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The Philosophical Context of Education in Light of the Khaldounian Thought from the Tribalism Paradigm's Perspective

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Abstract

Ibn Khaldun's philosophical contributions span diverse domains, including philosophy, religion, ethics, and civilization, significantly informing his unique perspective on historical and civilizational cycles. Through the lens of neurology, his insights offer valuable perspectives on the emergence of human civilization, a concept intricately linked to his era. This perspective comprehensively addresses society's foundational and structural aspects, concurrently recognizing neurology's dynamic role as a societal driving force and a discerning historical marker. Within this framework, education assumes a fundamental role within human civilization, governed by a carefully structured paradigm. Ibn Khaldun's literary works reveal profound reflections on education and academia, highlighting the intrinsic interdependence of urban development and educational requisites. Consequently, Ibn Khaldun's scholarship presents a comprehensive and pedagogically insightful methodology, emphasizing the pivotal position of education in the broader spectrum of human development.

Keywords: Philosophy of Education, Ibn Khaldun, Education, Teaching, Urbanization, Religion, Ethics, Tribalism

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1. INTRODUCTION

Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun, a prominent thinker, believed that Tribalism is the driving force behind society and serves as a historical indicator for understanding development. From this perspective, Tribalism can be seen as a social bond that plays a significant role in shaping societies. This viewpoint is consistent with many interpretations of the concept, which have explored it in various dimensions, approaches, statements, manifestations, and contexts. From the foregoing, it becomes clear that Tribalism has multiple connotations, as reflected in translations and studies by thinkers. Some have seen it as tribal affiliation by kinship or allegiance

and alliances. Others have attributed it to social solidarity, while some equate the concept of Tribalism with nationalism. Some have given it a religious hue as well. On the other hand, we cannot disregard the impact that this Tribalism has, in terms of strength and determination, on human being's ability to create the kind of pure human output that distinguishes them from their peers within human societies.

Suppose education, with all that it implies, serves as an indicator of the state of human civilization. In that case, this reason adds to the foundational ideas in Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy. This sentiment is echoed in the passages of his book's introduction, where he expresses his views on education and learning, delving into academic matters. The Khaldunian theory of education has embraced a distinct path, diverging from blind theorization far from the reality of the situation. Instead, the contexts of education and learning, presented through various chapters by the thinker Ibn Khaldun, reflect a procedural practice guided by a logical arrangement following societal needs.

Ibn Khaldun's perspective on education is situated within a broader framework that he envisions based on the notions of Tribalism and its requirements. His view reveals that human aggregation is a certainty dictated by the natural life of humans, wherever they may be. Human society is a necessity and a clear expression of human civilization, considering humans as social beings by nature. Religion also serves as a crucial social bond, encompassing various dimensions, especially its moral aspects. Ibn Khaldun granted significant attention to the connection between religion and Tribalism. He saw that Tribalism, as an effective political force, aligns itself with religion. Faith helps restrain the competitive nature prone to envy within Tribalism.

Furthermore, according to Ibn Khaldun, virtuous ethics constitute substantial moral support for the political system. He considers ethical ethics a sign of good governance, primarily because righteous deeds bolster and strengthen Tribalism. Moral virtues are pivotal in constructing a state and asserting its influence over others. The philosophical context of education and the need for a procedural approach to educational matters in the light of Khaldunian thought, encompassing religion, ethics, and civilization, aligns with Ibn Khaldun's approach to understanding historical cycles and cultures. This perspective leads us to consider within the paradigm of Tribalism and then transition to human civilization as a whole. As a social concept that emerged with Ibn Khaldun, human civilization refers to society's collective underlying and superstructural elements.

2. Tribalism, Human Civilization, and the Need for an Educational Philosophy Following the Khaldunian Approach

The thinker, Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun, was born in the city of Tunis on the 1st of Ramadan in the year 732 AH, corresponding to May 17, 1332 CE. His family was renowned for their

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knowledge and involvement in politics. They migrated from Andalusia to Tunis, where Ibn Khaldun learned and memorized the Quran under the tutelage of Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Saad ibn Bural al-Ansari. He studied Arabic sciences from his father and numerous teachers in Tunis, including Abu Abdullah ibn al-Arabi al-Hassairi and Imam of Arabic and Literature in Tunis, Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Bahar. He learned jurisprudence from Muhammad ibn Abdullah al-Jayani and Abu al-Qasim Muhammad al-Qasir and studied under the chief magistrate, Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abd al-Salam.

