

**TO BE EXCELLENT SOCIETY:  
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN  
WESTERN AND MUSLIM PHILOSOPHERS**

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**Abstract:** The western philosophers like Karl Marx believe that society is ontologically understood in terms of physical dimension only while the Muslim philosophers such as al-Fārābī, Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī, Ibn Khaldūn and Murtaḍā Muṭahharī argue that it consists of physical and metaphysical or spiritual aspects. The structure of a society along with its development and orientation can be seen and explained by its physical and metaphysical aspects. Moreover, the perfection of a society is not only based on the fulfilment of its physical needs but also on the establishment of intellectual and spiritual needs. This article aims to discuss society through Islamic philosophy's perspective with the elaboration of social science, the reality of a society, the structure of an ideal society and its development and orientation.

**Keywords:** excellent society, comparative analysis, western, Muslims, philosophers

**DOI:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v20i1.823>

## Introduction

BOTH WESTERN PHILOSOPHERS such as Karl Marx (1818-1883 M), August Comte (1798-1857 M) and Georg Simmel (1858-1918 M) and Muslim philosophers such as al-Fārābī (872-950 M)), Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1406 M), and Murtaḍā Muṭahharī (1919-1979 M) have discussed the concept of ideal society.<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, an outstanding figure in this theory, proposed the theory of social class. It is bourgeoisie and proletariat.<sup>2</sup> The proletariats keep striving to be the bourgeoisie whereas the bourgeoisies try to maintain the status quo as the ruler. These two classes emerge as a result of alienated labour and economic inequality. The proletariat is known as the former (materialised) in human labour and bankruptcy of any value of life. The bourgeoisie acts as profiteers who fight for chasing capital gain. In this case, Marx tries to mobilise the working masses of the proletariat by promoting resistance to bourgeois abuse<sup>3</sup> in order to reduce the inequality.

Therefore, the conflict of these two classes emerges when the proletariat attempts to attain the bourgeoisie level while the bourgeoisie tries to keep their status. This theory causes the emergence of another theory, i.e. the theory of conflict. Thus, Marx concluded that societies are always in conflict especially between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

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<sup>1</sup>The term Muslim philosophers here does not only refer to Muslims, but it also relates to the paradigm, the concern, and the scope of Islamic philosophy itself. As Seyyed Hosein Nasr said, Islamic philosophy deals with the One, pure being, universal existence, and its hierarchy. It deals with the cosmos, the men and their potential, and the final return of all things to pure being. The explanation of Islamic philosophy is united with the virtue and principle of the Qur'an and hadith. The paradigm of Muslim philosophers or Islamic philosophy is based on this notion. Researcher calls this paradigm as integrative and holistic paradigm. This paradigm does not belong to western philosophers because they separate between philosophy and holy text, between physic and metaphysic. See, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *History of Islamic Philosophy part I* (Qum: Ansariyan Publications: 2001), 21-51.

<sup>2</sup>Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1970), 32.

<sup>3</sup>Diana Jonmarie, "The Loss of the Philosophic tradition and the Rise of the Positive Philosophy of Aguste Comte" (PhD diss., University of Nevada Reno, 2015), 12.

After that, Marx stated that the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat will end when they reach the level where the properties belong to the public. When the society comes to this level, they are called communist society. The theory of communism may be summed up in the single sentence, i.e. abolition of private property.<sup>4</sup> By this theory, he wants to build a society based on the concept of freedom and the independence of human being, the abolition of private property, and the creation of a state where no manmade laws.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, there will be no proletariat and bourgeoisie.

Another figure who describes the structure of a society is August Comte. He considered it in the history of mankind. That is people's mind developed in the three stages:<sup>6</sup> metaphysical,<sup>7</sup> theological and positivist or scientific.<sup>8</sup> Positivist society is called enlightened society whereas the other two groups are called unenlightened society.<sup>9</sup>

Both theories of society have the same principles which root in the materialist perspective. The materialist ontologically believes that matter is the only reality that exists and is the fundamental substance of nature. According to this view, all mental phenomena such as consciousness, desire, mind, human and universe are categorised as matter. Then, it becomes the standard of all realities from physical into metaphysical. The effect of this theory is the rejection of non-physical reality.

<sup>4</sup>Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 48.

<sup>5</sup>John Conway O'Brien, "The Good Society: the Illuminated, Karl Marx and Adam Smith," *International Journal of Social Economics* 30, issue 5 (2003): 563.

<sup>6</sup>Auguste Comte, *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte vol. II*, trans. Harriet Martineau (Kitchener: Bathoche Books, 2000), 158.

<sup>7</sup>Comte said "The theological period of humanity could begin no otherwise than by a complete and usually very durable stat of pure Fetishism...." See, Comte, *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte vol. III*, 10.

<sup>8</sup>According to Comte that there are two figures who represent the metaphysical and positivist view, i.e. Plato and Aristotle. He said, "*the first, of which Plato must be considered the chief organ, most resembled the theological [metaphysical] philosophy.... The second, whose type was Aristotle, approached much nearer to the positive philosophy, and tended to disengage the human understanding from all theological guardianship.*" See Comte, *The Positive Philosophy*, 125.

<sup>9</sup> Comte, *The Positive Philosophy*, 10.

Karl Marx and August Comte have the same point of view. They deny the existence of religion. Karl Marx stated that religion is the opium of mankind while August Comte said that people who still believe in the principles of metaphysics and theology belong to unenlightened society. At the end of his life, Comte created a new religion known as the religion of humanities. However, it is different from formal religion which he criticised. It is merely based on the human being as a standard of truth and the existence which is called as humanism.

The thought of Karl Marx and Auguste Comte greatly influence the development of social science both in the intellectual-academic area and political discourses. Hannah Arendt (1906-1975) considered that Marx has influenced modern world because of two things: First, by the political parties of worker classes; Second, by the admiration of the intellectuals.<sup>10</sup> In addition, their thoughts do not influence western thinkers only, but the Muslim thinkers as well.<sup>11</sup> It means that Muslim scientists also use Marx and Comte's theory to analyse the phenomena of a Muslim society.

The structure and reality of a society in the Islamic philosophy's perspective is different from that of positive-materialist paradigm. In the perspective of modern social philosophy, a man is only seen in one aspect (physical). Meanwhile, in the Islamic philosophy's perspective, a man is viewed in physical and non-physical aspects. Therefore, in Islamic social philosophical perspective the reality of a society, the process, and the purpose of their existence are different from the view of modern social philosophy. Some Islamic

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<sup>10</sup>Hannah Arendt, "Karl Marx and the Tradition of Western Political Thought," *Social Research* 69, no. 2 (Summer 2002); 2.

