
NAVIGATING HISTORICAL CYCLES: IBN KHALDUN'S ASHABIYYAH AND ALI SHARIATI'S SOCIETAL EVOLUTION

Anisah Alamshah¹, Rahmawati², Syamzan Syukur³

anisahalamshah@gmail.com
rahmawati@uinalauddin.ac.id
syamzansyukur@uinalauddin.ac.id

¹Seri Begawan Religious Teacher University College Brunei Darussalam

^{2,3}Alauddin Islamic State University, Makassar Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Keyword:

Ibn Khaldun, Ali Shariati, Ashabiyyah, Sociology, History

ABSTRACT

Ibn Khaldun and Ali Shariati, pivotal figures in Islamic intellectual thought, have contributed meaningfully to how historians and sociologists understand the ways societies change over time and how historical cycles unfold. This paper seeks to integrate their significant insights in history and sociology, aiming to offer a cohesive framework of their ideas. By examining Ibn Khaldun's concept of Ashabiyyah, which describes the cyclical rise and decline of civilizations, alongside Ali Shariati's approach to societal evolution from an Islamic perspective, this synthesis highlights each thinker's unique approach to social change. Drawing on their foundational works, the analysis explores Khaldun's cyclical view of civilizations through Ashabiyyah and Shariati's complex understanding of societal transformation. The authors aim to provide a comprehensive discussion, illuminating the interconnectedness of history and sociology through the perspectives of these two influential scholars.

ARTICLE INFO

Keyword:

Ibn Khaldun, Ali Shariati, Ashabiyyah, Sosiologi, Sejarah

ABSTRAK

Ibnu Khaldun dan Ali Syariati, dua pemikir terkemuka dalam tradisi intelektual Islam, secara signifikan telah memberikan kontribusi yang berarti bagi para sejarawan dan sosiolog dalam memahami perubahan masyarakat dari waktu ke waktu serta bagaimana siklus sejarah berlangsung. Artikel ini berupaya mengintegrasikan wawasan mereka dalam ranah sejarah dan sosiologi untuk menyusun kerangka konseptual yang menyeluruh dari gagasan mereka. Dengan mengeksplorasi konsep Ashabiyyah dari Ibnu Khaldun yang mengilustrasikan siklus kemajuan dan kemunduran peradaban bersamaan dengan perspektif evolusi sosial Islam yang ditawarkan oleh Ali Syariati, artikel ini menyoroti pendekatan unik masing-masing pemikir terhadap dinamika perubahan sosial. Mengacu pada karya-karya utama mereka, analisis ini mengkaji pandangan siklus peradaban Khaldun melalui lensa Ashabiyyah serta pemahaman kompleks Syariati mengenai transformasi sosial. Penulis berupaya menyajikan analisis komprehensif yang mengungkap keterkaitan mendalam antara sejarah dan sosiologi dari perspektif dua tokoh berpengaruh ini.

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of Islamic intellectual history, Ibn Khaldūn and Ali Shariati stand as influential scholars whose work bridges the domains of history and sociology. Their intellectual contributions offer profound explorations into the development of societies, the forces that shape them, and the pivotal role of religion in structuring social systems. Ibn Khaldūn, a 14th-century scholar from the Maghreb, is renowned for his groundbreaking theories in *al-Muqaddimah*, where he laid the foundation for modern historiography and sociology.¹

Ibn Khaldūn rose to historical prominence as a pivotal figure whose contributions significantly shaped the discourse on the development of global civilizations, particularly within the Islamic context. His concepts and theories, as formulated in his seminal work *Muqaddimah*, have served as an influential source of inspiration for intellectuals across both Western and Islamic traditions, profoundly impacting the trajectory of civilization. A.J. Toynbee, the renowned English historian, regarded *Muqaddimah* as an invaluable and monumental work. Aside from that, numerous sociologists, philosophers, historians, and political scholars have lauded the depth and intellectual sophistication of Ibn Khaldūn's insights.

Abdullah examines Ibn Khaldūn's intellectual lineage, focusing on his historical theories, which have permeated various societal sectors and captured the attention of both the general public and governmental bodies, as well as academic circles.² Suharto examines the epistemological foundations of Ibn Khaldūn's historical methodology, highlighting the key elements of his approach to historical analysis.³ Ma'rif suggests that the widespread recognition of Ibn Khaldūn's work can be attributed to the universal importance of history as a discipline studied by societies across generations.⁴

In parallel, Kasdi highlights that Ibn Khaldūn identified patterns in societal development, introduced the concept of *Asabiyah* (social solidarity), and proposed a theory of

¹Samsinas, "Ibnu Khaldun: Kajian Tokoh Sejarah dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial", *Hunafa* 6, no. 3 (2009): pp. 329-346.

²M. Amin Abdullah, *Dinamika Islam Kultural: Pemetaan Atas Wacana Keislaman Kontemporer* (Bandung: Mizan, 2000)

³Toto Suharto, *Epistemologi Sejarah Kritis Ibnu Khaldun* (Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2003)

⁴Ahmad Syafii Ma'rif, *Ibnu Khaldun dalam Pandangan Penulis Barat dan Timur* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1996)

historical cycles, which trace the stages of birth, growth, decline, and eventual fall of civilizations.⁵ Simillary, in *Badawah and Hadarah: Ibn Khaldūn 's Concept of Sociology*, Amin explores Ibn Khaldūn's theory of the cyclical progression of societies from badawah (rural, pastoral culture) to hadarah (urban, sophisticated civilization). Khaldūn characterizes badawah society as one marked by simplicity, spontaneity, happiness, harmony, and egalitarianism.⁶

As society evolves, badawah transitions into the more complex hadarah civilization, where individual self-interest increasingly dominates social relations. In badawah societies, the struggle to meet basic needs fosters cooperation; however, in hadarah, once needs are met, competition intensifies, leading to social injustices as individuals strive for power over others. Khaldūn argues that the moral decline of hadarah civilizations signals their inevitable downfall. He views history as a cyclical process, with societies passing through stages of birth, growth, maturity, stagnation, decline, and eventual rebirth. Khaldūn emphasizes that studying history is vital for societies to avoid repeating past mistakes, as these cyclical phases influence all aspects of social life.

This perspective aligns with Kandiri's article *Ibn Khaldūn, the Originator of the Cycle Theory*, which outlines four key principles. First, social change is a continuous and inevitable phenomenon, occurring across all societies and historical periods. Second, humans are naturally responsive beings, taking action to ensure security and cohesion; however, in the absence of a social system or regulatory framework, life becomes dominated by violence, disorder, isolation, transience, and fear. Third, following theorists like Plato, Hobbes, and Hegel, Kandiri asserts that the highest authority within a state is its legal system, with all subordinate laws required to align with state law. Fourth, while all citizens possess equal rights under the law, they are equally obligated to obey it. When citizens actively participate in the law-making process, the

⁵Abdurrahman Kasdi, "Pemikiran Ibnu Khaldun dalam Perspektif Sosiologi dan Filsafat Sejarah", *Fikrah* 2, no. 1(2014): pp. 291–307.

⁶Khairul Amin, "Badawah dan Hadarah: Konsep Sosiologi Ibn Khaldun", *Sosiologi Agama* 12, no. 1 (2018): pp. 85–98.

resulting legal framework, including its regulations and sanctions, becomes widely understood, accepted, and serves as a guiding force in society, a living principle that shapes communal life.⁷

On the other hand, Ali Shariati, a 20th-century Iranian thinker, brought forth progressive perspectives on Islam and its relationship to society, focusing on the dynamic social and political roles that religion plays in shaping collective life. In accordance with this, *Religion as Ideological Consciousness: Reflections on Social Change* (Juhari, 2016), Juhari examines Ali Shari'ati's unique framework for social change, which distinguishes him from other prominent figures in Islamic thought and activism. Shari'ati opposed the authoritarianism of Iran's Shah Pahlevi, but he also differed from both the traditional Iranian clergy, who resisted change, and the radical Islamic movements that pursued political rebellion.⁸

Instead, Shari'ati advocated for resistance through revolutionary ideas, positioning Islam as a liberating ideology aimed at overcoming socio-economic injustice, tyranny, and cultural constraints. In this context, his approach presents two models of social change: the moderate and the radical. On the one hand, the moderate model seeks to integrate Islamic values into the fabric of national life without reducing Islam to mere symbolism or formal structures. On the other hand, the radical model emphasizes both the realization of Islamic values and the formal establishment of an Islamic state. While the moderate approach is more substantive, focusing on realizing Islamic principles in daily life, the radical approach, in contrast, prioritizes the formal implementation of Islamic law across society.

