The Rationality of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli In Thought of Religious and Political Relations

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Abstract

This article aims to describe Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli's thoughts in the context of religious and political relations. How are the differences and similarities, and what is the background for their thinking? The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative, with secondary data sources from various literature in the form of books and journal articles that discuss the political, religious, and state thoughts of the two figures. The results of the analysis reveal that Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli's political, religious, and state thoughts were born as an antithesis to the previous idealistic tendencies of thought. The socio-political situation that developed during their lifetime is one of the causes of these differences in style and significantly influences their thinking. In the context of practical politics, they tend to be rational. Meanwhile, they place religion as an institution that has an essential role as an adhesive element in society. Both of them argue that religion is a social institution that is functional towards the stability of the state.

Keywords: *Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli, religion, politics, relation*

INTRODUCTION

Some academics have argued that it is impossible to compare Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli. This is because they both have different backgrounds. Ibn Khaldun could be said to be a medieval Muslim figure who was quite religious. At least his position as Judge Madzab Maliki in Egypt supported for that. Meanwhile, Machiavelli is a political consultant, as well as a practical political actor in Florence.

Zainab Al-Khudairi is one of the few researchers who have this doubt (Al Khudhairi, 1987). He argues that the two have significant differences, especially in the aspect of the purpose of writing. Machiavelli wrote The Prince for practical purposes, while Ibn Khaldun wrote Muqoddimah as a critique of history and religion. However, Rosenthal and Yusuf Qordhowi

parallel Ibn Khaldun with Machiavelli and Montesquieu (Muta'ali, 2011). Rosenthal said Khaldun is the Islamic version of Machiavelli, while Yusuf Qordhowi said Ibn Khaldun is the Montesquieu of the Arab world. This is because they both develop the concept of state and power, with a high empirical foundation and social analysis.

Although much literature discusses the religious, political, and state thoughts of the two figures, most of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli's thoughts are still discussed separately. There are many aspects of the two figures that have in common, even though they have very contrasting personal backgrounds. Among the scientists who pay the most attention to Ibn Khaldun's study is Syed Farid Alatas, Khaldunian, who examines Ibn Khaldun's social cycle in many of his studies how its application is at the empirical-historical level (Alatas, 2015). Syed Farid Alatas is one of the many Muslim thinkers who believe that Ibn Khaldun's thoughts are still very relevant to be used as a tool for social analysis, especially in his theory concerning the ups and downs of a country. While other research from Kamarudin (2015; Kayapinar, 2008; Korkut, 2008; Muta'ali, 2011) explored more of Ibn Khaldun's theoretical state and political thinking with the subject of Ashobiyah as the center of their analysis.

On the other hand, the contextualization of state thinking and Machiavelli's power in practical politics in the Arab Islamic world has also been widely carried out (Syros, 2015; Yoran, 2010). Machiavelli's thoughts were read by them and compared with Muslim thinkers such as al-Maghili to see its relevance in political practice in Africa and Italy. However, there are not many studies that have compared Ibn Khaldun with Machiavelli, so it is interesting to raise the two figures in their political and religious perspectives, given that researchers do not have much pessimism to compare them.

The ideas about the relations of religion, politics, and the state are not new in academic conversation. The tension and alliance between the two institutions have been going on since the classical era. Medieval times became a long span of discourse on the relationship between religion and state. Roman despotism, which ended with the collapse of their power, marked a new era when religion (church-red) began to enter the domain of power. Is St. Paul was the first to come up with the idea of reinterpreting Bible verses related to worldly life and contemplating eternal life (Schmandt, 2015). Based on Christianity's non-harmonious relationship with the Roman Empire, Christianity became for many years the new religious movement that was marginalized. Then St. Paul became the initiator of the importance of submission to civilian authorities.

After that, several theological figures emerged who initiated the relationship between religion and the state. Like St. Augustine, who introduced two loyalties and the need for a line between religion and state. Gelalius is a later medieval figure who held the view that the independence of each of these institutions was something important, but the relationship between the two was not always certain, meaning that in certain contexts, there had to be a mutually regulatory relationship between one another. St. Thomas Aquinas emerged as a brilliant thinker trying to mediate the endless discourse between these two authorities. He gave one proposition, that revelation works to complement reason. So in the context of religious relations with state, the Church has a role to complete and guide the country. Post St. Thomas Aquinas appeared several other figures such as Martin Luther and John Calvin. However, none was more controversial in the post Enlightenment era than these figures than Nichollo Machiavelli.

