

EXAMINING THE ORIGINS OF SOCIOLOGY: CONTINUITIES AND DIVERGENCES BETWEEN IBN  
KHALDUN, GIAMBATTISTA VICO, AUGUST COMTE, LUDWIG GUMPLOWICZ, AND EMILE  
DURKHEIM

Mehmet Soyer, B.A.

Thesis Prepared for the Degree of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

May 2010

APPROVED:

Dale Yeatts, Major Professor  
Mahmoud Sadri, Committee Member  
Emile Sahliyah, Committee Member  
Sandra L. Terrell, Interim Chair of the Department  
of Sociology  
Thomas L. Evenson, College of Public Affairs and  
Community Service  
Michael Monticino, Dean of the Robert B.  
Toulouse School of Graduate Studies

Soyer, Mehmet. *Examining the Origins of Sociology: Continuities and Divergences between Ibn Khaldun, Giambattista Vico, August Comte, Ludwig Gumplowicz, and Emile Durkheim*. Master of Science (Sociology), May 2010, 49 pp., references, 89 titles.

This thesis examines the extent to which Ibn Khaldun can legitimately be considered a founding father of sociology. To pursue this research, Khaldun's theoretical framework will be compared with four Western scholars: Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Giambattista Vico, and Ludwig Gumplowicz. This paper begins with an Introduction (Chapter I), followed by a general overview of Khaldun's work (Chapter II). Next, Khaldun's work is compared to that of Auguste Comte (Chapter III), Emile Durkheim (Chapter IV), Ludwig Gumplowicz (Chapter V) and Giambattista Vico (Chapter VI). In each of these chapters, Khaldun is compared and contrasted to the other social theorist, illustrating their similarities and considering their differences. Finally, in Chapter VII, I put forth conclusions that consider the extent to which Khaldun can validly be considered a founding father of sociology.

Copyright 2010

by

Mehmet Soyer

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to offer thanks to my committee: Professor Mahmoud Sadri, Professor Dale Yeatts, and Professor Emile Sahliyah. Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Rudy Ray Seward and Professor Lynne Cossman for providing me necessary and invaluable guidance and advice.

I benefited from their knowledge and experience while working on this manuscript. I alone am responsible for any shortcomings.

I would like to thank my wife, Gonca, for her support and encouragement during this stressful time. Moreover, I would like to thank Paul A. Gilbert, Jr., and his mother, Rita Gilbert, for editing this thesis. Furthermore, my thanks go out to our families for their valuable support.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Pages
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES.....	v
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER II: OVERVIEW OF IBN KHALDUN’S WORK .....	4
CHAPTER III: A COMPARISON OF THE WORKS OF IBN KHALDUN AND GIAMBATTISTA VICO .....	9
CHAPTER IV: A COMPARISON OF THE WORKS OF IBN KHALDUN AND AUGUSTE COMTE.....	16
CHAPTER V: A COMPARISON OF THE WORKS OF IBN KHALDUN AND LUDWIG GUMPLOWICZ...	23
CHAPTER VI: A COMPARISON OF THE WORKS OF IBN KHALDUN AND EMILE DURKHEIM .....	31
CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION .....	41
REFERENCES.....	45

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

	Page
Table 1: Khaldunian Rural and Urban Society Typology .....	35
Figure 1: The relationship between dynastic stages and lifestyle.....	8

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Akbar Ahmed, the Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at American University, noted:

Bin Laden is a household name in the West, where, unfortunately, the names of important Muslim scholars are less well known. When I talked of Ibn Khaldun, Americans usually ask: Who is he? An oil sheikh? An Arab minister? Another “terrorist”? Any links to Bin Laden? Even the scholars who have heard of Ibn Khaldun may well ask: How is he relevant to problems of the twenty-first century? (2003, p. 213)

Yet, earlier generations of social thinkers contended that Khaldun was a founder of sociology (Kremer, 1879; Flint, 1893: 158ff.; Gumpłowicz, 1928: 90–114; Maunier, 1913; Oppenheimer, 1922–35, Vol. II: 173ff.; Vol. IV, 251ff.; Ortega y Gasset, 1976–8). Sorokin, Zimmerman, and Galphin believed Khaldun to be an historian, statesman, sociologist, and the “founder of sociology.” They noted that Khaldun described the transformation of Arabian society from *badawa* (rural society) to *hadara* (urban society), and analyzed this transition (Alatas, 2006). Harry Barnes and Howard Becker stated in their book *Social Thought: From Lore to Science* that “The first writer after Polybius (203–120 BC), then, to apply the equivalents of modern ideas in historical sociology was not a European” (1952, p. 266); they devoted substantial discussion to Khaldun’s ideas that are relevant to social science. By doing so, Barnes and Becker identified Khaldun as the first scholar who applied modern ideas to historical sociology and so, from their point of view, saw him as a founder of sociology. Unfortunately, until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Khaldunian sociology was unknown to Western scholars. From the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Western scholars commenced studying Khaldun and his social theories with astonishment and admiration. Khaldun developed numerous social theories treated a century later by Machiavelli, and some three or four centuries later by Giambattista

Vico, Charles de Montesquieu, Adam Smith, and Auguste Comte. After discovering and studying Khaldun, Western scholars began considering him a philosopher, an historian of civilization, and a scholar of sociology and political economy (Enan, 1979).

Khaldun wrote the *Muqaddimah, Historical Prolegomenon* (1377) in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, centuries prior to the systematic development of Western sociology. In this prominent work, Khaldun discussed scientifically the fundamental problems of what would be called modern sociology: the evolution of less-developed societies to advanced societies. Significant portions of Khaldun's work seem to be quite modern for his historical period (Sorokin, 1947).

Historically, it has been acknowledged that Khaldun made contributions to modern sociology; however, both his concepts and methods need examination, analysis and placement in their proper context vis-à-vis contemporary social science.

This thesis examines the extent to which Khaldun can legitimately be considered a founding father of sociology. To pursue this contention, Khaldun's theoretical framework will be compared with four Western scholars: Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Giambattista Vico, and Ludwig Gumplowicz. These prominent Western scholars were chosen for particular reasons. Auguste Comte was selected as he is often regarded as the founder of sociology. Durkheim was selected because of his position as founder of modern sociology and sociological methodology. Vico was chosen because he is generally regarded as the founder of the modern philosophy of history and Gumplowicz was selected because of his position as the founder of conflict sociology. The paper begins with an Introduction (Chapter I), followed by a general overview of Khaldun's work (Chapter II). Next, his work is compared to that of Auguste Comte (Chapter III), Emile Durkheim (Chapter IV), Ludwig Gumplowicz (Chapter V) and Giambattista



Vico (Chapter VI). In each of these chapters, Khaldun is compared and contrasted to the other social theorist, illustrating their similarities and considering their differences. Finally, in Chapter VII, I put forth conclusions that consider the extent to which Khaldun can validly be considered a founding father of sociology.

## CHAPTER II

### OVERVIEW OF IBN KHALDUN'S WORK

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) investigated theories of society, the basis of sovereignty or *asabiyah* (social solidarity), and the rise and fall of states. Born in Tunis, Tunisia, where his parents died of the plague in 1349, Khaldun spent most of his life in North Africa and Spain. His family's Andalusian origin suggests that his Spanish background provided Khaldun a different perspective, and unique from the Muslim mainstream in Northwest Africa and the East (Alatas, 2006).

Khaldun is one of the most significant figures in the history of the Muslim world (Enan, 1979). The reputation of the *Muqaddimah* as a significant work has brought Khaldun much attention. Khaldun taught his theories on society, the basis of sovereignty or *asabiyah*, the rise and fall of states, and other subjects presented in *the Muqaddimah*. Khaldun described social phenomena and situated them in the flow and perspective of historical events (Enan, 1979).

#### Khaldun's "New Science"

Ibn Khaldun's "new science" is interpreted as the science of human social organization, commonly interpreted as sociology. Khaldun stated that this science has "its own peculiar object -that is, human civilization and social organization that is, explaining the conditions that attach themselves to the essence of civilization, one after the other" (Khaldun, 1958, p. 77).

From Khaldun's perspective, civilization is the product of human interaction. Indeed, culture is not a thing in itself. The essential ability of human beings is their reflective and deliberative competence; furthermore, human beings have the capabilities to arrange their

relationships with other fellow human beings (Muhammad, 1998).

The fundamental principles of the new science are: “ (1) the subject matter of the new science is human association, (2) its problems are the essential modes of culture, (3) its method is demonstration, and (4) its end is making of truth from falsehood in historical reports” (Mahdi, 2006, p. 167). Khaldun maintained that he was presenting a new science that consisted of the following areas: human civilization, primitive societies, the states, the cities, the crafts, the occupations, and the sciences (Khaldun, 1958).

### Khaldun’s Typology

Khaldun classified societies into a dualist typology which includes *badawa* (rural) and *hadara* (urban) societies as understood by Western sociologists. Defined briefly, nomadic or rural means "inhabitant of the desert" or “the dessert dweller,” whereas urban refers to “inhabitants of cities” (Khaldun, 1958, p. 250).

#### *Rural Society (Badawa Umran)*

To explain the concept of *badawa* in his typology, Khaldun argued that primitive people are tied to the desert because of their agricultural life style. Since settled areas do not provide wide fields and pastures for animals, their social organization is organized upon bare subsistence (Khaldun, 1958).

#### *Urban Society (Hadara Umran)*

The notion of urban society implies a secondary phase of social organization. People

live clustered in cities that constitute countries. The economic arrangement of society is centered upon commerce and crafts, in addition to agriculture and husbandry. There is a higher level of life observed in terms of comfort and luxury as opposed to rural society (Khalidun, 1958).