This view aligns with the events described in 1971 at Iran's Hussainiyah University of al-Irsyad, where Shari'ati, known as a Marxist Muslim thinker, became a catalyst for mobilizing his students against the regime of Reza Shah. He openly criticized the oppression under Reza Shah's rule, advocating for a leader similar to Imam Ali, one who would fight for justice and establish a system rooted in authentic Islamic ideology. Shari'ati's call for rebellion and his condemnation of the 5,000 years of socio-political injustice under the monarchy thus reflect the radical model of social change that he endorsed.

⁷Kandiri, "Ibnu Khaldun Pencetus Teori Siklus", *Lisan al-Hal* 8, no. 2 (2014): pp. 245–262.

⁸Imam Bonjol Juhari, "Agama Sebagai Kesadaran Ideologis: Refleksi Perubahan Sosial 'Ali Syariati'", *Al-Tahrir*, 16 no. 1 (2016): pp. 1–20.

For instance, his promotion of Islam as a force for liberation, aimed at overcoming tyranny and inequality, aligns with his broader vision of an Islamic society that balances both ideological transformation and the formal establishment of Islamic values in governance.⁹ In the same vein, in *Islam and Rebellion against the Status Quo: An Analysis of Ali Shariati's Thought*, Mukhlis investigates the theological and philosophical foundations underlying Shariati's sociological ideas. Through descriptive-philosophical analysis, Mukhlis reveals that Shariati's sociological perspective is grounded in the concept of tawhid, or the unity of God, nature, and humanity.

Shariati asserts that humans can comprehend God through signs in reality, using their own autonomous consciousness. This worldview, grounded in *tawhid*, rejects contradictions and demands unity across all dimensions of existence. Therefore, when unity is disrupted, Shariati advocates for rebellion against the status quo, a stance Mukhlis argues is theologically supported by Qur'anic verses, particularly Q.S ar-Rum/30: 1-4 and 30. Thus, religion, according to this interpretation, serves as a driving force for challenging and transforming entrenched social structures.¹⁰

As a remarkable and controversial figure, Shari'ati represented a multifaceted persona—diverse, expressive, emotive, and spiritually humanistic. This complexity highlights the idea that Shari'ati's ideas are intricate and open to various interpretations. In a more contemporary context, he introduced the concept of 'Islamistik,' emphasizing Islam's potential role in creating a fair and autonomous society. His approach to Islamic thought continues to resonate, offering a vision of a society that is both ideologically grounded in Islamic principles and responsive to the needs of justice and equality.

To conclude, this study explores the ideologies of Ibn Khaldūn and Ali Shariati within the frameworks of history and sociology. Despite their emergence in different historical contexts, their contributions offer significant insights into societal development and social dynamics. Through a critical analysis of their key concepts, the research seeks to understand

⁹Abrar M. Dawud Faza, *Perspektif Sufistik Ali Syariati dalam Puisi One Followed by Eternity of Zeroes* (Medan: Panjiaswaja Press, 2010)

¹⁰Mukhlis, "Islam dan Pemberontakan Terhadap Status Quo: Telaah Atas Pemikiran Teologi Sosial Ali Syariati", *Ulumuna*, 13, no. 2 (2019): pp. 381-406.

how their ideas have shaped the study of Islamic history and sociology. In doing so, it will compare the similarities and differences in their approaches, evaluating the relevance of their ideas in contemporary discourse. Ultimately, the study aims to provide new perspectives on the evolution of Islamic historical and sociological thought.

METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach grounded in historical research, aiming to systematically and objectively reconstruct past events. At its core, qualitative research involves thorough examination and critical analysis of historical records and artifacts. This method of reconstructing the past through collected data is known as historiography, or the academic writing of history. Historical research is a methodical process that consists of four critical phases, each contributing to the systematic examination of the past. The first phase, known as heuristics, involves the collection of relevant primary and secondary sources, both written and oral, which serve as the foundation for the research. The second phase, criticism, is the process of evaluating and filtering out sources that may be unreliable or inauthentic. This phase involves assessing the credibility of the materials, considering their origin, context, and potential biases. The goal is to ensure the validity and authenticity of the evidence before moving forward.

The third phase, interpretation, involves analyzing the remaining credible sources to extract meaningful insights. This phase requires the researcher to contextualize the information, draw connections between different pieces of evidence, and develop an understanding of the historical events or phenomena under study. The concluding phase, historiography, involves integrating and organizing the interpreted data into a coherent and meaningful narrative or presentation. In this phase, the researcher constructs the historical account, drawing on various perspectives and interpretations, and presents the findings in a manner that contributes to the broader academic discourse.¹¹

¹¹ Louis R. Gottschalk, *Understanding History: A Primer of Historical Method* (New York: Knopf, 1969)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ibn Khaldun & Ali Shariati: Understanding Their Lives and Works

Ibn Khaldun

Ibn Khaldūn was born in Tunisia on the 1st of Ramadan in 732 H (27th of May, 1332 AD). His full name was Waliyuddin Abdurrahman ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Jabir Ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Abdurrahman ibn Khaldūn.¹² However, he is most widely recognized by the name Ibn Khaldūn, derived from his ninth grandfather, Khalid Ibn Khaldūn, a name that continues to be associated with him today.¹³ A distinguished scholar in Islamic sciences, Ibn Khaldūn made groundbreaking contributions to the fields of history, philosophy, economics, politics, and education. Notably, he is often regarded as a pioneer of sociological thought sometimes referred to as the “*guiding light of sociologists*” due to his foundational work in developing the principles of sociology.¹⁴

At the age of 20, Ibn Khaldūn embarked on an intensive course of study, focusing on *Tajwīd*, *Qirā'ah*, and the memorization of the Qur'an. His education also included Maliki jurisprudence, the Hadiths of the Prophet, and classical Arabic poetry. Under the mentorship of Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad bin Jabir bin Sultan al-Qaisi al-Wadiyashi the foremost Hadith scholar in Tunisia at the time-Ibn Khaldūn was granted a license to teach both language and law. He later received additional teaching licenses from other leading scholars who had taken refuge in Tunisia after the Marinid Sultan Abu al-Hasan invaded the Ifriqiya region in 748 AH (1347 CE).¹⁵

The 14th and 15th centuries the era in which Ibn Khaldūn lived were marked by profound upheaval across the Islamic world. Muslim societies faced simultaneous pressures on multiple fronts: Mongol invasions from the East, Crusader advances from the North, and Spanish expansion from the West.¹⁶ This period saw the unraveling of what had once been

¹² Muhammad Abdullah Enan, *Ibnu Khaldun: His Life and Work*, trans. Machnun Husein, *Biografi Ibnu Khaldun* (Jakarta: Zaman, 2013), pp. 14.

¹³ Ali Abdul Wahid Wafi, *Khaldun, Riwayat dan Karyanya* (Jakarta: Temrint, 1985), pp. 3

¹⁴ Badri Yatim, *Historiografi Islam* (Jakarta: Logos Waca Ilmu, 1997), pp. 139; M. Abdullah Annan, *Ibnu Khaldun: Hayatihi wa Turatsihi al-fikri* (Kairo: Muassasah Al-Mukhtar, 1991), pp. 12.

