

Universal Social Culture: An Empirico-Revelational Paradigm of Shāh Walī Allāh

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Shāh Walī Allāh's (1703-63) ideas and profound intellectual legacy continue to attract scholastic interest. Despite many works on his legacy, significant facets remain unknown. As his futuristic ideas hold great promise for modern and future Islamic thought, his works should be analyzed. We will focus on one such idea: his synthesis of reason, revelation, and empiricism. Building on evidence from an inductive survey of social phenomena to support the claims of revelation and staying within the doctrinal framework of revealed guidance, he constructs a universal social culture paradigm and says that all Qur'anic injunctions and instructions of the Prophet are compatible with the demands of human nature.

His view of the individual and human society is an integral facet of his philosophy of life and is one of the most original parts of his legacy. He sees life as a display of the grand divine scheme in natural order and social organization. Although his exposition of humanity's social development seems to be in the nature of a humanist and sometimes assumes the form of an empirical survey, his final conclusions confirm the fundamental postulates of religion. Some modern exponents of his social doctrines suggest that his ideas are not original and say that he might have taken them from Ibn Sīnā' or Ibn Khaldūn. However, a totalist view of his framework of thought shows that this is an unwarranted assertion.¹

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¹See Baljon, *Religion*, 1986, who says that the principle of mutual aid as a central element in a social order is not an original idea of Shāh Walī Allāh, for it was recognized as such by Ibn Sīnā' in his *Kitāb al Najāt* and Ibn Khaldūn in his *Muqaddimah*. We submit that any social or political doctrine of Shāh Walī Allāh should be viewed with reference to, and as an integral part of, his overall philosophy of life and in the given frame-

Shāh Walī Allāh's somewhat positivist survey of social phenomena seems to have been intended mainly for substantiating the standpoint of religion through empirical evidence. He looks at creation and humanity which, installed at its center, is the creation's trustee and the potential executor of the divine plan. This is a supplement to the revelational guidance from God. His basic premise is that all knowledge attainable by humanity, either by intellect or observation, is congruent with divine revelation, for whatever has been discovered (i.e., laws of nature or norms of human behavior) by positivistic inquiry is part of the supreme divine law. The prophets have enunciated another part: the revealed law. From this premise, he concludes that an individual's relation to other individuals is just another aspect of one's spirituality and that there is an organic relationship between the two (Sindhi 1964).

Taking a holistic view of life, Shāh Walī Allāh tries to identify the essential unity pervading human life. His philosophy represents an attempt to establish a close link between the social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of the human existential enterprise (Siddiqi 1963). With a basically theocentric view of the individual, who is the primary actor in social organization, it is natural that a transcendental moral law should provide the organization's mainstay. This law ought to be comprehensive and immutable and should serve as the final touchstone for determining good and evil, virtue and vice, love and hate (Shāh Walī Allāh n.d.).

The most outstanding and distinctive virtue of human society, in Shāh Walī Allāh's view, is justice (*'adālah*), which is both an individual and a collective trait. He contends that being guided by the principle of justice is an essential moral distinction of human beings. This individual moral consciousness is further augmented on the collective plane, where its preservation is even more necessary. For him, justice includes all human endeavor: in dress, manners, and modes, it is etiquette; in income and expenditure, it is economy; and in state affairs, it is politics (Siddiqi 1963).

He regards economic justice as a basic requirement for realizing the supreme objective of justice in every human sphere, for it is indispensable for the healthy and balanced development of human society. Every social group needs an economic system that can guarantee those material necessities of life required by its members for, in their absence, individuals would be discontented and, as a result, would be unable to find sufficient

work of his sociopolitical thought. If we compare his ideas with those of earlier sociopolitical Muslim and non-Muslim thinkers, similarities will surely be found. The value of Shāh Walī Allāh's sociopolitical ideas, as an original contribution to Islamic thought, lies in his development of a total view of human life, in the context of which he explains the phenomena of human social organization. It is this totality of approach to the complex multidimensional enterprise of life and his relating to it individual, familial, social, economic, political, international, and religious and spiritual undertakings, that makes his contribution original and unparalleled. In all fairness, it should be acknowledged as such.

leisure for the pursuit of the higher purposes of life: striving for the eternal bliss of the hereafter (Shāh Walī Allāh n.d.; Sindhi 1965).