### Khalidun's Social Conflict

Khalidun explained that social solidarity (*asabiyah*) plays a fundamental role in the rise and fall of societies and civilizations. Therefore, social solidarity functions “constructively” or “destructively.” Khalidun's concept of conflict theory was based upon social solidarity (*asabiyah*). On the one hand, social solidarity results in consequences causing an increase in social group adaptation. On the other hand, social solidarity (*asabiyah*) generates negative dynamics which destroy social groups.

### *Khalidun's Social Solidarity (Asabiyah)*

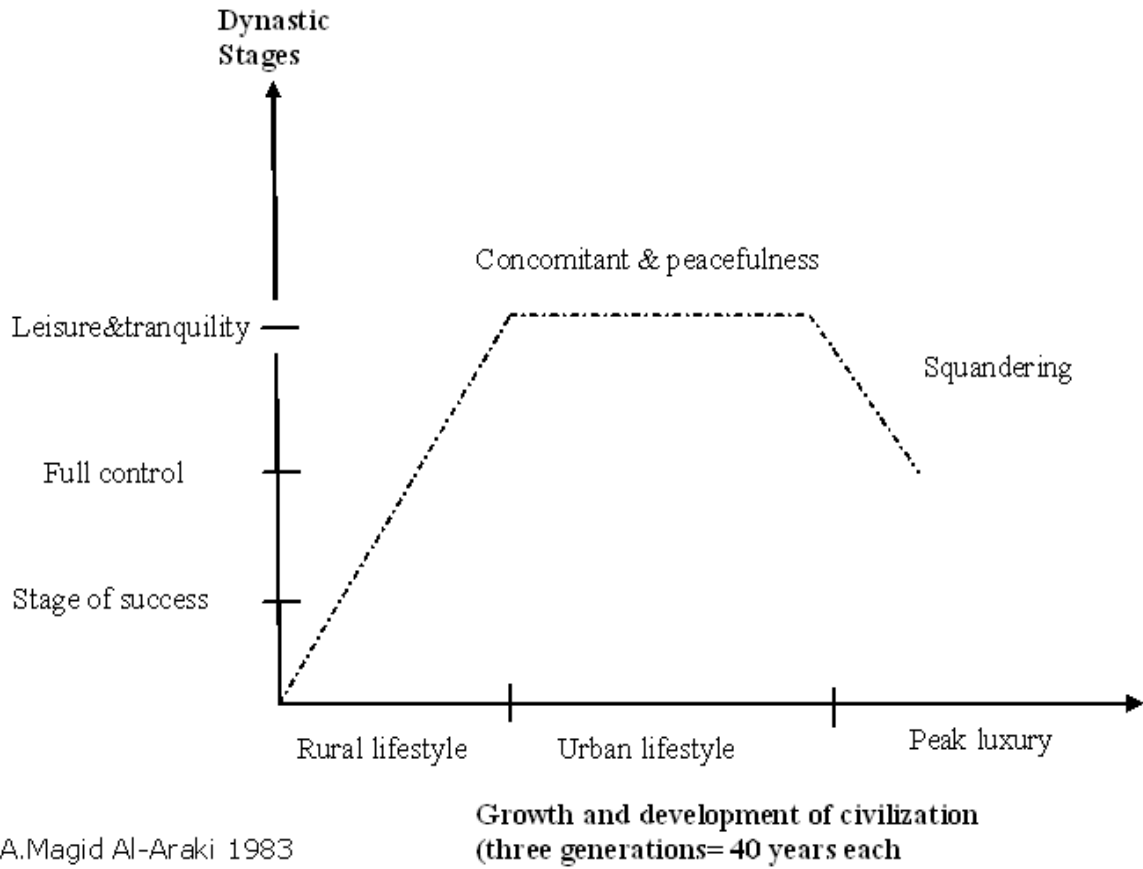
Khalidun asserted that social solidarity (*asabiyah*) is a vital function in explaining the cyclical theory of social change. He extended this term to indicate a universal theoretical framework concerned with examining human social organization. Khalidun mentioned the following features while describing the essentials of *asabiyah*: “associative sentiments, unity of purpose, community of social and economic interests, and oneness of feelings and emotions” (Ali, 1977, p. 118). Given these characteristics, he put forth a new essential idea that served a major role in the transformation of society, relating a new dynamic driving force. Each society transforms from primitive stages to advanced stages of civilization, from rural to urban. The

way social solidarity (*asabiyah*) plays a major role in the rise and fall of human civilization is intrinsic in the sense that he talks about the society's birth, growth, maturity, decadence, senility and demise (Ali, 1977).

### Khaldun's Cyclical Pattern

Khaldun analyzed society empirically. Moreover, he explained social phenomena by an evolutionary principle of social development. He conceptualized societal development as being parallel to the life stages of an individual: birth, maturity, and death. From this, Khaldun developed a spiral theory of social evolution which depicted a transformation from primitive life to civilized urban life (Bogardus, 1960). Khaldun believed that the dynastic cycle is as "a self-destroying but ever-rebuilt bridge between two worlds" (Arnason & Stauth, 2004, p. 36).

Khaldun contended that "dynasties have a natural life span like individuals" (Khaldun, 1958, p. 343). According to astrologers and physicians, the natural life span of human beings is 120 years, which is the maximum time period for states as well (Azmeh, 1982). Khaldun believed that a dynasty lasts no longer than three generations. The life span of a generation matches the life of an individual, which is 40 years. This time period allows one to achieve maturity and growth (Khaldun, 1958). Araki (1983) summarized that Khaldun perceived that the cycle lasts three generations and took place over five stages: 1) the overthrow of opposition (stage of success), 2) the ruler's attainment of complete control over his people (full control), 3) the stage of leisure and tranquility 4) the stage of contentment and peacefulness, and 5) the stage of waste, squandering, and disintegration (Khaldun, 1958, p. 353-5). (See Figure 1).



*Figure 1.* The dynastic stages and development of civilization.

## CHAPTER III

### A COMPARISON OF THE WORKS OF IBN KHALDUN AND GIAMBATTISTA VICO (1668-1744)

Giambattista Vico developed a comprehensive philosophy to address the historical and contemporary condition of humanity by positing universalistic presumptions. He assumed that the history of humanity had evolved gradually, resulting in class conflict. He employed a paradigm asserting that history, a continuing process, evolves through human will in three ages: the gods age, the heroic age and the human age (Barnes and Becker, 1952). Vico has traditionally been recognized as a social determinist; however, his historical perspective was essentially psycho-sociological. His primary thesis was based upon a cyclical pattern of social development. Moreover, he believed that social progress is a general and comprehensive movement in which all dynamics have evolved concurrently. That is, Vico suggested a parallel between the individual and society: that we can experience a process, within ourselves, similar to that experienced by society throughout history (Barnes and Becker, 1952).

Khaldun's cyclical theory of social change overlapped Vico's theoretical framework regarding the cyclical pattern. Vico developed the theory of *ricorsi* without knowing that Khaldun had already formulated it in the 14th century (Gumplowicz, 1980).

In 1725, Vico wrote his masterpiece *The New Science (Scienza nuova)*. In this work, Vico devised a cyclical theory of history (*ricorsi*); this theory of history is both a theory of social change as well as an epistemology for the study of social context. Additionally, Vico held that human civilization passes through the stages of the gods age, the heroic age and the human age (Baumer, 1978).

## Continuities between Khaldun and Vico

Vico believed that societies pass through cycles of development; moreover, society moves through similar cycles (Lana, 1987). Khaldun's three steps of "necessities, conveniences, and luxuries" (Khaldun, 1958, p. lxxxi) corresponded to Vico's six steps: "Men first feel necessity, then look for utility, next attend to comfort, still later amuse themselves with pleasure, hence grow dissolute in luxury, and finally go mad and waste their substance. The nature of peoples is first crude, then severe, then benign, then delicate, finally dissolute" (Vico, 1984, p. 70).

Vico argued that the development of civilizations is a spiral movement of prosperity and decline; however, there is no one continuous or uninterrupted process indicating the pace of development. A particular stage in a cycle is not necessarily the same as the corresponding stage in the preceding cycle and the history is not repetitive at all (Flint, 1884). Vico wrote that "Our science therefore comes to describe at the same time an ideal eternal history traversed in time by the history of every nation in its rise, development, maturity, decline, and fall" (Vico, 1984, p. 104). Khaldun's cyclical theory of social change proposed a similar contention; phases of rise, maturation, and decline occur for all civilizations. That is, Khaldun and Vico shared the same belief in cyclical mechanisms of change. Vico and Khaldun both embraced the notion that "The nature of peoples is first crude, then severe, then benign, then delicate, finally dissolute" (Vico, 1944, p. 70).

Moreover, Khaldun and Vico agreed that factors such as religion implicate substantial change and evolution in the civilization. Concerning religion, people tend to group together, creating a sense of solidarity. Their philosophy regarding realistic thinking was deemed a



dichotomy of reality. Khaldun suggested that oppression and social injustice are not permanent societal elements. Another shared observation between Vico and Khaldun prescribed that the powerful individual holding administrative office was revered and obeyed (Baali, 1988).

The corrosion of group cohesion, as concurred upon by Vico and Khaldun, elicits the tendency to spend time on leisure or in a lifestyle of luxury. This process causes society to lose some of its values; people turn to secondary sources such as dishonesty (Lana, 1987). Vico argued that a reverse of evolution towards minimal civilization could treat societal decay. He understood this societal condition as “the returned barbarian times” (Vico, 1984, p.144). His solution is in line with Khaldun: Turning to the point where the state and social solidarity are fresh and powerful. Like Vico, Khaldun's premise of his framework dealt with the historical interpretation vis-a-vis social transformation (Baali, 1988).

