This knowledge is aimed at conducting an in-depth observation on the conditions and factors that influence the rise and fall of a particular civilization.

In defining the *'umrān*, Ibn Khaldūn emphasised on history as the medium to disseminate information on society-related matters which socially inter-dependent among one another. This is similar to Adam who needed Eve, where in organizations, there is a need for a leader and followers. In relation to the cyclical theory, Ibn Khaldūn claims that humans have to look backwards in order to see the reasons and factors and learn something from the past for the benefits of their future. He adds that humans have the tendency to repeat the same mistake hence it is crucial that there must be a group of personnel in the society that practices good deeds. Hence, it is without a doubt that most

¹³ Onder, Murat & Fatih Ulasan, "Ibn Khaldun's Cyclical Theory on the Rise and Fall of Sovereign Powers: the Case of Ottoman Empire," *Adam Akademi*, 8/2 (2018), 234. The same case in the study of cyclical theory of Sokoto Caliphate. See Okene, Ahmed Adam & Shukri Ahmad, "Ibn Khaldun, Cyclical Theory and the Rise and Fall of Sokoto Caliphate, Nigeria West Africa," *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(4) (2011), 80.

of the Islamic empires in the past failed to maintain their power due to similar conditions which are being too comfort and prioritizing their own selves over the society.

Ibn Khaldūn emphasised that "*tārīkh huwa khabar 'an al-ijtimā' al-insānī*" which means history is a story of human activity affairs.¹⁴ History is also one of the contents of the Qur'anic verses. God told mankind to observe history as to guide human activities and not to repeat acts that could cause harm. This is in line with the Qur'anic view of 59:18¹⁵ i.e.; "*O you who have believed, fear Allah. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow - and fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do*". In short, it also means that there will not be today without having yesterday first (history).

According to Muhd Yusuf Ibrahim, humans themselves have a sense of importance to history, because history has a function to their daily activities. Awareness of historical significance is not only over their attitudes of concern, but also of the emerging literary works. This means that these two things illustrate human consciousness to historical functions.¹⁶ Mohd Roslan also stated that humans need to emulate and take lessons from the past Muslims experience, as the Islamic civilization in Andalusia rises in various fields of knowledge. This is because history has proven that Islam has reached a high position in their glorious days. What is important is that human beings need to return to the path of the tawhid framework where on this basis will form the unity of the *ummah*.¹⁷

¹⁴ Ibn Khaldun, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, 23.

¹⁵ Al-Qur'an, al-Hashr 59:18.

¹⁶ Muhd Yusuf Ibrahim, *Kepentingan Sejarah kepada Manusia dan Negara (The Importance of History towards Human Being and State)*, 22, *Jebat* (1994), 25-26.

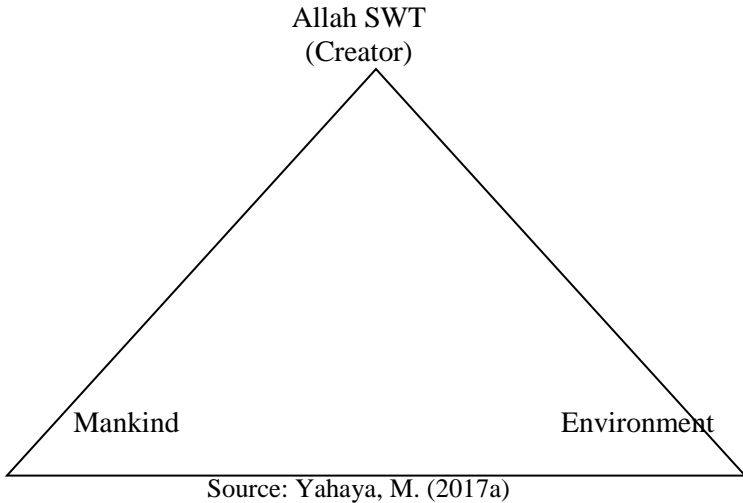
¹⁷ Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor, "Taking Lessons of Muslims History in Shaping Excellent Hadhari Community of the 21st Century," *Jurnal Hadhari*, 2(2) (2010), 19-40.

ii. Forming the Islamic Sociology Framework

In the aspect of sociology,¹⁸ Ibn Khaldūn contributed to the foundation and thinking style of which every human has his own reason and aim of being created, which is to prosper the world as being instructed by the Almighty. Hence, scholars who are focusing on sociology have to be well aware that in the Islamic sociology area, the element of revelation (*wahy*) plays a vital role in human's life. The combination of *naql* and *'aql* is the framework in forming the sociological philosophy as being initiated by Ibn Khaldūn.

