



THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE

SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

**A COMPERATIVE ANALAYSIS OF IBN KHALDUN'S AND NICCOLO
MACHIAVELLI'S REALIST AND RATIONALISTIC APPROACHES TO POLITICS**

Master's Thesis

Oktay Kimya

Political Science

December 2024



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Thesis Supervisor

Assist. Prof. Dr. Seval Yaman

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STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I affirm that all information contained in this document has been gathered and presented in strict adherence to academic standards and ethical guidelines. I have thoroughly cited and referenced all sources and findings that are not my original work, in compliance with these standards. Furthermore, I confirm that this thesis has been written following the writing guidelines of the Institute of Social Sciences at the Social Sciences University of Ankara.

Oktay KİMYA

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A COMPERATIVE ANALAYSIS OF IBN KHALDUN'S AND NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI'S REALIST AND RATIONALISTIC APPROACHES TO POLITICS

ABSTRACT

In Western political thought, Machiavelli, and in Eastern discourse, Ibn Khaldun, emerge as pivotal figures. Despite their diverse geographical, cultural, and historical backgrounds, both advocated for a similar realistic and rationalist approach. This thesis aims to meticulously examine and compare the revolutionary methodologies employed by Machiavelli and Ibn Khaldun within the realm of political theory. Significantly, both philosophers diverged from their predecessors and contemporaries by opting to analyze societal events through a pragmatic and historically grounded perspective rather than through idealized or normative lenses. This analytical framework not only fortified the foundations of their political doctrines but also left profound imprints on the trajectory of modern political thought.

This study deeply delves into the realistic and rationalist methodologies embraced by Machiavelli and Ibn Khaldun. While both engage in a realist analysis of politics, differences arise due to their unique cultural and historical contexts. For instance, Machiavelli's experiences during the Italian Renaissance shaped his pragmatic and realistic outlook, whereas Ibn Khaldun's upbringing in the politically complex Islamic world influenced his realism within that milieu. Moreover, this research examines the fundamental reasons behind the political realism advocated by these two thinkers and scrutinizes whether their perspectives were shaped by the epochs in which they lived and their personal experiences. Despite the significant similarities in the initial political and methodological approaches of the two thinkers, as well as their methods of analyzing social events, it is evident that they ultimately arrived at very different conclusions. Consequently, the advice they offered to rulers and caliphs diverged considerably.

Additionally, it explores the similarities and differences between Machiavelli's principles and Ibn Khaldun's historiographical perspectives. Particularly, Ibn Khaldun's realist approach diverges significantly from Machiavelli's realism, and the underlying reasons for this discrepancy are discussed in this study. The fundamental concepts and assertions used by the two thinkers in their works are compared in terms of their realist approaches and analyses.

In conclusion, this study meticulously compares the political philosophies of Machiavelli and Ibn Khaldun, aiming to shed light on the origins and characteristics of realism within different geographical and cultural contexts. It also asserts that despite both thinkers being realists, their understandings of realism significantly differ from each other.

Keywords: Realism, Historism, Machiavelli, Ibn Khaldun, Society, Politics

İBN HALDUN VE NİCCOLO MACHIAVELLİ’NİN SİYASETE REALİST VE RASYONALİST YAKLAŞIMLARININ KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ANALİZİ



ÖZET

Batı siyasi düşüncesinde Machiavelli, Doğu tartışmasında ise İbn Haldun, belirleyici figürler olarak öne çıkar. Farklı coğrafi, kültürel ve tarihsel geçmişlere sahip olmalarına rağmen her ikisi de benzer realist ve rasyonalist bir yaklaşımı savunmuşlardır. Bu tez, Machiavelli ve İbn Haldun’un siyaset kuramı içinde kullandıkları devrim niteliğindeki metodolojileri ayrıntılı bir şekilde incelemeyi ve karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Önemli bir şekilde, her iki filozof da öncülerinden ve çağdaşlarından ayrılarak toplumsal olayları idealize edilmemiş veya normatif bir bakış açısı yerine pragmatik ve tarihsel temelli bir perspektiften analiz etmeyi tercih etmişlerdir. Bu analitik çerçeve, sadece siyasi öğretilerinin temellerini güçlendirmekle kalmamış aynı zamanda modern siyasi düşüncenin seyrine de derin izler bırakmıştır.

Bu çalışma, Machiavelli ve İbn Haldun’un benimsedikleri realist ve rasyonalist metodolojileri derinlemesine ele almaktadır. Her ikisi de siyasetin realist bir analizini yaparken benzersiz kültürel ve tarihsel bağlamlarından kaynaklanan farklılıklar ortaya çıkarmıştır. Örneğin Machiavelli’nin İtalyan Rönesans’ı dönemindeki deneyimleri, onun pragmatik ve realist bakış açısını şekillendirirken; İbn Haldun’un politik olarak karmaşık İslam dünyasında yetişmesi, onun gerçekçiliğini bu bağlamda etkilemiştir. Ayrıca bu çalışma, bahse konu iki düşünürün savunduğu siyasi gerçekçiliğin temel nedenleri ve bakış açılarının yaşadıkları dönemler ve kişisel deneyimleriyle şekillendirilip şekillendirilmediğini incelemektedir.

İki düşünürün başlangıçtaki gerek siyasal ve metodolojik yaklaşımı gerekse de toplumsal olayları tahlil yönleri birbirine oldukça benzer olmasına rağmen nihayetinde çok farklı sonuçlara ulaştıkları, hükümdarlara ve halifelere birbirlerinden oldukça farklı tavsiyelerde bulundukları da aşîkârdır. Çalışmada ayrıca Machiavelli’nin prensipleri ile İbn Haldun’un tarih anlayışı arasındaki benzerlikler ve farklılıklar incelenmektedir. Özellikle İbn Haldun’un realist yaklaşımı, Machiavelli’nin realizminden önemli ölçüde farklılık göstermektedir ve bu farklılığın altında yatan nedenler bu çalışmada tartışılmaktadır. İki düşünürün eserlerinde

kullandığı temel kavramlar ve söylemler üzerinden realist yaklaşımları ve tahlilleri karşılaştırılmaktadır.

Sonuç olarak bu çalışma, farklı coğrafi ve kültürel bağlamlarda iki düşünürün realizminin kökenlerini ve özelliklerini aydınlatmayı hedefleyerek Machiavelli ve İbn Haldun'un siyaset felsefelerini titizlikle karşılaştırmakta ve iki düşünürün de realist olmalarına rağmen realizm anlayışlarının birbirlerinden oldukça farklı olduğunu iddia etmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Realizm, Tarihselcilik, Machiavelli, İbn Haldun, Toplum, Siyaset



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Political philosophy and politics have a rich history dating back to antiquity. Scholars have long studied this subject, aiming to advance society and the state. Like a snowball, knowledge and experience have continuously grown and progressed over time. Each thinker, philosopher, and writer has contributed a unique viewpoint to this accumulation and development, enriching the ongoing adventure of political thought. Among these philosophers my focus of analyses is Ibn Khaldun who grew up in the Islamic and Eastern culture and Niccolò Machiavelli who grew up in Western civilization, who both conducted extensive research in political philosophy. Since they lived in different cultures and eras, some scholars argued that comparing Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli is impossible due to their distinct backgrounds. Ibn Khaldun, a medieval Muslim scholar, was deeply religious, evident from his role as a judge of the Maliki School in Egypt. On the other hand, Machiavelli was a political consultant and an active political figure in Florence. However, despite these differences, it is not entirely accurate to claim they are incomparable; in fact, these two philosophers share many similarities. Rosenthal described Ibn Khaldun as the Islamic equivalent of Machiavelli, while Yusuf Qordhowi referred him as the Montesquieu of the Arab world (Luhtitianti, 2020).

Machiavelli and Ibn Khaldun have many common characteristics, similar methodological approaches and similar perspectives to politics. They understood politics, society, and history from a unique perspective, distinct from those of the intellectuals who preceded them. In order to compare their theories, it is essential to understand the historical context in which they lived and the events that influenced their thinking.

They both lived in the period in which their societies experienced dramatic political upheavals, political changes, and social conflicts. Italy was severely divided, with the French dominating on one side and the Spanish on the other. The period in which Machiavelli lived marked by significant internal tensions, major political transformations, intense power struggles between governments, and economic collapse. The political climate, historical context of the Renaissance, longstanding tensions between the church and ruler (Luhtitianti, 2020). The period in which Ibn Khaldun lived was the time of great destruction and turmoil, just like the Europe in which Machiavelli lived. The plague disease caused serious destruction in the Islamic world, likewise political struggles between Islamic states and emirates, social chaos, constantly changing powers, economic destruction, and the destructive attacks of the Timurid state. Ibn

Khaldun worked for years at different levels of bureaucracy in many different emirates during this period when political and social turmoil was at its peak, and then he approached the current realist situation with a rational and historical perspective and wrote his work called *Muqaddimah*.

Ibn Khaldun was one of the most distinguished Muslim scholars of the pre-modern era. The intellectual legacy of Ibn Khaldun stands out in Muslim political thought. Despite the passage of centuries, his work retains its value, vitality, and modern relevance (Naz, 2013, 26). He established a completely new discipline, which he termed the science of human society. Ibn Khaldun's most notable work is the *Muqaddimah*. In its introduction, he examines historical methodologies and establishes criteria for distinguishing historical truths from errors. The *Muqaddimah* is widely regarded as one of the most remarkable treatises on the philosophy of history ever composed (Tomar, 2008, 604). Ibn Khaldun's work is not secular in the conventional sense, as religion plays a pivotal role in the cycles he posits. Historical sociology represents a form of knowledge that holds both theoretical and practical implications for understanding human nature and influencing views and behavior. Ibn Khaldun's understanding of group dynamics mirrors, to a significant extent, his arguments regarding the natural progression of political authority, which tends towards monarchy (Hassanzadeh, 2019, 527).

In the Middle Ages, Ibn Khaldun pioneered a comprehensive and effective approach to a new discipline known as historical sociology, which represents an advanced form of historiography. He meticulously documented and analyzed eight centuries of social transformations within his community, employing rigorous intellectual methods to abstract the sociological aspects of history from the historical processes of Islamic societies. Ibn Khaldun departed from historicism of his era by focusing his studies on the social context. At the same time there is an international realistic approach by Ibn Khaldun. The main justification for including Ibn Khaldun in the canon of international relations is his focus on placing the state at the core of his analysis. Approximately 79 out of the book's 229 sections explicitly discuss politics, the sultan, kingship, or the state, and many other sections indirectly touch upon topics related to the state (Kalpakian, 2008, 363).

The academic discourse surrounding Ibn Khaldun within international relations often emphasizes comparisons with foundational texts like Machiavelli and Thucydides. However, these discussions tend to overlook key concepts, particularly those addressed by scholars of classics who grapple with fundamental questions in international relations. Identity remains a central enigma in contemporary international relations, driving many conflicts, disputes, and

dilemmas that defy easy solutions. Liberals criticize it as a cause of violence, realists typically downplay its emotional aspects, and Marxists view it as a form of false consciousness. Social constructivists and postmodernists are among the few schools comfortable engaging with the complexities of identity.

Social constructivist scholars in international studies are cautious about embracing the concept, despite its utility in explaining numerous conflicts. Unlike other perspectives, they acknowledge the darker aspects of identity but aim to leverage this understanding to address and resolve underlying issues. Another important realist thesis of Ibn Khaldun is its *umran*, historically a lot of thinker study about that topic. Translators have interpreted the concept of *umran* in various ways. Some, like De Slane, F. Rosenthal, and V. Monteuil, often translate it as civilization, but these risks oversimplifying Khaldun's concept and conflating it with *hadara*, which itself is rendered as civilization. Alternatively, M. Mahdi translates *umran* as culture, distinguishing *umran badawi* as primitive culture and *umran hadari* as civilized culture, while *hadara* remains civilization. Meanwhile, N. Nassar interprets *umran* as sociology, with *umran badawi* as nomadic society and *umran hadari* as sedentary society. These varied translations reflect the richness and complexity inherent in the concept of *umran* (Chabane, 2008). Moreover, we can clearly see that there are a lot of study about Ibn Khaldun and his realistic approach to history, sociology and politics and at the same time he is a very close figure to Machiavelli so Rosenthal likened Ibn Khaldun to the Islamic counterpart of Machiavelli, whereas Yusuf Qordhowi characterized Ibn Khaldun as the Montesquieu of the Arab world (Luhtitianti, 2020, 40). Ibn Khaldun emerged during the peak of Islamic civilization, a period marked by its subsequent decline and gradual fragmentation (Sidani, 2008, 75)

The time period in which Machiavelli lived and the political landscape of that era were much like those of Ibn Khaldun's time. Machiavelli worked for the Florentine Republic for fourteen years, serving as a secretary to the city council and as a diplomatic envoy. Throughout his career, he closely studied French history and politics, amassing a deep understanding of the operations of the French government (Gomez, 2002, 84).

During his tenure as secretary and diplomat, Machiavelli handled numerous internal and external state matters. This role gave him a unique vantage point to closely observe and analyze the behaviors and strategies of political figures of his time, both within Florence and abroad. He studied their interactions, particularly how they managed domestic and foreign affairs. In 1512, when the Medici family overthrew the Republican government, Machiavelli lost his position and was exiled. In exile, he devoted himself to writing, producing most of his renowned

works during this period. He began writing *The Discourses* but paused in 1513 to write *The Prince*, which he completed in December of that year. He believed *The Prince* could help him regain political influence and secure a position in the new Medici government led by Lorenzo de Medici. He eventually completed *The Discourses* in 1521. In an effort to gain the attention and patronage of the Medici family, Machiavelli dedicated *The Prince* to the esteemed Lorenzo de Medici. Unfortunately, Lorenzo was not impressed, and Machiavelli did not receive any government appointment. The public reaction was initially indifferent but eventually turned negative, with the book being criticized as immoral, evil, and wicked (Ilodigwe, 2019).

Despite the negative reactions that *The Prince* faced both initially and over time, it remains the fundamental source of Machiavelli's political realism. To truly grasp Machiavelli's political perspective, one must consider the context, motivations, and assumptions underlying *The Prince*. It can be argued that Machiavelli's political realism is largely derived from his practical experience as a politician and diplomat. Drawing from this practical knowledge, *The Prince*, along with parts of *The Discourses*, offers a series of recommendations to aspiring rulers on how to acquire and maintain power and effectively manage state affairs. While the initial and specific context is Florence or the Italian city-states, Machiavelli aims for the lessons derived from his experience to be relevant to any ideal situation. He seeks to offer insights into how a ruler should or should not act, regardless of the particular circumstances.

To this extent *The Prince* and *The Discourses* articulate Machiavelli's views on the manner in which a state should be run and the manner in which inter-state relations should be conducted to achieve the best results for the state (Kalpakian, 2008, 365). Machiavelli's writings are infamously unsystematic, inconsistent, and sometimes self-contradictory. He often relies on experience rather than rigorous logical analysis. Despite this, Machiavelli is considered one of the founding figures of realism. Commentators generally agree that Machiavelli has had a significant impact on the field, primarily through his two most important works, *The Prince* and *The Discourses* (Ilodigwe, 2019, 24).

Simultaneously, the dichotomy of realism and idealism is central to Machiavelli's thought. He believes that the state should not be inspired by something celestial or possesses an indefinable power capable of shaping the terrestrial realm at will. Machiavelli's principles are grounded in the real world. His recommendations to prospective princes are not a priori suggestions but empirical generalizations based on his practical experience. Considering the time and milieu in which Machiavelli wrote -that is the Italian Renaissance, still heavily influenced by medieval culture and mentality- his empirical approach to political realism was

revolutionary. Unlike the medieval status quo, Machiavelli focused on what is the case rather than what ought to be the case in his discourse on the state and political leadership (Ilodigwe, 2019, 26). Machiavelli's political thought introduced a novel form of knowledge, establishing its roots comprehensively. Unlike Aristotle, who explicitly links ethics and politics, Machiavelli diverges from this perspective. Similarly, he differs from Christian thinkers who view politics within the framework of salvation history (Abellanos, 2019, 63). Due to Machiavelli's belief that morality and politics should operate independently, he regards any effort to inject moral considerations into politics as improper (Ilodigwe, 2019, 21). Indeed, Machiavelli appears poised to declare himself the first political scientist who perceives the human condition without illusions, seeing the world as it truly is and people as they truly are. In doing so, he aims to warn humanity about the dangers of professing goodness in a world where many are not virtuous (Mindle, 1985, 217). It is also argued that Machiavelli was the first to appreciate the role sheer force in the conduct of government, the first to understand that the maintenance of a successful government depends on an unflinching willingness to supplement the arts of persuasion with the employment of effective military force.

Ibn Khaldun wrote Iberian history because he thought that the past was deterministic and we should learn from it, whereas Machiavelli wrote the history of Florence because he argued that in order to understand the present, we need to know that reality of history. Both took lessons from history, evaluated history in a very real way, analyzed the events in a very realistic way, and two thinkers gave very realistic advice to the leaders of their era and enabled them to read the society in a realistic way. Both made a real history reading and analyzed society on this plane. These two thinkers are the first of their era. Although the religious authority and the church were very dominant in his period, Machiavelli made an analysis of a secular society and politics by getting rid of religious values and traditions. At the same time, Ibn Khaldun got rid of the religious authorities of his time and evaluated society and politics in a realistic way. Both empiricists and advocates of a critical approach to historiography, neither Machiavelli nor his counterparts are reductionists. Both seek lessons from history, understanding that historical laws emerge from the dynamics of human political and social nature. Beyond their shared approaches, there is a profound alignment in their thinking. Each author believes they have discerned the patterns and learned the lessons of history (Goodman, 1972, 253).

1.1.Thesis Description

The aim of this study is to compare Machiavelli and Ibn Khaldun, two important philosophers of their time, in terms of their realistic perspective. It is clearly expressed that both philosophers analyzed history in a realistic way, and they discussed the existing situation rather than what should exist.

Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli exhibit numerous similarities and differences in their intellectual approaches. This analysis will elucidate the parallels and divergences between these two philosophers, with a focus on their realistic examinations of society, politics, and economy. We will delve into how each philosopher employs a pragmatic lens to analyze these domains, providing a comprehensive comparative study of their methodologies and insights. Moreover, in this study we will undertake a comparative analysis of two prominent historical figures, examining various aspects such as the historical epochs they inhabited, the civilizations they were part of, their philosophical frameworks, and the political environments in which they operated. The thesis shortly aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the political ideologies of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli within the framework of their respective historical contexts. By examining the intellectual contributions of these two figures, the study seeks to elucidate their significance and relevance in the broader discourse of political theory.

This study holds significance for political theory because the two philosophers have made substantial contributions to the field of political theory, they influenced, and transformed it. While both scholars have been extensively studied individually, there has been a lack of comparative analysis between them. A comparative study would be highly productive as it would elucidate the differences between these thinkers, their areas of agreement, the influence of their respective eras on their thoughts, and most importantly, how the civilizations, religions, and cultures in which they lived shaped their perspectives on life and events.

1.2.Main Research Question and Sub Questions

Machiavelli in the West and Ibn Khaldun in the East represent a break in traditional political theory. These two philosophers, who lived very close to each other but in very different

geographies, developed similar thoughts despite the differences in the culture and age they lived in. The aim of this thesis is to compare the realist approaches of Machiavelli and Ibn Khaldun.

Based on the research question, four sub questions have been developed:

1. How did Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli analyze the events realistically and showed a deterministic approach and how did the age and the politics of the age affect these thinkers?
2. Why did these two thinkers interpret the events and facts not by looking for what should be on the level of philosophy, like their predecessors, but by starting from what exists on history and what has been historically lived?
3. In what ways did societal structures, cultural contexts, and state traditions shape the philosophical ideas and approaches of these thinkers towards politics, society, and history?
4. What are the similarities and differences between Ibn Khaldun's realism and Machiavelli's realism?

1.3. Methodology

We adopted a qualitative research methodology in this study. It involves the critical appraisal, examination, evaluation, and analysis of publications by other scholars and authors on the subject. We prefer to use descriptive methods through primary and secondary sources and analyze the basic books/texts to understand how the content of both philosophers' changes with the evolution of events periodically, and in this study, we will examine the content, structure, and design of the texts. We analyzed the main books because we collected data systematically from a set of books such as *Muqaddimah* and *The Prince* which are the most famous books of philosophers. At the same time, we applied contextual analysis and explained concepts such as culture, society, age, and state that they live in.

1.4. Literature Review

The analysis of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli's political and religious thoughts reveals a stark departure from previous idealistic tendencies of their time. Their ideas were significantly shaped by the socio-political landscapes in which they lived, influencing their distinct styles and philosophical approaches. Both thinkers emphasize practicality in politics, advocating for rationality over idealism. Additionally, they underscore the role of religion as a crucial social institution that functions to maintain stability within the state. In comparing Ibn Khaldun's ideas in the *Muqaddimah of the Kitab al-Ibar* with Machiavelli's in *The Prince*, we delve into their

respective political philosophies and the contexts in which they developed. In his magnum opus *The Prince*, Machiavelli shares a historical perspective similar to Ibn Khaldun's. He constructs a schema of history where epochs resemble one another, each unfolding as a consequence of past events over time. In other words, history was not seen as a continuous, smooth flow, but rather as a tumultuous process marked by destructive upheavals that erased past achievements and memories, thus requiring mankind to constantly strive for recovery (Çetin, 2020, 219).

Naz compares the historical approaches of the two philosophers. Naz asserted that Ibn Khaldun stands out among Muslim philosophers and historians for his profound understanding of history, its significance, and his critical insights. His legacy as a prominent figure in Muslim thought continues to be celebrated -a pioneering spirit who prefigured Western contributions to history and sociology. Western scholars still admire and value Ibn Khaldun's work. While there is no direct or indirect connection between Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli, it is worth comparing certain aspects of their thoughts, which show striking similarities. These parallels can be attributed largely to the historical, political, and social contexts in which both thinkers lived (Naz, 2013, 28). Certain scholars cite Ibn Khaldun as an early proponent of realism and social constructivism in the academic field of international relations. Dr. Susan Strange, for example, presents him as an alternative to Machiavelli, suggesting that Ibn Khaldun's works could serve as foundational texts for this discipline (Kalpakian, 2008, 363).

According to Öztürk, there are similarity in Machiavelli's concept of *virtu* and Ibn Khaldun's concept of *asabiye*, both two philosophers have realist perspective about human history and state theory, the history to be taken to cyclical content and state are portrayed domination device, in fact both think that people are selfish, according to their thought there are parallels between war and life and war and politics (Öztürk, 2015, 69). Öztürk concluded that the convergence between the philosophies of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli unveils the parallelism inherent in the life trajectories of two individuals who navigated similar terrains albeit in different geographical contexts. Ibn Khaldun's career was marked by his service to multiple sultans, involvement in numerous intrigues, acclaim as a distinguished statesman, and eventual downfall leading to imprisonment (Öztürk, 2015, 75). Similarly, Machiavelli led a tumultuous life, occupying a prominent position as a high-ranking administrator in the Republic of Florence for an extended duration. Nonetheless, following an abrupt political upheaval, he spent his final years marginalized from public affairs, teetering on the brink of destitution and facing the looming threat of imprisonment. Consequently, the doctrines espoused by these

thinkers, whose life experiences bore striking resemblance, inherently shared various commonalities.

Additionally, Elmalı claims that Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli have similarity in the thoughts they put forward and they both are famous in their views on the state (Elmalı, 2003) and he comes to the following conclusion: Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli advanced remarkably similar concepts concerning the establishment, safeguarding, and perpetuation of a state. Both scholars envisioned a power-centric framework rooted in realist theory to institute and sustain governance. They advocated for a militaristic structure, emphasizing the pivotal role of the military, whose strength stemmed from a shared national identity. Furthermore, they posited that only a collective national mindset could effectively establish and defend the state (Elmalı, 2003).

For example, in a section of his work, Stoenescu conducts a comparative analysis between Machiavelli's concept of *virtu* and Ibn Khaldun's notion of *asabiye*. He concludes that the essence of *virtu* as energy can be found in Ibn Khaldun's writings. *Asabiye*, equivalent to Machiavelli's *virtu* in this context, signifies a fundamental creative force underlying all political actions. It represents group cohesion, social solidarity, or group unity, etymologically linked to the word *asaba*. *Asabiye* illustrates the cohesive power that binds individuals together, imparting strength and shaping them into robust, politically active groups (Stoenescu, 2009, 43). He concludes by making the following additions: Like Machiavelli's virtuous prince, *asabiye* can be awakened by a capable leader among his nonrelated supporters and followers. According to Ibn Khaldun, a foreign follower can be integrated into the *asabiye* of his leader, and conversely, a leader can govern a foreign group by assimilating into their identity, thereby appearing as one of them. Similar to Machiavelli's *virtu*, the concept of *asabiye* leads to dominance and is perceived as a natural force, akin to the workings of nature itself. Furthermore, *asabiye* enables an individual to assume leadership over members of a group. By leveraging the loyalty and solidarity within the group, one can establish kingship by eliminating competing loyalties and exerting authority through force. Moreover, according to Ibn Khaldun, *asabiye* leads to conquest because the group with the strongest sense of cohesion overpowers those with weaker group feelings and asserts dominance over them. Additionally, in battles, *asabiye* holds greater significance than numerical strength (Stoenescu, 2009, 45).

Kayapınar employs the following assertions within his scholarly inquiry, which juxtaposes Ibn Khaldun's concept of *asabiye* with Machiavelli's notion of *virtu* and Gumilev's theory of *passionarity*. Various philosophers have proposed similar variables that shape the

course of societal change. Machiavelli's *Virtu*, Hegel's *volksgeist*, and Gumilev's *passionarity* (or X factor) are examples of these concepts, treated as exogenous variables in their respective theories. In contrast, Ibn Khaldun presents *asabiye* as an endogenous variable, inherently connected with other variables within the system. This formulation allows for the predictability of *asabiye*'s evolution and makes it subject to scientific observation. (Kayapınar M. A., 2010). For Kayapınar, *asabiye* represents a synthesis of these two types of *virtu*. In terms of their functions and societal outcomes, the similarities between Machiavelli's *virtu* and Ibn Khaldun's *asabiye* are undeniable. Each thinker recognizes an unseen yet fundamental factor that influences the political realm from behind the scenes. They attribute the political order, efficiency, strength, and unity of a society to the existence of this invisible element. Additionally, both concepts *asabiye* and *virtu*, encompass moral and religious dimensions that serve as sources of legitimacy within a society. Despite these similarities, however, *asabiye* and *virtu* are formulated in distinctly different ways. *Virtu*, fundamentally rooted in Machiavelli's pragmatism, is characterized by a mysterious nature whose movements defy scientific observation -a quality absent in Ibn Khaldun's approach (Kayapınar M. A., 2010).

Morris (2009) highlights Ibn Khaldun's rhetorical strategy. One of Ibn Khaldun's most evident rhetorical techniques, which some modern Muslim interpreters have noted as bearing striking similarities to Machiavelli, is his emphasis on realism (in the sense of *realpolitik*). Ibn Khaldun consistently illustrates, across various historical contexts, the stark contrast between (1) what is perceived as ethically or religiously just and right, and (2) instances of pragmatically amoral attitudes and behaviors that prove politically effective and successful (Morris, 2009, 278).

In the thesis, three primary sources were used. Regarding Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah* translated by Süleyman Uludağ (2018) was chosen. Uludağ is a well-known scholar who has been addressed as Ibn Khaldun for years. His most related and original works are *Ibn Haldun Üzerine Araştırmalar*, (studies on Ibn Khaldun) and *Ibn Khaldun*, and translated works are *Dirâsât an Mukaddimeti İbn Haldûn* (trans. by Satı El Husrî), and *Tasavvufun Mahiyeti* (trans. by İbn Haldun). Moreover, he is a highly esteemed scholar and well-respected in academia. His works are frequently cited. His expertise in Arabic and advanced translation are among the reasons for his widespread recognition. Finally, his translation of *Muqaddimah* is one of the most qualified translations that attract a great deal of attention.

On the other hand, regarding Machiavelli, *the Prince* translated by Nazım Güvenç (1993) was preferred. Competence and credibility of the author, academic value of the work,

language comprehensibility, and comprehensive content. In this context, the translation of the book is faithful to the original text and a reliable and recognized source on the topic that provides comprehensive coverage of the topic. Last but not least, other academics who delve into Prince and Machiavelli mostly reference this translated version of the book.

To fully grasp Machiavelli's philosophy and provide a comprehensive analysis of the concepts outlined in his masterpiece *The Prince*, it is essential to delve into his earlier work, *The Discourses on Livy*. Therefore, I preferred to scrutinize the translation by Harvey C. Mansfield and Nathan Tarcov because of their profound expertise in political philosophy and his extensive knowledge of Machiavelli, as manifested by his various scholarly contributions on the subject, including Machiavelli's *Virtu*, Machiavelli's Effectual Truth Creating and Machiavelli's New Modes and Orders. Moreover, the scholarly eminence of Nathan Tarcov, a distinguished political scientist renowned for his advanced studies on Machiavelli, has profoundly impacted my decision to utilize this translation as a primary source in my thesis.

1.5. Synopsis of the Chapters

This thesis comprises five main sections. The first section defines the scope of the thesis, outlines its contents, poses the main research question, specifies its limitations, and conducts an extensive literature review.

The second section provides an analytical background and theoretical framework of the thesis. It extensively investigates the life of Ibn Khaldun and the pivotal moments therein, elucidates his works and theories, and analyzes the intellectual contribution of his era and civilization. Subsequently, it particularly examines the significance of his magnum opus, the *Muqaddimah*, in the field of political philosophy. It highlights the main tenets of the *Muqaddimah*, elucidates its fundamental thesis, and underscores Ibn Khaldun's purpose in writing this work. Furthermore, this section meticulously discusses the fundamental concepts that constitute the cornerstones of Ibn Khaldun's theory, such as *umran*, geography, and *asabiye*.

The third section delves into Machiavelli's life, explores the intellectual currents of his era, investigates the significant events that shaped Machiavelli's life, and analyzes the philosophical mindset of his period that influenced his political thought. After analysing Machiavelli's life and the political and intellectual context of his time, we will first analyse his work *The Discourse on Livy* to fully understand Machiavelli's theory. It then defines and

elucidates Machiavelli's works, particularly focusing on *The Prince*, and thoroughly analyzes the main concepts on which Machiavelli bases his thesis, such as *virtu*, history, and the state.

The fourth section conducts a comprehensive comparison between the two philosophers, elucidating the eras they lived in, the states they inhabited, and the civilizations by which they were influenced. It examines both commonalities and differences, discussing in detail the realistic approaches and theories of both philosophers. The final section delves deeper into the differing perspectives of the two philosophers, elucidates the arguments presented in the thesis, synthesizes the findings of the study, provides insights into the implications of the thesis's conclusions, and offers recommendations for future research areas.



CHAPTER 2: IBN KHALDUN

In the following section, we will delve into the formative period of Ibn Khaldun's life, focusing on the overarching characteristics of the era he inhabited, the intellectual milieu that shaped his thinking, and the political and social structures that defined his world. We will explore how these contextual elements influenced Ibn Khaldun's intellectual development and worldview. Subsequently, we will examine the geographical locations where Ibn Khaldun resided, the educational background he acquired, the bureaucratic roles he undertook, and the significant works he produced during this period. Central to this discussion will be an in-depth analysis of his seminal work, *The Muqaddimah*, and its enduring impact on various fields of study. In the final phase of this section, our focus will shift to the fundamental concepts that Ibn Khaldun employed in constructing his theories of civilization and society. We will elucidate the conventional meanings of these concepts and elucidate their importance and contributions to Ibn Khaldun's overarching theoretical framework.

2.1. Age of Ibn Khaldun

Ibn Khaldun emerged as a statesperson, religious scholar, sociologist, historian, poet, and geographer, gaining fame that was undoubtedly influenced by the conditions of his era (Yusofi, 2018, 19). Commencing in the 14th century, Islamic civilization underwent a period of general decline, juxtaposed with the burgeoning revival and advancement of the West across various domains. Islamic geography, which extends from the inner reaches of Asia to encompass Central and Western Asia, India, and a significant portion of Southwest Asian islands, as well as stretching northward to the Black Sea, witnessed profound changes. During this epoch, the Ottoman Empire steadily expanded its influence, particularly in the Balkans, heralding significant geopolitical shifts.

Meanwhile, the westernmost reaches of the Islamic world, including the Iberian Peninsula, delineated the borders of Islamic civilization. While Islamic influence continued to expand into various regions, its presence in Andalusia began to wane, symbolizing a broader trend of decline in this era. Andalusia, a region of particular significance in Ibn Khaldun's life, the aftermath of the collapse of the Umayyad caliphate in the first half of the 11th century saw

the emergence of approximately 20 short-lived statelets within cities and various regions, each under the rule of local lords or Meliks, collectively known as the *Muluku*. This period, known as the *Tavaif* or *Tavaiful Muluk*, witnessed a complex interplay of political forces (Yıldırım, 1990).

The environments in which Ibn Khaldun was raised were filled with diverse cultures. In the places where he lived -Tunisia, Morocco, Andalusia, and Egypt- different states ruled. These states frequently experienced wars, struggles for the throne, and chaos among themselves. In other words, there were no states or rulers that ruled for long periods in the region. Although states that ruled for short periods might seem like a negative situation at first, they had positive aspects. People with a desire to learn, like Ibn Khaldun, had the opportunity to collaborate with various scholars in such an environment with multiple rulers and statesmen (Baş, 2022, 379).

Over time, some of these stateless were absorbed or eliminated by the Christian Spanish states, while others fell under the control of the Almoravid and Almohad states, which dominated Northwestern Africa successively. This period of political fragmentation and conflict profoundly shaped the socio-political landscape of Andalusia, leaving a lasting impact on its history and culture. In Ibn Khaldun's era, the African continent witnessed the fragmentation of large states and the emergence of smaller ones. These smaller states were constantly at war with each other. Concurrently, the Muslim stronghold of Al-Andalus (Islamic Iberia) was on the verge of slipping from Muslim control (Yusofi, 2018, 33).

During Ibn Khaldun's time, Egypt, Syria, and the Hejaz were under the rule of the Mamluks, who constituted one of the most cohesive and influential states in the Islamic world of that era. The Ottoman state was gradually expanding its influence in Anatolia. However, Ibn Khaldun did not have extensive information about the Ottomans, as their rise to power was still in its early stages during his lifetime. During Ibn Khaldun's era, Iraq, Iran, Transoxiana, and Northern India were under the rule of the Mongols. The Mongol invasions and subsequent establishment of the Ilkhanate in these regions had a profound impact on the political and social landscape of the Islamic world.

The presence of Islam in Andalusia, on the Iberian Peninsula, had significantly diminished. The Kingdom of Granada stood as one of the last Muslim bastions in the region. The advance of European Christians into Andalusia had accelerated, pushing the Muslim presence to the southern reaches of the peninsula. The Kingdom of Castile and the Kingdom of Aragon were dominant powers in Andalusia. These kingdoms played significant roles in the

politics and conflicts of the era, particularly in relation to the Islamic presence in the Iberian Peninsula. Christians and Jews started to increasingly dominate trade in the Mediterranean and assert control over maritime routes. This shift had significant implications for the economic and political dynamics of the era.

When it comes to Maghreb region, encompassing present-day Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania, consisted of small principalities engaged in political conflicts and struggles for dominance. This period was marked by complex interactions and shifting alliances among these entities. Later, the plague epidemic, which caused significant devastation, ravaged a large part of the European population, and inflicted great losses in the Islamic world as well. These losses encompassed not only human lives but also the economic, social, and cultural destruction resulting from the loss of human capital. Prior to the emergence of the various small principalities in North Africa, there existed the Almohad state (known as the *Muvahhidun* in Arabic), which achieved a degree of political unity in the region. The Almohad made a significant impact on the era as a powerful *Berber* dynasty that originated in North Africa and ruled over Andalusia for about a century. Their rule left a lasting legacy on the region's political and cultural landscape (Uçar, 2019, 55).

After the dissolution of the Almohad State, a period of fragmentation ensued in North Africa, with the emergence of principalities such as the *Hafsis*, *Merinis*, and *Zayyanis*. This period was marked by intense competition between these principalities, as well as internal rivalries and external pressures from the *Berber* populations and European forces to the north. During the period when Ibn Khaldun lived, North Africa was a region in turmoil, facing significant political and economic challenges. The region was characterized by the fragmentation of political power, with various small principalities vying for control and facing internal rivalries. External pressures, such as conflicts with *Berber* populations and European incursions, added to the complexity of the political landscape. In this era marked by various civil wars and revolutions, Ibn Khaldun immersed himself in the realm of governance for about a quarter of a century and entered the political arena.

One of Ibn Khaldun's roles in politics is to regulate and organize the relationship between the political center, namely the sultan, and the Bedouin tribes. During this period, viziers and emirs formed alliances with various forces, constantly changing powers. It is worth noting that Ibn Khaldun spent a significant portion of his political life amidst the chaos in the central Maghreb region. The most significant power underlying and utilized by the aforementioned revolutions and transformations was the various *Bedouin* Arab and *Berber* tribes scattered

across the Maghreb countries (Alkan, 2010). Economically, the region faced disruptions due to these political instabilities, impacting trade and commerce.

Despite these challenges, North Africa's cultural scene thrived. The era was marked by a rich cultural exchange, with vibrant intellectual and artistic developments. Cities like Fez, Marrakech, and Tunis became centers of learning, attracting scholars, poets, and artists from all the corner of the Islamic world. This cultural flourishing was not limited to the urban centers but extended to rural areas as well, where traditional crafts and arts continued to thrive. The blending of various cultural influences, including Arab, Berber, and Andalusian, contributed to the richness and diversity of North African culture during Ibn Khaldun's time. It can be clarified that while North Africa faced significant political and economic challenges during Ibn Khaldun's era, its cultural landscape remained vibrant and dynamic, highlighting the resilience and creativity of its people. In *The Muqaddimah*, as stated below, Ibn Khaldun analyzes this time and geography very well and sets a mission for himself.

“In the late 14th century, the Maghreb experienced a profound transformation, marked by a significant shift in its demographic and political landscape. Arab tribes, who had arrived in the region from the 11th century onwards, displaced the Indigenous Berber population, assuming control and sharing administrative responsibilities. However, this equilibrium was disrupted by the devastating outbreak of the plague in the mid-14th century. Described as a catastrophic event, the plague resulted in widespread mortality and upheaval, severely impacting the social, economic, and political fabric of the region. It weakened existing states, caused considerable loss of property and goods, and led to the abandonment of urban centers and cultural sites (Khaldun, 2018, 195).”

After analyzing the situation, Ibn Khaldun assigns himself a role and mission through the following statements:

“Hence, there arises a necessity in this era for a historian to meticulously document the circumstances of the inhabitants, the geographical features, the various tribes dwelling therein, their distinct customs, traditions, and religious practices. This historian should adopt the method of inquiry pioneered by Masudi in his own time, thereby establishing a foundational work that subsequent historians can emulate. Such a work would serve as a fundamental reference and a guiding light for future historians in their endeavors (Khaldun, 2018, 196).”

Indeed, Ibn Khaldun's awareness of the profound changes and transformations of his time, as expressed in *The Muqaddimah*, highlights his keen intellect and foresight. By setting a mission and task for himself, he demonstrated his ambition to not only understand but also to document and contribute to the understanding of his era for future generations. This reflects Ibn Khaldun's stature as a remarkable thinker and historian. Ibn Khaldun argues in *The Muqaddimah* that the period in which he lived underwent a radical transformation, distinct from

previous eras. He emphasizes the importance of documenting these changes, suggesting that his time was unique and worthy of historical record.

