How about a Green Caliphate?
Global Islamic Environmental Governance
for Devout Muslim Communities

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Abstract

Over fifty years into global environmental negotiations since the first UN Conference in 1972 on the Human Environment in Stockholm, to the Climate Change Conference COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh in 2022, the major environmental concerns of our time are no closer to being resolved. Negotiations continued to fall by the wayside. Given the commitment to economic development and sovereignty of the nation states, the deadlocks are understandable. Against this background, this article proposes a "Green Caliphate" as a faith-motivated global

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environmental governance for a network of Sharia-based countries and devout local Muslim communities around the world. The article offers a set of rationales for considering the Green Caliphate in the light of climate emergency from multiple perspectives: social justice, knowledge sharing, and cultural transformation. Drawing on Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* and Ovamir Anjum's "Who Wants the Caliphate", this article broaches the concept of a socially and environmentally-responsible caliphate governance which might be in congruent with the Schumacherian pursuit of the "Fourth World" where government and economics are under genuine human control because the size of such units are small, sensible, and human scale, and where the pace of development is in accordance with the religious cosmology of their members to adapt. The Green Caliphate is envisioned on a decolonial horizon of pluriversality towards a multipolar world order.

In the cycle of nature there is no such things as victory or defeat; there is only movement.

Within that cycle there are neither winners nor losers, there are only stages that must be gone through. Both will pass. One will succeed the other, and the cycle will continue until we liberate ourselves from the flesh and find the Divine Energy.

—Paulo Coelho, "Manuscript Found in Accra"

1. Introduction

This article proposes an alternative global framework that might work, at least, for one sector of humanity. Though limited to *Sharia*-based countries and devout members only of the global *Ummah*, the article enumerates the intractable problems involved in current climate change actions which, in the end, infer that half a loaf is better than none. The proposed political vision of a "Green Caliphate" offers liberation from the concrete prison of western industrial culture that became a global phenomenon in the last few centuries since the adoption of the practices and culture of western

Europe by societies and countries around the world (whether through compulsion or influence). Therefore, this prospect is a pragmatist position in the entanglement of socio-ecological emergency. Among the major tasks of the Green Caliphate is to bring out what Heilbroner (1977) terms 'Statist Religion',[1] a movement away from individual to communal ethics—a proposition in ecological politics disparate from Ophul's[2] 'Brave New World', or Hardin's "injustice is preferable to total ruin" (Hardin 1968:1247). Furthermore, in the face of hunger and other crises by which climate change threatens the Global South, and the need to care for Muslims on the margins, this article seeks to contend with the modern social justice paradigm that Richard Miller (2010) articulates. Overall, it offers a rejoinder to Ovamir Anjum's (2019) call to resurrect the Caliphate, along the lines of envisioning the Schumacherian 'Fourth World' (Schumacher 1973).

Climate change, plastic pollution, biodiversity loss, and other unprecedented environmental issues raise a multitude of associated problems for society. The solutions required need to combine knowledge and skills from all disciplines. While this article is concerned with societal-environmental relations in the Muslim world, the article belongs to transdisciplinary Islamic studies. It draws on my PhD thesis in Sociology (Alkatiri 2015) according to which Muslim societies are largely divided along three 'symbolic universes', namely, Islam, nationalism, and westernism. The "Green Caliphate" being proposed should be treated as a seed notion that calls the attention of, and for contributions from, scholars on Islamic law, theology, and political theory to develop the idea in further detail. At this stage, what the article aims at is exposing the hard truth behind the continued lack of success in international climate diplomacy[3] (from the Kyoto protocol in 1997 to the COP26 in 2021), whereby national sovereignty consistently stands in the way of creating an international framework for collective action. Historian Arnold Toynbee was exactly correct in his prediction:

> The present-day global set of local sovereign states is...not capable of saving the biosphere from man-made pollution or of conserving the biosphere's non-replaceable natural resources...Will mankind murder Mother Earth or will he redeem her? This is the enigmatic question which now confronts (sic) Man. (1976: 593-596)

Thus, the article articulates the rationale for faith-motivated global environmental governance, set in the network of Sharia-based countries and devout local Muslim communities in non-Sharia-based countries. The models for operationalizing the Green Caliphate can be inspired by the relocalization practices espoused by Transition Network (TT), Global Ecovillage Network (GEN), and the concept of a minimal or night-watchman state in Robert Nozick (2013).