Therefore, Ibn Khaldūn is deemed the pioneer of the Islamic sociology field. He included the element of revelation in the construction of his *Muqaddimah* where Mahmoud Dhaoudi in *Ibar: Lesson from 'Umrān Mind* mentioned that Ibn Khaldūn possesses a genius mind. He also stated that there are three factors in recognizing genius minds which are wide knowledge, stimulating external milieu and special human personality traits. He further added that, Ibn Khaldūn's wide Islamic thoughts had shaped his cognitive world view (*weltanschauung*) which later formed his social science thoughts (*'ilm al-'umrān al-basharī*). He also contributed to the guidelines in forming the Islamic sociology framework in which Mahayudin Yahaya explained in detail the theory of *'umrān* as follows:

¹⁸ In the study of Khaldunian sociology, Syed Farid Alatas said that there are significance of Ibn Khadun for the modern social sciences today can be seen at three levels; 1) the development of alternative arguments for application to old topics in Islamic Studies; 2) the development of Khaldunian sociology in the context of the modern social sciences, and; 3) the implementation of Ibn Khaldun's approach. Some of Marx and Engels theories of sociology also provides with account of Ibn Khaldun's idea without any reference to him. Alatas, *Ibn Khaldun: Makers of Civilization* (India: Oxford University Press, 2013), 120 & 122.



Mahayudin Yahaya further explained that humans are the creatures of Allah SWT that live in groups and tribes (people) and give birth to history be a lesson to build the country's future through their political system, economy, social and physical natural resources guided by religious laws and morality.

Saleh Faghri-zadeh stated that Ibn Khaldūn is a pioneer of the modern scientific sociology knowledge where he refines the understandings of physical and spiritual of a society.¹⁹ In addition, the sociology knowledge introduced by Ibn Khaldūn is contrasting with Greece philosophers such as Aristotle who believes that God is the main source and the only reason for everything happens in the world. Faghri-zadeh further added that a sociologist has to learn the reasons and sociological laws and politics of a particular society. This includes all the internal and externals

¹⁹ Faghri-zadeh, Saleh, *Sociology of Sociology* (Tehran: Soroush Press, 1982), 227.

elements, such as climate, that may influence human's behaviours.

The combination and synergy between *wahy*²⁰ and 'aql²¹ are an important foundation in the minds of 'umrān by Ibn Khaldūn. It is recognized by many Khaldunian scholars, among them are famous Western scholars H.A.R Gibb²², Lawrence²³, Mahmoud Dhaouadi²⁴ and so on. Mahmoud Dhaouadi and Mahayudin Yahaya are among the scholars who pointed out religion is the foundation in the formation of the 'umrān thoughts. The combination of revelation and 'aql is also a combination of revealed knowledge and acquired knowledge (scientific, mathematic and so on).

As for the source of development of 'umrān, the revealed knowledge, that is al-Quran and al-Hadith as the main source, and acquired knowledge, that is science as to help and strengthen human living properly. Revelation also has a role as guidance to all disciplines of knowledge, such as *'ilm al-uṣūl al-fiqh* in analysing the recognition between *ḥarām* and *ḥalāl*. Here, we can see why and how Ibn Khaldūn relates combination in these two matters.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, the nature and purpose of human is as a vicegerent on earth. Human beings originate from soils (with all the essence of the earthly soil) and suitable for settled on it. Humans also have internal and external elements: internal elements such as spirits, feelings,

²⁰ *Wahy* here is al-Quran and al-Hadith as source of 'umrānic thought.

²¹ According to Ibn Khaldūn, rational and logic thinking have to combine with *wahy* to get a real result.

²² H. Gibb, "The Islamic Background of Ibn Khaldūn's Political Theory," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 7(1) (1933), 23-31. doi:10.1017/S0041977X00105361.

²³ Lawrence, (eds.), *Ibn Khaldun and Islamic Ideology* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1984), retrieved July 15, 2019, <https://brill.com/view/title/6377>.

²⁴ M. Dhaouadi, "The *Ibar*: Lessons of Ibn Khaldun's Umran Mind," *Contemporary Sociology*, 34(6) (2005), 585-591, retrieved August 8, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4147100>.

emotions and so on. The outside elements are related to physical forms and activities such as beauty, height and movement. This fact differs from the philosophy of human events according to the Western views who see human beings like animals, because of the way of life and daily movements such as eating, drinking and hunting as an animal feature. And for them, humans are merely better than animals due to the ability to speak and understand (*homo sapiens*).