Dedicating himself to writing his renowned book, the *Muqaddimah* (Introduction), Ibn Khaldun journeyed to Egypt, where he held judicial positions and taught until he passed away on the 25th of Ramadan in the year 808 AH, corresponding to March 15, 1406 CE.

It is widely acknowledged that Tribalism is one of the most significant social and political theories put forth by Ibn Khaldun, forming the foundation for the course of events. Tribalism plays a role in organizing the relationships between individuals within tribes and managing the external relationships of coexisting groups in the wilderness, both among themselves and with the state. Moreover, Tribalism essentially serves as a "socio-psychological bond, whether conscious or unconscious, that connects individuals of a group, based on kinship, a continuous connection that intensifies when there is a threat endangering those individuals: either individually or collectively" (Al-Jabri, 1994, p. 168). Its core lies in the bond of lineage, as blood relations are natural among humans and linked to support and cooperation, represented by loyalty and mutual assistance. Despite this influence, Ibn Khaldun introduced a new concept: affiliating commitment with birth lineage, meaning that Tribalism, according to him, isn't solely based on those born within a particular lineage but also includes the actual affiliation to a specific group.

The term "human civilization" emerged with Ibn Khaldun and refers to society's collective underlying and superstructural elements. Ibn Khaldun distinguishes two types of civilization: "From this civilization, there is Bedouin, found in the outskirts, mountains, and remote lands. And from it, there is urban civilization, found in metropolises, villages, cities, and fortresses used for seeking refuge and protection within their walls"

It aims to study the social phenomena in a scientific way based on foundations and principles, and the method of scrutiny and sifting are used, as Ibn Khaldun concluded that social phenomena are subject to laws, logic, and existential and positive causes and not to causes and laws of imaginary systems. Instead, there are facts in human existence that acknowledge the presence of a certainty that links social phenomena to each other. Therefore, it was and must be an established science that studies these phenomena to reveal their nature, away from everything that occurs by chance, to draw accurate conclusions that control the phenomenon of human society ((Hassan, 2014, p. 18).)

Ibn Khaldun's vision is clear that human gathering is an inevitability required by the natural life of human beings wherever they are, as "human gathering is necessary. The sages express this by saying: Man is civil, of course, meaning he must have a meeting, which is civility in their terminology, which is the meaning of urbanization" (Ibn Khaldoun, 2004, p. 137).

Ibn Khaldun relied on various factors in his division of this urbanization, perhaps the most prominent of which is the prevailing economic and social conditions among the Bedouin and the urban populations. He emphasizes that there are many degrees between Bedouin life and civilization and that some nations transition from a state of nomadism to civilization (Al-Hassri, 1967, p. 325).

Tribalism has indeed played a role in transforming societies, considering it the driving force that propels Bedouin civilization to the pinnacle of advancement. When Ibn Khaldun discusses Bedouin and urban civilization, he doesn't imply a separation between urban and rural populations but rather a foundation of integration and progression. Even though Tribalism is associated with the Bedouin tribes and clans rather than the urban dwellers, Ibn Khaldun's famous phrase, 'Civilization is corruptive of Bedouin culture,' carries a distinct meaning. Here, the term 'civilization' doesn't refer to any civilization but rather one rooted in ruling sectarianism, establishing states.

This Tribalism was present when society resided in the desert and was in state formation. At that time, it represented a united human group with distinct lineages characterized by a unique way of life. However, once it achieved its goals of monarchy and statehood and embraced civilization, its unity dissolved, its structure disintegrated, and its identity collapsed." (Al-Jabri, 1994, p 240).

This led to a clash of interests, resulting in the breakdown of Tribalism due to excessive luxury. Ibn Khaldun states that the prevailing pattern within the lifespan of a dynasty consists of three generations. The first generation remains in the desert, where survival necessitates ruggedness, ferocity, bravery, predation, and the pursuit of glory. Thus, the embodiment of Tribalism remains intact in them. The second generation experiences a transition due to wealth and indulgence, moving from the wilderness to civilization, from scarcity to luxury, from the pride of expansion to the humiliation of subservience. This leads to the breakdown of Tribalism. As for the third generation, they abandon the essence of wilderness and toughness as if it never existed. They lose the charm of pride and Tribalism, causing the state to decline with all it once carried." (Ibn Khaldun, 2004, p.p 335-336).

The foundation of Tribalism and belonging is the cornerstone of human civilization. It signifies the basis for the progression of civilization from a state of nomadism to a form of urbanism. In this context, urbanism represents the ultimate goal of human civilization, marked by the attainment of luxury and a shift towards indulgence in non-essential comforts, as opposed to

necessities. Consequently, corruption infiltrates the state due to the change in the dynamic between the ruling faction and the ruling faction, resulting from Tribalism prevailing over affiliations previously under the rule of a different section.