Turning Ideas into Action

Relocalization is a technical term used in the sociology of green community movements. It refers to the notion of a shifting society in the context of ecological emergency, against the centrifugal forces of centralization and globalization. As such, relocalization is a decentralist approach in green politics. It does not seek to shift the larger society at once; rather, it seeks to work on a community scale. Its ideals were inspired by Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* (1973). The single theme in all relocalization groups is their attempts to produce a coherent and holistic approach to confront social and ecological problems through the creation of the 'alternative society' model, minimizing ecological impact but maximizing human happiness and well-being. Relocalization draws upon multiple disciplines with pragmatic strategies shaped around the 'limits to growth' analysis. It aims to equip people with resilience and adaptive capabilities in the face of looming scarcity and environmental degradation.

Since I finished my PhD in 2015, I have observed that scientific communities are increasingly willing to speak out about the state and gravity of their scientific findings which strongly indicate that modern civilization as we know it will end over the next few decades, due to climate change and other socio-ecological reasons. Among the most recent proclamations of this type are Paul Ehrlich (in Carrington 2018), Sprat and Dunlop (2018), climate scientists (in Corn 2019), and the modeling of Mark Titchener (2022). While the logic of 'limits to growth' and 'peak oil' has been around within scientific communities for some time, there is a conventional wisdom that scientists must not frighten the public but

rather must focus its gaze on technical solutions. For this reason, this discussion has not been made public until quite recently.

In anticipation of environmental 'collapse' scenarios,[4] Transition Network (TT 2022) was initiated in 2006 in the small rural UK town of Totnes, Devon, by Rob Hopkins. The movement espouses 'resilience', which refers to the ability of a system, from individual people to whole economies, to hold together and maintain their ability to function in the face of change and shocks from the outside (Hopkins 2008). On the strength of the cause, the Transition Network has become the fastest growing environmental movement in the Global North (Barry and Quiley 2009). There are over 300 official transition town initiatives in the UK alone in 2022. The concept and network are now spreading to Australia, New Zealand, Austria, Belgium, Germany, Luxemburg, France, Italy, Hungary, Croatia, Israel, Japan, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and USA. Elsewhere, Global Ecovillage Network (GEN 2022) was founded by Hildur and Ross Jackson in 1991, as a global association of people and communities who try to create room for social, ecological, and spiritual values, and thus live together in greater ecological harmony. In 2022, the network connects approximately 10,000 communities and related projects in 116 countries within 5 regional networks and the youth arm, NextGEN, through virtual and real-world alliances. The GEN association seeks to develop strategies for a global transition to resilient communities and cultures.

The relocalization movement is clearly different from conventional environmentalism and the mainstream 'sustainable development' of the United Nations. The relocalization movement presents as a rejection of what they see as an outmoded dominant western worldview, in favor of worldviews that recognize the interdependence of humans and their ecosystems. My fieldwork and observation of these communities in New Zealand show that the movement attracts hippies and liberalists. It is a community where anti-authoritarianism thrives. The founders of the communities propounded their initiatives as concrete actions that can be done 'here' and 'now' by committed, like-minded people. Despite the fact that many among the communities are well read and tech-savvy, the movement maintains precautionary principles in the use of new technology. They insist on thinking through the social and environmental impacts of new technologies before their use. The founders of TT and

GEN believe that their models can be duplicated and their culture can be propagated to convert society at large.[5] In principle, emphasized relocalization activists Ted Trainer and Samuel Alexander of Simplicity Institute in Australia, the movement should attempt to replace the core institutions of consumer capitalism, rather than merely building resilience within them. Trainer puts forward a radical 'zero growth economy' in which,