Machiavelli "was born" when the political situation in Italy was uncertain, many regions were in conflict with each other, and each wanted to gain control. His experience as a politician led him to a thought that was in stark contrast to previous thinkers. When religion discusses the issue of how power should be exercised on a moral basis, Machiavelli thinks otherwise. The Prince and Discourse are two of his works that explain that the leader of a country can do anything for the common good. For Machiavelli, whether the king did it in a treacherous, corrupt, or treacherous way did not matter as long as these methods were used for good. As a result of his views, many scientists criticize his thoughts and personality. Nevertheless, on the other hand, he also reaps condemnation because the concept arises from his intriguing political experience. This figure never stops being discussed both as an enemy and only as a study of his thoughts.

Approximately one and a half centuries before the birth of Machiavelli, in the southern hemisphere of Italy, separated by the Mediterranean Sea, precisely in the region of Tunisia, North Africa, stood Islamic kingdoms under the *Abbasid Daula*. These dynasties, like Italy, where Machiavelli was born, struggled for power. In that situation, no one is more prominent in historical, political, and religious thought than Ibn Khaldun. Being born in Tunisia to elite and aristocratic family background gave him space to study politics and various branches of science from a young age.

Like Machiavelli, his political experience, which he began at the age of 20, also influenced his views on the relationship between morality, religion, and the state (Hasyim, 2012). The concept has been widely studied by Western scientists as a genuine thought that was born from empirical experience. And rather the result of contemplation of his life full of intrigue as well as

his deep mastery of religious texts, interpretation, hadith, history, politics, and philosophy. In the West, Ibn Khaldun, like Machiavelli, received praise and controversy, was considered a fatalist because of his theory of the cycle of power. Ibn Khaldun was considered secular because of the interpretation of observers about him that separated religion from the social life of the state, but on the other hand, he was a genius in his time because the cycle of civilization was the first in the world (Maarif, 1996). While in the East itself, Ibn Khaldun was a controversial figure because of his sharp criticism of historical writing at that time, he had been immersed in the East for about 600 years (Riyadi, 2017).

Based on the above background, this article aims to compare the thoughts of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli in their commentary on the aspects of religious and political relations. Several arguments can be used as the basis for why this article aligns with the two characters. First, the similarity in their socio-historical background, which then led to various ideas about the state and religious position. Second, their profession is politicians before they finally both focus on developing science, especially in politics and the state. And third, that their ideas are both born from their contemplation of life experiences.

This article used a qualitative method with a focus on literature studies. Primary sources are The Prince, Discourse, and Muqoddimah. Supporting literature and arguments are drawn from various journal articles that are limited specifically to the religious and political thoughts of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli. The literature data were then categorized and analyzed using the perspective of James Coleman's Rational Choice theory. The assumption of using this theory is because the perspective of Rational Choice emphasizes individuals as actors who have goals, considerations, and interests in carrying out a social action. So it is appropriate to use it as an analytical tool to answer why Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli had the same thoughts in their time.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ibn Khaldun: State of Religion and State of Reason

Biography

Many reports have been written regarding the figure of Ibn Khaldun. Arnold Toynbee commented on Ibn Khaldun as a genius scientist at his time. Lewis is of the view that Ibn Khaldun is a figure who first gave birth to philosophical and sociological thoughts about history (Maarif, 1996). His thoughts were pure without a history of contact with Greece and Rome. According to Hafidz Hasyim, Ibn Khaldun was a figure who laid the foundation of science who built his thinking based on the character of civilization. He spent half of his life accompanying the leaders of the various dynasties who were fighting for power at that time. Maghreb, Tunisia,

and Egypt are the 3 (three) places where he devoted his political life to the rulers in the area, as well as his place to gain knowledge and produce knowledge. The socio-political and religious conditions in these three places directly influenced Ibn Khaldun's thinking.

Since the end of the period of Nubuwwah and Khulafaur Rashidin, Maghribi and Tunisia became a place of struggle for dynasties that developed at that time, from the Umawiyah Dynasty to Fathimiyah (Hasyim, 2012). This condition resulted in the Maghreb and especially Spain, to have a religious intellectuality that is different from other Islamic regions such as Arabia, Iraq, Syria, and Egypt. Al Jabiri put forward two distinctive features of religious intellectuals in this area as areas whose thoughts are still pure in the study of the Qur'an and Hadith brought by the tabi'in during the religious expansion of Khulafaur Rasyidin (Hasyim, 2012). Therefore, according to Al Jabiri, the Maghreb, Tunisia, and Andalusia have a different intellectual independence style from other Islamic regions. For example, Iraq, Syria, and Egypt have had many intersections with the Hellenism tradition, several Islamic schools have developed into currents and ideologies of power. It was in the intellectual independence in Maghreb and Tunisi that Ibn Khaldun was born, grew, and developed his thoughts.

