Reading and interpreting Ibn Khaldun's economic philosophy

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Abstract: This work aims to present key concepts, ideas, and events that can be derived mainly from Ibn Khaldun's chapter on economic life, which he captures with the heading, *Chapter on Making a Living* (*ma`āsh*). Justifying this undertaking is the significance of Ibn Khaldun's contributions, the scarcity of translations of his work, and the dependency of secondary interpretive works on a single English translation. While a reading of Ibn Khaldun's economic philosophy through a textual analysis of the primary sources remains the focus of this work, a sampling of the interpretive and translation works is also presented here in order to understand the level of engagement of non-Arabic scholars with Ibn Khaldun's work and as a frame of mind with which economic philosophers and social historians might engage.

Keywords: The economic philosophy of Ibn Khaldun, Theories of Work, Systems Thinking, Urbanization, Civilization, philosophy of economics, Islamic social history

Introduction

Most modern scholars who engage with Ibn Khaldun's work consider him a social historian whose work is useful in that it sheds light on events and institutions they wish to reference. For these scholars researching in languages other than Arabic, translations of Ibn Khaldun often serve as their source material from which to draw conclusions. Yet a close comparison between the original Arabic text of his seminal work, *al-Muqaddima*, and some of the English-language secondary sources that have drawn conclusions from it, reveals some misinterpretations. As a corrective counterweight and drawing from the Arabic text of *al-Muqaddima*, this work highlights Ibn Khaldun's reliance on systems thinking and his original ideas in relation to some of the most consequential areas of social activities and human behaviors. This article avoids the reductionist approach that focuses on a single idea, imposing it as being Ibn Khaldun's unique original contribution, but, instead, tracks with key ideas as Ibn Khaldun presents them in Part 5, Book 1 of his *Muqaddima*'s section on economic systems and values.

Readers might benefit from an outline of this work so that they are better able to contextualize its content and understand its reasons for including or excluding certain topics and subjects. An outline might also help direct readers' attentions to specific areas of interest and the key ideas that shape Ibn Khaldun's worldview, which this author believes many English-language secondary works have omitted.

This article is divided into four main sections: brief comments on the secondary works that have interpreted and presented Ibn Khaldun's thought, notes on the function of translation and its impact on secondary works of scholarship, a textual analysis of Ibn Khaldun's economic philosophy based on an analytical reading of the original Arabic texts, and a list of what this author considers the most significant contributions of Ibn Khaldun along with recommendations for possible future research undertakings.

In this work, sample statements from the English translation of Ibn Khaldun's work and the secondary works that have engaged with Ibn Khaldun's thought underscore the need for both more translations and more secondary works that engage with their primary sources rather than relying on a single translation. If the original Arabic text is available in at least ten different editions, and given the potential variance among these Arabic editions, is it not reasonable to expect the production of many translations as well, to reflect not only the variance in Ibn Khaldun's manuscripts and subsequent published book editions but, importantly, the variance that must occur when translating from one language to another?

The section on translations and secondary works replaces the usual literature review of scholarship in academic papers because, in this case, the quality of such literature and their source materials (a single translation) merits questioning. Therefore, it stands to reason that this paper should allocate energy and space to direct engagements with the Arabic texts of the original work of Ibn Khaldun, rather than engage at length with allegedly deficient content. .

Moreover, some secondary works present Ibn Khaldun's ideas as unoriginal and nonconsequential. It would benefit the scholarly community to highlight Ibn Khaldun's ideas that are significant and consequential and expand the conversation on Ibn Khaldun's contribution to social theories and economic philosophy, rather than merely focus on secondary literature that lacks sufficiently diverse perspectives and sources. Given that some readers of Ibn Khaldun's work are skeptical of the level of originality and depth of his contributions, this article highlights what this author considers the compelling and consequential propositions that might have shaped Ibn Khaldun's worldview in relations to economic activity, wealth distribution, and systems of values, ethics, politics, and social behavior.

It is reasonable to ask for the impetus for connecting translation, interpretation, and exploration of a foreign language work in an article limited by space and structural considerations. Therefore, a few comments justifying such a connection are in order.

The purpose of the brief comments on the translation and some of its problems is to underscore the importance of translation as an interpretive undertaking that is connected to secondary theoretical works, for translation bridges primary sources and secondary literature, thus guiding and influencing subsequent scholars' interpretations and findings. There is no neutral translation. A translation reflects the methodological, disciplinary, cultural, and political biases of the translator. Therefore, theoretical works critiquing and recasting a foreign language text benefit from a plurality of translations produced by individuals from different backgrounds.

Secondary works that are based on a single translation, and which then become a source for other secondary works, risk degrading the connection to their primary source materials. It is critical that authors of secondary works are mindful of the biases of their interpretations and theories, and that they disclose their level of engagement with original sources.

With the above concerns in mind, it becomes clear that one can reconstruct Ibn Khaldun's thought through a comprehensive reading of his work relevant to all connected systems described and analyzed in the primary source materials. Secondary works of scholarship would benefit substantively and conceptually from the availability of additional translations of Ibn Khaldun's work, not just the abundance of secondary interpretive works that might be based on a single translation.

The above concerns guide the framing of this article and define its scope. The aim of this work is to engage directly with Ibn Khaldun's original texts on economic and social philosophy. To that end, this work addresses the following questions: What are the most consequential ideas of Ibn Khaldun's economic thought? What theoretical framework might have guided his reasoning? And which topics and ideas merit further discussions and analysis? The answers to these questions are rooted in a holistic analysis of related ideas beyond those found in the chapter on economic activities and schemes—*ma'āsh*.

Situating and interpreting Ibn Khaldun

Ibn Khaldun* may have been the last Islamic thinker who understood and interpreted the world without any measure of influence from the profusion of Western ideas and events that shaped modern civilization. [1] He was one of the most original and provocative, yet nonconsequential, social historians and political thinkers, in large part because he lived at a singular moment in history: at the seam of the Islamic and Western civilizations. As he predicted, Islamic civilization had reached a stage of decline, and there was no single strategic thinker who could have reversed the course of its historical trajectory at that point. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun's contribution should not be assessed the same way as Renaissance and Enlightenment thinkers' contributions: by how much influence they had on their contemporary and successive leaders and thinkers.

Enlightenment thinkers promoted reason as the means through which to address the absolutism of religious institutions and emphasized life, liberty, and property to resist the tyranny of monarchies and authoritarian rulers. As an event, Enlightenment marked the beginning of discovery and progress for modern Western societies.