For example, in defining the nature of human, Ibn Khaldūn does not state that Qur'anic reality is contrary to what he means. Humans are special creatures as described in the Qur'an that have the role of *khalīfah*. This is because, in line with what Ibn Khaldūn describes, human beings have the intellect that could differentiate between good and bad. Humans also have sense of *idrāk* (inquiry) and *ma'rifah* (knowledge) that distinguishes them from others. Therefore, there are some scholars who call humanity as the thinking animal even though it is indeed different.

In this case, Machouche states that the human nature is; "It was the concept of *fiṭrah* that essentially led Ibn Khaldūn to acknowledge human potential, undertake upon himself an understanding of their limits, and to perceive feelings, reasoning, thinking, and understanding as divine gifts upon humans".²⁵ Similarly, with the advantages of the human being, humans have the privilege that none of the other beings are thinking skills, analysing, creating something like handicrafts, speaking and understanding and so forth. Nevertheless, humans possess amazing abilities compared to other creatures, but at the same time humans also have weaknesses like being emotional, rushing, impatient and so on.

²⁵ Salah Machouche and Benaouda Bensaid, "The Roots and Constructs of Ibn Khaldūn's Critical Thinking," *Intellectual Discourse*, 23:2 (2015), 212-213.

Hence, people live their daily lives without having to think about questions such as why or what their purpose of life is? In contrast to Islam, Ibn Khaldūn sees man as a *khalīfah* with purpose, it is parallel with the word of Allah SWT in surah al-Baqarah that is:

“And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority." They said, "Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?" Allah said, "Indeed, I know that which you do not know.”²⁶

Al-Māwardī in *Ahkām al-Ṣultāniyyah* states that *iqāmat al-dīn wa siyāsah al-dunyā* which means the function of the caliphate is to uphold religion and to manage world affairs, including the affairs of prospering the world.²⁷ When people think of prosperity as their goal, then will be a community of mutual cooperation, respect for one another and selflessness. Hashim Kamali also insists on humans; in their capacity as vicegerents, human are stewards and custodians of the earth, with a mission to build it and establish a just social order therein.²⁸

According to Mahayudin Yahaya the thoughts of Ibn Khaldūn is parallel with *sunnat Allāh*²⁹ (rules and

²⁶ Al-Quran, al-Baqarah 2:30.

²⁷ Al-Māwardī, *Ahkām al-Ṣultāniyyah wa al-Wilāyah al-Dīniyyah (The Ordinances of Government)*, trans. Wafaa H. Wahba, (Reading: Garnet Publishing Limited, 1996), 3.

²⁸ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, “The Religious Thrust of Islamic Civilisation,” *Islam and Civilisational Renewal*, Vol. 4(4), (2013), 635 & 637.

²⁹ According to Ibn Khaldūn, he create new science, that is *‘ilm ‘umrān (mustanbat al-nash’ah wa ‘ilm mustaqil bi nafsih)* and based on the concept of *sunnat Allāh*. See Z. Ahmad, “Tradisi Ilmu dan Relevansinya Dalam Wacana Kontemporer,” in *Ibn Khaldun: Pemikiran Ibn Khaldun & Relevansinya dalam Ilmu Kontemporer*, edited by A. Baharudin, et al. (Kuala Lumpur: Pusat Dialog Peradaban

conditions of Allah as a creator of mankind and nature).³⁰ Humans need to live within the scope of Allah SWT rules known as *Sharī'ah*. Like wise to nature, humans need to understand and abide by their place of residence, such as land, air and water conditions to be in good condition and can benefit to a life of prosperity to mankind itself. On the contrary, if natural regulation is not complied with, it will lead to bad consequences such as major floods, global warming due to pollution from factories, landslides from uncontrolled and illegal acts.³¹

iii. Theory of Muslim Revival

In this aspect, human features are always moving and dynamic, they change from *badawī* (nomadic) to sedentary, towards the formation of cities, nations and civilizations. According to Ibn Khaldūn, humans are moving creatures working together to meet their needs. In debating the 'umrānic thoughts, Ibn Khaldūn states that the human nature changes in climatic conditions and its surroundings. For example, nomadic people living in the desert have the characteristics of 'aṣabiyyah in themselves.