Thoughts on the Relationship of Religion and State in Ibn Khaldun's View

Most of his thoughts on politics are realist and rational. This is because of Ibn Khaldun's background as a politician. He did not explain how the power should be exercised, but instead described what he had encountered and felt over the years accompanying various types of dynasties. His career as a politician began when he moved to Maghribi from his birthplace due to the plague of *ta'un*, he accepted the position of secretary to King Abu Inan in Fez (Maarif, 1996). Starting from this position, he observed and was involved in various government activities and various political intrigues between dynasties.

Ibn Khaldun's perspective on politics and religion is very broad. In his *Muqoddimah* he explains at length how the cycle of power works. In the early part of the introduction, he emphasized that the *Muqoddimah* he wrote was the first idea that came from the empirical facts he had observed (Alatas, 2015; Khaldun, 2008; Sunar & Yasliçimen, 2008). In explaining the nubuwwah, Ibn Khaldun said this period had ended since the era of the Prophet and Khulafaur Rasyidin (Khaldun, 2008). This view is based on his belief that humans or society will be able to maintain their existence without the existence of prophecy (Khaldun, 2008). This happens because human nature always requires relationships and cooperation with other people, so that

even in conditions without prophecy, people can live by making their own rules or strengthening social solidarity.

Based on this belief, Ibn Khaldun divided the state into 2 forms, namely a state of reason which based its laws on human-made regulations, and the second was a state based on religion which was completed when the Prophet died (Khaldun, 2008).

> "And such religious governance is very useful, both for life in this world and in the next. Because humans are not made only for this world which is full of emptiness and evil and which ends up dying and mere silence. "

Some researchers analyze Ibn Khaldun's statement as an attitude of ambivalence, on the one hand, Ibn Khaldun speaks of his rejection of nubuwwah, but on the other hand, he speaks of the importance of a state based on religion. In fact, he explicitly said that the religious state had ended when the Prophet Muhammad's prophetic period was over. In several other works of literature, such as those suggested by Syafii Maarif in his book *Ibn Khaldun Dalam Pandangan Penulis Barat dan Timur*, the political history of Ibn Khaldun is full of intrigue (1996). His career was built on his betrayal of several dynasties and kings who had previously trusted him. In fact, he was jailed for two (2) years because he was accused of treason against Sultan Abu Inan in Fez. After the death of Abu Inan he became an advisor to Abu Salim, the figure behind the rebellion during the lifetime of Sultan Abu Inan.

> "Therefore, it is imperative, because of the nature of religious laws themselves, so that humans adapt themselves to religious laws in all matters, whether related to this world, or with life later." (Khaldun, 2008)

Deliar Noor explains in his book *Pemikiran Politik di Negeri Barat* about the intent of Ibn Khaldun's statement that a country or civilization does not depend on religion (Noor, 2000). Civilization can grow and collapse without being visited by the Prophets.

Ibn Khaldun's youth, which was mostly spent studying science and religion greatly influenced his opinion about the need for humans to conform to religious law, especially during his time in Egypt as qadi 'Maliki's law, although at a practical level it seems that some of Ibn Khaldun's attitudes do not reflect his thoughts (Maarif, 1996). While playing his role in the political field, Ibn Khaldun acted as a real politician, but when he became a scientist who based his thoughts on the reality of his life, religious values (which he believed in and learned from childhood), he made as to the basis of political life. Simply because of the awareness that when the state wants to breathe more than three generations, the leaders and people must conform to religious law. In his social analysis of the causes of the collapse of a country, it is clearly stated, including the lives of leaders and people who have begun to move away from religion.

In the context of practical politics, Ibn Khaldun put forward his ideas about rational politics. This rational politics is divided by him into two. First, rationally relating the public interest and the interests of the (special) king, Ibn Khaldun comments on this:

> "Allah made this type of politics meaningless to us in Islam during the caliphate. Religious syari'at occupies its place concerning both public and special interests ... "(Khaldun, 2008)

The text above illustrates that, according to Ibn Khaldun, the type of politics related to the interests of the king did not give much meaning during the Islamic Khilafah era. According to him, this is because the caliphate government system at that time placed Islamic law (*syari'at*) as a formal foundation in state life. It is the Sharia that regulates both public and special interests so that there was no need for any other law.

The second rational politics deals with the interests of the king, in this context including how to carry out the law by force of force. According to Ibn Khaldun, this was the type of politics practiced by many Muslim and non-Muslim kings. This is what differentiates it from the first rational politics where sharia occupies the central position as the source of all sources of law during the *Ilami Khilafah* era. The source of this second rational political norm is a mixture of religious *syari'at* and ethical regulations that have become the character of civilization itself, including the *ashobiyah*. Ibn Khaldun added that the king carried out this political action only because of the demands of the *syari'at*, the normative imperative as a Muslim.