The brilliance of Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy lies in his foresight and connection between urban civilization and education requirements. Education is, in fact, one facet of culture, and education is an expression of the tribal bond in the construction of human civilization. This bond is essential to the development. Ibn Khaldun acknowledges that he doesn't disregard education within the context of human civilization. He asserts that education should encompass the principles and foundations of knowledge and derive its branches from its roots. Avoiding excessive memorization without comprehension is crucial. Engaging in discussions and debates for learning is more effective. This results from reaching what he terms as 'scientific sovereignty.' This approach should consider the learner's readiness and cognitive abilities.

Ibn Khaldun suggests that teaching should be gradual, step by step, introducing questions from each field of knowledge, starting with the fundamental principles of the area. The learner's understanding should be facilitated through a general overview, considering their intellect's strength and capacity to accept the material. This approach leads the learner to mastery in that field of knowledge. He emphasizes that a teacher should not push a student beyond their comprehension level, only presenting additional material according to the student's ability and acceptance of education, whether a beginner or advanced. The teacher should avoid mixing the book's content with unrelated matters until the student grasps the content from start to finish.

When the student achieves mastery in a specific area of knowledge, they are prepared to accept further material and become eager to seek more knowledge, aiming for higher levels until they attain the ultimate goals of learning. However, if matters are mixed and confused for the student, they become incapable of understanding, leading to discouragement, confusion, and eventually abandoning the pursuit of knowledge and education.

Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the importance of not confusing learners by introducing different subjects or topics from various books. He also warns against prolonging gaps between lessons and stresses the need for teachers to summarize and condense material without compromising its meaning. Ibn Khaldun believes that learning should be diverse, utilizing different methods such as lectures, imitation, and practical exercises as needed, allowing learners to adapt and become accustomed. This facilitates the learning process.

He also underscores the importance of precise terminology. Excessive terminology for learners can lead to confusion, lack of focus, and the loss of intended meanings. He advises against oversimplification and generalization. Through these insights, Ibn Khaldun establishes general

criteria and conditions for education based on wisdom, foresight, and a set of etiquettes. He outlines a method recognized and echoed by many thinkers and philosophers who have explored educational and learning issues before him.

3. Tribalism, Religion, and Their Ethical Impact from Ibn Khaldun's Perspective

Ibn Khaldun observes that there is a relationship between tribalism and religion. Tribalism, in its political efficacy, finds support in religion. Religion aids in curbing the competitive tendencies marred by envy within tribal communities. This is precisely what Ibn Khaldun witnessed among the Arabs during the Age of Ignorance (pre-Islamic era), where tribalism fueled various forms of injustice, causing divisions and eroding the human spirit. Nomads, bound by tribal affiliations, were unable to transcend those barriers and extend beyond their own tribe to another (Al-Hababi, 1984, p 47). The Islamic religion rejected the tribalism of the pre-Islamic era, and this becomes evident in the saying of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him: 'He is not one of us who calls for tribalism or dies for it,' or in his statement: 'Leave it, as it is a rotten thing.' Similarly, in the words of Umar ibn Abdul Aziz: 'There is no oath in Islam,' meaning there is no tribalism in Islam. The Islamic religion called for unity and mutual support while rejecting excessive partisanship. When hearts are driven by desires and pleasures, competition and disputes arise. However, when cooperation and collaboration prevail among tribes, inevitably this leads to the establishment of a state and the rise of leadership.

Ibn Khaldun states: 'Leadership is attained through dominance, and dominance is achieved through tribalism. Agreement on demands, unity of hearts, and reconciliation occur through the assistance of God in establishing His religion's principles and secrets. Hearts, when inclined towards false desires and worldly inclinations, foster competition and discord. Yet, when they turn towards truth, reject worldly matters and falsehood, and turn towards God, their direction unifies. Thus, the state is magnified.' (Ibn Khaldun, 2004, p. 313).

From this statement, it becomes evident that religious advocacy enhances the strength of the state alongside tribalism. This is because religion can help eliminate the negative aspects of tribalism by fostering unity among hearts and encouraging cooperation, mutual support, and limiting competition and envy. According to Ibn Khaldun, religious gatherings also amplify the power of tribalism. When religious gatherings occur among a group, it guarantees their ability to overcome those who have greater numbers and stronger tribalism. This concept ensures their dominance." (Al-Hassri, 1967, p. 348).