'Aṣabiyyah gives them a tendency to work together to help fellow groups or tribes, have courage and togetherness. This can strengthen their group to face any challenges and enemies. According to Ibn Khaldūn again, the 'aṣabiyyah spirit can bind the human group that is in a situation like the desert. This is contrary to a group of sedentary people who

dan Jabatan Pengajian Kenegaraan dan Ketamadunan, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2007), 8; Azmil Zainal Abidin, "Kajian Kemasyarakatan dan Ketamadunan (Ilmu 'Umran) Menurut Perspektif Usuluddin: Tumpuan Analitis terhadap *Muqaddimah* Ibn Khaldun," in *Ibn Khaldun: Pemikiran Ibn Khaldun & Relevansinya dalam Ilmu Kontemporari*, edited by A. Baharudin et al. (Kuala Lumpur: Pusat Dialog Peradaban dan Jabatan Pengajian Kenegaraan dan Ketamadunan, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2007), 193.

³⁰ Mahayudin Yahaya, *Ensiklopedia Negara Zikir*, jilid 2 (Brunei: UNISSA Press, 2015), 243.

³¹ Al-Qur'an, al-Rum 30:41.

enjoy urban life, they are dreaming of a luxurious life that may eventually lead to the collapse of the civilization. He describes the situation around and the climate plays an important role in shaping a good human soul. According to Ibn Khaldūn, religion is also seen as a factor in the rise of society facing evils that arise such as damage, immorality, crime and corrupt. A good soul is formed in a state of affairs and religion, not by the way of life of a city life that usually neglects its people.

According to Ortega, in Syed Farid Alatas's study, Ibn Khaldūn introduces to all the scholars after his time on how the history and secrets of the Arab society was formed, starting from a small movement that created influences and finally became a huge movement that eventually formed its own dynasty.³² This situation happened due to the presence of leaders who were religious-oriented in combatting crimes that were taking place at that time. With the aim of *taghyīr al-munkar*, a particular group became stronger with the combinations of the *'aṣabiyyah* spirit. The more people joining the movement, the stronger and more influential they became in fighting cruel leaders.

Humans also have the spirit of reform, which are reforms towards goodness. For example, humans will move together (which has the same purpose), towards the *taghyīr al-munkar*, and they will be together against the destructive actions of human pests. The fact of the existence of good and evil is always contrary to each other. This is aligned with the views of Syed Farid Alatas who stated that they were driven by the will to reform, eager to abolish what was objectionable, that is *taghyīr al-munkar*.³³ *'Umrān* according to Ibn Khaldūn in this context explains that it is a natural behaviour of humans to have elements or spirits of wanting something good; hence if the goodness is being

³² Alatas, *Applying Ibn Khaldun*, (London: Routledge, 2014), 74.

³³ Ibn Khaldun shows some of events of Muslim revival towards the unjust *amīr* or dynasty. *Ibid.*, 76-77.

oppressed, it would motivate humans to fight in order to regain the goodness (that has been bestowed by Allah SWT to one or the society). For instance, the prophet Muhammad SAW himself had once fought the Quraysh in order to fight for the Muslims who were oppressed.

In any Muslim societies, there must always be groups of people who will work against crimes where Ibn Khaldūn himself has come up with some examples such as the Sanhajah tribe in the al-Moravid empire, the Masmudah tribe in the al-Mohad era and the Zanatah tribe in the Marinid era.³⁴ According to Ibn Khaldūn, the *'aṣabiyyah* spirit cannot be neglected in any movement that is formed. This is due to the fact that the *'aṣabiyyah* spirit determines whether a particular movement will succeed or not.

One of the closest examples that can be seen is during the Arab Spring where the young generation in Egypt had collectively used their *'aṣabiyyah* spirit in overthrowing Hosni Mubarak's 30 years of power. According to them, Hosni Mubarak's government had ruled the country in injustice where they wanted to revive fairness in their country. The same issue can also be seen in Libya where the government was overthrown by their own people.

iv. Theory of Rise and Decline of States or Civilization

In his *Muqaddimah*'s debate, Ibn Khaldūn discusses an important knowledge called the theory of social organization (*'umrān*). Among the elements discussed in the study are economy, urban institutions, the state and solidarity (*'aṣabiyyah*).

Bedouins (nomadic) and *Ḥaḍarī* (sedentary) people have their own characteristics. They are shaped by the influence of their way of life and their environment. The bedouins community has a lot of courage, fortitude and morals compared to the sedentary people. Their *'aṣabiyyah*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 77.

spirit is also stronger especially in terms of familial relationships (blood ties).