<sup>11</sup>Majid Fakhry in his book, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, mentioned some figures whom influenced by Comte and Marx's thought especially on positivism and socialism. Some of them are Shibli Shumayyil (1860-1917), Qasim Amin (d. 1980), Farah Atun (d. 1922), and Ya'qub Sarruf (d. 1927). These figures are mentioned as the followers of positivism. As for the figures whom became followers of socialism are like Sadiq J. al-'Azm (1969), Tayyib Tizayni (1971), Abdallah Laroui (1974), and Husain Muruwah (1979). See, Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 355-367.

philosophers such as al-Fārābī, Ibn Khaldūn, Murtaḍā Muṭahharī, and several other Muslim philosophers have discussed this matter.

This article explains the nature of a society, its characteristics, structure, and purpose, as well as the ways to achieve the highest goal of the development of society, i.e. excellent society. According to the perspective of Muslim philosopher, society has not only positive-materialist dimension but also spiritual-transcendental dimension. Borrowing the structuralism's view, man has structures and certain patterns. These structures are not only organic physical objects but also something invisible. According to Fritjof Capra (1939), the structures of society are called the invisible relation. Although the hidden relation is not visible, its reality doesn't mean not real (exists). The reality of the relation or the structures is real and in the concept of Islamic philosophy, the non-physical reality exists before their physical reality. The non-physical reality is the cause of the presence of a physical form. In the perspective of Islamic philosophy, there is unity between physics and metaphysics. There is no division between the spiritual and the material, between science and religion.<sup>12</sup>

### Social Science in Islamic Philosophy

In Islamic philosophy, the scope of the object of scientific study or research is not only limited to physical objects but also includes non-physical objects. These objects are hierarchical and horizontal ranging from the highest form of existent, pure existence, or also called metaphysics, to the mathematical object. In mysticism, it is known as imagined reality or *barzakh*, the object of which is between the physical and non-physical, which then to physical reality. Although it is called as physical object, it does not mean only consist of physical form, but there is also non-physical dimension, and Muslim philosopher calls it soul (*'aql* or *rūḥ*). According to Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, the soul has two

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<sup>12</sup>Wilson Moha Maina, "Understanding Social Order in the Religion of Islam: A Comparative Analysis," *Journal for the Study of Religion and Ideologies* 14, issue 40 (Spring 2015): 168-183.

functions namely *anna al-nafs dhātu tarfayni tunbitu minha qumwatāni* and *qumwatun mim mā yalī al-ṭabī'a wabiya al-muttaḥida bibā min al-af'āl al-ṭabī'yyati wa qumwatun tunbitu min al-ṭarfi al-qarīb min al-'aql* (Soul exactly has two sides from which the two powers emerge. The first is natural power which becomes one with physical action. The second is the power which emerges from mind).<sup>13</sup>

Muslim philosophers explain that rocks, plants, animals, and human being have soul. Thus, it is called as soul of plants (*al-nafs al-nabāṭiyyah*), animal souls (*al-nafs al-hayawāniyyah*) and the human soul (*al-nafs al-insāniyyah*).<sup>14</sup> They argue that the planets move because they have soul. It is not merely a reciprocal relationship between particles with other particles as described by Isaac Newton when he calls it as motion.<sup>15</sup>

When explaining the nature of reality, Muslim philosophers argue that reality has gradations and levels from the highest to the lowest. They do not discuss society directly, but the topic of society is inevitable in their discussion about human being since humans are not only individual beings but also social creature. Al-Fārābī, for example, in his book *Mabādī' Ārā' Abl al-Madīna al-Faḍīlah* discusses the notion of society in chapter fifteen, *al-qawl fī ḥajat al-insān ilā al-ijtima' wa al-ta'āwun, wa kam aṣnāf al-ijtimāt al-insāniyya* (The third chapter deals with the importance of human to interact, help one another, and forms of society).<sup>16</sup>

In this book, al-Fārābī discusses an ideal society after talking about God, angels, heaven, matter and form, physical objects, plants, humans and soul. Therefore, the existence of society is inseparable from human existence itself. The discussion of society, in the context of Islamic philosophy, is inseparable from the theme of God, man, and nature. Human both individual

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<sup>13</sup>Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā vol. 4* (Qum: Maktab al-A'lam al-Islāmī, 1405 HQ), 215.

<sup>14</sup>Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Najāt* (Beirut: Dār al-Afaq al-Jadīdah, 1985), 196-197.

<sup>15</sup>Samir Okasha, *Philosophy of Science: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 7.

<sup>16</sup>Al-Fārābī, *Mabādī' Ārā' Abl al-Madīna al-Faḍīlah: A Revised Text with Introduction, Translation, and Commentary by Richard Walzer* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 46.

being and social being is viewed as creature of God, human being is a part of universe itself (the macrocosm/ *'ālam al-kabir* and microcosm/ *'ālam al-ṣagīr*). Therefore, talking about community or society in Islamic philosophy is always associated with the system and structure of the universe as a whole. The existence of society is not independent from the universe (as part of universe) as Arthur O. Lovejoy (1873-1962 M) in his book *The Great Chain of Being* calls society as a part of great chain of being.<sup>17</sup>

Based on the Islamic philosophy paradigm, the discussion of the community has to be a part of practical philosophy and distinguished from theoretical philosophy. The theoretical philosophy is the science which deals with the nature of the science for the sake of science itself or for the knowledge itself. This science focuses on the actualization of human potential soul, *anna al-naẓariyyah biya allatī naṭlub fihā istikmāl al-qunwaw al-naẓariyyah min al-naḥs biḥusūl al-'aql bi al-fī'li, wa dhālika biḥusūl al-'ilm al-tasawwuriyyi wa al-taṣdiqiy bi umūr laysat biya biannah a'mālana wa ahwālana, fataḥūn al-ḡayab fihā ḥusūlu ra'yin wa i'tiqādin laysa ra'yan wa i'tiqādan fī kayfiyyati 'amalin aw kayfiyyati mabda'i 'amalin min haythu huwa mabda'u 'amalin* (Theoretical philosophy is when our soul attempts to achieve perfection by self-actualization. The form of actualization is to achieve knowledge on conception and assertion without acting. Thus, the purpose of theoretical philosophy is to get theory and believe but it does not mean theory and believe have to be actualized in an action or ways to do something).<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, the practical philosophy deals with the science which focus on what should be done (The focus is human action as individuals), *wa anna al-'amaliyyah biya allatī yaṭlub fihā anwālan istikmāl al-qunwaw al-naẓariyyah biḥusūl al-'ilm al-tasawwuri wa al-taṣdiqiy bi umūri biya biannah a'māluna, liyaḥsūla minha thāniyan*

<sup>17</sup>Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain Of Being: A Study of the History of Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001)

<sup>18</sup>Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā: al-Ilahīyyat vol. 1* (Qum: Dzawil Qurba: 1430 H), 2. See also, Avicenna, *The Metaphysic of the Healing-al-Shifā Ilahīyyat: A Parallel English-Arabic Text*. Translated, introduced, and annotated by Michael E. Marmura (Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2005), 2.