Finally, Khaldun and Vico shared the idea that government is natural and necessary. Furthermore, both agreed that an end to government is always found, consisting of the savage or tyrannical form. Khaldun explained social phenomenon as a cyclical theory of social change. That is, societies pass through stages of birth, growth, and death, as experienced by an individual. Consequently, both thinkers have similar ideas concerning the rise and fall of civilization (Baali, 1988).

#### Khaldun’s Contributions that are Divergent from Vico

Khaldun believed that the process of the rise and decline of dynasties lasts no longer than three generations. The first generation preserves desert characteristics, the harshness of desert life, and desert savagery. The strong social bond present in desert life continues to be

preserved. Khaldun articulated that the second generation transitioned from nomadic life to civilized life, from hardship to luxury, from a state sharing in glory to monopolization of it while others are too lazy to strive for it. Social solidarity is to some extent broken, and that monopolization of glory makes people submissive to oppression. The third generation then forgets the period of rural life as though it had never existed. The social solidarity is broken-down and power is lost (Khaldun, 1958).

Khaldun presented extensive descriptions of the process of societal progress. However, Vico developed a method which is a universal prospective on the process of societal development and change into contemporary methods (Lana, 1987). Moreover, Khaldun's contention that society can survive and endure without religion sharply contrasted with Vico's statement that if religion disappears among a civilization, there is nothing left to enable the people to live in society (Baali, 1988). Unlike Vico, Khaldun freed himself from fables and delusions. Khaldun did not believe "in the influence of the stars on the fortunes of individuals, nations, and states" (Baali, 1988, 126).

#### Vico's Contributions that are Divergent from Khaldun

Vico characterized historical development into three time periods. "There were three kinds of nature, three types of character, three epochs of religion, three species of language, of writing, of governments, of natural law, of jurisprudence, of legal judgments, etc" (Flint, 1884, p. 214). Vico maintained that the historical cycle followed these stages: (1) "anarchy and savagery; (2) order and civilization, accompanied by the rule of reason and peaceful industry; and (3) the decay of civilization, with new barbarism setting in" (Sztompka, 1994, p. 145).

In this conceptualization of history, Vico discussed the “natural” state of the Jews and the Gentiles, both of which he contended were descendants of the Biblical Adam. After events of Noah and the flood, nevertheless, they differentiated. The Hebrews sustained their progress, never passing through the third stage of returning to barbarian times. However, after the flood, Vico believed that Gentile nations turned to the most miserable savagery. They were subsequently saved from this state of barbarism and entered into conditions of society only by the mechanism of a religious consciousness (Barnes and Becker, 1952).

Vico held that “nations and cultures followed sequences of development which are given by discoverable universal principles. The beginning of this sequence can be understood by analysis of the language of the ancient myths of a nation” (Lana, 1987, p. 158). These myths, which refer to the periods that Vico called the gods age, the heroic age and the human age, specify different modes of thought, expression, social forms, and institutions. Vico held that each of these periods of the gods age, the heroic age and the human age were each governed by certain universal principles. As a result, the development of a word can be traced through examination of intellectual history in the social context of a particular society (Lana, 1987).

In his work, *New Science*, Vico described in detail the three periods: the gods age, the heroic age and the human age.

#### *Gods Age*

In the first period, pious clergy are among the positions in government and state. A strong religious orientation in the society is observed at the beginning of social existence. This forced people to think about gods and the way of communication between gods and the people. The pronouncements about the relation between gods and people gave birth to the

concept of divination. The active elements of societies are the poets who were quite powerful and influential with their words. Poets could both dramatically criticize and praise people, and they did not refrain from unreal definitions in their poems. The gradual change evolved society into the next heroic age (Barnes and Becker, 1952). The application of reasoning strengthens as the social existence matures and the society becomes less likely to understand religion as being a fundamental pillar of the society. The community is particularly shaped by the expressions and judgments of the group religion (Lana, 1987). During the gods age, religious principles permeate religion, art, philosophy, regulation, political and societal organization (Sorokin, 1947).

### *Heroic Age*

Vico argued that a civilization starts with the second period, the 'age of hero.' The heroic age begins when patriarchal rulers conquer people previously governed by priests in the gods age; this conquest causes political and social inequality, leading to a continuous struggle between the patriarchal governors and the governed. While the government of this period is essentially aristocratic, the democratic principle increasingly begins to express itself. In addition, mythological language is, in the heroic age, mostly displaced by metaphorical language, and knowledge remains in the hands of the poets (Barnes and Becker, 1952). In this phase, society is governed by an aristocratic administration where people do not receive any support from the government. The Gods age maintains its influence in the heroic age through divine concepts. This way of conducting laws develops well-defined governing principles. Therefore, "the letter of the law is supreme" (Lana, 1987, p. 158).

### *Human Age*

As time passes, aristocratic government is increasingly criticized as citizens pursue greater political freedoms in the third period, the human age. At the same time, aristocratic families are increasingly weakened: through the process of marrying off their children, their fortunes are fragmented. Accordingly, this decline of aristocratic power and the rising popular demand for political rights produces a freer society where intellectual thought and scientific accomplishments are more possible (Lana, 1987). As the last stage, this epoch of society is characterized by the potential limitations of harmony and peace that can serve to reduce social cohesion. Moreover, society experiences increasing civil equality as a universal rule, despite the continued existence of gaps between rich and poor even as a society becomes more egalitarian. For example, vice, dishonesty, and decadent luxuries remain prevalent among the rich despite increasing social equality (Flint, 1884).

The human age is the last stage of civilization which results from class conflict. At the last phase of civilization, we see the human age resulting from class conflict. In the human age, the divine providence of man is utility. In Vico's overall conceptualization of human behavior in all three ages, first the nature of man is crude, then severe, then benign, then delicate, and finally dissolute. With the increasing rationalism of man, human civilization evolves through the social arrangement types of forest dwelling, huts, villages, and cities, ending in academies. Vico stated that legislative bodies, through use of the material, economic, and intellectual assets of the country, create armed forces, trade, and governing classes (Vico, 1984).

## CHAPTER IV

### A COMPARISON OF THE WORKS OF IBN KHALDUN AND AUGUST COMTE (1798–1857)

Auguste Comte, whose main theoretical frameworks consisted of the hierarchy of sciences and the law of the three stages of social change, is often acknowledged as the founder of modern sociology. Yet, some scholars consider Khaldun as the first sociologist. Gumprowicz forcefully asserted: "I wanted to show that long before not only Auguste Comte, but also Vico, whom the Italians wanted forcibly to consider as the first European sociologist, a pious Muslim studied with perspicacity the social phenomena, and expressed profound ideas on this subject. What he wrote is what we term today as 'Sociology'" (Enan, 1979, p. 125). In addition, Cohen (1959) stated that Khaldun "discovered and mastered the fundamentals of sociology some five centuries before Auguste Comte coined the word" (p. 81). Moreover, the originality of Comte's theories has been critiqued. Some theorists contend that "Comte made very few original contributions: almost all of his ideas can be traced back to numerous predecessors" (Timasheff, 1955, p. 29). Arguably, Comte's major accomplishment was to systematically synthesize and abridge several of the disparate, inarticulate doctrines of his time. Furthermore, Comte can be seen as "greatly behind the scientific achievements of his age in many ways and quite failed to absorb many of the most important developments of the period which have since entered into sociological thought" (Becker and Barnes, 1952, p. 565).

#### Continuities between the Perspectives of Khaldun and Comte

Each scholar undoubtedly believed that his outlook was unique. Khaldun termed his perspective *ilm al-umran* (science of human social organization), while Comte named his

sociology. Furthermore, Khaldun constantly emphasized that his science of human social organization was novel (Baali, 1988).

Another similarity between the two theorists appears in their theories of social transformation. Khaldun stated that societies rise and fall in three stages, and the cycle recurs from primary stage and settlement to senility. Comte asserted that social progress is classified human knowledge which passes through three stages: the theological, the metaphysical, and the positivistic stages. Both Khaldun and Comte discovered social phenomena according to principles of social development. Social development pertains to various aspects of life and creates strong social interaction. Enhanced trade and business, cultural convergence of society, and advancements in artistic temperament are observed in communal activities throughout this stage. Both scholars also acknowledged the essentiality of the material aspects of civilization such as literature, art, and commerce. Khaldun argued that these features are the unavoidable consequences and by-products of urbanization and urbanism (Baali, 1988).

A third similarity between Khaldun and Comte is illustrated in their explanation of historical-empirical method. Comte maintained that the most important aspect of human development would come through observation, experimentation and comparison accurate enough to give explanation to all experiences in terms of natural cause and effect (Comte, 1896). Like Comte, Khaldun had a similar historical-empirical method to analyze the society during his time (Baali, 1988).

Both Comte and Khaldun discussed specialization, occupations and professions, focusing on inequality (Baali, 1988). Khaldun stated, "Differences of conditions among people are the result of the different ways in which they make their livings" (Khaldun, 1958, p. 249).

Comparable to Khaldun's idea regarding the division of labor, Comte believed in principle that the division of labor fostered the development of individual gifts and capacities; at the same time, it contributed to human solidarity by creating in each individual a sense of his dependence on others. Thus, Comte focused on the principle of cooperation: the division of labor in society. Such cooperation creates a comparative advantage over others and pushes inefficient workers to either differentiate or shift to more efficient segments of industry in the market. Differentiation results in specialization where the refinement, quality and cultivation of goods and services are promoted. On the other hand, more efficient labor allocation produces cost reduction that helps establish economies of scale. Eventually, over time, the standards of living in the society is elevated. Therefore, the division of labor creates interdependence among members of the society. Society ultimately benefits from a properly functioning efficient labor market. As societies become more complex, the division of labor is the only means to properly adjust to that complexity (Comte, 1866).