Like many other social philosophers and theorists from Plato to Comte, Shāh Walī Allāh's ultimate aim was the establishment of an ideal moral, altruistic, and perfectly civilized society. This cannot be achieved, however, without attaining a high level of God-consciousness and spiritual purification (Shāh Walī Allāh n.d.). In contrast, Comte thought that a "perfect society would come about by the proper application of a new moral science: the study of society." He envisioned a "scientifically designed commonwealth, wherein social control would be entrusted to the 'Religion of Humanity'—with sociologists as its priests" (Biesanz and Biesanz 1978; Backer and Barnes 1952). Comte insisted that a strictly rational, as opposed to religious, course should be followed to alleviate the ills of postindustrial European society. He posited that one application of this "rational strategy" could be the incorporation of physical and natural sciences methodology in the service of social relationships.

Herbert Spencer, another notable social philosopher, developed his social thought on similar lines. He believed that "there can be no complete acceptance of sociology as a science, as long as the belief in a social order [that is] not conforming to natural law survives" (Ba-Yunus 1988). As modern sociology, which is still dominated by the ideas of Comte and Spencer, gives no significant role to religion, there is little point in comparing the social thought of Shāh Walī Allāh and western sociological insights, for they have hardly anything in common.

Modern sociology, like other social sciences that have mushroomed in the West during the last two centuries, gradually desacralized knowledge and almost totally blinded it to transcendental realities. The inevitable consequence of this process, as well as curbs and restrictions placed on individual perception, was that he/she was gradually reduced to a *promethium anthropos*, one who was not expected to attain the status of a promising spiritual personality whose ultimate fulfillment will be actualized in the hereafter. Furthermore, "today's sociology is most concerned with low level empirical generalizations rather than constructing grand theories and fails to come to grips with the great problems of the modern society at large" (Biesanz and Biesanz 1978; Gouldner 1970).

Despite western sociology's narrow outlook, some sociologists take a broad view when examining societies, worldwide trends, historical phenomena, or the relationship between personality types and cultural differences: Weber (1948) related capitalism's rise to the Protestant Reformation, Riesman (1965) linked character types with social trends, and Williams (1970) analyzed American society from secular perspectives.

In current sociological parlance, "studies of such large scale macroscopic phenomena as we cited above are designated as macrosociology" (Riesman 1965). In a sense, Shāh Walī Allāh can be considered a great

macrosociologist who made a lasting contribution to the progress of human thought, for he was "a grand theorist concerned with historical trends and human destiny, who worked out a social philosophy that explained a broad range of phenomena and constructed a model of a future good society." Exponents of modern sociology do not generally acknowledge anyone other than Comte and Marx as "social philosophers." As Shāh Walī Allāh's original and innovative social thought fulfills Riesman's (1965) criteria, he should be recognized as a social philosopher.

The difference between the approaches of western social philosophers and that of Shāh Walī Allāh can be better appreciated by noticing that the former take specific western experience for granted. The West's historical experience, as regards its social, economic, religious, and political variables, has provided western sociologists with rich and varied material with which they could construct a constellation of social ideas. Shāh Walī Allāh, however, proceeds from a totally different view: the construction of an entire system of thought, including the social aspects, on the foundations of the historical concretization of Islam under the Prophet and his four immediate political successors.

The Four Stages of Social Development

Shāh Walī Allāh explains the evolution of a social framework by identifying four stages for the development of a cultured society. To denote these stages in humanity's attempt to meet its social and economic needs, he coined the term *irtifāqāt* (Shāh Walī Allāh n.d.). In common with most medieval and some modern social philosophers, the first stage features traits that distinguish human beings from "fellow animals":

a. *Al Ra'y al Kullī* (The Universality of Purpose). All animals share the instinctive drive to pursue their immediate physical needs of eating, drinking, sex, and seeking shelter from the vicissitudes of weather. The methods used to satisfy these needs are intuitive and fit the peculiar requirements of each species. For instance, God taught a bee to partake of varied fruits, to make a dwelling, where other bees may join it, to submit to the drone, and to produce honey. The natural law ordained by God has provided a Shari'ah (i.e., a prescribed course of conduct) for each species,² which is transfused in the nature of each member of that particular species. Likewise, in his *Hujjat Allāh al Bālighah* (n.d.) and *al*

²It is important that he uses "Shari'ah" in the context of biology, for this indicates that he sees the operation of the divine law in two parallel but harmonious spheres: biological and social. As we probe into his social ideas, we can see that his thesis develops along the same line, namely, identifying a necessary coherence between the Shari'ah's social laws and nature's biological laws. For him, each sphere fully complements the other.