¹⁵ Syed Farid Alatas, *Ibn Khaldun: Biografi Intelektual dan Pemikiran Sang Pelopor Sosiologi*. (Bandung: Mizan, 2017)

¹⁶ Fuad Baali and Ali Wardi, *Ibnu Khaldun and Islamic Thought-Styles*, trans. Ahmad Thoha and Mansuruddin, *Ibnu Khaldun dan Pola Pemikiran Islam* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2003), pp. 10.

referred to as the “*Arab miraculous century*,” a defining moment of Islam’s golden age. In its wake came political fragmentation and a noticeable stagnation in intellectual and cultural development.¹⁷

The era of political disintegration and decline within the Islamic world reached its peak with the destruction of Baghdad, the once-great center of power and Islamic civilization, by Hulagu Khan on February 10th, 1258.¹⁸ This event marked the collapse of the caliphate system in the East. Simultaneously, Islam faced significant disruption from the invasions of Timur Lenk (1331–1405), whose military campaigns devastated various Islamic regions.¹⁹

In the West, Islam also encountered a political crisis, particularly in Spain (Andalusia) and North Africa. The Caliphate of Abdurrahman al-Dakhil was dissolved in 1013 when the ruling council in Córdoba removed the caliphate title, signaling the onset of instability. This period of political disintegration persisted until the rise of Mulk al-Thawaif, when small, competing kingdoms emerged across the Islamic territories.²⁰ The crisis in Spain ultimately reached its climax in 1492, when the Christian forces captured Granada, the last Muslim stronghold in the Iberian Peninsula.

The capture of Granada in 1492 marked the collapse of Islamic rule in Spain, leaving Muslims with the harsh choice of either converting to Christianity or being expelled. By 1609, all Muslims had been forcibly removed from Spain. Similarly, the decline of the Murabitun Dynasty (1086–1147) and the Muwahhidun Dynasty (1146–1235) led to a period of instability in North Africa, which subsequently became divided into three small kingdoms.²¹

One of the most significant episodes in Ibn Khaldūn’s life was his encounter with Timur Lenk. After Timur Lenk successfully conquered Syria and Aleppo, the people of Egypt, alarmed by the threat, rallied under the leadership of Sultan al-Tahir al-Barquq to defend against the advancing Tatar forces. Ibn Khaldūn participated in the military campaign at the Sultan’s

¹⁷Badri Yatim, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam II* (Jakarta: Grafindo Persada, 1993), pp. 63.

¹⁸Abdurrahman Ibnu Khaldun, *An Intorduction to History: The Muqaddimah*, trans. Ahmadie Thoha, *Muqaddimah Ibnu Khaldun* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2001), pp. 172-174.

¹⁹Ahmad Syafii Ma’rif, *Ibnu Khaldun dalam Pandangan Penulis Barat dan Timur*. Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1996), pp. 18.

²⁰Biyanto, *Teori Siklus Peradaban Perspektif Ibnu Khaldun* (Surabaya: LPAM, 2004), pp. 28.

²¹Musyrifah Sunanto, *Sejarah Islam Klasik: Perkembangan ilmu Pengetahuan Islam* (Jakarta: Penanda Media, 2004), pp. 129-130.

request. Despite more than a month of conflict between Egypt and Timur's forces, neither side achieved a decisive victory. It was during this stalemate that Ibn Khaldūn met Timur Lenk in Damascus in Maulud 803H/October 5th, 1400 AD.

The two engaged in a lengthy discussion, during which Timur Lenk expressed interest in Ibn Khaldūn's intellectual work, particularly his views on the history of North Africa. Impressed by Ibn Khaldūn's knowledge, Timur Lenk instructed him to document the history of the region. Ibn Khaldūn shared his insights on the dynamics of state formation and decline, a topic that mirrored the unfolding events, as Damascus soon capitulated. In response, Ibn Khaldūn compiled the history of North Africa into eleven volumes, which he presented to Timur Lenk.

Throughout his scholarly career, Ibn Khaldūn produced a substantial body of work that foreshadowed many ideas central to contemporary sociology. His research was grounded in scientific analysis of society, involving empirical investigations and a focus on identifying the causes of social phenomena. He examined the interplay of political and economic institutions and explored their relationships within societies. Ibn Khaldūn also showed a keen interest in both primitive and advanced societies, offering valuable insights into the social structures that shaped them.

Ibn Khaldūn's works that remain central to scholarly discourse today include *al-Ibar*, *Muqaddimah*, and *al-Ta'rif*. *Muqaddimah* and *al-Ta'rif* are key components of the expansive seven-volume work *al-Ibar*, with *Muqaddimah* functioning as its introductory section and *al-Ta'rif* as its concluding part.²² *Muqaddimah*, also referred to as the Prolegomen, is a seminal work in the fields of history, sociology, and economics. It offers a foundational framework for understanding the cyclical nature of societies and civilizations, introducing concepts related to social dynamics and the influence of environment, culture, and economics on historical processes.²³

²²Muhammad Za'im, "Studi Pemikiran Pendidikan Ibnu Khaldun Perspektif Sosio-Progressif", *Thesis* (Malang: Fak. Pendidikan Agama Islam, UIN Malik Ibrahim, 2013), pp. 106-107.

²³Basma Ahmad Sedki Dajani, "The Ideal Education In ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah*", *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 192, no. 1 (2015): pp. 308–312.

This comprehensive introduction not only provides a detailed guide to Ibn Khaldūn's larger body of work but also offers critical insights into the development and transformation of human societies.²⁴ To fully understand Ibn Khaldūn's intellectual contributions, it is necessary to situate his ideas within the historical and cultural context in which they were conceived, with particular emphasis on his strong ties to Islamic thought. As M. Iqbal observes, the *Muqaddimah* is fundamentally shaped by the teachings of the Quran and Hadiths.²⁵ As a result, Ibn Khaldūn's writings can be understood as both a product of his intellectual prowess and the religious and cultural environment that influenced his worldview.

Ibn Khaldūn, as a Muslim philosopher, demonstrated a deep commitment to logic and rational thought.²⁶ This inclination can be attributed to his extensive philosophical education in his early years. According to Toto Suharto, the ideas of Al-Ghazali (1058–1111 AD) and Ibn Rushd (1126–1198 AD) significantly influenced Ibn Khaldūn's intellectual development.²⁷ Although these two thinkers held opposing views Al-Ghazali's rejection of logic contrasted with Ibn Khaldūn's appreciation of it as a tool for systematic reasoning both contributed to shaping his philosophical outlook.

Ibn Khaldūn's approach to the intersection of philosophy and religion was largely inspired by Ibn Rushd, with his ideas often echoing those of the latter.²⁸ However, Ibn Khaldūn also critiqued certain aspects of Ibn Rushd's philosophy, particularly his views on metaphysics. This critical engagement illustrates Ibn Khaldūn's capacity to integrate the philosophies of both Al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd, ultimately developing a unique perspective that fused rationalism with Sufism.²⁹

Ali Shariati

Ali Shariati was born on November 24, 1933, in Mazinan, a village near northeastern Mashhad in Khurasan, Iran, as the eldest son of a respected and devout family. His father, Muhammad

²⁴Lintang Nawangsari, “Pandangan Ibnu Khaldun Tentang Keruntuhan Bangsa-Bangsa: Sebuah Kajian Filsafat Sejarah”, *Thesis* (Depok: Fak. Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Indonesia, 2002), pp. 15.

²⁵Toto Suharto, *Epistemologi Sejarah Kritis Ibn Khaldun*, pp. 22.

²⁶Ali Audah, *Dari Khazanah Dunia Islam* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1999), pp 59.

²⁷Toto Suharto, *Epistemologi Sejarah Kritis Ibn Khaldun*, pp. 238.

²⁸Nurchalis Madjid, *Khazanah Intelektual Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1994), pp. 47-48.

²⁹Muhammad Iqbal, *Membangun Kembali Pemikiran Agama dalam Islam* (Jakarta: Tintamas, 1966), pp.