The discussion regarding the process of rationality from the thought of Ibn Khaldun above will be detailed in the author convey at the sub-point of the discussion. In this sub-point, the writer will only explain what the two characters think first.

Machiavelli: Religion and Morality in the Dimensions of Power

Biography

Like Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli was born in an unfavorable socio-political situation in Italy. Several small countries such as Milan, Venice, Naplace, the Papal States, and Florence were involved in internal conflicts, each of which wanted to gain control and become pawns in a larger political field such as France, Germany and Spain (Schmandt, 2015). In this political situation, Machiavelli, armed with a good education from his family, established a close relationship with Cesare Borgia and became his personal advisor, an ambitious and power-mad Italian aristocrat (Hardiman, 2004).

Machiavelli's political career was crushed when the Republic of Florence allied with France and forced France to leave Italy. When the Medici family who were expelled from Italy in 1494 became hostile to Machiavelli, they put Machiavelli in prison for 1 (one) year.

Machiavelli also retired, he decided to write his political ideas into two major works that attracted controversy from various parties, his two works were Il Principe and Discourse. Il Principe made people berate Machiavelli as an immoral politician. His dictation clearly "put aside morals and religion in political life". Schmandt calls The Prince a handbook for tyrants (Schmandt, 2015). Meanwhile, in Discourse, Machiavelli talks a lot about the goodness of the Italian people. Some scientists claim that The Prince must be read in the 'light' Discourse.

When the Medici established power in Italy, and Machiavelli was released from prison, he no longer held strategic roles in government. He wrote The Prince and Discourse when Italy was marked by turmoil and political morality hit rock bottom. Murder, violence spreads, and every individual wants to gain power in various ways. One of the Italian aristocrats who greatly influenced Maschiavelli's thinking was Cesare Borgia, a tyrant at that time, and did everything to achieve his political goals. Cesare Borgia has been the inspiration for Machiavelli when writing The Prince.

Relationship between Religion and Politics in Machiavelli's Perspective

There are several Machiavelli ideas related to religion, state and morality (virtue). In the context of the relationship between religion and state, Machiavelli tends to separate religion from the state's political life. The Middle Ages was a time when the Church at that time dominated the country quite a lot. Machiavelli learned from some of the Church's conflicts with the state. The tension between the Pope and Henry IV over the church-state's position and relations, and the immunity of the Church's authority from taxes, became the source of a conflict that did not end in the Middle Ages. Until the Enlightenment, the Church's power over the state experienced a crisis. Many thinkers such as Machiavelli, Bruno, and Bacon emerged who opposed the Church's unlimited power.

According to Machiavelli, religion should not dominate the state, and on the contrary, the state must regulate religion (Hardiman, 2004). There are several things underlie Machiavelli's conception. First, this thought was born due to several negative effects in the Middle Ages when the Church was very dominant in political life, including the Emperor's removal. His knowledge of the past political history of the Church, tends to be destructive, even in some cases the Church has often exceeded its authority as a religious institution (Puspitasari, 2001). The

discourse on the position of religion and state in the Middle Ages is a long process since Roman despotism ended. Roman oppression of Christian congregations is a dark history for the Church, they slowly rose through the ideas of several church leaders such as Gelalius and St Thomas Aquinas, who tried to shrink the position and authority of religion and state over one another (Schmandt, 2015). However, in practice, Gelalius and Aquinas' ideal conception was unable to stem the conflict between Church and state, because their ideas were still at the ideal level.

The second basis is Machiavelli's tendency towards Classical Roman reality, where the position of the state was above religion (Hardiman, 2004). Machiavelli believes that politicians can do various public good by justifying any means, even if it has to be done with crime, treason, or murder (Schmandt, 2015). In a God perspective, doing evil and good at the same time for the common good is not something that makes sense. Kind actions or ways should accompany general kindness. Therefore, divine values (religious) are the basis for power (Puspitasari, 2001). Because of this perspective that tends to negate the value of morality, Machiavelli is often categorized as a secular thinker.