Ibn Khaldun, on the other hand, understood that the Golden Age of the Islamic civilization, which started at the end of the 8th century (CE), had reached its end when the Mongol invasion collapsed the seat of the Abbasid Caliphate in 1258 CE. Although the Islamic dynasties in North Africa (Maghreb; west) and the Iberian Peninsula (Andalus; Andalusia) were insulated from the effects of the struggles of the Islamic dynasties in the east due to their autonomous status, their internal strife tied their fate to the inertia of the declining civilization that represented all Muslims.

These radically different circumstances and conditions of the Western world and the Islamic world of that time placed Ibn Khaldun in a unique position that must be factored in when interpreting his thought and reconstructing his worldview, especially in relation to the political and philosophical economy. Ibn Khaldun's contributions ought to be weighed by the quality of knowledge that he passed on and the utility of predictions derived from his knowledge; for he lived on the edge of human transition from one extraordinarily volatile era, marked by decline of the civilization of which he was a member to another rising civilization about which he has knowledge and that he did not include in his presentation of social history.

Moreover, in academia, originality is a modern standard, one that lacks humility one might add; it is not a universal standard that cuts across cultures and times. Ibn Khaldun would have judged his own work and the works of his peers by their depth and breadth of knowledge, not by the appropriation of an accretive body of knowledge augmented by many thinkers and scholars from different communities and different time periods.

Considering the fact that the Renaissance signaled a robust interest in investigating previous cultures' most significant contributions to art, architecture, astronomy, science and literature, and given that Ibn Khaldun, as his work testifies, was engaged in collecting and cataloging human advances in these same areas of knowledge, it is curious that Western Renaissance thinkers did not give his work the same attention or make it the subject of interest in the same way they justified their interest in Greek and Roman cultures. This omission becomes even more curious given the fact that Ibn Khaldun produced his seminal works during the same period when Renaissance thinkers started on their journey of rediscovering the legacy of ancient civilizations, around the 14th century CE.

Later generations of scholars, including Enlightenment thinkers and beyond, did not rectify Renaissance thinkers' exclusion of Ibn Khaldun's work from the processes of exploring ancient classics. It was not until the emergence of Orientalist scholars in the 20th century that thinkers began attempting to translate and engage with Ibn Khaldun's thought.

Still, in the context of modern Western scholarship on the Islamic civilization and the emerging academic area of study broadly known as 'Islamic studies,' Ibn Khaldun should be the most studied classical Islamic thinker. Yet, little consensus—through scholarly assessments of his theoretical framework, and particularly its originality and significance—has emerged about the nature of his work. The few works Orientalist scholars who have produced regarding Ibn Khaldun are more focused on discrediting his thought than on conducting a substantive examination of his work.

For instance, after embarking on review of previous works of scholarship that might have influenced Ibn Khaldun, a twentieth century Orientalist scholar found that Ibn Khaldun's claim to originality is, at best, disappointing. The review's author argued that, notwithstanding any direct link between Ibn Khaldun's work to works of previous thinkers, we should not assume his ideas are his: 'In what measure Ibn Khaldun was influenced by the writings of the authors just passed in review, or by others, is hard to determine.' Nonetheless, because some of the ideas he touched upon were 'widely held (having been effectively treated in Plato's political works) and must have been known to Ibn Khaldun' (Spengler 1964, p.283), the Orientalist author argues, no measure of originality should be granted to Ibn Khaldun. Some Orientalist scholars are even willing to credit Ibn Khaldun's ideas to 15th-century Fürstenspiegel literature (Spengler 1964, p.283), a post-Ibn Khaldun development, rather concede that Ibn Khaldun had contributed original ideas that progressed thinking. In the view of these scholars, what Ibn Khaldun did was cobble together a framework out of 'bits and details' (Spengler 1964, p.283), not produce a coherent, congruent, original work of scholarship.

Secondary literature that engaged with Ibn Khaldun's thought were shallow, uninformed, and rooted in conjectures perhaps due to personal bias or lack of a linguistic capacity and competence that would have allowed their authors to skillfully parse and analyze Ibn Khaldun's complex thinking. By these authors' consistent reference to the translation, it is evident that the secondary literature Orientalists produced relied heavily on the assumptions and conjectures of translators to craft and support their own conjecture-based assessments of Ibn Khaldun's ideas. Economist Joseph J. Spengler, for instance, asserts that it 'remains true, however, that [Ibn Khaldun] knew or drew on many sources, among them Fürstenspiegel and administrative writings' (Spengler 1964, p.283). This statement that Ibn Khaldun's source material is uncontested fact—that what he used as sources 'remains true'—is not, in itself, a finding based on facts. It comes from on another assumption, which Ibn Khaldun's translator, Franz Rosenthal, proposed:

> We should perhaps be justified in assuming that practically every matter of detail found in the *Muqaddimah* was probably not original with Ibn Khaldun, but had been previously expressed elsewhere. Even his characterization of *`asabiyah* as a positive factor in society, or his demand for knowledge of social conditions as prerequisite to the historian's correct evaluation of historical information, although seemingly original ideas, may have been inspired by a source yet to be rediscovered. (Rosenthal 1958, p.854; Spengler 1964, p.283) [2]

Such poor grasp of Ibn Khaldun's nuanced and technical formulation of ideas was evident in the way Orientalist scholars understood and presented their interpretation of Ibn Khaldun's main theory, which in their view is related to the cyclicity of civilization. They opined that 'civilization and culture,' as Ibn Khaldun presents them, 'had moved somewhat cyclically, fluctuating between nomadism and sedentary civilizations' (Spengler 1964, p.289). Moreover, scholars who engaged with the translation of Ibn Khaldun's work saw his ideas as limited and applicable only to the cultures and communities with which he was familiar—those of Spain and North Africa. Some modern Western scholars explicitly denied that Ibn Khaldun 'apprehended or intended so universal a model' based on his 'cultural fluctuation' (Spengler 1964, p.289) theory.

Either because of the flaws in the translation, or because of their failure to appreciate Ibn Khaldun's careful and deliberate choice of words to discuss technical matters, Orientalist scholars collapse Ibn Khaldun's categories into a single conceptual framework. They erroneously see his reference to *`umrān* and *ḥaḍāra* as using two different words to refer to the same thing: culture. The cyclical theory, which Orientalists see as the only semi-original idea that Ibn Khaldun contributed, is—in their understandings—rooted in his 'concern with "civilization" (*`umrān*), or culture' (Spengler 1964, p.294). [3]

It is important to note that most secondary works on Ibn Khaldun draw heavily, if not exclusively, from a single translation of *al-Muqaddima,* which has not been significantly revised since it was first published more than half a century ago (Rosenthal 1958). At first glance, the lack of other translations of all or parts of *al-Muqaddima* might suggest that Rosenthal's original translation was adequate and authoritative enough to render producing a new translation redundant and unnecessary. To evaluate these assumptions, we must review not only some of secondary literature, but, importantly, the translation of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima* that non-Arabic literate scholars have used, comment generally on translation as an interpretive activity, and present an alternative translation to the sections on economic thought and events. Here, the goal is to highlight some of Ibn Khaldun's theoretical ideas, especially those distinguishable from related ideas driving modern institutions and informing the modern discourses in a number of critical areas of public life.