Another similarity is that Khaldun and Comte shared the belief on the intervention of religion in the creation of civilization. Comte asserted that religion provides energy and power, and helps people to accomplish their life objectives (Faghirzadeh, 1982). He established a secular religion, the Religion of Humanity, and a secular worship system. Moreover, he developed a 13-month calendar which included special festival days celebrating his understanding of religion (Comte, 1866). In Comte's perspective, "religion was to be divorced from super-nationalism and transformed into a collective emotion-building force supporting secular reforms and social justice" (Becker and Barnes, 1952, p. 503). Khaldun perceived religion as the utilitarian foundation in the establishment of *asabiyah* (social solidarity). In



addition, religion acts as a tremendously dominant factor in socialization and enables unity among members of its society (Mohammad, 1998).

Finally, Khaldun and Comte both observed the dissolution of the old social order. They were eager to find a stable state that could sustain needed social control. The role of social cohesion in the maintenance of the social group can be seen in Khaldun's emphasis on the role of social solidarity in fortifying the social group, and in Comte's analysis of society as "an organism where the whole is better known and more important than the part" (Baali, 1988, p. 66).

#### Khaldun's Contributions that are Divergent from Comte

Khaldun applied social change theory to a society and to a state. Khaldun argued that the social system can be classified into two types of social life, the rural and the urban society; Comte only applied his theory to the human mindset in its progress from the theological stage to the positive stage (Baali, 1988).

In contrast to Comte's strong materialist and positivist view, excessive dependence upon a materialistic position was marginalized in Khaldun's understanding of the cyclic theories of civilizations in which Khaldun took a hostile position towards materialism (Dhaouadi, 2006).

Khaldun stated that societal progress is not unidirectional; rather, it circulates. Comte held the opposite position: historical progress moves in a single direction. Comte insisted that the positive stage is the final phase of this linear process; society will employ human reasoning to organize itself when the proper time arrives (Comte, 1896). Moreover, this process occurs not by a revolution but through a gradual transition, which has to be assisted by the scientific

class of society (Comte, 1896). In the positive stage, both temporal and spiritual power would unite "to keep up the idea of the whole, and the feeling of the common interconnection" (Comte, 1896).

To some extent, Khaldun differed from Comte regarding the natural character of human ability. Khaldun asserted that distinctions in the attributes of primitive and advanced civilized people persist because of differences in habit rather than differences of natural character. He believed that there is not progress in human ability, only that change is cyclical (Lana, 1987). Therefore, focus on the self-control and will-power is issued prevalently rather than changing the nature of human being.

#### Comte's Contributions that are Divergent from Khaldun

Khaldun's conceptualization of the social system differed from Comte. Comte's theory of social dynamics was founded on the law of the three stages, i.e., societal evolution is based on the evolution of mind through the theological, metaphysical, and positivist stages. Comte understood social dynamics as a process of progressive evolution in which people become cumulatively more intelligent and in which altruism eventually triumphs over egoism. This process is one that people can modify or accelerate, but in the end the laws of progressive development dictate the development of society (Comte, 1896).

Unlike Khaldun's perspective, Comte's theory of the three stages of societal progress was idealistic because Comte's basic principle extended from ideas, rather than economic dynamics. Therefore, according to Comte, society evolved from theological phases to philosophical phases, and finally to positivist phases in mental orientation (Faghirzadeh, 1982).

The subject matter of Comte's new science became human society: his sociological goal was the improvement of human society. Conversely, Khaldun was interested in describing human society (Baali, 1988). In his historical framework, Comte asserted that social progress throughout history can be classified under three stages.

*Theological stage* (The "infantile" stage): People have a primitive, supernatural world-view and believe in God or gods. In this stage, men, manipulated by their imagination, seek out justification of all social phenomena in the will of supernatural beings (Comte, 1896).

*Metaphysical stage* (The "adolescent" stage): There is an acknowledgement of unseen natural causes, "essences," and de-personalized forces; the key terms here are mind and reason. In this stage, intellect masters imagination. Metaphysics then displaces religion, and man seeks a justification of phenomenon in the forces of nature (Comte, 1896).

*Positive stage*: In this "mature" period, only logical explanation is sanctioned; all evidence other than the material world will be refused. The laws of nature are not "justifications," but "descriptions" of nature. There are no ultimate causes. The question asked should not be "why?" but "what?" There are no absolutes or universals. The only absolute is that "Everything is subject to change and is relative." In this stage, science achieves dominance over philosophy. Furthermore, Comte believed that positivism could both advance science and social change. He argued that the upper classes of his time were far too conservative to advance to the positive stage (Comte, 1896).

Comte applied science to explain sociology from a positivist perspective. On this issue, Comte departed from Khaldun. Each scientific field depends on the deterministic chain, but in this process some sciences precede others. Astronomy, the most general and simple of all

natural sciences, developed first. In time, it was followed by physics, chemistry, biology, and finally, sociology (Comte, 1896). Each science in this series depended for its emergence upon the prior developments of its predecessors in a hierarchy marked by the law of increasing complexity and decreasing generality. The social sciences, the most complex and the most dependent for their emergence on the development of the others, were highest in the hierarchy (Comte, 1896).

The division of society is divided into static and dynamic conditions. Social dynamics study progress and change in society grounded on the law of the three stages of society, the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive stages. Social statics study the structure of the social system in which people cooperate among each other (Comte, 1896). Comte divided society into two major conditions explicitly and more specifically than Khaldun did. Khaldun employed such a division implicitly in his discussion of the struggle between primitive society and advanced society (Baali, 1988). According to Comte, social science methodology was dependent upon observation of the static and dynamic laws of social phenomena. Comte extended the technique of observation of static and dynamic conditions from physical science to social science (Comte, 1896).

## CHAPTER V

### A COMPARISON OF THE WORKS OF IBN KHALDUN AND LUDWIG GUMFLOWICZ (1838-1909)

Gumplowicz is considered a prominent social conflict theorist. In his book *Sociological Essays*, Gumplowicz noted Khaldun's perspective by praising his understanding of conflict theory. He pointed out that Khaldun reached the zenith of social investigation when he developed his observations on the cohesive action of social groups, and that these social groups are themselves the creation of the milieu. In addition, Gumplowicz's most significant statement about Khaldun's ideas concerned conquering races. He stated that Khaldun's observations regarding his historical period and its impacts verify that he recognized the 'law of assimilation' five centuries before Darwin (Enan, 1979).

#### Continuities between Khaldun and Gumplowicz

Khaldun's cyclical philosophies shaped Gumplowicz's historical perspective. Gumplowicz was profoundly influenced by the cyclical theory of history or *ricorsi*, first developed by Khaldun in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and autonomously developed by Vico in his work *New Science*. In Gumplowicz's perspective, "History does not present so much mandates or guides to action, as it serves as a basis for placing of the present in cultural perspective"(Gumplowicz, 1980).

Gumplowicz argued for the rise and fall of societies. He agreed that societies' interests create political conflict. This conflict initiates societal change, and has an exploitative influence upon economic policy. In agreement with Khaldun's solidarity theory, Gumplowicz held that when a strong society emerges, one social group tends to dominate another. The dominant group does not necessarily constitute the mainstream of society, and may be a numerical

minority. However, because of its political, economic, and social power, this dominant group usually exemplifies the attributes of order, authority, and unity as a solid community because these aspects are driving factors of supremacy (Baali, 1988). Khaldun and Gumplowicz also coincided in the belief that constant struggle is an inevitable factor of social life; however, Gumplowicz methodically developed this point (Andreski and Radcliffe-Brown, 2003).

Moreover, Khaldun and Gumplowicz's "conquest theories" are similar. Gumplowicz held that the strong group restrains the weak one into a service position; Khaldun asserted that desert tribesmen overpower the cities and place them in a tributary position (Cahnman et al, 1995).

Solidification in Gumplowicz's conflict analysis was somewhat similar to Khaldun's concept of social solidarity. Only the group is essential for the reason that the individual is a group product, whereas Khaldun regarded the individual level as important as the group level. Like Khaldun, Gumplowicz stated that a minority of united, dedicated, and disciplined conquerors overpower and exploit the conquered majority; consequently, the situation causes the ultimate decline or fall of the civilization or state (Baali, 1988). Accordingly, some critics argue that both theorists seem to be "pessimistic." Their common conceptualization of societal progress of the beginnings and the ends of civilizations implies that these stages follow each other sequentially. That is, these phases support one another because eventually after a decline of a civilization, another civilization will begin in a primitive phase (Busch, 1968).

Similar to Khaldun, Gumplowicz concluded that the process of conflict is accompanied by economic exploitation. Furthermore, another prominent similarity to Khaldun's social solidarity (*asabiyah*) in Gumplowicz's theory was that no state has ever existed without

progressing through a process of subjugation of one group by another (Baali, 1988). However, Khaldun and Gumplowicz did not specify how tribal groupings first developed (Becker and Barnes, 1952).

#### Khaldun's Contributions that are Divergent from Gumplowicz

Khaldun believed that humans naturally engage in a process of domination over other humans. This tendency produces conflict and is the origin of wars. Indirectly, political dominance is the ultimate goal. Conversely, the losers of these conflicts become degraded in the new social strata. Because of their dominated position, the subjugated group loses the will to resist the dominant group (Mahdi, 2006).