However, Machiavelli does not mean that religion is not important (Hardiman, 2004). He functions religion only as one of the institutions in the state that can become a tool to unite the nation. For Machiavelli, the foundation of morality, which becomes a belief in religion as a reference for someone in action, only applies in the private sphere. The rest, at a practical political level, Machiavelli tends to purify politics from religious values. Because for him, a politician who upholds morality's values in a circle of political power will quickly be eliminated. Thus, quoting Schmandt's statement in his book Political Philosophy, that The Prince is actually more of a handbook for tyrannical rulers. Below is Machiavelli's quote in The Prince:

> "But my goal is to write something that can be used by those who want to understand, to me it seems more appropriate to turn to the real truth of a problem than to continue to fantasize ... because how we live turns out regardless of how we should live, that people who leave what is done for what should be done will destroy him and not perpetuate him. " (Machiavelli, 1991)

The above quote implies the rationality of Machiavelli, that being a politician should be total. Departing from the definition of politics as a strategy to achieve power (Greenberg, J., & Baron, 2000), and based on the reality of his political experience, Machiavelli wants to emphasize that when we want to achieve what our goals are, then action should accompany what needs to be done. It is no longer at the ideal level, which is what should be done. If a politician is shackled by moral values or what he calls something that should be done, then the path to power will be blocked.

Furthermore, in the context of general virtue, Machiavelli emphasized that a political leader is said to be measured not from his morality as an individual or as a public figure. But from a pragmatic test how tough and stable is it in power (Schmandt, 2015). It seems that Machiavelli learned from Cesare Borgia, a political figure who, during his tenure as his political advisor, was known as a power-hungry person and did everything he could to achieve his political goals (Hardiman, 2004). He praised Cesare Borgia as being quite good at the stability of his power, and that what Cesare Borgia was doing was for the common good.

In this context of general virtue and individual morality, Machiavelli is often considered inconsistent because on the one hand, he denies morality in politics. However, on the other hand, he requires honesty in a king. This honesty is a prerequisite for assuming that a king must consider general virtue in all his actions. According to him, honesty is not in the sense that being honest is the right ethic, but honesty can be a fortune in certain situations (pragmatic). It can mean that Machiavelli wants to teach a leader to be honest if it will lead a king to his political goals. Moreover, be cruel when it is for the common good and bring us to power (Schmandt, 2015).

Just like Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli distinguishes the types and forms of government power into two. Although not as direct as Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli shows the type of state power in The Prince and Discourse. In The Prince, he talked more about state power under a tyrant and advocated many things so that tyrannical power could survive. While in Discourse, Machiavelli stated that he supported a republican form of government, with political freedom for each individual in it. Some observers argue that Machiavelli argues this because the socio-political situation in Italy at that time did not allow the establishment of a Republican state, but the tyrannical power that held general virtues was considered to be more able to handle conflict and conflict in Italy (Schmandt, 2015).

Thus, it becomes clear here that Machiavelli does not advocate religion and the value of religiosity as the basis of political power, because it cannot guarantee the realization of justice in the country. Besides, the Enlightenment century's factor as the century marked the abandonment of the theological and metaphysical periods that based state life based on religious values and other metaphysical aspects seemed to have influenced Machiavelli's thinking. Everything related to these two matters is considered irrational and at the same time unable to prove the legitimacy of religion, which can bring peace to society. As the author stated earlier, it is sufficient that religion only occupies a position as a moral institution.

Analysis of the Relationship between Religion and State Politics of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli: Secular or Rational?

The various analyzes of observers regarding the thoughts of Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli show that it is difficult to then position them at which point in the context of religious and political relations. The explanation in the sub-points above provides an assumption of ambivalence in the thinking of the two figures. On the one hand, the ambivalence side is that religion should occupy a central position in the field of state politics. However, on the other hand, they also tend to separate the two institutions.

In this case, the author will mostly use several researchers' opinions who have written about their thoughts. Then, to strengthen this opinion, the author will use James Coleman's Rational Choice perspective to analyze why Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli seem ambivalent. Consider the use of this theory because its assumptions are built from pragmatic philosophy. Its scope is only to see how the process of rationality works on an individual to produce a certain thought and action.

Basically, Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli both raise an idea that departs from empirical reality (Bosley, 2010; Patriarca, 2010). When Ibn Khaldun tried to distinguish his thoughts from those of his predecessors, like Al Farabi, he argued that their ideas were still at the ideal level (Khaldun, 2008). This is the same as Machiavelli's thinking, from what he wrote in The Prince, it seems that he built his thinking based on existing political realities, not how politics should be run.

Thinkers in the Middle Ages such as St. Thomas Aquinas and Gelalius, according to him, explained more about what the state and religion should do, not what happened at that time between religion and state. These two thinkers are more concerned with how the authority of each institution should be over one another. Machiavelli, through The Prince, trying to appear to bridge it with thoughts that he is based on his political experience, is more like trying to teach how to be a politician and how a politician can achieve his power and goals. Below can at least make it easier for us to categorize their thoughts.

Table 1.

Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli's View of Political Thought

	A Metodology	Political View	Religion View
Ibn Khaldun	Realis	Rational	Functional
Machiavelli	Realis	Rational	Private

Source: compiled from various sources

Machiavelli and Ibn Khaldun based their thinking on empirical phenomena, from what they encountered and felt directly. Consequently, their ideas in politics tend to be rational. Because of this rational perspective, Machiavelli placed religion as an institution that functions as a reinforcement and unifier of the state. Meanwhile, the teachings of morality in religion can be applied in the person of its adherents, but not in a political context. As for Ibn Khaldun, he took the middle point that the state can stand by the rules made by its people, but the values contained in religion should be the foundation in social life. This can be seen in the Civilization Cycle theory, which presupposes the value of religion as one of the factors that can maintain the existence of this civilization.

In general, in every idea, there will always be historical, social factors that influence why a character issues the idea. According to several studies, Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli are two figures who have generated much controversy in their own times. Among Islamic thinkers, Ibn Khaldun occupies a quite contradictory position between some Islamic thinkers who reject him and some who accept him. Some of the reasons for Islamic thinkers who rejected Ibn Khaldun include Al Asqalani, Taha Husain, Enan and Mahmod Ismail (Riyadi, 2017). They argued that Ibn Khaldun was a morally flawed person, mainly because his background was a politician. Even Taha Husayn had considered Ibn Khaldun to copy the ideas of the Ikhwan al-Shafa.

Meanwhile, on the other hand, Machiavelli's position was obvious. In the introduction, the author has explained that Machiavelli has received much criticism for his secular views. Even The Prince is considered to have become a handbook for several state leaders such as Hitler and Mussolini. His third work, The Art of War, also illustrates how the state can be stable by strengthening the military as an essential factor.

The history and the socio-political situation of the two figures greatly influenced why they tended to think controversial. It can be explained sociologically by using James Coleman's Rational Choice theory. James Coleman was the initiator of a theory of rational choice based on individuality. This theory assumes that individuals have specific goals, considerations, and interests in carrying out certain social actions (Ritzer, 2004). One of his propositions is that individual rational choices largely determine how the social system works. According to him, through "intervention" at the micro-level (individual-ed) will create social change.

Then, how did the process of rationality work in Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli to produce ideas on the relation between religion and state, which could be considered quite controversial at that time? Before going there, this article will discuss a little concerning the historical socio-political situation of the environment in which Machiavelli and Ibn Khaldun

lived. In the context of Ibn Khaldun, the Arab world at the time of Ibn Khaldun, thereafter, it did not allow the development of thought like that of Ibn Khaldun. Two (2) things are inhibiting factors (Riyadi, 2017), including:

1. The authority of the scholars of *fiqh* and *hadith* is powerful

2. Muslims in general face the stagnation of knowledge, which is caused by:

   a. Fanaticism on *fiqh*

   b. Reluctance to accept scientific developments

   c. *Taklid*, which is blindly following a group's or individual views

As mentioned earlier, Ibn Khaldun criticized several well-known names in hadith, interpretation, and history. Muqoddimah is the result of his contemplation. He explicitly mentioned at the beginning of the Muqoddimah that his work was the first to discuss civilization's character, which he brought up several times from his anxiety about writing history.

The Rationality of Civilization Existence (*al-'umran*) Without *Nubuwwah*

As the author has described earlier, Ibn Khaldun's conception of the existence of society without prophecy has often served as a justification for some Islamic scientists to categorize him as a secular thinker. It is because his opinion is theoretically contrary to Islamic values, where nubuwwah becomes a necessity, as a way to convey God's message to humans.

James Coleman's Rational Choice Theory can at least help us to understand Ibn Khaldun's thoughts. There are three (3) rationalization processes of Ibn Khaldun's thought. First, starting from the philosophical assumption that humans are social creatures who need to interact with other people. This interaction is intended to fulfill their basic needs (basic needs), such as food and beverages. In order to fulfill these needs, humans need interaction in the form of cooperation with other humans. Ibn Khaldun said that this cooperation process requires a set of rules and social solidarity (ashobiyah-red). Ashobiyah is needed for group strength in facing other types of needs, namely facing threats/attacks from other groups. This first premise tells us that societies can exist and walk towards equilibrium "independently" without a Prophet guiding them.

Second, nubuwwah in Islamic terminology is defined as news, which comes from one place to another (Satriawan, 2015). Nubuwwah's concept is identical with the arrival of a prophet who brings good news to humans, showing the way of goodness in living the happiness in this world and the hereafter. According to Ibn Khaldun, society can organize itself without a Prophet. He presented historical-empirical evidence in the past, where the Majusi community

could achieve civilization's progress before the prophecy came to them (Khaldun, 2008). For example, the existence of ruins of buildings that are still intact and solid, according to Ibn Khaldun's perspective, it is one proof that humans can organize themselves without a Prophet guiding them.