The functions of translation in relation to primary sources

Examining the body of secondary literature that introduces and interprets Ibn Khaldun's economic ideas reveals a curious pattern: The English secondary works that relied exclusively on the English translation share the same understanding, assessment, and critiques; whereas the English secondary works that relied on the Arabic only, or on the English translation and the Arabic works, are divergent and diverse in terms of their understandings, assessments, and critiques of Ibn Khaldun's ideas. This pattern alone, ironic in its notable unoriginality, was compelling enough for this author to take a closer look at the English translation and compare it to the Arabic text. However, needing to research and answer many serious questions from students about Ibn Khaldun's ideas made it imperative that more primary sources are examined, including the Arabic work—*al-Muqaddima*. [4] In doing so, it was

discovered that in addition to substantive differences resulting from the variance among the slightly different manuscripts and/or editions of the Arabic text, there were also serious errors with word choice and, in many cases, missteps with basic understanding of the North African Arabic dialect that influenced Ibn Khaldun's writing. To illustrate the nature of the problems with Rosenthal's translation, it would suffice to point out just one example.

In part five (*al-bāb al-ḵāmis*) of book one (*al-kitāb al-awwal*), covering economic themes, Ibn Khaldun defines trade (*tijāra*) this way:

> *i`lam anna al-tijārata muḥāwalatu al-kasbi bi-tanmiyati al-māli bi-shirā'i al-sila`i bi-'l-ruḵṣi wa-bay`ihā bi-al-ġalā'i ayyama kānati al-sil`atu min daqīqin 'aw zar`in 'aw ḥayawānin 'aw qumāsh*. (Ibn Khaldun 2001, p.1:494)

Here is how Rosenthal translated this passage:

> It should be known that commerce means the attempt to make a profit by increasing capital, through buying goods at a low price and selling them at a high price, whether these goods consist of slaves, grain, animals, weapons, or clothing material.

Here is this author's translation:

> It should be known that trade is the attempt to earn money by augmenting capital through the buying of merchandise at a cheap price and selling it at an expensive price, whether the merchandise might it be flour, crop, animal, or fabric.

The difference between these translations is not merely disagreement over word choice in the presence of many options from many cognates—like 'trade' or 'commerce.' Rather, the difference touches on substantive additions and omissions. In the Arabic text, the list of 'goods' (*sila'*) names only four objects. Rosenthal's list consists of five objects. The difference could be attributed to the source upon which Rosenthal relied. The possibility that that the translator had access to a different manuscript or book edition that might have included those words shows the need for more critical works and for more transparency in deciding which manuscript or which edition one must rely on and what standard, if any, is used to make that decision. The same way there are numerous manuscripts (about 6 partial or full manuscripts by some accounts) and numerous published editions of *al-Muqaddima* (more than 11 editions are now available), there should be numerous translations.

Many interpreters of and commentators on Ibn Khaldun's work did not pay close attention to the fact that Ibn Khaldun relied on Maghribi Arabic. The word *daqīq* in Arabic may mean fine, detailed, or thin. However, the word *daqīq* has been used throughout the Maghrib region to refer to ground grain, or flour. Rosenthal may have preferred the single manuscript that contained *raqīq* instead of *daqīq* to avoid confusion and overcome the unusual origins of the latter word.

Western scholars are familiar with the notion that some human beings might be considered 'property.' Within Western societies, women and slaves have been considered 'property.' They also understand this to have been the case in some Arab and Islamic societies. The Qur'ān, for instance, refers to enslaved war captives as 'what your right hand possessed.' [5] It is not farfetched, then, to believe that Ibn Khaldun considered slaves to be a form of goods or merchandise (*sil`a*). He might have. But in this context, he did not. It is far more probable that he used the word for 'flour.'

In the same space, Rosenthal understood *kasb* to mean 'profit.' Ibn Khaldun is very specific and deliberate about the use of the words *kasb* and *rizq*. He coined these words to mean specific things and he used them consistently in specific contexts. Nonetheless, Rosenthal collapses Ibn Khaldun's sentence and the meanings of his words to define trade as the act of profiting from selling goods. Ibn Khaldun defines trade (*tijāra*) as a process or scheme of increasing one's wealth (*māl*). There is a clear and significant difference, as it will be explained when Ibn Khaldun's theory on the store of value, virtues of trade, and other matters related to economics are introduced in later parts of this work.

Disagreements over which cognates to use are compelling enough alone to encourage others to propose different translations of the same work. However, these diverging choices in combination with the disagreements involving personal and social bias, the lack of appreciation of the level of influence of Berber languages and cultures on Ibn Khaldun's writing, and the fact of Ibn Khaldun's highly technical language, make it imperative that scholars with diverse expertise and disciplines produce new translations of the work of one of the most important thinkers and record-keepers of the Islamic civilization.

In the end, the connotations of the English words and concepts scholars chose to translate Ibn Khaldun's text was too significant and critical to simply dismiss them as disagreements over word choice. Another reason, corollary to the first reason, is this: If a translation is substantively and significantly different from Rosenthal's, and if it is clear that the act of translation is in fact interpretation—rather than unbiased and mechanical rendering of ideas in two different languages—then secondary works based on translations from primary sources should not be treated as equivalent to their corresponding primary sources in an academic context.

Analysis of the primary text to highlight Ibn Khaldun's economic philosophy

To present Ibn Khaldun's thought related to economic philosophy, consider a textual analysis of the relevant Arabic text. This may sound simple enough. However, as explained in the sections on translation of, and secondary works on, Ibn Khaldun, there are many factors that influence such engagement with old texts. Compounding those issues are the many editions of the same work, which vary not only by level of editorial details, but also by content. The editorial (*ẓabṭ; tanqīḥ*) details that distinguish editions include full vocalization of the Arabic text as well as notes (or lack thereof) on the sources the author relied on. The substantive issue is the presence of words and sentences in one edition and their absence in another edition. A translator or reader of any work based on primary sources in the original language must address these factors. One explanation for the substantive variance between editions might be the fact that Ibn Khaldun first drafted *al-Muqaddima* while residing in Algeria, then he produced revised drafts later after his travels east. At least six manuscripts (housed in Turkey and Egypt) have been the basis of translations of parts or all of his *Muqaddima*. The evidence points to Ibn Khaldun having made changes to *al-Muqaddima* even when he lived in Syria, and as late as three years before his death. This explanation for *al-Muqaddima*'s textual variance aligns with the variance in current book editions; North African editions (produced in Morocco, Algerian and Tunisia) often contain words and passages absent from editions produced in Egypt, Syria, or Lebanon.