Budūr al Bāzighah (Baljon n.d.), Shāh Walī Allāh states that God has inspired human beings to pursue instinctively the beneficial ends (*irtifāqāt*) of these necessities.

In addition to these immediate and instinctive drives, which he terms *al ra'y al juz'ī* (individuality of purpose), an individual is driven by *al ra'y al kullī* (universality of purpose), which inspires him/her to pursue a purely rational cause that may not be rooted in his/her instinctive disposition (i.e., the creation of a good social order, the perfection of morals, the achievement of cultural accomplishments, or the struggle for salvation in the hereafter) (Shāh Walī Allāh n.d.; Baljon n.d.). This moral aspect, he states, is the fundamental distinction between a human being and an animal, for it is the former who tries to establish a good social system after satisfying his/her biological needs. Individuals also seek the ascendancy of moral ideals in the individual and collective spheres of human life. They devote a great deal of time to attaining accomplishments in culture and civilization. Moreover, a sizeable portion of available material resources is often dedicated to attaining salvation in the hereafter (*ibid.*).

It should be noted that, unlike many earlier Muslim social philosophers, Shāh Walī Allāh did not stress the faculty of intellect (*virtus rationalis*) as the essential difference between humans and animals, although he does discuss some external physical and inner mental features of the archetypal individual (i.e., uprightness, power of speech, relatively hairless body, and perceptive faculty of mind, [*idrāk*]) as distinctively human traits (*ibid.*). However, the most fundamental distinction stressed in his social philosophy is the moral concerns of the individual.

The most prominent propounder of sociology before Shāh Walī Allāh was Ibn Khaldūn, who also regards *quwwah nāṭiqah*, *virtus rationalis*, *fikr*, *cogitativa* (all of which are related to human intellect) or *rawīyah* (deliberation) to be the essential differentia of humanity (Mahdi 1964). This view was held by many early Muslim and non-Muslim thinkers. Shāh Walī Allāh's approach, in our opinion, is an improvement, for his main emphasis is on identifying underlying "motives" as opposed to the "potencies" with which human beings or animals have been invested. The rational faculties have been given to humanity by God, but it is ultimately the conscious and voluntary pursuit of higher goals that distinguishes human beings from animals. The value of these higher goals, which are far beyond the frontiers of biological fulfillment, lies in the fact that they transcend all immediate selfish and essentially animalistic interests. This transcendence requires the subjection of one's animalistic disposition (*bahīmīyah*) and the elevation of the angelic disposition (*malakīyah*). The distinction is therefore contingent upon one's conscious and selfless struggle to achieve certain goals that are commendable for their moral value and universal good.

His original concept of *al ra'y al kullī* ends the apparent confusion engendered by the seemingly overlapping instinctive pursuits of human beings and animals. The resulting confusion among those who have tried to understand the interrelation of various species of the animal world has led some to conclude that human beings and animals share a common ancestry (Darwin 1859; Bakar 1988).

b. *Zarāfah* (The Aesthetic Urge). The second distinctive trait is that the satisfaction of instinctive needs is supplemented by an aesthetic urge. An animal seeks only to ward off heat and cold, end hunger and thirst, and relieve sexual tension, while human beings aspire to obtaining endless pleasure and joy from these: a beautiful mate, delicious food, elegant dress, and a comfortable house (Shah Wali Allah, n.d.). Though pursuit of these instinctive desires is rooted in one's animalistic disposition, he/she uses his/her intelligence to satisfy them in an accomplished and refined manner. Therefore, a great deal of human resources and potential are spent on achieving progressive refinement and various modes of accomplishment as well as enjoying the pleasures of food, sex, and housing.

c. *The Capacity for Knowledge*. The third distinctive trait is the existence of degrees of intelligence and understanding. Those who are smarter seek to discover the beneficial stages of social development (*irtifāqāt*). Those who are unable to do this, although they feel an urge to do so, are forced to seek the help of those who are smarter. In this way, they learn and adopt the methods of those who are smarter, which conform to their own general understanding (*ibid.*). This lays the basis for a cooperative effort to achieve humanity's common good. Such mutual cooperation is the primary condition for the growth of any social framework.