Despite all the fragmentation and chaos, there was a cultural and scientific unity in the Arab world. The Arabic language and trade facilitated scientific relations among Arab states. Scholars knew each other and their thoughts through letters or the pilgrimage route. Consequently, the works of thinkers were read and known in other Arab states as well. Ibn Khaldun's recognition by statesmen and scientists is a result of these conditions.

2.2. Who Is Ibn Khaldun?

Ibn Khaldun's work and theory challenged the linear and progressive understanding of history that was particularly influential in Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. His theory was highly praised and esteemed by many important intellectuals. For example, according to Frans Rosenthal (Dale, 2006, 437), many ideas that were discussed in Europe long after Ibn Khaldun's time were surprisingly not as new as previously thought; at least their initial forms were already established by the 14th century. 14th North African scholar who laid the foundations of a new science in his work *The Muqaddimah*. Similarly, according to Muhammed Talbi (Sharif, 1965, 779), who has written extensively on Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Khaldun is "a lone genius who does not belong to any Arab-Muslim school of thought." According to De Boer, there is neither a predecessor nor a successor to Ibn Khaldun in the history of Islamic civilization. Moreover, according to (Dale, 2006, 440), Ibn Khaldun is either the last Greek or the first analytical historian because he does not belong to either school of thought. In fact, according to De Boer, Ibn Khaldun represents the pinnacle of Greek historical thought. The British historian Arnold Joseph Toynbee (Stowasser, 1984, 187) states that Ibn Khaldun is the possessor of "the greatest philosophy of history ever created by any mind at any time, in any country." The prominent Muslim historian and writer Abu Zayd Abd al-Rahman bin Muhammad bin Khaldun Al-Hadrami (1332–1406), also refers Ibn Khaldun as one of the founders of contemporary economics, sociology, and historiography.

The century in which Ibn Khaldun lived was a century of great destruction for the Islamic world. On the one hand, Muslims lost their dominance in Andalusia, and on the other hand, as the plague ravaged everywhere, it also caused a cultural and intellectual destruction in the Islamic world.

Ibn Khaldun was born into a Muslim family that migrated from Andalusia to Tunis in the middle of the 7th century. His family was forced to migrate to Tunis due to the weakening of

the Almohad state and the intensification of chaos in Andalusia (Yusofi, 2018, 23). Ibn Khaldun's education began with memorizing the *Quran* in the local madrasa. After learning Arabic literature from his father and scholars in Tunis, he started studying Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) with the great scholars of his time. In the early years of his childhood, Ibn Khaldun received various scientific training from his father and political training from his older brother, who was also an important bureaucrat worked in the position of *hajib* at that time.

We know very well about Ibn Khaldun because he introduces himself in the end of his book. Due to his family's esteemed status, Ibn Khaldun had the opportunity to study under the finest teachers in North Africa during his youth. He received a traditional Arabic education, delving into the Quran, Arabic linguistics -the foundation for understanding the Quran and Islamic law- and studying Hadith and Fiqh. The philosopher Al-Alibi also introduced him to mathematics, logic, and philosophy (Hassan, 2006, 12). When Ibn Khaldun was just 15 years old, Sultan Abu'l-Hasan captured Tunisia. Under the rule of this sultan, who was supportive of scholars, Ibn Khaldun learned the science of Hadith from the scholars in the sultan's court.

The sultan's court had a library with over two thousand books, from which Ibn Khaldun benefited. During this period, Ibn Khaldun not only read these books but also participated in the gatherings of scholars and the sultan's court. Thus, during this period, Ibn Khaldun acquired the knowledge of the scholars and earned a place among the great scholars. When Ibn Khaldun was 18 or 19 years old, the Black Plague, also known as the Black Death, swept through the world, particularly affecting Europe and the Mediterranean region, eventually reaching Tunisia. This was a devastating moment, as thousands of people perished. Due to this plague in Africa in 1349, Khaldun lost his mother, father and nearly lost all his teachers. After the Black Plague, Ibn Khaldun relocated to Morocco to live with his brother, initiating his political career, which lasted approximately 25 years. This period was characterized by considerable turmoil and upheaval in his life.

Taking advantage of the political authority vacuum caused by the plague, Abu Inan, the son of Abu'l-Hasan who died in 1358, succeeded his father and seized Tunis through trickery. Shortly before this event, Abu Inan imprisoned Ibn Khaldun, using his relationship with the Hafsids as a pretext. Ibn Khaldun, who was 25 years old at the time, was able to be released from prison only after the assassination of Abu Inan by his vizier on November 27, 1358, after nearly two years of imprisonment (Öz, 2022, 205).

Ibn Khaldun served in various positions as political advisor, prime minister and judge in various in a period of great political turmoil in North African countries and Muslim Spain. He

lived during a period when the Muslim nation in North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula fragmented into numerous city-states engaged in conflict with each other. Concurrently, the Spanish kingdoms were consolidating and gradually gaining control over the Muslim city-states in Iberia. He actively participated in political intrigue and held various roles under Muslim rulers, ranging from diplomatic envoy to minister (Hassan, 2006, 9).

Ibn Khaldun had to travel between Mecca, Damascus, Palestine, and Seville because of the unrest, unstable political climate, and frequent changes in governments. Towards the end of his life, he remained in Egypt, where he was employed as a Maliki judge and lecturer at Al Azhar University. In 1382, Ibn Khaldun expressed his desire to leave Tunis under the pretext of performing the Hajj pilgrimage. He no longer wished to be involved in political events. He requested permission from the sultan, who granted him permission to leave Tunis. Ibn Khaldun's first stop was Alexandria, where he completed his preparations for the Hajj. However, instead of going to Mecca, he decided to go to Cairo. In Cairo, Ibn Khaldun was warmly welcomed. His works had reached the city earlier, especially *The Muqaddimah*, which had been read and appreciated. Therefore, students and scholars who wanted to learn from Ibn Khaldun surrounded him, and he eventually began teaching.

At the same time when Ibn Khaldun came to Egypt, Egypt was the intellectual center of the Islamic world. Almost all the representatives of the most prominent schools of that period in the Islamic world were in Egypt. In 1406, Ibn Khaldun passed away in Cairo, where he had spent the last twenty-four years of his life. Like many medieval scholars, Ibn Khaldun showed interest in a wide array of sciences, contributing diverse opinions in fields such as geography, history, economics, philosophy, sociology, literature, and politics (Rauf, 2016, 445).

He was deeply respected because he solved many problems occurred between tribes through peace and negotiation. An important historical event that made Ibn Khaldun considered as an effective statesman was during Timur's conquest of many parts of the Middle East and the possibility of attacking Syria and Egypt. Ibn Khaldun took an action to prevent this situation and requested a task from the Mamluk Sultan. With the permission of the Sultan, he set out to meet Timur directly. Ibn Khaldun used his diplomatic skills to persuade Timur not to attack Egypt. Ibn Khaldun's convincing arguments and diplomatic attitude succeed in dissuading Timur from attacking Egypt. As a result, Ibn Khaldun's meeting with Timur played a pivotal role in sparing Egypt from his invasion, thereby helping to preserve regional stability. This encounter highlights Ibn Khaldun's remarkable statesmanship and diplomatic acumen,

demonstrating his ability to navigate complex political situations and protect his homeland from external threats.

The Ibn Khaldun family hailed from a long-established lineage with roots tracing back to Yemen. They arrived in Andalusia during the early 8th century, amidst the Muslim conquest of the Iberian Peninsula, and played an active role in the military campaigns. Once settled in Andalusia, the family quickly rose to prominence, consistently holding significant positions within the state administration. For generations, each of Ibn Khaldun's ancestors, up until his father, served in important governmental roles. However, Ibn Khaldun's father chose a different path -abandoning politics to embrace a life as a dervish.

When we examine Ibn Khaldun's life and work, it is seen that he seriously benefited from his family's experiences, both politically and scientifically. As it is known, when we look at the Islamic world of the period in which Khaldun lived, the dominance of many different movements and schools of thought stands out, but we see that Ibn Khaldun did not belong to any movement or school in such a period and was an independent thinker. Centuries after his time, Ibn Khaldun's intellectual legacy remains unparalleled in the realm of Muslim thought and philosophy, retaining its enduring value, vitality, and relevance, and holding a prominent position in the realm of political thought. While Ibn Khaldun was discovered, studied, and evaluated by the West in the nineteenth century, his contributions have not been fully appreciated in the East (Naz, 2013, 26).

He was not well read or understood in the Islamic world, especially for his time. However, in the Ottoman Empire, he became well-known, and numerous studies were conducted on his writings. In 1374, at a time when political instability was at its peak, Ibn Khaldun escaped from the center and went to the Bedouin communities, where he took shelter in the *Ibn Salame* Castle, which belonged to the *Arifoğulları*, one of the *Bedouin* tribes. Ibn Khaldun stayed in this castle for four years and wrote his work called *The Muqaddimah* here. After completing this masterpiece, Ibn Khaldun went to Egypt upon invitation and again engaged in academic and political studies there.

During Ibn Khaldun's lifetime, the Islamic world was in turmoil due to the outbreak of the plague, a disease that caused widespread death and devastation. This period of social and political unrest deeply affected Ibn Khaldun, as he lost his father, mother, and many other family members to the disease.

In his work, *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun reflected on the profound changes brought about by the plague, including the decline of cities, the breakdown of social order, and the

weakening of political institutions. He believed that the plague played an important role in the rise and fall of civilizations, as it disrupted the social and political structures. Ibn Khaldun's experiences with the plague shaped his theories on history, society, and politics, leading him to explore the causes and consequences of this devastating disease.

He realized that this disease caused great social and political changes during his lifetime, and he expressed these changes and transformations in his work called *The Muqaddimah* as follows;

“As for our time, the date is now the end of the 8th century (in today's periodization, it is the end of the 14th century), a revolution took place in the Maghreb (Northwest Africa) conditions that we observe, a wholesale and radical change took place. Starting from the 11th century, the Arab tribes that came to the Maghreb and the Berbers, the former inhabitants of this place, changed places. The Arabs devastated them, overcame them, generally took their homeland from them, and shared with them the administration of the remaining part. This situation continued in the middle of the 8th century, until the plague descended on the prosperous and prosperous regions of the east and west. The plague, which was a devastating disaster, devastated the tribes, took away a generation, and destroyed many of them in the beauty of Umrān (Civilization). At a time when the state was old and had reached its fullest extent, the plague appeared and diminished the shadow of the state, that is, its glory and enthusiasm, dulled the sharp edge of its sword, weakened its strength, dragged the state into disintegration and collapse, and caused the destruction of property, politics, society and umran (civilization). With the decrease in people, the earth's horizon decreased, cities, workplaces and artistic places were destroyed, roads and signs disappeared, countries and dwellings became deserted and lonely. States and tribes became weak, people living in countries changed (Khaldun, 2018, 195).”

As clearly seen above, Ibn Khaldun is aware that the age he lived in has undergone great transformations and changes. Ibn Khaldun addressed social and historical events in a multifaceted manner, interpreting them from a comprehensive and wide viewpoint rather than attributing the events to a single cause. Ibn Khaldun's early life was influenced by the turbulent political environment of his time, marked by the decline of the once-great Islamic empires and the rise of new dynasties. Despite this backdrop, he received an excellent education in Islamic sciences, jurisprudence, and philosophy, which prepared him for a distinguished career in public service. In his *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun introduces his theory of *asabiye* or social cohesion, which he argues is the key driving force behind the rise and fall of civilizations.

2.3. Ibn Khaldun's Masterpiece: *The Muqaddimah*

To understand a culture or a civilization, it is necessary to understand well the classical texts that encompass and reflect that culture, society, or civilization in all its aspects. Classical texts have a multi-layered structure and serve as the foundational pillars of the civilization and society they belong to. According to Kayapınar, a work referred to as a classic is akin to a three-

pillars structure: one pillar is the social reality that exists here and now, the second pillar is the religion or worldview at the core or origin of that civilization and the values that emanate from them, and the third pillar is universal human values. If a work can simultaneously bring together these three structures and frameworks, it is considered a classic (Kayapınar, 2006, 89).

Written by a North African philosopher in the 14th century, *The Muqaddimah* is one of the important universal works of Islamic thought and civilization. Moreover, the fame of this classical work by Ibn Khaldun has transcended the boundaries of the Islamic world; especially from the 19th century onwards, it has been translated into many languages and has created great echoes in the West, taking its place among the world classics. Ibn Khaldun conveyed his political, intellectual, and scholarly experiences he acquired up to that time in *The Muqaddimah*, transcending both his geography and his era, introducing it to the world with ideas that surpassed both (Berkli M., 2019, 15). The intellectual legacy constructed by Ibn Khaldun is commonly known by the title *Al-Muqaddimah*, often referred to as the Prolegomena or Introduction to History. However, this is just a shorthand. The entire work actually consists of a brief introduction and a book titled *Al-Muqaddimah*, along with a collection of five other books known as the *Kitab al-Ibar*, roughly translated as the Book of History, as termed by Ibn Khaldun (Gillis, 2018, 27).

In 1374, at a time when political instability was at its peak, Ibn Khaldun escaped from the center and went to the *bedouin* communities, where he took shelter in the *Ibn Salame* Castle, which belonged to the *Arifoğulları*, one of the *Bedouin* tribes. In his later years, Ibn Khaldun's primary passion was writing a universal history. He aimed to explain the turbulent politics of his era by uncovering universal causes for the ascent and decline of states. (Naz, 2013, 30). Ibn Khaldun authored this book in 1375 during a period of tranquility at the castle of Ibn Salamah. *The Muqaddimah*, also known as the Introduction or Prolegomena, serves as the preface to his first universal history book, the *Kitab al-Ibar*. This introduction, which outlines universal history, is also referred to as *The Book of Admonitions* or *The Book of Precepts* (Çal, 2014, 19).

The Muqaddimah essentially serves as the preface to Ibn Khaldun's larger work named *Kitab al-Ibar*. It lays the groundwork for his theory and constructs the basis for his thesis. Ibn Khaldun's fame owes much to his work, called *The Muqaddimah*, which consists of the "Introduction" and the First Book of *Kitab al-Ibar*. The First Book, in turn, comprises six chapters:

1. The first chapter deals with General Aspects of Human Life.

2. The second chapter discusses Nomadic Life, Wild Nations, and Tribes, and the Circumstances Affecting Them.
3. The third chapter explores Great Dynasties, Sovereignty, Caliphate, Positions in State Organization, and All Pertinent Circumstances.
4. The fourth chapter focuses on Countries, Cities, Other Communities, and the Circumstances Affecting Them.
5. The fifth chapter examines Livelihood, Its Various Forms of Earning and Arts, and All Pertinent Circumstances.
6. The sixth chapter delves into Sciences and Their Types, Teaching and Methods, and All Pertinent Circumstances.

As seen in the relative sections, Ibn Khaldun begins by explaining why people need to live together and establish communities gradually. He grounds his thesis by discussing tribes, states, dynasties, and nations, thus embarking on the quest to construct a universal model. The majority of commentators who have examined his monumental work, *The Muqaddimah*, agree that, unlike the period in which Ibn Khaldun lived, his method of observing and analyzing social and political phenomena is surprisingly modern and original, and is several hundred years ahead of post-Medieval Western thought (Ergül, 2022, 71). *The Muqaddimah* still offers a functional methodology that can be used today for a more realistic understanding of such topics, thus making it a highly functional classic work even though it was written around six centuries ago.

The Muqaddimah is one of the important classics and one of the peak texts produced by Islamic thought and Islamic civilization in terms of historical thought, philosophy of history, historiography, social sciences, political and social issues, rational, realistic, and systematic approaches. *The Muqaddimah* covers geography, everything from the relationship between people and the environment to the division of states and nations, the distinctions between settled and nomadic cultures, general traits, rural and urban life, population, occupational groups, industry and trade. He used a geographical approach to examine the problems. Along with providing evidence to support each of the points made, Ibn Khaldun also shows how the location of the circumstance affects it.

In *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun expresses the importance and framework of his work and why his book is a significant contribution with the following words:

“I have extensively expounded on all matters such as the rise and fall of states and civilizations, urban and nomadic life, rural settlements, honor and humiliation, growth and decline, knowledge and arts, gain and loss, profit and loss, variable and widespread conditions, sedentary and bedouin lifestyles, actual and expected situations, providing evidence and explaining their causes in this work. Due to the inclusion of strange sciences,

original knowledge, and hidden wisdom veiled beneath a superficial layer, my book emerged as singular and unique among its counterparts (Khalidun, 2018, 161).”

Even it can be clearly stated that *The Muqaddimah* is the most serious text in the Islamic world that systematically deals with political and social issues. *The Muqaddimah* is the work that has surpassed the boundaries of Islamic civilization and become one of the world classics. It is a text that became well-known in Europe, especially after the 19th century, and has remained on the agenda of intellectuals around the world today.

The Muqaddimah, especially when it comes to social sciences, historiography, and socio-scientific method, *The Muqaddimah* does not only carry the values of its own time and place, does not only shed light on its own time and place, but also offers a framework that is still valuable and usable today. Ibn Khaldun acknowledges some sort of a dialectical change in nature as well as in history. He perceives reality not as a haphazard accumulation of isolated and static objects, but as a cohesive totality of interconnected phenomena that mutually and necessarily influence each other (Çaksu, 2017, 31). The philosopher conceptualized a series of universal phenomena that he observed in the social and political field in *The Muqaddimah* and showed great care and diligence in using these concepts consistently in his work (Ergül, 2022, 78). Ibn Khaldun, who held a variety of posts in several North African empires, maintained that a thorough understanding of human nature and historical events was necessary to create a qualified society and a robust political structure.

Ibn Khaldun’s analysis of political, social, and historical events differed significantly from his predecessors and contemporaries. Unlike many Islamic thinkers of his time, he was not affiliated with any school or movement. Additionally, his approach was distinctive because he possessed not only theoretical knowledge but also practical experience in politics. This difference enabled him to look at issues more objectively, realistically, rationalistically, and universally. The fact that Ibn Khaldun was not affiliated with any movement or school and that he was a more objective and independent thinker was reflected in his world of thought and works. In *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun used a different methodology and critical approach. This is mostly because Ibn Khaldun had a more diverse and broad education than that taught in the madrasah or curriculum.

Ibn Khaldun put forward a very different methodology and built a new understanding of history, sociology and politics. Taking history as a reference, Ibn Khaldun examined the dynasties and states of the past, focused on the reasons for the destruction they experienced and interpreted this through current events. Ibn Khaldun is quite rational and realistic, and argued that nature and geography affect people's ways of living, governing and sheltering. Inside *The*

Muqaddimah examples of this method can be found in a variety of human perspectives. He used his method while authoring the book, and after writing it, he applied it to the book again. He continuously reviewed his work. Rosenthal notes that “Ibn Khaldun’s work has remarkably few [historical] errors”, which he attributes to Ibn Khaldun’s meticulous process of revising and cross-checking the text against new sources over a span of twenty-nine year (Wood, 2024, 67).

According to Ibn Khaldun, people by nature have to live together and establish a society, because no person can meet all their needs alone without a society. Ibn Khaldun can be considered a determinist for a variety of reasons. Because, in the words of Ibn Khaldun, humans have become part of their surroundings and are shaped by the temperature and topography of the areas in which they reside. Put another way, the physical environment shapes people both physically and spiritually. There is a deep relationship between learning geography and understanding politics and history. For example, it is important to look at the location of a city, pay attention to whether it is surrounded by fertile plains, and understand how those plains support various elements. Ibn Khaldun believes that history, human civilization, and societies have their own rules; these rules operate like laws of nature. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the necessity of understanding these rules and states that otherwise it will not be possible to make history.

He argued that different climates influenced the temperament and spirit of their inhabitants, leading to variations in behavior and societal norms. For instance, he suggested that temperature directly affected the human body and, consequently, the soul and morality of individuals. For example, people of Sudan region, he mentions that his people (black people) have certain characteristics due to the influence of the hot weather they live in. Black people; they are light and hasty in their work and are very fond of pleasure and enjoyment. In fact, they are very fond of dancing and therefore love every piece of music they hear.

Ibn Khaldun’s arguments are quite clear and rational, and often convincing, because he believes that certain rules exist in human history and that social events can be explained by understanding these rules. When *The Muqaddimah* is examined as a whole, it is observed that fundamental ideas are put forward in many branches of the humanities such as philosophy of history, politics, and economics, which can serve as a basis for them (Blbas, 2018, 66). According to him, understanding the relationship between geography, politics and history helps us better understand the evolution and behavior of human societies. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun’s approach provides an important framework for understanding human history and social events.

In his seminal work *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun introduces several key concepts that diverge from their conventional meanings, offering a unique perspective from the Khaldun's viewpoint. These concepts, including “*Bedavat*, *Bedevi*, *Historism*, *Umrān*, *Hadari*, *Asabiye*, and *Mulk*,” are interconnected and play a crucial role in his theory. These concepts will be mentioned and explained in detail in the following parts of the thesis.

2.4. Main Concepts of *The Muqaddimah*

One of the most important characteristics of great thinkers and great books is that they possess highly significant conceptual patterns. The internal coherence of concepts is extremely high, and these concepts are used in a mutually supportive manner. In Ibn Khaldun's works as well, these conceptual maps are quite distinct. As a philosopher and statesman of the 14th century, Ibn Khaldun formulated his theory of state and politics based on the conceptual frameworks he developed. While the concept of *asabiye* existed before him, he was the first philosopher to systematically address this concept in the context of social events. As a pioneer in the science of “*umran*” and history, his emphasis on these concepts helped him develop theories on state and politics (Dilber, 2020, 77).

In his analysis and depiction of contemporary society, Ibn Khaldun introduces several unique concepts, each carrying distinct values and meanings. A thorough understanding of these concepts is essential for grasping Ibn Khaldun's fundamental theory, historical perspective, realist approach, and societal perception. In different parts Ibn Khaldun constantly imbues these concepts with closely related conventional meanings, thus continually reformulating these concepts. As the founder of a branch of science called *Umrān*, focused on human society and civilization, Ibn Khaldun conceptualized a series of universal phenomena observed in the social and political realms. He showed great care and meticulousness in consistently applying these concepts throughout his work (Ergül, 2022, 53). Ibn Khaldun's political philosophy is fundamentally informed by the concept of change. He argues that any attempt to comprehend sociopolitical systems must fundamentally incorporate the notion that the character of societies undergoes transformation as periods change (Kayapınar, 2006, 109).

Thus, it is evident that Ibn Khaldun's concepts have undergone shifts in nature and meaning, aligning with concurrent societal changes. Ibn Khaldun initially grounds his exploration of concepts in their conventional societal meanings. However, he subsequently expands upon these meanings, attributing new and broader connotations to them. Therefore,

this section aims to provide a detailed explanation of the concepts central to Ibn Khaldun's thesis, exploring their historical background and interpreting them within the framework of Khaldun's works and theories.

2.1.1. Asabiye

In pre-Islamic Arab societies, the most common usage of *asabiye* refers to the sense of solidarity and unity that binds together all family members related by blood ties on the paternal side. It encompasses the collective support and cohesion among family members, prompting them to act together in the face of external threats to protect and defend against attacks (Berkli M., 2019, 39). The term *asabiye* is derived from the Arabic root *asabe*, which carries meanings related to wrapping, binding, or tying things together tightly.

In *The Muqaddimah* Ibn Khaldun uses *asabiye* in various meaning and definitions. Ibn Khaldun sometimes treats *asabiye* in its traditional sense, while in the other parts of *The Muqaddimah* he assigns different meanings to the concept. In some parts, he also attributes newer meanings to the term that deviate from conventional interpretations. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun's approach makes *asabiye* more flexible in his theory, but at the same time, it complicates its explanation and understanding. The concept of *asabiye* in Ibn Khaldun's work is characterized by its multi-layered and multifaceted nature, suggesting that its meaning is complex and not easily defined by a single interpretation. The concept of *asabiye* holds multiple nuanced meanings within Ibn Khaldun's texts.

There are many reasons why Ibn Khaldun uses *asabiye* in such complex and different meanings. Ibn Khaldun's scholarly purview extends far beyond the confines of pre-Islamic Arab tribal organization. His interests encompass a wide array of political structures, ranging from local tribal organizations to vast empires such as the *Umayyads*, *Abbasids*, *Seljuks*, *Kyanites*, and *Sassanids*, as well as classical civilizations like the Greeks and Romans. By examining these diverse political entities and their interrelationships, Ibn Khaldun's conceptualization of *asabiye* emerges as a complex and dynamic concept that transcends narrow tribal frameworks. *Asabiye* is a dynamic concept encompassing various politically significant elements such as solidarity, trust, self-confidence, a sense of belonging, power, legitimacy, honor, courage, fortitude, freedom, and good morals. Therefore, it is inadequate to simply describe it as "solidarity," as is often the case (Kayapınar, 2006, 95).

Kayapınar (2006,105) listed the 25 meanings of *asabiye*:

1. The only reason people can truly submit to governmental power is because of *asabiye*.
2. *Asabiye* is merely an element arising from the unity of lineage or something else in that sense.
3. *Asabiye* as a concept expansive enough to encompass all tribes and branches, capable of being observed in lower political and social units. It manifests at various scales and to varying degrees, akin to intertwined peoples.
4. *Asabiye* is the source of family and honor.
5. *Asabiye* is the secret of honor.
6. *Asabiye* is an element whose ultimate purpose is “mulk”.
7. *Asabiye* is essential for achieving protection, defense, and the pursuit of rights.
8. In other words, *asabiye* is an essential element for any collective action to take place.
9. *Asabiye* drives its possessor to seek superiority over others once they attain a certain rank or level.
10. In regions where multiple *asabiye* exist, Ibn Khaldun observes that the largest and strongest among them asserts dominance, subjugating the others and amalgamating all *asabiye* into a single, formidable force, thus giving rise to a significant *asabiye*.
11. Following its establishment of dominance within its own tribe, the strongest *asabiye* as described by Ibn Khaldun seeks to extend its dominion over other *asabiye*.
12. If different *asabiyes* are evenly matched and cannot overcome each other, they will each dominate their respective regions, resulting in the coexistence of different *asabiyes* in the world.
13. *Asabiye* weakens when its proponents become preoccupied with the comforts of prosperity before attaining property.
14. *Asabiye* is a force that generates *mulk* when combined with virtuous and commendable qualities.
15. Allah has bestowed good and beautiful traits upon those who possess *asabiye*, corresponding to their excellence and assertiveness. These traits are not randomly bestowed but are bestowed purposefully, in accordance with their temperament and leadership, and are not formed in vain.
16. *Asabiye* is a dynamic element that fluctuates across generations, increasing and decreasing in inverse proportion to changes in prosperity.
17. *Asabiye* is a force that engenders struggle and resistance, occurring only in its presence, and encourages its members to willingly sacrifice their lives for one another.
18. Among those with *asabiye*, there exists rivalry and envy, which religion serves to eliminate.
19. *Asabiye* is an element that complements the completion of religious invitation.
20. *Asabiye* is an essential element in every matter concerning the people and the public.
21. *Asabiye* consists of multitude of numbers.
22. *Asabiye* is an element resulting from the combination and fusion of many *asabiye*.
23. The possessors of *asabiye* exhibit stoicism and resilience.,
24. Not all *asabiye* entities possess *mulk* in its true sense; rather, *mulk* belongs exclusively to *asabiye* that has unmatched power.
25. While the *asabiye* that existed in the first period of Islam was *asabiyyetu'l caliphate*, it later turned into *asabiyyatu'l mulk* (Kayapınar, 2006, 105).

Ibn Khaldun's concept of *asabiye* is multifaceted, encompassing various meanings and evolving in different contexts, also is referenced in approximately 450 different instances. This broad and nuanced understanding allows for a deeper exploration of societal dynamics and historical transformations. Thus, a thorough comprehension of this concept is pivotal for a detailed understanding of Ibn Khaldun's ideas. Some of the meanings of *asabiye* mentioned in *The Muqaddimah* can be expressed as follows:

“Asabiye is a sentiment that is particularly prevalent among those who belong to the same tribe. It is a feeling of unity that permits tribal members to stand behind their fellow tribe members without reservation and to come together in the face of external danger from other tribes or societies. This social solidarity among tribes is essential for their survival in the harsh desert environment, providing protection against the elements and safeguarding them from external threats. Nevertheless, what is particularly striking is that, irrespective of the perceived danger, tribal members will come to the aid of an attacked individual, regardless of the circumstances or the individual's innocence. This sense of solidarity within the tribe is fueled by a shared feeling of asabiye” (Khaldun, 2018, 413).

First, Ibn Khaldun posits that *asabiye* functions as the principal driving force and fundamental basis for collective action. His observation of collective actions occurring worldwide and throughout history leads him to conclude that *asabiye* is a constant presence in every society and era. *Asabiye* is a fundamental element for the initiation and sustenance of any collective action, irrespective of whether it occurs within a tribal framework or in other forms of social organization. Establishing a state or undertaking any form of collective action necessitates *Asabiye*. Therefore, one of the main purposes of *asabiye* is to establish a state and to maintain the continuity of the state. After the state is established, the feeling of *asabiye* diminishes and then it is not possible to prevent this situation. The primary reason for this is the weakening of the feeling of *asabiye* due to the needs of urban life and economic differences in strong communities that come together through blood ties. Another reason is that while the bond of *asabiye* in society is strong during the establishment of the state, over time, the bond between the ruler and the people weakens and eventually begins to break. Ibn Khaldun's idea stems from his belief that states and the phenomenon of *asabiye* go through stages of birth, growth, and death, similar to the stages of human organisms (Özdemir, 2023, 417).

Secondly, Ibn Khaldun argues that *asabiye* arises not merely from kinship ties (*el-iltihâm bi'n-neseb*). He argues that *asabiye* is not limited to blood ties and kinship relations but is a fundamental universal principle for the formation of social action. This broader interpretation highlights the role of *asabiye* as a cohesive force that extends beyond familial bonds to drive societal cohesion and development. When one of a person's relatives experiences adversity, such as oppression or assault, the sadness and desire to rush to their aid that one feels in their heart can be interpreted as a clear indication of this natural bond (Kayapınar, 2006, 94). On the authority of the thinker, there are different levels of *asabiye* in society; the stronger *asabiye* prevails and forces others into submission. Ibn Khaldun asserts that, the strength of *asabiye* means a strong sense of solidarity and kinship (Öztürk, 2015, 69). However, *asabiye* extends beyond tribal societies and encompasses its relevance in diverse societal contexts. He discusses its significance in historical empires such as the Roman Empire, the Persian Empire, Iraq, and

Greece, illustrating its role in various regions and states with differing social structures. In *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun references the story of Yusuf (Joseph) in the Quran while defining *asaba*, citing the verse where the children of Yusuf's brothers say to their fathers, "If the wolf eats him while we are his *asaba* and his close relatives, by God, in that case, we are in loss (Kayapınar, 2006)." This reference underscores the importance of *asaba* as a concept related to kinship and close familial ties. However, the impact of *asabiye* within a tribe can vary significantly. In instances where conflicts arise between different factions or lineages within a tribe, distinct forms of *asabiye* can emerge. This phenomenon is succinctly captured in a well-known Arab proverb: "Me and my brother against my cousin, me, my brother, and my cousin against the stranger." The formation of *asabiye* and the connection between *asabiye* and *mulk* (sovereignty-property) are almost entirely built upon power relations.

Thirdly, Ibn Khaldun defines *asabiye* also as the force that enables a ruler to control and influence people. He argues that true obedience to authority can only stem from *asabiye*. In this light, Ibn Khaldun underscores the significance of *asabiye* as a pivotal element for a ruler's success. In the context of multiple *asabiye* within a region, Ibn Khaldun posits that the largest and most robust *asabiye* will dominate the others, subjugating them to its authority. This process results in the amalgamation of all *asabiye* into a single dominant *asabiye*, giving rise to a formidable collective identity and unity. The primary purpose of *asabiye* is to establish a state. However, the importance of *asabiye* does not diminish once the state is established; in fact, the continuity of the state is dependent on *asabiye*. *Asabiye* here plays a crucial role in the legitimacy of political authority in the eyes of the governed, as well as in the acceptance and obedience of the governed to the political authority (Yavuz, 2013, 333). Initially, those who establish the state are tightly bound to their tribe, but over time, this bond weakens, and the closeness between the ruler and the tribe diminishes. Nevertheless, after the establishment of the state, *asabiye* gradually begins to lose its power over time. Consequently, *asabiye* deteriorates (Blbas, 2018, 33). It is not possible to prevent this decline.

Fourthly, Ibn Khaldun uses this term metaphorically to describe the social cohesion and unity that binds a group of people together. This unity enables communities to seek knowledge and progress together, highlights the role of *asabiye* in both social cohesion and advancement. Members of an *asabiye* are willing to make voluntary sacrifices, including the sacrifice of their lives, for the sake of their group. Indeed, *asabiye* embodies a spirit of unity and solidarity where the distinction between individual and collective interest's blurs. It signifies a state where the individual (I) becomes indistinguishable from the collective (we), leading individuals to

willingly sacrifice themselves for the protection and advancement of the group. Ibn Khaldun posits that the enduring presence of *asabiye* among North African tribes is primarily attributed to the necessity of social cohesion for survival in the region's challenging geographical and environmental conditions. However, this *asabiye* also possesses a destructive dimension. While it fosters solidarity within tribes, it hinders the formation of supra-tribal organizations due to the perpetual inter-tribal conflicts fueled by *asabiye*. *Asabiye* is characterized by the presence of internal conflict and opposition that is unique to its own group. When a group is united by the force of *asabiya*, its members will be deeply committed to fighting for their own glory. They will exhibit a much stronger self-sacrificing devotion to their perceived common cause than if they were merely the rank-and-file at the bottom of a pyramid-structured organization. In such a hierarchical group, they might fight out of a sense of duty, fear of punishment, or, as mercenaries, for recompense (Verza, 2018, 18).

Ibn Khaldun also mentions that religion has a functional role in the formation of *asabiye* which unites the members of a group through the spirit of *asabiye*. This spirit is vital for spreading religious teachings, as religion helps eliminate jealousy among members of a group that possesses *asabiye* (Asyiqin Abdul Halim, 2012, 1235).

Ibn Khaldun acknowledges the destructive aspects of *asabiye* but also recognizes its constructive potential. He distinguishes between negative forms of *asabiye*, such as *Asabiyyayi elal batil* (*Asabiye* for falsehood) and *asabiyetul jahilliye* (*Asabiye* of the ignorant), and positive forms like *Asabiyetul hak* (*Asabiye* for truth) and *Asabiyetul tabii* (Natural *Asabiye*). Ibn Khaldun further divides *asabiye* into two categories: detrimental and beneficial. Detrimental *asabiye*, as exemplified by supporting someone solely due to tribal affiliation, even when they are wrong, leads to negative outcomes. Conversely, beneficial *asabiye* is the foundational element of collective action and development.

In *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun presents various definitions of *asabiye* encompassing both traditional and novel meanings applied in different contexts. Nevertheless, he asserts that for a unity or social structure to emerge, the fundamental basis and driving force behind it is *asabiye*. He argues that *asabiye* represents a state of deprivation, primarily observed in *Bedouin* societies, where individuals lack external protection. Consequently, they band together based on kinship ties, village residency, and shared deprivation. As individuals in such societies coalesce, their *asabiye* strengthens, eventually leading to the formation of a state with its inherent administration. Ibn Khaldun indeed discusses how the main purpose of social action, driven by *asabiye* is to attain *mulk* (property or dominion). He highlights two situations that can

diminish or eliminate *asabiye* before it fully achieves *mulk*. Firstly, when a prosperous community loses its focus on acquiring *mulk*, they become vulnerable to conquest by a group with higher *asabiye*. Secondly, when a community falls under the domination of a stronger group, they may lose their fighting spirit and submit, leading to subsequent generations lacking in courage and *asabiye* the formation of *asabiye* and the connection between *asabiye* and property are largely built upon power relations.

Due to the multifaceted nature of Ibn Khaldun's concept of *asabiye*, as evidenced by its evolving meaning throughout *The Muqaddimah*, a singular, universally applicable translation into other languages proves elusive. This translational challenge stems from the concept's inherent multi-layeredness, encompassing notions of tribal solidarity, social cohesion, group consciousness, and even a sense of shared purpose. A further complicating translation effort is the context-dependent nature of *asabiye*, with its meaning shifting based on the specific sociopolitical situation it describes. *Asabiye* has been translated in various ways, including *esprit de corps* by De Slane, 'the motor of the development of the state' by Erwin Rosenthal, and as *patriotism* and 'national awareness' by other scholars. While these interpretations are certainly acceptable, particularly Erwin Rosenthal's since *asabiye* indeed plays a key role in the development of the state according to Ibn Khaldun (Esteban, 2004, 27). The concept of *asabiye* has been translated into English by different thinkers using various concepts, including:

1. Group feeling
2. Social cohesion
3. Tribal solidarity
4. Group consciousness
5. Tribalism
6. Clannishness
7. Group loyalty
8. Group spirit
9. Military spirit
10. Public Spirit
11. Feeling of Solidarity
12. Communal spirit

These translations attempt to capture the essence of *asabiye*, which is the idea of group unity and solidarity that Ibn Khaldun described as essential for the rise and fall of civilizations. That's a key aspect of Ibn Khaldun's approach to the concept of *asabiye*. He intentionally left

it open-ended and context-dependent, allowing it to encompass a range of meanings and interpretations. *Asabiye*, for Ibn Khaldun, is a dynamic concept that can manifest differently based on the social, political, and historical contexts in which it is applied.

Limiting *asabiye* to local conditions or patrimonial political formations of North Africa contradicts both the essence of *The Muqaddimah* and Ibn Khaldun's overarching purpose (Kayapınar, 2006, 99). In conclusion, according to Ibn Khaldun, *asabiye* plays a significant role in determining the following aspects:

1. The establishment of a state by people of the same lineage and tribe coming together.
2. The defense of the country and the struggle to be superior to other societies.
3. Ensuring unity and solidarity within society.
4. Moving collectively towards a specific goal.
5. Unquestioning obedience to the ruler.

Thus, the first sociological function of the phenomenon of *asabiye* is the formation of a political organization that unites society within the framework of legal rules. The second aspect, defense of the country, involves the sense of mutual assistance and solidarity stemming from lineage, which unites all members of the community on the condition of defending their country (Kayapınar, 2006).

According to Ibn Khaldun, once a political structure has matured, *asabiye* may no longer be necessary. This is because, over time, obedience and submission have become ingrained or legitimized in people's minds, possibly with the influence of religion. Therefore, the function that *asabiye* initially fulfilled -ensuring people's obedience and submission to political authority- is no longer needed. At this stage, it is possible to speak of the disappearance of *asabiye*.

The indicator of the disappearance of *asabiye* is that societies become accustomed to their poor political, social, and moral conditions, even becoming content with them, and falling into a state where they are incapable of demanding some of their rights (Yavuz, 2013, 340). Khaldun prefers to approach the concept of *asabiye* parallel to the distinction between *bedouinism* and *hadarism*. According to Ibn Khaldun, the concepts of *bedouinism* and *hadarism* are linked to *asabiyyah*.

He argues that it is possible for *bedouin* societies to transition to *hadarian* societies through *asabiye* (Yılmaz, 2019, 35). It involves the transition from a less developed form of social organization (*bedouinism*) to a more civilized social form, namely sedentarism (*hadarism*) (Öztürk, 2015). Therefore, to understand the relationship between *asabiye*, *bedouin* culture, and

hadarian civilization, as well as to evaluate Ibn Khaldun's theory of social change, we will examine the concepts of *bedouin* culture and *hadarian* civilization.