*istikmāl al-qumwāh al-‘amaliyyah bi al-akhlāq* (Meanwhile in practical philosophy, the first is to improve theoretical power through the fulfilment of conceptual knowledge and assertion as they are. The improvement is a part of our actualization. The second is to increase practical power through good deeds).<sup>19</sup> This practical philosophy includes the ethics, an economics, and politics. The focus of ethics is the study of human action as individuals; the economic discusses human action in the family or household. Currently, this area is referred to as microeconomics. While, the political science studies human action as social being, the relationship and the rule between one individual to another, a group of society with other, both in the context of small, medium, and large community. We can study and discuss the social sciences in the area of practical philosophy and practical of Islamic philosophy as well.

The classification and discussion of science can be found in the works of al-Fārābī, as mentioned above; works of Ibn Sīnā in his book *al-Shifā’*, *al-Najah*, and *Fī al-Hikmah wa al-Tabi‘iyyat*; the work of Brethren of Purity in his book *Rasā’il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’*; the work of Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī (1201-1274) in *Naserian Ethic*, and Ibn Khaldūn in his book *Prolegomena (Muqaddimah)*. The basic division of philosophy to theoretical and practical remains a benchmark in the assessment and development of Islamic philosophy.

### **The Nature of Society: Ontological Foundation**

A German sociologist Georg Simmel, who gave birth to the theory of symbolic interactionism, stated that the emergence of the community is caused by the process of the relationship and mutual interaction between one individual with another. In the process of interaction, there is a mutual influence of relationship which then stimulates the emergence of what so called a community. Therefore, the community or people or society can be interpreted and mentioned as association which means the

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<sup>19</sup>Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā: al-Ilahayyat vol. 1 and 2*.



creation of a society. Such interactions, according to Simmel, are temporary and very fragile.<sup>20</sup>

Ontologically, according to Simmel, the existence of man (exist, real, and tangible,) is when interaction exists between one individual to another. He asserts that the meaning of reality in the context of community refers to the experiences found in human being and human experience. He maintains that the 'world of reality' exists only in human experience. That is the reality exists only as concept. It is a mistake to assume that the reality of the empirical world is fixed or immutable in some form. Simmel also stated that society is not marked by a reality which does not change, or objective reality. According to him, society is not a single concept and has been fixed, but it is a gradual frame, changeable, depending on the magnitude of interactions made by each of its members.<sup>21</sup>

So, if interactions take place in a large scope and more intense, society will increasingly exist, be more real, and vice versa. It means that if smaller interaction is occurred, then the existence of the people loses or it will not exist and become real. According to Simmel, society can exist if it is continuously constituted by individuals in interaction.<sup>22</sup>

Based on Simmel's assumptions above, it can be concluded that the community does not have its own reality. The lack of society statement, compared to the individual, is because the community does not have a physical dimension that can be verified. The society is simply imaginary concept and only based on the experience of individuals. Therefore, the existence of society is limited to the individual's interaction, and that is evidence in interaction of community. And such interaction is just temporary because when there is no interaction, society is not real.

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<sup>20</sup>Doyle Paul Johnson, *Teori Sosiologi Klasik dan Modern*, trans., Robert M. Z. Lawang, (Jakarta: PT Gramedia, 1986), 257-258.

<sup>21</sup>Jacqueline Low, "Structure, Agency, and Social Reality" in Blumerian Symbolic Interactionism: The Influence of Georg Simmel," *Symbolic Interaction* 31, issue 3 (July 2008): 327.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 327.

Simmel's thought above differs from the perspective of Islamic philosophy. According to modern Muslim philosophers from Iran, Murtaḍā Muṭahharī, both of individual and society are equally fundamental, co-exist, and equally real. The reason is the existent and status of individual are the main elements of society and it will not disappear with the appearance of a new identity. Although society does not exist in a physical meaning as envisioned in positivist and materialist perspective, but it is a combination of thoughts, emotions, desires, will, and culture.<sup>23</sup>

Muṭahharī stated that the existence of society is same as the existence of natural compounds in the field of natural reality. The illustration of this is when an object comes in contact with another object it will cause the relationship between action and reaction, and from that relationship is born a new identity or new phenomenon. Likewise, human as individuals when doing interaction -in Simmel language- it gives the birth to a new compound, and the new compound is called society. In the context of the relationship between individual and society, as individuals entering social life, it gives birth to a new identity called collective spirit.<sup>24</sup>

However, the compound (combination) in the context of communities or society is different from the field of chemistry that is physical (sensory). In physical elements, it reacts each other in real term, where the interactions between the particles of the physical form of the compound are as a whole with a new and changing plurality of the parts into a unity.

In the context of society which consists of individuals, even though the combination of involved individuals in the real form is physical and join together as community, it did not change its plurality into unity, as one shape. Individual will still exist and has an identity as individual but at the same time the new identity emerges, i.e. society. Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī stated that each compound has a rule, property, and forms with the particular and unique form, but the parts do not share in it. The

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<sup>23</sup>Murtaḍā Muṭahharī, *Masyarakat dan Sejarah: Pandangan Dunia Islam tentang Hakikat Individu dan Masyarakat dalam Gerakan Sosial Berbasis Agama*, trans., Arif Mulyadi, (Yogyakarta: RausanFikr Institute, 2012), 12.