1   There can be no interest payments to eradicate growth:

    If you do away with growth then there can be no interest payments. …The present economy literally runs on interest payments of one form or another, an economy without interest payments would have to be totally different mechanisms for carrying out many processes… Therefore *almost* the entire finance industry has to be scrapped, and replaced by arrangements whereby money is made available, lent, invested etc., without increasing the wealth of the lender. That is incomprehensible to most current economists, politicians and ordinary people. (Trainer 2011:77)

2   There is radical change in cultural attitudes towards consumption, hence the notion of 'economic sufficiency' must be embraced at the cultural level. (Alexander 2012:7)

3   Market activity would not be driven by an ethics of profit maximization, but by some ethics of genuine mutual benefit and concern. (Alexander 2012:7-8)

    The proponents of TT and GEN are confident that they will eventually win out because the current system is not meeting the needs of a large percentage of the world's population (Jackson and Jackson 2002), or simply because other environmental scenarios are very unlikely (Hopkins 2008). Nevertheless, they are perfectly aware that the existing economy is quite capable of accommodating what the movement is doing without replacing the fundamental structure of consumer-capitalist society: "In recent years, resilience has been gradually adopted by large companies and governments, to the point of losing its original radicality. As it is used most of the time, the concept does not fundamentally challenge the assumptions underlying established systems" (Hopkins in Cara 2021, para 3).

Regarding the Global South's issues, the founder of GEN contends that people in the West are predominantly unaware of their predicaments: "the global society of the 21st century is in crisis – spiritually, socially and environmentally, though Western media mostly do not reflect this view, and this is not surprising since the crisis is most visible in the other 90% of the world's population" (Jackson and Jackson 2002:130).

Accordingly, I have classified the relocalization movement according to their ulterior motives into the 'survivalists', such as Transition Network (TT), who aim to prepare for the conditions of scarcity and social destruction which they anticipate will result from climate change, looming ecological collapse, and energy crisis; and the 'redemptionists', such as Global Ecovillage Network (GEN), who have been driven by psychological dissonance between a sense of their own values and ethical standards and the behavior that people are forced to adopt through participation in consumer-capitalist society.

As someone working in the Global South, I observe that the enduring domination and control of the postcolonial world in global politics could give rise to a sentiment that dismisses the need for global cooperation to tackle complex environmental challenges. The satirical illustration under the headline "UN Climate Change Conference in 2021" in Section 2 demonstrates this reality plainly. Against this ethical dilemma, a reconciling and reuniting worldview is needed. Toward this end, I humbly propose the *Tawhidi* (unitive) worldview explicated in my recent work on Islamic mysticism (Alkatiri 2021a).[6] It is a set of assumptions about the world that have powerful effects on people's cognition and behavior. The *Tawhidi* worldview in question serves as the philosophical undergirding that influences the practice of this research – much like what Neuman (2000) calls *research methodology*, and others have called *paradigm* (Lincoln & Guba 2000; Mertens 2007). Against the dualistic vision of reality that characterizes the modern rational worldview, the *Tawhidi* worldview as a research methodology or paradigm guides me to see everything as governed by a single Principle and unified by a common Center. The satirical illustration below demonstrates how the *Tawhidi* worldview in question transcends the impasse on climate change diplomacy: it moves away from the blame game of contemporary climate

change politics. Moreover, in a step towards decolonizing the research, I have placed Muslim voices and Muslim epistemology in the center of the research process, and thereby lifted the cultural blinders imposed by dominant ideologies and Western rationalism. My PhD research assessed the willingness, ability, and possibility of local Muslim communities in Indonesia (as the world's largest Muslim nation) to pursue the ideals and actions of relocalization (Alkatiri 2015). I found that two local communities—namely, Hidayatullah in Balikpapan, East Kalimantan (Alkatiri 2018a), and An-Nadzir in Gowa, South Sulawesi—provide the closest example of intentional communities which can be transformed into models of endogenous[7] Islamic relocalization.