Conversely, if that religious cohesion is absent from a group, the dynamics change, as Ibn Khaldun affirms: "Consider the situation when the influence of religion fades and deteriorates.

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The scenario shifts, and dominance relies solely on the strength of tribalism without the added strength of religion. The state is controlled by those whose power is augmented by religious cohesion, even if they possess stronger tribalism and a more primitive lifestyle." (Ibn Khaldun, 2004, p. 314).

The evidence that religious gatherings amplify the power of tribalism is gleaned from the rich history of Islam. Amidst the Islamic conquests, a war unfolded between the Muslim forces and the Persian forces, ending in victory for the Muslims, despite the fact that the Persian forces greatly outnumbered and outpowered the Muslim forces.

From the aforementioned, we can conclude that Ibn Khaldun recognizes the necessity and significance of religion in relation to tribalism, and vice versa. The relationship here is reciprocal. Religious advocacy and tribalistic elements together generate greater strength. This has the potential to reinforce a state built upon tribalism and solidify its existence. Moreover, Ibn Khaldun observes a resemblance between religion and tribalism in terms of their influential power over social life. Religion unifies hearts, strengthens bonds of unity and affection among people, promotes unity, and discourages envy that spawns animosity. Similarly, tribalism plays a significant role in encouraging collaboration, mutual support, and collective effort. It becomes evident that the functions of religion and tribalism are similar.

According to Ibn Khaldun, the relationship between religion and tribalism must be one of integration and mutual support. This is achieved by directing all members of the tribe towards righteous deeds advocated by religion. Such actions work to reduce the manifestations of envy, selfishness, and other traits that stem from tribalism. Ibn Khaldun's viewpoint aligns perfectly with his concept of tribalism. The strength of tribalism primarily derives from the close-knit bonds resulting from kinship. When combined with social cohesion, this kinship gives rise to a spiritual unity that empowers tribalism to the point that little can stand against it." (Al-Jabri, 1994, pp. 189-190).

4. Tribalism and Ethics within the Duality of Values and Civilization in the View of Ibn Khaldun

Ibn Khaldun sees a relationship between tribalism and ethics in his theory of the state, and his study revolves around two significant divisions of ethics: the ethics of the Bedouins and the ethics of the urban population. He considers the Bedouins closer to goodness compared to the urban population. This is because the former lives a simple life, where the tribe preserves its natural purity and virtuous ethics. On the other hand, the latter tends towards a life of luxury, comfort, and a focus on worldly matters, which distances them from virtues and corrupts their character with blameworthy actions. Among their characteristics are injustice, aggression, and the loss of modesty." (Ibn Khaldun, 2004, p. 248).

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This perspective on ethics stems from the angle of human society, starting with the stage of Bedouin life, which relies on simplicity in matters and limited sustenance. This lifestyle preserves their sound nature, keeping them within the bounds of goodness, justice, and all noble qualities. The stage of civilization, however, tends towards extravagance, indulging in excessive food, drink, and adornment. This has led to the corruption of their ethics, the fading of their dignity, and the weakening of their strength.

In a dedicated section of the introduction, Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the negative role of civilization in corrupting ethical values. He explains that civilization influences human nature and alters their moral values due to their immersion in luxury and indulgence in desires. As a result, their conditions become disarrayed and overturned, warning of the impending downfall of the state. Therefore, it can be said that the ethics stemming from 'civilization and luxury are the source of corruption. Because a human being is only a human being due to their ability to seek benefits, avoid harm, and maintain their nature in the pursuit of these goals.' (Sharit, 1984, p. 95).

According to Ibn Khaldun's perspective, civilization is detrimental to ethics, weakening tribalism and leading to its corruption. He states, "Among the ethics of people are injustice and aggression, one against another. So, whoever casts their eye on their brother's possessions, their hand has reached out to push away his restraint." (Ibn Khaldun, 2004, p. 254).

This statement embodies the actual image of urban ethics characterized by deceit, cunning, and aggression against one another. Through this, the original state of human nature becomes apparent, similar to the views of social contract philosophers like Rousseau, Hobbes, and Locke. However, the distinction lies in Ibn Khaldun's portrayal of urban dwellers with qualities of deceit and cunning, being closer to the primitive natural society in its wild state.

Ethics played a significant role among the great figures of tribal society, as the rulers who seized control of states and subjected them to their rule possessed virtuous qualities that enabled them to foster a sense of unity. Thus, the desired ethics highlighted by Ibn Khaldun are the virtues of the rulers and kings from tribal backgrounds. When a ruler possesses good ethical qualities, it contributes to achieving unity and instilling a sense of tranquility among the subjects, by eradicating treachery, and oppression, and advocating for the betterment of the country and its people. Ibn Khaldun states, "If the existence of tribalism alone, without adopting noble virtues, diminishes the status of households and accounts, then what do you think of the people of power who are the ultimate goal of all glory and the pinnacle of all estimation?" (Ibn Khaldun, 2004, p. 277).