<sup>24</sup>Muṭahharī, *Masyarakat dan Sejarah*, 12.

combination of each individual as well as the substance, nature and its characteristics are not found in the individuals themselves because the reality has already formed a new compound and a new reality.<sup>25</sup>

The new identity that becomes the characteristic of the unity of individuals, according to Ibn Khaldūn, is the collective consciousness. According to Mehmet Hisyar Korkusuz, collective consciousness is imaginary or an imaginary community (*aṣabiyyah*). Its formation is based on apprehension. It is clear that human nature has a close relationship with his species and tried to gather with others, even if they have different backgrounds,<sup>26</sup> diverse in skin colour, and varied perspectives. According to Macanly TB, the existence of the state as a representation of society has a network of awareness of every individual contained in those countries, the connection of history, culture, and language rather than as the automatic, predictable function of bureaucratic agencies.<sup>27</sup>

Therefore, the idea of the collectivity of Ibn Khaldūn has very important position in the context of the existence of society. The meaning of collective, in Arabic, is *aṣabiyyah*. It means the network of kinship or social relationship. Muhsin Mahdi in his book, *Ibn Khaldūn's Philosophy of History: Study in the Philosophic Foundation of the Science of Culture*, used the Aristotelian four categories (material, formal, efficient, and final) in analyzing the theory of Ibn Khaldūn. He mentioned that *aṣabiyya* or solidarity as the efficient cause. Meanwhile, the formal and material causes of society are the state and the final cause is preserving public sake. The relationship between formal and material cannot be explained except by explaining the efficient causes. According to Mahdi, *aṣabiyyah* of Ibn Khaldūn become very important in explaining the structure of society. *Aṣabiyyah* is called as final cause because solidarity aims to establish the state and political power. It is possible to explain the direction by

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<sup>25</sup>Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī, *Nasarian Ethics*, trans., G. M. Wickens (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1964), 211.

<sup>26</sup>Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddima*, 292.

<sup>27</sup>Sean Coyle, *From Positivism to Idealism: A Study of the Moral Dimension of Legality* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2007), 80.

concentrating on the actual operation of the existential cause without pretending the investigation of the efficient cause. It automatically will offer a complete explanation of the complete form of culture.<sup>28</sup>

According to Ibn Khaldūn, collective consciousness as a trigger for the creation of a community is not only found in educated society or society who live with a certain culture (*‘umrān ḥaḍarī*) but also possessed by the moving people (*‘umrān ḥadawī*). Therefore, the collective consciousness becomes driving force for each group to collaborate, connect, group, and also to gain power.

Another factor of the efficient cause in the formation of community, in addition to Ibn Khaldūn's perspective on solidarity, is religion. Religious based solidarity values can build a great civilization. In addition, religious solidarity also can conquer and build an empire. These forces will be able to be a force to cover up their weaknesses caused by waning solidarity which is not based on religious values. With the help of religion, solidarity becomes more effective in developing countries. The reason is the community or society will adhere to the ruler and hear its directives, and will be more sincere in accepting the ruler's advices. After religion is adopted and supported by the group, it becomes a very effective force. Religion will create a new loyalty for their beliefs and demands absolute obedience to the law and religious leaders.<sup>29</sup> Even though, in the level of civilized society or civilized culture religion is still needed. It differs from solidarity as a unifying source that will be replaced by a paid army and organize an administrative bureaucracy that carries out his wishes.<sup>30</sup>

If we use the comparison method between the theory of Ibn Khaldūn and modern sociologist like Emil Durkheim and Max Weber related to the presence of religion, we will find sharp difference. If Ibn Khaldūn mentions religion as *elan vital* for the

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<sup>28</sup>Muhsin Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldūn's Philosophy of History: Study in the Philosophic Foundation of the Science of Culture* (Petaling Jaya Selangor: The Other Press Sdn Bhd, 2006), 261.

<sup>29</sup>Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldūn's Philosophy*, 201.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 205.

formation of solidarity but according to Durkheim and Weber, religion is not a source of solidarity. In modern society, theology was replaced by sociology as principle and sources of life.<sup>31</sup> For both of them, religion doesn't trigger the creation of a community but it is society who created religion.

Meanwhile, Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī asserts that *elan vital* or efficient cause for the formation of society is love. Love is more general than friendship. Love is conceivable amid a swarming throng but friendship or collective does not reach this comprehensiveness degree.<sup>32</sup> Even thought, according to al-Tūsī, justice will disappear when love disappear. Therefore, justice is under love. Love is the quest for union with that thing the seeker conceives it perfection to be united. The perfection and nobility of each existent is in accordance with unity that has been effused upon it. Therefore, love leads to nobility, virtue, and perfection. If individual attempts to achieve perfection by love then it is likely to be achieved.<sup>33</sup>

Good spirit of collective solidarity based on a bureaucracy or based on religion as mentioned by Ibn Khaldūn and love as described by al-Tūsī has become a trigger and efficient cause to live together and build living systems in society. It also builds a leadership system for a harmonious life. But, in the view of social philosophy of positivist and materialist, collective spirit or love with its desires, wishes, emotions, and a common view are not real. For Marx, the human consciousness is an illusion or false consciousness if it has no relation with physical reality, as rational consciousness and fiction. Likewise love, as stated by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), was affected by human libido of physical-chemical nature. Behaviors, thoughts, and feelings of humans, according to Freud, were determined by sexual impulses and aggression.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Peter Connolly, ed., *Aneka Pendekatan Studi Agama*, trans. Imam Khoiri (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2002), 270.

<sup>32</sup>al-Tūsī, *Naserian Ethics*, 197.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 195-196.

<sup>34</sup>Akhyar Yusuf Lubis, *Filsafat Ilmu dan Metodologi Posmodernis*, (Bogor: AkaDemiA, 2004), 156.

In contrast to Marx and Freud, in Islamic philosophy, desire, thought, will, and emotions are not only related and caused by something physical, but also related to non-physical reality. When someone has a passion, desire, and love in reality, it is more important and even the most important. It is not a physical form but purely non-physical. For example, human seeks to get a virtue, perfection, and glory. These objects are not physical.