Both theorists understood the genesis of conflict quite differently in their conflict perspectives. In his conceptualization of conflict theory, Gumplowicz held that racial hatreds are a major conflict factor; his perspective focuses on the dysfunctional element of social conflict (Gumplowicz, 1980). By contrast, Khaldun did not appear to address conflict separate from social solidarity. Khaldun argued that the concept of *asabiyah* (social solidarity) plays a crucial role in the development and subsequent degeneration of societies (Mohammed, 1998). Khaldun's concept of social solidarity functions "constructively" or "destructively." For Khaldun, social conflict results in consequences that increase social group adaptation. Yet, it also generates negative dynamics which destroy social groups (Khalifa, 1972). He declared that *asabiyah* (social solidarity) was an instrument of defense, as well as aggression. Khaldun asserted that "respect for blood ties is something natural among men;" moreover, he stated that "one feels shame when other's relatives are treated unjustly or attacked, and one wishes

to intervene between them and whatever peril or destruction threatens them” (Khalidun, 1958, p. 264). Gumplowicz’s understanding of social conflict only functions destructively. While Gumplowicz saw its origin in an almost primordial racial hatred, Khalidun contended that this conflict originated from two strong but opposing group solidarities (Khalifa, 1972).

Ortega, a Spanish philosopher, further elaborated on Khalidun’s ideas when he explained Khalidun’s view that the state is created by nomadic or rural groups, and civilization by sedentary groups. The city is a place where humankind finds enlightenment, occupations, wealth, and happiness. However, power is to be found among nomads, who become stronger through harder life conditions and possess moral discipline and courage. Those conditions enable nomads to conquer cities and create states. As nomads become civilized, they fall victim to other nomads, who remain unaffected by the excesses of the city. This process then repeats itself, *ad infinitum* (Alatas, 2006).

Khalidun maintained not only that societies are compelled to act according to principles of social change, but that everything an individual says is subject to nature and its laws. All strength and accomplishment are temporary; moreover, they reach an optimal level and a natural limit that cannot be surpassed (Stowasser, 1983). Khalidun’s concept of solidarity plays a dynamic role in explaining the rise and fall of human civilization. Khalidun held that human civilization passes through stages of birth, growth, maturity, decadence, senility and demise (Ali, 1977).

Given these social changes, social solidarity is necessary for the establishment of order.

That is, Khalidun articulated that

the restraining influence among Bedouin tribes comes from their *shaykhs* and leaders. These result from the great respect and veneration they generally enjoy among the



people. The hamlets of the Bedouins are defended against outside enemies by a tribal militia composed of noble youths of the tribe who are known for their courage. Their defense and protection are successful only if they are a closely-knit group of common descents. This strengthens their stamina and makes them feared, since everyone's affection for his family and his group has greater importance (than anything else). (Khalidun, 1958, p.262)

It can be noted that Khalidun's social solidarity comprises a sociopolitical formation marking the transition from a classless to a class society. The tribal aristocracy holds political power only as it is incorporated into egalitarian structures. For Khalidun, the dialectics of "solidarity and kingship continue to be essential for the formation and sustenance of all political regimes" (Mahdi, 1957, p. 198).

Social solidarity, as described by Khalidun, provides a strong bond and manages power; consequently, it contributes a measure of stability to society. The rural period of *asabiyah* (social solidarity) indicates the unity of structure and accord of action, whereas the urban period of social solidarity is characterized by disintegration and conflict. Its purpose as a social bond and a harmonizing factor is a feature of a particular phase of progress of human association. *Asabiyah* unifies people through blood ties and bonds of alliance (Rabi, 1967).

#### Gumplowicz's Contributions that are Divergent from Khalidun

Gumplowicz, a law professor and sociologist, presented a theory explaining that every man in the world has varied origins, with no common blood bond uniting all mankind, and that modern society arises from the endless life-death conflict of the groups preceding it.

Gumplowicz conceptualized history as a continuous series of aggression, suppression and incorporation. The state arises as means for dominating inferior peoples; laws are created to help govern these peoples, and social groups result from cyclical inequalities. Therefore,

because of his belief in Darwinist and scientific principles, Gumplowicz insisted that society should be studied “purely in naturalistic terms, without any recourse to metaphysical or supernatural explanations, to establish scientific sociology” (Faghirzadeh, 1982, 189). That is, Gumplowicz contributed to the development of a purely empirical sociological perspective and methodology.

Gumplowicz developed his Darwinist sociology of social group conflict by focusing on racial struggle. He positioned racial struggle at the center of his analysis: the racial struggle for dominance in all its structures, whether open and brutal, or subtle and peaceful, is the dynamic principle which is the engine of history. He held that racial hatred was inherent in humans. Consequently, this primordial racial hatred led to violence, bloodshed brutal enslavement and extermination (Weikart, 2003). Gumplowicz asserted that “the function of sociology consists of showing that universal laws apply to social phenomena” (Gumplowicz, 1980, p. 82).

Gumplowicz believed that social and cultural evolution has been a continual struggle between social groups, which is “analogous to the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest among individuals” and supersedes individual struggle in the theory of evolution. Moreover, he emphasized that only the group is essential because the individual is a product of group interaction (Timasheff, 1966).

Gumplowicz believed that lust for expanded economic dominance has an indirect influence on conflict (war) between social groups. War produces violence towards the conquered group. Moreover, men find it beneficial to subjugate the conquered and to exploit them economically. Gumplowicz’s theory of the origin of the state lies in one social group dominating another. Wars between states result from the urge for conquest after state

formation. Moreover, class struggle develops among states in which the hegemonic class understands that it can preserve and expand its dominance by organizing lawful and political institutions (Timasheff, 1966).

Gumplowicz's philosophy was based initially on the polygenetic hypothesis, the notion of the multiple origins of humankind. This is the concept that humanity lacks a single common ancestor, an "Adam." He maintained that this polygenetic origin, and its inherent racial hatreds, led to group conflict. Gumplowicz proceeded to argue that through such struggle any extension of the social group, or any combination of two or more social groups into one social body, is feasible (Sorokin, 1928). Subsequently, the triumphant group (that is now one social body) has transformed the conquered group into slaves or subjects. To manage them successfully, the dominant segment of the group acts as follows: (a) A new state is created through the unification of triumphant and conquered groups. The conquerors evolve into the privileged and the authoritative, whereas the subjugated groups compose the exploited and the disenfranchised. (b) Law derives as a totality of compulsory rules ratified by the governing (conqueror) body for the purposes of controlling and exploiting the conquered group. (c) The origin of social stratification and inequality turns the conquerors into an aristocracy, whereas the subjugated groups become the lower strata. Finally, (d) cultural differences between the conquerors and the conquered diminish, yet class differences remain (Sorokin, 1928).

The conquerors become dominant at the level of the language and the religion of the subjugated, and the cultural gap between them is progressively bridged. In this process the contending social groups gradually achieve more cohesion until another social group outside of these groups subjugates them, and the same process is renewed. Gumplowicz held that such

repetition is a fundamental historical process (Sorokin, 1928). In every state, fractional evolution and progress have occurred. However, Gumplowicz maintained that there were always barbarians present who anticipated initiating this historical process. The decline of powerful states cannot be understood without acknowledging the presence of domestic elements that can produce internal discord and destabilize the state. Gumplowicz asserted that the state “is the result of conquest, the establishment of the victors as a ruling caste over the vanquished” (Baali and Wardi, 1981). He declared that there is no progress and retrogression throughout history: progress can be observed only in particular periods and countries (Gumplowicz, 1980).

Lester Frank Ward (1907, p.205) summarized the principles of Gumplowicz’s cyclical theory in his book *Pure Sociology: A Treatise On the Origin and Spontaneous Development of Society*, as follows: (a) subjugation of one race by another, (b) origin of the caste, the conquered race forming a lower and the conquering race a higher stratum of society, (c) gradual mitigation of this condition, leaving simply a state of individual, social, and political inequality, (d) gradual rise from purely military dominance to a recognition of law and the origin of the idea of legal right, (e) origin of the state, under which all classes have both rights and duties, (g) cementing of the mass of heterogeneous elements into a more or less homogenous people, and (h) rise and development of a nation.

Every political organization, and hence, every developing civilization, begins when one horde permanently subjugates another (Gumplowicz, 1980). That is, “Gumplowicz developed his sociology of war as a necessary prerequisite to social progress” (Sklair, 1970, p. 70).

## CHAPTER VI

### A COMPARISON OF THE WORKS OF IBN KHALDUN AND EMILE DURKHEIM (1858-1917)

In some respects, Khaldun and Durkheim shared similar ideas. However, their perspectives differed on several points. Khaldun's social theory emphasized a dualist typology. Moreover, Khaldun framed his social solidarity theory prior to Durkheim.

#### Continuities between the Perspectives of Khaldun and Durkheim

Durkheim's notion of "mechanical" and "organic solidarity" reflected Khaldun's notion of *asabiyah* or "social cohesion." The Khaldunian understanding of society was based on *asabiyah*, which is similar to Durkheim's notion of collective consciousness (Baali, 1988), the key factor for establishing social order within societies. By collective consciousness, Durkheim refers to the sum of feelings that are common to people in society; group consciousness is strengthened over time and unites the group (Durkheim, 1984). Ernest Gellner noted in *Muslim Society* (1981) that "Ibn Khaldun, like Emile Durkheim, is primarily a theorist of social cohesion" (p. 86).

Khaldun compared societies to individuals when he asserted that "dynasties have a natural life span like individuals" (Khaldun, 1958, p. 343). Like Khaldun, Durkheim applied biological metaphors and analogies to describe social changes. Both scholars conceptualized society as a social organism which evolves or develops from being simple and mechanical to being complex and organic (Durkheim, 1984).