To explain the rise and decline of a nation, Ibn Khaldūn said that a civilization was originally formed by the bedouins who practiced a basic life to meet the needs of life. The nomadic society then established their own civilization (sedentary's life). Over time, nomadic society's lifestyle had faded due to the surrounding environments that had affected them. They then tended to pursue worldly lifestyles and luxury and also relied much on help of other people's assistance which eventually led them to live an easy and idle lifestyle.³⁵

In addition, those features, the *'aṣabiyyah* element is an important aspect in the transfer or exchange of power of the state as the strength of the *'aṣabiyyah* is used to build a nation or civilization. This means that the groups with stronger *'aṣabiyyah* will dominate the ones with weaker *'aṣabiyyah*. This exchange is dependent on the strength and stability of the *'aṣabiyyah*.

The decline of civilization is also related to the country's economic situation of which, Ibn Khaldun states that "*'i'lam anna al-jibāyat awwāl al-dawlah takūn qalīlat al-wazā'i kathīrat al-jumlah, wa ākhir al-dawlah takūn kathīrat al-wazā'i qalīlat al-jumlah*" which means, "it should be known that at the beginning of the dynasty, taxation yields a large revenue from small assessments. At the end of the dynasty, taxation yields a small revenue from large assessments".³⁶ The country had ample resources from taxation, making it a rich country. But things changed when the authorities and society began to lose the good

³⁵ Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn: al-'Ibar wa al-Dīwān al-Mubtada' wa al-Khabr fī Ayyām al-'Arab wa al-'Ajam wa al-Barbar wa man 'Aṣarahum min Dhaw al-Sulṭān al-Akbar* ('Ammān: Bayt al-Afkār al-Dawliyyah, n.d.), 64-66.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 140.

values of civilization as a result of fulfilling the demands of luxury.

Taxes collected in the past may not be enough to cause the tax authorities to increase the amount of tax. The people were desperate to meet the needs and became dissatisfied with the authorities. As a result, the country's state of affairs deteriorated due to dissatisfaction and disunity. In this discussion, it can be said that a strong *'aṣabiyyah* element and stable economy are factors at the heart of a country's stability.

v. The Concept of Universalism of 'Umrān al-'Ālam

'Umrān al-'ālam is a concept that was brought up by Ibn Khaldūn which is coherent with the concept of universalism.³⁷ According to Mahayudin Yahaya, *'umrān al-'ālam* is derived from the understanding of *ṭabī'at al-'umrān fī al-khalīqah* (the law of God in the creation of man and nature). Ibn Khaldun's aim is to express the universalism of *'umrān al-'ālam* across the geographical, religious, linguistic and cultural boundaries of the world. It is also regarded as a 'model' of the prosperity of nature, society and nation for people of various races and religions.³⁸

Regarding this matter, Ibn Khaldūn promotes the concept of partnership among countries in the world by creating positive relationship in the aspects of economy, politic and social. Among the similar concept to this is multilateralism that was introduced by the Western. Multilateralism means there are international partnership, referring to the groups of countries that work together in attaining their collective objectives. Among the international partnerships in the political aspect are the

³⁷ Mahayudin Yahaya, *Umran al-Alam: Wadah Pembangunan Ummah*, (Brunei: UNISSA Press, 2013), 175.

³⁸ Mahayudin Yahaya, "'Umran al-'Alam dari Perspektif Ibn Khaldun: Suatu Anjakan Paradigma," *International Journal of West Asian Studies*, Vol 3 No 1, (2011), 14.

United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Soviet Union (SU), Arab League (AL), Association of Southeast Asia (ASEAN), The Group of Four (G4) and others.

From the aspect of economy, the examples of partnership are the European Union (EU), The Group of Seven (G7), The Group of Twenty (G20) and others. From the social aspect, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Social Forum, United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR) and others are formed. However according to Ibn Khaldūn, the objective of the *'umrān al-'ālam* is to develop the world's prosperity based on the cooperation of the world's society. This kind of cooperativeness would eventually achieve something beyond that which is in the form of blessings from Allah SWT.

Conclusion

'Umrānic thought of Ibn Khaldūn has its own philosophy in building a society and a nation. This philosophy can be seen throughout his writings in the *Muqaddimah*. His scope of thoughts is thoroughly in line with his educational background and experience which is in understanding human and nature. Other than that, Ibn Khaldūn's contributions towards today's formation of theories such as the theory of cyclical of history, the theory of Muslim Islamic, the theory of *'umrān al-'alam* as well as the founder of the Islamic sociology field. These theories by Ibn Khaldūn have become the underpinning foundations to numerous today's researchers and scholars in understanding humans from the aspects of Islamic sociology and civilizational studies.

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