It is like man's love to God in mystical perspective which is entirely not related to physical reality. The desire is spiritual and immaterial, and is the same as in the context of the collective consciousness of society. The collective consciousness is the quality or psychiatric conditions arise in every soul of individuals in a community. Collective consciousness is unification (*ittiḥād*) of spiritual and immaterial actualized in the unitary form of attitudes, actions, norms, and laws agreed upon and adhered together.<sup>35</sup>

In philosophy of Fritjof Capra, the pattern and the system of individual interaction have four aspects; form, materials, processes and meanings. From the perspective of the form, the order of society has a pattern, a system and a self-forming network. In the perspective of material aspect, the people are living with dissipative system. It is an open system that operates far from equilibrium. In the perspective of the process aspect, the community is a network pattern that can be understood through the cognitive processes that give rise to conscious experience and conceptual thinking or it is called collective consciousness in the language of Ibn Khaldūn. As the meaning of the process aspect, the public is referred to as a living tissue that involves mental awareness and social reality of the human actions or a symbol of the mental awareness.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Cecep Zakarias El Bilad, "Problem Eksistensi Negara dalam Hubungan Internasional: Perspektif Mulla Sadra" (MA Thesis, The Islamic College for Advanced Studies [ICAS]-Universitas Paramadina, 2015), 94.

<sup>36</sup>Fritjof Capra, *The Hidden Connection: Strategi Sistemik Melawan Kapitalisme Baru*, diterjemahkan oleh Andya Primanda (Yogyakarta dan Bandung: Jalasutra, 2009), 83-87.

There is process and movement (*al-ḥarakah*) within the order of society. The motion is basically caused by the material aspect but it is non-material. Muslim philosophers call the cause of their motion is a soul. Based on the theory of Mulla Sadra's substantial motion (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*), the motion does not only occur in the physical aspect but also the substantial aspects or non-physical aspects.

With these principles, the community as a new compound in Muṭahharī's term or as hidden systems and networks in the Capra's term, which is a combination of individuals (*ijtima'*) is a tangible reality and real as the individual himself becomes the element for the formation of society. The process, the collective consciousness, desire, and cognitive phenomena are non-material. However, the reality of them exists and real. "The human soul cannot be seen, but its influence is evident in the body, as if all its parts, in a combination of separately, were organs of the soul and its powers", said Ibn Khaldūn.<sup>37</sup>

Collective consciousness, in the term of Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996 M), is called paradigms. Kuhn argued that each individual moves and is based on what is called as a paradigm.<sup>38</sup> Paradigm is where individual as a part of society works together, whether his action accepted or not. Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) mentioned that the collective consciousness as psychological intimacy is different from the physical intimacy. It expresses itself frequently as a special taste for privacy. It comes under the broader heading of personality fusion.

Paradigms are not rules but like subjects for further study and elaboration. It is a belief in certain metaphors or analogies about the world and shared values. For Kuhn, most researchers have not related with major breakthroughs or the result of research but they are mopping up or sweating out the details of existing paradigms. Major progress is achieved and new paradigms are created. These are not getting through gradual

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<sup>37</sup>Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddima*, 76.

<sup>38</sup>Maslow, *Religion, Values, and Peak Experience*, 183

evolution but revolutionary and unpredictable transformations after the intellectual field reach diffusion.<sup>39</sup>

It is clear that society actually exists not only in physical aspect or in the existence of interaction but it has a new compound, new entity, and is called as collective consciousness, desire, common platform, values, and so on. This is not physical but it is real.

### The Order of Society

The term community and society in Islam is very diverse in theological, philosophical, and sociological dimension. In theological dimension, society is mentioned and classified into *mu'minin* (those who believe) and *kaafirun* (infidels or unbelievers). Meanwhile, in theological-sociological theory, the Quran has mentioned some terms regarding this topic, starting from the smallest to the largest such as *ahl*, family, *qabilah*, *shu'ub*, and the *ummah*.<sup>40</sup>

As in the context of philosophy, Muslim philosophers did not refer directly to the Quran or hadith. They usually refer to theological and sociological approach. Muslim philosophers explain society in terms of the ideal philosophical that can be applied to all humanity, discrimination between believers and unbelievers, between the *dhimmī* and *harbī*. No classification of society in Islamic philosophy is based on the values of goodness and badness or on the principles of wicked (*al-dālla*). The principle can be propped on a whole group of people or community, both Muslims and non-Muslims who are in a town or place, or within a country, or society in general.

Likewise, Muslim philosophers did not classify people based on material or physical stratum as used by Karl Marx like bourgeoisie and the proletariat which moves on horizontally-material nature. Based on the positivist-materialist, the structure

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<sup>39</sup>Stefano Gattei, *Thomas Kuhn's "Lingustic Turn" and The Legacy of Logical Empiricism: Incommensurability, Rationality and the Search for Truth* (England: Ahsgate Publishing Company, 2008), ix.

<sup>40</sup>Ann K. S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam: An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory, the Jurists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985). 13-20



of the society considered as the same structure as physical objects which are organic-determinism and objective-empirical. According to Capra, the positivist framework is based on classical physics namely the emphasis on quantification and rejection of the explanation in the form of subjective phenomenon such as the meaning of reality itself.<sup>41</sup>

The structure of society in the perspective of Islamic philosophy is more integral and holistic, on the one hand, is horizontal but on the other hand is also vertical. In addition, as described by Capra, that the society in the perspective of Islamic philosophy has four dimensions; materials, forms, processes and meanings. While in the perspective of positivism, society has only two dimensions namely matter and form.

The structure in this context refers to a building system or the pattern of a society. The structure of Islamic community is based on more holistic perspective. It means that society is not considered as a matter of aggregates or particles of physical mutually engaged and influenced but also has a non-physical dimension. The structure itself is something physical, visual, or observable but its existence is unobservable. In the language of Capra, structure, system, or building pattern referred to as the hidden connection.

Muslim philosophers like al-Fārābī, Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī, and Ibn Khaldūn have already explained about the structure of society. Al-Fārābī, for example, a Muslim philosopher who is considered as a pioneer in the context of social philosophy especially in his book *al-Madīnah al-Fadīlah*, classified society into two parts; perfect and not perfect, *al-fadīlah* or *kamīlah* and *al-qāilla*.<sup>42</sup>

Those classes of the community are divided into two parts; namely qualitatively and quantitatively. The perfect form of society quantitatively is composed of three parts; small (*sugra*), medium (*wusṭā*) and large (*uẓmā*). The small group of community is a collection of people who are in a city that became part of the territory of each nation. The medium class is an association of

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<sup>41</sup>Capra, *The Hidden Connection*, 88.