Shāh Walī Allāh is aware of these degrees of intelligence, for he assigns the role of discovering methods of human social development on behalf of the rest to a gifted group of people. He explains this by imagining an individual living at the most primitive level. This individual feels hunger and thirst but, finding nothing to eat or drink, suffers great hardship until this problem is solved. After that, he/she strives to develop a sound method to satisfy these vital needs on a regular basis but fails to do so. Maybe such information can be gleaned from one who is smarter: one who, through personal experience, discovered how to plant seeds, reap the produce, and store and preserve the harvest. This individual might also know something of irrigating land, through wells or streams, and how to carry and preserve water (i.e., water pots or skin bags). Now that the less intelligent individual can satisfy his/her immediate needs in an organized and intelligent manner, he/she can attain a degree of *irtifāq*. This procedure can be applied to cooking, frying, grinding, and baking grains and other food-stuffs, thereby satisfying other needs (*ibid.*).

Shāh Walī Allāh uses this illustration as an analogy of how primitive human beings gradually attain the primary level of social development. These attainments, he says, are the result of two elements: an individual's natural and intuitional guidance, which God gave to humanity, and one's understanding acquired through experience. Combining these results in knowledge, by which an individual discovers how to satisfy his/her material needs in an organized and regular manner. Over time, these practices become so common and familiar that they form part of the collective habits of a human group that lives together (ibid.).

The characteristics of a human being, according to Shāh Walī Allāh, are beyond number. But, after further analysis, they can be grouped into three categories: a) the urge for social welfare and the common good of humanity (*al ra'y al kullī*); the urge for cultural accomplishment (*zarāfah*) (ibid.); and the capacity for knowledge. Although all human beings aspire to perfection through the attainment of knowledge, not all of them can do so. This indicates that God created individuals with varying capacities and predilections for different kinds of knowledge (Baljon n.d.). In addition, just as animal species can be classified into higher, middle, and lower orders according to their relative harmony, vigor, and purity, human beings can be distinguished from each other according to the level of these qualities they have attained.³ The most perfect individual is the one who has attained the highest level of these three qualities. Their effects can be seen in three faculties: conation and will (*qalb*), the psycho-biological factor (*tabī'ah*), and the rational soul (*al nafs al nātiqah*).⁴

Obviously, these three human traits are not found in all individuals to the same degree. This disparity in aptitude and competence, which is attributable to several causes and factors, is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it is significant for our purpose: Shāh Walī Allāh claims that social development (*irtifāq*) exists at two levels due to the varying intellectual and cultural levels of different social groups. The first or primary level is an essential characteristic of such small social groups as nomads and those who live in isolated locales that are geographically distant from the centers of civilization and culture. He terms these *al aqālīm al sāliḥah* (the virtuous realms) (Baljon n.d.).

³One factor that makes an animal's disposition different from a human being's is that, in the former, there is a dominant physio-biological factor (*nafs* or *tabī'ah*) to which its intelligence (*'aql*) and volitional faculty (*qalb*) are in absolute subservience. See Shāh Walī Allāh, *Hujjah*, n.d. and Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd, *'Abaqāt*, n.d. In a human being's disposition, the influence of intelligence (*'aql*) or intellect is the predominant factor. See Halepota, *Philosophy of Shāh Walī Allāh*, n.d.

⁴See Baljon, *Budūr* (English), n.d. For details on this subject and the psychological dimension of the human personality, see Halepota, *Philosophy of Shāh Walī Allāh*, n.d.

The second stage is attained by people living in urban areas and civilized cities within the virtuous realms. These realms are "virtuous" because their social environment acts as a constant incentive for the development of human beings with excellent morals and wisdom. As human social organization expands and engenders increasing needs and requirements, people have diverse experiences that, in turn, give rise to varying social practices. Over time, these practices become permanent social customs and form part of their collective social behavior (ibid.). Its culmination is reflected in the practices of kings and rulers, who acquire and possess higher standards in the amenities of life. In addition, they are visited by gifted individuals from all over the world. This allows them to acquire *sunan ṣāliḥah* (virtuous practices), which are then seen in the living patterns of their subjects. These societies may then be classified as virtuous realms (ibid.).⁵

The third stage, which is a natural consequence of attaining the second stage, is the need for a government. The immediate causes are the greed, jealousy, procrastination, and denial of rights that now begin to appear in social and interpersonal transactions. To solve these disputes and to deal with the threat posed to society's moral integrity and general well-being by those individuals who are ruled by "low" passions, a particular agency is needed. Another cause is the need to ensure that all members of society enjoy the benefits and work for their achievement. The end result of this realization is that a ruler or a governmental agency must be found and installed to enforce the social rules and moral norms. This gives rise to a need for taxes from the more affluent, which Shāh Walī Allāh (n.d.) sees as the *raison d'être* of a government.