Last in order (but not in importance) is the promise of the minimal state or night watchman state. This is a form of government in political philosophy where the state's legitimate function is only the protection of individual from assault, theft, breach of contract, or frauds (see Nozick 2013). The advocates of this school are called minarchists. They argue that the state has no right to use its force to interfere with transactions between people. The only legitimate governmental institutions are the military, police, and courts. I believe this scheme would best serve conditions of the post-carbon world where creativity and older virtues of fortitude, courage, foresight, and prudence will once again become a necessity. This is the only political scheme that would allow a life of creativity and liberate people to freely choose their own social arrangements, where no compulsory loyalty to a state ideology is required. Moreover, it can be extrapolated from Hallaq (2012, ix-x), that the weaker or more "minimal" the state, the more compatible it is with Islam (Alkatiri 2018a)—because the state in the Islamic sense should be organized organically around divine sovereignty. Nonetheless, numerous issues remain to be addressed, given the non-organizational structure of Islam, where there is no central religious authority for the whole *Ummah*. I imagine a world summit to be organized by the *Ummah*, where Muslim scholars and jurists (*fuqahāʾ*) make comprehensive deliberation about environmental problems and arrive at a consensus (*ijmāʾ*). The council that arranges the summit could be founded, for example, by Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Muslim communities around the world

would there be called to mobilize ecological actions based upon Islamic jurisprudence in a decentralized Muslim world based upon communities. Leaders and active members of local communities from around the world would be the basic nuclei of such an organization.

This article is organized as follows. In the midst of the 'materialization' that has been taking place in the Global North and South, Section 2 demonstrates that the United Nations climate change negotiations have simply bogged down in ideological tensions. The depiction of the given positions at a climate conference in a satirical illustration is meant to hammer home the deadlock of negotiation behind closed doors. Further to what has been argued in Sections 1 and 2, Section 3 enumerates more rationales (from social justice, knowledge sharing, and cultural transformation perspectives) for considering the Green Caliphate against the background of climate emergency. Drawing further on Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* and Ovamir Anjum's "Who Wants the Caliphate?", Section 4 seeks to broach the ideas of Green Caliphate in the pursuit of the "Fourth World".

2. Transcending Historic Debts

We have seen the clash of the worlds of science and politics, economics and ethics, on issues of climate change, plastic waste crisis, and energy transition. The global community's commitments to a state-centric framework in addressing global environmental challenges and reducing greenhouse gas emissions has put them in a bind, as displayed dramatically at the COP26 climate change conference in Glasgow when the Global North was placed in a hot seat by the Global South. The scene revealed that many of the latter deeply resent the North; their bitterness was not easily mollified despite the economic development that has already been achieved. The 'Global South', a synonym for the 'Third World', bore witness to the grave environmental damage that came with the industrial-capitalist model of development promoted by western countries. The satirical illustration that follows in the next section is gleaned from COP26, to help get across the main points of the article. References to the transcribed speeches of the Global South leaders are in endnotes 9-11. I shall like to highlight that behind the ethical dilemmas we are facing today is the

Third World's "captive mind" (Alatas 2006) within which the development theory was adopted uncritically in a wholesale manner, or in other words, the subconscious white supremacy stereotype that manifested itself in the eurocentric nature of development in the Global South. Schumacher's Small is Beautiful (1973) helps to substantiate my proposition about what is wrong with development projects in the Third World or Global South, and thus offers a rationale for the 'Fourth World'.

The following grouping of Muslim populations into three types was made in reference to my thesis, "Theorizing Muhammad's Nation" (Alkatiri 2017a). The common Muslim grievance against the history of western colonialism yields three broad responses, which I argue stem from three symbolic universes: (i) Westernism, (ii) Nationalism, and (iii) Islam. My broader thesis research shows that the 'symbolic universe' is a deeply political concept in the strictest sense of the term. Not only does it define individual and collective interactions between Cognition, Meaning, and Action, it defines, by consequence, their ultimate loyalty and the objects of their devotion.[8]

Table 1 – Muslims in Muslim-majority countries classified by symbolic universe (Alkatiri 2017: 184).