The most significant variance, however, concerns vocalization—Arabic short vowels (*ḥarakāt*) added to the skeletal text. Because none of Ibn Khaldun's manuscripts were fully vocalized, and to add

value to published books of the work, some publishers rely on linguistic experts to fully vocalize the text and add footnotes and marginal notes to explain any ambiguity, highlight historical events for context purposes, or fix spelling errors. It should be noted that adding the vowels to an Arabic skeletal text is a complex and consequential intervention because it is the vowels that fix the meaning of words, assign syntactical and grammatical functions, and provide meaning to sentences. Doing this kind of work requires skill not only in linguistics, but also expertise in cultural idioms, historical context, and content-specific knowledge (topics addressed by the original author, in this case, a very broad list including chemistry, biology, astronomy, arts, engineering, medicine, etc.). In many ways, vocalizing an Arabic text is similar in function and approach to translating an original text.

For the above two reasons, this work relies on a textual analysis of many available editions of the original text. The approach here is both textual and analytical. It is textual in that it parses the Arabic language to find the meaning of words and translate them into English. It is analytical in that it considers context beyond single words, in order to identify the more likely meaning of sentences and paragraphs. To accomplish these steps, this author relied on different editions, including but not limited to editions containing vocalized texts, even as such vocalized texts limit the range of meaning Ibn Khaldun might have had in mind because vowels fix meaning at the level of words. Consulting unvocalized texts that relied on different manuscripts adds greater context and allows for a fresh, holistic look at the original text. Detailed footnotes indicate which edition is used for every citation or direct reference to Ibn Khaldun's ideas. One might see such a method as creating room for an interpreter's bias. To this critique: An interpreter's bias is present in any interpretive work, be it translation or commentary. Some of the more meaningful ways to control for unsupported bias or mitigate for the effects of bias are full transparency with the sources, consideration of a broader range of available sources, reliance on historical and factual context, and engagement with other interpreters from different disciplinary backgrounds and ranges of expertise.

Ibn Khaldun's work is both descriptive and prescriptive. For the descriptive portion, Ibn Khaldun seems to have relied on ethnographic observations, archival research, and archeological artifacts. His prescriptive contribution is driven by deductive and inductive reasoning, data analysis, and the application of Qur'ānic principles as critical instruments of thought and behavior. Taken as a whole, Ibn Khaldun produced a remarkable work of scholarship that is difficult to decipher, insightful in its explanation of events and objects, comprehensive in its coverage, and deeply informative in its record-keeping. Ibn Khaldun was not a passive reporter on, and recorder of, historical events. He was a keen observer of consequential social change, a theoretician deeply interested in identifying the systems that govern the trajectory of development of isolated societies, and a systems thinker who appreciated the interconnectedness of the world. Ibn Khaldun reflected on events based on outcomes—outcomes rooted in lived experiences, which are subject to both the conceptual and practical systems that govern their existence. Understanding Ibn Khaldun's economic philosophy cannot be fully achieved without understanding Ibn Khaldun's conceptualization of civilization and the nature and evolutions of other systems that give rise to human civilizations (Bakar 2017, p.311-33). He addressed these issues in section (*faṣl*) 17 (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:43), which precedes the section on economic activities (*ma`āsh*) (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:65).

As the title of the section of *al-Muqaddima* asserts, civilization [6] is the creation of the State [7] and the existence and persistence of civilization is directly connected to the State and to the persistence and longevity of the State (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:43, 2:47, 2:50-53). As such, civilization

becomes a universal social condition that emerges out of enduring urbanization.[8] Civilization is a stage in human societal development that describes a universal system, not a cultural or communal closed system.

Before going further in our analysis, it should be noted that these terms are highly technical. Ibn Khaldun deliberately selected and coined these specific words to denote distinct concepts, ideas, and systems. [9] Additionally, it is critically important to factor in the influence of Berber languages and North African dialects on the writing style and discourse Ibn Khaldun adopted.

First, Ibn Khaldun was the first to coin the words *ḥaḍāra* and *`umrān* in reference to two conditions or states of human development. *`Umrān* is a concept derived from the Arabic word that means, among other things: age, lifecycle, endurance, persistence, and longevity. Ibn Khaldun uses the word *`umrān* to refer to groups of human beings settling and occupying a specific space for a continuous period of time. In other words, it is a reference to people living in clusters, for instance large cities, year-round and for multiple generations, that is to say: enduring urban living. Ibn Khaldun qualifies urbanization this way to distinguish it from regions settled by communities who move around depending on the seasons, other natural patterns, and the availability of natural resources. The uninterrupted, persistent living in the same location is carefully signaled by the choice of the Arabic root, *`-m-r*, which suggests the existence of a living being with a natural lifespan (*`umr*). This qualification of urbanization as a living, time-bound being becomes useful when Ibn Khaldun proposes his theory of the lifespan of dynasties or political regimes tethered to specific human societies.

Ibn Khaldun holds that the existence of *`umrān* is a prerequisite for the emergence of *ḥaḍāra*. In this sense, and contrary to what some Orientalist scholars have suggested, Ibn Khaldun does not think that *`umrān* and *ḥaḍāra* are the same thing. He is explicit in his proposition that, without settled, enduring, populated cities (*`umrān*), there can be no civilization (*ḥaḍāra*). Moreover, the rise of a civilization is dependent on the degree of urbanization, to the extent that there exists a threshold that a settled urban area must attain for a civilization to be born. Yet, the variation among human civilizations is limited only by the level of urbanization, which in turn spurs the intense economic activity and production of goods and services.