2.1.2. Umran and Geography

There is no doubt that human association is necessary; that is, it is an essential requirement for people to live in society. Philosophers have expressed this by stating that human beings are by nature social beings. In other words, living within a social order is essential for humans because, by nature, humans require food and defense, which they cannot obtain alone. Therefore, they must come together with their fellow beings and cooperate. Because the needs of humans are so numerous and living alone is not possible for an individual to supply them all, people must coexist. Therefore, according to Ibn Khaldun, people have to live together and create a civilization or an *umran*. According to him, people naturally come together and help each other in order to sustain their lives and meet their needs (Akçetin, 2017, 360). Ibn Khaldun uses the example of a loaf of bread to demonstrate this point, pointing out that numerous occupations, including farming and baking, are required to produce even one loaf of bread. Ibn Khaldun argues from a naturalistic perspective that humans can more effectively meet their general needs through cooperation. Unfortunately, persistent hunger is not the only challenge they face. Security issues, which also drive people to cooperate, represent another significant difficulty encountered by humans.

Naturally, God endowed animals with abundant physical capabilities compared to those bestowed upon mankind. Ibn Khaldun observes that akin to the specialized limbs of animals, humans' superior qualities lie in their hands and their capacity for reasoning (Çal, 2014, 45). Ibn Khaldun advocated for the transmission of accumulated knowledge across civilizations and geographic regions, including Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece. He noted the existence of continuous civilizations in places like Spain and Egypt, where sciences and arts thrived and endured. This perspective fueled his openness to and fascination with knowledge and wisdom accumulated over ages from various civilizations and cultures (Çaksu, 2017, 30).

Consider the sheer number of instruments, occupations, and laborers required to just make a loaf of bread. In Ibn Khaldun's intellectual world, *umran* is a comprehensive concept that is connected with various aspects, from liberating history from mere narration to establishing a standard of accuracy, addressing the fundamental problems of narrative storytelling, and approaching from the perspective of reason and fact (Ötenkaya, 2022, 22). Ibn Khaldun is aware

that he has established a new science, which he calls the science of *umran*, and he explicitly states this. What Ibn Khaldun aims to do is to identify and explain how the lifestyles of people and societies change, how the earth is developed, how states are established and grow, and why they are subjected to decline and destruction (Yılmaz, 2004, 67).

The etymology of the word *umran* comes from “-m-r” or “-a-m-r”. In terms of meaning, it refers to civilization, progress, settling and living in a place, visiting a place, constructing buildings in the places where people are, making them habitable, and being in communication with people and animals (social structure and relationships) (Dilber, 2020, 23). However, this concept has been translated into similar but different meanings by many different thinkers. For example, De Slane, Rosenthal, and Monteli translated “*umran*” as ‘civilization,’ “*ilm-i umran*” as “human culture” and “social organization, Taha Hussein as “civilization science”, Vafi as “sociology,” G. Hostele as “development of societies”, Muhsin Mehdi as “science of culture,” and S. Pnes as “societal science” (Sharif, 1965, 13).

The concept, which has various translations such as development, social progress, and civilization involves the process of humans reflecting their potential onto the external world, transforming their environment into a place where they can sustain their life and express themselves, and building a “world” or civilization. It encompasses social structure, social organization, and the network of relationships that emerge from it. At its core, it includes the organizations undertaken by society's members in their efforts to live together and all the resulting relationships. Ibn Khaldun asserted that living together is a natural necessity for humanity because no individual can meet their most basic needs or protect themselves from external dangers and attacks by wild animals.

Ibn Khaldun, as the founder of a discipline called *umran* in the field of human and civilization, conceptualized a series of universal phenomena observed in social and political realms, and he demonstrated great care and meticulousness in consistently employing these concepts in his work (Ergül, 2022, 66). The concept of *umran*, introduced by Ibn Khaldun as the inaugural technical term in the opening paragraph of *The Muqaddimah*, became the cornerstone of the new science he claimed to have initiated. *Umran* refers to an organic environment that is broader than the state and society. Furthermore, *umran* is the act of moving to a city or other accommodation and staying there with others in order to meet needs and integrate with society. However, despite providing this definition, Ibn Khaldun uses the term *umran* with very different meanings in different sections of *The Muqaddimah*. For example, sometimes he defines *umran* as a encompasses the notion of settling on land, the population

involved in this settlement, and all activities undertaken by this population to sustain their livelihoods. The science of *umran* is the foundation of other sciences. Any change observed in it affects others as well.

Umran is the term used to describe the process that emerges through the collective manifestation of human nature within a specific time and on a specific geographical location. It denotes a unit of humanity that is smaller than the human race but larger than units such as societies and states. Therefore, from this perspective, it can be said that multiple societies and multiple states can be part of the same *umran*. In this sense, due to its broader and more inclusive nature, the concept of *umran* can be synonymous with the concept of civilization. This term is commonly understood to encompass the notions of social life, society, civilization, and culture, as reflected in its usage in various languages, including Turkish.

While civilization is often employed as a translation, it can also be rendered as “culture” or “society” depending on the context (Ergül, 2022, 71). According to Ibn Khaldun, in order to truly understand *umran*, it is necessary to have a good understanding and analysis of history, society, and geography, as all these structures are deeply interconnected with each other. For instance, Ibn Khaldun asserts that geography and climate significantly influence people's dietary habits, clothing, shelter, and architectural forms. According to Ibn Khaldun's approach, climate not only affects human habitation, architecture, or physical characteristics, but also influences their behaviors, personal traits, and even their ethics. When Ibn Khaldun speaks about tribes, he observes the relationship between their geography, climate, and lifestyle, forming opinions about their character traits. According to him, these characteristics have shaped and will continue to shape a society. Therefore, when analyzing a society, these mentioned features should not be overlooked (Baş, 2022, 383).

Indeed, according to Ibn Khaldun, the key criterion for discerning between accurate and erroneous information in books and historical accounts is to grasp the nature of *umran*. According to Ibn Khaldun, the most important reason for inconsistencies and exaggerations in historical data is that historians do not understand the nature of *umran*, or in other words, the laws governing *umran* (Yavuz, 2013, 340).

In his work, Ibn Khaldun expresses the relationship between the science of civilization and history as follows:

“The science of civilization leads to a necessary knowledge of what is possible and what is impossible in history, which in turn allows historians to evaluate the accuracy and falsehood of the news they convey (Khaldun, 2018, 204).”

In his work *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun asserts that he is the establisher of the science of *umran* by comparing himself with previous thinkers. As the most comprehensive unit of analysis, *umran* does not fully correspond to the concepts of civilization or culture. According to Ibn Khaldun, descending to a city or settlement to merge with society and meet its needs, and residing there together, is defined as *umran* (Genç, 2015, 150). Although it does not fully correspond today, the structure defined by Ibn Khaldun as *umran* is still defined as civilization.

Ibn Khaldun emphasized three essential principles of *umran* (the science of civilization):

1. The subject of the science of *umran* is human beings and human societies. It examines the fundamental developmental processes of civilizations as the primary concern and field of study of human societies.
2. The method of the science of *umran* is to present facts with rational evidence.
3. The aim of the science of *umran* is to distinguish truth from falsehood in historical knowledge (Khaldun, 2018, 339).

Ibn Khaldun, along with the science of civilization (*umran*), attempts to attribute a legality to society and sociality. He argues that there are certain laws of social nature, but for these laws to be truly understood, a good understanding of history, climate, and geography is necessary. For Ibn Khaldun, *umran* is the material of the state, and the state is the constructor of *umran*.

Additionally, *umran* is the only science that enables one to avoid the mistakes made in history (Dilber, 2020, 77). On the authority of Ibn Khaldun, just as the physical structure of the universe has laws, its social structure also has various rules and that rules should be grasped to analyze and understand the real meaning of *umran*.

In conclusion, according to Ibn Khaldun, "the state is the form of *umran*, and *umran* is the substance of the state." Just as there cannot be a dynasty without *umran*, there also cannot be a state without civilization. Similarly, *umran* without a dynasty and without property is not possible (Akçetin, 2017, 13).

2.1.3. Bedouins and Hadarians

As we have mentioned before, one of Ibn Khaldun's most important duties in politics was to regulate and organize the relationship between the political center, namely the sultan, and the *bedouin* tribes. Ibn Khaldun frequently conducted negotiations with the *bedouin* tribes on behalf of the sultan. Therefore, from the beginning of his political life, Ibn Khaldun always maintained good relations with the *bedouins*. In 1374, during a peak of political turmoil, Ibn

Khaldun fled from the center and sought refuge with the Arif tribe at the Ibn Salama fortress, which was a stronghold of the *bedouins*. Ibn Khaldun stayed in this fortress for about four years. His experience in this period gave him the opportunity to closely observe and understand the *bedouin* lifestyle and their nature.

Ibn Khaldun argues that the differences between societies stem solely from differences in their means of livelihood. According to him, people living together do so to assist each other in providing for their livelihoods. There are fundamentally two forms of living in society: Bedouin and sedentary (*Hadarian*). *Bedouin* refers to “rural, rustic, countryside,” while sedentary (*Hadarian*) refers to “native, settled, non-nomadic, urban, civilized, settled (Akçetin, 2017).

The term *bedevi*, according to M. Mehdi, is derived from the Arabic root “b-d-e” and denotes a lifestyle associated with the wilderness, specifically referring to those who reside in the steppe, lead a nomadic life in tents, and are migratory or nomadic. The term *bedevi* is used in contrast to urban life, signifying the opposite of settled or urban habitation (Yüksel, 2020, 67).

The *Bedouins* for Ibn Khaldun are tribes or nation groupings that live in the wilderness, not in cities. Ibn Khaldun asserts that the term *bedevi* refers to a necessary stage of life and living environment that must be experienced in order to transition to settled urban life (*hadari* or *umrana*). These groups of people, who come together out of necessity to fulfill their basic needs and protect themselves from external dangers, represent an essential stage of societal development. When Ibn Khaldun describes *bedouin* life, he is referring to communities of people residing in caves, forests, deserts, tents, or smaller settlements. Therefore, according to Ibn Khaldun, living a *bedouin* life does not necessarily require being nomadic or migratory; one can also lead a semi-nomadic life or have transitioned to a certain level of settled living.

According to Ibn Khaldun, *bedouin* communities comprise two primary groups: those who lead a nomadic life based on livestock and grasslands, without dependence on settled land, and villagers who adopt a *bedouin* lifestyle despite residing permanently for their livelihoods (Özcan, 2016, 117). Factors such as dietary habits, materials used in house construction, and the characteristics of the regions they inhabit determine whether a group of people are *bedouin* or not. For instance, living in harsh environments like barren deserts, leading a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle, and residing in tents or simple structures suitable for such a lifestyle can indicate that a community is *bedouin*.

The food and beverage preferences of these communities, as well as their inclinations towards activities such as hunting and herding, can serve as indicators of the *bedouin* way of

life. Ibn Khaldun asserts that in the *bedouin* society when people are only familiar with one leader, acceptance of that leadership comes practically automatically and naturally. Moreover, everyone feels a sense of belonging to that leadership and society by nature. The *bedouin* lifestyle is a form of living where people sustain themselves by utilizing natural resources and adapt to environmental conditions. In the *bedouin* lifestyle, people primarily pursue the most essential and basic needs to acquire primitive life necessities. Meals are typically made from the produce they cultivate in their own farms, and their clothing needs are met by obtaining hides from the animals they raise (Yusofi, 2018). Ibn Khaldun acknowledges *bedouin* life as the cradle of civilization or urbanization while also considering the beginning of city and social life as originating from *bedouin* culture.

Bedouin community is the first form of community that people establish when they need each other. There exist simple relationships and rules based on kinship ties. Therefore, due to the small number of people in *bedouin* life, their sense of solidarity (*asabiye*) is stronger (Yüksel, 2020, 18).

Ibn Khaldun also characterizes *bedouin*, in terms of their economic status and means of livelihood:

“It should be known that the diversity observed in the conditions of societies (generations) arises solely from the differences in their means of livelihood. For people living together do so solely to assist one another in earning a livelihood. And in order to earn a livelihood, they start with what is necessary and simple, rather than indulging in pleasure and luxury (Khaldun, 2018, 201).”

Ibn Khaldun emphasizes that the essence of *bedouin* communal living is essentially a necessary unity. This compulsory unity not only represents a group of people gathered together to fulfill their basic needs but also represents a group of people who have come together to protect themselves against external threats. Then, especially for the *bedouins*, Ibn Khaldun articulates the general and fundamental means of livelihood with the following statements:

“Some tribes (and societies) engage in agriculture and horticulture, practicing farming. Others have made a profession out of tending to animals and creatures such as sheep, goats, cattle, bees, and silkworms. The aim is to obtain their products (such as wool, milk, meat, honey, etc.). Because the desert is vast, it accommodates pastures, plowed fields, cultivated lands, grazing lands, etc., which do not fit the places where the settled people (Hadari) reside. Therefore, especially for them to dwell in the desert and lead a *bedouin* life has become necessary. In this situation, their coming together to lead a communal life, assisting each other in terms of sustenance, shelter, clothing, and livelihood, was only to preserve life and meet their basic needs, no more than that. For their capabilities do not extend beyond this (Khaldun, 2018, 350).”

Ibn Khaldun’s definition of *bedouinism* encompasses a broad framework. He asserts that the strongest *asabiye* is found among the *bedouins* because they typically fulfill all criteria for

asabiye According to Ibn Khaldun, *bedouins* are characterized by shared blood ties, communal upbringing, cohabitation in the same village, and the necessity to protect each other due to the absence of external security measures such as a police force, city walls, or a dedicated military unit; hence, they rely on themselves for protection and defense. Ibn Khaldun states that because *Bedouins* live in rural areas, life is more challenging for them. They are in a constant struggle, as the wilderness provides a continuous battleground where they must protect themselves against attacks from other tribes or wild animals. *Bedouins*, due to their common ancestry and kinship ties, protect each other at all costs. They are always on alert, as they have no force to protect themselves other than their own. Therefore, their tribal solidarity is strong, their bodies are muscular and powerful, and comfort and luxury have not weakened them.

The second lifestyle that Ibn Khaldun particularly emphasized is *hadarism*: This term refers to a person living in a city, town, or village, leading a settled life (Blbas, 2018). People (*hadarians*), who live in cities, enjoy prosperity and comfort, and own property, are actually groups that originated from *bedouin* culture. However, due to urban life and their prosperity, they have lost many *bedouin* a characteristic, which has weakened their *asabiye*. In his work *The Muqaddimah*, he explains that the *asabiye* (social solidarity) maintained by *bedouins* in harsh living conditions weakens among *hadarians* people living in urban comfort and prosperity. The luxury and comfort of city life have diminished the combat abilities and resilience of *hadarians* people. The complexity of social relationships and the weakening of bonds between individuals in urban life have led to the loss of *asabiye*. The *asabiye* of *hadarian* people, unlike that of *Bedouins*, has become weak. The society is made up of more knowledgeable and skilled individuals. Settled societies appear to be open to consumption and inclined toward political authority (Berkli M., 2019, 43).

The *bedouin* way of life is limited to the production of what is necessary for sustenance. As power, wealth, comfort, and the desire for leisure increase in social production, surplus values lead towards a sedentary way of life (Yıldız, 2010, 33). In this regard, the *bedouin* way of life precedes the *hadarian* lifestyle historically. This is because starting with obtaining what is necessary for sustaining life precedes acquiring what is necessary to enhance life. However, the group or tribe that has the *bedouin* lifestyle, as they approach civilization, become richer, live in cities, and indulge in luxury, begin to adopt *hadarian* ways.

The *bedouin* people possess formidable *asabiye* due to their strength and existence in harsh desert environments where finding necessities is exceedingly challenging. Nevertheless, they persistently struggle to sustain themselves and meet their needs. Conversely, the *hadarians*

living in urban civilizations rely on state security since their inherent weakness leaves them unable to defend against external threats. Consequently, *asabiye* is more pronounced in rural life than in urban settings (Fedayee, 2023, 97).

In a *bedouin* society, people cooperate for essential needs, that is, to sustain their lives and provide for their necessities. However, in a *hadarians* society, cooperation extends beyond the essential needs. This is because there is an abundance of food and resources, and large houses, cities, and towns have been built (Akçetin, 2017, 370). In a *hadarian* society, people may pursue various professions such as art or trade. *Hadarism* represents a more advanced mode of production and a complex network of social relationships.

The mode of production and consumption in society changes, evolving into civilization and urbanity. Consequently, transitioning from a *bedouin* to a *hadarian* society involves changes in both societal and individual characteristics.

Bravery is another attribute that sets the *bedouins* apart from the *hadarians*. Ibn Khaldun highlights that people in high society are shielded by hired guns and hired bodies because they lose their physical strength and fighting prowess and give up their security to a higher power. They lose their military prowess and are shielded by hired soldiers. The *bedouins* believe that those who live in poverty are very dangerous because they lose their warrior and military attributes and get wealthy and successful. Therefore, the *bedouins* are braver and more assertive because their armies are themselves; they are in a state of perpetual war and struggle, with comfort possessing property not yet wrapped their souls. As comfort is the sink of the soul, according to Ibn Khaldun, individuals who live in luxury and comfort become lazier, less able to overcome adversity, and are destroyed by the ease and comfort they have grown accustomed to. Ibn Khaldun this difference as follows:

“The Hadari lay down on a bed of peace and comfort, dived into the sea of blessings and prosperity, entrusted the task of defending their goods and lives to the governors and the ruler who guided and managed them, and the protectors and guards who took on the duty of protecting them. They fell asleep in heedlessness behind the walls that surrounded and protected them. They felt safe, so they laid down their weapons. However, the Bedouins, on the other hand, remained isolated from the society and lived alone, became wild and savage in the land, stayed away from the protector, and abandoned living in places protected by walls and gates, so they occupied themselves with the task of defending themselves. "They do not delegate this issue to others, they cannot trust anyone but themselves in this regard. Bedouins always carry weapons and protect themselves against incoming dangers (Khaldun, 2018, 333).”

The *hadarian*, or residents of the city, are subject to a governmental system and authority that forbids them from abusing or violating one another's rights. They are shielded from outside attackers by the walls and the regular military formations around the city. However, this is not

the case with the *bedouins*. The white-haired people or the elders of that tribe discourage them from violating each other's rights or oppressing each other. That is because in such societies, elders are seriously respected. In these societies there is no structures like laws, police departments, or city walls to protect them against violence which can only be provided by a central authority. Under this circumstances Ibn Khaldun emphasizes that survival in such conditions necessitates the support of others facing similar circumstances, typically close family members.

When it comes to protection against attacks from outside, strong, muscular and well-built men formed from young people within the tribe serve as defense against outsiders. The main bond that brings these tribes together and assigns the duty of protection is *asabiye*. They come from the same blood, have the same ancestor and be the member of the same tribe. On the other hand, the situation is different for *bedouins*, who spend all their time and energy they have on producing the minimum amount they need to survive. They live a simple life, away from luxury, comfort and lust, which have damaging effects on the human soul. For this reason, bad habits are less common in *Bedouins* compared to the *Hadarians* (Kayapınar, 2006, 111).

The *hadarian* has a well-developed system of division of work, no one meddles in other people's affairs, social cohesiveness declines, irritation declines, and the situation gets worse when security is introduced.

Hadarians people live in walled areas that protect them from the dangers of nature and attacks from other communities, and they completely entrust the task of ensuring their security to the government (Gültekin, 2016).

In *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun expresses that *bedouins* are more inclined to goodness compared to settled people with the following words: "Settled people, due to their pursuit of various pleasures and adherence to the customs brought by prosperity, frequently encounter many bad and ugly habits, which pollute their souls" (Khaldun, 2018, 317). *Hadarians* are not as close to "goodness" as *bedouins* are. Since human nature was equally far from both good and evil at the time of creation, it is possible to have a tendency toward goodness and make excellent decisions. But human potential is influenced by both good and evil in his environment. Ibn Khaldun contends that because of the *hadarian* lifestyle, orientation toward riches, pursuit of material pleasures, and involvement in lust and cravings, their nature has been corrupted. On the contrary *bedouins* live in more natural, rural cultures with lower levels of income, desire, and rewards, they are therefore more inclined to practice charity than *hadarians*.

Furthermore, urban life is essential in a sedentary society, with its own set of rules and responsibilities. The freedom inherent in *bedouin* life becomes limited. As a result, habits also change. Moreover, abundance and prosperity prevail in a *hadarian* society due to excess production. Commerce and profit-making emerge. The aim of *bedouin* society is also to achieve this prosperity and luxury, to urbanize. Both needs and demands increase in a *hadarian* society, leading to an increase in luxury and extravagance. Furthermore, *hadarian* society begins to perceive luxury as a necessity. This process ultimately leads to the destruction of the state). These two distinct communities have an interdependent economic relationship. *Bedouins* specialize in producing raw, unprocessed, and primary materials, while urban dwellers produce processed, manufactured, and semi-finished goods. This dynamic foster commercial relation grounded in reciprocal exchange (Özcan, 2016, 99).

As a result, Ibn Khaldun views society, the city, and the state as an organism undergoing constant change and transformation. Ibn Khaldun stated that no society is settled (*hadarians*) from birth. When societies are first born, they are all nomadic (*bedouin*). The *bedouin* life of a society depends on its structure and can be long or short. Nomadic life is a necessity of both social and natural conditions. A society that does not live a nomadic life cannot establish civilization (Berkli M. , 2019). Therefore, Ibn Khaldun sees social change as a natural necessity and law. Every society is born with a high level of solidarity and nomadic, then it strengthens and becomes settled (urbanized) and enriched as it gains power and property. However, inversely proportional to this, its solidarity decreases, and eventually, it collapses, to be replaced by another society that begins to settle with stronger solidarity, gaining property and statehood. Very brave people living in a *bedouin* state become *hadari* they lose that courage.

The comparison of *bedouin* and *hadarian* by Kayapınar is quite comprehensive and productive in this regard (Kayapınar M. A., 2010).

<i>Umran Badawi</i>	<i>Umran Hadari</i>
The origin and foundation of the civilizational process	Originating from the Bedouin, it owes its beginnings. It represents a subsequent, derived phase of development.
Small population with low density.	Dense population on small territory.
Animal husbandry and agriculture constitute the two primary modes of existence	Craftsmanship and commerce.
Simple division of labor and specialization.	A complex division of labor requires specialization.

The satisfaction of basic needs, less comfortable living.	An affluent and comfortable life with the ability to satisfy luxury needs.
Toughness, roughness, bravery and fortitude are natural characteristics. Greater military ability.	Softness, politeness, fragility, and cowardliness are natural characteristics. Also marked by repression of military spirit and relying on others.
Strong asabiya.	Fragile or diminishing of <i>Asabiye</i> .
Purity of lineage	Confusion and fictionality regarding lineage
Chieftainship, simple administrative organization.	A sophisticated governmental structure featuring a highly rationalized and depersonalized bureaucracy.
Willingly embraced informal influence.	Institutionalized constraint, monopoly of violence.
Rigorous preservation of traditions.	Continuous potential for change
Prevalence of illiteracy or minimal education.	Promotion of the sciences, formalized education.
Morally beneficial attributes, high religiosity.	Morally dubious or questionable lifestyle with low religiosity.

Source: (Kayapınar A. , 2006)

As mentioned above, *bedouism* and *hadarism* are fundamental components of Ibn Khaldun's theory of transformation. Although these two concepts and ways of life are quite different from each other, they are actually complementary in nature. *Bedouin* forms the basis for *hadarian* and represents its initial stage. *Bedouin* societies generally adopt a nomadic lifestyle, believing it to be suitable for meeting their basic needs. However, over time, *hadarian* societies emerge and embrace a settled way of life. *Hadarism* feeds off *bedouism* and derives strength from it. *Hadarian* societies are typically based on agriculture, trade, and more complex social structures, and they emerge as a result of *bedouin* societies adopting a settled way of life.

These two ways of life complement and influence each other. *Bedouin* societies, with their mobility and ability to adapt to nature, can contribute to urban societies in areas such as external trade and defense. Urban societies, on the other hand, with their more complex economic structures and the opportunities provided by cities, can contribute to *Bedouin* societies economically and culturally. Ibn Khaldun observed a recurring pattern where *Bedouin* peoples, the nomadic tribes of the desert, frequently overthrow the dynasties of Mediterranean cities along the coast. When one of these tribes establishes a new country through conquest, they create new dynasties and start to improve the well-being of their own people. Over time,

these once-nomadic groups transition to a sedentary lifestyle, only for the cycle to repeat itself after a few generations.

In conclusion, *bedevism* and *hadarism* are important concepts in Ibn Khaldun's theory of transformation and play a significant role in each other's development. The relationship between these two ways of life provides an in-depth understanding of the evolution and transformation of societies and civilizations.

2.1.4. Historism

Ibn Khaldun was among the first to study social phenomena, comprehensively explaining historical events and deriving social laws in a highly scientific manner (Naz, 2013). History plays a crucial role in Ibn Khaldun's philosophy. Ibn Khaldun explains in detail why he writes history in the first part of his work. According to Ibn Khaldun, if you know what people did in the past, how they behaved, how they were governed, then you can understand what people did right and their mistakes. Everything that happens in history occurs within a certain order and framework; therefore, historical events are subject to certain laws and rules. These rules can be discerned by the human intellect, and Ibn Khaldun himself claims to have largely identified these laws and based on these rules, it becomes possible to make predictions and forecasts about the future.

Ibn Khaldun begins his work by addressing the relevance of the science of history:

“Let it be known that the science of history is a discipline and knowledge that is noble in purpose, abundant in benefits, and of great importance. This is because this science acquaints us with the morals of past nations, the course of prophets, and the states and policies of rulers (Khaldun, 2018, 165).”

Ibn Khaldun does not see history merely as the narration or transmission of events. For him, true history is a science that involves laws and constitutes a field of research. Ibn Khaldun does not consider history as a single independent and superficial science instead, history should be approached in harmony with human nature, society, and *umran* (civilization). Secondly, Ibn Khaldun argues that history should be rational and philosophical rather than merely transmitted (Dilber, 2020). Ibn Khaldun's perspective on events and facts is characterized by a holistic view rather than a reductionist one. According to Ibn Khaldun, history follows a cyclical process where sovereign powers emerge, strengthen, decline, and are eventually supplanted by new powers (Murat Önder, 2018, 237).

According to Khaldun, what makes history a science is its framework within its own era. Therefore, considering history merely as an independent field is insufficient for understanding history; it is necessary to approach and interpret history as a whole in connection with the political and social mindset of that period.

Ibn Khaldun provides two different definitions of history. According to the first definition, history is the narration of events belonging to a particular time or nation. The second definition is more comprehensive, and about the investigation of causality and reasons behind events (Alkan, 2010, 24).

History is not just a simple sequence of facts or events; rather, it is a way of understanding society and the state through these events and facts. According to Ibn Khaldun, the main purpose of the science of history is to understand the causes and consequences of past events and to comprehend the evolution of human societies. The way to achieve this goal is to follow a correct methodology and to go beyond merely recording events superficially by conducting in-depth analysis. This means that there is a meaning and order in the general flow of history and Ibn Khaldun's primary goal is to discover this law and this order. Ibn Khaldun argues that reaching this goal requires establishing a logical framework to understand the underlying causes of events and how societies have shaped. In *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun argues that formulating absolute propositions marked the initial stage in establishing his groundbreaking historical science -an approach to understanding human society based on a thorough grasp of the actual state of affairs (Dale, 2006, 447).

By examining the past to discover patterns, making abstractions, and formulating generalizations, it becomes possible to establish more universal and rational principles and rules. Based on these principles, it is feasible to make predictions and forecasts about the future. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun argues that after incorporating all these considerations, the discipline of history should be considered a branch of the wisdom sciences, that is, a discipline within philosophical studies.

Ibn Khaldun history is not progressive but cyclical. Ibn Khaldun reviewed the works of historians, identified their methodological errors, and reestablished history on a foundation consistent with the nature of *umran* based on facts.

Ibn Khaldun used historical facts and events to reinterpret them in the context of his own thinking and thus establish his own theory. Ibn Khaldun explains in his work that history is not merely a field based on narratives and should be considered as a science among the wisdom sciences with the following statement:

“It informs us of how the conditions and situations of people and nations have changed, how state borders have expanded, and how their power and might have increased until the age of decline and destruction comes upon them, revealing how they have cultivated the earth until that time. This is the apparent meaning of history. The hidden meaning within history, however, consists of examining, contemplating, researching, considering the causes and reasons of existence (the universe), and understanding the causes and order of events' occurrence and progression. Therefore, history is honored, and it is immersed in wisdom. Therefore, history deserves to be considered among the sciences of wisdom = philosophy (Khaldun, 2018, 195).”

Ibn Khaldun introduced innovation and methodology to the field of history:

“I have thoroughly elucidated the essence and substance of this science, lighting the torch for those desiring to perceive with the eye of insight, illuminating the surroundings, and making the light of this science exceedingly bright. I have explained its path and method among the sciences, expanded the territory of knowledge, enclosed it with walls, and defined its domain (Khaldun, 2018, 196).”

One of Ibn Khaldun's most emphasized fundamental concepts about history is the concept of change. Ibn Khaldun believes that historians fail to understand the nature of *umran* because they overlook this change. He asserts that everything is constantly undergoing change and transformation, emphasizing that this change permeates human nature, politics, society, and ethics. According to Ibn Khaldun, because this change occurs slowly and over the long term, it escapes the attention of people and thinkers. When the concept of change in the Khaldunian perspective is examined carefully, it can be easily understood that Ibn Khaldun views the state, history, politics, and society as a living organism. Ibn Khaldun suggests that minds that do not consider this continuous change and transformation, as well as statesmen who cannot calculate it and historians who cannot interpret it, are mistaken. When at the starting of *The Muqaddimah* Ibn Khaldun affirms that history is-or should be-rooted in wisdom or philosophy (*hikmah*), he is not purely telling his readers that historians ought to be learned and thoughtful individuals. He advocates for analyzing the past beyond mere event reporting, emphasizing the rational use of Greco-Islamic logical methodologies in historical inquiry (Dale, 2006, 443). According to Ibn Khaldun, history is not only about real facts but also the analysis of the conditions necessary for these facts to occur. Ibn Khaldun approached social and historical events from multiple dimensions and interpreted them with a comprehensive and broad perspective when explaining them (Rauf, 2016, 463).

After explaining the main purpose of history, Ibn Khaldun criticizes many historians who lived in both his own time and previous ages for basing their accounts on false and inaccurate information with the following statement:

“When muqallid (imitator) historians attempt to describe a state, they preserve the narrations about that state, whether they are delusional and false or true, and arrange the news in order, and do not attempt to explain the initial state of the state. They do not mention the reasons that raise the flag of that state and the evidence of sovereignty and the verse that reveals it, and do not explain the reason for its stagnation in the end. For this reason, those who read such histories, even though they have studied history, are always curious to learn about the circumstances of the establishment and beginning of states and the stages and stages they went through (Khaldun, 2018, 165).”

Ibn Khaldun critiques historians for often having a narrow understanding of history, relying on incomplete or biased sources, and limiting their perspectives to their own countries or environments. He argues that historians may fail to uncover the truth because their personal connection to the societies they study can distort their objectivity and judgment. According to him, previous historians have transmitted the *ahbâr* (narratives or reports) they received without investigating their accuracy, that is, without examining whether they conform to natural and causal principles (Yıldız, 2010, 27). The historian should present events in a concrete and objective manner, avoiding subjective thoughts. A historian who narrates events according to their own thoughts is mistaken. If a historian is not knowledgeable about the level of civilization of the society in which the events they are studying occurred, they may fall into error (Berkli, 2019, 44).

Those engaged in the science of history, according to Ibn Khaldun, need to understand the principles of politics and the nature of beings. They must know how a state is established, what conditions are necessary for its establishment, how people come together behind leaders, and what qualities leaders must possess. Therefore, qualified historians must be knowledgeable about matters concerning nations and countries in terms of their trends, ethics, traditions, religions, sects, and other aspects. They should grasp future situations by observing current conditions, understand the compatibility or disparity between the present situation and the historical situation, consider the causes and reasons for compatibility or disparity, and pay attention to the principles on which states and nations are founded, the principles they relied on at their inception, the reasons behind their emergence, and the factors influencing their formation, as well as the circumstances and conditions of those who govern them. In conclusion, a historian gains a comprehensive understanding of the causes behind the information in their possession. In this case, they assess the information against the principles and rules they have. If it aligns with them and proceeds according to the requirements of those principles and rules, the information is correct; otherwise, it is flawed, and there is no need for such information.

He emphasized that history is a discipline, should be grounded in facts, insisting that relying solely on narrative accounts fails to capture the true essence of historical events. He criticized historians for often merely repeating the narratives of established authorities, without questioning or exploring the underlying causes and effects of those events. By neglecting to investigate the causal relationships between events, historians, in his view, hindered the full recognition of history as a legitimate science. According to Ibn Khaldun, history is not just a collection of events; it is shaped by the societal laws that govern the community being studied, and its analysis must be rooted in the specific conditions of that society (Alkan, 2010, 66). Since for Ibn Khaldun history is not merely about imitation, he criticizes previous historians for their tendency towards imitation. Due to this imitation, incorrect information mixed with correct information and passed down from generation to generation without distinction. Ibn Khaldun suggests that to purify history from inaccuracies, historians should not blindly accept everything they hear. Instead, they should investigate the customs, traditions, natural conditions, political situations, characteristics of societies, and underlying causes related to the event of that time. Ibn Khaldun also pays attention to in historical writing is rationality. He recommends considering whether the narratives are rational or not.

Ibn Khaldun lists the following reasons that lead historians into errors:

1. Extreme partisanship and devotion to views and sects. In other words, if the historian is a supporter of a sect or view, he may not be critical of the news on that subject.
2. Writing false news to benefit high-ranking people. Writing history to be close to statesmen and the wealthy
3. Narrating events based solely on personal foresight without understanding their purpose.
4. Lack of familiarity with the individuals narrating events and failure to criticize or assess their character.
5. Lack of knowledge about the science of *umran* and its formation.

According to Ibn Khaldun, history has both visible and invisible dimensions. When a historian narrates a concrete event, they should also mention the period in which it occurred, the social, political, and economic structure of that period, the reasons for its occurrence, the consequences it led to, and its impacts on the present day (Berkli, 2019, 47).

After presenting the new methodology of history and criticizing the errors of historians, Ibn Khaldun focused on the fundamental characteristics of his new science. Ibn Khaldun felt the necessity of establishing a new science to solve these problems, and he determined the subject, method, and doctrines of this new science. The subject of this new science is *umran*,

meaning social life and forms of organization. In other words, it is to provide a historical description of social development and to outline its political stages. In order to understand historical events correctly, this science must precede history. Ibn Khaldun argues that there are laws governing history and society. In fact, he expresses this in the introduction to *The Muqaddimah* as follows:

“I have organized my work in every aspect, removing redundancies and bringing it closer to the understanding of scholars and intellectuals. In structuring and dividing the book, I followed a strange method, different from the usual, and invented an original method among various methods. In this work, I explained the states of civilization and urbanization, as well as the factors that afflict human communities, including inherent defects. These explanations will be beneficial to you in understanding the causes and reasons behind events and will describe to you how statesmen and rulers enter the state through the opened door (Khaldun, 2018, 161).”

From this perspective, it is clear that Ibn Khaldun sought to establish a law of history and society. As he outlined, his approach to history is not merely a retrospective analysis, but a methodology that, in his view, allows for the explanation of both past events and future developments with clarity and precision. By applying this framework, he believed that the course of history could be understood as a predictable, causal process.

Ibn Khaldun asserts that by providing a model, he offers a framework through which one can not only understand past events but also helps to predict future occurrences. As the founder of the science of sociology, Ibn Khaldun transformed history into a scientific discipline, grounding his insights in systematic reasoning and empirical analysis. Before Ibn Khaldun, historical writing was largely viewed as a mere act of transmission and narration. History was often reduced to a chronicle of events, recorded haphazardly and without critical distinction between fact and fiction (Naz, 2013, 31). In other words, the science of *umran* must be the criterion and foundation of history. Through the science of *umran*, history can be understood with objectivity, free from embellishment or distortion, and liberated from myths and legends. In doing so, Ibn Khaldun introduced the foundations for a philosophy of history. His concept of *umran* highlights the importance of analyzing history through the lens of cause-and-effect relationships among social events, marking a significant departure from earlier, more narrative-driven approaches. Thus, Ibn Khaldun approached the historical development of societies with a new method and, as he claimed, with a new science (Yıldız, 2010, 33).

Ibn Khaldun aims to shed light on the social and political issues of his time, particularly the conflicts and divisions within the Islamic world, from a historical perspective (Yıldız, 2010, 53). When defining the subject of the science of history, Ibn Khaldun approached society with an objective attitude and made a clear distinction between “what is” and “what should be.”

On the authority of Ibn Khaldun, history is not merely about collecting and narrating information about past events. An understanding that focuses on appearances represents *zahiri* (apparent) historiography. On the other hand, *batini* (internal) historiography, which considers the unseen, must delve into the foundations of events that have occurred in history, researching how and why they occurred and providing causal explanations (Akçetin, 2017, 370).

In his work, Ibn Khaldun defines history as *batini* (internal) as follows:

“Looking inward at history means to contemplate, seek truth, and uncover the reasons behind events. The underlying principles of events are nuanced, and understanding the nature and causes of these events requires profound knowledge. This is why history is considered a noble science, rich in wisdom.” (Khaldun, 2018, 160).

Ibn Khaldun shows that the foundations of his philosophy of history are based on two principles. The first is that history should be based on facts derived from research and documents, not on narratives. The second is the establishment of cause-and-effect relationships between events.

When a historian examines an event, they must investigate the conditions that led to it. Events do not occur randomly; they always emerge as a result of preceding events. Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the importance of connecting events to each other in order to explain them, without neglecting the conditions that preceded them (Alkan, 2010, 27).

Ibn Khaldun argues that there is a causality underlying the philosophy of history, which consequently makes it subject to a form of regularity or lawfulness (Hilmi Ziya, 1940, 83). Ibn Khaldun’s most significant contribution to historiography is his emphasis on the causal relationships in history, the principle of impartiality, critiquing the sources of history, and proposing that it should be written through the science of *umran*. He liberated history from unilateralism and transformed it into a multidisciplinary field. When writing history, he drew from the disciplines of sociology, economics, politics, and geography. Therefore, he accuses previous historians of mere imitation and considers them only as conveyors of information (Yusofi, 2018, 33).

In this context, Ibn Khaldun highlights that the political order (which he equates with the state) undergoes constant change, but historians fail to recognize this. The state reaches a point of stagnation, but historians, lacking an understanding of the nature of *umran* and a critical historical perspective, are unable to perceive this stagnation. Ibn Khaldun considers a historical perspective that disregards the effects of time and place to be erroneous and misleading.

He advocates for reintroducing the dimensions of time and place through *umran* into historiography. Ibn Khaldun argues that his redeveloped historical understanding can lead to a

better comprehension of the characteristics and circumstances that characterize *umran*. This understanding can reveal how rulers and sovereigns entered the state through the opened door, i.e., how the political order was established.

