A BRIEF ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS:

"A CRITICAL STUDY
OF

JALĀL AL-DĪN AL-DAWĀNĪ'S CONTRIBUTION
TO

SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY"

Al-Dawānī (1427-1501 A.D.), the celebrated Persian jurist, commentator, theologian and scholar, has made significant contribution to the growth and development of social thought in Islam. Al-Fārābī, for the first time in the history of Muslim thought, discussed the problems of social philosophy in a systematic way in his celebrated writings, viz., "Madinat al-Fāḍilah", "Siyāsat al-Madaniyyah", "Tahṣīl al- Saādah" and "al-Fuṣūl". Miskawaih, the father of ethical philosophy in Islam, reinterpreted the social thought of Al-Fārābī and discussed it at length in his monumental works, "Tahdhib al-Akhlaq", which inspired Naṣīruddin Tūsī to write his book "Akhlāq-i Naṣīrī". Al-Dawānī, with whom the present study is concerned, appears to have been greatly inspired by Naṣīruddin Tūsī's Akhlāq-i Naṣīrī. But al-Dawānī does not merely reproduce Tūsī's views but tries to bring about a
synthesis of Greek ideas as interpreted by Farābī, Ibn Sinā and Miskawaih and of the traditional Muslim thought. Thus al-Dawwānī's social system comes as a significant modification of Tūsi's thought and is a definite advance over it.

al-Dawwānī's approach in propounding his social theory is highly synthetic in spirit. He not only incorporates the social thought of the day in his system but also aims at a sound integration of the Hellenic ideas together with the Islamic doctrines. He attempted to resolve the problem of revelation and reason, of law divine and human. "al-Dawwānī has achieved in his philosophical writings, comments Rosenthal, in his book, 'The Political Thought in Medieval Islam', "a harmonious blending of philosophy and tradition, represented in terms, of which no exception could be made". His originality, therefore, lies in making an intelligent application of the existing social ideals of the day by incorporating them into his own system as well as in synthesising apparently different attitudes and opinions, theses and their anti-theses, into a constructive synthesis.

al-Dawwānī, says A.J. Arberry, "is one of the most productive authors Persia ever produced". Numerous works by him are extant on philosophical, theological and mystical subjects, including commentaries on some of the famous works of his time.
"Akhlaq-i Jalali," among his philosophical writings, however, deserves special consideration and offers an important and fruitful field for research. It is, of course, one of the best known ethical digests to be composed in medieval Persia, if not in medieval Islam. But it is really unfortunate to note that no systematic attempt has been so far made to introduce him to the modern world, especially to the English knowing readers. A thorough philosophical work, therefore, is earnestly awaited to be undertaken on his Akhlaq-i Jalali, the principal source of his social philosophy. The present study is an attempt to fulfil this need. It is planned to make or critical exposition of al-Dawwani's social system.

Al-Dawwani's social theory is based on his general philosophy and metaphysics. He has developed a socio-political theory conforming to his ethical ideals. His social system, in its completely worked-out form, is a study of human life as a whole. He is primarily concerned in his work, Akhlaq-i Jalali, with the criteria of human behaviour first at individual or personal level where man is seen as an integral part of the creation, being responsible to the Creator; secondly at the domestic or family level where he operates as an active member of family and of other social as well as economic units; and finally at the political level where he becomes, individually and by way of the higher groupings, an organic number of the
society and state.

The present study consists of the following heads:

**INTRODUCTION**

(i) General survey of social philosophy

(ii) al-Dawwānī: His life and works

(iii) Metaphysical foundations of al-Dawwānī's social philosophy

**CHAPTER-1 : BACKGROUND OF AL-DAWWĀNĪ'S SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY**

(i) Greek Social Thought

(ii) Muslim Social Thought before al-Dawwānī

**CHAPTER-II : VIRTUE**

(i) Virtue: Preliminary discussion

(ii) Cardinal virtues

(iii) The Importance of Justice

(iv) Division of Justice

(v) The order of the cultivation of virtues

**CHAPTER- III : PSEUDO-VIRTUES AND VICES**

(i) Pseudo-virtues

(ii) Vices
CHAPTER IV  MAINTENANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH

(i) Maintenance of Mental Health
(ii) The Treatment of Mental Diseases

CHAPTER V  FAMILY

(i) The need for home and family life
(ii) The way of behaving with wife
(iii) Upbringing of children
(iv) Observance of Parental Rights
(v) Employment of servants
(vi) Finance of Family

CHAPTER VI: STATE

(i) Man's need for Civilization
(ii) Importance of love in Civilization
(iii) The Classification of States
(iv) Administration of State and qualities of an able administrator
(v) The Code of Conduct for serving the king and the civil authorities
(vi) Significance of Friendship and Nature of friendly relations
(vii) The Manner of dealing with different classes of People
CONCLUSION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

When we critically reflect upon al-Dawwānī's social philosophy as a whole, we find that it is basically evaluative or normative in character. It is purely value-centric, teleological and mostly concerned with otherworldly life. His approach towards the basic problems of social philosophy, though apparently highly synthetic in spirit, yet is fundamentally metaphysical. The central concern of social philosophy, in his opinion, is the moral evaluation of social process and institutions in the light of some basic metaphysical considerations. The important thing about a social philosopher is not the particular system or theory which he formulates but his grasp of the ideal of unity of all social phenomena and his effort to interpret the various particular conceptions by reference to that unity. al-Dawwānī conceives the ideal of unity of all social phenomena in a purely theocratic social organization which is mainly based on the Qurān and the Sunnah. In elaborating his social ideals, al-Dawwānī appears to have been indeed, influenced by diverse sources, but the underlying spirit of his social philosophy is purely Islamic. Its form is, to a great extent, platonic and Aristotelian, but so far as its content is concerned, it is his own which he derives from purely Islamic sources, i.e., the Qurān and the Sunnah. His contribution lies in the adaptation of the views of the Muslim Philosophers, especially of al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīna, Miskāwī and Tūsī, to the traditional Muslim Thought and at the same time of Platonic and Aristotelian ideas to Islamic environment.