Khaldun noted that "human beings cannot live and exist except through social organization and cooperation" (Khaldun, 1958, p. 33). This concept was similar to Durkheim's

notion that "society cannot exist if its parts are not solidary" (Durkheim, 1984, p. 332). Khaldun discussed the well-developed division of labor in urban areas, and proposed that division of labor occurred as a result of a transition in lifestyles from rural to urban society. This idea was quite similar to Durkheim's for the rise of the division of labor, caused by a transition from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity (Baali, 1988).

Khaldun closely examined how economical factors affect society. However, he did not ignore noneconomic factors like *asabiyah* (social solidarity) and religion. Khaldun, like Durkheim, treated religion as a culturally determined social fact; that is, civilizations can continue without "religious laws." Khaldun preceded Durkheim with regard to emphasizing the positive role of religion in social control and group harmony. Religion fortifies social solidarity, an idea Durkheim highlighted some 500 years after Khaldun (Baali, 1988). Moreover, Khaldun's analysis on religion is regarded as "the beginning of a sociology of religion" (Becker and Barnes, 1952, p. xiii). In Khaldun's perspective, religion is the most significant player to solidify society, followed by kinship (Mohammad, 1998). Khaldun's association of religion with primitive society presented the same idea as the function of religion in Durkheim's mechanical solidarity which minimized individual differences signifying that "ideas and tendencies common to all the members of the society are greater in number and intensity than those which pertain personally to each member" (Durkheim, 1984, p. 332). Trivialized differences among societal members advance community interests rather than individual interests. In an economic sense, labor is directed towards producing more societal benefit by utilizing the previously discussed notion of division of labor. Like Khaldun, Durkheim noted that "higher societies can maintain themselves in equilibrium only if labor is divided" (Durkheim, 1984, p. 397).

## Khaldun's Contributions that are Divergent from Durkheim

Khaldun stated that rural societies can possess only mechanical solidarity, whereas more complex urban societies, characterized by greater division of labor, possess the potential to show signs of organic solidarity. However, Durkheim drew a direct comparison between mechanical and organic solidarity, indicating that the former has more primitive and inferior attributes of societal unity than the latter. That is, Durkheim saw mechanical solidarity as a substandard form of social cohesion, as opposed to organic solidarity (Turchin, 2003)

Durkheim's conception of social solidarity was developed by contrasting mechanical and organic solidarity, whereas Khaldun only identified mechanical solidarity. Khaldun was aware of 'organic' civilization, and he held it to be the necessary and essential requirement of civilization (Gellner, 1981).

From Khaldun's perspective, tribes were knit from within. While Khaldun perceived complex societies as undermined by their lack of common will, Durkheim perceived complex societies as fortified by their domestic interdependence. Indeed, Durkheim saw social solidarity as challenging for pre-modern people, tracing what simpler people have to common ideas; by contrast, Khaldun identified tribes as constant and united together by social solidarity (Spickard, 2001).

The collapse of collective consciousness generated a greater role for the institution of the State, whereas the breakdown of *asabiyah* (social solidarity) for Ibn Khaldun initiated the disintegration of the State. Therefore, the loss of social solidarity in both cases created two different forms of social changes (Mohammed, 1998).

In Khaldun's theory, the nomadic lives and sedentary lives of cities were contrasted;

through this comparison, the concept of social solidarity –*esprit de corps*- was developed. The nomadic lifestyle encompassed an explicitly strong social cohesion that decreased in intensity as the society urbanized. Khaldun's frame developed concepts of cyclical theory and social dynamics over nomadic and sedentary society (Barnes and Becker, 1952). Bedouins survived with bare necessities, while sedentary people live more comfortably. Humans first pursued bare necessities. After fulfilling those needs, humans sought comfort. Nomadic people typically urbanized, the goal (*ghaya*) of rural society (Khaldun, 1958). Khaldun divided primitive "societal structure" (Al- Araki, 1983, p. 4) into the following: (1) agricultural societies, "those who make their living through the cultivation of grain and through agriculture," (2) pastoral societies, "those who make their living from animals such as sheep and cattle, requiring pasturage," and (3) camel desert societies, "those who make their living by raising camels" (Khaldun, 1958, p.251). In rural *society*, these three primitive social structures were the result of blood ties, alliance and clientship. Khaldun believed the first type, blood ties, embodied the most influential of the social structures and consisted of the strongest feelings of social solidarity: It took precedence over relationships from other ties. The meaning of clientship represented loyalty to religion or religious affiliation. In Khaldun's perspective, religion was capable of generating prominent feelings of social solidarity (Rabi, 1967).

Khaldun believed that the negative influences of luxury and comfort in everyday life were experienced by sedentary people. On the other hand, Bedouins, who lived with bare necessities, were closer to the natural and pure life preserved through a limited social life. Sedentary life imposed many opportunities which could produce harmful consequences. Hence, primitive people were prevented from engaging in activities with negative results without even



being aware of it. The last stage of human civilization was represented by sedentary life; however, this peak point marked the beginning of degeneration and decay (Khalidun, 1958). To quote Khalidun, "Sedentary culture is the goal of civilization. It means the end of its life span and brings about its corruption" (Khalidun, 1958, p.291).

Baali (1988) demonstrated the summarized table that illustrates the characteristic of Khalidunian typology which is rural and urban society. (See Table 1).

Table 1

The Characteristics of Rural and Urban Societies

<b>Ibn Khalidun's Typology</b>	
<b><i>Rural Society</i></b>	<b><i>Urban Society</i></b>
Preceded Urban society; it is the origin of civilization	Indebted to rural society for its origin (population).
Small population with low density	Large population with high density
Occupations are limited mainly to agriculture and animal husbandry	Occupations are varied but "secondary and subsequent" to rural people's crafts
Division of labor and specialization are simple	Complex division of labor necessitates specialization.
Bare necessities of living; less comfortable living	Abundant and comfortable life.
More brave	Less brave
Strong sense of social solidarity	Weak solidarity. Social solidarity may vanish
Purity of lineage	Lineages are "mixed up."
Closer to being good "more remote from the evil habits."	More deviance and "blameworthy qualities."
Little or no change in customs and habits.	Change is inevitable and expected.
Emphasis is on informal social control	Use of "restraining laws" by "authorities and the government."
Prevalence of illiteracy or minimal education	Learning is stressed; arts and sciences are cultivated.
Generally, less clever	More clever as a result of scientific and related activities

Note. Modified from Baali (1988), p. 100.

## Durkheim's Contributions that are Divergent from Khaldun

The initial issue to be discussed is Durkheim's evolutionary perspective on social change, which he conceptualized as changing in a linear form from one stage to another. As the division of labor increased in a society, members of society begin to perform more specialized tasks in professions. This indicated that a society evolved from being simple or "mechanical" to more complex or "organic" in nature. Societal development towards modernization and industrialization was directed from a mechanical to an organic state. These changes could be observed through enlarged population density, increased communication between mechanical societies, specialization, and a division of labor (Durkheim, 1984). Moreover, Durkheim argued that social change is intrinsic to society; it was inherent in the nature of society. The main reason behind this change is the division of labor that stimulated the transition from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity. (Durkheim, 1984).

Durkheim explained the role of division of labor in a society. He stated that the division of labor accelerates both the productive capacity and skill of workmen. Consequently, this increase in both economic and material productivity provides the necessary catalyst for intellectual societal development. However, the division of labor also entails a moral facet that is more important: it creates a feeling of solidarity between people. Durkheim used the example of a married couple to explain how the division of labor contributes to feelings of solidarity. That is, people working together towards a common goal, albeit performing different tasks, have "fellow feeling" or group cohesion. He asserted that the division of labor went beyond purely economic interests; it constituted the establishment of a social and moral order "sui generis." Durkheim contended that "these great political societies cannot sustain their

equilibrium save by the specialization of tasks; the division of labor is the source...of social solidarity.” The division of labor includes a moral element because the integral components of social solidarity, order, harmony, are moral needs (Durkheim, 1984, p. 23).

Durkheim held that the most visible symbol of social solidarity was law. Durkheim understood law as the form most representative of these types of organization, mechanical and organic societies. The first type was the “repressive” or punishing law, which delegated some form of punishment upon the offender. The second type was “restitutive,” which did not necessarily imply suffering on the part of the victim, but consisted of restoring the previous relationships that had been disturbed from their normal form (Durkheim, 1984). Durkheim claimed that repressive law created a society characterized by mechanical solidarity and that penal rules expressed the basic conditions for repressive law. Deviant acts “disturb[s] those feelings that in any one type of society are to be found in every healthy conscious” (Durkheim, 1984, p. 40). Penal law demonstrated the strength of collective reaction to a given action in a mechanical society. Durkheim defined an act as criminal when it offended the collective conscience. He stated, “It is actually public opinion and opposition which constitutes the crime” (Durkheim, 1984, p. 40). Durkheim claimed that, unlike repressive law, restitutory law focuses on restoring society. Moreover, restitutory law worked through more specialized bodies such as courts, magistrates, and lawyers, while repressive law tended to remain diffused throughout society (Durkheim, 1984).