Ibn Khaldun brought a different perspective to historiography. He approached historical events and situations not in a narrative style as they had been previously portrayed, but rather in a critical manner. He emphasized the causal relationship between events and moved beyond the method of simply recounting events as they were. Ibn Khaldun interpreted history by both analyzing and establishing cause-and-effect relationships. Considering history as a living science, Ibn Khaldun remarked, The past resembles the future more than one drop of water resembles another (Khaldun, 2018). He thus established a connection between the past and present, suggesting that events recur on the stage of history (Yılmaz, 2019, 53).

Ibn Khaldun laid the groundwork for the modern scientific approach to history, pioneering what can now be termed as historical determinism. He analyzed various societies, demonstrating that their structures and historical trajectories were determined by their modes of production (Sümer, 2012, 257).

According to Ibn Khaldun, understanding civilization requires understanding history. Therefore, writing history means knowing what people did in the past, how they were governed, and how they governed. By knowing their right and wrong actions, one can then establish a good civilization (Blbas, 2018, 69). The sentence summarizing Ibn Khaldun's general approach to civilization and history is: "More than water resembles water, the past resembles the future and the present." Ibn Khaldun provided a framework which would uncover the social dynamics of human history and went far beyond the launched norms of historical thinking (Manoochehri, 2016, 7). Ibn Khaldun argues that in order to truly understand history, one must grasp the existing social and historical changes.

Ibn Khaldun states that history is a science related to the transformation and development of human society. In other words, history is neither predetermined nor fixed. It is not independent of the actions and transformations of human society. While presenting this idea, Ibn Khaldun was inspired by nature and objects, noting that just as nature and objects constantly change and transform, history must also change.

In this regard, according to Ibn Khaldun, everything in human society is in a state of constant change. Change is not independent of movement, and movement is not independent of life. If a person denies change, they are simultaneously denying life or failing to comprehend the essence of life (Ötenkaya, 2022, 21). Ibn Khaldun posits that society and the state undergo

continuous change and transformation. Statesmen and historians who fail to recognize this dynamic nature are prone to error.

Ibn Khaldun expresses the concept of change in *The Muqaddimah* as follows:

“The unnoticed and concealed error in history is the failure to recognize that the conditions of nations and peoples will change with the passing of ages and the progression of days, for this change occurs over long periods, and it is exceedingly slow. Except for very few individuals, almost no one perceives this. The reason for this is that the states of nations and the conditions of the world, the customs of societies, and their religiosity do not remain stable for an extended period. This aspect involves a transition from one state to another as days and times pass. Indeed, this change and transition are present in individuals, times, and cities. It is the same in countries, regions, and states (Khaldun, 2018, 194).”

Ibn Khaldun argues that in order to understand history, one must not overlook societal change because, according to him, the primary determinants of history are the perception and understanding of societal change, along with grasping the nature of *umran*. Ibn Khaldun considers the true meaning of history as *umran*, which means regarding it as a science that informs about human societal life and its conditions affected by nature (Duman, 2010, 170). Ibn Khaldun intertwines history and *umran*, arguing that in order to truly grasp the meaning of history, one must understand the essence of *umran*.

Ibn Khaldun employs a very different, rational, and universal methodology when discussing the importance of history. Firstly, he elucidates the true purpose of history. Subsequently, he analyzes not only the errors of historians in his own time but also those preceding him. For instance, according to Ibn Khaldun, Islamic historians in ancient times mixed fabricated stories into the materials they collected regarding events that occurred. Later historians, on the other hand, confused truth with falsehood because they did not apply a process of analysis to the historical events, they collected materials on, nor did they interpret them correctly. Consequently, they distanced the science of history from reality by solely relying on hearsay, turning it into a tale composed of legends, extraordinary events, and coincidences. Subsequent generations of historians imitated these ancient historians in dealing with the science of history. In *The Muqaddimah* Ibn Khaldun describes the methodology of the study of history and explanation of the history of mankind. Ibn Khaldun not only as a perpetrator of history, but also as a scientist of history that has spawned the new theories based on the results of his empirical research and methodology (Thoha, 2019, 13).

Then, he adds a method and rationality to history, explaining the principles by which historical events should be evaluated and emphasizing the importance of understanding the nature of *umran* for comprehending a historical event. He elaborates on why historians must understand the concept and meaning of change. Such an approach to history did not exist in his

time or in the works of historians before him. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun asserts that he is the founder of such a discipline in history. Ibn Khaldun can be regarded as the precursor and even the founder of modern historiography and sociology. When his roles as a historian, philosopher of science, and methodologist are evaluated together, it becomes evident that he is not only exceptional for the Islamic and Christian Middle Ages but also for the Modern Age.

This is because the type of historical critique and philosophy of history developed by Ibn Khaldun finds its earliest parallel in Western philosophy only in the 18th century with Vico (Özdemir, 2023, 430). Ibn Khaldun had actually pioneered the so called as scientific history. Historical method proposed by Ibn Khaldun includes four stages. According to his opinion, the study of history requires:

1. a variety of sources
2. knowledge of all aspects
3. the exact calculation and perseverance
4. examine the sources used carefully

Ibn Khaldun claimed that the history is not only factually disclosed but more important is the history of the law of causality itself must be expressed. A historical event should be viewed from various aspects, such as economic, political, social, religious, and so on aspects (Thoha, 2019, 17).

In conclusion, Ibn Khaldun's understanding of history centers on the fundamental factors that determine social and political events and examines the transformation of human societies. Here are the key points on which Ibn Khaldun's understanding of history generally relies:

1. *Asabiye*: The concept of *asabiye* represents the cohesion and solidarity within a community, which is a crucial factor in determining its strength and resilience.
2. Historical Cycles: Ibn Khaldun's understanding of history involves the idea of historical cycles, where societies go through stages of establishment, growth, peak, decline, and resurgence.
3. Nature of Political Power: Ibn Khaldun utilizes history as a tool to understand the nature of political power and how it changes over time. He emphasizes the importance of *asabiye* and the legitimacy of rulers in maintaining and sustaining power.
4. Geographic and Economic Factors: Ibn Khaldun highlights the influence of geographical and economic factors on historical events and the shaping of societies.

5. Observation and Analysis: Ibn Khaldun's approach to history involves thorough observation and objective analysis of events. He emphasizes the importance of historians in objectively observing and analyzing historical phenomena.
6. Ibn Khaldun stressed that before the study history and politics, you have to know how human society work.

Ibn Khaldun's understanding of history represents a deep approach to understanding the complexity of historical events, and his theoretical framework has played a significant role in the development of modern historiography and social sciences. Ibn Khaldun's theory of history and his methodology are regarded as remarkably modern, rational, and effective. Toynbee considers him the most insightful interpreter of historical morphology to have emerged worldwide thus far (Naz, 2013. 30). He not only attempted to consider the problems of history, but also developed a "science of history" or a "science of culture."

According to Ibn Khaldun, the essence of history is a record of the human race. History itself is identical to the world civilization, about revolution and rebellion by a part of other, with the consequent emergence of kingdoms and countries with various levels; about the activities and status of peoples, both to achieve their livelihood as well as in science and carpentry; and in general, about all the changes that take a place in the civilization because of the nature of civilization itself is *sunnatullah* (The laws of God).

2.1.5. Riasa (Chieftain), Mulk (Supreme Political Power), Dynasties, Dawla (the State)

Ibn Khaldun considers the existence of political authority to be necessary. According to him, a strong political organization is the fundamental element of a great civilization. As noted before, Ibn Khaldun argues that humans tend to fight each other to secure their material goods. In other words, weapons protect people from the aggressiveness of animals, but because human nature leads to various destructive conflicts, people cannot sustain eternal peace among themselves (Çal, 2014, 15). For example, a weapon is the property of a person, and they have the right to use it, so a constraining power is needed to control people's animal character. This superior authority and power, according to Ibn Khaldun, is a strong political authority to which people submit with resignation. On the authority of Ibn Khaldun, when it comes to social norms, if there is no binding sanction and authority, people may violate each other's rights and laws. Within human beings, there exists both good and evil, which emerge depending on the circumstances. Ibn Khaldun expresses in his work that, although humans are inherently good by nature, they still need a political authority with the following words:

“In terms of his rational thinking ability and innate nature, human beings are closer to qualities of goodness rather than traits of evil. This is because evil and negative feelings come to him only through the animalistic forces that exist within him, whereas, by virtue of being human, he is closer to goodness and qualities of goodness. Simply by being human, *mulk* and politics are inherent in him. This is because *mulk* and politics are unique to humans, not animals. Therefore, the qualities of goodness in him are suitable for *mulk* and politics, because goodness aligns with politics and the overall policy of the state (Khalidun, 2018, 355).”

According to Ibn Khaldun, one of the most important characteristics that discriminate humans from other living beings is the need for an influential and authoritative arbitrator, or a strong authority, essentially a leader or a head. In Khaldun’s view, this need implies a necessity for a political order and this political order must be organized hierarchically. At the very top of this hierarchy, there must be an arbitrator to whom everyone submits.

When Ibn Khaldun’s work *The Muqaddimah* is examined as a whole, it can be observed that he uses four different concepts related to this political power: These concepts are *riyaset* (leadership), *mulk* (property), *hanedanlık* (dynasty), and *devlet* (state). Although these concepts sometimes appear to be quite similar and overlapping in meaning, they can carry significantly different meanings in certain contexts.

The person at the head of the *bedouin* political order is called *riyaset* (leadership) or chief. The governance style known as *riyaset* or leadership, as described by Ibn Khaldun, is commonly observed in *bedouin* communities and tribal settings. In such governance, tribal members are bound to their leaders or rulers through traditional ties. Within this societal structure, spiritual sanctions are typically employed in addressing any arising issues, such as exclusion from the community.

Numerically, the population in urban settlements, known as *hadaret*, exceeds that of *bedouin* communities. Consequently, the traditions and social norms prevalent in *bedouin* societies are often insufficient, and even irrelevant, for governing urban communities due to their larger and more complex nature. Hence, the governance of urban communities necessitates the implementation of laws and coercion. For this reason, Ibn Khaldun defines the governance style in *hadarian* (urban) communities as *mulk* or property.

In the context of *bedouin* society, the political order is referred to as *riyaset* or leadership whereas in *hadarian* society, its counterpart is *mulk* or sovereignty. In other words, *riyaset* and *mulk* are equivalent yet distinct concepts within *bedouin* and *hadarian* societies, respectively. *Riyaset* is personal, while *mulk* is impersonal. *Mulk* resembles the state apparatus in today’s understanding, relationships are impersonal, there are laws, written statutes, and legal sanctions.

There are law enforcement agencies to implement these sanctions, thus ensuring compliance with the laws through coercion and force.

This is not the case with *riyaset*, there are no law enforcement agencies, no police force, laws are not written, and courts and governance are not institutionalized. *Riyaset* is more about establishing a political order through customs, traditions, and conventions, functioning as a process rather than an institutionalized operation. On the other hand, while governance is personal, *mulk* is impersonal as well. Ibn Khaldun describes *mulk* (property) as a system of government founded on coercion and force. It embodies the ultimate authority within a specific territory, thus aligning with the dominant social cohesion (*asabiye*) within that territory.

In this regard, even if there are various different manifestations of *asabiye* in a territory, not every one of them will completely *mulk*. (Kayapınar, 2010). Ibn Khaldun says that just as it is natural for people to live socially in a community, it is also natural for them to establish *mulk*, that is, a state. Living together and community are inseparable. Collective strength ensures the provision of sustenance and possessions for all. Assistance and resources are distributed adequately to meet the needs of those engaged in production (Özcan, 2016, 110).

Ibn Khaldun mentions three different types of *mulk*. The first type of *mulk* is the natural *mulk* (property) in which rulers act in the most natural way of the human soul. In today's understanding of politics, this type of *mulk* can be defined as tyranny or despotism. Like any entity, the *mulk* actualizes what is inherent in its nature. The first aspect about the nature of the state is not tolerating sharing its power. The primary nature of the state is to possess glory and magnificence exclusively, which is what we refer to as monarchy (Yılmaz, 2004, 43). The second type of *mulk* is the political *mulk*, which means the rational politics, where the administration is shaped according to the mind and the principles of reason. The third type of *mulk* is Caliphate which is based on religious politics. Its difference from rational politics is that it has laws and rules that address not only the needs of this world but also the needs of the afterlife.

In the true sense, *mulk* is only reserved for the *asabiye* which tyrannizes the people, collects goods and taxes, sends ambassadors, protects the borders, and has no other power above its power. Ibn Khaldun explains in detail why people need a property (*Mulk*) and a ruler:

“There is a need for an absolute deterrent power that will protect people against each other and prevent them from doing evil. Because it is in the animal nature of people to attack and do injustice. The weapon used to repel the attacks of wild animals is not enough to repel the attacks from people, because the same weapon is accessible to all other people. In this case, there is a need for something else that will protect people from the attacks of other people, as a matter of fact, this should be a strong ruler, a sultan who is superior to others.

This should be so that no one can violate the rights of others and harm them (Khalidun, 2018, 333).”

In the manner of Ibn Khaldun, humans have distinguished themselves from other creatures by certain unique characteristics. One of these characteristics is knowledge and arts. Knowledge and arts separate humans from other beings, elevating them to an esteemed position, and are the result of the noblest quality of humans, namely intellect. Another fundamental aspect that sets humans apart from animals and other creatures is the need for an effective and influential arbitrator and strong authority, namely a leader or ruler, because among all other animals, only humans require such a presence for their existence.

Ibn Khaldun argues that people need to live together in order to fulfill their most fundamental needs such as protection and shelter, and since this compulsory togetherness would lead to chaos without it, there is a need for a supreme ruler, referred to as the ruler according to the Khaldunian idiom, who can ensure peace and security by holding *mulk* (property).

In his work, Ibn Khaldun defines *mulk* (property) and rulership as follows:

“Then, when this gathering occurs among people and the world's affairs are completed through them, there arises a necessity for a power that will protect them against each other and repel their attacks. This authority is what prevents people from harming each other, as aggression and injustice are inherent in human nature. Weapons, which were created to repel the attacks of wild animals, are not sufficient to repel the assaults of humans because all humans possess the same weapon. Therefore, there is an absolute need for something else to prevent people from aggressing against each other. The subject of discussion cannot be another living being outside of themselves because all animals are inferior to humans in intellect and inspiration. Thus, the subject of discussion will be one of the humans, but this authority will have dominance, sovereignty, compelling power, and superior rule over other humans. It should be such that no one can aggress against or harm others; this is the essence of rulership or *mulk* (property) (Khalidun, 2018, 383).”

As Khaldun expresses, the most distinctive feature of *mulk* (property) is to be significantly more powerful than other humans. Its power must exceed that of others so as to prevent them from attacking each other.

Ibn Khaldun also defines *mulk* as a form of governance based on force and coercion:

“In its true essence, *mulk* is characterized by subjugating the subjects to tyranny, collecting taxes, sending out emissaries, protecting borders, and possessing a dominating power that surpasses any other force. The renowned meaning, truth, and essence of *mulk* lie in this. Now, the rulership of one who lacks the capability to perform some of these functions, such as protecting borders, collecting taxes, or sending out emissaries, is incomplete. In order for no one to attack another, there must be an authority (*vazı*) among people, superior to everyone and possessing the power of execution (*sultan*) and the right to use force (*el-yedü'l-kahire*). This is the meaning of political power (*mulk*). However, in reality, power does not fall into the hands of every social power cohesion (*asabiyah*); it can only fall into the hands of someone who does not have a power above him that uses force (*el-yedü'l-kahir*).” (Khalidun, 2018, 415).

Therefore, in the manner of Ibn Khaldun, the function of a complete *mulk*, without deficiency, include these, and its most important attribute is that there is no force superior to its own. Khaldun's definition of *mulk* is quite similar to Weber's modern state definition. Weber's notion of the state having a monopoly on violence aligns with Khaldun's statement about there being no force superior to its own.

Therefore, from a Khaldun's perspective, the prominent features of *mulk* can be listed as political and military superiority, monopoly of violence, that is, there will be no power superior to itself, and where the *mulk* authority exists, no one else will have a say and will have the power to resort to force.

In general, Ibn Khaldun uses the term *mulk* in two senses. One is the broader sense, where *mulk* encompasses the framework of political order, or the state and political administration. According to Ibn Khaldun, this type of *mulk* is a necessary requirement of human nature. Secondly, Ibn Khaldun uses *mulk* in a narrower sense, representing a more negative and oppressive understanding. This type of *mulk* is characterized by indulgence in comfort, pleasure, and decadence. Due to these negative attributes, Ibn Khaldun views this aspect of *mulk* unfavorably and criticizes it.

In this respect, Ibn Khaldun's concept and definition of *mulk* is very close to the definition of the modern state. On the other hand, Ibn Khaldun makes a serious distinction between *mulk* and state, while the state is mostly translated as dynasty and is related to the people, *mulk* is related to management and control. However, it should be known that what Ibn Khaldun means by *mulk* is what we call the state or political authority today, and what Ibn Khaldun calls the state is the group of people who manage that *mulk*, use the *mulk* and represent the *mulk*. Therefore, from the Khaldun's perspective, the state actually corresponds to a group of people, while *mulk* corresponds to the political authority in the hands of those people.

According to Ibn Khaldun the *mulk* is based on two things: the first is the enthusiasm and nervousness that is called soldiers and the army, the second is the goods and the money that are necessary for this army to survive and to see the situations that the *mulk* needs.

Another concept that Ibn Khaldun frequently uses in his theory related to political power is *hanedanlık*, (dynasty). This concept is often translated as dynasty alongside terms such as state, monarchy, ruler, and dynasty rule. As is known, the history of the state is a phenomenon. For much of human history, the state did not exist; therefore, depending on the context, Ibn Khaldun prefers to use the concept of dynasty in some parts of *The Muqaddimah* while using the concept of state in other parts (Ergül, 2022, 77). There is a very important difference

between dynasty and state, which is that, while dynasty represents a power belonging to a certain family, the state represents an impersonal power. Ibn Khaldun emphasizes that states and dynasties have a life cycle similar to that of real beings -they are born, grow, and eventually die.

According to Ibn Khaldun, the gradual process experienced by states is a social law that occurs independently of individuals' free will. Ibn Khaldun says that every state has a maximum limit it can reach in terms of its *asabiye*, and it cannot go beyond that. Ibn Khaldun considered society and the state as two different concepts. Society is the necessity of people living together, while the state is the inevitable result of living together. In *The Muqaddimah*, the state is defined as follows: The state is the highest political authority in a society and is not subject to any other political authority. In urban societies, it is observed that society is divided into two segments: the rulers and the ruled. The state possesses the capacity to use overwhelming force over the people in society. According to Ibn Khaldun, the state is a necessary product of civilization, and civilization emerged with the settled lifestyle (Berkli, 2019, 63).

Ibn Khaldun sees the state as the organized form of civilized life, which he described as evolving step by step from *bedouin* culture to *hadarian* civilization, based on division of labor and solidarity, from chieftainship to kingship (Ötenkaya, 2022, 27). According to Ibn Khaldun, the emergence of dynasty and state occurs when people come together to unite their powers. People gather around a leader to form a stronger unity and protect themselves against external threats. After the establishment of the state, a new ruling dynasty emerges. Led by a single ruler chosen based on strength and lineage, this leader assumes full authority and initiates the construction and expansion of a stable and prosperous state (Garrison, 2012, 78). Dynasty typically comes from the lineage of this leader and can continue even after the leader's death. In this way, the birth of dynasty and state is a result of people coming together to protect their security and interests. In the context of the establishment of the state, the most fundamental concept Ibn Khaldun put forward is *asabiye*. Ibn Khaldun emphasizes that people need to have common goals to establish a state and they need to act with a sense of solidarity to be able to become powerful (Fatih Özdemir, 2023, 438). Ibn Khaldun grounds the formation and maintenance of social unity with *asabiye*, meaning to hold, to be attached (Yıldız, 2010, 33).

Ibn Khaldun explains the emergence of states as follows;

“It is impossible for people to live without a judge who prevents the rapes they inflict on each other. For this reason, they need a sanction, that is, a person who imposes prohibitions and obstacles. This sanction is the judge over them, and this judge is the ruler who is dominant and oppressive as a requirement of human nature (Khaldun, 2018, 383).”

According to Ibn Khaldun, people need power that can control them. Thus, every society is under the control of a regulatory and prohibitive authority. This is the fundamental factor that leads to the emergence of the state (Akçetin, 2017, 370). Here, Ibn Khaldun put forward an idea that is close to the philosophers we call social contract, but with a very fundamental difference. According to Ibn Khaldun, what will take people out of this state of nature is not the contract, but *asabiye*. A tribe that, thanks to its bonds of *asabiye* wards off internal and external attacks, dominates the whole of society; this is called the state. In other words, the result and purpose of *asabiye* is to establish a state (Yıldız, 2010, 33).

Ibn Khaldun indeed had a diverse political career; serving in various positions within the government at different levels and sometimes even in different states therefore, Ibn Khaldun is very well acquainted with the state, knowing its functioning. Ibn Khaldun, thanks to living in a wide region from Andalusia to Egypt and serving in various positions in the state hierarchy, had the opportunity to observe different social and political events (Rauf, 2016, 455).

Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the necessity of unity and indivisibility of authority for the emergence of a strong state structure. According to his approach, if a political order is to be established somewhere, political leadership must be singular, and authority must be indivisible. This is because in the absence of singularity, that is, if there are many different leaders, they will fall into disagreement, leading to corruption in everything. Therefore, just as there is only one God in the universe, there should be only one leader in the state; otherwise, unity and integrity will be disrupted. Many philosophers have grounded this idea before. Ibn Khaldun's thought is also present in modern state definitions. For instance, according to Weber, the state is the only institution that possesses the legitimacy to use violence, and in this idea, there is also singularity. If there are multiple authorities capable of legitimate violence on a piece of land, there is no state; there is chaos. Indeed, the failure and chaos in states such as Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq today, which are unsuccessful in terms of authority, are primarily due to the existence of multiple authorities.

On this very subject, Ibn Khaldun mentions two different types of states:

1- *Mulk-i Hakiki*: This type of state is fully sovereign and independent. It has achieved both internal and external sovereignty and has a smoothly functioning organization. According to this, the state has established internal sovereignty, is recognized by other countries, collects taxes, has the power to protect its borders, and does not fall under the protection of foreign states. The type of state described by Ibn Khaldun corresponds to what we understand today as a fully independent state (Berkli, 2019, 75). This state form ensures internal security and can

protect itself externally, is economically strong, and has features such as defined borders, a flag, an official language, and a national anthem.

2- *Mulk-i Nakıs*: This type of state is partially independent and not fully sovereign. It is an incomplete state and is dependent on other states. Although power is in the hands of an absolute ruler, other viziers exercise it (Berkli, 2019, 38). According to Ibn Khaldun, if a state cannot protect its borders, collect taxes, send armies and ambassadors, or maintain order within society, this state is incomplete and not fully sovereign.

Ibn Khaldun argues that there are two main instruments that a ruler especially relies on: the sword and the pen. Rulers initially need the sword more than the pen to strengthen their dynasties. However, later on, they need the pen to sustain their state securely. According to the Khaldunian perspective, the state is not subject to the same laws and rules at every stage; different laws and principles apply to each stage of the state.

To illustrate, in the establishment phase of the state, it is necessary to demonstrate its power to people and other states, to ensure its domestic and international legitimacy. Once people and states accept its authority, there is no longer much need to resort to force and the sword; the state should manage its affairs with the pen. According to Ibn Khaldun, the reason for the being of the state is to ensure the safety of people's lives and property, and to secure future generations and their beliefs. In doing so, the administration of the state must treat its subjects with kindness. Only in this way can the subjects and the state become completely integrated (Akçetin, 2017, 363). The state remains standing as long as it can meet the needs of its subjects, prevent oppression, and integrate with the people.

The senility of the state and the falling of state: Ibn Khaldun likens states to human beings; they emerge, develop, age, and eventually perish. According to Ibn Khaldun, just as reaching the age of forty marks the peak of physical, intellectual, and spiritual strength and development for a human, when a person reaches the age of forty, after the period of vigor, their nature pauses for a while and then begins to decline. Ibn Khaldun concluded that the downfall of states is not accidental but inevitable (Akçetin, 2017). Ibn Khaldun asserted that after a state is established, it is subject to the natural and necessary principle of expansion, maturity, and decline (Yıldız, 2010, 33).

It should be known that the state of civilization, state, and settled culture is also the same, because it too has a goal, boundary, and limit. After reaching it, it pauses and slowly begins to decline. Ibn Khaldun determines a period of time for the life of states, which is three generations, each generation consists of forty years, when an *asabiye* group seizes power, it

generally holds power for three generations, with the third generation, that power begins to degenerate and weaken. Eventually collapses.

The fundamental thesis of Ibn Khaldun holds that when a state arises, it must adhere to the natural and necessary law of growth, maturation, and decline. He made this argument by using the states and societies throughout history as examples. In addition, Khaldun emphasizes that states undergo internal change and transformation over time, so even if no external element intervenes in the state, this change and transformation that the state will undergo from within will still lead it to its final end, that is, collapse. This is an issue that distinguishes Ibn Khaldun from modern definitions of politics and the state because, compared to modern perceptions of politics, there is the idea of perceiving the state as more mechanical and like a machine. The state reaches the final limit it can reach, there its *asabiye* is exhausted and the welfare and comfort within the state reaches its final stage, and according to Ibn Khaldun, the state enters the phase of old age and collapse. Ibn Khaldun explains this situation as follows:

“The glory and victory of the dynasty becomes grander, blessings and provisions become abundant as taxes flow in abundance, the sea of prosperity and abundance becomes more abundant, and new generations grow up to adopt these. In this case, the temper of the soldiers softens, and the characters of the dynasty become gentler and more refined. This situation makes their souls cowardly and lazy. This situation is caused by stripping away from the motto of masculinity and bravery, living in a state of gentleness and politeness to the point of feminization in the natural state, separation from bedouinism and its harshness, and the understanding of gaining dignity by reaching for leadership and position and fighting for it. That's why they get into each other and kill each other. Since it leads to the murder of chiefs, public elders and liquidation of prominent statesmen, the sultan discourages them from this and pulls their reins, and at the end of such chaos, emirs, administrators and great statesmen disappear. Those who have the habit of being subject to others and being governed by others will increase in number of servants. This situation dulls the sharpness of the dynasty and weakens its enthusiasm. The first disruptions occur in the dynasty (Khaldun, 2018, 393).”

Wastefulness in expenses goes equally with this because the members of the dynasty are surrounded by the majesty of glory. They go beyond the limits by competing with each other in food and clothing, building magnificent mansions, owning good weapons and breeding skilled horses. In this case, the dynasty's income does not cover its expenses. Thus, disruptions in terms of goods and taxes knock on the door of the dynasty, and in these cases, the people in the border zone and along the borders consider themselves strong because they feel that the dynasty behind them is weakening, and for this reason, they enter into a state of despotism and declaring their independence in the provinces and states they live in. Ibn Khaldun particularly emphasizes the importance of economic life. According to him, the material basis of civilization is its economic structure.

The deterioration of the economic structure will lead to the deterioration of the state, and the deterioration of the state will in turn lead to the deterioration of the country's development (Yavuz, 2013, 341). According to Khaldun, as the welfare rates and the state's expenditures have increased recently, the state has diversified and increased taxes, and the taxes are increasing so much that it is now reaching the stage of oppression and makes the merchants angry, and no one wants to invest. Therefore, on the authority of Ibn Khaldun, the stagnation and collapse of the state begin to spread throughout the state. If the civilization of a city begins to decline and the population there starts to decrease, this leads to a decrease in the arts.

As a result, good, solid buildings and tall buildings with decorations disappear, then, due to the decrease in population, the skilled workforce decreases, as a result, the supply of construction materials such as stone and marble gradually diminishes and eventually disappears completely, and the development of that city or region comes to a halt.

Ibn Khaldun claims that the economic situation of a city can be understood by looking at the situation of beggars and animals such as cats and dogs in that city. If the economic situation of the city is good, the beggars there will be more comfortable, and the animals will be fatter. In fact, according to Ibn Khaldun, even the economic difference between two different cities can be easily understood by looking at these.

Ibn Khaldun argues that prosperity and wealth in a country or in an area increases step by step from the center to the periphery, just like a stream coming out of its source, it brings greenery and wealth to wherever it reaches. The state and the ruler are like a marketplace for the world, so all prosperity and wealth will be available in the market and places close to it. When you move too far away from the marketplace, commercial wealth and abundance will disappear completely. As can be seen here, Ibn Khaldun redefines free and modesty in terms of distance and closeness to the state. Therefore, the dynasty gradually collapses, and the surrounding nations covet and take control of the dynasty, but then they overpower it and establish another dynasty of their own. Ibn Khaldun posits that states undergo a lifecycle lasting three generations or approximately 120 years. The decline starts with two key factors: the military being controlled by mercenaries and excessive spending by the royal household. These issues severely weaken the state, particularly its tribal identity, making it susceptible to attacks by rival tribes with a different social cohesion (*asabiye*) (Kalpakian, 2008, 10).

When Ibn Khaldun's theory on states is analyzed from a holistic perspective, it is noteworthy that he puts forward five stages related to the natural development and decline process of states. In the context of his political views, Ibn Khaldun places great importance on

the state. According to him, the form of civilization (*umran*) is political authority, namely the state. If the state oversteps its functional boundaries, it leads to its deterioration, and the deterioration of the state means the deterioration of the country's development (Yavuz, 2013).

The first stage is the period of absolute victories and great triumphs. In this period, the territories of the weak state are taken over. The resources necessary for the establishment of the state are provided, and order is established. In this stage, the person at the head of the nation sets an example for his subjects, is greatly loved and respected by the people, and the youth and soldiers rally behind him. This is the period when *asabiye* is strongest. The second stage is the period of despotism and disintegration. This period is a natural state of both natural and political power. The person at the head of the state takes over the administration by putting his tribe aside, personalizes the power, and begins to be enslaved by his own arrogance and ego. Those who helped establish the state are forgotten, and their participation in governance begins to be curtailed, sometimes even resulting in exile or death for some of the founders. Meanwhile, the political authority begins to gather supporters for itself. The third stage is the period of prosperity, wealth, rest, and comfort. The fruits of the state are now obtained. Taxes are collected, wealth is acquired, great works of art are created, great cities are built, high statues are erected, pleasure and luxury begin to dominate everywhere, and in this period, abundance and comfort virtually enslave souls. The fourth stage is the period of contentment and peace. The person at the head of the state is content with what his ancestors established. He makes peace treaties with other states. He imitates his predecessors and tries to ensure the survival of the state by maintaining the previous situation. It is a kind of period of stagnation. Finally, there is the stage of extravagance and destruction. The state has now reached its natural limits in terms of power. Although the political authority is strong in the center, it weakens towards the borders. If the state tries to exert more than it can manage by taking control of other territories, those areas become unprotected and ownerless. Therefore, they become vulnerable to enemy attacks. Moreover, extravagance is prevalent in the state's resources.

The ruler breaks the hearts of his subjects and alienates them. Degeneration begins in all areas -social, political, and economic. Friendships and loyalties are broken. Desires and lusts come to the forefront. The army is neglected both materially and spiritually. The state has aged. It has contracted a disease from which it cannot easily recover and has fallen into the clutches of death. Now, this state waits to be swallowed by another state with a stronger *asabiye*, and fear has engulfed everywhere. Ibn Khaldun concluded that the downfall of states is not accidental but inevitable. According to him, the reasons that led to the downfall of past

dynasties have not changed; they are still valid today and will lead to the same downfall in the future (Akçetin, 2017, 17).

Ibn Khaldun argues that the state derives its life from two sources. The first is the military and all other forms of security forces, which are essentially what provide security. The second is economy and welfare. Ibn Khaldun claim that the state cannot survive if the ruling class does not take care of these two issues. Ibn Khaldun places responsibility on rulers regarding the nature of the state.

According to Ibn Khaldun, the state being good or bad is related to the rulers. According to Ibn Khaldun, good governance is when rulers act in accordance with the interests of the people; bad governance is when rulers frighten and oppress the people. The populace will not support the state led by a ruler who maintains bad governance. In times of war, they will revolt and will not unite in difficult situations (Yılmaz, 2019, 27).

Ibn Khaldun lists the reasons for the downfall of a state as follows (Khaldun, 2018).

1) Weakening of *asabiye* (group solidarity): The state emerges from the strength of group solidarity. However, after the state is established, the dominant members of the tribe become involved in wealth, possessions, and entertainment, making it difficult for them to return. These people begin to forget their past and seek more enjoyment and wealth. As a result, their sense of solidarity weakens. They believe that sovereignty is only about money, wearing fancy clothes, and living a comfortable life (Yusofi, 2018, 33).

2) Tyranny and oppression of the ruler: The ruler must have good morals. According to Ibn Khaldun, rulership does not endure with tyranny and despotism. When the ruler becomes tyrannical, does not understand the people's situation, and becomes estranged from society, the state begins to decline.

3) Economic system breakdown: After some time of the state's establishment, rulers and members of the dynasty tend to live luxuriously, indulge in entertainment, wear expensive clothes, build large buildings, and spend money excessively. This situation will cause the state to spend more than it earns. As a result, soldiers' wages will decrease, and their numbers will also decrease because the state can no longer afford to pay them as before. This reduction in soldiers jeopardizes the state's defense. Consequently, the state starts to impose higher taxes on its citizens, but even this is insufficient to halt the decline in the number of soldiers. With the increase in taxes, the loyalty of the people to the state weakens. Ibn Khaldun considers “virtu” to be an indispensable condition for the existence of a state and sovereignty. He particularly argues that those at the head of the state and officials involved in state policy “must absolutely

be virtuous.” Among the virtues, he places “justice” at the forefront. He advises rigorously avoiding oppression of the people and not imposing burdens or taxes that the populace cannot bear (Ünalır, 2015, 75).

Additionally, the state becomes unable to cover its expenses with its revenues, leading to a decrease in the support of previous allies. Moral decay occurs in society, leading to disorder, and as a result, the state enters a process of fragmentation, eventually leading to its dissolution and ultimate disappearance (Özdemir, 2023, 440). This weakens the state not only against neighboring states but also against its own citizens; while neighboring states covet the territories of this state, some of its own citizens may revolt.

4) The problem of the state's borders being wider than its *asabiye*: Ibn Khaldun argues that for a state to expand its borders, it needs a large number of members of the dynasty. According to him, for a member of the dynasty to administer the newly acquired territories, there must be enough members of the dynasty. If a state seizes a region and territory much more than the number of members of the dynasty, there will not be enough soldiers and administrators to defend the center of the state (Yusofi, 2018, 23). When neighboring regions and inhabitants of annexed territories learn that the central state lacks defensive capability, they may launch attacks, placing the state in a precarious position.

According to Ibn Khaldun, a state needs enough administrators from its own *asabiye* to expand its territories. If this is not available, the state's expansion will lead to its downfall. Ibn Khaldun, despite acknowledging that there may be some changes due to social and political conditions in the stages the state goes through, still argues for a deterministic view.

These stages occur in a cyclical process in every state. Different states may experience different stages at the same time. While one state is being established or developing, another may be in decline. However, for all states, going through these stages is a natural and necessary process. According to Ibn Khaldun, who explains the transition between these stages with natural forces in the social structure, this historical process is a social law and is not dependent on individuals' will (Yıldız, 2010, 33). The driving force behind the establishment of the state, *asabiye*, also poses a constant danger within dynasties. This is because different forms of *asabiye* can come together within the state, leading to various problems. In fact, these factions may even attempt to eliminate each other. Therefore, for the state to maintain both stability and control over competition and conflict, as well as to establish sovereignty over wide territories, it needs to rely on another factor, which according to Ibn Khaldun's claim, is religion (Akçetin, 2017, 28).

2.1.6 Religion

Ibn Khaldun's aim in *The Muqaddimah* is to examine civilization (*umran*) and the events that occur within it. Religion is one of the main factors that arise in and influence civilization, and therefore, it falls within the scope of Ibn Khaldun's study and analysis. According to Ibn Khaldun, religion is not necessary for the emergence or development of a social-political life, as such lives have been established without religion. On the authority of Ibn Khaldun, every society has a civilization. These societies can be those where religious rules prevail, as well as developed and prosperous societies that are subject to different laws and principles independent of religion. From the perspective of his general model of civilization, Ibn Khaldun does not view religion as an essential prerequisite for the establishment of social life. Instead, he considers it as one of the possible phenomena that may emerge within a civilization (Yılmaz, 2004). Ibn Khaldun is opposed to the idea that religion is the foundation of the state. He argues that religion and politics are not the same but have different characteristics. He also opposes the idea that there can be a state or society without religion. Religion, according to him, is not natural or rational in nature. Ibn Khaldun claims this by pointing out the existence of states and societies without religion or prophets (Yusofi, 2018, 30).

Ibn Khaldun did not view religion as essential for the formation and progress of states, but he recognized its significance. He emphasized a strong connection between religion and political dominance, asserting that religious influence cannot manifest without social solidarity (*asabiye*), which is essential for every collective political endeavor (Sümer, 2012, 265).

Asabiye alone cannot unite and harmonize hearts; it becomes complete when religion is also involved. The fundamental factor that can eliminate the divisions among those with *asabiye* is religion. In Ibn Khaldun's model, religion and *asabiye* are like inseparable parts of each other. According to Ibn Khaldun, religion is a great unifying force because it eliminates the existing competition and envy among those with *asabiye*, turning their focus solely towards the truth. As a result, when they have a clear vision of their situation and a unified goal, nothing can stand in their way because their objective is singular, and everyone desires the same thing equally and is willing to sacrifice their lives for it. Even if the dynasty they seek to conquer and the state's subjects outnumber them many times over, their motives are contradictory and false. Indeed, the unifying power of religion is clearly evident in the early periods of Islamic history, where Arab tribes with *asabiye*, who had previously never come together and were impossible

to unite, came together through the religious call and grew rapidly in an unprecedented manner in history.

According to him, in great dynasties, bringing hearts together and uniting them at one point is achieved through religion. If hearts are called to the desires of this world, competition and conflicts spread. However, if they are turned towards the Truth, reject falsehood and the world, and turn towards God, purposes unite, competition disappears, conflicts decrease, and cooperation and solidarity emerge (Akçetin, 2017, 365). According to Ibn Khaldun, religion significantly influences the establishment and longevity of societies and civilizations. He contends that major states derive their foundations from either prophetic faith or a righteous movement that strengthens an existing faith (Kalpakian, 2008, 353).

Ibn Khaldun asserts that religion increases *asabiye* and strengthens *mulk*, because religion reduces worldly competition between people, encourages people to unite and turn to Allah, therefore strengthens *mulk* and dynasty. In Khaldun's thought, *asabiye* and religion are deeply related to each other, and there is a complicated connection between them.

Ibn Khaldun grounds his argument that religion has a profound and deep influence on *asabiye* on historical instances from Islamic history. These examples show how tribes and communities with strong religious *asabiye* overcome states far larger in terms of military strength. He asserts that a religious mission or calling cannot succeed without a firm foundation in *asabiye* (Kalpakian, 2008, 350). Religion is seen as a factor that regulates people's behavior, determines social norms and values. According to Ibn Khaldun, religion is a tool that ensures the cohesion of society and is important for maintaining social order and plays a significant role in the establishment and governance of the state. Religion serves to unify society and provide legitimacy to rulers, thereby supporting the stability of the state.

In societies where religious leaders and institutions have influence over governance, it becomes easier to maintain social order and justice. Ibn Khaldun argues that religion is one of the fundamental pillars of the state, and the widespread dissemination of religious values across all segments of society enhances the strength and sustainability of the state.