Lastly, a third determinant system must be present to enable the emergence of a civilization: the State. [10] The State, according to Ibn Khaldun, is a necessary but not sufficient exclusive factor that must be present for a human civilization to exist and thrive. The State must exist because it is the force that can secure, redistribute, and grow wealth (*amwāl*). Here, too, Ibn Khaldun distinguishes between a political power holder, like an individual king or a clan, and the political governing institution. In the paradigm Ibn Khaldun proposes, the triad that makes human civilization possible consists of these elements: enduring urban centers, a diversified workforce, and a powerful State. He summarizes this paradigm this way: 'Power and State produce the market of the world' (Ibn Khaldun 2005, p.1:223). [11]

The system that we can envision here, based on Ibn Khaldun's conceptual framework, is one in which *work* becomes the only store of value, represented by the temporal intensity (time) and level of diversification and sophistication of work (skill; expertise). The stability and endurance of urbanization depend on the ability of the State to secure the space (market) within which, and the instruments (currency) with which goods and services are produced and traded. Here, the significance of the idea that work, not money, is the only store of value cannot be overstated. The implication of

this view is that work becomes a unit, a metric for measuring the value of goods and services, not price in terms of money.

Ibn Khaldun was not satisfied with simply identifying the three elements that connect the social systems that produce human civilization. He went further to suggest that zeal [12] fulfils its mission when individuals obtain political power, and that rural living evolves to create the conditions that would enable a civilization to thrive (Ibn Khaldun 2005, p.1:226). [13] Therefore, the same way the individual human being goes through a determinate lifecycle that peaks at forty years, each human civilization, too, has a lifecycle (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:55). What he seems to suggest by this analysis is that set goals, be they set by nature or by culture, predetermine the span of the lifecycle of human existence, be it the biological individual, the person, or the social being, the civilization. As a general rule, he suggests that once a being attains their ultimate goal, they predetermine for themselves the span of their lifecycle, its peak, and its phase of decline. Human civilization is the ultimate goal beyond which there is no other goal (Ibn Khaldun 2005, p.1:226). [14] Therefore, civilization marks the peak of the trajectory of the collective human lifecycle.

What Ibn Khaldun is suggesting here is this: Human beings, [15] individually and collectively, are outcomes of a network of self-regulating systems. Once they subject themselves to the forces of the various systems that power their individual and collective selves to achieve their respective goal (*ghāya*), they are bound to become outcomes, in and of themselves, of the systems they design and deploy to govern their lifestyles.

The connection between the collective and the individual, as Ibn Khaldun sees it, is remarkable. Since the prerequisites of attaining civilizational status are diversified work in a highly competitive environment of settled and enduring urban centers (Ibn Khaldun 2005, p.2:227), [16] the virtues of each activity must be imprinted on the individual human being involved in that specific activity, rendering him an obedient object of the various systems that govern his behavior. Ibn Khaldun ends up tethering human behavior, which is deeply shaped by one's activities for making a living, to human conscience.

With the connections that Ibn Khaldun makes between urbanization, diversified work, and human temperament, [17] he allows us, his readers, to move freely between the moral and the social, between the social and the psychological, and between the material and the emotional forms of existence, showing both interconnectedness and individuality. In other words, we can bypass the idea of whether humans are intrinsically anything—good, bad, courageous, brave, etc.—in favor of understanding that each human being, at their core, is the outcome of their social and environmental systems. Ibn Khaldun unpacks this fluid transition between the social, the psychological, and the moral in human beings in more detail in the section on economic life.

Another important idea that provides more critical context for Ibn Khaldun's theory on civilization is his assertion that the evolution of a human culture to attain the status of a civilization does not represent a virtuous evolution whereby humans attain moral good through the way they conduct their individual and collective life. For, although he theorizes that intense urbanization necessarily leads to a more complete civilization (Ibn Khaldun 2005, 2:227), [18] he nonetheless cautions that the completeness of a civilization is often accompanied by increased power in the hands of the State. And because powerful states tend to impose higher taxes to meet increased expenditures, the increased taxation leads to increased prices of goods and services, which leads to inflation. This course of events is often irreversible according to Ibn Khaldun, because in enduring, settled urban

settings, human beings become bound by the systems—cultural and societal, conceptual and practical—that they designed and by which they live, [19] rendering them incapable of altering their behaviors, including their spending behavior. As such, civilization is always marked by excess. [20] Excess, in the view of Ibn Khaldun, compromises the integrity [21] of the overall system that sustains humans as individuals and as a collective. With disintegration, corruption, exploitation, and dislocation overtaking human values and directing behavior, civilization, in the opinion of Ibn Khaldun, emerges as an immoral, non-virtuous stage of the life of the collective.

> The goal of urbanization (*al-ʿumrān*) is civilization (*al-ḥaḍāra*); excess (*ṭaraf*) is a likely outcome of civilization; when urbanization achieves its goal—building a civilization, urbanization turns into corruption (*fasād*)… indeed, the ethic gained from civilization through the pursuit of excess is exactly corruption (*ʿayn al-fasād*) for the human being is a human being (*insān*) if and only if he is able to balance securing that which benefits him and repelling that which harms him while maintaining upright ethics (*istiqāmati khuluqih*). (Ibn Khaldun 2005, p.2:229)

It should be clear by now why understanding the meaning and functions of civilization, urbanization, and political power, as Ibn Khaldun imagines them, is essential for understanding the economic life of humans regardless of the environment in which they conduct their productive and consumptive activities—be it an urban setting, the precursor to civilizational rise; or in a rural setting, the precursor to urbanization. With these ideas in mind, we shall now focus on several key ideas derived from *al-Muqaddima*'s section on economics and economic life.

Although Ibn Khaldun discusses, in fewer details, themes that are connected to economic life throughout the various sections and chapters of *al-Muqaddima*, it is in Chapter 1 of Book 5 that he focuses specifically on economic topics including subsistence, building wealth, work, investment, capital, types of work, and related subjects. The highlights of his key ideas, therefore, come from this particular section of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima* (Ibn Khaldun 2005, p.2:243). [22]

Ibn Khaldun lays out the framework within which his analysis of economics takes place. He generalizes that God created all that is on Earth and made it available to all human beings, who are the collective beneficiaries. However, when something is obtained (*ḥaṣala*; *ḥuṣūl*) by the hand (*yad*) [23] of one person, it becomes prohibited for another person to possess it except through exchange for something of close value (*ʿiwaḍ*). From this framework, key features of Islamic economic theories, as Muslim scholars including Ibn Khaldun promulgate, emerge to the foreground.

First, according to Ibn Khaldun, all that is on Earth is made by an external force, God. All that is made by the external force is a communal [24] resource for all people. Individual human beings may possess [25] some of these otherwise communal resources through work (*ʿamal*). Once a person gains possession of something through work, it becomes proscribed for someone else to claim it except through an exchange. This exchange could include an instrument that serves as a store of value (*dhakhīra*, *qinya*), such as gold and silver, which are also created or provided by an external force—God. In Ibn Khaldun's paradigm, these are foundational elements that inform economic life.