Durkheim asserted that there are two types of solidarity. The first, mechanical solidarity, established a bond between the individual and society because of the similarities everyone shares. The second, organic solidarity generated social cohesion because a type of cooperation

existed between the various “parts” or functions of society (Durkheim, 1984). These relationships were partly organized by a division of labor. Each individual must have had a function and a unique set of relationships with other members. Individuality grew at the same time as the parts of society intensified in complexity. Society became more effective at managing its various functions as the elements increased their specific duties (Durkheim, 1984). Durkheim described a simple society as one where its members had quite similar attitudes, beliefs, and material living conditions. Yet, he recognized that mechanical societies could be placed on a continuum: some were more complex than others. In this discussion, he mentioned the “horde,” a social arrangement in which all its members live exactly the same ideal and material lives. Durkheim contrasted the horde with the clan, which is a more developed social group, which is established by several hordes coming together. Durkheim emphasized the level of uniting, fusing or “complete coalescence” of the society as the main criteria for classification of social types (Durkheim, 1984).

### Religion

To conceptualize the term “religion,” Durkheim separated the concepts of “rites” and “beliefs.” Since rites involved actions motivated by beliefs, first he defined “beliefs.” Durkheim held that all religious beliefs shared one common characteristic: “they presuppose a classification of all the things real and ideal, of which men think, in to two classes or opposed groups, ... [the] profane and sacred.” He defined religion as “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, beliefs, and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them” (Durkheim, 1976, p. 37).

## Suicide

Durkheim asserted that the collapse of social solidarity led to abnormal behavior, a phenomenon he called anomie. While Khaldun did recognize how the breakdown of social solidarity resulted in pathological behavior during his time, his conceptualization of anomie was less systematic than that of Durkheim (Ahmed, 2003). Khaldun understood the causes of the breakdown of social solidarity leading to anomie in this fashion:

By its nature, kingdom demands peace. When people grow used to being at peace and at ease, such ways, like any habit, become part of their nature and character. The new generations grow up in comfort, in a life of tranquility and ease. The old savagery is transformed. The ways of the desert which made them rulers, their violence, rapacity, skill at finding their way in the desert and travelling across wastes, are lost. They now differ from city folk only in their manner and dress. Gradually their prowess is lost, their vigor is eroded, their power undermined.... As men adopt each new luxury and refinement, sinking deeper and deeper into comfort, softness, and peace, they grow more and more estranged from the life of the desert and the desert toughness. They forget the bravery which was their defense. Finally, they come to rely for their protection on some armed force other than their own. (Khaldun III, 1958, p. 341)

In the Khaldunian view, the loosened dynamics of the rural society after the transition to the urban is encompassed in the last phase of the dynastic stages and the development of civilizations. Khaldun's view discussed in the quotation above on behavior attributed to the consequences of the collapse of social solidarity describes moribund and inert societies. A combination of these aforementioned physiological and psychological factors such as anomie is associated with suicide in Durkheim's work.

In *Suicide*, Durkheim explained the social causes of suicide. He proposed three different types of suicide, based on the degrees of imbalance between moral regulation and social integration. He introduced two important "extra social" causes that have direct effect on

suicide rates: the “organic-psychic dispositions and the nature of physical environment” (Durkheim, 1951, p. 57).

He compared two different perspectives on suicide. The first perspective proposed that suicide is mental alienation, and a kind of insanity or disease of mind. The second perspective claimed that mental illness cannot explain suicide. Although suicide may be influenced by mental disorders, it cannot be generalized to all cases. Durkheim combined these two perspectives. He stated that in spite of existing psychological causes, all people who commit suicide are not insane. However, “suicide may occur in a state of insanity” (Durkheim, 1951, p. 62). He classified four types of insane suicides. The first type is maniacal suicide: “this is due to hallucinations or delirious conceptions” (Durkheim, 1951, p. 63). The motives of this type of suicide are not rational. The second type of insane suicide is melancholy suicide. This “type is connected with a general state of extreme depression and sadness” (Durkheim, 1951, p. 63). Chronic hopelessness and desperation are the most prominent characteristics of this type. The third type is obsessive suicide; for this type “suicide is caused by no motive, real or imaginary” (Durkheim, 1951, p. 64), but there is a solid fixed idea of death. Although there is not a clear reason, the patient possesses a desire to kill himself. The final type is impulsive or automatic suicide. This type is similar to the previous type in that there is not any real or unreal motivation. It is an unpredictable and automatic process; even the person who tried to commit suicide cannot explain or even remember the cause (Durkheim, 1951).

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

Having made this comparative analysis, there were significant similarities between Khaldun and the other scholars. Khaldun's theoretical perspective coincided with these Western theorists in a two-fold fashion: on one hand, societal innovation and change proceeds from less advanced to advanced; on the other hand, the progress of change can be connected to and based on certain materialistic perspectives and forces in the transformation of societies (Dhaouadi, 2006). Moreover, each scholar explained social phenomenon in terms of principles of social change.

Khaldun based his argument on two claims. The first claim is that the rise and fall of civilization can be understood as the interruptible processes of evolution and transformation. The second claim is expounded in Khaldun's historical-empirical studies where he analyzed the social behavior of the Arab world. The culmination for Khaldun is that no civilization lasts forever (Dhaouadi, 2006).

Khaldun and Comte's conceptual frameworks are similar to the extent that they share almost the same approach on historical-empirical method regarding social progress. Furthermore, both created a "new science" to analyze their epoch. Khaldun anticipated some theories that were developed by Comte. That is, Khaldun discovered the essentials of sociology such as the systematic analysis of social structure and group behavior and the evolution of less-developed societies to advanced societies some five centuries before Comte coined the word.

The similarities between Khaldun and Durkheim are so compelling that one can declare Khaldun's theory of social system, a dualist typology, similar to Durkheim's typology. Moreover,

Khaldun's concept of *asabiyah* and Durkheim's concept of solidarity are identical. It can be said that Khaldun's theories on *asabiyah*, division of labor, and religion were highlighted and developed by Durkheim some 500 years later.

Similarities between Khaldun and Vico are notable and substantial enough that they lead one to conclude that Khaldun's cyclical theory of social change overlaps with Vico's theoretical framework regarding the cyclical pattern. As argued by Gumplowicz, the cyclical theory of social change was first developed by Khaldun in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and independently developed by Vico, who further developed Khaldun's cyclical theory of social change.

Parallels between Khaldun and Gumplowicz are so significant that they allow one to note that Gumplowicz's conquest theory was strongly influenced by Khaldun. That is, Gumplowicz's understanding of the cyclical process of struggle between groups is similar to Khaldun's circulation. Khaldun's conquest theory, grounded upon cyclical social change theory, appears to have been developed further by Gumplowicz. It can be maintained that Khaldun's conquest theory is still relevant to social conflict theory employed by modern sociology. In short, Khaldun is both a theorist of social cohesion as well as a conflict theorist.

The criteria of what constitutes being a founder of a discipline are another question to be answered in detail in a separate study. Here, I would adhere to the arguments that are made above indicating the substantially important ideas of the scholars and the similarities between the thoughts of Khaldun and other social thinkers. It is reasonable to assert that Khaldun has developed the boundaries of the discipline, defined various relevant concepts, presented propositions and developed causal relationships. Considering the pre-modern age in which Khaldun lived, it is worth noticing that Khaldun briefly coined the terms of rise and fall of



civilizations, societal transformation, and social solidarity and established a theoretical framework that incorporates significant elements of modern thought. Khaldun crafted his ideas around social principles such as division of labor, social interaction, and change in individual values and in society at large. He examined dynastical patterns throughout history and created a paradigm that details the stages of social development of civilization. Developing an interdisciplinary perspective towards sociology, Khaldun fabricated his theoretical concepts using the available knowledge of his era, given its strengths and limitations. This work was able to draw a holistic picture of sociology and its foundations, integrating ideas of significant sociologists, by referring back and forth between Khaldun and more contemporary thinkers. Detailing each scholar's contribution to the discipline is a significant and valuable exercise that demonstrates Khaldun's important relationship to sociological studies in the contemporary academic world.

In this study, I omitted a discussion of criticisms against both Khaldun and the other social thinkers to remain focused upon the larger argument. Criticisms are issues to be explored in future studies. Another limitation to this thesis lay in the difficulty to analyze these theorists in a structured way since each scholar has his own conceptual theoretical framework. Furthermore, a limitation in examining Khaldun's work discloses that while he anticipated sociological theories such as conflict theories, social organization theories, and social change theories, the anticipated theories are not methodological and totally systematic. The question is how a researcher would test and operationalize empirically some of Khaldun's concepts.

In conclusion, Khaldun's theoretical framework demonstrates elements of the later theories of Comte, Durkheim, Vico, and Gumplowicz. Because Khaldun anticipated theories

developed by subsequent well-known theorists, he remains relevant to modern sociology. After comparing Khaldun's theoretical framework with these later founding fathers of sociology, it appears reasonable to suggest that Khaldun was a founding father of sociology as well. This study provides insights to Khaldun's sociological framework and vividly illustrates Khaldun's relevance to sociological theory. However, it only provides a beginning to the integration of Khaldun's theoretical framework within modern sociological curricula.