Ibn Khaldun also examines the relationship between religion and political authority, noting that religious institutions are sometimes used to support or weaken political power. A close reading of *The Muqaddimah* reveals that Ibn Khaldun was well aware of the influence that religion, historical cycles, and identity had on the creation and dissolution of kingdoms. In the coherent model presented by Ibn Khaldun, religion, like other concepts, changes and begins to degenerate over time. The religion in the nomadic phase (*bedouin*) is quite different from the

religion in the sedentary phase (*hadarian*). As society develops, becomes wealthier, and indulges in luxury and prosperity, the position and importance of religion within society also change.



CHAPTER 3: NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

This section will begin by focusing on Niccolò Machiavelli's era and the general mindset of his time. Machiavelli lived in Renaissance Italy (15th and 16th centuries), which marked the peak of the Renaissance, a period of important intellectual and artistic renewal in Europe. The Renaissance is characterized by a renewed interest in ancient Roman and Greek cultures, advancements in art and science, and the spread of human-centered thought and libertarian ideas. However, it was also a period overshadowed by political turmoil, religious divisions, and wars. This complex era likely shaped Machiavelli's worldview and political views, adding a critical and rational perspective to his thinking, and this section will evaluate the contributions of this turbulent era to Machiavelli's ideas.

Next, we will analyze in detail the influence of this era on Machiavelli's worldview. Machiavelli witnessed a series of events that influenced the political and social structure of the time. Particularly, factors such as Italy's political fragmentation, religious divisions, inter-state competition, and power struggles may have played a significant role in shaping Machiavelli's realistic and pragmatic political outlook. The events and observations of this period likely played an important role in shaping Machiavelli's political theories and principles.

Following that, an examination will be made of who Machiavelli was, how he lived, and what positions he held in which states and in what capacities. Machiavelli served as a diplomat, political scientist, and writer in the Republic of Florence. He held political positions in Florence, observed intrigues among powerful families, and had contacts with various leaders in Europe. These experiences shaped his political understanding and the ideas he expressed in works such as *The Prince*.

Subsequently, we will delve into a detailed analysis of Machiavelli's masterpiece, *The Prince*. *The Prince* is considered a significant milestone in political philosophy. While the book explains how a ruler can become a strong and effective leader, it also discusses topics such as state governance, power relations, morality, and justice. Machiavelli approaches politics realistically; rejecting idealistic and moralistic approaches and evaluates politics pragmatically. His influential work will be critically and rationally examined in this section. In the final part of the section, we will thoroughly examine the thesis and concepts upon which Machiavelli built his ideas in *The Prince* and other works.

Machiavelli introduced various concepts in *The Prince*, particularly regarding power, authority, government, and the nature of politics. By offering a comparative perspective on the implications and meanings of these concepts in contemporary politics, we will have the opportunity to relate and reassess Machiavelli's thoughts with present-day politics.

3.1. Ages of Niccolò Machiavelli

To understand the ideas and theories of great figures, it is necessary to first understand and contextualize the climate, geography, state, and era in which these philosophers lived. Machiavelli is a bureaucrat and political thinker who lived in a time period when radical changes were started to be experienced in Europe due to many innovations in the light of the Renaissance movement. Machiavelli, who is considered the most original thinker of the Renaissance period, is a political philosopher who represents the transformation from the Middle Ages to the Modern Age. Italy, as one of the most important sources where the Renaissance flourished, holds the title of Europe's most cultured country. Florence, where Machiavelli lived, was the most prosperous city in Italy during this period in terms of quality of life (Celep, 2018, 17).

The period in which Machiavelli lived was marked by significant political upheavals and wars between nations, and internal revolts, which collectively shaped modern Europe. Concurrently, this era witnessed the cultural and intellectual transformation known as the Renaissance. The Renaissance was a period during which skepticism emerged in nearly every field, and it became evident that the narratives provided by the Church did not align with reality. The Renaissance is characterized by a lack of certainty about the nature of reality but a clear understanding that reality was not what the Church claimed it to be. This period also marked the beginning of intense political and intellectual struggles against the authority of the Church. Machiavelli is fundamentally the child of this Renaissance period.

During this time, people began to challenge the Church's absolute authority and turned towards acquiring knowledge through direct observation, experimentation, and rational thinking. From the fifteenth century onwards, the Renaissance has formed the intellectual foundation of modernization, which is considered as the general process of intellectual and social changes occurring in Europe (Deniz, 2001, 113). In this intellectual climate, Machiavelli introduced an innovative approach to political philosophy. His works, particularly *The Prince*, advocate for a pragmatic and realist political perspective that is independent of traditional moral values.

At the same time, Italy was the crossroads of changes in science, art, and literature occurring in Europe. The main reason for this was that Italy had not lost its contact with ancient times and had carried the intellectual vitality of that period to the present through its city-states. It was almost as if it was shouting out the splendor of the past. Italy was different from many other European states. At least here, the suffocating atmosphere of the feudal system that we are accustomed to was not present (Deniz, 2001, 115).

Historically, Italy of Machiavelli's time was generally a period marked by intellectual activity, social, economic, and political struggles for power between the rising bourgeoisie and the nobility, civil wars, murders and betrayals, sectarian conflicts, and religious wars. The Renaissance country, which presented a dynamic social appearance, was governed by numerous city-states such as the Duchy of Milan, the Republic of Florence, the Republic of Venice, the Kingdom of Naples, and the Papal States of Rome, thus displaying a politically fragmented appearance (Tanrıverdi, 2019, 78).

During Machiavelli's time, Italy was plagued by continuous warfare between city-states. At the same time, these states, constantly in conflict with each other, decided on non-aggression following the Peace of Lodi they signed in 1454. However, it can be said that the principalities' commitment to this agreement was based on a threadbare foundation. The reason for this is that the states in the Italian geography did not feel secure due to their geopolitical positions and their pursuit of fame and glory, indicating that this agreement could be broken by any event. Indeed, the inevitable outcome occurred with the death of King Ferdinand I of Naples, also known as Don Ferrante, in 1494. With the death of the King of Naples, the rulers, no longer adhering to the agreement, did not hesitate to seek help from external powers or invading states to achieve their own interests and weaken the existing principalities in the shared geography.

The states in Italy, which had not yet achieved national unity in their own geography and were in constant conflict, thus created a potential war zone in this area. Although the conflicts and competition created by the principalities seemed like internal problems, neighboring states that had completed their national unity and were politically and militarily stronger than Italy, pursued an opportunistic policy and as mentioned above, greatly benefited from this situation (Yıldırım, 2023, 63). In the 15th and 16th centuries, it is not possible to speak of an Italian state. Instead, the region was composed of city-states such as Venice, Florence, Milan, the Papal States, and Naples. The French kings and the Habsburgs were struggling for dominance over these city-states. On the other hand, the Papacy was a constant source of pressure on these city-

states. These city-states were continually under threat amid these struggles. This political fragmentation in Italy brought about power struggles and an economically collapsed society.

The same situation prevailed in Florence, where Machiavelli lived, and it was the scene of intense power struggles (Celep, 2018, 68). With France's invasion of these states in 1494, a prolonged period of political instability and violence began in the region (Çengel & Mertek, 2017, 210). The ascent of the great European nation-states was both the reason behind and the result of the collapse of the Italian political and military world in the early sixteenth century.

France, Spain, and the Holy Roman Empire waged their battles in Italy and for control over Italy because they were stronger than any individual Italian state at that time. However, their own strength also grew as a result of the intense conflicts during these decades, which led to reforms in their institutions, structures, and foreign policy priorities for the subsequent decades (Lucchese, 2015, 68).

This political instability significantly influenced Machiavelli's understanding of politics. He proposed realist and practical solutions for acquiring, maintaining, and exercising political power, as opposed to idealistic approaches. His political philosophy prioritizes political success and stability over individual virtue. In this context, Machiavelli's thoughts reflect the new thinking style and critical perspective introduced by the Renaissance. The Renaissance, as a period that encouraged individual creativity and critical thinking, provided the foundation for Machiavelli's political analyses. Interest in classical antiquity surged during this time, and the idea that human beings and nature should be studied rationally became widespread. Machiavelli drew inspiration from classical historians and philosophers, using their works as a foundation to develop his own political theory.

In conclusion, Machiavelli's thoughts were shaped by the political and intellectual dynamics of his era and emerged as part of the new thinking style introduced by the Renaissance. By addressing politics independently of morality, Machiavelli became a pivotal figure in laying the foundations of modern political science. In this regard, his works and ideas embody the critical and innovative spirit of the Renaissance. In general, Machiavelli's time in Italy was marked by intellectual mobility, social and political rent battles between the emerging bourgeoisie and the nobility, civil wars, murders and betrayals, and religious conflict. Conflicts and religious warfare occurred throughout this time. The Kingdom of Naples, the Duchy of Milan, Florence, the Republic of Venice, and the Papal State of Rome are examples of dynamic Renaissance nations from a social standpoint. Its political structure is complicated and fractured due to the several city-states that govern it.

Machiavelli indeed faced significant political upheaval in 1512 when the Medici family, supported by the Spanish, took control of Florence, effectively ending the Florentine Republic and Machiavelli's position within the government. Subsequently, in 1513, Machiavelli was implicated in a conspiracy against the Medici, despite his unwillingness and lack of direct involvement. As a result, he was sentenced to imprisonment and subjected to torture (Yavuz, 2023, 310).

Machiavelli's only path to freedom was through exile to San Andrea. His time in exile was a period of reflection and intellectual development, during which he wrote some of his most famous works, including *The Prince* and *The Discourses on Livy*. These works reflect his experiences in politics and his observations of the power dynamics of his time, offering pragmatic insights into the nature of political rule and leadership.

In conclusion, considering the age and states in which Machiavelli lived, it can be argued that four main factors significantly influenced Machiavelli's worldview and his theory of realist politics.

1) Internal issues and instability in Italy: during Machiavelli's time, Italy was divided into many small city-states without a strong central authority. Florence, where Machiavelli lived, was experiencing political strife and instability, with power struggles between the Medici family and other dynasties.

2) External issues and security dilemma: Italy had become so weak that it had not only internal instability but also became a target for external powers. Constantly invaded by France and Spain, Italy was fragmented.

3) The Church and scholastic thought: the Church was very powerful throughout Europe, but due to Italy's deep historical background in Christianity, the Church was even more powerful in Italy. There was intense power struggle between the existing power and the Church. According to Machiavelli, the reason for Italy's failure to achieve political unity was the influence of the Church. As a reaction to this situation, he conceptualized the state/political power as a secular entity, separate from religion, and sought to remove the Church from the secular realm to establish a centralized and strong political unity. In this context, Machiavelli took the initial steps away from the Medieval "Scholastic Philosophy," which was built on the view that "all powers come from God," and many thinkers subsequently followed him. Thus, Machiavelli fundamentally separated religious rules/values from politics, grounding political governance on secular principles (Cengiz, 2022, 13).

4) The Renaissance and reform: Despite all these political struggles and chaos, Italy, and even Florence where Machiavelli was born, was clearly the starting point of the Renaissance. In the late 14th and 15th centuries, just as Italy was the most cultured and wealthy country in Europe, Florence was the most cultured and wealthy city in Italy at that time. Florence was an industrial and banking center. Florentine merchants even lent money to foreign rulers. During this period, a war of ideas was launched against scholastic thought, and in Italy, where many different thinkers and scientists from many different fields were present, flags of rebellion were raised against the church. In every field, from painting to music, biology to architecture, realism and rationalism permeated, and in this age where realism and rationalism pervaded in politics and philosophy, Machiavelli was in a position to carry the flagbearer of realism and rationalism.

3.2. Who is Niccolò Machiavelli

Italian philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli is considered one of the founders of modern political theory and he is also the most important representative of realism in the history of political thought. Machiavelli holds such a unique and important place in this literature that some circles regard him as the founder of political science. Not only in the field of political science but also in many areas of the social sciences, Machiavelli is a significant figure whose life is full of difficulties (Yavuz, 2023, 301).

He was born in Florence in 1469, at a time when political complexity was at its peak in Italy. Machiavelli was born during a period of political uncertainty in Italy, with numerous regions in conflict with each other, each striving for control (Luhtitanti, 2020, 39).

The political, philosophical and social complexity of the period he lived in greatly determined his world of thought, theory and approach to politics. Machiavelli, who entered politics from an early age, just like Ibn Khaldun, worked at many different levels of the state and in many different positions. Machiavelli entered political life in 1494, during the time the Council of Ten governed the Florentine Republic. This council was responsible for managing the republic's domestic and foreign policies. Initially, Machiavelli was sent by the council as an ambassador to other republics and rulers in Italy, and he played a key role in resolving many issues. While handling these external assignments, Machiavelli also worked on organizing Florence's militia (Gül, 2013, 25). He served in the Florentine Republic for fourteen years as a secretary to the city council and as a diplomatic envoy. During his tenure, Machiavelli extensively studied French history, gaining profound insights into the inner workings of the

French government (Gomez, 2002, 92). Throughout his service as a secretary and ambassador, he dealt with a wide range of issues both inside and beyond the state.

Additionally, it gave him a unique opportunity to closely observe and research the attitudes and actions of the political players of the day, both inside and outside of Florence; in particular, it allowed him to study how these players interacted with one another and how they managed the state's internal and international affairs.

He played a crucial role in negotiations between Florence and the French crown to uphold their longstanding alliance. Additionally, Machiavelli authored several short treatises exploring French cultural, social traditions, and political structures. Furthermore, his more theoretical and scholarly works extensively discuss the French monarchy (Gomez, 2002, 90).

Machiavelli rose to prominence in Florentine politics through his service in various diplomatic roles between 1498 and 1512. However, his fortunes took a turn when the republican regime he served collapsed due to the Spanish occupation of Florence in 1512, which was allied with France at the time.

As a consequence, Machiavelli was ousted from his political duties and subjected to fines. The return of the Medici family, backed by Spanish support, marked a significant shift in power dynamics within the city. Approximately eighteen years later, Machiavelli staged a return to prominence. However, his involvement in an assassination attempt against Giuliano de Medici led to his arrest and imprisonment. During three weeks of detention and torture, Machiavelli endured considerable hardship. The Medici played a central role in Machiavelli's life and works. Until 1494 he lived in a city dominated by them, and from 1498 to 1512 he was employed by a government to which they represented a threat and an alternative focus of allegiance for discontented Florentines (Butters, 2010, 64). Eventually, he was released as part of a general amnesty issued by Giovanni de Medici, who later became Pope Leo X. These tumultuous events further shaped Machiavelli's political philosophy and influenced his subsequent Works (Tanriverdi, 2019, 19).

Indeed, the years of exile between 1512 and 1525 were undoubtedly challenging for Machiavelli. Accustomed to the vibrant political life of Florence and having served in numerous diplomatic missions, Machiavelli found the seclusion of his farmhouse existence difficult to bear. His experiences as a diplomat and statesman had shaped his identity, portraying him as a cultured, dynamic, and capable figure within political circles. The contrast between his previous active engagement in state affairs and the isolation of exile would have been stark for Machiavelli. The inability to directly participate in the political arena and the absence of the

stimulating environment he was accustomed to likely posed significant emotional and psychological challenges for him. Moreover, Machiavelli's intellectual curiosity and passion for political theory may have been stifled by the lack of interaction and exchange of ideas with fellow thinkers and statesmen. Despite the hardships he faced during this period, Machiavelli's time in exile provided him with the opportunity for introspection and intellectual pursuits. Machiavelli lost his job and fled into exile in 1512 after the Medici family overthrew the Republican regime.

Machiavelli's period of exile from Florence, which lasted from 1512 to 1519, was a prolific time for his writing. It was during this period that he composed his most famous works, including *The Prince* and *The Discourses on Livy*, reflecting on his political experiences and observations. However, despite all the hardships of this challenging life, Machiavelli is considered one of the most important founding thinkers of modern political philosophy. Like Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli departed from the idealist thinkers before him on many important issues, developing a more rational and realistic understanding of politics. Machiavelli is considered as the first philosopher to liberate political philosophy or theory from the clutches of religion and morality (İbrahim Kurnaz, 2024, 105). Therefore, he is considered the founder of modern political philosophy as a more secular, realist, and rationalist thinker. He argued that politics has its own autonomous functioning, independent of the church, religion, or, in short, divine rules, thereby making this field autonomous and claiming that it is a separate, independent discipline. Machiavelli, one of the most popular political thinkers of the Renaissance era, evaluated politics in a highly realistic manner and expressed it as the effectiveness of obtaining power and maximizing it.

Machiavelli did not show much interest in high moral and religious principles. His main goal was the practical or political interests of power and the state. Especially in his masterpiece, *The Prince*, he clearly states that the prince's primary goal is to protect the interests of the state and to hold absolute power, rather than religion, virtue, and morality (İbrahim Kurnaz, 2024, 121). In other words, Machiavelli takes a clear stance on the relationship between religion, morality, and virtue on the one hand, and politics on the other hand, highlighting the invalidity of these concepts in the political and social realm. However, he emphasizes that morality and religion are quite different from the political realm and claims that the prince, as the sole representative of power and sovereignty, must protect these concepts from his moral and political mindset.

Machiavelli is a realist and rationalist thinker in every respect. According to him, lessons about politics and society can only be drawn by looking at historical realities or current realities. Machiavelli considers anyone who abandons what should be for what is as foolish and likely to lose what they have. Therefore, he does not build his thesis and theory on what should be like Plato, but rather feeds on existing real codes. More than a hundred years after Ibn Khaldun's death, Machiavelli wrote a book that holds a similar esteemed position in Western thought as Ibn Khaldun's *The Muqaddimah* holds in Muslim thought. This is *The Prince*, a remarkable work of political and social analysis, distinguished by its vigor and unparalleled originality (Naz, 2013, 30).

Machiavelli's implicit metaphysics aligns with materialism, asserting that all material entities are inherently competitive due to the physical limitation that no two bodies can occupy the same space at the same time. Consequently, Machiavelli views all men as inherently competitive and potentially hostile towards one another. He posits that man is fundamentally selfish, and only the application of force can compel him to act against his selfish nature, for the greater good or the benefit of others.

Machiavelli rejects the existence of innate moral virtue or an inherent inclination towards virtue, as well as the idea of virtue having any inherent power over the human soul. In his philosophical outlook, Machiavelli tends towards atheism, at least in practice. He explicitly states that in all of human life, there are only two forces at play: virtue and Fortuna. Virtue, according to Machiavelli, represents human power, while Fortuna embodies chance -a force representing the power of unknown and uncontrollable nature over humanity. He denies the existence of a third force, rejecting the notions of divine power, divine will, divine revelation, divine providence, or any divine intervention in history or human affairs. Machiavelli does not accept human nature as good; in general, he believes that human nature is inherently bad and selfish.

In *The Prince*, there are many examples that could be cited as reasons for his characterization as bad or devilish, such as the following advice given by Machiavelli in a section of *The Prince*: A ruler need not have all positive qualities, but he must seem to have them. For everyone sees what you seem to be but, few have experience of who you really are (Machiavelli, Prens, 1993). He also stated "Anyone who wants to act the part of a good man in all circumstances will bring about his own ruin...so it's necessary for a ruler, if he wants to hold on to power, to learn how not to be good (Machiavelli, Prens, 1993)."

Machiavelli is also regarded as a pioneer of realism, one of the oldest schools of thought in international relations (Ilodigwe, 2019). Machiavelli is so realistic that his views in “*The Prince*” are perceived as a violation of moral norms. Since Machiavelli advises the prince to establish a political power that is quite ruthless, entirely self-interested, and power-focused, independent of morality, his contemporaries called him the son of the devil.

In England, the devil is referred to by Machiavelli’s first name, Nick or Nicholas. *The Prince* scorns all principles other than pragmatic ones and does or even care about justice at all only about success. As is known, Machiavelli’s realistic and ruthless approach to politics, society, and history has led to the emergence of a school and approach in political science called Machiavellism. According to this approach, anything is permissible on the path to achieving one’s goals. Machiavelli explains the advantages to a prince of being like both a fox and a lion, stating that the fox is clever and cunning, while the lion is powerful and frightening. Therefore, the political strategy proposed by Machiavelli, known today as Machiavellism, is a strategy of cunning, deceitfulness, mercilessness, and ruthlessness. The shortcomings of this strategy lie in its potential to justify unscrupulous and unethical behavior, as well as its potential to be used as a strategy to achieve absolute power over others, leading to tyranny and dictatorship.

Machiavelli, both because he was the first thinker in whom the wave of modernization in politics appeared, and due to his innovative and exceptional ideas, has been subject to various interpretations and criticisms by different thinkers, both during his lifetime and in subsequent periods (Yıldırım, 2023, 68). It is for this perspective and approach that some circles today use expressions like the son of the devil or the teacher of evil for Machiavelli. Thus, the term Machiavellianism is defined as the political doctrine attributed to Machiavelli, which dismisses the importance of morality in political affairs and asserts that cunning and deception are justified in the pursuit and preservation of political power. This definition suggests that achieving goals in the realm of power justifies the methods used in short ends justify the means. Essentially, Machiavellianism prioritizes the security of the state above moral considerations, emphasizing the pragmatic use of tactics regardless of their ethical implications (Daniel, 2021, 27).

Primarily, when Machiavelli’s work *The Prince* is read as a whole, especially highlighting how Machiavelli teaches evil in it, how he legitimizes all kinds of deceitfulness and ruthlessness for the sake of power, and how he advises a ruler on how to remain in power and maintain absolute control. This topic will be discussed in detail after analyzing Machiavelli’s work *The Discourses*, which is vital for understanding his fundamental thesis.

3.3. Niccolò Machiavelli's Work: *The Discourse on Livy*

As previously stated, the main objective of this thesis is to compare, in the broadest sense, the realist approaches of two thinkers -namely, Ibn Khaldun, based on his primary theory in *The Muqaddimah*, and Machiavelli, through his political approach in *The Prince*- with respect to politics, society, and history. However, since it is not possible to fully understand and interpret *The Prince* without examining Machiavelli's *The Discourses on Livy*, before delving into a detailed analysis of Machiavelli's masterpiece *The Prince*, a general examination of *The Discourses on Livy*, another work by Machiavelli that has become a classic in the history of modern political thought, will be presented to ensure a complete understanding of Machiavelli. It is a puzzling fact that in *The Discourse on Livy* Machiavelli proposes a return to Roman modes and orders while simultaneously proclaiming the radical novelty of his ideas. There is an old Machiavelli who breathes the air of republican Rome and a new Machiavelli who walks a path untrodden by others (Coby, 1999). In *The Discourses* on the First Ten Books of Titus Livy Machiavelli undertook a wide-ranging comparison of ancient and modern states and societies, enlivened by a running contrast between the ancient Roman republic and modern Florence that gives the work much of its polemical force (Najemy, 96, 2010).

Indeed, besides *The Prince*, one of Machiavelli's most important works for understanding his thought is *The Discourses on Livy*. Written in 1517, after *The Prince*, this work presents a perspective and approach quite different from *The Prince*, while also serving to complement it. *The Discourses on Livy* serves as a foundational source for many of Machiavelli's other works. In this text, Machiavelli addresses different topics in each section. Essentially, it is clearly evident that the primary aim of Machiavelli's works, *The Prince* and *The Discourses*, is to determine the governance structure of the Italian states and the ideal qualities that a ruler should possess (Sekman, 103, 2020).

In the first part, of *The Discourses on Livy*, he discusses the importance of wisdom in founding a city, emphasizing the role of public wisdom in the creation of laws. According to Machiavelli, cities or laws established by individuals who lack public wisdom cannot remain functional for long and will eventually decline and disappear. In the second part of the work, Machiavelli examines and analyzes different forms of government. He argues that all existing forms of government will inevitably deteriorate over time. For this reason, he suggests that the Roman Empire adopted a mixed form of government. Machiavelli also believes that for the unification of Italy, a monarchy initially established by a prince would, over time, evolve into

a republic. Additionally, in this fundamental work, Machiavelli describes human beings in their natural state and the emergence of the state and justice with the following expressions;

“At the beginning of the world, due to the scarcity of settled living, people lived scattered for a time like animals. Consequently, the diversity of forms of government arose among people by chance. Later, as their numbers increased, they gathered together and, to better defend themselves, they chose the strongest and bravest among them as a leader, obeying his decisions. After that, they began to understand not only what was harmful and bad, but also what was honorable and good. Because if someone did harm to one who had done good to them, they found those who showed feelings of hatred and compassion among people to be honorable, while accusing others of ingratitude. Additionally, due to the thought that similar evils could be done to them, they took it upon themselves to create laws to avoid such evils and to punish those who did not comply. (...) As a result, when they later had to choose a prince, they chose not the strongest, but the most prudent and just one. “(Machiavelli, 31, 1998).

Initially, as the population of people living in scattered areas increases, relationships develop, and to protect themselves, they place themselves under the protection of the strongest and bravest among them, making that person their leader and obeying him. They establish laws to reward the good and punish the bad, thus giving rise to justice. According to Machiavelli, this situation eventually passes from father to son, and the sons may not always be as virtuous as their fathers; they may fall into luxury and indulgence, leading people to harbor resentment towards them. Resentment brings fear, and fear leads to tyranny, resulting in the emergence of the first form of government, monarchy, and its corrupted form, tyranny.

Against the tyrant, the best and bravest in society will rise up. The people will follow them, and thus the tyrant is overthrown, and these good, brave individuals are placed at the head of the government as saviors. They establish governance among themselves; initially, everything goes well; the rulers adhere to the laws, prioritize the common good over personal interests, and act justly. This form of governance is aristocracy. However, when power passes into the hands of their sons, a situation similar to that in monarchy arises. The sons who inherit the rule from their fathers change the governance, showing no respect for anything, and thus the second form of government, which is the corrupted form of aristocracy, oligarchy, emerges (Duyar, 468, 2021).

What happens to the tyrant will also happen to them, and the weary populace will become the vehicle for anyone who promises to take revenge on the tyrants, thus enabling that person, with the support of the people, to remove the tyrants from power. Fearing the re-establishment of tyrannical rule, the people will organize a form of power where one person or a small minority will not have effective control, thus establishing popular governance. However, a

generation later, the bad examples of governance from the past will be forgotten, and everyone will begin to act according to their own whims. This leads once again to chaos and a return to single-person rule (Duyar, 468, 2021). Every country is not strong or resilient enough to repeat this cycle of development throughout its history, and during a period of chaos, it may also fall under the yoke of a neighboring country.

At the same time, Machiavelli chose Livy's history of Rome as his textual interlocutor because of its abundant material on the early history of the ancient republic, which was, for Machiavelli, the exemplary state by which all others, ancient and modern, should be assessed. This was not a purely theoretical inquiry (Najemy, 96, 2010).

In the third part, Machiavelli emphasizes that those who establish a state and design its laws must always keep in mind the inherent nature of people, which he believes to be fundamentally bad. He stresses that when individuals are free to act, they are likely to commit wrongdoings, and this reality should be considered by lawmakers and founders.

In the fifth chapter, Machiavelli argues that the person with the least ambition for possessing something should be appointed as its guardian. Therefore, in the Roman Empire, it was crucial to entrust liberty to the people, because the nobility, driven by a desire to seize power, posed a greater threat to governance than the common people. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli emphasizes this point by arguing that, since the people constitute the majority, a prince must first win their favor. Similarly, in *Discourses on Livy*, Machiavelli outlines a republican system centered on the people.

Machiavelli stresses that the nobility cannot be trusted, and that the people are more reliable. He highlights that, in times of chaos, the nobility is likely to be more ruthless than the people. Additionally, Machiavelli argues that the common people are more open to education and more easily persuaded, whereas the nobility, due to their cunning and strategic thinking, are resistant to learning and constantly threaten the state with their ambitions and self-interests.

In the seventh chapter of his work, Machiavelli discusses the importance of providing an outlet for societal hatred. He argues that the laws should include the right to accuse individuals who provoke harm to the republic. If legal avenues for accusations are absent, people will take justice into their own hands. Therefore, Machiavelli stresses that lawmakers must thoroughly account for everything when designing laws, ensuring there are legitimate ways for grievances to be addressed within the legal framework to prevent individuals from resorting to personal retribution.

In the eighth chapter, Machiavelli addresses the issue of accusations that are not based on any substantial grounds and instead rely on suspicion, often escalating to slander. He argues that such situations create a politically insecure environment and harm the republic. According to Machiavelli, in these cases, accusations should only be made through formal channels and supported by evidence. He insists that if an accusation is to be made, it must be through the courts. This is because rumors without evidence circulating among the people lead to uncertainty and distrust, undermining both the legal process and political stability.

In the eleventh chapter, Machiavelli extensively discusses the concept of religion, its importance, and its role within society. According to him, religion is the most fundamental tool for ensuring the continuity of the state and the unity of society. People are more afraid of breaking an oath to God than of violating laws. In Machiavelli's view, any gap in authority or the legitimacy of power within the state can only be filled by religion, which serves as a critical force for maintaining order and obedience. In terms of the stance Machiavelli adopted, he was not fundamentally opposed to religion; however, he was critical of Christianity and presented the church as a factor contributing to the inability to achieve political unity (Duyar, 465, 2021). Regarding this matter, Machiavelli expressed the following in his work *Discourses*:

The popes continued to invite new people to Italy and instigate new wars, both for the benefit of religion and to satisfy their own ambitions. When they elevated a prince to power, they would often regret it, quickly changing their minds and seeking ways to eliminate him. When they found themselves insufficient, they allowed others to seize control of the regions they could not dominate. The princes feared them, as these popes, unless they had been outmaneuvered by emperors and had not been captured under the guise of friendship, were sure to emerge victorious, whether through fighting or fleeing (Machiavelli, 75, 1998).

As clearly stated in *The Discourses*, Machiavelli views religion as a significant and necessary tool for the unity of the state. However, he critiques the church and the order it maintains. In this context, while emphasizing the role of religion in ensuring social unity, he negatively assesses the church's influence over political authority.

In the fifteenth chapter, Machiavelli examines the relationship between religion and the military, asserting that the minds of soldiers can be best filled with faith and belief. He emphasizes that religion serves as the most motivating factor for an army. In the fifty-first chapter, Machiavelli explains that when rulers appear to be doing what they must willingly and knowingly, their respect among the people increases. He argues that maintaining such a perception can bring greater benefits to the rulers, as it enhances their legitimacy and support from the populace.

As clearly indicated by the thoughts presented in *Discourses on Livy*, it becomes evident that understanding Machiavelli is incomplete without reading this work. When only *The Prince* is read, Machiavelli may appear to be a purely realist, ruthless, and Machiavellian figure. In reality, to fully grasp Machiavelli's thought, *Discourses on Livy* is just as essential as *The Prince*, as it provides a more nuanced perspective on his political philosophy and enriches the overall comprehension of his ideas.

While Machiavelli establishes a system characterized by violence and a strong monarchy in *The Prince*, in *The Discourses on Livy* he endeavors to develop a more complex and constitutional system. In *The Discourses*, Machiavelli introduces and elucidates a governance model that is based on republican principles, emphasizing the importance of public good and civic duty. Therefore, to better understand Machiavelli's theories, it is crucial to consider and evaluate his works as a whole, as this comprehensive approach reveals the depth and complexity of his political philosophy. As a result of his historical studies, Machiavelli concludes that in order to establish or maintain a republic in a corrupt city, it is necessary to steer the republic toward a structure closer to a monarchy rather than a popular government (Machiavelli, 1998, 27).

In fact, the title of the book refers to Titus Livius, a significant Roman historian known for his objectivity. He held no official position and focused solely on producing impartial historical works. It is well-known that he examined and narrated the history of the Roman Empire from its founding. Unlike many historians of his time, Livius neither glorified the Empire nor the Republic; instead, he approached both with a highly objective perspective. In this regard, Titus Livius is admired and followed by Machiavelli for his impartiality and objectivity, as well as for his ability to analyze history more independently than other disciplines.

In general, Machiavelli's *The Discourses* aims to draw lessons for modern states based on the political structures and governance mechanisms of the Roman Republic. The work focuses on republican governance, delving deeply into topics such as the roles of the people and the elites, the importance of laws, and the concept of liberty. The book is divided into three main sections: it concentrates on the rise of Rome, the constitution, and the power of the people. Machiavelli discusses the people's participation in governance, the power of laws, and the protection of liberty. He then examines Rome's relations with external nations and its military strategies. In this section, Machiavelli emphasizes the importance of military strength and

conquest for the sustainability of states. Finally, he analyzes the reasons behind Rome's decline, exploring how the mistakes of leaders and moral corruption weakened the republic.

At the same time, in Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy*, the concept of a republic is addressed in a way that emphasizes popular governance and political participation. Machiavelli argues that the foundation of a good republic lies in the presence of virtuous citizens and strong laws. He asserts that the republic should be based on the will of the people, claiming that this makes it more stable and just compared to authoritarian regimes. Additionally, he highlights the importance of the separation of powers and mechanisms of accountability, as these can prevent rulers from infringing on the rights of the citizens. Through historical examples, Machiavelli discusses how a strong republic can be established and maintained.

The main themes of the book are liberty, republicanism, political innovation, and the prevention of corruption. Therefore, in order to better understand both Machiavelli's view of history and his political theory, as well as *The Prince*, where this theory was developed, it is essential to thoroughly comprehend his work *The Discourses*.

3.4. Niccolò Machiavelli's Masterpiece: *The Prince*

Throughout the history of thought, there are few masterpieces that have had a great impact, influencing the course of history, the governance of societies, and the forms of government of states. Indeed, the work of this diplomat, who was born in Florence, Italy, can be considered one of the most important works among these masterpieces. Although written centuries ago, this work titled *The Prince* by Machiavelli still retains its depth of meaning in today's political, philosophical, and historical background. The impact of this important work on the history of politics is quite significant; it has influenced many different statesmen, politicians, and dictators, and has been read aloud and admired by Mussolini, Stalin, and Lenin. It is also the bedside book of the 14th Louis (Deniz, 2001, 117).

The period in which Machiavelli lived was a complex period in many respects, such as the division of Italy into many different city-states, the high political tensions between these states, the scholastic thought imposed by the church, and in such a period and world of thought, Machiavelli built a new realist and rationalist system of thought. As a bureaucrat in the city-states of Italy during a tumultuous period marked by sovereignty claims from foreign powers like France and Spain, Machiavelli found himself in a unique position to closely observe the

power struggles and conflicts that ensued. This firsthand experience provided him with valuable insights into the causes and consequences of these conflicts, which he meticulously reflected upon in his seminal work, *The Prince*.

In this treatise, Machiavelli delved into the intricacies of political maneuvering, offering detailed analyses and practical suggestions on how rulers could navigate and even exploit these power dynamics to their advantage. Through his astute observations and pragmatic advice, Machiavelli sought to provide a blueprint for effective governance amidst the chaos and uncertainty of his time. Simultaneously, to amplify the impact of his work, Machiavelli opts to portray the exceptional historical situation as the new norm: not merely a temporary crisis to be overcome by returning to the old golden age of the earlier Italian Renaissance, but instead the dawn of a new era that paradoxically exposes the enduring and intrinsic nature of politics itself.

According to Machiavelli, only now can politics be openly recognized for what it has always been: a tragic clash of forces, where violent conflict is commonplace and inevitable (Lucchese, 2015, 68).

As we mentioned above, even the period of exile was very productive for Machiavelli. For instance, it was during these years that he produced some of his most influential works, including *The Prince* and *The Discourses on Livy*, which continue to shape political thought to this day. Thus, while exile may have been a difficult period for Machiavelli, it also proved to be a fruitful one in terms of his intellectual and philosophical development. Machiavelli's work *The Prince*, completed in 1513 and dedicated to Giuliano Medici, then later dedicated to Lorenzo Medici after Giuliano's death in 1516, indeed served multiple purposes.

The Prince is Machiavelli's most important work in which he expresses his views on politics and the issue of power. In the first part of his book, Machiavelli classifies forms of government. Then, in turn, he discusses how principalities are established; the measures that need to be taken to avoid their downfall, the issue of the military and warfare, and the strategy a ruler should formulate to maintain power.

In the final section of his work, Machiavelli explains that his aim is to establish an independent and unified Italy. In short, in *The Prince*, he attempts to derive from history and his own experiences of the time how a principality can be acquired, maintained, and lost. Firstly, Machiavelli sought to offer practical advice and counsel to rulers, aiming to contribute to the betterment of his country through his insights and experiences. Secondly, by dedicating his work to powerful figures like the Medici, Machiavelli aimed to reestablish himself within the political sphere and regain his former position of influence. Through *The Prince*, Machiavelli

aimed to demonstrate his expertise in political matters and highlight his understanding of statecraft, governance, and the dynamics of power. By presenting his ideas in a comprehensive and influential work, he sought to prove his worth as a valuable advisor and strategist to rulers. Furthermore, the dedication of the work to prominent political figures like Giuliano and Lorenzo Medici was a strategic move by Machiavelli to align himself with those in power and to potentially secure a return to political relevance (Lucchese, 2015, 73).

When evaluating Machiavelli's masterpiece, it is important to note a particular aspect: that this work was written with political rather than scientific purposes in mind. *The Prince* presents a theory that purports to be scientific by offering explanations of political reality, predictions, and strategies for effective action to participate in and influence that reality. Its aim, therefore, does not merely understand, but also to spur into action, without which any understanding would be entirely futile. The book was not intended for detached political scientists or for every prince in any era, irrespective of historical context. Rather, it was written specifically for the Florentine prince during a critical and unique period in the city's history. In this regard, its nature is more practical and political than strictly scientific (Lucchese, 2015, 77). By associating himself with influential patrons, Machiavelli aimed to gain favor and recognition, which could potentially lead to opportunities for him to reenter the political arena and reclaim his former status.

In essence, *The Prince* served both as a practical guide for rulers and as a strategic tool for Machiavelli to assert his expertise and reintegrate himself into the political landscape. Through his work, Machiavelli sought not only to advise rulers but also to position himself for a potential return to political power. Machiavelli indeed lived in a tumultuous period marked by regional fragmentations, political disagreements, and constant internal and external conflicts.

During this time, Italy faced continuous wars, invasions, and power struggles, leading to significant losses and suffering. Machiavelli observed how the inadequacy of rulers contributed to Italy's vulnerability and the repeated plundering and destruction of its most powerful city-states.

Figures such as King Louis XII of France and King Ferdinand II of Aragon played prominent roles in these events, leaving Italy in a state of instability, defeat, and anarchy. In Machiavelli's political theory, these turbulent realities are central. He critiqued the failures of leadership and the moral dilemmas faced by rulers, seeking to understand why cities prosper or decline, why political decisions often go awry, and what qualities make a leader effective.

He grappled with the role of fate and chance in political events, as well as the pragmatic considerations of means and ends. Machiavelli confronted the difficult choices leaders must make, sometimes between two evils, and emphasized the importance of realism in understanding and addressing political challenges. Through his works, Machiavelli aimed to provide practical solutions to the political and moral dilemmas of his time. He approached events with a realistic perspective, seeking to navigate Italy and Florence away from anarchy and towards stability and prosperity.

Machiavelli's insights into the complexities of politics and governance continue to resonate, offering valuable lessons for leaders grappling with similar challenges today. Machiavelli indeed made significant contributions to political thought with his works, particularly *The Prince* and *The Discourses on Livy*. His argument for the separation of politics from conventional morality was groundbreaking in its time and continues to be a subject of debate and analysis. *The Prince* is often seen as a pragmatic guidebook for rulers, emphasizing the importance of power, authority, and the manipulation of circumstances for political gain.