Taqi Shariati, worked as a teacher at Syerafat Elementary School, while his maternal family also had a strong tradition of religious scholarship. Shariati's maternal great-grandfather, Akhund Mulla Qurban-Ali, known as Akhund e Hakim, was a leading religious figure in Mazinan, having studied in Bukhara, Najaf, and Mashhad.³⁰

Shariati's educational trajectory was strongly influenced by his father, who played a pivotal role as his primary teacher. He began his formal education at a public school, where he developed a broad academic foundation, which was further enriched by traditional religious teachings at home. His father placed a particular emphasis on social philosophy and modern Islamic practices, in line with the intellectual currents of the time.³¹

In 1941, Ali Shariati began his education at the private Ibn Yamin primary school in Mashhad (Faza, 2010).³² During his early schooling, he developed a strong interest in literature, notably reading works such as Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. This passion for literature continued throughout his high school years, during which he explored a variety of subjects, including philosophy, social sciences, poetry, and religious studies. Shariati had access to an extensive library of over 2,000 books, largely compiled by his father, yet he showed a marked preference for literature and philosophy over religious studies.

This inclination toward literature and philosophy led Shariati to enroll in the Faculty of Literature at the newly established University of Mashhad in 1955. There, his intellectual talents and passion for literature earned him admiration and respect among his peers. It was also at this time that he met Puran-e Syariat Razavi, whom he married on July 15, 1958. Following his marriage, Shariati was awarded a scholarship to study abroad and chose to pursue his studies at the Sorbonne in Paris in 1959. A year later, he was joined by his wife and their son, Ehsan.³³

³⁰Ali Syariati, *Martyrdom: Arise and Bear Witness*, trans. Dede Azwar Nurmansyah, *Doa, Tangisan, dan Perlawanan* (Yogyakarta: Rausyanfikir Institute, 2012), pp. 8; Abrar M. Dawud Faza, *Perspektif Sufistik Ali Syariati in Puisi One Followed by Eternity of Zeroes* (Medan: Panjiaswaja Press, 2010), pp. 16.

³¹Hadimulyo, *Manusia dalam Perspektif Humanisme Agama: Pandangan Ali Shariati*. In M. Dawam Rahardjo (ed.), *Insan Kamil: Konsep Manusia Menurut Islam* (Jakarta: Grafiti Press, 1987), pp. 123-145; Ali Rahnema, "Ali Syari'ati: Guru, Penceramah, Pemberontak", in Ali Rahnema (ed.), *Para Perintis Zaman Baru Islam* (Bandung: Mizan, 1996)

³²Abrar M. Dawud Faza, *Perspektif Sufistik Ali Syariati dalam Puisi One Followed by Eternity of Zeroes* (Medan: Panjiaswaja Press, 2010), pp. 16.

³³Ali Syariati, *Martyrdom: Arise and Bear Witness*, trans. Dede Azwar Nurmansyah, *Doa, Tangisan, dan Perlawanan* (Yogyakarta: Rausyanfikir Institute, 2012), pp. 9.

While at the Sorbonne, Shariati was exposed to a wide array of ideas that significantly shaped his intellectual development. He attended lectures by prominent scholars, philosophers, and poets, delving into their works to expand his understanding. His academic circle grew to include influential figures such as Louis Massignon, Jean-Paul Sartre, Che Guevara, Frantz Fanon, Jacques Berque, Henri Bergson, and Albert Camus. Notably, George Gurvitch, a sociology professor at the Sorbonne, introduced Shariati to Marxist sociology, which had a lasting impact on his thinking. Shariati held great respect for Gurvitch, not only for his intellectual guidance but also for his strong stance against Stalinism, fascism, and French colonialism in Algeria, which aligned with Shariati's own political convictions as a committed communist.³⁴

After earning his doctorate in 1963, Shariati returned to Mashhad, Iran, where he initially taught at a local high school. He then joined the Ministry of Education's Research Center in 1965 and co-founded the Husainiya-yi Irsyad, an intellectual Islamic center in North Tehran, with Murtadha Muthahhari. In 1967, Shariati began lecturing at the University of Mashhad, where his powerful speaking style and stimulating lectures captivated students, motivating them to critically engage with societal and political issues.

In June 1971, Shariati relocated from Mashhad to Tehran with the intention of transforming Husainiya-yi Irsyad into a progressive Islamic university. However, political tensions surrounding the center led to its forced closure on November 19, 1972. As a result of his outspoken opposition to the Shah's regime, Shariati was arrested and remained in Iran for approximately 13 years. On May 16, 1977, he left Iran for London, adopting the name Ali Shariati.

Shariati's departure was closely tracked by the Shah's military and the SAVAK, who quickly alerted their operatives overseas. Tragically, on June 19, 1977, Shariati was found dead in his London apartment under mysterious circumstances. Although the official cause of death

³⁴Abrar M. Dawud Faza, *Perspektif Sufistik Ali Syariati dalam Puisi One Followed by Eternity of Zeroes*, pp. 23-24.

was never conclusively determined, many sources suggest that SAVAK was involved, with the secret police being widely regarded as the likely perpetrators.³⁵

To gain a deeper understanding of Ali Shariati's intellectual perspective, it is crucial to examine the socio-political context in which his ideas developed. Living in the post-World War II era, Shariati witnessed Iran undergoing significant changes, particularly under the leadership of Reza Shah Pahlavi. This period was marked by an ambitious drive for modernization, which introduced new ideas and redefined the nation's identity. Throughout Shariati's life, Iran was ruled by both Reza Shah and his son, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, whose modernization and secularization efforts generated considerable unrest among religious and intellectual groups. Policies such as the hijab ban and the repression of traditional religious institutions deepened societal divisions.³⁶

The Pahlavi regime's embrace of Western values in its modernization efforts led to a clear divide between those who supported these changes and those who viewed them as a threat to Islamic traditions. In this climate of social and political transformation, Shariati's intellectual development was shaped by a rising tide of activism and the search for alternative ideologies. The environment of change, combined with the global anti-colonial and anti-imperialist movements in Asia and Africa, provided Shariati with the foundation for his progressive ideas.³⁷

Despite the Pahlavi regime's efforts to minimize the role of religion in public life, Shariati and other intellectuals worked to revive Islamic values. At the heart of his ideology was the concept of "Islamism," which emphasized Islam's crucial role in shaping social and political transformation.³⁸ These ideas became the foundation for Shariati's extensive body of work. By 1986, he had written 35 books, as noted in *What is to Be Done: The Enlightened*

³⁵Ali Syariati, *Martyrdom: Arise and Bear Witness*, terj. Dede Azwar Nurmansyah, *Doa, Tangisan, dan Perlawanan*, pp. 10.

³⁶Syahrin Harahap, *Metodologi Studi Tokoh Pemikiran Islam* (Medan: Istiqomah Mulya Press, 2006)

³⁷Mashadi, "Pemikiran dan Perjuangan Ali Syari'ati", *al-Ulum*, 11, no. 1 (2011): pp. 115–138.

³⁸Ba-Yunus Ilyas and Ahmad Farid, *Islamic Sociology: An Introduction* (Bandung: Mizan, 1985).

Thinkers and Islamic Renaissance.³⁹ In addition, numerous other writings by Shariati remain unpublished.

Ibn Khaldun: A Sociology of History

Before the emergence of Western scholars in history and sociology, and while much of the Islamic world held that human existence was entirely under divine will, Ibn Khaldūn pioneered an innovative perspective on human history. His ideas departed from the traditional notion of history as solely determined by God, offering instead a practical, empirical framework for understanding historical events based on observable social phenomena and governed by causal laws.

To express his concept of history, Ibn Khaldūn used the term “*fann al-tarikh*” in his early writings. The word *fann* translates to art or technique, yet, in scholarly terms, it conveys the practical application of theoretical knowledge using specific tools or methods that can be mastered through study. Thus, *fann* signifies the application of knowledge in a concrete manner. The Arabic word *tarikh* refers to recording specific events at designated times, akin to the Western notion of history. Together, *fann al-tarikh* represents a systematic approach to recording historical events through disciplined methodologies.⁴⁰

Ibn Khaldūn’s concept of “*fann al-tarikh*” comprises both an external and internal perspective. Externally, history serves as a record of past eras and political cycles. Internally, however, history reflects critical reasoning and a dedicated search for truth. For him, history went beyond simply documenting events; it required a disciplined evaluation of evidence to uncover the causes behind occurrences. This analytical approach distinguished him as a leading interpretative historian among Arab scholars.⁴¹

His commitment to truth-seeking in historical study provided him a notable edge over contemporaries. Ibn Khaldūn’s strength lay in his ability to restore credibility to historical narratives through careful analysis. In his *Muqaddimah*, he structured his exploration of history

³⁹Ali Syariati, *What Is to Be Done: The Enlightened Thinkers and Islamic Renaissance* (Bandung: Mizan, 1993)

⁴⁰Abdurrahman Kasdi, “Pemikiran Ibnu Khaldun dalam Perspektif Sosiologi dan Filsafat Sejarah”, *Fikrah* 2, no. 1 (2014): pp. 300-301; Samsinas, “Ibnu Khaldun: Kajian Tokoh Sejarah dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial”, *Hunafa* 6, no. 3 (2009): p. 329-346.