This stage is followed by a fourth: when a ruler becomes independent in his/her own domain, controls the collection of wealth by way of taxes, and secures the services of warriors. As elements of niggardliness, greed, and hatred prompt many rulers to quarrel and fight each other, the people feel compelled to establish an office of superior authority (*khalīfah*) or to join the jurisdiction of a supreme authority (*khalīfah al kubrā*). Shāh Walī Allāh defines the *khalīfah* as one who enjoys so much prestige and popular respect that it is almost impossible for anyone to deprive him/her of his/her position (ibid.). Each individual *khalīfah* should be different, for the collective character and psychology of his/her subjects differ. He

⁵See Baljon, *Budūr*, n.d. In the context of society's cultural evolution and its various stages, Shāh Walī Allāh uses several key terms to represent his own original concepts. The terms "virtuous practices" (*sunan ṣāliḥah*), "virtuous realms" (*aqālīm ṣāliḥah*), and "temperate realms" (*aqālīm mu'tadilah*) seem to have their roots in classical Muslim social thought. Unlike other social terms coined by him, which he explains in his books *Hujjah* and *Budūr*, he assumes his readers' familiarity with them, for he does not explain them. Thus we are inclined to assume that such terms are part of the typical socio-ecological approach used by early Muslim social scientists to classify different societies. See Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, n.d., and Siddiqi, "Shāh Walī Allāh," 1964.

asserts that those communities with stronger and sharper temperaments are always in greater need of rulers and *khalīfahs* than those that are less greedy and grudging (ibid.).

It is clear that evolution and relativity are prominent features of Shāh Walī Allāh's social philosophy. He conceives the evolution of society as an organic whole⁶ and does not regard it as

an aggregate of units, held together by any external force, or artificial means of social contracts, but as a veritable living organism. It obeys the laws of its own evolution. It has an end and a purpose. It works on lines almost analogous to those of the individual, who is subjected to states of health and ailment, progress and regression, life and death. (Halepota n.d.)

A Universal Model of Society and State

A striking feature of Shāh Walī Allāh's social philosophy is his reconstruction of a more or less empirical theory of a universal model of social and political organization. He cites examples from the inductive observation of social phenomena to substantiate his basic contention: all cultured societies that have emerged since the genesis of humanity have adhered to the basic principles of social development (*irtifāq*) (ibid.). These principles, he maintains, have been common in all human societies, for they stem from urges rooted in the same human nature and urges that are directed, ultimately, to the actualization of humanity's common goals. It is these objectives that constitute the immutable universal basis of all culture and civilization. Despite any variations that might appear between various societies (i.e., forms, fads, fashions, and customs), humanity has always unanimously upheld these basic principles (ibid.).

Shāh Walī Allāh derives this conclusion from his analysis of human nature and his subsequent identification of the components of the aesthetic urge (*zarāfah*) and the universality of purpose (*al ra'y al kullī*), which are inherent in human nature and distinguish human beings from animals. These two urges, supplemented by the intellect (*virtus rationalis*) and in collaboration with rational and intuitional faculties, generate moral consciousness and provide the mainstay for social and cultural development. All human enterprises are a response to these inherent urges that

⁶In Shāh Walī Allāh, *Hujjah*, n.d., there are indications of similarity between socio-political thinkers of various epochs and traditions as regards their understanding of city growth, the evolution of social culture, and the development of political organization. See Plato's *Compendium Legum Platonis* in al Fārābī's *Talkhīṣ Nawāmīs Aflāṭūn*.

give rise to society, as well as culture, civilization, moral discipline, economic order, and political organization, in varying degrees (ibid.).⁷

Any appreciation of Shāh Walī Allāh's views on society should be made by relating them to his overall perspectives on humanity and human nature. Each step in the development of his social and political philosophy is integrated with his views on human beings and their relationship with their environment. The culmination of his thought is the Islamic state. However, he does not approach this through traditional arguments derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, but rather constructs a full-fledged social theory based mainly on empirical and rational grounds. This allows him to reach a meeting point between inductive reason, empirical observation, and religious sanctions. Thus the Islamic version of sociopolitical organization, the *khilāfah* in Shāh Walī Allāh's (n.d.) view, is a natural outcome of humanity's free and healthy pursuit of its socio-cultural aims as dictated by its natural disposition, provided that it is unhampered by moral perversion or deviation from the natural course.