<sup>42</sup>Al-Fārābī, *Mabādi' Ārā' Abl al-Madīnah*, 228.

individuals in a nation. And the great community is the unity of all people on earth.<sup>43</sup>

Meanwhile, the form of imperfect society quantitatively is a community in the village. That is *ijtima' abl al-qarya* or a collection of people in the village, people on the street or alley, and community in the house or in the family. However, between perfect and imperfect people can become one and unite in the city. This means that the entire group, bonding, and relations of perfect and imperfect society equally inhabit a city or part of the population of the city, and the city became part of a nation, a nation is a part or a combination of all the people on earth.<sup>44</sup>

The most important community, according to al-Fārābī, are those who live in the town, not in a smaller community of a city such as villages, towns, alley and family. "*wa-amma al-ijtima'at fi al-qura' wa-al-mahal wa-al-sakak wa-al-buyut fahiya al-ijtima'at al-naqisa* (the less important society is those who live in village, somewhere, dormitory, and houses)".<sup>45</sup> It is because when the community in city work together to achieve goodness and happiness it can be implemented. When people in a city are working together to achieve happiness and virtue, it is necessary that happiness can be obtained. Al-Fārābī mentioned and refers this form of society as an excellent society (*al-madīna al-fādila*). If a community has arrived at this stage and jointly cooperate with other communities that exist in a country, the country will arrive at the excellent nation. In this kind of country, people cooperate together and help each other to achieve happiness. This achievement is the final destination of all community.

The opponent of the perfect society, according to al-Fārābī, is the ignorant society (*al-madīna al-jahila*) or the wicked society (*al-madīna al-fāsiqa*). The wicked peoples are those who do not know the true happiness and it never crossed their minds. Even if they were told, they could not understand and do not believe it. They understand and know that happiness is related to material entities. Goodness and happiness are only concerned with the purpose of living in this world such as physical fitness,

<sup>43</sup>Al-Fārābī, *Mabādi' Ārā' Abl al-Madīnah*, 228.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 229 and *Kitāb al-Siyāsāt al-Madaniyyah* in *Rasā'il al-Fārābī*, 39-40.

<sup>45</sup>Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-Siyāsāt al-Madaniyyah*, 39.

treasures, having fun with the sensory pleasure, freedom to follow the desires of others, happy and proud.<sup>46</sup> The most perfect and highest happiness for the people who are in town relates to the whole thing. It is not only physical but also covering all aspect of a human being including non-physical like intellectual and spiritual.

Al-Fārābī divided ignorant society into six parts, some of which are groups of people who just try and work together to meet their basic needs such as eating, drinking, clothing and shelter, and sex. Another form of backwards peoples is those who work just to get the materials. They collect property and do not spend for something else but they assume that the purpose of life in this world is wealth itself.<sup>47</sup>

Another form of ignorant society, in addition to those mentioned above, is a democratic society. The reason of al-Fārābī in classifying democratic society as backwards people is that its main purpose of the society living in a democratic city is to obtain freedom. They just follow their desire without control.<sup>48</sup> Life orientation of this community is in order to earn the honour and fame. They always expect to be praised and treated with respect both by words and deeds. They always try to reach glory and beauty in order to be praised by others.

The classification of society as perfect and imperfect is also explained by Muslim philosopher after al-Fārābī namely Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī. He also mentioned two groups of society in terms of virtuous city and non-virtuous city.<sup>49</sup> According to Tusi, the virtuous society is of one type only and there is only one way to goods.<sup>50</sup>

Between al-Fārābī and Tusi basically, have the same principles. Both of them classify society as good and bad society, primary and underdeveloped society. Nevertheless, al-Fārābī divides perfect society or the mainstream society based on other characters namely qualitative-territory such as small, medium,

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<sup>46</sup>Al-Fārābī, *al-Madīna al-Fadila*, 254-255.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 254-255.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 256-257.

<sup>49</sup>Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī, *Naserian Ethics*, 211.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 211

and large. This qualitative-territory category also applies to imperfect society. Meanwhile, Tusi purely classifies society qualitatively, for example, the virtues community is one group only, those who are on the path of goodness.

Tusi divides virtuous society or city into five categories. The first is the most virtuous man. There are three standards of virtuous and values on this level of society namely there is regulation which accepted and done by society; there is a virtuous man, Tusi called this man as the perfect philosophers who are distinguished from their fellows by the faculty of intellectual and by accurate opinions on momentous affairs and on the issues of requiring solutions; the last standard is a man who has crafted and attempted to know the realities.

The second group of virtuous society is the master of the tongue. According to the researcher, this community is like lectures and teachers. This community brings common people and the lower elements on degrees of relative perfection to accept the conviction of the first group for example in accepting the regulation of the city or ruler. Their duty is to teach the common people to know and understand scholastics, jurisprudence, elocution, rhetoric, poetry and calligraphy, and other sciences.

The third group of virtuous society, according to Tusi, is the man of measure. This community is those who preserve the laws of justice among its members, observe the necessary of measurement in taking and giving, and urge people to practice equality and compensation. This group of society should have ability in mathematical science like reckoning and accounting, medical science, and theoretical science like geometry and astrology.

The Fourth group of virtuous society is warriors. The duties of warriors are protecting the entire city's inhabitants, defending the integrity of the territory of state, and keeping the lords, the leader, the king, from the non-virtuous cities and distance him from them. Their duty is to fight and defend the inhabitant of the city and observe the conditions.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 215-216.

The last group of virtuous society is called men of substance. They are responsible for organising the food and stuffs supplies for the classes whether by transaction and crafts or tax-collections.<sup>52</sup> This community can be classified into businessman, bankers, traders, and merchants.

Another Muslim philosopher who described the structure of society is Ibn Khaldūn (born in Cordova, Spain). If al-Fārābī and Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī explained the structure of society based on the ideal-philosophical values, Ibn Khaldūn described the structure of society based on the factual-sociological aspect. Ibn Khaldūn's classification and explanation methodologically is called as factual-sociological by using historical methods.

As mentioned by Ibn Khaldūn in the beginning of his famous book *Muqaddima* (Prolegomena) that this science, method and topic are something new, exceptional and very useful. According to Ibn Khaldūn, historical science and method have not belonged to rhetoric, one of the logical disciplines as represented in Aristotle's organon. This science is not politics either or philosophy of politics (*'ilm al-madani*) as described by al-Fārābī because politics associates with the administration of the house or the city in accordance with the requirements of ethics and philosophy. Ibn Khaldūn indicates that the subject matter of this science has similarities with those two disciplines but they are also different.<sup>53</sup> By using the historical science and method, Ibn Khaldūn tries to explain various aspects of civilization that affect human being in their social organization objectively not philosophically or logically.<sup>54</sup>

Ibn Khaldūn mentions two forms of society; nomadic (Bedouin) and settled (urban or sedentary society). Muhsin Mahdi (1926-2007) mentions two forms of society classified by Ibn Khaldūn as a primitive and civilised culture.<sup>55</sup> The term is derived from the Arabic word, *'umrān badawī* and *'umrān ḥaḍarī*. The characteristic of the nomadic society is simplicity and purity

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 215-216.