⁴¹Toto Suharto, *Epistemologi Sejarah Kritis Ibn Khaldun*, pp. 80.

and civilization into an introductory section, followed by three in-depth discussions, setting a framework for understanding the dynamics of societies over time.

The *Muqaddimah* begins with an introduction that discusses the broad benefits of historiography, presenting a comprehensive overview of various historical methods and briefly highlighting common errors among historians. The first main section examines the nature of civilization *umran* and its fundamental characteristics, addressing aspects such as governance, authority, economic sustenance, professions, and the full range of human knowledge.

In the second section, Ibn Khaldūn traces the historical development of societies and states from the earliest eras up to his own time, offering concise analyses of prominent civilizations, including the Nabateans, Syrians, Persians, Israelites, Copts, Greeks, Romans, Turks, and Europeans.⁴²

In his third section, Ibn Khaldūn explores the history of the Berber and Zanatah peoples, emphasizing their kingdoms and Maghribi states as vital components of their cultural identity. For Ibn Khaldūn, history was more than a chronicle of events; it required understanding the underlying causes, making history a branch of wisdom or philosophy. His analytical approach allowed him to affirm historical truths through rigorous examination of the past.⁴³

In addition to his philosophical insights, Ibn Khaldūn was also celebrated as a sociologist, politician, and historian. He believed sociology served as an essential tool to interpret historical events and the social conditions of specific eras, shedding light on the forces of change, their contributing elements, and their influence on civilization. Among his most notable contributions was his theory of *asabiyah*, or social cohesion, which he viewed as central to the formation, growth, and decline of states, a concept that remains foundational to his social theories.

Etymologically, *asabiyah* derives from the term “ashaba,” meaning “to bind,” and functionally refers to the socio-cultural bonds that measure the strength and unity of a social group. As such, *asabiyah* embodies social solidarity, emphasizing awareness, unity, and

⁴²Lintang Nawangsari, “Pandangan Ibnu Khaldun Tentang Keruntuhan Bangsa-Bangsa: Sebuah Kajian Filsafat Sejarah”, *Thesis* (Depok: Fak. Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Indonesia, 2002), pp. 15.

⁴³Muhammad Za’im, “Studi Pemikiran Pendidikan Ibnu Khaldun Perspektif Sosio-Progressif”, *Thesis* (Malang: Fak. Pendidikan Agama Islam, UIN Malik Ibrahim, 2013), pp. 115;

cohesion within a group.⁴⁴ This concept was pivotal in securing Ibn Khaldūn's reputation among contemporary thinkers, as it illustrates the degree of attachment an individual has to their social group or faction, as well as their commitment to preserving its values and principles.⁴⁵

Ibn Khaldūn identified five distinct forms of *asabiyyah*. The first, based on kinship and lineage, is the most influential form. The second, *asabiyyah* in coalition, occurs when an individual shifts allegiance from their original ancestry to another group. The third form, loyalty-based *asabiyyah*, develops when an individual's family circumstances change, leading to the formation of new social bonds and affiliations. The fourth, merging-based *asabiyyah*, arises when an individual transitions from one family or tribe to another. Finally, *asabiyyah* in the context of slavery is shaped by the relationships between slaves and their masters or benefactors.⁴⁶

Throughout his life, Ibn Khaldūn meticulously observed the changing dynamics of time, particularly in the context of North Africa. He focused on the al-Barbar tribe, the indigenous population of the region, whose descendants had spread throughout the Mediterranean and thrived since the nomadic period.⁴⁷ This era of nomadism, according to Ibn Khaldūn, could be described as stagnant, as human life was primarily governed by the harsh and unpredictable forces of nature.

During this time, human survival depended on available food sources and suitable environments, and once these resources were depleted, communities had to migrate in search of new areas that could provide sustenance. Building upon these observations, Ibn Khaldūn developed a structured framework in which he argued that the nomadic era ended with the establishment of settled communities, leading to the rise of states. However, he contended that

⁴⁴Khudayri, et.al., *Filsafat Sejarah Ibn Khaldun* (Bandung: Penerbit Pustaka, 1987), pp. 143.

⁴⁵ Hakimul Ikhwan Affandi, *Akar Konflik Sepanjang Zaman: Elaborasi Pemikiran Ibn Khaldun* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004), pp. 105.

⁴⁶Khudayri, et.al., *Filsafat Sejarah Ibn Khaldun*, pp. 145-146; Khairul Amin, "Badawah & Hadarah: Konsep Sosiologi Ibn Khaldun", *Sosiologi Agama* 12, no. 1 (2018): pp. 85-98.

⁴⁷Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, "Arabization and Its Discontents: The Rise of the Amazigh Movement in North Africa", *Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 3, no. 2 (2012): pp. 109-135.

the lifespan of a state was limited to three generations, each phase characterized by distinct patterns of growth and decline.

The Founding Generation is characterized by individuals united by a strong sense of kinship, shaped by the hardships of a nomadic and primitive existence. Educated by necessity, they were keenly aware of the challenges they faced, which fostered resilience and resourcefulness. This phase was marked by a simple yet tough lifestyle that nurtured courage and tenacity, enabling these groups to conquer others. The unity and solidarity they developed within their ranks fueled their rise to power, leading to the formation of states through expansion and conquest.⁴⁸

The Prosperous Generation followed, benefiting from the power and wealth established by the previous generation. Having ascended to political and economic authority, they transitioned from a harsh, primitive life to one of comfort and luxury. However, this newfound affluence led to complacency, as they became increasingly indifferent to the needs of the nation. This decline in unity left them vulnerable to external threats. The Declining Generation, which emerged later, was emotionally detached from the state and contributed to its further decline. Indulging in luxury, they lost the virtues of honor, courage, and valor, and the state entered a period of decay, driven by excess, hedonism, and a disregard for societal and national concerns.⁴⁹

Ibn Khaldūn's perspective on cultural development offers a distinctive contrast to that of many Western historians, even though some of his ideas have influenced contemporary thought. Similarly, social scientists largely agree that societal rise and decline are inevitable historical phenomena.⁵⁰ However, there is considerable debate regarding the forces that drive these shifts. Philosophers such as Plato, Confucius, Thucydides, and Machiavelli contend that societal momentum is primarily driven by key figures, especially rulers. In contrast, Ibn

⁴⁸ Khairul Ihsan, "Filsafat Sejarah Menurut Ibn Khaldun dan Karl Marx", *Skripsi* (Jakarta: Fak. Ushuluddin, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2020), pp. 17; Budi Sujanti, "Konsepsi Pemikiran Filsafat Sejarah dan Sejarah Menurut Ibnu Khaldun", *Tamaddun* 6, no. 2 (2018): pp. 127-148; Samsinas, "Ibnu Khaldun: Kajian Tokoh Sejarah dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial", *Hunafa* 6, no. 3 (2009): pp. 329-346.

⁴⁹ Khairul Ihsan, "Filsafat Sejarah Menurut Ibn Khaldun dan Karl Marx", *Skripsi* (Jakarta: Fak. Ushuluddin, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2020), pp. 18.

⁵⁰ Effat Al-Sharqawi, *Gerak Sejarah: Filsafat Kebudayaan Islam* (Bandung: Universitas Padjajaran, 2007), pp. 28-33.

Khaldūn challenges this notion. He argues that a society's trajectory its progress or decline, is not solely determined by the actions or failures of rulers, nor by chance or destiny.