Second, since all these elements are internally shared resources that an external force (God) has provided, the only individual element that can be claimed by every person as intrinsically their own, and that can determine a person's social and economic weight, is *work*. As such, according to Ibn Khaldun, all systems of assessment and measurement of economic input and output must use work as their foundational unit—for nothing has a value without work. Aware of this extraordinary

generalization, Ibn Khaldun explains that some work is obvious, especially among artisans and craftspersons. But even things of value whose existence may not immediately appear to be the outcome of human work, are in fact so; they are just not as obvious to the casual observer.

For this definition of work to hold, Ibn Khaldun distinguishes between two outcomes of work. Subsistence (*rizq*) is any outcome of work that results in providing human beings with necessities including food, clothing, shelter, and other goods and services that sustain and preserve the well-being of the human being. Ibn Khaldun argues that on the surface, securing (*ḥuṣūl*) some of these basic needs, like food from plants that grow due to natural processes like rain and sunlight, may not require work. In reality, he adds, such natural interventions go in tandem with human labor (*mu`īn*), for a person must still exert some effort, or work, to process the product and consume it. Securing *rizq* (*taḥṣīl al-rizq*) can occur through a number of systems: fishing and hunting (*iṣṭiyād*), taxation-based income that the State provides (*jibāya*), domestication (*tadjīn*) of animals, or cultivation of plants (*falaḥan*).

The second outcome of work is earnings, income, or earned income (*kasb*). *Kasb*, for him, is all that is acquired (*mutamallak*) through one's work and one's power (*sa`y*, *qudra*) and that is above and beyond one's *rizq*. *Kasb* can be achieved through direct [26] human work, through crafting and skilled labor (*ṣanā`i*), or through trade (*tijāra*). Ibn Khaldun does not see any other legitimate paths for subsistence or for earned income.

It is a mistake to assume that Ibn Khaldun thought that *rizq* (subsistence) can be derived only from some basic activities like hunting, fishing, and farming. The inclusion of taxation as a source for subsistence connects subsistence to all other activities that result in *kasb* (earned income). Since the State often acts through levying taxes and fees on all economic activities to predetermine the political economy of the nation, Ibn Khaldun envisions *rizq* to be a base income that every human being must secure regardless of their ability or disability, regardless of their skill, and regardless of their access to capital. If a person is able to work, they will be able to provide subsistence for themselves and for those under their care. If they are unable to work, then it is the responsibility of the State, through taxation, to provide for those who cannot provide subsistence for themselves and for those under their responsibility. In this paradigm, the State is under the obligation to provide that base level of income, *rizq*, and is under the prohibition of not taxing basic income (*rizq*). This distinction is important within the context of modern taxation regimes that tax income, which stands in contrast to Islamic taxation systems that effect wealth but not exclusively income.

This framing of work as a central currency allows Ibn Khaldun to proceed to categorize and catalog the types of work humans perform for both subsistence and for building wealth. In this context, he coins the word *ṣinā`a* (pl. *ṣanā'i'*) to refer to all activities that would allow one to make a living (*rizq*) or to build wealth (*kasb*). It is in this context, then, that Ibn Khaldun makes the remarkable claim that what a person does for a living will decide what kind of a person, ethically and morally speaking, that person would be or is. Ibn Khaldun holds that without work, humans are unable to access and consume the resources God provides. Therefore, any attempt to generate income without work is necessarily exploitative and leads to harming the integrity of systems (*fasād*) that sustain human beings.

In this section, as is the case in all of his work, Ibn Khaldun combines a remarkable understanding of the professions and activities he describes with a sharp mind that enables him to prescribe provocative and intriguing theories and explanations. A good translation that attempts to

match Ibn Khaldun's appreciation of the use of language to inform and intrigue should do his work on economics justice. Here it would suffice to highlight what might be some of his consequential ideas.

His insistence that human beings are the product of what they do should be subject of critical examination for scholars from a number of disciplines today, especially given the dominance of some philosophical and scientific approaches that do not share that point of view.

Another aspect of Ibn Khaldun's thought seemingly absent from modern scholars' critical analyses of his work is his approach as a systems thinker. The idea that all events are outcomes of systems, and that human beings are subject to natural systems as well as to additional systems that they design themselves and apply to their lives, is compelling and deeply original when taken in the context of Islamic thought and beyond during that time. His notion that systems imprint their outcomes on their subjects is fascinating for many reasons.

For instance, thinking in terms of systems as understood by Ibn Khaldun would suggest, among other things, that it is not important or useful to think that people are not smart and dumb because they are created so. Rather, it is more constructive, according to Ibn Khaldun, to think that people are smart, dumb, deceitful, hypocritical, courageous, cowardly, noble, meek, humble, or any other characteristic through their *ṣinā`a*. The things human beings do in life over a long period of time require of them certain behavioral traits, and the habits that make them successful in their line of work also imprint on them the traits built from those habits. In other words, what one does for a profession or vocation rewrites one's conscience and sense of self.

What Ibn Khaldun is suggesting, through this connection of all the systems that act on the human being, is that the material world is ultimately connected to the human mind to a degree that the human soul carries the influences of lived experience beyond their material existence. He posits that fragments of human work live in the memory of the collective, with the power to influence the cultures and conditions of future generations. He used the idea of the persistence of lived experience in the form of a spiritual 'haunting' power when he explained the consequences of exploitative trade practices that manipulate peoples' access to basic needs.

Also of significance is Ibn Khaldun's vision of the State as an institution and a determinant system that has the power, and often the will, to override market-based systems and rules, to promote one form of trade over another (*al-dawla hiya al-sūq al-aʿẓam*) (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:95). Specifically, he held that the State is the determinant system when it comes to creating and sustaining crafts because it can create demand. It can fund the learning and transfer of crafts, and it can fund the markets for the products of such crafts. If the State wishes to terminate or devalue a craft and its product it can do so, even if demand is there. Markets alone cannot create demand unless the State wills it. This stream of thought is not only intriguing in its own historical and cultural contexts, but also relevant given the competing visions in the modern area of political economy.

Summarizing Ibn Khaldun's most significant contributions

After analyzing Ibn Khaldun's economic philosophy, this author wishes to highlight a few ideas that stand out and that might be deserving of further inquiry.

One idea can be characterized as Ibn Khaldun's theory on the economic origins of human conscience. It is derived from the notion that a human being's values, morals, ethics, and temperaments are outcomes of what they regularly do to make a living (*maʾāsh*). Ibn Khaldun signals

this proposition more clearly when he argues that some professions (*ṣanā'i*) do imprint certain traits and moral principles on their holders. For instance, Ibn Khaldun contends that the ethics and morality of traders or merchants is 'below the ethics and morality of nobles and kings,' for the profession confers certain traits on those who undertake it' (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:75, 2:89).