<sup>53</sup>Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddima*, 39.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 42.

<sup>55</sup>Muhsin Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldūn's Philosophy of History: A Study In the Philosophic Foundation of the Society of Culture*,

of manners. Their life is based on a loyal devotion to the interests of the family and tribe. It was called primitive culture because they lack organised rational knowledge. It has very little literacy and experience on science and arts like medical science. The orientation of nomadic life is to seek the satisfaction of basic need like food.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, the primitive mode of life is contrary to the ways of civilised society. The characteristic of sedentary society is pursuing higher economic, intellectual, and spiritual need. Solidarity and religion, in the level of civilised society, have been replaced by organised administrative bureaucracy, and there is a division of labour and duty. It is also characterised by economic and politic stability. With a stable economy and politic and based on the division of labour, it gives birth to various forms of technological equipment, art, architecture, and various branches of science. The impersonal organisation of the army and the bureaucracy take care of protection of the state and the development of the various institutions of a civilised culture.

### **Toward Excellent Society**

The unification of individuals which produces a group or community known as society should have a purpose. Even within the smallest group such as the unification of man and woman through the sacred bond or marriage, it should have a purpose and orientation. Their orientation of unification, for example, is to maintain regeneration. So were also in the context of a larger and wider group of individuals, they must have a goal and orientation to be achieved and reached. The question is what would be achieved by the individuals or communities?

Muslim philosophers like al-Fārābī, Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī, and Ibn Khaldūn state that the purpose of man coming together into one community is to attain happiness and perfection. This objective, according to al-Fārābī, could not be achieved only when individual lives alone without cooperation with other persons. Al-Fārābī said, *lā yumkin an-yakūna al-insān yanālu al-kamāl alladhi li-ajlihi ju'ilat labū al-ṣiṭrah al-tabi'iyah illā bi-ijtima'at jama'a kathīra muta'awanin yaqūmu kullu wāhid likulli wāhid bi-ba'di*

*ma yabtaj ilayhi* (the human cannot achieve perfection as their nature of creation except they gather in a large number where each individual help one another to fulfil their need).<sup>56</sup> According to Ibn Rushd, since human perfection is multiple it is attained through participation in a society or group rather than by individuals.<sup>57</sup>

Unification and association are the main way for individual to obtain perfection and happiness. Without association and cooperation, society is difficult to achieve happiness and perfection. The statement of al-Fārābī above echoed by subsequent Muslim philosophers such as Ibn Sīnā (980-1037 M), Suharawardī (1154-1191 M), al-Gazālī (1058-1111 M), Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī, Ibn Rushd (1126-1198 M), and Ibn Khaldūn.

The term happiness used by Muslim philosophers is derived from the Arabic word *al-sa'ādah* and *al-najah*.<sup>58</sup> The choice of the word *al-sa'ādah* is to apply happiness to the people or communities because the word happiness is addressed to all aspects of human reality which consist of several aspects and elements. It is not only one aspect as revealed by modern scientists who think that human being consists of only one aspect namely the material aspect.

So, happiness as the purpose of community and society formation involves three aspects, i.e. material, intellectual, and spiritual. Natural material happiness is a basic need for every human being. Even though, this material happiness cannot be achieved simply. The term used by Muslim philosophers in describing the physical happiness is a pleasure from the Arabic word *ladhdhab*. According to Abraham Maslow, psychologically, the fulfilment of physiological-physical and material need is a

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<sup>56</sup>Al-Fārābī, *Mabādi' Ārā' Abl al-Madīnah*, 228.

<sup>57</sup>Oliver Leaman, *An Introduction to Classical Islamic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 182.

<sup>58</sup>This word have been used by Al-Fārābī in his work, *Tahsil al-Sa'adah*; al-Gazālī wrote a book by the title, *Kimia al-Sa'adah*; and Ibn Sīnā wrote a book by the title *Kitāb al-Najah*.

fundamental requirement for every human being both as individual and also as a part of the community.<sup>59</sup>

In the view of materialism, happiness in the first level – material happiness- is the most important thing for a country or society. Karl Marx, for example, as described by Farhad Rohani in his dissertation, *Changing the World: Durkheim and Marx on Ideal Society* stated that man is a natural entity and as a natural entity, man is equipped with natural abilities as inclination and a driver.<sup>60</sup> Karl Marx explicitly states that human being is an organic being. He becomes a part of nature and an organic as well.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, as organic beings (physical beings) or objective being, they can only express their existence to the sensual objects.<sup>62</sup>

Marx exemplifies that man as material being is his sense of hunger. According to Marx, hunger is a natural need of man. Therefore, it requires nature or objects out of himself in order to be satisfied. For example, he needs to arise to eat or a water to drink. Hunger is the objective needs of the body that exist out of self and it is important for the integration and expression of its nature.<sup>63</sup>

There is three kinds orientation of mankind as organic being in Karl Marx's perspective; individual, social, and actualization. At the first level, human as individual, he tried to meet their physical needs. This level is preceded by man as merely natural. At the second level, man as social being, he needs to actualize himself. From this requirement, according to Marx, human need the other person or people to express their needs and aims. Marx pointed out the relationship between man and woman that both need to distribute each other in biological needs. On the third level is the actualization at a greater level namely in the context of society. Marx point out that man develops his

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<sup>59</sup>Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (Harper & Row, Publisher, Inc, 1954), 59

<sup>60</sup>Farhad Rohani, *Changing the World: Durkheim and Marx on ideal Society* (PhD diss., University of Oklahoma, 1993), 380.

<sup>61</sup>Rohani, *Changing the World*, 387.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 385

<sup>63</sup>Rohani, *Changing the World*, 380.



subjective human sensibility as well as his personality through his social existence and self-objectification through production.<sup>64</sup> Definition of production here is only related to the physical fields in the so-called economic theory.

Although human being becomes part of society, in the view of Marx, but in reality, he or she remains as an individual. He or she mingles in one community to be society is only to satisfy his physical need. Caused by his or her desire and to fulfil his or her physical need, it gives the birth of two form of society namely the working class and the owners of capital. According to Marx both of the groups will continue to conflict until the time came to an ideal society without class and this level is referred to as socialism.