The two processes then gave rise to speculation from Ibn Khaldun that civilization could exist before or after Prophethood. Syafi'i Ma'arif argues that this premise does not mean that Ibn Khaldun rejects nubuwwah (Maarif, 1996). The underlying assumption is the theory of the cycle of civilization, which presupposes that people experience a decline due to the lack of ashobiyah and luxury in their social life. The characteristics of society during the Abbasid Dynasty described by Ibn Khaldun as being in a stage of economic decline due to waste in several segments such as military costs, government administration costs, war costs, and the lifestyle of the aristocracy at that time. Ibn Khaldun explained that humans moved away from religion at this stage, which would diminish the ashobiyah ties in the next stage. When the ashobiyah diminished, and the country was in economic bankruptcy, it would easily be occupied by other dynasties.

So, it can be argued that when Ibn Khaldun talks about a society without prophecy, it must be read in a different context. The concept of a society without nubuwwah is to explain the natural laws of the characteristics of a civilization (*al umran*). In another context, when talking about the rise and fall of civilization and ashobiyah, Ibn Khaldun looks very strict in placing religion as the core of his analysis.

That is, Ibn Khaldun had goals, considerations, and interests when he conceptualized these ideas. For example, considering the characteristics of society that is always changing, it demands an understanding of history and ijtihad that must adjust to the state's political life. This aspect, which later in Ibn Khaldun's rationality became the basis for him in dividing the roles and relations between religion and state, which the author will describe in the sub-point below.

Religion in the Rationality of Ibn Khaldun's Sovereignty

Ibn Khaldun divided the types of political leadership into two, which he called rational politics. First, rational politics based on religious law, and secondly, rational politics based on the interests of the king. The first was useful during the period of Nubuwwah and Khulafaur Rashidin, and the second was in effect during the Umayyad Dynasty. Ibn Khaldun calls this second type a form of sovereignty (*al-mulk*) obtained through ashobiyah ties (Alatas, 2015; Khaldun, 2008). At that time, the sovereignty characteristic was marked by no longer making

religious law an absolute foundation in political life, replaced by the role of ashobiyah. This ashobiyah bond is formed from two elements, clan, and religion (Alatas, 2015). This clan bond was the first to exist during the Umawiyah era. Here also lies Ibn Khaldun's rationality when dividing the two political leadership.

Ibn Khaldun divides the roles of the two institutions as not an ideal type. He aims to explain how the reality at that time existed, occurred during the time of Khulafaur Rasyidin and the beginning of the Umayyad Dynasty. During the Khulafaur Rasyidin period, religion had a role as the basis for the source of law and policy, while during the Umayyad period, it shifted to a system of sovereignty based on Ashobiyah ties. According to Ibn Khaldun, this sovereignty was built on religious interests and the interests of the king.

As the initial premise of humans as social beings, in the context of this sovereignty, Ibn Khaldun explained that the head of state/king has a significant role in maintaining the continuity of human life (Khaldun, 2008). It is what Ibn Khaldun meant by the second rational politics, in which the king had a vested interest. A sovereign for Ibn Khaldun must be reliable and able to gather social solidarity (Khaldun, 2008). In another part, Ibn Khaldun explained that there is a weak aspect of this second type of politics. Among them are regulations that change according to the interests of the king, who alternates from dynasty to dynasty. It has consequences for rebellion and chaos. Therefore, according to Ibn Khaldun, there must be a political law that people can accept and follow. Here Ibn Khaldun divides political law into two types. First, laws based on reason, made by humans. Second, religious law, which is determined by Allah through the Apostle (Khaldun, 2008).

The religious law functions as a regulator in human life, including how an individual relates to his country. Ibn Khaldun suggested religious law as the basis for the state so that there is supervision from God. According to Ibn Khaldun, this type of power belonged to the Prophet and the caliphs after him (Khulafaur Rasyidin). Meanwhile, the king ruled through political action according to reason to avoid evil and the advancement of worldly interests. According to Ibn Khaldun, the state-based purely on religion was valid during the period of Nubuwwah and Khulafaur Rasyidin, while the state of the reason (which means sovereignty) existed at the time of the kings after that.

It should be underlined that a state which is already based on sovereignty in Ibn Khaldun's view does not entirely rely on the law of reason by putting aside religion. Ibn Khaldun put religion in a functional position to state stability through religious ashobiyah and clans. When

the state is stable, the integration of society is achieved, then the country can achieve its prosperity. Whereas in the syari'at itself for Ibn Khaldun, it does not explicitly state what the form and structure are. Sharia only denounces the bad consequences it causes, whether the state does it towards its people or in ordinary interactions (*muamalah*) (Khaldun, 2008). Thus, sovereignty is a rational choice in post-Khulafaur Rasyidin Islamic governance.