## REFERENCES

- Ahmed, A. (2002). *Discovering Islam: Making sense of Muslim history and society*. London: Routledge.
- Ahmed, A. (2002). Ibn Khaldun's understanding of civilizations and the dilemmas of Islam and the West today. *Middle East Journal*, 56(1), 20.
- Ahmed, A. (2003). *Islam under siege: Living dangerously in a post-honor world*. Blackwell Publishing
- Ahmed, A. (2005, November). Ibn Khaldun and anthropology: The failure of methodology in the post 9/11 world. *Contemporary Sociology*, 34(6), 591-596.
- Ahmad, Z. (2003). *The epistemology of Ibn Khaldun*. New York: Routledge Curzon.
- Al-Araki, A. M. (1983). Ibn Khaldun: *Discourse of the method and concepts of economic sociology*. <http://home.online.no/~al-araki/arabase2/ibn/khald0001.html>
- Alatas, S. (2006, January). The autonomous, the universal and the future of sociology. *Current Sociology*, 54(1), 7-23.
- Alatas, S. (2006, November). Ibn Khaldun and contemporary sociology. *International Sociology*, 21(6), 782-795.
- Alatas, S. (2007, May). The historical sociology of Muslim societies. *International Sociology*, 22(3), 267-288.
- Al-Azmeh, A. (1982). *Ibn Khaldun: An essay in reinterpretation*. London: Frank Cass.
- Ali, S. (1977). *Intellectual foundations of Muslim civilization*. Lahore: Publishers United.
- Andreski, S. & Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. (2003). *Military organization and society*. London: Routledge
- Arnason, J., & Stauth, G. (2004, February). Civilization and state formation in the Islamic context: Re-reading Ibn Khaldun. *Thesis Eleven*, 76, 29-47.
- Baali F. (1988). *Society, state, and urbanism: Ibn Khaldun's sociological thought*. Albany, NY: Sunny Press.
- Baali, F. & Wardi A. (1981). *Ibn Khaldun and Islamic thought-styles: A social perspective*. Boston: G. K. Hall.
- Barnes H. & Becker H. (1952). *Social thought: From lore to science* (Vols. 1-2) Washington: Heath and Company.

- Baumer, F. (1978). *Main currents of Western thought: Readings in Western European intellectual history from the Middle Ages to the present*. Connecticut: Yale University Press.
- Black, A. (2001). *The history of Islamic political thought: From the Prophet to the present*. New York: Routledge
- Bogardus, E. (1960). *The development of social thought*. New York: McKay
- Bulliet, R. W. (2006). *The case for Islamo-Christian civilization*. Columbia University Press
- Busch, B. C. (1968, May). Divine intervention in the "Muqaddimah" of Ibn Khaldun. *History of Religions*, 7(4), 317-329.
- Chapra, M. (2008, April). Ibn Khaldun's theory of development: Does it help explain the low performance of the present-day Muslim world? *Journal of Socio-Economics*, 37(2), 836-863.
- Cohen, G. (1959). *Ibn Khaldun: Rediscovered Arab philosopher*. New York: Midstream.
- Comte, A. (1896). *The philosophy of positivism*. New York: Free Press.
- Darling, L. (2007, April). Social cohesion (*asabiyya*) and justice in the late medieval Middle East. *Comparative Studies in Society & History*, 49(2), 329-357.
- Dhaouadi, M. (2006). The concept of change in the thought of Ibn Khaldun and Western classical sociologists. *Turkish Journal of Islamic Studies*, 16, 43-87.
- Dhaouadi, M. (2005, November). The Ibar: Lessons of Ibn Khaldun's *Umran* mind. *Contemporary Sociology*, 34(6), 585-591.
- Dover, Cedric (1952). The racial philosophy of Ibn Khaldun. *Phylon*, 13(2), 107-119.
- Durkheim, E. (1984). *The division of labor in society*. New York: Free Press
- Durkheim, E. (1912). *The elementary forms of religious life*. New York: Free Press
- Durkheim, E. (1941). *Suicide*. New York: Free Press
- Enan, M. A. (1979). *Ibn Khaldun: His life and work*. New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan.
- Faghirzadeh S. (1982). *Sociology of sociology*. Tehran: Soroush Press.
- Fleischer, C. (1983, July). Royal authority, dynastic cyclism, and Ibn Khaldunism in sixteenth century Ottoman letters. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 18, 198-220.
- Flint, R. (1884). *Vico*. Boston: W. Blackwood.

- Frers, L. (2004). *Ibn Khaldun and Comte: Discontinuity or progress?*  
[http://userpage.fuberlin.de/~frers/ibn\\_khaldun.html](http://userpage.fuberlin.de/~frers/ibn_khaldun.html)
- Fukuyama, F. (2002). *The end of history and the last man*. New York: Perennial.
- Gellner, E. (1981). *Muslim society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gibb, H.A.R. (1962). *Studies on the civilization of Islam*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Gierer A. (2001). Ibn Khaldun on solidarity (*asabiyah*) – Modern science on cooperativeness and empathy: A comparison. *Philosophia Naturalis*, 38, 91-104.
- Goodman, L. (1972). Ibn Khaldun and Thucydides. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 92, 250-270.
- Grunebaum V., Gustave E. (1946). *Medieval Islam: A study in cultural orientation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gumplowicz, L. (1980). *Outlines of sociology*. New Jersey: Paine-Whitman Publishers.
- Hitti, P. K. (1937). *History of the Arabs*. London: Macmillan.
- Hopkins, N. (1990). Engels and Ibn Khaldun. *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, 10, 9.
- Hynson, L. M. (1974). Classical theories of social change. *Oklahoma Academic Science* 54, 100-101.
- Issawi, C. (1950) *An Arab philosophy of history: Selections from the prolegomena of Ibn Khaldun of Tunis (1332–1406)* (C. Issawi, Trans.). New York: John Murray
- Khaldun, Ibn. (1958). *The muqadimmah: An introduction of history* (Vols. 1-3) (F. Roshendal, Trans.). New York: Bollingen Foundation.
- Khalifa, I. M. (1972). *An analytical study of asabiyah: Ibn Khaldun's theory of social conflict*. Doctoral dissertation, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC.
- Katsiaficas, G. (1996, December). Ibn Khaldun: A dialectical philosopher for the new millennium. In T. Kiros (Ed.), *African Philosophy: Critical Interventions*. New York: Routledge
- Lana, R. (1987, December). Ibn Khaldun and Vico: The universality of social history. *Journal of Mind and Behavior*, 8(1), 153-165.
- Lawrence, B. (1983) Introduction: Ibn Khaldun and Islamic Ideology. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 3(4) 154-165
- Lawrence, B. (1983, July). Ibn Khaldun and Islamic reform. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 18, 221-240.

- Lester, F.W. (1907) *Pure sociology: A treatise on the origin and spontaneous development of society*. New York: Macmillan.
- Lewis, B. (1988). Ibn Khaldun in Turkey. *Studies on Turkish-Arab Relations*, 3, 107-110.
- Lewis, B. (1993). *The Arabs in history*. New York : Oxford University Press.
- Mahdi, M. (2006) *Ibn Khaldun's philosophy of history: A study in the philosophic foundation of history*. Kuala Lumpur: The Other Press.
- Maier J. (1995). *Weber & Toennies: Comparative sociology in historical perspective*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.
- Margoliouth D.S (1967). *Ibn Khaldun. Encyclopedia of the social sciences*. New York: Macmillan.
- Martindale, D. (1960). *The nature and types of sociological theory*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Moaddel, M. (2002). The study of Islamic culture and politics: An overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28, 359-386.
- Mohammad F. (1998). Ibn Khaldun's philosophy of social change: A comparison with Hegel, Marx and Durkheim. *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 15(2), 26-45.
- Moujetan, B.A. (1981). Ibn Khaldun and his cycle of fatalism: A critique, *Studia Islamica*, 53, 93-108.
- Oppenheimer, F. (1932). Tendencies in recent German sociology. *Sociological Review*, 24(3).
- Outhwaite, W. (2003). *The Blackwell dictionary of modern social thought*. Great Britain: Blackwell Publishing.
- Pompa, L. (1975). *Vico: A study of the new science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rabi', M. M. (1967). *The political theory of Ibn Khaldun*. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Richard, M. P. (1977). Sorokin and social change. *Social Science*, 52(2), 94-98.
- Rosen, L. (2005, November). Theorizing from within: Ibn Khaldun and his political culture. *Contemporary Sociology*, 34(6), 596-599.
- Rosenthal, F. (1983, July). Ibn Khaldun in his time (May 27, 1332-March 17, 1406). *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 18, 166-178.
- Said, A., Funk, N.C., Kadayifci, A.S. (Eds.). (2001). *Peace and conflict resolution in Islam*. New York: University Press of America.

- Sarton, G. (1927-47). *Introduction to the history of science*. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Company
- Schmidt, N. (1967) *Ibn Khaldun, historian, sociologist, and philosopher*. New York: Ams Press.
- Sklair L. (2003). *The sociology of progress*. London: Routledge.
- Sorokin, P. A. (1928). *Contemporary sociological theories*. New York: Harper & Brothers
- Sorokin, P. A. (1947). *Society, culture, and personality: Their structure and dynamics, a system of general sociology*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Sorokin, P. A. (1985). *Social and cultural dynamics: a study of change in major systems of art, truth, ethics, law, and social relationships*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.
- Sorokin, P. A. (1998). *On the practice of sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Sorokin, P. A., Zimmerman, C., Galpin C. (1930-33). *A systematic source book in rural sociology*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Spickard, J. (2001, March). Tribes and cities: Towards an Islamic sociology of religion. *Social Compass*, 48(1), 103.
- Stowasser, B. F. (1983, January). Religion and political development: Some comparative ideas on Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli. *Center for Contemporary Arab Studies Occasional Papers Series*.
- Thompson, J. W. (1942). *A history of historical writing*. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Timasheff, N. S. (1966). *Sociological theory: Its nature and growth*. New York: Random House.
- Toynbee, A. (1934). *A study of history*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Trevor-Roper, H. R. (1957). *Historical essays*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Turchin, Peter. 2003. *Historical dynamics: Why states rise and fall*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Vico, G. (1984). *The new science of Giambattista Vico* (T. G. Bergin & M. H. Fisch, Trans.). Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- Wallerstein, I. M. (1979). *The capitalist world-economy: essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Weikart, R. (2003). Progress through racial extermination: Social Darwinism, eugenics, and pacifism in Germany, 1860-1918. *German Studies Review*, 26(2), 273-294.