Machiavelli's insistence on the practical realities of politics, even if it meant acting immorally by conventional standards, has led to both positive and negative interpretations of his ideas. On one hand, Machiavelli's realism has been praised for its honesty and its acknowledgment of the harsh realities of political life. His focus on the effective exercise of power and the importance of stability and order in governance has been seen as a valuable insight into the nature of politics. On the other hand, Machiavelli has been criticized for advocating ruthless and amoral behavior in the pursuit and maintenance of power. His willingness to set aside traditional moral considerations in favor of expediency has led some to view him as a cynical and morally bankrupt thinker.

Despite the controversy surrounding his ideas, Machiavelli's contributions to political thought are undeniable. His emphasis on the importance of understanding and navigating the complexities of political power has influenced generations of thinkers and continues to shape discussions about politics and governance today.

In another respect, it is observed that Machiavelli challenged other political philosophers of his time by not emphasizing the importance of the prince, who embodies the powers of the sole political form, in his rule. According to him, power constitutes the most important aspect of political philosophy. This aspect is directed towards a specific purpose based on the public interest: to establish a strong state and to maintain this state (Kurnaz, 2024, 113).

The book *The Prince*, published in 1532 with the permission of Pope Clement VII (1478-1534), although it was not met with a negative reaction at first, was praised by various circles for atheism, immorality and despotism in the violent environment that occurred due to the religious conflicts that occurred after the 1550s. It was evaluated as. On the basis of various interpretations made until modern times and even until today, Machiavelli has been accused by very different circles over this book, and the concept of Machiavellianism, meaning “it is legitimate to resort to all kinds of means to achieve goals, regardless of moral value judgments, for the sake of political power” was derived from the thinker’s surname (Tanrıverdi, 2019, 45).

Indeed, the term “Machiavellianism” has become synonymous with cunning, deceitful, and manipulative behavior in politics and beyond. Machiavellianism is the general name for a political interpretation and style of action that emerged due to Machiavelli’s new perspective on the relationship between politics and morality, which deviated from the tradition that generally dominated his time. This interpretation and style of action have captivated political actors for centuries (Kesgin, 2015, 125). Machiavelli is seen as a person who believes everyone works solely for their own interests and who finds justification for the actions of dictators. The adjective “Machiavellianism” has become synonymous with ruthless leaders willing to do anything to maintain and increase their wealth and power (Cengiz, 2022, 63).

This association can be traced back to Machiavelli’s own writings, particularly in *The Prince*, where he discusses the pragmatic use of power and the necessity of sometimes acting in ways that might be considered unethical or immoral by conventional standards. Over the centuries, Machiavelli’s ideas have been interpreted and misinterpreted in various ways, often emphasizing the darker aspects of his philosophy.

His willingness to prioritize the acquisition and maintenance of power over traditional moral values has contributed to the perception of Machiavellianism as a negative trait associated with manipulation, ruthlessness, and amorality. It's worth noting, however, that Machiavelli’s ideas were not solely focused on advocating for cruelty or treachery.

He also emphasized the importance of stability, order, and effective governance, albeit sometimes through means that might be considered unscrupulous. Nevertheless, the lasting impact of Machiavelli’s work on political thought and the enduring association of his name with cunning and manipulation demonstrate the profound influence he has had on our understanding of power and politics. Machiavelli’s emphasis on politics as an autonomous field separate from conventional morality was a significant departure from previous political thought. He argued

that politics should be analyzed based on its own laws and dynamics, rather than being constrained by moral or religious considerations.

By positing that politics has its own laws and principles, Machiavelli challenged the prevailing notion that political authority derived from divine or moral authority. Instead, he focused on the practical realities of power dynamics, strategy, and statecraft. This perspective led Machiavelli to prioritize political effectiveness and stability over adherence to traditional moral principles. He famously argued that rulers should be willing to employ deceit, manipulation, and even cruelty if necessary to maintain power and ensure the stability of the state. Machiavelli's rejection of previous ethical understandings and his prioritization of political expediency marked a significant shift in political thought. His work laid the groundwork for modern political science by emphasizing the importance of empirical observation and analysis in understanding political phenomena. While Machiavelli's ideas have been controversial and often criticized for their perceived immorality, they have also contributed to a more nuanced understanding of politics as a complex and dynamic field. His emphasis on the autonomy of politics continues to influence political theory and practice to this day.

Machiavelli systematically reflected this code in all his works. Reality has now gradually spread to all areas of life. In this period, it is possible to see reality reflected not only in politics but also in art, painting and literature. In an age when reality was sought in every field, Machiavelli sought reality in politics and social science. Like other thinkers, Machiavelli does not build his thesis on what should be therefore he does not exhibit an idealist approach. On the contrary, he analyzes on what is and builds his thesis on this equation, so he is quite realistic. Machiavelli takes history as a reference in his works and gives examples by drawing lessons from historical events.

Machiavelli attaches great importance to history because, according to him, the past is deterministic and realistic, so in order to avoid the mistakes made by those in the past in politics and administration, it is necessary to know those mistakes and learn from them. Believing that realism depends on knowing history, Machiavelli attaches particular importance to heroes who achieved great success in the past, such as the Prophet Moses, the Prophet David and Alexander the Great, and talks about them at length in his work.

When reading the work titled *The Prince*, the first notable aspect is Machiavelli's realism. Machiavelli is so realistic that some thinkers have described him as the teacher of evil.

Machiavelli is also considered one of the pioneers of realism, one of the oldest schools in International Relations (Ilodigwe, 2019, 27).

Machiavelli, at a time when Italy was in disarray and was divided into many different states, where some were under the rule of the Spanish and some were under the rule of the French, was strongly influenced by the age and the events of the age, and wrote his work titled *The Monarch* for the Florentine king Lorenzo de Medici. After giving all the advice, at the end of the book he tells Lorenzo de Medici that everything is possible, unite us now. Machiavelli focuses on the concepts of *virtu* and *fortune* throughout the book, but rather than making a definition of *virtu* like Socrates or Plato, Machiavelli makes a more realistic definition of *virtu*.

The period during which Machiavelli lived was a time when almost every concept, value, and institution was subjected to a process of questioning. The method of interpreting events and phenomena by focusing on their natural processes rather than adhering to the traditional framework of meaning was prominent during this period. Therefore, it is natural that such a perspective is reflected in Machiavelli's intellectual style (Kesgin, 2015).

On the authority of Machiavelli, the captain who can manage his ship under all circumstances is the virtuous one. According to Machiavelli, practicality outweighs moral goodness for a prince. He argues that if moral *virtu* hinders the maintenance of political power, a prince must learn to set moral considerations aside. The prince must always prioritize what is expedient to preserve political authority. To maintain power, a prince must project an image of *virtu* and honor, even if genuine *virtu* and honor are not necessary.

It is crucial for a prince's authority that he appears virtuous and honorable, regardless of whether he truly embodies these qualities. Machiavelli focuses on the concepts of *virtu* and *fortuna* throughout the book, but rather than making a definition of *virtu* like Socrates or Plato, Machiavelli makes a more realistic definition of *virtu*. According to Machiavelli, the captain who can manage his ship under all circumstances is the virtuous one.

In conclusion, Machiavelli, who read historical events and derived lessons from the past, compiled his insights into a book titled *The Prince*. His primary aim was not *virtu*, honor, or morality, but rather power and strategies for how a prince can remain in power. *The Prince*, which contains such strategies and advice, has been read by various circles. A significant majority have interpreted the work to mean that Machiavelli believed the ends justify the means (Yavuz, 2023, 311).

From a different perspective, it is argued that Machiavelli actually intended to highlight the dangers of being ruled by a single person, thereby demonstrating how a ruler's governance

could lead to various evils. This view is also supported by Machiavelli's republican theses in *Discourses*. In this context, the common point of the two perspectives is the idea that *The Prince* is considered a kind of advice book, offering recommendations to the king. At the same time, it is believed that while *The Prince* appears to give advice to the king, it also provides important lessons to the people.

3.4. Main Concepts of Niccolò Machiavelli's Prince

Great thinkers' classical works often contain a conceptual framework that reflects their way of understanding and explaining the world. For instance, Plato's *Republic* portrays an ideal society and state model, while Aristotle's works such as *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics* explain his moral and political philosophy. These conceptual frameworks are important for understanding the thinkers' thought worlds, as they are built upon their fundamental concepts, theories, and thoughts. The concepts in these works exhibit a high level of internal coherence and are used in a mutually supportive manner.

Machiavelli attributes significant meanings to various concepts, turning them into the main pillars of his theory and constructing his thesis using these concepts. Essentially writing as a guide for a ruler, but also aiming to regain his lost position in politics through this work, Machiavelli establishes an important conceptual framework in his work *The Prince*, turning his back on the traditional world and presenting a new and modern paradigm. Like Ibn Khaldun, who essentially wrote a history book, this thinker, having read history and being familiar with the depth of historical events, to some extent sets aside ideal and traditional ties to develop a more deterministic and realistic understanding of politics. In doing so, Machiavelli advances step by step with various concepts, almost turning these concepts into the locomotives of his work. We will explore and examine these concepts in detail below: Virtù, Fortuna, Historicism, Religion, and the relationship of power.

The Machiavellian context of power and authority has gained increased attention to the contemporary world due to his methods and ways that a prince or a leader can go just to keep his/her power. His views in *The Prince* are perceived as the violation moral norms (Daniel, 2021, 17).

After explaining the place, meaning, and importance of these concepts in Machiavelli's theory, we will also evaluate the theoretical implications of these concepts in the contemporary political thought. Because the Machiavellian context of power and authority has gained

increased attention to the contemporary world due to his methods and ways a prince or leader can go just to keep his/her power.

His views in *The Prince* are perceived as the violation of moral norms. The world presently is confronted with serious issues of leadership and authority and as to which ideas a leader can use in maintaining his or her power (Nicholas, 2021, 13).

3.4.1. Virtù and Fortuna

Indeed, the two most important concepts highlighted in Machiavelli's work are *fortuna* and *virtù*. Although these two concepts are the main concepts of Machiavelli's fundamental work, he does not directly define them in any part of his study. Instead, he continuously attributes conventional meanings to these concepts in different contexts, much like Ibn Khaldun did with the concept of *Asabiye*, broadening their meanings and reusing these concepts. Since Machiavelli uses these concepts in very broad, deep, and conventional senses, it seems somewhat difficult to confine them to specific meanings. For instance, according to Leo Strauss, the concept of *virtù* is so ambiguous that in most cases it is impossible to say which type of *virtù* is being discussed. For example, Russell Price says that *virtù* has fundamentally three meanings: moral, political, and military (Özmkas, 2019, 7).

Both concepts are known as part of the legacy of the Roman Empire. The Romans likened *fortuna*, or fortune, to a woman. The goddess of fortune was female. The way to persuade fortune was to treat her like a man. Machiavelli also assigns meanings to these concepts similar to those of the Romans. For instance, according to him, *fortuna* is like a woman: strong, unreliable, malevolent, lurking to attack, and not showing the slightest weakness towards men.

Fortuna is like a woman, and to seize her, one must act impulsively. Machiavelli expresses this comparison in his work *The Prince* as follows:

“Since I believe that fortune is like a woman, I support the opinion that it is better to act impulsively rather than thoughtfully to control her. Experience shows that men who act violently more often prevail over those who act calmly. Therefore, fortune is always a friend to the young, because they are less cautious and more passionate, and command with greater boldness.” (Machiavelli, 1993, 132).

In other ways, the concept of *virtù* as used by Machiavelli is not equivalent to Ancient Greek philosophers' the concepts of *virtù*, goodness, and beauty. This concept, which has its roots in the Roman Empire, is more closely related to masculinity and entails a different meaning. The root of the word *virtù*, *vir*, meant the conditions of being a man. it must be clearly

understood that any intellectual endeavor to understand Machiavelli, and specifically *The Prince*, necessarily goes through these two concepts (Özmkas, 2019, 12).

In this context, for a person to possess *virtu* means having qualities such as wisdom, fearlessness, righteousness, generosity, and cunning. It represents a political *virtu*. According to Machiavelli, the decisive factor in winning is *virtu*. A person, with *virtu*, strives to change *fortuna*, which expresses the slipperiness or uncertainty of human affairs, in their favor (Cengiz, 2022, 45). *Virtu* is a term that gives the ruler the abilities to protect himself from the winds of *fortuna* and to seek the goddess's favor.

This, in turn, creates fame, respect, and success, and establishes security for power. Since Machiavelli lived in a period of political complexity at its peak and chaos caused by civil wars that killed thousands of people, he attributed different concepts to the notion of *virtu*, rather than *virtu*, thus adding a new perspective to the concept. According to Machiavelli, *virtu* is a concept that endows the prince with the abilities to protect himself from the whims of *fortuna*, attract the goodwill of *fortuna*, thereby gaining fame, honor, and victory, and establish security for his government (Poyraz, 2019, 18).

Machiavelli uses the concept of *virtu* to describe the administrative skills a ruler must have under normal circumstances to ensure the unity of the state and maintain public order. During wartime, the same concept corresponds to the strategic ability a commander must demonstrate to win the war. For Machiavelli, *virtu* means being able to maintain political power and not losing control of the country, regardless of the circumstances.

With this usage, Machiavelli gives the concept a nature that is no longer connected to morality, contrary to its traditional meaning. Generally, in Machiavelli's works, the concept of *virtu* has been used to portray individuals who stand firm in the face of difficulties without giving up (Tanriverdi, 2019, 43).

Fortuna, which corresponds to concepts like luck and chance, is quite different from *virtu*, which Machiavelli describes the ruler's own administrative skills. He uses the term to express situations where events and processes go beyond the ruler's control (Cengiz, 2022, 9). Machiavelli does not attribute a meaning to the concept of *virtu* that is contrary to tradition, but rather he expands its meaning and adds new conventional connotations. The thinker uses *fortuna* in a sense close to the meaning *map* in ancient texts. Derived from the Latin word *fors* meaning chance and the verb *ferre* meaning to bring, *fortuna* is translated into English as luck, fortune, and fate. In its historical usage, this concept does not refer to a transcendent power that comes from outside and arbitrarily governs human life.

Fortuna, often used in the sense of chance in history, is a female deity with a capricious nature, who sets various traps and tricks for humans and whose actions are unpredictable. She is a deity who must be avoided and to whom gratitude must be shown by offering various gifts. Sometimes making extremely incompetent and ordinary people rulers, and sometimes bringing about the downfall of those who represent the ruling position well, *fortuna* has been defined by tradition as a power superior to *virtu* (Tanriverdi, 2019, 75). Machiavelli explains that fortune is not an excuse for those rulers who fail. *Fortuna*, he says, controls only half of human actions, as people can control the other half. Machiavelli argues, fortune is a woman, and if men are virtuous enough to act according to the spirit of their age and impose their own domination on her, they can achieve great success without being completely endangered by her potential interference. Machiavelli (1993) states that, It is better to be bold than cautious when dealing with fortune, because women more quickly yield to bold men; similarly, fortune hands over states to bold rulers.

Fortuna can be harsh at times, and when it is harsh, it cannot be resisted. However, when its harshness diminishes, it can be directed and controlled, and we can take advantage of it. Machiavelli emphasizes that fortune is like a woman and, as a result, is inclined to be attracted to masculine qualities. In this way, Machiavelli suggests that allying with fortune, learning to act in harmony with her powers, and neutralizing her changing nature makes it a real possibility for a person to always succeed in their endeavors (Skinner, 2002, 7).

Machiavelli likens *fortuna* to a river in his work *The Prince*, and expresses this idea with the following words:

“I liken fortuna to one of those violent rivers that, when they become enraged, flood the plains, tear down trees and buildings, and carry away soil from one place to deposit it in another. Everyone flees before them, and yields to their power, unable to resist in any way. Yet, though this is their nature, when the weather becomes fair, people can make provisions against them with dykes and dams so that, when they later rise, either their force is diminished, or their effect is more easily withstood (Machiavelli, 1993, 136).”

From the above explanation, it can be understood that in Machiavelli’s perspective, this concept expresses the uncertainty, changeability, and slipperiness that come with being human, with human freedom. Since even the most well-designed and determined plans can always be subject to error. To illustrate, a victory thought to be won can result in great destruction, sometimes, predictions can be misleading. However, in Machiavelli’s terminology, the concept of *virtu* is more dependent on the individual than on *fortuna*. According to Machiavelli, *virtu* is a concept that endows the prince with the abilities to protect himself from the whims of *fortuna*,

attract the goodwill of *fortuna*, thereby gaining fame, honor, and victory, and establish security for his government (Poyraz, 2019).

Virtu is a concept that, to some extent, suggests taking control rather than the fatalism brought by the concept of *fortuna*. *Virtu* is closely related to human abilities and skills because through one's own intelligence, abilities, and skills, one can transcend one's own reality. Unlike the passivity or helplessness brought by a fatalistic perspective, *virtu* is the blending of virtues, skills, and talents with tremendous energy. Therefore, contrary to the gloomy passivity of *fortuna*, it is an active and dynamic force. *Virtu* is, in a sense, turning crisis into opportunity by using the talents you possess. According to Machiavelli, the passive state stemming from the common fatalistic understanding prevalent among people lies in seeing fate as an insurmountable force. Machiavelli rejects a deterministic understanding of fate that is prevalent in all aspects of life.

In *The Prince*, Machiavelli surpasses classical moral norms and biblical teachings by presenting a new conception of virtue, asserting that individuals may do whatever is necessary to attain their goals and safeguard their accomplishments. Machiavelli contends that the governance of the state and the affairs of the people should be entirely separate from the influence of the church (Oral, 2022, 340).

In the perspective of realist thinker, a ruler (the prince) can be successful in politics by not getting stuck in a fatalistic understanding and by activating virtue, thereby controlling *fortuna* to some extent. Therefore, one should be prepared for everything, should not overlook the possibility of making mistakes, and should always be aware that variables can always exist. What is important is for people not to blindly adhere to the situations brought by *fortuna* and not to see themselves as helpless. It is about constantly fighting against all kinds of negativity by using the positive talents one possesses. Of course, just as there can be unforeseeable negative *fortuna*, there can also be positive *fortuna*. Positive *fortuna* can also be associated with concepts such as luck and fortune.

Machiavelli emphasizes that just as one does not feel powerless when faced with negative *fortuna*, one should not become complacent in a lucky situation brought by positive *fortuna*, but should always keep their talents, skills, and character, their virtue, active. The philosopher states that nations with strong *virtu* will not easily fall into the quagmire of pleasure, laziness, and misery. In this sense, he gives the example of the Romans. According to Machiavelli, the fact that the Romans did not lose their courage in the face of misfortunes and did not become arrogant in the face of successes shows how virtuous this people were. As a result, *virtu* and

fortuna are two realities that divide all of human life for Machiavelli. *Virtu* is simply all that is under your power and *fortuna* means all of it is not. Machiavelli's claim to be first to discover the science of success and even to put it into a formula, the formula for success is the conquest of *fortuna* by *virtu*. The more *virtu* and the less *fortuna* the more success for the prospective prince or ruler. At the same time, according to Machiavelli, true *virtu* when it comes to the state is having the power, determination, and resolve to do whatever is necessary to maintain political power, regardless of how it may appear morally or conscientiously to others. If a ruler can maintain the state strongly, then he is virtuous. However, having *virtu* is not sufficient for a ruler; *fortuna* is also important. *Fortuna* symbolizes fate, but it is closer to destiny than mere chance.

According to Machiavelli, a person who possesses only one of these abilities can gain power but cannot remain in power; however, someone who has these two abilities can both attain power and hold onto it for a long time. Machiavelli's two fundamental concepts, *virtu* and *fortuna*, which form the basis of his theory in a certain context and are most discussed in *The Prince*, contain a series of dualities within themselves. These concepts, being used in different forms within different contexts in the text, correspond to a rather ambiguous meaning, which makes it difficult to understand Machiavelli's thesis.

3.4.2. Historism

Machiavelli is fundamentally a statesman and a historian of the state, having undertaken serious studies related to the history of Florence. Therefore, it can be clearly stated that the foundation of Machiavelli's political understanding is rooted in history. Machiavelli believes that history should be read and understood well, and that lessons and advice should be derived from it, because, according to the philosopher, the past, that is, history is deterministic. It should be read, understood, and lessons should be drawn from it.

Reality lies in history; one should take as examples the great figures who have succeeded in history, such as Alexander, Moses, and David. However, Machiavelli does not possess a one-sided understanding of history; in his view, history is in close connection with many different objects and situations. Machiavelli frequently advocates for the study of history in his writings. He suggests that the Bible serves as a historical document and commends Xenophon's *Life of Cyrus* for its historical value. *The Discourses* is presented as a philosophical commentary on Livy's historical accounts. Additionally, Machiavelli authored several historical works, including the poetic *Florentine history*, *I Decennali*, the fictionalized biography of *Castruccio*

Castracani, and the Medici-commissioned *Florentine Histories*. It is evident that Machiavelli had a profound interest in the craft of the historian, particularly in the recovery of lost knowledge.

The most important feature of Machiavelli's understanding of history is his approach to considering history in relation to nature and conceptualizing the relationship between nature and history as one of mutual determination (Öztürk, 2015, 8). Shaping his political theory with the understanding that history is cyclical, Machiavelli, in *The Prince*, frequently references historical events, drawing lessons from their outcomes to offer advice to the ruler. A good sense of history is obviously required for the understanding of his stories and histories. Again, Machiavelli displays that his historical lessons are for statesman and politicians. Deeply influenced by the fragmented and divided state of Italy during his time, Machiavelli argues that for a prince to truly comprehend the nature of politics and effectively govern societies, it is crucial to combine historical experience with empirical knowledge and observation.

Viewing history as a guide with legal codes and unchanging principles, Machiavelli meticulously examines the lives, battles, and defeats of successful leaders and statesmen who established great states throughout history. He analyzes these accounts repeatedly, concluding that the most important lessons for a statesman and politician are found in history and that historical truths are the greatest teachers. As a result of this insight, Machiavelli writes the history of Florence. According to Machiavelli, history continuously repeats itself in a cyclical manner. Therefore, it is essential to understand and analyze the past, including past events, existing states, and fallen rulers. This analysis is vital for comprehending the nature of politics and the state, as well as understanding how society is governed.

For the realist thinker, a good statesman and politician must grasp the lessons of history well, essentially becoming a student of history. This understanding enables them to discern when opportunities are favorable and when times are disadvantageous (Lucchese, 2015). Machiavelli asserts that a prince or statesman must thoroughly understand history and draw from historical realities as a necessity of politics. He expresses this view in his work with the following statements:

“As for mental exercise, a prince should read history, particularly taking an interest in the actions of the greatest examples; he should observe how they conducted themselves during war, examine the reasons for their successes in order to imitate them, and the reasons for their defeats in order to avoid them. And he should especially follow the example of a few of the best princes of the past: They would choose a leader with exceptionally brilliant talents and always keep him in mind.” (Machiavelli, 1993, 99).

According to Machiavelli, a good prince should understand and read history well. In order to understand the functioning of current politics and society, it is necessary to know its historical origins and codes. This is because Machiavelli thinks that there is a certain determinism and causality between events. To validate this thesis, Machiavelli constantly takes notes related to past histories, reads Roman history, and examines the city-states of Ancient Greece one by one. One of the greatest indicators of the importance he attributes to history is his personal endeavor to write the history of Florence, because according to the philosopher, the true way to understand the world is through knowing history and the laws of history.

Machiavelli describes human nature as inherently selfish, deceitful, cunning, and always in pursuit of obtaining everything. A person constantly wants to hold power and establish superior authority over others, even if it involves oppression and cruelty. Machiavelli believes that the desire for more, which he attributes to human nature, also makes humans inherently bad (Öztürk, 2015, 23). In such a living environment, the self-interest among people will ultimately lead to chaos and disorder. Based on his historical readings, Machiavelli concludes that life and war almost mean the same thing. In this situation, the duty of an individual or a prince is to emerge stronger and invincible from every conflict, even if it goes against moral and ethical norms.

Machiavelli generally considers nature and history together, believing that there is a mutual interaction between the two. The thinker holds that human nature has not changed much; therefore, if we understand how people lived, governed, and were governed in ancient times and states, contemporary society can be better understood and governed in the light of these lessons. For this reason, the philosopher is constantly engaged in drawing lessons from history and the past. Machiavelli's most fundamental work, *The Prince*, is essentially about recommending truths and lessons derived from history to the ruler. In this work, Machiavelli primarily uses historical references to discuss how a prince can stay in power, how he should react to various situations, and how he can prevent social corruption, complacency, and decay. History is not limited to nature and human nature alone for Machiavelli. As we have detailed in the above section, according to the thinker, there are also two main concepts that determine the functioning and development of individuals and societies: *virtu* and *fortuna*. While *virtu* is associated with the skills and abilities of the individual, *fortuna* is, in a sense, the partial fate imposed by history. Machiavelli presents a conception of history by examining states that have existed in history through the lens of these two concepts.

History repeats itself, but mistakes should not be repeated. For this reason, leaders need to read and understand history well. Machiavelli believes that three main lessons should be drawn from history.

The first is military science; Machiavelli praises the military model of ancient times, especially speaking highly of the military systems of Ancient Greece and Rome. According to Machiavelli, the soldier should be one with the state and society; the soldier should see himself as a part and representative of the polis. From this perspective, the citizen-soldier protects his home and the polis. Machiavelli argues that mercenaries cannot achieve success because they lack virtues and only think of their own interests. However, citizen-soldiers are more successful no matter what because ultimately what they protect is their own homes and homelands.

The important second lesson that Machiavelli draws from history is about religion. According to Machiavelli, the way the Roman Catholic Church interprets and understands religion increases laziness and encourages femininity, dulling virtue. In Machiavelli's view, the Christian faith corrupts and enervates people and societies, making them lazy and fearful. Machiavelli, like a true Renaissance thinker, thinks deeply about religion. According to Machiavelli, the Church also leaves bad effects on politics, posing a major obstacle to achieving political unity. The Church's divisive approach to politics leads to societal division, increases the threat of civil war, and makes the country vulnerable to invasion by external powers. Nevertheless, Machiavelli is very aware of the great power of religion. Therefore, he argues that even if a ruler is not religious, he must appear to be so. In this context, Machiavelli argues that the prince should take control of religion because, according to Machiavelli, religion is the most basic device that affects society and the most powerful weapon to direct the masses toward your desired goal. Therefore, according to Machiavelli, the ruler should neither confront religion nor appear irreligious to the people, even if they are not religious themselves (Öztürk, 2015, 72).

Machiavelli's third lesson is the republican model he derives from Ancient Greece and Rome. Machiavelli argues that people will always want freedom, while the aristocratic and wealthy elites will always seek more power and wealth. In this context, according to Machiavelli, the real cause of tyranny and despotism is not the poor people but the powerful elite who are never satisfied and act immoderately.

Machiavelli does not chase after utopias that will redesign the world, like the thinkers before him. Instead, he builds his thesis based on historical realities, criticizing previous philosophers in this sense because they have always strived for an ideal order and utopia. According to

Machiavelli, this is not the truth; the real focus should be on what is, not what should be. For the realist thinker, whoever gives up what is for what should be is a fool because they may lose what they already have.

3.4.3. Society

As it is known, in traditional texts, philosophers such as Aristotle, Plato, and Al-Farabi continuously refer to the good qualities of humans in their attempts to define humanity and construct a system and theory based on these codes. According to them, humans are rational, virtuous, and generally possess many beautiful virtues and essences that will emerge over time. However, in contrast to this historical school of thought, Machiavelli begins his thesis by considering the negative aspects of human nature. In his masterpiece *The Prince*, he offers the following definition of humanity:

“In general, it can be said about people that they are ungrateful, fickle, deceitful, hypocritical, cowardly, and self-serving. As long as you are doing good to them, they will be loyal to you, giving you their blood, property, lives, and even their children when it is not necessary. However, when the need arises, there is not a single person by your side (Machiavelli, 1993, 106).”

Unlike the philosophers before him, Machiavelli did not look at what should be when defining human nature; he analyzed existing people and defined human nature based on reality. Machiavelli's understanding of politics cannot be separated from his understanding of human and societal nature.

In Machiavelli's view, politics, history, society, and the nature of society are intertwined, like links in a chain that directly or indirectly influence each other. According to Machiavelli, human nature inherently desires to continually gain new things. There is a natural power struggle between those who desire to gain more and those who do not desire to lose what they already have. This mentioned struggle corrupts the individual (Cengiz, 2022, 45). Machiavelli defines the relationship between human nature and power as follows:

“The desire to acquire is indeed very natural and ordinary, and when powerful individuals do this, they will always be praised or at least not criticized; but when they lack the power to do so and still desire to do such a thing, they err and deserve condemnation... Furthermore, human desires are insatiable; because nature gives them the power to desire everything, while luck gives them little power to reach their desires; the result is endless dissatisfaction in their minds, a weariness for what they want to achieve.” (Machiavelli, 1993, 216).

In this respect, according to Machiavelli, people's daily lives are also like a form of politics. Machiavelli argues that there are universal characteristics of human nature that apply

everywhere and at all times, discoverable through observation. He finds transcendent assumptions about human nature and potential to be unreasonable. According to him, the foundation of human nature is selfishness. Everyone desires to achieve what is better for themselves success, fame, and glory and Machiavelli believes that everyone has the right to pursue these desires.

In Machiavelli's understanding human beings behave well out of necessity, and the reason for human wickedness is believed to stem from their instincts. Humans constantly desire to possess things, seek power and authority, and thus, everyone pursues their own interests and harbors a savage desire for power. In this situation, the strong continue on their path and become even stronger, while the weak bring about their own downfall. There is a natural power struggle between those who want to obtain more and those who do not want to lose what they have. This struggle drives people to wickedness, cunning, and, at times, the use of physical force. Therefore, moral values entirely disappear on the way to achieving the goal, and the one who is strong in every aspect seizes power in all respects.

Machiavelli, who was quite knowledgeable about mythology, made his analyses of human nature through a character from Greek mythology. Chiron, the mentor of Achilles, who is half-horse and half-human, according to Machiavelli, points to the animalistic side of humans.

With this comparison, he suggests that humans are not pure and innocent beings but rather, by their nature and instincts, are inclined towards evil. According to Machiavelli, people are generally evil, and there is no harm in treating them badly. People are inherently evil, and this nature never changes. Therefore, people will be the same in the future as they have been in the past. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli introduces people with the following expressions:

“People are generally ungrateful, fickle, deceitful, hypocritical, and cowardly in the face of danger, yet their desire for gain is endless. As long as you do good to them, they are all with you, offering you their blood, property, lives, and children when it is not necessary. But as soon as the need arises, they all turn away from you (Machiavelli, 1993, 106).”

Machiavelli's interpretations of human nature generally align with Christian theology and the concept of sin in Christianity. However, when advancing these ideas, Machiavelli does not rely on religious references. Instead, he cites historical examples, using history and historical realities as his evidence. According to Machiavelli, historical experiences show that goodness does not work. When looking at history, it is noticeable that good princes, virtuous statesmen, and honest merchants generally fail. On the other hand, he analyzed the tools that great commanders, founding leaders, and lawmakers used on their path to success, arguing that goodwill and virtue were not among them. Wisdom, goodness, and virtue are important to

Machiavelli, and he has no issue with these concepts. However, he warns us that if we only act wisely, kindly, and virtuously, we won't achieve much. According to him, the wicked and cunning are much closer to victory because they possess a significant advantage: they are not confined behind the walls of virtue, religion, and morality that would restrain them. They excel at deceiving others, using seductive words, and outwitting their opponents with cunning. Through these means, they seize power and rule over the state.

On the contrary, a person with a good heart can become a prisoner of their mercy, acting based on emotions rather than making rational choices. A ruler should not allow their own goodness, mercy, or other virtues that could hinder making the right decisions to interfere in state affairs. According to Machiavelli, just as humans are inherently evil, so is politics inherently evil, and to deal with this evil, goodness must be set aside. Machiavelli argues that human nature is inherently selfish, deceitful, cunning, and manipulative. According to him, people can do anything to gain power, as it is a requirement of their nature.

Machiavelli believes that nature and human nature are immutable, leading inevitably to societal decay and corruption. Everything deteriorates continuously, and moreover, human nature is inherently bad and more inclined towards evil (Öztürk, 2015, 69).

3.4.4. The Prince

Machiavelli, who studies and examines ancient times, states, and rulers, offers various pieces of advice to the prince on how to better govern a state or maintain power, based on historical truths. According to Machiavelli, there are two types of principalities: the first are hereditary principalities, which do not easily lose their sovereignty. The second are new principalities, where the ruler is new to the people of the region he has conquered.

According to Machiavelli, no matter how powerful a ruler is, he cannot conquer or retain a territory without the support of the people. For a ruler who has conquered a territory and does not wish to lose it, there are two fundamental rules: the first is to eliminate the bloodline of the previous ruler, and the second is not to change the laws and taxes.

The prince symbolizes unity. Representing a mechanism where all parts are bound to him, the prince, as the singular ruler, makes and enforces decisions on behalf of all. Thus, the political power that derives its existence condition solely from itself is embodied in the prince's persona. This political power mechanism, therefore, is based on an unequal power relationship between the prince on one side and the people on the other (Yavuz, 2023). Machiavelli defines the existence of the state as inherently necessary. According to him, the state emerges to control

human nature. He points out that philosophers emphasizing human's wicked nature demonstrate the necessity of the state by making people depend on security and instilling fear. Therefore, according to Machiavelli, establishing social order must originate from the sovereignty of a single mind. It is natural that in a social order created by individuals with evil nature, the establishment and continuity of state order, in other words, the wisdom of governance, can only be established under the sovereignty of a single mind. Therefore, according to Machiavelli, for the ruler to create the state out of nothing, he must be alone, must be everything in management, and must be absolute (Poyraz, 2019, 12).

Machiavelli places great importance on the support of the people, and according to him, if a ruler immediately raises taxes, the people will revolt, and the ruler will lose their support. Furthermore, according to Machiavelli, a ruler should settle in the conquered territory. He gives the example of the Turks, who, after conquering the Balkans, moved their capital to nearby regions. Therefore, a ruler should live among the people in the conquered territory, get to know them, and detect potential rebellions on the spot. If the ruler appoints governors to the newly conquered region, these governors might oppress the people and incite them to revolt. However, if the ruler is personally present, good citizens will have reasons to love the ruler, and those who do not wish to be good citizens will have reasons to fear him. The sole objective of the ruler at the head of the state should be to preserve the state and increase its power. In pursuit of this goal, anything can be done, and any means used are legitimate.

The modern understanding of Machiavellianism stems from this idea. However, while expressing his thoughts, Machiavelli emphasized that one should prioritize the state over personal interests. For him, the state itself is what matters. The ruler should aim only to sustain the life and existence of the state. The means employed to achieve this will always be right and commendable.

In his work, Machiavelli uses certain concepts in a way that is prone to misinterpretation. For example, he suggests that a ruler should be miserly rather than generous. At first glance, this idea may seem quite wrong to us. However, the author refers to the time when generosity turns into extravagance. According to Machiavelli, if a ruler wants to be known as generous among people, he cannot avoid ostentation and showiness. Such a ruler will exhaust all his resources in these activities. If he wants to maintain his reputation as generous, he will impose limitless taxes and other pressures, thereby squeezing his people, and in short, there is nothing he wouldn't do to procure money. If a prince desires to gain a reputation for generosity among people, he must avoid any show of extravagance. Subsequently, to maintain this reputation, he

will need to impose heavy taxes on his people and resort to any means to make money. As a result, he will gain the people's resentment and lose respectability. Therefore, since a prince cannot achieve generosity in a way that spreads his reputation in a sad state, if he acts cautiously while demonstrating generosity, he will not need to worry about being labeled stingy, as he will gradually acquire the quality of generosity as time passes (Cengiz, 2022, 77).

This will result in arousing hatred in the eyes of his subjects. According to Machiavelli, however, if a ruler is known as miserly because he does not strip his subjects bare, can defend his country, and is not greedy, he should not look down on himself. Since this trait is one of the flaws that sustain a ruler. Therefore, according to him, it is more rational to be a miser who does not arouse hatred rather than a greedy person who does. If a ruler is known as miserly because they do not plunder their subjects, can defend their country, avoid impoverishment and humiliation, and refrain from greed, they should not be bothered by this label. Because what they have preserved belongs to their own people.

In the later sections of his work, the thinker questions whether the prince should be loved or feared. Ultimately, he concludes that ideally, the prince should be both loved and feared but acknowledges that achieving this balance is difficult. Therefore, he prefers the prince to be feared rather than loved. According to Machiavelli, a ruler must never forget that, although it is not strictly necessary to possess all the qualities generally considered good, it is extremely important to appear as if one does. It is reasonable to seem merciful rather than cruel, and it is crucial to be thought of as someone with great virtue. Thus, the key lies in being a great imitator and hypocrite, learning how to deceive people's minds with cunning and convincing them to believe in the tricks you perform (Skinner, 2002, 67).

According to him, people are ungrateful, fickle, deceitful, hypocritical, cowardly, and self-interested; they will remain loyal as long as you are doing them good, readily offering their lives, blood, and even their children when there is no real need. However, when the time comes that you truly need them, they will turn their backs on you. People can harm a ruler who is loved much more easily than one who is feared; for love is a bond of obligation which people break whenever it suits their advantage. Fear, on the other hand, is maintained by a dread of punishment which never fails. Therefore, a ruler should prefer to be feared and does not necessarily need to possess all the qualities generally considered good, but it is essential for him to appear to have them. It is good to be regarded as tolerant; it is reasonable to appear merciful; and it is quite important to be thought of as a person of great virtue. However, in reality, he should not be so; instead, he should be a great pretender and hypocrite (Kesgin, 2015, 17).

According to the Machiavelli, a ruler has two paths: one is to adhere to the laws, and the other is to use force. The first is characteristic of humans, while the second is characteristic of animals. Unfortunately, since the first often falls short, the second must also be employed. Thus, a ruler should be part human and part animal. When adopting the animal identity, the ruler should choose the lion and the fox. This is because the lion cannot protect itself from traps, and the fox cannot defend itself from wolves. Therefore, to avoid traps, a ruler must be as cunning as a fox, and to ward off wolves, he must be as strong as a lion. Who offers ruthless advice to the prince, a ruler who has seized power should carefully calculate the use of violence and apply it all at once, so as not to have to repeat it every day. By not repeating it, he can gain the trust of the people. A ruler who cannot show courage will not be able to lay down his club. Violence should be applied in its entirety and all at once, so the people do not taste it, otherwise it will cause them pain. On the other hand, kindnesses should be distributed little by little, so that the people can savor them. A ruler comes to power either with the support of the people or the elites. To reach this point, neither pure fate nor pure skill is required; what is necessary is alertness to opportunities. When the elites can no longer withstand the pressure from the people, they give prestige to one of their own and put him forward to become the ruler, subsequently satisfying their own ambitions under his shadow. A person who comes to power with the support of the elites finds it harder to stay in power than one who comes with the support of the people because, once in power, he is obliged to yield to those who brought him there and cannot maneuver the people.

However, a ruler who comes to power with the support of the people does not face external intervention, and there is no one around who will ignore his commands. While it is impossible to make the elites happy without harming others, it is not the same for the people. You can make the people happy without harming others. The goal that the people are committed to is more justified compared to that of the elites because the elites seek to oppress, whereas the people seek not to be oppressed. The greatest calamity that can befall a ruler from a hostile populace is being abandoned. However, hostile elites can not only abandon him but also act against him. Since elites are foresighted and alert, they do not waste time and align themselves with the powerful that have a chance of winning, to secure personal gain. The ruler is obliged to always live with the same people, but the elites can deprive him of or bestow the throne at their whim.