	Symbolic Universe	Vision of Geographical Territory	Economic Vision	Worldview with Regard to the Ecological Crisis
1	**Westernism** (eco- and/ or anthropo-centrism of the modern scientific worldview)	Citizens of the global world created by Western colonialism/ imperialism (global world)	Capitalist (development ideology)	Humans as earth-bound creatures
2	**Nationalism** (nation-centrism)	Compatriot (countryman) (nation-state)	Capitalist (development ideology)	Humans as earth-bound creatures
3	**Islam** (theo-centrism)	Muhammad's nation (global world)	Islamic values	Humans as divine creatures

The division of the Muslim population along symbolic universes has political implications for the context of climate change and the transition to non-fossil fueled- civilization. I argue that the symbolic universe of Nationalism, including ethno-nationalism, is the Pandora's Box of evils. From a global environmental perspective, nationalist interests may come in conflict with the common good, for the latter confines its concerns to a bounded area where the sovereignty of the state is supreme and the national community is the object of devotion. My work elsewhere describes the nation-building enterprise in the history of Indonesia (Alkatiri 2018a), as it encouraged the ceaseless desire to compete with other nations. Nationalist Global Southerners - Muslims or not – are mired in the values of the very industrial society in the North that had produced the economic and ecological crisis they protest against.

Moreover, although Nationalists and Westernists (including but not limited to liberal Muslims and neoliberal politicians) may disagree on many things, they all agree on endless economic growth, progress, and development. Both agree that economic growth is the panacea to all ills, making us all rich, happy, and healthy. Both believe that as long as science and technology continue to advance, growth and progress can be maintained. In addition, by perceiving humans as earth-bound creatures, it is impossible for both Nationalists and Westernists to renounce the lust and greed that makes ever-greater demands upon the environment. There is no way for them to transcend the debts of history, inciting the elusive dream of economic progress.

3. UN Climate Change Conference: A Satirical Illustration

The UN Secretary General

"The time is past when humankind thought it could selfishly draw on exhaustible resources. We know now the earth is not a commodity. In this seminal event we are here to unite our voices, with a single mission to protect and hand on the planet to the next generation. We are the last generation that can take the steps to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Future generations will judge us harshly if we fail to uphold our

moral and historical responsibilities. We must now agree on a binding mechanism under international law to decarbonize the world and stop financing denials of climate change. Business as usual is no longer an option. We must shift towards net zero, nature-positive, and socially equitable walk. The time to act on it is now, the decision we take today will bind us to the path for the coming years."

i)   *West-wannabes of the Global South (Muslim or otherwise)[9]*

"Sure, we will definitely go along with that view, as long as the rich nations understand our national circumstances. Underdeveloped and developing countries have not fully accomplished development. We should be given more leeway: even though we have emerging economies, we are not out of the woods yet. Give us money and appropriate technologies and we will figure out how to do deal with these challenges."

ii) *Nationalists of the Global South (Muslim or otherwise)[10]*

"The developed countries consume more global energy and contribute more to global emission than developing countries. That has caused global inequity in energy consumption, and now the developing countries have to reduce their global carbon emissions?"

"The United States, 4 or 5% of the world population, still uses 25% of the world's resources! You outsourced production to China and then you say China is the carbon polluter? China's producing you buckets, China's producing your nuts and bolts, China's producing your phones, try to produce it in your own countries and see your carbon emission rise! You love lecturing us because you have a colonial mentality. Then there are the colonial structures and institutions: you lend us our own money! The International Monetary Fund comes to our societies and tells us, here's the money we are giving you—no! It is our money, you gave us our money back as debt and then you lecture us how we should live: it's extraordinary, it's

not just a colonial mentality, it's colonial structures and institutions which reproduce themselves year after year after year. Let me tell you something: the climate justice movement is not clued enough on this, it just says it's the future that we're worried about. What future? What future do children in the African continent have, in Asia, in Latin America? They not only don't have a future, they don't have a present! They're not worried about the future, they're worried about their present. Your slogan is, we're worried about the future, what future? That's a middle class bourgeoise western slogan, you have got to be worried about NOW … 2.7 billion people can't eat now, and you're telling people, reduce your consumption. How does that sound to a child who hasn't eaten in days? You have got to clue into this, guy, you have got to clue into this. Otherwise, this movement will have no legs in the third world!"

iii) Muhammad's Nation of the Global South[11]

A. Traditionalists

"Nothing is outside the power of God. Everything happens for a reason. God let the climate alter to warn and punish humanity for its consumerism, destruction of the environment and personal excesses, as the Quran predicts already: *Corruption has flourished on land and sea as a result of people's actions and He will make them taste the consequences of some of their own actions, so that they may return* (Q. 30:41)… So, fighting climate change is futile. People should rely on God to protect them, and should return to righteousness.