Between Karl Marx and the Muslim philosophers like al-Fārābī, on the one hand, have in common, that is the purpose of the society in order to work together, help each other and share values among each other so that the desires of physical need can be fulfilled. However, on the other hand, al-Fārābī is in contrast to Marx in terms of human do not only consist of a single dimension namely the physical dimensions as believed by Karl Marx but humans also consist of non-physical dimensions, i.e. souls and *'aql* (mind). In Ibn Sīnā's view, the fulfilment of physical needs of human is mentioned as *ladhdbah* (pleasure).<sup>65</sup>

As al-Fārābī said, if a society has orientation limited only to achieve their physical needs, it is considered as an ignorant society (*al-madīna al-jahila*), wicked people (*al-fāsiqa*) or misguided society (*al-mubaddalah wa al-dalla*). The characteristic of this society is that they only recognise physical need such as body health, wealth, enjoyment of pleasures, freedom to follow one's desire, and being held in honour and dignity.<sup>66</sup> According to them, happiness is the sum total of all them.

Happiness and perfection of human or real community in the perspective of Islamic philosophy are not only physical, but also it must have the virtue of intellectual, spiritual, and action. It is called as an intellectual virtue when each individual as a part

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 384

<sup>65</sup>Ibn Sīnā, *al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat* (Qum: Bustan Kitāb, 1423 HQ), 341.

<sup>66</sup>Al-Fārābī, *Mabādi' Ārā' Abl al-Madīnah*, 254.

of the community can actualize his potential given by God to him. The fulfilment of the intellectual and spiritual needs, according to Muslim philosophers, is more important than just the fulfilment of the physical aspects. According to the paradigm of Islamic philosophy, perfection and happiness of man and society lie not only in its physical aspects such as how many treasures collected but how many potentialities of a human being has been actualized (*min al-quwwah ilā al-fi'il*) and the pursuit of perfection (*al-kāmilah*).

According to Muslim philosophers, there are at least five potentials to be actualized for every member of society in order to they acquire perfection and happiness. The five potentials are a shared sense (*his al-al-mushtarak*) or also called a fantasia, imagination (*al-khiyal*), estimation (*al-wahmiyya*), memory (*al-hifẓ*) and reason (*al-fīkr al-'aqlī*). The first four are equally owned by both humans and animals while the last one is only possessed by humans. This five potential of a human being is mentioned as inner senses which differ from the five external senses.

To actualize the intellectual potential in the ideas of al-Fārābī is called theoretical virtue (*al-faḍā'il al-naẓariyya*). This theoretical virtue consists of two parts. The first is the knowledge possessed by human being since the beginning which is unnoticed where it comes from and how to obtain it. The second is the knowledge obtained through reflection, research, training, teaching, and education. Both of knowledge is grouped into four branches of sciences namely metaphysical, mathematical, physical, and social sciences (*al-'ilm al-madani*). The society who wants to achieve happiness and perfection should be able to master the art or should have theoretical virtue.

According to al-Fārābī, to achieve happiness and perfection, besides the theoretical virtue, the society should have the ability in practical virtue or science. These practical virtues are referred to as *al-faḍā'il al-fikriyya* or *al-'aql al-'amali*, also referred to as *al-faḍā'il al-madaniyya*, a skill or craft that can be used in organising society. If the theoretical virtues are related to the knowledge itself (physical science, metaphysical and mathematical science) that must be known and mastered by every member of the community theoretically. The practical virtue is the ability of

individual in order to acquire the virtues and perfection that can be beneficial not only for himself but also for every member of society in the country or for all people in the world. The practical virtue (*al-faḍā'il al-madaniyya*) is a human ability which tries to obtain a goodness and virtue which have positive impacts or beneficial not only to himself but also to the others.<sup>67</sup>

Another requirement for society to obtain happiness and perfection is that they must have a moral virtue (*al-faḍā'il al-ḥilqīyya*). The virtue is highly related to the public happiness because it is synonymous with goodness. The virtue is concerned with the actions of a community especially related to goodness itself. The reason is the happiness of individual and society can only be achieved with goodness where the individual with others work together in goodness and not vice versa.

The last virtue that has to be possessed by individual in order to achieve happiness and perfection is a practical skill (*al-sina'at al-amaliyya*). Every member of society should have the skills in accordance with the position and status of individuals as of the community. If the individual is a leader, he should have the skill to lead. For example, he should be able to direct people to always do good things and prevent it from doing bad things. A leader should also be able to actualize the potential of every individual either physical, intellectual, or spiritual to achieve their perfection and happiness. Therefore, a leader must have these five virtues so he is able to direct people to measure all virtues.

From the explanation above, it can be said that a person's happiness and perfection, both in the world and in the hereafter, is impossible to achieve if he is not in a group, association, and cooperation with each other in goodness and virtue. Humans are naturally a social being, therefore such perfection can be achieved when they live together.

## Conclusion

The structure of excellent society in Islamic philosophical perspective has more holistic and integrative because it has two

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<sup>67</sup>Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb Tahsīl al-Sa'ada* (Beirut: Dar wa Maktabah al-Hilal, 1981), 55-59.

dimensions; a vertical and horizontal relation. Vertical relation means that society has the highest orientation, i.e. happiness in worldly life and hereafter. Besides that, the vertical relation means that a good society should be based on the transcendent value, a belief in God, as a foundation of value and final orientation of society development. Besides that, an excellent society is where all aspects of society potential like physical, intellectual, and spiritual can be actualized.

To understand the Islamic philosophical perspective of social order, one should understand the principal of the Islamic metaphysics and the structure of non-physical realities because metaphysic is the foundation and origin of all existence in the world either nature, animal, or human. Metaphysics is also the foundation of the virtue of human both in thinking and acting. It connects between nature and human, human and animal, and also between universe and God. Based on this paradigm, it can be concluded that the structure of society related to the structure of universe because the universe is a model in the order of society.

So, the development and orientation of society should be based on this paradigm, the holistic and integration of paradigm that link physical, intellectual, and spiritual development. This paradigm becomes characteristic of social science in Islamic philosophical perspective. That conclusion is different from the modern sociological perspective as described by Karl Marx and Auguste Comte. According to them, the citizen has one aspect only namely the physical aspects. We call this view as a partial paradigm because they only saw society in one dimension and reject the existent of spiritual aspects. Consequently, all descriptions, orientations and the development of human rely on physical forms only.

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