According to Machiavelli, a wise ruler must, above all, be guided by the dictates of necessity. To maintain his position, a ruler must possess the ability not to be good and must

know when to use this power, depending on the course of events. Furthermore, a wise ruler does what is right when he is strong but also knows how to do what is wrong when necessary. Beyond that, if a ruler wishes to maintain his reign, he must be prepared to accept the fact that he will often need to act against truth, benevolence, humanity, and religion. From this perspective, it can be understood that, for Machiavelli, the path to successful statesmanship lies in understanding the power of circumstances, accepting the command of necessity, and adapting one's course of action to the times (Skinner, 2002, 61).

In conclusion, according to the thinker, a ruler must win the friendship of the people. If he turns the people against him, he will be helpless in bad times. On the other hand, a ruler who is brave knows what to do against enemy forces, takes the necessary precautions, and keeps the people's spirit alive with his courage and orders will never be betrayed by the people. A ruler should think about war even during times of peace. According to the thinker, there are rulers who, even when they go somewhere for leisure, observe the land, vegetation, mountains, and plains. Even in times of peace, a good ruler is constantly vigilant. Because on the authority of Machiavelli, Real life and the idealized life are so far apart that someone who abandons what exists in pursuit of what should be will lose even what they already possess.

That is because anyone acting like a fairy of goodness everywhere and in everything will surely come to ruin. Therefore, a ruler must learn not to be good and to use goodness appropriately in order to survive. You must either caress people or eliminate them, because if the punishment you give is light, they will seek revenge from you, but if you give a severe punishment, they will no longer be able to raise their heads.

The punishment you give to people should be one from which you will not fear retaliation. According to Machiavelli, a ruler should be as strong as a lion and as cunning as a fox. A ruler must be strong like a lion, thus solving problems and enforcing commands through the use of force when necessary. However, in Machiavelli's view, power alone is not always sufficient and may not work effectively. Therefore, a ruler must also be cunning like a fox, using their intellect and clever tactics instead of physical violence in appropriate situations. Machiavelli emphasizes the importance of cunning over strength, as people who act based on emotions like hatred and revenge, rather than reason, often suffers heavy consequences. Therefore, according to Machiavelli, a good ruler should primarily rely on reason in their actions.

According to Machiavelli, a ruler must be both a lion and a fox: strong like a lion to overcome threats directly, and cunning like a fox to defeat adversaries through strategy and deceit. Therefore, a ruler should appear merciful, loyal, humane, honest, and religious, but not

necessarily embody these traits. The crucial point is that the ruler must create an impression that everyone sees them as merciful, loyal, honest, humane, and religious. The appearance of religiosity is as essential as the fact that nothing is necessary because people often judge with their eyes rather than their hands. Because everyone sees, but few people understand what is going on, many people see you as they are, but few people know what you are. That few people cannot withstand the majority behind the power of the authorities. The ruler must do everything possible to be successful and keep the state together, as the way they present themselves is respectable and praiseworthy, because the masses are fooled by the appearance of success. According to Machiavelli, when a ruler has genuine friends and genuine enemies, it earns him respect. The prince, showing his passion for virtue, should protect virtuous and talented individuals, honoring those who excel in their endeavors.

Moreover, he should guide his citizens in sectors like trade, agriculture, and other fields to ensure they can easily conduct their businesses. Providing security of property, reducing taxes, and distributing rewards to those who enrich the state are also essential.

According to Machiavelli, a ruler should organize festivals and fairs because these are tools that placate and distract the population. When necessary, these instruments should be used to divert attention and mitigate reactions. If a ruler must commit an act of cruelty, such as applying violence to the people to exert influence, it should be done decisively and swiftly. This is because people tend to forget acts of cruelty quickly.

The less time violence is applied, the less damaging it will be. A ruler should appear honest, generous, moral, and religious, even if they do not necessarily possess these qualities. However, it is crucial to appear this way because people are easily deceived by appearances, and what lies behind them is often not considered very important. The populace always judges by what they see, without knowing the depth of meaning or the true nature behind appearances.

The appearance of religiosity in a ruler is as necessary as anything can be unnecessary because the people's minds are not based on reality and rationality but on faith. For example, in ancient traditions, there is always a scepter alongside the sword. According to Machiavelli, politics cannot be based on submission without seers, wizards, and clergy; these are mechanisms of legitimacy for rulers.

“In our time, it is seen through experience that great rulers have often given little importance to their promises and have known how to dazzle people with cunning. As a result, those who rely on truthfulness and honesty have been surpassed” (Machiavelli, 1993, 78).

According to Machiavelli, a person who always tries to be good is definitely doomed to lose against the wicked. Therefore, a ruler in the political arena should not prioritize goodness and morality. Instead, they should be willing to take any necessary risks for success against rival countries and should act accordingly.

On the authority of Niccolò Machiavelli, when it comes to the interests of the state, it is normal for the state to depart from general moral principles; it is almost the law of politics. “Even if it means defending the homeland through dishonorable means, all methods are good as long as the homeland is preserved (Machiavelli, 1993, 47).

Machiavelli argues that to secure control over a newly acquired territory, a prince must assume command of the military forces. The prince has the authority to dissolve the existing army and establish a new one under his direct command. This army can then be utilized to preempt any potential threats to his rule.

According to Machiavelli, practicality outweighs moral goodness for a prince. He argues that if moral virtue obstructs the maintenance of political power, a prince must learn to set aside moral considerations. A prince must always prioritize what is expedient to preserve political authority. To maintain power, a prince must project an image of virtue and honor, even if genuine virtue and honor are not necessary. It is crucial for a prince's authority that he appears virtuous and honorable, regardless of whether he truly embodies these qualities (Nicholas, 2021, 7).

Machiavelli argues that a wise prince will strive to be both feared and loved. However, if achieving both is not feasible, the prince should focus on being feared without inciting hatred among those who are subject to his authority. Therefore, a prince should avoid appearing rapacious, greedy, corrupt, unscrupulous, or arbitrary. However, whether a prince is perceived as merciful or cruel, generous or miserly, honest or deceitful, trustworthy or untrustworthy is only significant if it serves to maintain his political power.

Machiavelli also argues that a prince might need to employ cunning and deceit to uphold political power. A prince should embrace honesty and truthfulness only when they prove politically advantageous or expedient. A prince should strive to act in good faith when feasible but must be prepared to act in bad faith if it becomes necessary to maintain political authority (Nicholas, 2021, 13). Machiavelli extols the advantages for a prince in embodying qualities of both a fox and a lion. The fox represents cunning and deceit, while the lion symbolizes strength and intimidation. This political strategy known as Machiavellianism advocates for cunning, deceitfulness, mercilessness, and ruthlessness. However, this strategy is flawed in that it can

justify unscrupulous and unethical behavior and may be used to seek absolute power over others, potentially leading to tyranny and dictatorship (Nicholas, 2021, 3).

When Machiavelli approaches the end of his book, he says, 'I have explained everything, but there is also fate.' Fate shows its power where there is no virtue to oppose it. A ruler who relies entirely on fate will fall as soon as fate changes; on the other hand, a ruler who manages to adapt his politics to the conditions of the time will be successful, while those who do not will fail. Fate is female; if one wants to dominate it, one must caress it. Then it will be seen that it will submit to the one who acts passionately, not coldly. Fate, as a woman, is a friend to the young because the young do not calculate much and, by showing greater courage, they dominate that woman.

These pieces of advice that Machiavelli gave to the prince, Lorenzo de Medici, are quite practical for his own time and necessary for the unification of a divided Italy. In fact, the advice given by Machiavelli has been used by rulers and politicians for centuries. However, Machiavelli's systematization and documentation of this advice subjected him to serious criticism from many groups of his time. As a result, according to Machiavelli, even if a politician strives to gain power for good purposes -meaning that once in power, they will act in accordance with the interests of society- they must behave immorally, lie, use religious and traditional values, and even manipulate the people if necessary, until they come to power. In short, they must be manipulative, immoral, and cunning. Otherwise, even if they would be a perfect ruler, it would not matter much if they cannot gain power.

3.4.5. Power and State

According to the thinker who particularly emphasizes that a prince's ability to remain in power depends entirely on power in every respect, the prince must monopolize all mechanisms of a state and society, which can include the military and bureaucracy, as well as education and religion. Based on his fundamental code derived from realist readings of history, Machiavelli argues that a prince's primary goal is to be the most powerful and to maintain absolute power in any circumstances.

Machiavelli in *The Prince* puts forth the ideal of a national state based on power and argues that the state should derive its power from the nation rather than from the Church. According to this understanding, the state should not be dependent on the Church; it should free itself from Church influence. Machiavelli praises the illustrious examples of ancient kingdoms and republics, speaking of the *virtues* and wisdom of the lawmakers of antiquity.

According to Machiavelli, to establish a state, preserve an established state, govern a kingdom, assemble an army, conduct a war, or administer justice, one must emulate the wise and virtuous rulers of antiquity (Machiavelli, 1993). In his work, Machiavelli first discusses different types of rulership, praising some and criticizing others. Later, he talks about military matters, highlighting the unreliability of mercenaries and emphasizing the need for volunteer soldiers to Machiavelli explained politics with sharp realism; for him, politics is a battlefield with its own rules and principles. When it comes to the interests of the state and the prince, any means to an end is permissible. In its simplest form, according to Machiavelli, when it comes to political power, the continuity of the state, and the interests of the prince, everything is permissible and moral. In such a case, evil can turn into good, immorality can gain legitimacy, and concepts we condemn in everyday life can be placed on a moral ground for the sake of ensuring the continuity of power and the integrity of the state (Machiavelli, 1993). Machiavelli is so realistic about politics and state administration that modern European politics and political understanding are directly related to Machiavelli. Moreover, the codes of today's European political understanding are hidden in Machiavelli. Modern international relations and state politics are, in the truest sense, based on this Italian Philosopher.

According to Machiavelli, state politics does not proceed based on ideals or utopias, but rather on existing real codes. For this reason, he says, 'Anyone who abandons what is for what should be is a fool, because they lose what they have.' Building his thesis from a power-centric perspective, Machiavelli believes that a ruler may resort to all kinds of deceit and trickery in both domestic and foreign politics to maintain power (Machiavelli, 1993). According to the thinker, what is moral and virtuous is not goodness and beauty, but rather the ability of a captain to navigate his ship under any circumstances. If he can do that, he is virtuous. Machiavelli has been dubbed the teacher of evil because he detailed in his works what a ruler must do under various conditions to maintain power and authority.

Due to his doctrine that separated power from morals, Machiavelli's theories faced criticism from both Catholics and Protestants for two centuries. His methods of gaining power did not align with Biblical principles. Machiavelli was concerned not with what the Bible prescribed, but with what was necessary given the realities of circumstances. He sought strategies for maintaining power within a real and imperfect society, distinct from the perspective of the church. However, Machiavelli did not advocate pursuing evil for its own sake; rather, he believed that when maintaining power necessitates acting in ways perceived as

evil, one must do so. In the pursuit of power, good and evil are considered equally valid strategies (Nicholas, 2021, 22).

According to Machiavelli, who skillfully analyzed his era, deeply understood political, social, and economic transformations, and foresaw future events with his historical perspective, it is essential for a prince not only to come to power but also to remain in power and control every part of the state. Machiavelli argues that there should be a single power in a country, which is one of the most characteristic features of his thought. He is entirely opposed to parallel structures and competitors that could harm this structure within the country's borders. One of the most significant reasons why Machiavelli is so important today is his idea of a centralized state.

During Machiavelli's time, various types of power existed, including the church, kings, princes, aristocrats, and feudal lords. However, from the 15th century onwards, kings in England, France, and Spain took steps to monopolize political power. For instance, King Henry VIII of England took radical steps to end the church's dominance over his lands, seizing all its assets and incorporating its institutions into his own.

During this period of political disintegration, Machiavelli accurately read the realities of politics and built his theses upon them. Due to the economic fluctuations of this time, all authorities other than absolute monarchy lost significant power.

Machiavelli sees patriotism as the highest value. According to him, citizens should be willing to fight and even die for the state if necessary. He claimed that the strength of the state is not only the ruler's responsibility but also the collective duty of all citizens, as Machiavelli's understanding of the state fundamentally relies on the people. The rationalist thinker who evaluates power, authority, and the state with very different real codes has laid the foundation for the understanding of power in today's modern world and the nation-state and has ignited a torch in this field.

3.4.6. Religion

Machiavelli decisively breaks away from the scholastic tradition of the Middle Ages, notably by rejecting the idea that the authority of kings and rulers originates from God. According to Machiavelli, the legitimacy of rulers does not stem from a divine source but rather from their role as rulers themselves, evidenced by the realities of political life. This stance contrasts sharply with the God-centered worldview prevalent in the Middle Ages, emphasizing

instead the inherent nature of political phenomena. Machiavelli's primary focus lies in the secular realm of earthly governance. He evaluates the value of religion based on its impact on political life, positioning himself as a pivotal thinker who lays the theoretical groundwork for the secular state.

Religion, morality, and law are subordinate to the state, and when it comes to the nation, the ruler should use these as tools to achieve their goals if necessary. According to Machiavelli, in every era, Christian and Muslim clergy have moralized issues on religious grounds that would require the ruler to get their hands dirty when necessary. Therefore, according to Machiavelli, the ruler should fully utilize religion to govern the people more easily.

In *The Discourses*, Machiavelli states, 'By carefully studying Roman history, we discover the significant role that religion played in fostering obedience in the military, courage among the people, maintaining morality, and exposing the wicked... Just as the worship of God contributes to the greatness of republics, so does its neglect led to their downfall.' Religion acts as a unifying force that bolsters the strength of the state (Naz, 2013, 19).

At the same time, Machiavelli is of the opinion that the fear of God with religion inspires in man makes him obedient to orders and laws, reliable in keeping an oath or a promise, and easy to rule (Naz, 2013, 28).

Machiavelli separates politics from religion and morality, because according to him, politics is an autonomous field that is independent of the metaphysical realm and solely dependent on reality. In other words, morality is not within the domain of politics; politics is an area independent of morality, with its own rules and principles. The only goal of someone who embarks on this path should be to achieve success.

Therefore, according to the realist thinker, anything is permissible to achieve success. Hence, whatever you do to achieve success is legitimate and right; Machiavelli states that this is the current reality. On the authority of Machiavelli, the essence and nature of politics require this. Machiavelli always focuses on reality and tries to find solutions. For him, what ought to be in politics is not important; this is merely an endless, difficult-to-achieve dream. What is truly important is what exists. Machiavelli distinguishes between what is and what ought to be by using historical examples and truths.

According to Machiavelli, everyone has an idea of what ought to be: moral, honest, virtuous rulers, a society without conflict, and filled with prosperity. These are almost everyone's common ideals. Some believe in these ideals so deeply that they are constantly disappointed. Therefore, such a person cannot see the truth because the truth is not what they

idealize. This is precisely what disappoints people. For Machiavelli, what is important is what exists, as it always stands before us like a reality, and there is no need to deceive ourselves about it. The first and essential prerequisite for grasping the truth is to see reality as it is.

Machiavelli views religion from this perspective as well. According to the thinker, religion and morality are merely tools to be monopolized and used by the prince to ensure unity and integrity among the people and to legitimize the prince's power.

However, although Machiavelli envisions a secular state, this secular state is not entirely detached from religion. On the contrary, the thinker is fully aware that, in line with the realities of politics, religion is one of the main apparatuses that ensures social solidarity and maintains order. In this respect, Machiavelli asserts that state rulers should make use of religion. This is because religious people, out of fear of falling into sin, will live in a manner more suitable to social order and will refrain from actions that would violate the laws.

“God reveals His will through bright signs: the sea parts, a shining cloud shows the way, water gushes from a rock's heart, or manna rains from heaven in the desert. Thus, everything demonstrates your greatness. The rest is now up to you: God Himself does not want to do everything, because doing so would take away our freedom and deprive us of the glory and honor that He permits us to earn” (Machiavelli, 1993, 255).

In this context, it can be comfortably said that Machiavelli did not aim to separate politics from religion. Machiavelli's primary concern was to assert an independent truthfulness apart from religion.

According to Machiavelli, the more religion serves politics, the more acceptable it is. If Machiavelli rejected anything about religion, it was the church that he accused of not acting worthy of politics (Yavuz, 2023, 307).

According to Machiavelli, although the church was capable of preventing the political unity of Italy, it was unable to achieve Italian political unity. In this sense, Machiavelli is against a supra-political understanding and sovereignty of religion. According to the thinker, religion has the power to unite and integrate societies. However, even if religion has this unifying function, it is still not an institution above politics but rather an institution subject to and subordinate to it. Therefore, in Machiavelli, religion has ceased to be the foundation of social life and thus has lost its status as a separate goal in itself. Machiavelli never aimed to isolate politics from religion; on the contrary, he considered religion an indispensable element for social order. However, according to Machiavelli, the continuity of religion has been entirely proportional to its impact on political life.

The subtle irony underlying Machiavelli's arguments about religion should not be overlooked. It is not because religion is not a powerful tool, but rather because it is so powerful that it can actually be shaped in any direction and used to manipulate people for different reasons.

Religion itself does not have any higher or transcendent value. Therefore, Machiavelli advises a religion that is under the sovereignty and monopoly of political power and the prince. Religion should not be above or binding on political authority; rather, it should be under the prince's monopoly and used as a tool to control the people (Lucchese, 2015, 213).



CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION: COMPARISONS OF IBN KHALDUN AND NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

As it is known, representatives of two different civilizations and cultures, Ibn Khaldun and Niccolo Machiavelli, approached various fields in the social sciences, particularly politics, philosophy, and history, with a different perspective compared to the philosophers and thinkers who preceded them. These two statesmen made realism, rationalism, and objectivity the main codes of their works. Their life stories and the eras they lived in show significant similarities.

There are many similarities between the two thinkers, but the most significant one is that both were statesmen who engaged in politics for a long time. Although there is no direct or indirect connection between the two thinkers, some aspects of Machiavelli's thought strikingly resemble those of Ibn Khaldun's thought. While there may not be many material similarities between the works of the two thinkers, there are many spiritual similarities. In particular, there is a strong resemblance between the two thinkers in terms of the environments and conditions in which they were raised, their understanding of history and social events, and finally, their styles of explaining and providing evidence for historical events (Naz, 2013, 30).

Although their approaches to facts and methodologies are quite similar in general, the aims of the thinkers and the points they ultimately reach contain significant differences. The Italian principalities and republics, under which Machiavelli lived, with their hostilities and competitions, and ambitions for rivalry, presented the same political aspects and organizations in Italy as the North African Kingdom during Ibn Khaldun's time. These included the conquest of each other and the succession of sovereignty and power into the hands of different leaders and statesmen.

Both thinkers, who lived in a transitional age, put forward fully integrated revolutionary ideas. Departing from traditional lines, these two philosophers developed a new approach and a realist style, particularly concerning the functioning of power politics. Both thinkers developed similar methodologies and approaches, as they both analyze what exists rather than instrumentalizing what exists for the sake of what should be. Their language and approach focus on understanding reality as it is, without using it as a means to prescribe an ideal state (Öztürk, 2015, 66).

While Machiavelli fundamentally aimed to provide highly unethical and realist advice to a prince on how to govern the state under all circumstances, maintain power, control religion, and keep the people under his grip, Ibn Khaldun sought to gradually establish the civilization he believed he discovered, which he named *Umran*. Machiavelli claimed that he authored his book *The Prince* for rulers in general and specifically for Lorenzo de Medici, whereas Ibn Khaldun asserted that he wrote his *Muqaddimah* for people and scholars.

The purposes of writing for these two revolutionary thinkers, whose aims show significant diversity, also demonstrate notable similarities and differences in the concepts they put forth while constructing their theories.

Human Nature and Society

As is well known, many different philosophers and thinkers begin constructing their theses and theories by defining human nature as a starting point. Similarly, Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli place great importance on human nature and the necessity of social life. The two thinkers put forth ideas on human nature that contain both similarities and differences.

Machiavelli does not strive for human happiness. For him, the happiness of individuals is not important; the entire goal is the continuity or perpetuity and stability of the state. Therefore, the survival and stability of the state are more important to him than individual well-being (Duyar, 2021, 473).

According to Machiavelli, the individual is a force of nature, a source of living energy. The type of individual Machiavelli describes resembles the assertive, enterprising, and productive individuals of ancient times. However, personal skills alone do not constitute a gain; what is important is that these skills can be collectively accumulated, like sciences, combining with what has been inherited from the past. The reason is that only in this way can the state gain. The individual's evil does not come from birth, but they may have gone astray due to certain deviations later on -in other words, the individual is a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate, forming cognitions through experiences and acquiring schemas. Machiavelli described this situation as both the cause and the death knell of social decay.

Machiavelli's view of human nature is generally pessimistic; for instance, he notes that people are vindictive, insatiable, and envious. Drawing from his readings of history, Machiavelli argues that people have remained the same throughout the ages and that, in general, their nature and pessimistic traits exhibit the same characteristics.

Machiavelli generally defines human nature with the following statements:

“In general, it can be said about people that they are ungrateful, fickle, deceitful, hypocritical, cowardly, and self-serving. As long as you are doing good to them, they will be loyal to you, giving you their blood, property, lives, and even their children when it is not necessary. However, when the need arises, there is not a single person by your side” (Machiavelli, 1993,106).

Machiavelli attempts to clearly demonstrate the extent to which human nature is cruel, selfish, and ruthless. Rather than constructing a utopia of politics and society, Machiavelli seeks to discover and interpret the truth of reality and develop a theory based on that. He reveals what actually exists in politics, constructing his thesis on the true nature of reality. In this sense, due to Machiavelli's emphasis on rationalism and realism, both *The Prince* and *Discourses* represent a sharp departure from the utopian approaches of both the ancient world and the Christian world. This is akin to Ibn Khaldun setting aside the utopianism and idealism of the Islamic world to analyze society and politics through history rather than philosophy and religion, building his thesis on this reality. At the core of all historical events lie evils such as selfishness, the desire for power, and the pursuit of interests and benefits, which are intertwined with human egos (Sekman, 105, 2020)

On the other hand, Ibn Khaldun's view of human nature is more positive. He suggests that every person is born with the capacity to be good or bad and is inherently closer to being good. Similar to Machiavelli, he argues that human nature is shaped by external influences; the traditions to which individuals are exposed determine what they will become. Ibn Khaldun asserts that the negative side of human nature is the animalistic aspect, while logical thinking guides humans toward good qualities.

However, the reason Ibn Khaldun sees logical thinking as leading humans to good qualities is that people have a desire for honor and fame, and the fulfillment of this fame is tied to the details that complement its existence.

Machiavelli argues that humans are inherently evil and selfish and that natural and societal pressures and conditions force individuals into this state. According to Machiavelli, the most universal trait of humanity is an incessant desire for acquisition. People shape their lives based on an inherent desire to possess. Humans are created with a nature that longs for everything but will not be able to attain it all. This characteristic distinguishes humans from other beings and simultaneously constitutes the fundamental contradiction of human existence. For, while humans are created with a great desire for conquest, they are also constrained by the same nature (Poyraz, 2019, 98).

According to Machiavelli, history has shown that humans are deceitful and wicked. Since people's needs are insatiable, there is always a sense of dissatisfaction within their spirits. Consequently, the present time is condemned, the past is praised, and the future is desired.

Due to their ambitions and impatience, people deceive themselves and engage in actions that contradict the flow of time. In this regard, Machiavelli portrays a negative type of human (Deniz, 2001, 115). In contrast, Ibn Khaldun asserts that humans are inherently good and inclined towards goodness, but they tend to become bad due to societal impositions. According to Ibn Khaldun, many negative traits, including aggression, are inherent in human nature (Yavuz, 2013, 328).

According to Ibn Khaldun's understanding of human nature, there are two types of nature within a person:

1. The innate nature, which is the human disposition.
2. The secondary nature, which is the conditions imposed on a person by the surrounding environment (Khaldun, 2018).

Ibn Khaldun emphasizes that while every person has an innate disposition, people do not act according to this disposition but rather according to their secondary nature. This highlights the impact of the surrounding environment and social structure on human nature (Khaldun, 2018). According to Ibn Khaldun, geographical conditions determine the social structure of people, influence their psychological characteristics, and even shape their morality in conjunction with socio-economic conditions, such as income status. Therefore, when considering the societal context, people largely reflect the social structure they were born into and live within and are shaped by it.

Ibn Khaldun argues that each individual has the potential to transcend these environmental conditions through personal will, but this requires awareness and effort. Not everyone can demonstrate this awareness and effort, which is why individuals must push themselves. Most people do not undertake this effort and instead take the easier path, which is to conform to the surrounding conditions. Consequently, history flows based on societal averages.

Thus, Ibn Khaldun's perspective suggests a kind of determinism, but it is a social determinism rather than an individual determinism. He is not deterministic at the individual level; every person has the will and potential to overcome societal impositions due to their inherent nature. However, when it comes to the majority, people do not exhibit this potential and will. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun's determinism can be seen as relative. According to his

perspective, the primary nature of a person is malleable and can be shaped by whatever influence -good or bad- first takes hold and establishes itself.

Politics and Prince

According to Machiavelli, politics is the art of obtaining, preserving, and, when necessary, expanding power. In his view, politics is not an effort to establish a moral or ideal order but rather a power-oriented process. For this reason, when analyzing the nature of politics, Machiavelli considers the power- and interest-driven nature of human beings and advises rulers to adopt a strategic, pragmatic, and, when needed, ruthless style of governance to maintain their authority. Machiavelli's thinking and approach are entirely political. According to him, there is a single ultimate goal, which is power. Any means can be used to achieve this ultimate goal. Many political scientists share the common view that Machiavelli's entire philosophy is about obtaining power, elevating it to the highest level, and preserving it. Summarizing Machiavelli's ideas in general terms, the primary goal is to sustain the state and continuously increase its power. For this reason, any means and methods that can be used to achieve this goal are deemed legitimate. Secondly, law, morality, and religion are subordinate to the state, and thus, the state should use them as instruments if necessary to fulfill its primary objective (Duyar, 2021, 466).

Machiavelli seeks to construct a politics centered entirely on power and self-interest, with little regard for the condition of the people. When advising the prince, Machiavelli uses the following expressions: “You must either caress people or eliminate them, because if you inflict minor injuries, they will avenge themselves; but if you inflict severe injuries, they cannot” (Machiavelli, 1993). In short, the punishment you give people should be such that you do not have to fear their revenge. According to Machiavelli, it is better for a prince to be feared by the people than to be loved by them.

According to Ibn Khaldun, politics is the set of rules that organizes societies and states, ensuring that individuals and communities can live together. His understanding of politics is based on a scientific approach that examines the nature of societies and their historical development processes. Ibn Khaldun links politics to the concept of *asabiye*, which forms the foundation of social structure and the state. *Asabiye* represents the sense of loyalty and solidarity among individuals, and according to him, communities with strong *asabiye* are able to establish more powerful and longer-lasting states.

Ibn Khaldun, on the other hand, says the complete opposite of Machiavelli's notion. Unlike Machiavelli, Ibn Khaldun concludes on the qualities that should be in a sultan:

“It should be known that the benefit of the subjects does not lie in the sultan's personal attributes such as his appearance, pleasant demeanor, physical stature, extensive knowledge, good writing, or sharp intellect. Their benefit from the ruler lies solely in their relationship and connection to him. Because the essence of sovereignty and authority is relational. This relationship is the connection between two parties, the ruler and the subjects. Now, the true nature of the sultan is to possess authority over the subjects and to be responsible for their affairs. Therefore, the sultan is someone who has subjects. And the subjects are those who have a sultan. The title given to the attribute that the ruler holds in relation to his subjects is called sovereignty (meleke). Sovereignty is the possession of the subjects by the ruler. If sovereignty and its dependents are in place from the perspective of goodness and correctness, then the purpose of the sultan's existence is realized in the most perfect way. If sovereignty is good and appropriate, then the benefit of the subjects will also be so. However, if it is bad and unjust, it will be harmful and destructive to them. Good and beautiful sovereignty is based on gentle and soft treatment (Khaldun, 2018, 356).”

Additionally, according to Ibn Khaldun, dominion (mulk) and politics are a divine guarantee for the people, applying Allah's laws among humans. Allah desires only good for people; therefore, aiming for goodness and obedience is essential for the survival of states and societies.

However, when it comes to *The Prince*, Machiavelli explains how to deceive and gain control over people, even if it means departing from truth, honor, and morality. In this regard, Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli diverge: while their methods may appear similar in approach (focusing on what is rather than what should be), their outcomes lead to different conclusions. According to Machiavelli, if a ruler seeks to achieve the highest goals, he will not always find being moral to be rational. On the contrary, any consistent effort to practice all the qualities that people consider good would result in a disastrous and irrational policy. Unlike Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli prefers that a ruler appear to possess good virtue and moral values rather than actually possessing them in a genuine sense (Skinner, 2002, 60).

Although Machiavelli discusses a prince in his work *The Prince*, he approaches the politics of a prince in a manner that is free from morality, presenting extraordinary circumstances as if they are normal. This is because the period in which Machiavelli lived in Italy was marked by a lack of political unity, with power fragmented among principalities, duchies, and the Church. In reality, Machiavelli's *The Prince* is a book on crisis management. In this work, he outlines the principles applicable in exceptional or extraordinary political situations, as the significance of religion, virtue, and morality diminishes during times of crisis and civil war.

Machiavelli argues that normal moral rules cannot guide political action in times of anarchy, destruction, and chaos. Thus, he clearly expresses how politicians should act to succeed during periods of crisis and chaos. The primary reason Machiavelli is labeled as a

teacher of evil or a student of the devil is his assessment of politics based on its true nature and operation. Machiavelli has a transformative, realistic, and revolutionary perspective.

In his work *The Muqaddimah*, specifically in the section “*The Crescent and the Sword*,” Ibn Khaldun portrays a tableau focused on justice and goodness, whereas Machiavelli adopts the opposite stance.

If Machiavelli’s recommendations were implemented in the society envisioned by Ibn Khaldun, according to Ibn Khaldun, that society would likely face collapse and dissolution. However, on the other hand, the advice Machiavelli gives to the prince and the counsel Ibn Khaldun offers to the sultan show considerable similarities. For instance, according to Machiavelli, a prince may encourage competition among rival individuals or groups within his domain to prevent anyone from becoming strong enough to threaten his hegemony. This strategy aligns closely with the guidance provided by Ibn Khaldun. According to Ibn Khaldun, a leader should strive to undermine powerful institutions and support weaker ones to prevent the emergence of a force that could challenge his authority. At the same time, Ibn Khaldun, who sees war as a natural phenomenon, considers the army as the fundamental institution of the state. Like Machiavelli, he finds mercenary armies to be unreliable. For him, the only acceptable and reasonable option is a national army based on the people. In this sense, Ibn Khaldun's ideas present the same design as Machiavelli's understanding of a nationalist and secular state (Öztürk, 2015, 72).

Machiavelli provides advice that is entirely independent of ethics and values, focusing purely on power and self-interest. For example

"A ruler, in order to keep the state standing, may forsake moral qualities, refrain from doing good deeds, and go against promises and humanity. Therefore, the ruler must possess agility of spirit to resist the whims of fortune and the variability of events; this is called *virtu* (Machiavelli, 1993, 83)."

Machiavelli’s thinking is quite natural in this regard because his conception of politics revolves around gaining and maintaining power. In this view, everything is permissible when it comes to state and power, imposing the idea that the end justifies the means. Here, Machiavelli breaks the principle of politics being constantly bound by different norms and opens up a more individualistic realm for politics.

The ideas analyzed above are, of course, from Machiavelli's work *The Prince*. However, when it comes to Machiavelli's *Discourses*, an entirely different Machiavelli emerges. According to Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy*, politics is not merely the art of a ruler maintaining power, but also a form of governance based on popular participation, the strength

of laws, and the importance of republican values. In the *Discourses*, Machiavelli develops in-depth thoughts on politics by taking the Roman Republic as an example and argues that a republican government can be more stable and powerful in the long run. In this context, politics emerges as a virtuous form of governance that serves the common good of society.

Machiavelli emphasizes the participation of the people, freedom, and the supremacy of laws. According to him, the balance between citizens and rulers is fundamental to a stable state. *The Discourses on Livy* presents a broader understanding of politics beyond the mere pursuit of power, highlighting the value of republican governance and offering a more idealistic vision of politics.

At the same time, when explaining the establishment phase of the state, Machiavelli does not appear to foresee any distinction in terms of forms of government. In his view, whether a monarchy or a republic, the state should play the role of a single and absolute power in its foundation in both systems of governance:

“We must accept the following as a general rule: aside from being established by a single person, neither a republic nor a kingdom can ever be well-organized at the outset, at least in general and perhaps rarely otherwise. Moreover, governance must come from a single person, and such arrangements must originate in his mind. Therefore, a prudent founder of a republic, whose intention is to promote the common good rather than his own interest or lineage, must strive to consolidate all authority within himself for the advancement of the homeland. Sound judgment should not condemn anyone who acts outside the law when establishing a republic or organizing a kingdom. Whatever may condemn the action, the end result should always justify it (Machiavelli, 1998, 60).”

Thus, Machiavelli considers that the state can only be established by a single sovereign power and that actions carried out by this sovereign in pursuit of the common interest, even if they technically constitute wrongdoing, should be regarded as virtuous as long as they ensure the survival and continuity of the state. For Machiavelli, the fundamental goal is to maintain the state and continually strengthen its power. In this respect, any means used to achieve this goal are deemed legitimate (Duyar, 2021, 470).

When considering *The Discourses*, it becomes clear that Machiavelli's ultimate goal is republicanism. While he discusses a harsh and oppressive regime based on tyranny in *The Prince*, his actual aim, alongside *The Discourses*, is for governance to undergo a change and transformation into a republic after political unity and stability are achieved. The primary goal of Machiavelli in *The Prince* is not to emphasize evil, but to capture a snapshot of real politics.

In fact, the ideas Machiavelli put forth—such as deception, lying, manipulating people through religion, undermining others, and being two-faced—have been tactics employed by

statesmen and politicians throughout history. However, until Machiavelli, these actions were never considered morally acceptable, nor were they theoretically justified and recommended. Politicians and statesmen engaged in such behaviors, but always with an awareness that they were morally wrong. What makes Machiavelli a realist and revolutionary thinker is his argument that these actions are necessary and legitimate, grounded in historical examples and justified within a historical perspective.

Religion

According to Machiavelli, religion is an important tool for maintaining social order and reinforcing the authority of rulers. Especially in his work *The Prince*, he argues that religion should be used in a way that helps rulers sustain their power. Machiavelli notes that religion plays a significant role in social life and politics, but it should be viewed not as a moral obligation but rather as a strategy.

In *The Discourses on Livy*, Machiavelli emphasizes that religion is beneficial for ensuring the stability of the state and the unity of the people. Since religion shapes the values and moral norms of the populace, it plays an important role in establishing order and authority within society. Furthermore, Machiavelli states that it is also possible to use and exploit religion for political purposes when necessary.

According to Machiavelli, where faith is weak, evil and selfishness emerge, and the spirit of piety fades. In the lands of Italy, due to a lack of true faith or misguided beliefs, unethical behaviors such as corruption, self-interest, and opportunism have become widespread (Sekman 113, 2020).

Therefore, religion occupies an important place as a means of power and control in Machiavelli's understanding of politics. Machiavelli approaches religion not from a theological perspective but within a pragmatic framework. For him, the importance of religion lies in the benefits it brings to politics. Religion is a tool offered on a silver platter for Machiavelli's political aims. As a tool, religion fosters unity and solidarity among the people, serves as a source of inspiration for governance, acts as a regulatory law for society, and allows concepts such as morality and evil to be properly understood (Skinner, 33, 2002).

It could be argued that Machiavelli fundamentally separated politics from the realm of higher moral values. However, much like Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli does not advocate for a society independent of religion; he is quite aware of the importance of religion.

In his work *The Discourses*, Machiavelli illustrates the significance of religion as a unifying and integrative force in the establishment of a city or state, using examples from the Romans:

“It does not seem irrelevant to present examples of how the Romans employed religion to reorganize the city and execute their initiatives. Although there are many instances in Titus Livy, I will limit myself to a few. After the Romans established tribunes with consular powers, who were predominantly plebeians with one exception, a plague and famine struck that year, along with several ominous signs. The nobility seized this opportunity during the subsequent election of tribunes to argue that the gods were angry because Rome had misused the majesty of its empire, and that the only remedy to appease the gods was to restore the election of tribunes to its rightful place. Consequently, the populace, intimidated by this religious manipulation, elected only nobles as tribunes. Another example can be found in the capture of the city of Veii. Military commanders utilized religion to maintain the soldiers' morale for their campaign. That year, when Lake Albanus rose mysteriously, and Roman soldiers, frustrated by the prolonged siege, wished to return to Rome, the Romans discovered through oracles, including Apollo, that Veii would be captured the year Lake Albanus overflowed. This belief effectively facilitated the capture of the city (Machiavelli, 1998, 39).”

There are certainly many reasons for Machiavelli's strong opposition to religion. According to him, the most powerful faction in divided Italy is the Papacy, which is also the group capable of establishing Italian unity. However, Machiavelli emphasizes another point: the Papacy is also the group that obstructs the establishment of political unity in Italy. A strong, unified Italy would not serve the interests of the Church, as it would lead to a loss of its sovereignty and power. Machiavelli summarizes this situation in *Discourses* with the following words:

“We owe our atheism to the Church; it has divided our country and wishes for it to remain divided. The reason Italy has never united under a single leader is that the Church possesses enough power to govern all of Italy and does not allow any other force to unite the country” (Machiavelli, 1998, 149).

Therefore, when *The Discourses* is analyzed independently of *The Prince*, it becomes clear that Machiavelli is not against religion itself but rather opposed to the Church and the existing order established by the Papacy. In *The Discourses*, one of the key points Machiavelli emphasizes is the existence of a Church system that lives in luxury and wealth contrary to moral standards. He criticizes this system for its moral corruption and the power it wields. For Machiavelli, religion is an essential tool in state governance. It is the fundamental instrument necessary for maintaining unity and order within the state and legitimizing the exercise of power in the eyes of the people. However, he believes that the immoral political games played by the

popes undermine trust in religion. Thus, when Machiavelli analyzes the Church's actions, he argues that Italian society owes its atheism to the Church.

According to Machiavelli, the Catholic Church, responsible for upholding religious duties, has deviated from its purpose, become preoccupied with worldly matters, and acted as an oppressive force over society. The Church has begun to become a heavy burden on the shoulders of the Italian people. The popes, engaged in a struggle to fill their own pockets and gain fame, have not uttered a single word regarding the deteriorating situation in Italy. This has led to the fragmentation of Italy and a drift toward irreligion. Influenced by these events, Machiavelli associates the irreligion of the Italian people with the state of affairs brought about by the Catholic Church in Italy (Sekman, 103, 2020).

The primary reason for Machiavelli's opposition to institutional religion and the Papacy is that Christianity has fallen into a miserable state in the hands of the pope and the Church. Furthermore, he asserts that there is no ambition within Christian morality to achieve Italy's political unity. According to him, Christianity has lost its earthly ambition and power, emphasizing the afterlife to the detriment of its practical functionality, except for its focus on poverty. Machiavelli emphasizes the urgent need for the Catholic Church to rectify its misguided attitudes in order to strengthen the power of the state and ensure its continuity. He advocates for a strong, bold, and vigorous prince as essential for achieving these goals (Sekman, 104, 2020).

At the core of Machiavelli's understanding of ethics lies the principle of success, rather than religious values. Therefore, Machiavelli moves away from religious ties due to a more positivist, pragmatic, and secular perspective.