We are not here to tell you that greed and 'green' cannot coexist, we all know that. We are here to tell you that what's happening is the thing that God inflicted upon humankind before us, as the Quran says: *Have they not seen how many generations We destroyed before them which We had established upon the earth as We have not established you? And We sent [rain from] the sky upon them in showers and made rivers flow beneath them; then We destroyed them for their sins and brought forth after them a generation of others*" (Q. 6:6) – so, there's no such thing as winning or losing here."

B. Environmentalists

"But isn't there a strong prohibition in Islam to forecast 'the Hour'? The Prophet himself, in the Hadith of Gabriel, said, "About the Hour, he who is questioned knows no more than the questioner." The fact is that we are all traveling here on a single spaceship, meaning Earth! The conference ended in such a deadlock—we have not many choices left—we just have to return to righteousness and resurrect social justice, returning to smaller scale, more self-reliant Muslim communities with simpler ways of living and with self-local governance, no poverty, no affluence, people must be equipped with resilience and adaptive capabilities in the face of looming scarcity and environmental degradation. We have got to devise a completely new way of living and redefine an Islamic 'good life'.

C. Fundamentalists and Islamists

"Let me tell you, we must stop being naïve: look around and listen to what other people are saying. Climate change is just another western hypocrisy and double standards. The climate movement is all about maintaining western civilization at the expense of the Global South and certainly the Islamic world. Look, it didn't bother them one bit, the US just approved a trillion-dollar infrastructure Bill to repair and replace aging public works, roads, bridges, airports, high-speed internet access, and power grids that many of us have never been able to build yet...and yet they are lecturing the Global South to stop developing? Have you not heard about their spaceship tourism? Billionaires are spending their cash on launching themselves into space for fun! If climate change is so true, let's go to hell together, then. In fact, they have more to lose than we do.

Before analyzing these paradigmatic positions, some further prefatory remarks are in order.

Material Civilization

Before climate change entered the equation, Schumacher had strongly criticized the fallacy of 'material progress' and warned of the dire consequences it would cause to the "Third World". Schumacher found that 'materiality' has been the spirit of development, as explicitly stated in a British Government White Paper on Overseas Development: "To do what lies within our power to help the developing countries to provide their people with the *material opportunities* for using their talents, or living a full and happy life and steadily improving their lot" (Schumacher 1973: 173). I have argued elsewhere that a belief in 'infinite material progress' has discommodious relations with Darwin's theory of evolution and the secularization of Christianity's doctrine of incarnation (Alkatiri 2021a). When the Global South achieved its independence from European rulers, that belief in progress congealed into what is called 'development ideology'. A vulgar Americanization then became a comprehensive concept of economic development during the 20th century. As a matter of fact, ever since their struggles for independence, Southerners exerted all their strength to rival their colonizers in the Global North. The 'development ideology' has been firmly held by virtually all citizens: the bureaucrats, the politicians, the government economic managers, the industrialists, the intelligentsia, the academics, even the religious scholars and ulema remote from scientific understandings of natural resources and industrial production. Ironically enough, colonial powers remain heavily involved in postcolonial economies, exerting influence through a variety of economic, political, and social channels (including, crucially, international aid).

In the Morass of Development

The failures of development aid in the Global South have been widely reported. Critics have drawn attention to hierarchical and asymmetrical relations with the Global North and the inherent dependency that development schemes foster. They refer to economic analyses to conclude that satisfactory development for the Global South is impossible in a global economy driven by market mechanisms or Breton Woods-style

economic assistance. Moreover, much of the development in the Global South is not appropriate to the needs of the majority of the population. (That is, foreign investors never invest in what is most needed.) These mechanisms have brought about development in the interests of the rich, namely Southerner elites, transnational corporations, and those who consume the Global South's raw materials. Thus, conventional capitalist development is a process of plunder. These critics have advocated that the Global South should re-localize problems as they become too complex and too interconnected. My PhD research dealt with this issue exhaustively (Alkatiri 2015).