Instead, Ibn Khaldūn emphasizes the concept of a "Shar'iah" society, one that is most conducive to positive transformation. However, his own experiences did not entirely align with this ideal. The social changes he observed were more intricate, unfolding on a global scale. Khaldūn's theory of societal progression spans approximately 120 years, divided into three 40-year generations. While inspired by Quranic teachings, as Mahyuddin suggests, this theory continues to be the subject of debate.

Ibn Khaldūn's analysis of societal structures hinges on the concept of *ashābiyyah* (social solidarity), which he uses to differentiate between two distinct social forms. The first form, *Badawah*, represents a nomadic and less complex society. These communities are bound by a strong sense of collective identity, shared values, and cooperation, which makes their *ashābiyyah* particularly robust.

In contrast, the second form, *Hadharah* (civilization), is characterized by weaker, more superficial social bonds. In these societies, individuals prioritize personal needs over collective welfare. Khaldūn argues that as societies evolve towards modernity, *ashābiyyah* becomes less important. Societies with weaker social cohesion often experience ineffective social control, while those with stronger solidarity are more likely to maintain order and effective governance.⁵¹

Ali Shariati: Islamizing Socialism and Socializing Islam

Ali Shariati's work seamlessly integrates history and sociology, a method that mirrors the approach of many sociologists who strive to connect these two fields. In his exploration of historical narratives, Shariati goes beyond simple chronological recounting, instead linking historical events to the broader social and national fabric that shapes them. He investigates pivotal themes within Islamic sociology,⁵² such as the dialectical dynamics of community life in the Quranic story of Qabil and Habil, the transformative significance of the Hijrah in Islamic

⁵¹Budi Sujanti, "Konsepsi Pemikiran Filsafat Sejarah dan Sejarah Menurut Ibnu Khaldun", *Tamaddun* 6, no. 2 (2018): pp. 127-148.

⁵²M. Ali Sibram Malisi, "Konsep Sosiologi Ali Syariati", *Himmah* 4, no. 9 (2003): pp. 79-96.

history, and the deeper social forces that drive societal shifts, unraveling why certain societies evolve, undergo dramatic changes, or experience sudden collapse.

Shariati's approach, grounded in both history and religion, broadens the scope of Islamic sociology. His conceptualization of Sociological History, as described by Azyumardi Azra, views history not merely as a recounting of past events, but as a comprehensive analysis shaped by sociological factors and dialectical processes.⁵³ Shariati asserts that history, with its events and facts, is fundamentally an art rather than a science or philosophy. He critiques the common confusion between history and the science of history, despite the clear distinctions between the two.

While history is filled with facts and events that, when scrutinized, provide valuable insights, the field of history as a science does not fully capture the essence of the past. This raises two interconnected issues: one concerning the physical phenomena and facts themselves, and the other focused on interpreting and understanding these events.⁵⁴ Shariati laments the lack of clear terminology that differentiates these concepts, which leads to the erroneous conflation of history with historical facts. Although the terms are often used interchangeably, he maintains that they are inherently different. He proposes that sociology should adopt a historical approach, intertwining the science of history with the factual events of the past, in order to uncover the underlying forces of social change.

By doing so, sociology can achieve deeper insights into the dynamics of human society.⁵⁵ Accordingly, Azyumardi's description of Shariati's sociology as a form of historical sociology is both accurate and fitting. Shariati's dialectical approach to history draws on the philosophical traditions of Hegel and Marx, yet he distinctively shaped his historical philosophy through an Islamic lens, interpreting the conflict between Qabil and Habil as a pivotal foundation for his ideas. He viewed this narrative not just as a religious tale, but as a source of profound historical insight.

⁵³Zamah Sari, "Relevansi pemikiran Sosiologi Islam Ali Syariati dengan problematika Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia", *Ta'dibuna* 7, no. 2 (2018): pp. 194-214.

⁵⁴Ali Syariati, Islam, *Mazhab, Pemikiran dan Aksi*, trans. M.S Nasrulloh dan Afif Muhammad (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), pp. 66.

⁵⁵Akbar Nour, "Book Review: Ali Shariati Expanding the Sociological Canon", *Sage Journals* 10, no. 1 (2022): pp. 126-129.

According to Shariati, the struggle between Qabil and Habil exemplifies a fundamental and enduring conflict within history, which he interpreted as historical dialectics.⁵⁶ The conflict begins when Qabil kills Habil, a moment that Shariati analyzes symbolically. He identifies Habil with a primitive form of socialism, representing pastoral economics and the absence of private ownership. In contrast, Qabil, as an agriculturalist, symbolizes the advent of landownership and private property. Through this interpretation, Habil, the shepherd, is positioned as a victim of Qabil, the landowner. Shariati argues that these symbolic forces continue to manifest in the present, reflecting ongoing dialectical contradictions between different economic and social systems.

Shariati argues that the shift from communal ownership to agriculture and private property initiated a profound transformation in society, leading to the emergence of a new, power-driven social structure. In this new era, a small elite controlled land and the means of production, while the majority were deprived of both. This division created a stark class contrast, with competing interests and a growing conflict over resources and power.

As an intellectual or “raushanfikr,” Shariati wrestled with his faith through a rigorous intellectual journey before fully embracing Islam. He believed that, as a *raushanfikr*, he had a responsibility to establish a logical and philosophical foundation for his religious commitment. Shariati examined a variety of ideologies, including Marxism, existentialism, liberalism, and Iranian nationalism, before concluding that Islam was not merely a theological doctrine, but an ideological system that advocated for justice and social transformation (Syariati, 1995).⁵⁷

Shariati further contrasted Islam with other major religious traditions, such as Taoism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Judaism, and Christianity, through his Pendulum Theory. According to this theory, religions throughout history swing between two opposing extremes: Extreme Materialism on one end and Extreme Spiritualism on the other. Religions, over time, shift between these poles, with some periods reflecting a movement toward materialism and others toward spiritualism. For instance, spiritual traditions such as Lao Tzu,

⁵⁶ Ali, Syariati, *On the Sociology of Islam*, terj. Saifullah Mahyuddin, *Paradigma Kaum Tertindas*, (Jakarta: Al-Huda, 2001)

⁵⁷ Ali Syariati, Islam, *Mazhab, Pemikiran dan Aksi*, trans. M.S Nasrulloh dan Afif Muhammad (Bandung: Mizan, 1995); Ali Syariati, Islam, *Mazhab, Pemikiran dan Aksi*, terj. M.S Nasrulloh dan Afif Muhammad, pp. 69.

Buddhism, Vedic traditions, and Christianity align with the extreme spiritualism, while figures like Moses, Confucius, and Zoroaster reflect a focus on materialism.

Shariati argued that when society shifts too far toward one of these extremes, a Prophet emerges to counterbalance this deviation. The influence of the Prophet helps restore equilibrium, but as time progresses, society again drifts toward the opposite extreme, prompting the emergence of another Prophet with a message that challenges the prevailing direction. This cyclical movement, according to Shariati, represents the ongoing evolution of religious history, with the pendulum continually swinging between materialism and spiritualism, driven by the needs of the society at any given time.

The religious transitions from Taoism to Confucianism and from Judaism to Christianity, when analyzed through the lens of Historical Dialectics, reflect a continuous oscillation between thesis and antithesis without achieving a satisfactory synthesis. According to Ali Shariati, it is only within Islam considered the culmination of religious history that this ideal synthesis is realized. He argues that Islam guides humanity “from the depths of the earth to the heights of heaven, from mutual enslavement to sincere devotion to the Creator, and from religious oppression to the justice of Islam”.⁵⁸

In exploring the catalysts for social change, Shariati questions: “What fundamental element drives sudden advancements or declines in society?” Initially, he refers to various Western sociological theories to explain societal shifts. However, he finds these frameworks lacking. In his search for a more comprehensive understanding, Shariati turns to the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet, ultimately developing a theory of social change that he considers “fresher and more accurate”.⁵⁹

Shariati emphasizes a crucial aspect of social change highlighted in the Qur'an, namely *an-nas* (the people). Unlike other thinkers, Islam is unique in recognizing the central role of the people in initiating societal change. This stands in contrast to the views of Nietzsche, who focused on extraordinary individuals as the primary agents of change; Plato, who saw aristocrats

⁵⁸Ali Syariati, *Kritik Islam atas Marxisme dan Sesat Pikir Barat lainnya*, trans. Husin Anis al-Habsyi. (Bandung: Mizan, 1983), pp. 75.