While discussing monopoly (*iḥtikār*), Ibn Khaldun asserts the notion of human souls being attached to their basic needs (food, shelter, clothes) to the extent that if a merchant or a tax collector leverages their control over the basic needs of persons, through monopoly or levies, the collective souls of these persons who were denied access to basic needs or whose basic needs were exploited to enrich the merchant or the tax collector will haunt these merchants, resulting in the disappearance and loss of their profit (*talaf wa-khusrān al-fā'ida*) or the corruption of their wealth (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:87). [27] Ibn Khaldun asserts that what a person does in life and the duration of their connection to their profession has an effect on their conscience: 'Good deeds have virtuous effects and bad actions return non-virtuous effects, and the moral effects would endure if they take hold early and repeat' (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:89). [28] He explains that merchants who associate with other merchants will acquire the worst traits, for the imprinting of merchants' ethics is accretive and proportional to the frequency of contact a merchant has with those in the same or related profession (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:89). [29] Ibn Khaldun further asserts that ability, acquired or otherwise, colors the conscience of the person and limits its ability to acquire a second *ṣinā'a* (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:100). [30]

Although Ibn Khaldun makes the case for connecting a human's conscience to what they do in life by referencing merchants and traders as the best candidates for the power of the profession to imprint certain values in the human conscience, there are enough references in *al-Muqaddima* alone that suggest that he would generalize this kind of effect across any profession. The difference is that he sees different professions imprinting different values onto their holders. Interestingly, he also connects the professions that imprint the least virtuous traits to happiness (*sa`āda*), as in the case of being submissive or subservient and cajoling (*al-khuḍū' wa-l-tamalluq*); the same traits are also paths for acquiring prestige (*jāh*) and prestige is the path to acquiring happiness (*sa'āda*) and earnings (*kasb*). He concludes that cajoling produces the most people with wealth (*tharwa*) and happiness (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:78).

This connection is fascinating considering that Ibn Khaldun is a systems thinker who connects what appear to be unrelated, 'unconnectable' systems, like financial transactions and human souls and consciences. The reason Ibn Khaldun's propositions and his framework of analysis needs more attention is that he insists on work being the central engine that produces outcomes. Without work, no events can be achieved. At the same time, he connects humans' consciences to the work in which they engage.

Another significant proposition is Ibn Khaldun's contention that work is the basis of value and values. He insists that work should be the basis of determining value, not the arbitrary assignment of price or even the price determined by the market. This is significant, because when read in a comparative context, it suggests that the valuation of any object or event must be based on the work performed to achieve its realization. In other words, Ibn Khaldun might be suggesting the use of work as a metric of valuation not only for trade purposes, but for assessment as well. With this in mind, informing Ibn Khaldun's worldview is his proposition that work is central and universal, and because it is central and universal it shapes the human conscience, and because it shapes the human conscience, there must be some judgements about which lines of work or paths for making a living are

legitimate and which are not. His list of *ṣanā'i`* contains explicit and implicit judgments about each one, with trade being less favored perhaps because of the high risk of monopolistic practices associated with it or perhaps because traders do not actually produce goods and services, but merely sell them and make a profit from the price fluctuation (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:68).

By connecting trade (*tijāra*) as the activity that produces income (*kasb*) through the packaging and distribution of goods and services produced by people who have *ṣanā'i`*, and that people with *ṣanā'i`* flourish in urban settings, and that urban settings are a prerequisite for the rise of human civilizations, one can easily see the holistic approach, the systems thinking framework through which Ibn Khaldun sees the world—the universe—when one pays attention to his religious references.

The impact and implication of Ibn Khaldun's ideas globally are unmistakable. First, he concluded that the surest paths to profit through trade involves the sale of goods and services in local markets when local market conditions change, which can be triggered by hoarding (a form of *iḥtikār*) or transporting local goods to distant countries where prices are higher (Ibn Khaldun 2004, p.2:83, 2:86). Second, he determined *iḥtikār* to be risky for social and religious reasons. The more attractive path, in this scenario, is cross-border trade, which helps merchants who wish to avoid *iḥtikār* make significant profit. Historically, this explains the appeal of cross-border trading to Muslim merchants, who ended up reviving and enriching the ancient Silk Road. Socially, one must imagine the impact of cross-border trade on indigenous economies related to issues of equity, autonomy, sustainability and access and use of resources. Ibn Khaldun's ideas have local and global impact and implications.

In addition to the suggested connection between the kind of work and the kind of a human being that would emerge out of doing a certain kind of work, this article proposes that Ibn Khaldun's philosophy cannot be characterized as coherent without finding that he relied on a systems thinking approach that defines a system as a divisible whole in terms of structure, and indivisible unity in terms of function. That is, to think of the existence of events as isolated systems with specific purposes that are organically connected to each other through physical and conceptual links. For example, a universal event, such as the decline of a human civilization, can be traced back to the values systems that individual human beings subscribe to and act upon, which can be traced to work, the kind of work the individual would regularly perform.

The complexity of these claims makes it necessary to introduce them here for the purpose of recommending future research endeavors, as they cannot be accommodated in this work since it is limited by structure, medium, and convention. The economic origin of human conscience is a compelling stream of thought that should be pursued in a standalone work for it is, in the view of this author, the most fascinating and intriguing idea that can be derived from Ibn Khaldun's work on economic activities and economic systems—the alleged impact of one's profession on their ethics and morality.

Conclusions

As a systems thinker, Ibn Khaldun believed deeply that knowledge is an accretive, accumulated body of information. In this way he differs from modern scholars, for whom originality of thought is more valuable—even an obsessive priority—over accumulated knowledge. Ibn Khaldun was well aware that the knowledge he acquired was the providence of generations of scholars and thinkers that preceded

him. As a product of modern scholars, perhaps responding to modern scholarship, this author may have indirectly emphasized the fact that Ibn Khaldun was an original thinker more than Ibn Khaldun would have cared to think of himself. Perhaps our modern boilerplate scientific method that requires a literature review section before producing our own analysis is what compels us to theorize and comment on earlier scholars' original thought. It should not be the point of discussion here. What should be promoted is for modern scholars to examine Ibn Khaldun's contributions on the basis of their own merit and as presented in their original language.