Machiavelli: Religion, Morality and Political Immorality

In the previous sub-points have explained the essence of political and religious thought from Machiavelli. Machiavelli emphasized that the state can play a role in regulating religion, but religion cannot interfere in state affairs beyond its authority. One example of religious teachings that would hinder an individual's political goals is morality. Herein lies the limitation of the role of religion, according to Machiavelli. Many researchers and observers considered it a form of secularity.

Rational choice theory presupposes that every action has a purpose and importance. We can use this theory to see Machiavelli's thoughts on the other side, apart from some criticisms of this theory, which are too pragmatic and micro. Nevertheless, at least this theory can explain Machiavelli's thinking from another side, for example about what motives and interests Machiavelli wants to achieve with his thinking, is it secular like the general perspective on him, or rational?

First, in the Machiavelli context, Budiman explains that Machiavelli's opinion is not intended to reject religion altogether. However, there is a pragmatic function of religious teachings that can be used as a tool for social integration (Hardiman, 2004). For example, religion can play a role in supporting nationalism and the spirit of patriotism in society. According to Machiavelli, this will significantly help the implementation of the country's functions properly. So it is not religion that is the fundamental problem, but the function of religion in politics.

The second rationalization, before he wrote Il Principe and Discourse, Machiavelli was a political consultant to Caesare Bourgia, a king who was described as very ambitious and crazy for power. Some of his political experiences shaped his thinking character. Plus, during the Renaissance, Machiavelli's time was when science tried to separate itself from the influence of religion. Including in the context of power, during the Renaissance, the model of power with church influence experienced many crises. Machiavelli also came up with the idea of the political

function of religion and how morality in religion can become a barrier for rulers to achieve state goals.

One of the salient features of the Middle Ages is that many thinkers exalt man as the image of God (anthropocentrism). Machiavelli rejects this view by basing his argument on the history of church authority over the empire, which resulted in the church's immunity to state regulations such as taxes (Schmandt, 2015). Humans for Machiavelli are creatures with volatile and changing emotions, all of which cannot be said to be the image of a holy God. Therefore, Machiavelli argues that the authorities need to make regulations to regulate the behavior of its citizens.

It is the third characteristic of rationality, where when a ruler wants to order for his citizens, moral considerations are unnecessary. The volatile and changing human character requires a ruler who can act like humans and beasts. The characters, as humans and beasts, depend on each other. The character as a beast is necessary to recognize the enemy's political snare in a violent political arena. Machiavelli also "justifies" the ruler not to keep his promises when it is deemed detrimental and hinders his political steps. Even in warfare, a leader's realistic action to side with a more influential camp is highly recommended so that he can get the maximum share in the spoils of war.

The political situation, the historical setting of the renaissance period, the history of tensions between the church and the rulers, and the political experience greatly influenced Machiavelli's thinking. As well as reaffirming that Machiavelli is a realist thinker. F. Budi Hardiman calls it real politics, he does not talk about what should be there, but rather what exists in political life (Hardiman, 2004). Before Machiavelli, such as Thomas Aquinas and Gelalius for example, some intellectuals got quite a place in the hearts of thinkers afterward. Indeed, before Machiavelli, these two figures had already conveyed the ideas of religion and politics. So, Machiavelli is not the first. Nevertheless, his courage to appear different, trying to break through religious authority at that time, was courage in itself.

There is a huge disparity between ideal ideas and reality in society in the current context. Whereas when religion exerts too much authority on the state, for Machiavelli, it is not a peace that is created, as it is a religious ideal. Even so, Machiavelli does not necessarily rule out the role of religion, he removes religion from politics but still believes that religion would be more appropriate if it took a position as a unifying state institution (Hardiman, 2004).

CONCLUSION

The dialectic of the relationship between religion and state, religion and politics throughout history has been more of a conflict pattern. There is always a side of historicity that lies behind every thought pattern in the relation between these two aspects. Including Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli. Their political career history and conflicts in the communities where they live greatly influence their thinking. So it will not be easy then to contextualize the concept of their thoughts at each time. However, at least through the perspective of rational choice above, we can understand how the rationality process of a particular thought works from figures who are widely seen as having a secular character such as Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli.

Both Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli both believe that the position of religion is an institution that is functional towards state instability. For Ibn Khaldun, the teachings of morality in religion can prevent the destruction of a civilization. Meanwhile, Machiavelli tends to see religion more explicitly not as an authority that has a political function in governing the state, but as an institution that unifies society (a function of integration). Through these two thinkers, we can understand their principles of realism, and how religion and state (politics) should relate to their complementary functions.

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