⁵⁹Abed Kanaaneh, “Ali Shariati: Islamizing Socialism and Socializing Islam.”, *Left History* 24, no. 1(2021): pp. 45–64.

and nobility as the driving forces; Carlyle and Emerson, who valued great personalities as key to societal shifts; and Alexis Carel, who argued that only those of pure lineage could influence societal progress. Shariati, however, contends that in Islam, the people themselves *an-nas* are the primary agents of transformation. While other factors may play a role in shaping a society's fate, Shariati argues that it is the people who are the essential force behind every social change.⁶⁰

Navigating Historical Cycles: Ibn Khaldun's Ashabiyah and Ali Shariati's Societal Evolution

For a more nuanced understanding of social change, integrating Ibn Khaldūn's concept of 'asabiyah with Ali Shariati's theory of societal evolution offers a comprehensive understanding for analyzing the broader currents of history. Though they emerged from vastly different eras, Khaldūn in the 14th century and Shariati in the 20th both thinkers provide deep insights into how social structures and ideological forces shape the rise and fall of civilizations. Ibn Khaldūn's 'asabiyah goes beyond simple group solidarity; it functions as a binding force that holds the social fabric together. This cohesion not only explains the internal dynamics of communities in their formative stages but also sheds light on how 'asabiyah determines a civilization's endurance or signals its eventual decline.

When *ashabiyah* appears in a robust form, such as through tribal or communal unity, it enables the formation of stable governance and the rise of complex, organized civilizations. Yet in Khaldūn's cyclical view of history, *ashabiyah* is not static. As societies accumulate power and wealth, their original solidarity tends to erode, weakened by internal divisions, complacency, and moral decline. This fragmentation signals the beginning of societal decay and paves the way for eventual collapse. In this sense, *ashabiyah* operates as a core force in determining the longevity of civilizations, capturing the recurring rhythms of rise and fall that characterize the historical evolution of states.

Ali Shariati presents an ideological approach to social transformation, grounded in his theory of societal evolution. He maintains that genuine social change originates not merely from external conditions or institutional shifts, but from within, through the development of

⁶⁰Zamah Sari, "Relevansi Pemikiran Sosiologi Islam Ali Syariati Dengan Problematika Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia", *Ta'dibuna*, 7, no. 2(2018): pp. 194–214.

ideological consciousness. For Shariati, it is this awakened awareness, particularly one that identifies and challenges the entrenched social and economic injustices within a society, that drives progressive change. He links this insight to a broader understanding of social consciousness, arguing that ideological awareness serves as a vital catalyst for revolutionary movements, often powerful enough to overcome even the most entrenched structural barriers.

For Shariati, religious or social ideologies that foster a deep awareness of injustice serve as the foundation for transformative social change. This idea aligns with his broader concept of *awareness* as a core element of social theory, emphasizing that lasting revolutions are not brought about solely by structural shifts, but by a fundamental transformation in collective worldview and consciousness. When considered alongside Ibn Khaldūn's theory, the interplay between *ashabiyyah* and ideological consciousness reveals a nuanced and complementary dynamic. *Ashabiyyah* supplies the social cohesion necessary for a society's initial growth and stability. Yet as this cohesion gradually erodes, it is ideological consciousness, as Shariati defines it, that can emerge as a revitalizing force, capable of reshaping the direction of civilization.

At pivotal moments in history, *ashabiyyah* and ideological consciousness operate in tandem: *ashabiyyah* provides the structural backbone that stabilizes a civilization, while ideological consciousness equips societies to confront new challenges and reimagine their future. The decline of *ashabiyyah* often signaled by the erosion of group solidarity can be accelerated by shifts in collective awareness and the emergence of new ideological currents. Taken together, these forces reveal how social cohesion and ideological insight do not act in isolation, but instead interact dynamically, each shaping and reshaping the other in an ongoing cycle of societal transformation.

The integration of *ashabiyyah* and ideological consciousness offers a rich interpretive approach for interpreting the complexities of social change in the contemporary world. Recent global events reveal that the drivers of political and social transformation extend beyond external pressures such as economic crises or armed conflict. They also involve deep shifts in ideological and collective consciousness. Major upheavals such as the Arab Spring and other reform movements illustrate how evolving ideologies, whether through political awakening,

calls for social justice, or changing worldviews, can serve as powerful catalysts for widespread societal change.

In modern societies, *ashabiyyah* often takes shape as solidarity within specific groups be they ethnic, political, or religious that influence policy and governance. Yet when this cohesion begins to weaken or fracture, Shariati's perspective draws attention to the role of progressive ideologies as catalysts for change. Movements for civil rights, social justice, and political reform often emerge from this ideological awakening, especially when traditional forms of solidarity no longer suffice. The interplay between group cohesion and ideological transformation reflects the dual internal forces that continue to shape the direction of social evolution today.

The integration of Ibn Khaldūn's concept of *ashabiyyah* with Ali Shariati's theory of societal evolution offers a deeper understanding of the internal forces that drive historical development. Both frameworks emphasize that meaningful change arises not only in response to external pressures, but also from within from shifts in social cohesion and transformations in collective awareness. Although Khaldūn and Shariati come from distinct historical and intellectual traditions, their ideas converge on a critical insight: that the evolution of civilizations is propelled as much by the strength of their internal bonds as by the ideals they choose to pursue.

CONCLUSION

Ibn Khaldūn conceptualizes history as a cyclical journey, where dynasties rise, thrive, and eventually fall, replaced by new forces shaped by group solidarity and shifting power. Central to his thought is the idea of '*ibar*', which refers to events that reflect broader historical patterns and offer lessons for the present. Through a philosophical lens, he transforms history into more than a timeline of events, it becomes a dynamic process shaped by internal social forces. For Ibn Khaldūn, *ashabiyyah* is the central force behind the formation and decline of civilizations. This concept, which extends beyond basic kinship ties, explains how social cohesion allows groups to establish order, authority, and stability. Yet as that cohesion fades, eroded by luxury, division, or moral decay, the civilization begins to collapse. In this view,

historical change is not arbitrary but rooted in a materialist understanding of social forces: economic shifts, environmental conditions, and collective behaviors all play a part.

Ali Shariati, writing from the context of 20th-century Iran, challenged the dominance of Western frameworks in sociology and offered a distinctly Islamic approach to understanding society. His training at the Sorbonne exposed him to European social theory, but his intellectual project was aimed at reshaping that knowledge through the lens of Shi‘i theology and revolutionary ethics. He argued that true social change is driven not solely by external structures but by ideological consciousness. That is, transformation begins when people recognize injustice and reorient their worldview in response. For Shariati, Islam was not just a religion, but a comprehensive worldview capable of guiding a just society. He advocated for a synthesis of science and spirituality, and for a model of development that balanced personal freedom with social responsibility. His critique of the Shah’s regime used religious symbolism particularly the figures of Qabil and Habil, to show how power, when stripped of justice, becomes tyranny masked by piety. Though Shariati did not live to witness the 1979 revolution, his thought is widely seen as laying its intellectual groundwork. As John Esposito notes, Khomeini may have led the revolution, but Shariati gave it its ideological shape.