This essay is not intended to be a substitute for direct engagement with Ibn Khaldun's thought in translation or in its original language. It is intended to encourage other researchers and scholars from other disciplines to take a fresh look at Ibn Khaldun's work in its own context and with open minds—minds as free as possible from the limitations of our cultural and professional biases. Such renewed attention would require us to consider the fact that it is difficult, but possible, to see and access that which our 'work' allows us to read and think, and that we are, after all, the products of the systems that govern our *ṣinā`a*—one of Ibn Khaldun's theories that connects our material world to our conscience.

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Endnotes

* A social historian and philosopher, Ibn Khaldun (Ibn Khaldûn or Ibn Khaldun) is `Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥasan Ibn Jābir Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ibrāhīm Ibn `Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Khaldun al-Ḥaḍramī (1332–1406 CE). For discoverability and searchability, Ibn Khaldun will be used in the main text of this work instead of the transliterated name.

[1] By the close of 1900 CE, scholars had cited Ibn Khaldun about 50 times. However, most entries were references to historical events mentioned in Ibn Khaldun's work. Prior to the 20th century, no major work engaged with his theoretical contribution. Since the start of the 20th century, on the other hand, scholars have referenced Ibn Khaldun about 9,000 times. In contrast: Thomas Aquinas has been cited about 90,000 times; René Descartes, 50,000; Immanuel Kant, 80,000; and Emile Durkheim, to whom Ibn Khaldun is often compared, 45,000 scholarly references.

[2] From Franz Rosenthal's commentary on *al-Muqaddima*; a fuller quote than the one cited by Spengler, 283.

[3] See also Dale, Stephen Frederic (2006), "Ibn Khaldun: The Last Greek and the First Annaliste Historian." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 38, no. 3, pp. 431–51; Gibb, H. A. R. (1933), "The Islamic Background of Ibn Khaldun's Political Theory." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, University of London, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 23–31; Rosen, Lawrence (2005), "Theorizing from within: Ibn Khaldun and His Political Culture." *Contemporary Sociology*, vol. 34, no. 6, pp. 596–99; Jean David C. Boulakia. "Ibn Khaldûn: A Fourteenth-Century Economist." *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 79, no. 5, 1971, pp. 1105–18; Gellner, Ernest (1975), "Cohesion and Identity: The Maghreb from Ibn Khaldun to Emile Durkheim." *Government and Opposition*, vol. 10, no. 2, 203–18; and de Muijnck, Sam, et al. (2021), "History of Economic Thought & Methods." *Economy Studies: A Guide to Rethinking Economics Education, Amsterdam University Press*, 187–99.

[4] *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldun*, often abbreviated as *al-Muqaddima*, is the first volume of Ibn Khaldun's history with the Arabic title, *Diwan al-mubtada' wa-l-khabar fi tarikh al-`arab wa-l-barbar waman `asarahum min thawi al-sha'n al-akbar*. The Arabic text and this author's translation relied on and cross-referenced the Moroccan edition, *al-Muqaddima*, the Lebanese edition, *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldun*,, the Egyptian edition, *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldun*, the Tunisian edition, *Kitab al-`ibar wa-diwan al-mubtada' wa-l-khabar fi tarikh al-`arab wa-l-barbar waman `asarahum min thawi al-sha'n al-akbar*, and the Syrian edition, *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldun*.

[5] The phase *mā malakat aymānukum* appears in seven Qur'ānic verses, including, 4:3, 4:24, 4:25, 4:36, 24:33, 24:58, 30:28. While these references are cited to situate ownership of something or someone, Ibn Khaldun sees the explicit reference to 'hand' or 'right hands') as s signal to the work as legitimizing to claims of ownership.

[6] *al-ḥaḍāra*.

[7] *al-dawla*.

[8] *al-`umrān*.

[9] Because Ibn Khaldun is deliberate in his choice of technical terms, and because he coins words that have multiple meanings and implications, some words ought not be translated but instead remain as Arabic words, notwithstanding potential for breaking the reading flow when foreign words are truncated within the text of the narrative. This decision became more appealing when I examined other translations and noticed that the word choice for the translation of certain words was either influenced by personal bias or by the failure to find an English word that is as encompassing and inclusive as the original Arabic. The words *ṣinā`a* and *murū'a*, for instance, are good examples of the inefficiency and inappropriateness of the words craft and manliness, which were used by other interpreters and translators, including Rosenthal.

[10] *al-dawla*.

[11] '*al-sultān wa-'l-dawla sūq al-`ālam.'*

[12] *`aṣabiyya*.

[13] '*al-ḥaḍāra ġāya li-l-badāwa*.'

[14] *ġāya lā mazīd warā'aha'*.
[15] *al-insān*.
[16] *matā kāna al-`umrānu akthar, kānati al-ḥaḍāratu akmal*.
[17] Keep in mind that Ibn Khaldun held that what humans do, as work, imprints certain traits, ethics, and habits on their soul (*tatalawwanu al-nafsu min tilka al-`awā'id bi-alwānin kathīra*).
[18] *matā kāna al-`umrānu akthar, kānati al-ḥaḍāratu akmal.*
[19] *la yajidūna walijatan `an ḏālika limā malakahum min asri al-`awā'idi wa-ṭā`atiha*.'
[20] *ṭaraf*.
[21] *Fasād* is the concept Ibn Khaldun uses to connect corruption of any system when it is deployed in a way or for a purpose it was not intended for.
[22] In the Moroccan edition, the *ma'āsh* section can be found here: Ibn Khaldun (2005), *al-Muqaddima*, Morocco: Khizanat Ibn Khaldun--Bayt al-funun wa-l-`ulum wa-l-adab, 2:243.
[23] The use of the word *yad* (hand) should not be overlooked or downplayed as a rhetorical, figurative, or linguistic instrument. Given the presence of the same term in the Quranic text, which informed the development of Islamic law, *yad* must mean more than ownership. It must mean, among other things, as Ibn Khaldun suggests, ownership through a particular activity, work, in which a person must utilize their hands for the *ḥuṣūl* to be realized, not any other instrument of acquiring property.
[24] It is communal as signaled by his use of the word *mushtaraka*.
[25] The conceptual transfer of ownership is called *ḥuṣūl*.
[26] Ibn Khaldun explicitly states that *kasb* is through (direct) human work, which can be contrasted to indirect human work in which humans exploit animals or other human beings to do work for them.
[27] *Fasād al-ribḥ*.
[28] *Tarsukh 'in sabaqat wa-takarrarat*.
[29] *Kānat radā'atu tilka al-khuliqi `indahu ashadd*.
[30] *al-malakāt sifatu al-nafsi wa-alwāni fa-lā tazdaḥimu mujtami`atan*.

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