According to Machiavelli, for religion or the state to renew itself, it must return to its essence, as a state or religion that has grown does so because it is fundamentally healthy and good. However, like human nature, these entities begin to age and deteriorate as they grow. To renew this condition, a return to the essence, or the past, is necessary. This return can be achieved through either good laws, functional institutions, or a strong prince. In a religious sense, established religious institutions cannot facilitate this return to essence, as they are likely corrupted due to being under the control of a particular faction or group. Therefore, this renewal can be better achieved by a more independent and dynamic form of religion. It is true that Machiavelli did not concern himself with high moral and religious principles. His primary focus was on the practical or political interests of power and the state. Specifically, the principal

concern of the prince would generally be to safeguard the interests of the state; this becomes clearer when examining his work *The Discourses*.

In other words, Machiavelli took a clear stance regarding the relationship between religion, morality, and *virtu*, on one hand, and politics, on the other, demonstrating a distinct position on these concepts. He sought to emphasize the invalidity of phenomena such as *virtu*, morality, and religion, which have practical implications in the political and social realms. However, he stressed that the domains of morality and religion are quite different from that of politics, and that the prince, as the sole representative of power and sovereignty, must protect these concepts from his moral and political mindset. Thus, Machiavelli recognized that the moral and religious principles prevalent in his socio-political environment were inadequate for explaining the realities of politics, and he articulated this observation. In this context, his advice to the prince cannot be simply viewed as a call to pursue an immoral or religiously hypocritical politics. Rather, it is more valid to interpret it as advising the prince that he need not be motivated by principles that have become invalid. Because, on one hand, Machiavelli defends the dichotomy between morality and religion, while on the other, he supports the contradictory relationship between these concepts and politics (Kurnaz, 2024, 110).

However, when it comes to Ibn Khaldun, he does not approach politics independently of higher moral values like Machiavelli does. On the contrary, from an Ibn Khaldunian perspective, for a political system or societal structure to succeed, it must significantly draw from these higher moral values. Ibn Khaldun's political model is based on realities and emphasizes that a political authority cannot emerge independently of moral values; a state cannot exist independently of moral values. According to Ibn Khaldun, when we read political authority through historical codes, the concept of rulership cannot arise independently of moral values. He argues that only with moral values can a ruler possessing social solidarity reach power.

Machiavelli praises the republic over the monarchy because, in his view, a republic is more institutional and represents the will of the people rather than a single individual. In *The Prince*, he defends monarchy, but in *The Discourses*, he extols the *virtus* of the republic. Machiavelli's ultimate goal is to achieve political unity in Italy through a prince, who will then pave the way for the transition to a republic over time. On the authority of Niccolo Machiavelli, governance is cyclical. Monarchy can easily transform into tyranny, aristocracy can shift to rule by a small number of people, and democracy can devolve into anarchy due to the abuse of freedoms (Deniz, 2001, 118).

According to Machiavelli, since humans are wretched and greedy creatures, they cannot establish a republic on their own; a charismatic prince with *virtu* is necessary for this. After that, the process will naturally evolve into a republic. Furthermore, he believes that only a virtuous and charismatic leader can revive a republic that has entered a period of decline. For Machiavelli, a state is established by a single person but governed by the people. The essence of Machiavelli's thought is that the existence of the state and the common good are paramount, and to achieve this, anything may be considered legitimate.

According to Ibn Khaldun, religion is critically important for the coexistence of societies and the maintenance of social order. He emphasizes that religion strengthens solidarity among individuals and communities and ensures social cohesion. By defining moral values and norms, religion shapes individual behavior and helps to strengthen social bonds. Ibn Khaldun also notes that religion is one of the foundations of the authority and legitimacy of the state. The acceptance of religion within a society assists leaders and rulers in consolidating their power. Religion contributes to social harmony by addressing the spiritual and social needs of individuals.

Additionally, Ibn Khaldun expresses that religion, particularly Islam, plays a significant role in the historical development processes of societies. Religion is a determining factor in the formation of cultural and social structures within societies, and it also contributes to the strengthening of *asabiye* (solidarity). Therefore, in Ibn Khaldun's thought, religion is not merely a matter of individual belief but also a social and political necessity.

Therefore, in Ibn Khaldun's theory, morality is not something externally injected into politics; rather, morality is an intrinsic component of Ibn Khaldun's model and even the driving force behind the formation of the state's cohesion. Machiavelli's ideal ruler is a combination of duplicity and cunning. For him, truth is deceit, religious demolitions, and the complete destruction of idealism; the ruler strives for immorality, destruction, and corruption. In stark contrast to the qualities attributed to Machiavelli's Prince, Ibn Khaldun's ruler struggles effortlessly for stability and solidarity.

Both thinkers show similarities and differences in their approaches to religion. Both argue that religion fosters social unity, maintains order, and prevents corruption. Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli acknowledge the importance of religion for the state and recognize the connection between religion and power.

According to the thinkers, religion is the best way to keep people good and united because it prevents corruption. Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli both consider the importance of religion

for the state and emphasize the necessary and significant connection between religion and power. Both realist philosophers believe that governments striving to avoid corruption must, above all, keep their religion absolutely pure.

However, Machiavelli notably diverges deeply from Ibn Khaldun on certain matters related to religion. Machiavelli was extremely hostile towards the Church and argued that the fundamental cause of the state's defeats on the battlefield and societal corruption and decline lies primarily in the attachment to religion and religious values. On the other hand, Ibn Khaldun is a realist, rationalist, experientialist, and empirical, but not secular. According to Ibn Khaldun, politics that do not rely on divine laws and Sharia are considered bad.

He argues that when people make laws, they only consider the outward and apparent aspects of events and cannot see the deeper meanings and wisdom behind them. Only the divine laws set by Allah encompass both the inner and outer aspects of the issue.

History

Both philosophers place significant importance on history; Ibn Khaldun wrote *The Muqaddimah*, a historical work on Islamic history, while Machiavelli chronicled the history of Florence. In a broad sense, both philosophers built their theories on readings of history and positioned historical studies as central to their work. They both seek to return to the glorious periods of the past, exploring how ancient states and statesmen achieved success and established great empires. Through this method, they aim for their own states to be successful and illustrious.

Each philosopher views history as something that can be imitated to understand human nature and to help govern people. Ultimately, both are engaged in the endeavor to establish societal and universal laws regarding society, politics, and history. They believe that like the natural sciences, politics and society are subject to certain universal principles. Ibn Khaldun refers to these principles as Divine laws and the *sunnatullah*, while Machiavelli considers them as laws of nature. Importantly, both intellectuals employ a universalist method in examining history, which influences their personal worldviews and thus their perspectives on politics. Like Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli gives a privileged place to history when shaping his thoughts on society and politics. According to him, human nature, with its selfishness and passions, remains constant, and for this reason, history continuously repeats itself (Öztürk, 2015, 72).

According to Ibn Khaldun, each era has its own ruling principle, and it is necessary to consider the conditions people are in before accusing them. Machiavelli, on the other hand,

believes that each era possesses a spirit, and understanding that spirit and its changes is essential to understanding the age.

Machiavelli is the first thinker to systematically emphasize the need for politicians to recognize the inherent cruelty, ruthlessness, and betrayal present in human nature and society. He approaches history, analyzing it in terms of causes and effects, similar to Ibn Khaldun, highlighting how history unfolds functionally and causally, and how politics is rigidly informed by historical reality.

In both *The Prince* and *The Discourses*, Machiavelli conducts a reading of history, drawing on successful figures from the past to create a foundational example for understanding the existing chaos of realpolitik. One of Machiavelli's greatest achievements is his profound understanding of human nature and human history, through which he builds a realistic political framework. According to Machiavelli, just as there is a nature of humanity, there is also a nature to politics and history. Leaders who understand this nature and develop policies that align with it will succeed and maintain their power.

Like Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli believes in a cyclical understanding of history, asserting that history will repeat itself; thus, by knowing and studying this history, a political and social understanding can be constructed. According to Machiavelli, individuals with free will select the correct tools and knowledge necessary for struggle based on the lessons learned from history. This idea is reflected in Ibn Khaldun's assertion that individuals who understand how past states have risen and fallen are more successful in politics. At the same time, Ibn Khaldun has essentially created a form of historical sociology by examining society through social necessities and historical realities, analyzing history through causal relationships. He emphasizes knowing, understanding, and analyzing politics and society through history. By studying society and making it the subject of his examination, he develops a comprehensive understanding of societal dynamics (Ulukan, 2005).

Asabiye, Virtu and Fortuna

On the other hand, Ibn Khaldun's concept of *asabiye* and Machiavelli's development of the concepts of *virtu* and *fortuna* also exhibit similarities. Ibn Khaldun suggests that every state has a maximum limit it can reach based on its *asabiye* and cannot surpass it, while Machiavelli asserts that every prince and ruler has both *virtu* and *fortune*, and surpassing these is exceedingly difficult. Ibn Khaldun emphasizes that strong leadership is a significant part of *asabiye* whereas Machiavelli believes that a ruler who integrates *virtu* and *fortuna* as a whole

will be successful. The concept of *asabiye* put forward by Ibn Khaldun, which is related to the desire to control the source of politics and power, closely resembles Machiavelli's idea of *virtu*. Both speak of the driving forces that will fulfill the human desire to rule and express that this force is *asabiye* and *virtu* (Öztürk, 2015, 68).

However, they diverge in certain aspects. For instance, Ibn Khaldun's concept of *asabiye* (group solidarity) is a specific cohesive force he used to explain social interactions in power politics and the remarkable rise of the Arabs, which Machiavelli does not have a similar counterpart for.

The unified strength provided by *asabiye* where people are willing to fight and die for each other, becomes the foundation of political power due to Ibn Khaldun's theory. Machiavelli does not have a theory similar to *asabiye*, but he suggests that adversity can also create a more cohesive community because wealth corrupts people and leads to laziness. Both thinkers believe that corruption inevitably arises in advanced civilizations due to the luxury that wealth brings, as it encourages us to pursue our desires, ultimately leading to societal decay and weakness over time.

Machiavelli, like Ibn Khaldun, appreciates the role of power and the will to power in establishing, developing, and solidifying the state. In the third chapter titled "The goal of *asabiye* is sovereignty" in the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun strongly emphasizes the concept that the state exists only through the power will of the ruler or the ruling group.

According to Ibn Khaldun, strong *asabiye* cannot emerge without the ambition to hold power. Similarly, Machiavelli asserts that under all circumstances, a prince's fundamental goal is to maintain power.

While Ibn Khaldun explains the role of *asabiye* (social cohesion or group solidarity) in society and its preventive position against social decay, Machiavelli addresses this through the concept of *virtu*. According to him, the internal affairs of a city must be organized in a way that instills the quality of *virtu* in all citizens. He mentions a very fundamental method to achieve this: the most important institutions of any city are those that support religious beliefs, ensure their effective use, and secure them. Machiavelli argues that obedience to religious doctrine is so crucial that it can, on its own, lead a republic to greatness. Conversely, in Machiavelli's view, the primary cause of a country's downfall is nothing other than weakness in *virtu* and the diminished value placed on sacred beliefs (Skinner, 2002, 91).

Comparing Khaldun and Machiavelli

When compared comprehensively, despite their differences, both thinkers exhibit striking similarities on many issues. For instance, they both emphasize the importance of history in understanding the condition of nations, the effects of tyranny and arbitrary policies on people's minds, the qualities required of a ruler, the defense of the state and the loyalty of soldiers, the ruler's competition with the state, trade and profit within their subjects, the subjects' attachment to their wealth and its effect in provoking public anger, the infiltration of anarchy into the state, soldiers attacking the property of the people, and finally their remarks on secretaries of state. These similarities are quite apparent.

The ideas of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli clearly forged new ground and developed a fresh approach for their times. Firstly, these two thinkers approached issues and events with a much more realistic perspective rather than an idealistic one, unlike their predecessors. The period and events in which they lived had a significant impact in shaping a different paradigm.

The socio-political circumstances evolving throughout their lives are among the reasons behind the substantial differences in their styles and thought structures. Ibn Khaldun acts as a historian of civilization, observing, analyzing, and making deductions. On the other hand, Machiavelli himself is a political activist and reformer. He offered recommendations as a guide for the unification of Italy and was part of the Renaissance. Both share a neutral empiricism, seeking truth while examining political reality.

Each of these great thinkers followed their own approach and drew inspiration from their own sources. Just as *The Muqaddimah* was a significant advancement in the Middle Ages, *The Prince* was a major success in the Renaissance era.

Despite all these similarities, there are important differences to note, particularly that Ibn Khaldun's theory is much broader and more comprehensive than Machiavelli's. This suggests that Ibn Khaldun is richer in material and has a broader perspective compared to Machiavelli. Ibn Khaldun generally addresses society and all its phenomena, seeking to understand these phenomena, analyzing them in the light of history, and ultimately deriving some general laws from the successive rhythms and interactions among them.

Machiavelli offers advice to the prince based on his readings of history and his experiences related to the state. According to Machiavelli, a ruler does not necessarily have to possess all the qualities generally considered good, but it is essential that he appears to have them. Being seen as tolerant is beneficial; appearing merciful is rational; and being thought of as a person of great virtue is quite important. However, in reality, the ruler should not embody

these qualities genuinely but should instead be a great imitator and hypocrite. Subsequently, he must learn how to deceive people's minds, convincing them of the necessity (and righteousness) of his actions (Kesgin, 2015, 110).

Moreover, Ibn Khaldun establishes a concept of civilization (*umran*) by examining and analyzing the existing historical and political context step by step, whereas Machiavelli is not concerned with founding a civilization.

Machiavelli described politics with sharp realism, viewing it as a battlefield with its own rules and principles. According to Machiavelli, when it comes to the interests of the state and the prince, any means necessary to achieve the goal are justified. In its simplest form, political power, when it concerns the continuity of the state and the interests of the prince, legitimizes all actions, even those considered unethical. In such a context, evil can transform into good, immorality can gain legitimacy, and concepts criticized in daily life can be justified for the sake of maintaining power and ensuring the integrity of the state.

Machiavelli's realism in politics and governance is so profound that it directly influences contemporary European politics and political thought. Moreover, the codes of contemporary European political understanding are rooted in Machiavelli. Today's international relations and statecraft are literally based on Machiavellian principles.

According to Machiavelli, statecraft does not proceed based on what should be or utopian ideals, but rather advances through existing, real-world codes. Therefore, anyone who abandons what should be for what is in their possession is considered wise, because they can also lose what they have. Machiavelli constructs his thesis from a power-centered perspective, asserting that a ruler may resort to any kind of deceit and cunning, both in domestic and foreign policies, in order to maintain power.

According to him, *virtu* and morality do not lie in goodness and beauty, but rather in the ability to steer a ship in any conditions, making a captain virtuous if they can do so. Machiavelli earned the nickname the teacher of evil because he detailed in his works what a ruler must do under various circumstances to acquire and maintain power.

On the authority of Machiavelli, who skillfully analyzed his own era, deeply understood political, social, and economic transformations, and foresaw future events with his historical perspective, for a prince, it is more essential to maintain power and dominate throughout the state than merely acquiring power.

Ibn Khaldun, like Machiavelli, constructs his thesis based on both historical readings and political experiences. However, while Machiavelli's approach is rational, realistic, and

methodological in his analysis of events, his ultimate goal is not solely to hold power for its own sake. Khaldun believes that a ruler must understand the nature of society and can only govern it with justice once this nature is understood. According to Khaldun, the sultan must know and understand the nature of human beings and society in order to educate and discipline them.

While Ibn Khaldun aims fundamentally to establish a science he calls *umran*, Machiavelli's primary goal is for the prince to understand human nature to use it in his favor and maintain power. Ibn Khaldun seeks to read history in its true sense, interpret it, and develop a philosophy of history. Both thinkers lived during periods when societies were in crisis and chaos, and struggles for power were at their peak. While Khaldun sought solutions to these crises and aimed for social harmony, Machiavelli investigated how princes could benefit from these crises and rise to the top through these benefits.

If we look at the history of science and thought, we can see that the prevailing cosmological perception at a given time determines the character of the science and thought produced during that period. However, there are also periods when certain thinkers developed different ideas and analyses that did not conform to the cosmology and worldview of their time. In the field of social sciences, particularly in political philosophy, both Ibn Khaldun and Niccolò Machiavelli represent such a change and transformation.

Consequently, despite coming from different cultural and historical backgrounds, there are noteworthy similarities between the works of Ibn Khaldun and Niccolò Machiavelli on politics, governance, and historiography. Both thinkers emphasize the importance of realism, pragmatism, and a deep understanding of human nature in political analysis. By challenging traditional wisdom, they offer enduring insights into the nature of power and society. A comparative analysis of their ideas provides a valuable framework for understanding the complexities of political theory across different historical periods and cultural contexts.

When comparing the works, concepts, and methodologies of these two thinkers, striking similarities become apparent. In many respects, Ibn Khaldun is very similar to Machiavelli because Machiavelli's question is also about determining what ought to be by looking at the world. However, while Machiavelli and Ibn Khaldun observed different things when looking at the world, their methods and approaches are similar. Despite these similarities in their methodologies and approaches, the conclusions and destinations they reached are quite different.

The codes of European politics and political understanding are directly linked to Machiavelli. Machiavelli is an excellent analyst, and contemporary state politics largely rely on him. Like Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli uses history as a paradigm. While Ibn Khaldun wrote *the history of Iberia*, Machiavelli wrote *the history of Florence*. The purpose of both thinkers in writing history stems from their belief in the deterministic nature of the past and their desire to learn from it.

Unlike political philosophers before him, Machiavelli did not perceive politics merely as a set of actions but developed a political theory that was neither utopian nor fictional. In this context, the questions he sought to address pertained to finding solutions for the situation Italy was in at that time, such as: "How can order be established? How can a national state and a national army be created? What needs to be done to achieve this? (Tanriverdi, 2012).

When considering the history of world politics, it becomes clear how, in various periods, many statesmen have set aside justice, religion, morality, and virtue to establish order and unity. In this context, Machiavelli articulates the extent to which the discourse in politics diverges from actions taken during periods of chaos. However, to truly understand Machiavelli, one must take into account the political crises and chaos present in the world and Italy during the 15th and 16th centuries. Machiavelli is fundamentally a thinker of extraordinary circumstances and periods, and his ideas cannot be understood independently of the political landscape of his time.

However, there is a significant difference. When building his theory, Ibn Khaldun is engaged in a struggle to construct a civilization, which he names *umran*. He seeks to build a civilization based on historical truths and realities. In contrast, Machiavelli focuses solely on how a ruler should govern a country and maintain absolute power. Since Ibn Khaldun is engaged in the struggle to construct a civilization, he states that he wrote for scholars and humanity. On the other hand, Machiavelli wrote his work for Lorenzo de' Medici, as he clearly states in the first part of his book. Both thinkers build their works around key concepts. In Machiavelli's entire book, two important terms stand out: *Fortuna* and *Virtu*. In Ibn Khaldun's work, concepts such as *asabiye*, *umran*, *bedevet*, and *hadaret* are prominent.

The lessons Ibn Khaldun derives from observing the world are more morally infused, whereas the conclusions Machiavelli reaches, especially in *The Prince*, are more detached from moral considerations. In this respect, it should be clearly stated that despite the significant similarities in their approaches and methodologies, the conclusions and lessons they draw are markedly different. Ibn Khaldun is in a quest to discover what is by observing the world and the events within it. His main ideas have a timeless character that can be compared with ideas

from various temporal and spatial contexts. His theoretical framework supports a quest for comprehensive meaning and coherence.

As a founder of a new field of science called *umran* (the science of society and civilization) in the social sciences, Ibn Khaldun conceptualized a series of universal phenomena observed in the social and political spheres and used these concepts consistently in his work with great care and meticulousness in *The Muqaddimah*.

Ibn Khaldun's primary quest was to make sense of the events of his time. The events during his era represented a collective decline, a general fall of Islamic civilization and the Islamic world. Ibn Khaldun was engaged in a challenge and struggle against this problem. With *The Muqaddimah*, he sought to address these issues, entering a struggle to provide meaning for himself and future generations. He meticulously built his thesis step by step, laying the foundation for more rational and meaningful social sciences. Ibn Khaldun's thought is considered a precursor to modern social sciences. He made observations far ahead of his time, particularly in historiography, the philosophy of history, and economics. The model he outlined and the methodology he described in his work still retain their functionality today and can be used to understand and explain certain social phenomena. His model is particularly useful for analyzing states and societies composed of tribes (such as those in North Africa).

By addressing the decline of his time and seeking solutions, Ibn Khaldun constructed a theoretical framework that allowed for a rational and systematic understanding of social dynamics. This framework not only provided insights into his contemporary society but also laid the groundwork for future social scientific inquiry. Ibn Khaldun's goal was, in a sense, to reach law-like generalizations. By examining the experiences related to society and politics, he sought to abstract and generalize these experiences to formulate overarching principles. In this regard, Ibn Khaldun's efforts and work from his own time align with and are consistent with the aims and methods of modern social sciences. His approach to creating theoretical generalizations based on empirical observations mirrors the goals of contemporary social scientific inquiry.

When examined as a whole, one of the most notable features of Ibn Khaldun's *The Muqaddimah* is his emphasis on the significance of structural factors over individual agency in his social and political analyses. According to Ibn Khaldun, the structure is paramount, and individual wills are largely subject to these structures. He adopts a holistic approach, considering events from an interdisciplinary perspective. For Ibn Khaldun, society is an integrated whole; he does not separate the economic aspects from the cultural, political,

historical, and anthropological dimensions. He analyzes and interprets the cause-and-effect chains within a reciprocal context, treating society as a unified entity. This comprehensive approach allows him to address societal phenomena in a manner that integrates multiple facets of social life.

In addition, Ibn Khaldun adopts an empirical analytical method. For example, when examining the concept of history, he evaluates whether historical events actually occurred or whether they are possible or impossible through an experimental approach. He argues that if an event aligns with the measures of reason, nature, and physics, it could be considered possible. Conversely, if it deviates from rationality and reality, he deems it unlikely to occur. Ibn Khaldun also rejects a linear understanding of history. According to him, history is cyclical, constantly changing, and not progressing along a straight and predictable line. Instead, it is characterized by fluctuations, unforeseen changes, and cyclical patterns. Thus, Ibn Khaldun's explanations, analyses, and interpretations are rational and based on demonstrable principles. Ibn Khaldun concluded that the collapse of states is not accidental but inevitable. The causes that led to the downfall of past dynasties have not changed; they remain valid today and will continue to lead to the same collapses in the future (Akçetin, 2017). Ibn Khaldun argues that in order to understand the stages that states undergo, it is essential to have a solid knowledge of history.

Ibn Khaldun's thought not only represented a significant shift and innovation in his own time but also retains its importance and depth today. His approach and ideas offer an alternative paradigm to the mainstream paradigms of modern social sciences, which have largely lost their function in understanding, explaining, forecasting, and guiding societal phenomena. In particular, contemporary social sciences, including political science, political philosophy, and sociology, have long been searching for ways to understand and explain social events. In this context, Ibn Khaldun provides an opportunity for an alternative paradigm.

Ibn Khaldun's methodology intertwines analysis and synthesis. Instead of dissecting parts from the whole, he considers and analyzes the whole as a unified entity. For Ibn Khaldun, the meaning and value of a part are defined by its place within the whole. He adopts a structural approach, focusing on structures rather than individuals. This holistic and structural perspective allows for a comprehensive understanding of societal dynamics. Ibn Khaldun certainly incorporates rationalism into his thought. He is rationalistic to a certain extent, but his rationalism is limited. According to Ibn Khaldun, there are situations that human reason cannot fully explain. He does not approach metaphysical issues with excessive rationalism. For him, reason is like a delicate scale; if you overload it with too much, it cannot balance and may break.

Beyond this, when it comes to the human realm, it is essential to adhere to the principles of reason.

Ibn Khaldun examines what is, rather than what ought to be, and builds a bridge from the existing state to what should be. He adopts an anthropological perspective and does not limit his studies to just Muslim societies; he explores all societies he has knowledge of and access to. In his work, he uses examples and evidence from different societies to support his thesis, attributing universality to his model. In this sense, he conducts comparative analyses, comparing different societies, states, and civilizations.

In general, the basis for comparisons between Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli is as follows: both are realists who focus on what exists rather than idealism. They formulate what ought to be based on what is. However, when examining Machiavelli's *The Prince*, we encounter a depiction that contrasts sharply with Ibn Khaldun's portrayal in *The Muqaddimah*. While Ibn Khaldun praises *virtu* he considers good and beneficial, such as *hilalu hayr* (the crescent of goodness), Machiavelli extols the opposite traits. Machiavelli discusses how to deceive people, how to control them, and how, if necessary, to distance oneself from morality, justice, and honor to achieve one's goals. This is where Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli diverge significantly. Despite their similar starting points -examining the existing state of affairs to describe and formulate what should be- their conclusions and recommendations are quite different.

In contrast to Ibn Khaldun's perspective, Machiavelli ultimately advises that a ruler may need to abandon moral qualities and avoid acts of goodness, break promises if necessary, and even oppose religion and humanity to keep the state stable. According to Machiavelli, a ruler must possess the flexibility and cunning (*Virtu*) to counter the whims of fate (*Fortuna*) and the variability of events. Machiavelli argues that a prince should indeed choose this path, as politics demands it. According to Machiavelli, the ultimate aim of both the prince and politics is power. Therefore, Machiavelli's approach to politics is one that operates outside any moral framework

Indeed, Machiavelli's intervention can be seen as a revolutionary shift for modern politics. He fundamentally broke the reliance of politics on higher values and its instrumental nature, which had characterized political thought up to his time. By advocating for a politics that operates independently of moral and ethical constraints, Machiavelli introduced a new paradigm where political strategy and power dynamics took precedence over traditional moral and ethical considerations. This shift marked a significant departure from the idea that politics must be subordinated to overarching values, thus paving the way for a more pragmatic and power-centric approach to political theory.

At the same time, the shocking and surprising aspects of Machiavelli's *The Prince* reflect strategies that have been employed by politicians and statesmen throughout history, such as deceit, manipulation, and duplicity. However, until Machiavelli, these tactics were never formally endorsed or seen as morally acceptable. Machiavelli was revolutionary in that he not only recognized these tactics as common but also argued that they should be principles of political practice. He asserted that these actions are necessary and justified within the realm of politics, thereby detaching political strategy from moral or ethical considerations. Machiavelli's radical departure from the moral frameworks of his predecessors marks him as a revolutionary thinker. He proposed that politics should be understood and practiced independently of higher values, which was a significant break from earlier traditions.

Interestingly, this revolutionary aspect of Machiavelli's thought is somewhat analogous to Ibn Khaldun's approach. Both thinkers offered methodologies and perspectives that were distinct from their predecessors and sought to analyze societies and politics from new angles. While their conclusions and frameworks differ, both Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli introduced fresh, groundbreaking perspectives in the social sciences.

Indeed, when examining the works of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli as a whole, their approaches, analytical styles, and methodologies are quite similar, yet their goals and conclusions differ significantly. Both are realists, but their interpretations of realism and the lessons they derive from it are distinct. For Ibn Khaldun, religion plays a constructive role in shaping society, as it is seen as a necessary aspect of human nature and a reflection of divine will. He views religion as integral to social cohesion and the design of society.

In contrast, Machiavelli also acknowledges the importance and function of religion in social life, but he sees it differently. For Machiavelli, religion is a tool that a prince can use to maintain control and manipulate the populace. Rather than valuing religion for its intrinsic role in society, Machiavelli views it primarily as a means to enhance the ruler's power and effectiveness. Thus, while both thinkers offer realist perspectives, their interpretations and applications of realism in relation to religion and governance reflect their differing objectives and underlying philosophies. According to Ibn Khaldun, a ruler must understand human nature to govern society justly. However, Machiavelli believes that a prince should know and understand human nature in order to manipulate it and maintain control in governance.

Overall, when examining Machiavelli's life, it becomes clear that he strives to return to the old importance and effectiveness of politics by supporting a prince who must be in power. The focal point of Machiavelli's political views is the unification of Italy. During his time, Italy

lacked political unity and was a country plagued by internal conflicts, wars, and assassinations. Machiavelli's goal was to re-establish Italy's fractured unity. According to him, this goal could only be achieved by a strong prince. This prince, dedicated to the noble purpose of unification, should consider himself unbound by any religious or moral rules (Arslanel, 2011, 4).

Machiavelli adopts a perspective where, according to his analyses and historical readings, any means are justified to achieve the end. In contrast, Ibn Khaldun was deeply involved in politics but eventually sought to withdraw from it. He was a thinker who genuinely studied history and human nature and aimed to build a civilization, and a system of governance based on these insights. His focus was not on returning to power or holding control but rather on creating a rational and meaningful framework for understanding and organizing society. Consequently, while Ibn Khaldun's conclusions are realist and rationalist, they are not devoid of ethical considerations. On the other hand, Machiavelli's primary concern is to maintain power by any means necessary, prioritizing the preservation of power above all else.

On the other hand, Machiavelli's political goals change along with the understanding of humanity and the historical process. The cynical perspective in *The Prince* presents individuals as deprived of freedom and only seeking basic freedom and protection under the shadow of a prince. In his later work, *Discourses*, however, his aim is to establish a republican politics that protects and enables citizen participation rather than suppressing it (Luban, 2016).

In the dedications to both *The Prince* and *The Discourses*, Machiavelli asserted that he had acquired his understanding of politics through lengthy experience of the contemporary world and continual reading of ancient texts. His fourteen-year career in the Florentine chancery placed him at the hub of government and politics and afforded him manifold opportunities, whether at his desk in Florence or as an emissary abroad, to observe and experience at close hand the problems of Florentine politics and territorial administration and European diplomacy and statecraft, problems on which he meditated and began to write during his career in government (Pesman, 2010, 48).

When considering Machiavelli's *The Discourses on Livy*, it becomes evident that it presents a significantly different perspective from his renowned work, *The Prince*. Although both texts are frequently analyzed in isolation, a more comprehensive reading reveals that Machiavelli does not merely advocate for power and monarchy, as he might seem to in *The Prince*. Rather, he expresses a belief in the superiority of republican governance. As a result of his historical studies, Machiavelli concludes that in order to establish or maintain a republic in

a corrupt city, it is necessary to steer the republic toward a structure closer to a monarchy rather than a popular government (Machiavelli, 1998, 27).

According to Strauss, the *Discourses* contain extensive discussions on many details and do not focus on a specific subject; instead, they reference classical texts and draw upon them. However, since *The Prince* addresses an actual prince, it reasonably implies a call to action, making its content more limited and action-oriented (Strauss, 1992, 22). It is a puzzling fact that in the Discourse on Livy Machiavelli proposes a return to Roman modes and orders while simultaneously proclaiming the radical novelty of his own ideas. There is an old Machiavelli who breathes the air of republican Rome and a new Machiavelli who walks a path untrodden by others (Coby, 1999).

However, Machiavelli acknowledges that the challenges of political leadership—particularly during times of fragmentation, chaos, or civil strife—can be more effectively addressed through princely rule. In such scenarios, he suggests that the authority of a prince may prove more beneficial than a republican system. This perspective introduces a Machiavelli who operates independently of conventional moral and ethical considerations, emphasizing pragmatic solutions to governance in turbulent times. Machiavelli's weakness for power does not merely encompass a simplistic understanding of power; rather, it is articulated in *Discourses on Livy* that the circumstances of his time compelled him toward this perspective:

“If people are to make a complete judgment, they should pay attention not to those who need power to be truly free, but to those who are genuinely free. They should respect those who know how to govern a kingdom, rather than those who possess power but do not understand how to rule a kingdom (Machiavelli, 73, 1998).

In *Discourses*, Machiavelli establishes a contrast between tyranny and despotism, advocating for a republican system and placing significant emphasis on republican governance. In the *Discourses* Machiavelli likewise exposes the Prince-redeemer, theorized in Prince 26 as Italy's liberator from foreign invaders, restorer of its lost virtue, and promulgator of new order, as an improbability and perhaps a fantasy (Najemy, 99, 2010). In the first section of his work, he thoroughly details how cities are established, similar to how Ibn Khaldun enumerates the conditions necessary for the emergence of a civilization and political order in *The Muqaddimah*.

While Ibn Khaldun argues that societies should be governed according to their own temperaments (for example, that *Bedouins* are best governed through *reis* and *riyaset*), Machiavelli, much like the Islamic thinker, advises preferring a form of governance that aligns with the conditions of the times rather than opting for a direct form of rule. A reader of *The Prince* might mistakenly conclude that Machiavelli supports despotism and tyranny; however,

a reading of *Discourses* reveals that he is significantly in favor of republicanism. In fact, *The Prince* serves as a precursor to Machiavelli's discourse on the republic in his work *Discourses*. Certainly, Machiavelli is not as cruel and ruthless as he appears in *The Prince*; rather, he is a realist and a rationalist, much like Ibn Khaldun in his advice to sultans on seizing *mulk* and *riyaset*.

In this context, Machiavelli advises the prince, who will serve as the founding leader in his book *The Prince*, that the masses are virtiless, greedy, narrow-minded, and incapable of self-governance. He asserts that the despot can lie to the people as necessary to keep them united and may resort to deceit. According to Machiavelli, because classical moral ties cannot bring together greedy and ungrateful individuals, the prince can comfortably lie to his people. As Gisela Bock and Quentin Skinner state, Machiavelli's Prince must act hypocritically in the phase of establishing power to ensure the political unity of the country and must deceive the people to maintain his power (Kanatlı, 2020, 286).

In a sense, for the prince in the role of founding authority to establish a stable state, he must cleanse himself of traditional moral teachings and embark on a new beginning. In other words, the prince must be a new and powerful leader who creates new laws and forces the people to obey those laws as the only means of initiating a new beginning.

When Machiavelli explains the establishment phase of the state, he does not foresee any differences in terms of forms of government. According to him, whether it is a monarchy or a republic, a single and absolute power should play a role in the establishment of the state in both forms of governance. In his work *Discourses on Livy*, he expresses this situation with the following statements:

“We must accept the following as a general rule: apart from being organized by a single man, perhaps rarely, but generally, no republic or kingdom can be well organized at the outset (...). Again, the governance must come solely from one man, and such arrangements must originate from his mind. Therefore, a prudent organizer of a republic, whose intention is not his own benefit but the common good, and who seeks to advance not his lineage but his homeland, should strive to concentrate all authority within himself. A prudent understanding will not condemn anyone for acting unlawfully while establishing a republic or organizing a kingdom. Regardless of the circumstances, even if the act makes him guilty, the outcome should always exonerate him (Machiavelli, 60-61, 1998).”

Thus, Machiavelli asserts that the state can be established by a single sovereign power, and the actions taken by this sovereign power, when motivated by the common good, are considered virtuous, even if they may constitute wrongdoing, as long as they contribute to the preservation and sustainability of the state. According to Machiavelli, the primary objective is

to ensure the survival of the state and to continually increase its power. From this perspective, every means used to achieve this goal is deemed lawful (Duyar, 470, 2021).

Machiavelli has sought to articulate the ontology of politics by adhering to reality. There are many contradictory discourses and situations associated with Machiavelli; on one hand, he is known as a teacher of evil and a supporter of despotism, while on the other, he is recognized as a defender of freedom and a founder of the modern republic. Machiavelli is the first thinker to view politics as an autonomous field not influenced by transcendent elements in modern times. Above all, Machiavelli asserts that politics has its own laws. The acceptance or rejection of this thesis by people goes far beyond mere obedience to authority or rebellion against it. When politics is regarded as an autonomous realm, comparing the laws of politics with the principles of morality becomes a rather futile endeavor. In a sense, the Florentine thinker challenges the ethical understandings of his predecessors, whether they were Christian or pagan; instead, he establishes his own approach that prioritizes politics (Beriş, 2019, 3).

What Machiavelli essentially does is to present politics stripped of value judgments. According to Machiavelli expert Leo Strauss, understanding Machiavelli's thought in its true sense and seeing the true character of Machiavelli's thought requires freeing oneself from Machiavelli's influence. Practically, this means that one cannot see the true character of Machiavelli's thought; rather, one must recover the pre-modern heritage of the Western world, both biblical and classical, within oneself. To do justice to Machiavelli requires looking toward a new and surprising Machiavelli, who is strange and unexpected from a pre-modern perspective (Strauss, 1992, 12). To truly understand Machiavelli, it is necessary to analyze and evaluate the events of his time, the social circumstances, and all of his works.

Above all, Machiavelli views politics not as a web of *virtus* but as a totality of actions. For him, the most important thing is the most suitable policy required by the existing conditions, regardless of how independent it may be from *virtu* and morality. Machiavelli evaluates everything in terms of the acquisition and preservation of power; for him, what matters is the continuity of power and stability. According to Machiavelli, the source of legitimacy is success. In *The Prince*, he focuses on what a leader must do to maintain power and what leads to its loss.

According to Machiavelli, human nature is fundamentally evil; it is quite natural for a person left to their own devices to gravitate toward the bad. Therefore, to guide humanity toward goodness, individuals must be kept under constraint and pressure. People are inherently envious creatures with a constant desire for acquisition, often chasing after things beyond their

means. Humans are ambitious and greedy. Thus, for Machiavelli, the most desired thing for humans is power.

In this context, Machiavelli views politics as nothing more than the struggles that political actors engage in to obtain power from one another. This struggle is perpetual; therefore, according to Machiavelli, one must choose the right tools for the struggle. Similar to Ibn Khaldun's emphasis on how *asabiye* (group solidarity) serves as an effective tool for struggle, Machiavelli highlights the importance of *virtu* (virtue) and *fortuna* (fortune).

For both thinkers, a politician succeeds to the extent that they surrender to the natural flow of politics and understand and utilize the nature of society. For Machiavelli, while fear is crucial for establishing a successful rule, love is more necessary for its maintenance. According to him, people obey those they fear, but they also need to be satisfied by love.

The parallels between the thought of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli reveal the striking similarities in the lives of two individuals who, despite living in different but geographically close regions, engaged in similar endeavors. Ibn Khaldun served many sultans, was involved in numerous intrigues, and, although he was respected as a prominent statesman, he also fell out of favor and spent time in prison. This tumultuous career as a high-risk bureaucrat closely mirrors Machiavelli's life. The famous thinker held a high-ranking position in the Florentine Republic for many years. However, following a sudden regime change, he spent the final years of his life in poverty, ostracized from public life, and under the threat of imprisonment. Beyond these life experiences, the key connection between the two philosophers lies in their similar approaches to politics, history, and society, with comparable theses, methodologies, and arguments.

Both Ibn Khaldun and, later, Machiavelli used language that institutionalized the key elements of modern sovereignty. Notably, their discussions on how the state emerges and the political nature of the relationship between the state and society are particularly significant. Both thinkers broke away from the ties of the ancient and traditional world, constructing a more modern and rational understanding of history and politics.

When only *The Prince* is considered, Machiavelli appears ruthless and brutal; however, in *Discourses on Livy*, he evolves into a different perspective. Like Ibn Khaldun, who draws from real political and historical objectivity, Machiavelli made significant efforts toward establishing and strengthening a powerful Italian state that would eventually evolve into a republic. As discussed above, although these two thinkers share many similarities, they also

differ in several ways. Fundamentally, however, both worked to construct a new, realist, and rationalist understanding of society and politics in contrast to traditional ideas.

In conclusion, this study, unlike others, comprehensively examines every aspect of the two philosophers (their historical context, fundamental concepts in their theses, and their basic approaches to politics) and provides a comparative perspective. In this sense, it is believed that our work will make a modest contribution to the literature.



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