In *Small is Beautiful,* Schumacher identified the emergence of a "dual economy" in virtually all developing countries: a dual economy within which there are two different patterns of living as widely separated from each other as two different worlds. One is modern and the other pre-modern; the former took place in one or two big cities, and the other in rural and small towns. In the course of time, the "dual economy" turned into a source of social and political tensions that continue to this day. Most post-WWII development efforts went into the modern sector in big cities, which (depending on the country) may have served only fifteen percent of the population. The assumption behind that policy was that the modern sector in big cities will grow until it has absorbed almost the entire population (which was of course what happened in many of the highly developed countries). Given the size of the population in many developing countries, however, such an assumption was utterly unrealistic. Even so, mass migration transpired everywhere, the population concentrating in major big cities.

There are at least two philosophical issues that Schumacher perceptively identified plaguing the notion of development. The first is its materialist philosophy, which precludes consideration of invisible things. Having bought into the materialist ideas, Southerners tend to be fixated on the outcomes of development and overlook the (invisible) preconditions needed for its success. They failed to realize that development does not start with goods but with people, their education, organizations, and discipline. Development aid might not entirely overlook these preconditions but would treat them too as material things

to be planned, scheduled, and purchased with money according to a comprehensive development plan. Interestingly, while in every branch of modern thought the concept of evolution plays a central role, development thinkers in the modern West tend to think of the Global South's development not in terms of evolution but in terms of creation:

> the Almighty is not credited with having been able to create anything complex. Every complexity, we are told, is the result of evolution. Yet our development planners seem to think that they can do better than the Almighty, that they can create the most complex things at one throw by a process called planning, letting Athene spring, not out of the head of Zeus, but out of nothingness, fully armed, resplendent, and viable. (Schumacher 1973: 176)

Occasionally these developmentalists were successful, carrying out extraordinary unfitting things, creating small 'ultra-modern islands' in a premodern society. But what happened in the long run was a process of "mutual-poisoning" (177) whereby successful development in the cities destroyed the economic structure of the hinterland. The hinterland took its revenge through mass migration into cities, poisoning them and making them utterly unmanageable.

The second philosophical issue compounded the fallacy of the first by casting morality out of the equation. In line with my own proposition about the divorce of ethics and science and the crucial need to reintegrate ethics into our rationality (Alkatiri 2021a), Schumacher identified the loss of ethics from modern rationality as accounting for the failure of development in the Global South. Having achieved the marvelous power of science and technology, ethics has no place, and is in fact no longer needed. He noted that during the worldwide economic depression in 1930, the great economist Lord Keynes felt moved to speculate on the economic possibilities for our grandchildren:

> the day might not be all that far off when everybody would be rich. We shall then once more value ends above means and

prefer the good to the useful. The time for all this is not yet. For at least another hundred years we must pretend to ourselves and to every one that fair is foul and foul is fair; for foul is useful and fair is not. Avarice and usury and precaution must be our gods for a little longer still. For they can lead out of the tunnel of economic necessity into daylight. (Schumacher 1973: 24)

The Keynesian message, Schumacher underscored, is clear enough: "ethical considerations are not merely irrelevant, they are an actual hindrance, for foul is useful and fair is not." Nearly a hundred years from then, in the face of the pressing climate change agenda, the developmentalist ideology appears as the most dangerous achievement of the post-World War II era. It has become apparent that the most wicked socio-ecological problems in the Global South came hard on the heels of economic development in these regions. Terms like pollution, biodiversity loss, environmental health, ecological crisis, greenhouse gas emission, etc. suddenly came into prominence. These are glaring signs that we have moved into ecological overshoot, eating into the earth's natural capital and undermining the earth's ability to regenerate. They are proof that our current methods of production are already eating into and devastating the very substance of industrial civilization (fossil fuels, the tolerance margins of nature, and consumerist-materialist culture).