In this respect, the approach of Shāh Walī Allāh seems comparable to that of Ibn Ṭufayl, as presented in the latter's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*. While Ibn Ṭufayl visualized the natural evolution of an individual who, in total isolation from society, pursues an imaginative, intuitional, and rational quest to discover God, Shāh Walī Allāh conceives of human society as passing through stages until it finally reaches the God-conscious state (*khilāfah*).⁸ The similarity between the ideas of these two scholars is accentuated by a brief remark made by Shāh Walī Allāh in his *al Budūr al Bāzighah* (Masumi 1970). While stressing that the *irtifāqāt* were a natural attainment achieved through intuition, just like the instinctive knowledge imparted by nature to birds and animals to obtain their means of sustenance and survival, we come across the following remark:

I have heard from some of those who are not gifted with sound imaginative perception that this system (of *irtifāqāt*) is acquired from ancestors. And had there not been any legacy from the ancestors, people would have been ignorant of this system. If, by this statement, they mean that the second *irtifāq* was based on the first *irtifāq*, then this statement is correct and stands to reason. Otherwise, it is an obvious un-truth. An evident sign of this un-truth is that, even if we presume the existence of a man, growing

⁷For an explanation of the roots of human moral traits in a human being's psychic disposition according to Shāh Walī Allāh's ethical philosophy, see Halepota, *Philosophy of Shāh Walī Allāh*, n.d.

⁸See Ahmad, *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, 1958. For biographical details about Ibn Ṭufayl, his contribution to Muslim philosophical thought, and an English summary of his work, see Siddiqi, "Ibn Ṭufayl," 1963.

all alone in wilderness, and who never sees another human being, he still must acquire a degree of the morals which we have made mention of.

While the conclusions drawn by Ibn Ṭufayl might appear to contain elements of fantasy and imagination, in the case of Shāh Walī Allāh, his thesis is founded on actual observation of the substantive function of human society.

In juxtaposition to *irtifāqāt*, Shāh Walī Allāh also developed the concept of *iqtirābāt*, which is integrated fully with his ideas on the individual and human nature, in which an individual's psychological, moral, and religious personalities are embedded. As noted previously, Shāh Walī Allāh (n.d.) regards religion as essentially a response to a natural human urge. He points to the concern for salvation in the hereafter as stemming from the universality of purpose (*al ra'y al kullī*). *Iqtirāb* (seeking proximity, pl. *iqtirābāt*) is the equivalent of *irtifāq* in the domain of religious experience. Any human endeavor to seek spiritual fulfillment through attaining divine proximity is termed *iqtirāb* by Shāh Walī Allāh (Masumi 1970).

Shāh Walī Allāh's comprehensive understanding of *anthropos* presents a concept of a balanced human personality consisting of a biological animal, a moral being, a spiritual soul, and a rational creature at the same time. He then traces the evolution of this comprehensive personality as an active member of a dynamic social organism. In this process of evolution, he identifies apparently different pursuits as integrated phenomena catering to the urges that have been instilled by nature.

His unique contribution lies in the fact that he begins with an analysis of the macrolevel of an average cultured and civilized society and then spells out the features of a universal paradigm of society and state. He tries to make the point that the healthy evolution of culture, both in the individual and the collective spheres, is, of necessity, conducive to the attainment of *iqtirābāt*. When this attainment assumes a vigorous collective form at an organized level and is reinforced by an army, a judiciary, and the other necessary tools of public order, the natural result is the emergence of an Islamic state (*khilāfah*) (ibid.). This event, on the universal plane, represents the culmination in the cultural evolution of human society. With its emergence, the divine mercy and favor to humanity is consummated to the degree of perfection, for its attainment allows humanity to achieve the highest levels of peace and tranquility through organized unity between the various social groups and under a just order. This ensures their felicity in this world and brings a promise for eternal bliss in the hereafter (Ludhianwi 1969).

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