Furthermore, the spread of Islamic belief has the potential to solidify in their hearts the practice of righteous deeds. In this regard, Ibn Khaldun says, "When there is among them a prophet or a

saint who guides them to obey the command of God, rids them of blameworthy morals, leads them towards virtues, and aligns their words to express the truth, then their unity is achieved. They attain dominance and rule" (Ibn Khaldun, 2004, p. 289).

Noble ethics serve as the most significant moral support for the political system, and Ibn Khaldun considers them as a sign of kingship. This is because virtuous deeds reinforce and strengthen tribalism. Moral virtues are a fundamental factor in building a state and establishing its influence over another state. Tribalism without these virtuous deeds is like a person lacking limbs from one perspective. On the other hand, a king is akin to God's representative on Earth. Hence, it is imperative for a king to adhere to righteous deeds and virtues. Failing to do so would mean failing to fulfill the entrusted mission (Khudair, 1983, p. 149).

The Arab state that adopts tribalism is inherently susceptible to rapid collapse because it lacks a political or religious ethical foundation. Instead, it is built upon tribal identity and the prominence of tribal affiliation within it. However, this doesn't entail denying the role of tribalism in state-building. It indeed plays a role in rectifying various deviations within the family during its early stages, which has a positive impact on state formation. As a result, the state fulfills its moral mission by eliminating forms of excess that enslave hearts and weaken spirits (Al-Hababi, 1984, p. 49).

From this, we can deduce that religious tribalism, in order to ensure its longevity and continuity, must be grounded in ethical principles. Ethics are essential for tribalism, just as they are essential for religion. Consequently, religion, ethics, and tribalism are all interconnected. When each of these elements is respected within reasonable bounds, they collectively contribute to removing the oppressive aspects of tribalism on one hand and counteracting the negative consequences generated by civilization on the other.

5. CONCLUSION

Ibn Khaldun's distinguished perspective encompasses the establishment of comprehensive standards and general conditions for education with insight and foresight. He adheres to universal ethics and a consistent approach, aligning his approach with his predecessors in addressing educational and pedagogical issues. His view on human progress does not overlook the realms of education and learning. He possesses a holistic pedagogical and instructional approach that extends beyond mere jurisprudential matters. Ibn Khaldun connects education to human development and livelihood.

Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the necessity of upholding the principles of knowledge and its foundations, deriving its branches from its core. Notably, he emphasizes avoiding mixing different subjects or topics from various sources in the process of learning. He also stresses the

importance of concise transitions between lessons, advocating for instructors to resort to summarization and abbreviation while preserving meaning.

According to Ibn Khaldun, learning should encompass diverse methods, including lecturing, simulation, and practical exercises, adapting to circumstances and needs. This adaptive approach allows learners to acclimate and ease the learning process. He further highlights the importance of precise terminology, cautioning against overwhelming learners with excessive terms that may lead to confusion and mental dispersion, ultimately distorting the intended meaning. Ibn Khaldun also cautions against oversimplification and generalization.

In essence, Ibn Khaldun's approach to education is comprehensive and nuanced, rooted in both pedagogical methods and ethical considerations. He emphasizes the importance of maintaining balance, clarity, and a purposeful alignment between education, human development, and societal well-being.

Indeed, Ibn Khaldun highlights the significant role that ethics played in the greatness of leaders within tribal societies. Those rulers who established their dominion over states and subjected them to their authority were distinguished by virtuous qualities. These qualities enabled them to foster a sense of unity and cooperation within their societies. In this context, the desired ethics that Ibn Khaldun emphasized primarily revolved around the conduct of rulers and monarchs from tribal backgrounds.

Ibn Khaldun also asserted that religious gatherings amplify the strength of tribal identity, as evident from the rich Islamic history replete with evidence. During the Islamic conquests, battles erupted between the Muslim armies and the Persian forces. Despite the Persian armies' apparent superiority, the Muslims emerged victorious. This outcome is attributed to the power of tribal unity enhanced by religious camaraderie.

It's worth mentioning that tribalism served as the cornerstone upon which human societies were built, forming a social bond within the framework of cultural and historical cycles. Ibn Khaldun's insights underscore the intricate interplay between ethics, religion, and tribal affiliation in shaping the historical development of societies.

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