Bringing Ibn Khaldūn and Shariati into dialogue offers a deeper way of thinking about how societies evolve. *ashabiyyah* provides the structural cohesion that enables a society to rise and function, but as that cohesion weakens, it is often the emergence of new ideological consciousness that redirects the course of history. In this sense, Shariati’s vision complements Khaldūn’s: where the latter charts the rhythms of social solidarity, the former points to the transformative power of ideas. At pivotal moments, these forces work together. The decline of *ashabiyyah* may create a crisis, but it is through ideological renewal that new possibilities emerge. We see this interplay in both historical and contemporary contexts, moments where group unity fades, but a reawakened sense of justice, identity, or faith sparks new movements. As recent global events show, from civil rights struggles to revolutions and reform movements, social change often arises not just from economic or political pressures, but from a deep shift in how people see themselves, their communities, and their futures. Together, Khaldūn and Shariati help us see that history is not simply made by external forces, but is continually

reshaped by the inner life of societies-their solidarities, their ideas, and the tensions between the two.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abdullah, M. Amin. *Dinamika Islam Kultural: Pemetaan Atas Wacana Keislaman Kontemporer*. Bandung: Mizan, 2000.

Abdurrahman, Ibnu Khaldun. *An Introduction to History: The Muqaddimah*. Translated by Ahmadie Thoha. *Muqaddimah Ibnu Khaldun*. Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2001.

Affandi, Hakimul Ikhwan. *Akar Konflik Sepanjang Zaman: Elaborasi Pemikiran Ibn Khaldun*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004.

Ahmad. Syafii Ma'rif. *Ibnu Khaldun dalam Pandangan Penulis Barat dan Timur*. Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1996.

Annan, M. Abdullah. *Ibnu Khaldun: Hayatihi wa Turatsihi al-Fikri*. Kairo: Muassasah Al-Mukhtar, 1991.

Alatas, Syed Farid. *Ibn Khaldun: Biografi Intelektual dan Pemikiran Sang Pelopor Sosiologi*. Bandung: Mizan, 2017.

Audah, Amin. *Dari Khazanah Dunia Islam*. Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1999.

Baali, Fuad, and Ali Wardi. *Ibnu Khaldun dan Pola Pemikiran Islam*. Translated by Ahmadie Thoha and Mansuruddin. Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2003.

Ba-Yunus, Ilyas, and Ahmad Farid. *Islamic Sociology: An Introduction*. Bandung: Mizan, 1985.

Biyanto. *Teori Siklus Peradaban Perspektif Ibnu Khaldun*. Surabaya: LPAM, 2004.

Bonjol Juhari, Imam. "Agama Sebagai Kesadaran Ideologis: Refleksi Perubahan Sosial 'Ali Syariati.'" *Al-Tahrir* 16, no. 1 (2016): 1–20.

Dajani, Basma Ahmad Sedki. "The Ideal Education in Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah*." *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 192, no. 1 (2015): 308–312.

Dawud Faza, Abrar M. *Perspektif Sufistik Ali Syariati dalam Puisi One Followed by Eternity of Zeroes*. Medan: Panjiaswaja Press, 2010.

Enan, Muhammad Abdullah. *Ibnu Khaldun: His Life and Work*. Translated by Machnun Husein. *Biografi Ibnu Khaldun*. Jakarta: Zaman, 2013.

Gottschalk, Louis R. *Understanding History: A Primer of Historical Method*. New York: Knopf, 1969.

Hadimulyo. "Manusia dalam Perspektif Humanisme Agama: Pandangan Ali Shariati." In *Insan Kamil: Konsep Manusia Menurut Islam*, ed. M. Dawam Rahardjo. Jakarta: Grafiti Press, 1987.

Harahap, Syahrin. *Metodologi Studi Tokoh Pemikiran Islam*. Medan: Istiqomah Mulya Press, 2006.

Ihsan, Muhammad Za'im. "Studi Pemikiran Pendidikan Ibnu Khaldun Perspektif Sosio-Progressif." Thesis, Fakultas Pendidikan Agama Islam, UIN Malik Ibrahim, Malang, 2013.

Ikhsan, Khairul. "Filsafat Sejarah Menurut Ibn Khaldun dan Karl Marx." Skripsi, Fakultas Ushuluddin, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, 2020.

Iqbal, Muhammad. *Membangun Kembali Pemikiran Agama dalam Islam*. Jakarta: Tintamas, 1966.

Kandiri. "Ibnu Khaldun Pencetus Teori Siklus." *Lisan al-Hal* 8, no. 2 (2014): 245–262.

Kanaaneh, Abed. "Ali Shariati: Islamizing Socialism and Socializing Islam." *Left History* 24, no. 1 (2021): 45–64.

Kasdi, Abdurrahman. "Pemikiran Ibnu Khaldun dalam Perspektif Sosiologi dan Filsafat Sejarah." *Fikrah* 2, no. 1 (2014): 291–307.

Khudayri, et al. *Filsafat Sejarah Ibn Khaldun*. Bandung: Penerbit Pustaka, 1987.

Maddy-Weitzman, Bruce. "Arabization and Its Discontents: The Rise of the Amazigh Movement in North Africa." *Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 3, no. 2 (2012): 109–35.

Madjid, Nurcholish. *Khazanah Intelektual Islam*. Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1994.

Malisi, M. Ali Sibram. "Konsep Sosiologi Ali Syariati." *Himmah* 4, no. 9 (2003): 79–96.

Ma'rif, Ahmad. Syafii. *Ibnu Khaldun dalam Pandangan Penulis Barat dan Timur*. Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1996.

Mashadi. "Pemikiran dan Perjuangan Ali Syari'ati." *al-Ulum* 11, no. 1 (2011): 115–138.

Mukhlis. "Islam dan Pemberontakan Terhadap Status Quo: Telaah Atas Pemikiran Teologi Sosial Ali Syariati." *Ulumuna* 13, no. 2 (2019): 381–406.

Nawangsari, Lintang. "Pandangan Ibnu Khaldun Tentang Keruntuhan Bangsa-Bangsa: Sebuah Kajian Filsafat Sejarah." Thesis, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Indonesia, Depok, 2002.

Nour, Akbar. "Book Review: Ali Shariati Expanding the Sociological Canon." *Sage Journals* 10, no. 1 (2022): 126–29.

Rahnema, Ali. "Ali Syari'ati: Guru, Penceramah, Pemberontak." Dalam *Para Perintis Zaman Baru Islam*, ed. Ali Rahnema. Bandung: Mizan, 1996.

Samsinas. "Ibnu Khaldun: Kajian Tokoh Sejarah dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial." *Hunafa* 6, no. 3 (2009): 329–346.

Sari, Zamah. "Relevansi Pemikiran Sosiologi Islam Ali Syariati dengan Problematika Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia." *Ta'dibuna* 7, no. 2 (2018): 194–214.

al-Sharqawi, Effat. *Gerak Sejarah: Filsafat Kebudayaan Islam*. Bandung: Universitas Padjajaran, 2007.

Suharto, Toto. *Epistemologi Sejarah Kritis Ibn Khaldun*. Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2003.

Sujanti, Budi. "Konsepsi Pemikiran Filsafat Sejarah dan Sejarah Menurut Ibnu Khaldun." *Tamaddun* 6, no. 2 (2018): 127–48.

Sunanto, Musyrifah. *Sejarah Islam Klasik: Perkembangan Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam*. Jakarta: Penanda Media, 2004.

Syariati, Ali. *Islam, Mazhab, Pemikiran dan Aksi*. Translated by M. S. Nasrulloh dan Afif Muhammad. Bandung: Mizan, 1995.

-----. *Kritik Islam atas Marxisme dan Sesat Pikir Barat Lainnya*. Translated by Husin Anis al-Habsyi. Bandung: Mizan, 1983.

-----. *Martyrdom: Arise and Bear Witness*. Translated by Dede Azwar Nurmansyah. *Doa, Tangisan, dan Perlawanan*. Yogyakarta: Rausyanfikir Institute, 2012.

-----. *On the Sociology of Islam*. Translated by Saifullah Mahyuddin. *Paradigma Kaum Tertindas*. Jakarta: Al-Huda, 2001.

-----. *What Is to Be Done: The Enlightened Thinkers and Islamic Renaissance*. Bandung: Mizan, 1993.

Wafi, Ali Abdul Wahid. *Khaldun, Riwayat dan Karyanya*. Jakarta: Temrint, 1985.

Yatim, Badri. *Historiografi Islam*. Jakarta: Logos Waca Ilmu, 1997.

Yatim, Badri. *Sejarah Peradaban Islam II*. Jakarta: Grafindo Persada, 1993.