

Ibn-e-Khaldoon.

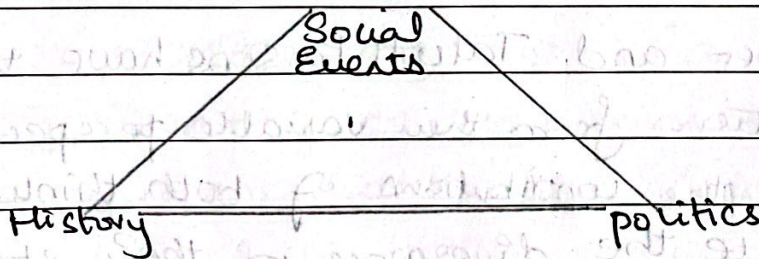
Date: 10/8/2023.

Q. Discuss why Ibn-e-Khaldoon, a 14th century Islamic jurist and scholar, still influences thinkers and sociologists even today with respect to his ideas about social change? (2021) (20)

Introduction:

Ibn-e-Khaldoon was born in Tunis in 1332.

Ibn-e-Khaldoon extensively talked about the changes in the cultures of people. He used logic as a scientific study or method to contemplate the functioning of society. He believed there is a close relationship between history, social events and politics.



∴ Ibn-e-Khaldoon believed, there is a close relation.

Ibn-e-Khaldoon's remarkable work:

i, Theory of Assabiya:

His theory of Assabiya, gave the basis why people come together and form societies.

Date: _____

eventually leading to civilizations. His theory proposed 'Assabiya is a form of solidarity'. It is a uniting force. People get together, join their minds and resources and form a society. He termed Assabiya as a 'Spirit of Cohesion'. People form institutes under this and resolves their problems leading to formation of civilization. Without Assabiya, there would be no tribes / civilizations. He also quoted: "Desires and ambitions dissipate when prosperity takes hold. Prosperity destroys dominance, and affluence destroys power." Further, he says Assabiya ensures governments. There would be no government without Assabiya. Subjugation and humiliation breaks / weakens Assabiya hence the society is ~~on~~ turned on or is on the verge of being turned on into a ruled state. He believed, the more a society adheres to the principle of cohesion the stronger it becomes. He backed his argument by, cohesion is strengthened by 'Religious Movements' and termed it as 'Spirit of Cohesion Solidarity'. He mentioned "no individual can live without a society". He termed this concept as 'Umm-ul-Insaan'.

Why his theory is still considered as influential?

His idea influences the western sociologist as he proposed the foundation for people coming together. He evaluated and demonstrated the formation of civilizations. The working of a governance and political system and why the emotion of similarity paves the way for people to unite. He simplified the complex system or mechanism of a society.

Individual → Group → Tribe → Society → Civilization

ii, Muqaddimah

Muqaddimah was his masterpiece. In which Khaldoun discussed not only the culture, society and civilization but also how it evolves. His extraordinary ability of studying the society in scientific way, made concepts very easy for today's sociologist. He related the society similar to a human body and described the phases a society goes through as the body. "The Cycle of History". The stages Khaldoun mentioned are as follows:

a, Growth.

b, Maturity.

c, Decline

d. Extinction'

Khaldoun, believed all human civilizations go through these stages and it takes 120 years for a civilization to complete these phases. In *Society and Civilization*, Khaldoun quotes in *Muqaddimah*:
 "Civilization is what survives after you have lost all your accomplishments" - Ibn-e-Khaldoun.

iii. The other three phases accompanied with the above stages:

- Khaldoun acknowledges, along with the phases the stages a society ~~simultaneously~~ simultaneously goes through are governed by two main factors:

① Assabiya

② Religion

The three phases are the following:

i) Nomadic:

In the Nomadic stage, this is the initial. People live in deserts and with meagre resources.

They join through Assabiya. Life is easy and hard making people brave and war-like.

A person would spring amongst those and through his/her military qualities would unite people using religion as an agent to bond. They then enter in the next following.

Stage:

ii) Military:

In this phase, people are ~~born~~ united through religion. The person with best war-like and military attributes unites others against the society which is rich, civilized but importantly decadent. They conquer the neighbouring civilizations and after that the kingdom finds its leader. The military leader hence becomes the supreme leader and at this point the civilization is at excellence.

iii) STATE and Society:

According to Khaldun, this is the final stage of a civilization. In this it moves along the following four stages of human similar to human body's.

Growth

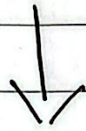
This is the time of founders and conquerors.

↓
Maturity

This is the period when builders and glorious prosperous society takes birth and prosper.

↓
Decline

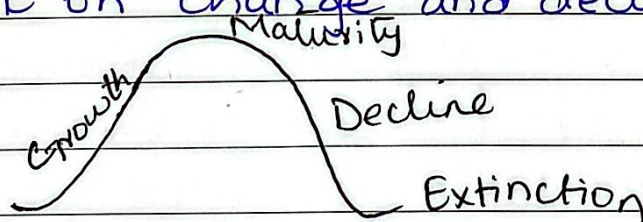
The time of decline is when the rulers become pleasure-seeking and indulge in idle luxury practices. They are interested in lavish-lifestyle other than doing anything meaningful and productive leading to the next stage.



Extinction

In this the weak civilization is conquered by new, nomadic bonded by assabiya civilization.

Ibn-e-Khaldoon also mentioned a quote in his work on change and decline:



“When a civilization reaches the point of its curve, the accumulation of power and wealth creates social conflicts, and these conflicts bring about the civilization's destruction.”

Date: _____

How is it Relevant today?

Despite, the limitations, the way the complex system is simplified has a lot for today's sociologist to evaluate. His theories on the growth and decline of civilizations, along with effective leadership and cohesion are applicable to today's developing countries. His focus on cultural factors and his insights when people divert from their roots and moral values and the way it has a pessimistic consequence on the civilization gives a lesson to in today's era about the preservation of cultural and identity especially in globalized world. The western world took advantage of his studies at the time of 'Renaissance and later enlightenment periods'. His concepts were not only welcomed by the sociologist but also philosophers, historians and scientist contributing to the evolution of western thought. His unique way of contemplating the surroundings and also catering the environmental factors impressed and has huge influence when it comes to studying and articulating the complex complexities of civilization. Today it is very well believed & 'Man is a social animal' about

Date: _____

Ibn-e-Khaldoon proved it in 14th century that 'no individual can live without a society'. His extensive, comprehensive work is still used as a guidance for many due to astonishing revelations.