Were Schumacher and his proponents simply turning a blind eye to the positive outcomes of development in the Global South, to the way it raised the standard of living, healthcare quality, mass education, women's empowerment, and the benefits of technological advancements, to say nothing of consumer goods, entertainment, and information dissemination? I read them to point out the illusion of unlimited natural resources and the desire of unlimited progress that had been taken for granted in development ideology. As Schumacher put succinctly, "We are not blind! We are men and women with eyes and brains … and we do not have to be driven hither and thither by the blind workings of The Market, or of History, or of Progress, or of any other Abstraction" (Schumacher 1973: xii). He problematized the attitude of treating as valueless everything that human beings have not made themselves (e.g., non-renewable resources). On the contrary, they are irreplaceable capital which we have not made

but simply found and without which we can do nothing. This very illusion has made the development ideologues unable to recognize that the modern industrial systems, in all their intellectual sophistication, consume the very basis on which they have been erected. Perceptively, Schumacher ascribed this fallacy to the self-delusion of unlimited intelligence. It could be that their astonishing scientific and technological achievement is what made people believe that natural resources too have no limits, but that belief, disastrously, constitutes the modern economic rationality (Alkatiri 2021a).

Truly, how can material progress be infinite? Heidegger identified a quality of modern man as being "in flight from thinking," as having abandoned "meditative thinking."[12] As someone raised in the Global South, I learned in high school and understood at once the inescapable Law of Conservation of Mass and the Laws of Thermodynamics, the applications of which were key to my undergraduate studies in chemical engineering. These laws state that in any closed system, mass and energy cannot be created or destroyed (even if it may degenerate and decay, as in the second and third laws of thermodynamics). Given that our planet is also a closed system, these laws describe the limits of what the Earth can do. Infinite economic growth is impossible on a finite planet. Just like the threat of death makes people more aware of their lives, the idea that the earth has a finite fate should have made us concerned with conservation and protection of nature. As a believer, though, I believe nothing is outside the power of God. The world as a reality is the *mulk* and it is through the *malakūt* that God is directly involved in the world. The Quran states: *Say: In whose hand is the dominion (malakūt) over everything, protecting all while none can protect against Him, if you truly know?* (Q. 23:88). We must face the coming catastrophe with serenity, wisdom, and resignation.

More Rationales for Considering a 'Caliphate'

This article sets out from a belief that the Earth is a closed system with a finite amount of natural resource stocks and energy flows. Our economy is embedded in society, which in the end is embedded in the biosphere. Consequently, we must align our economic and social activities within the limits of the biosphere. Endless development is impossible, and a

global transition to a low-carbon economy in the face of climate change is a necessity, not an option. Moving to a non-fossil fuel civilization (as required by greenhouse gas emissions targets) implies a reform of all spheres of life, since renewable energy sources will not be able to sustain the existing consumer society and green technology will not be up to the task of maintaining modern civilization as we know it. To reduce carbon dioxide requires an alteration in nearly every facet of the economy and therefore nearly every facet of our culture. This section examines a series of ways in which Islamic environmental governance might help to mitigate climate change and cope with the consequences.

Social Justice

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded that climate change is happening and human actions are making a significant contribution to this change. We contribute through our energy use, unsustainable consumption, population growth and ecological changes such as deforestation. The IPCC predicts temperature rises of at least 2ºC (probably more), which will result in drastic weather changes and weather events, including droughts, floods, storms, forest fires, and accompanying human health problems, as well as the risk of extinction or significant changes in the distribution of many species. There is even the possibility of a 'tipping point' for a significant and catastrophic environmental impact, such as thawing of the permafrost, which in turn might trigger further rapid changes and repercussions that are, as yet, unknown. This assessment is endorsed by a large body of scientific agencies—including every one of the national scientific agencies of the G8+5 countries—and by the vast majority of climatologists. The majority of research articles published in refereed scientific journals also supports this scientific assessment.

Since their beginning in the mid-1990s, UN Climate Change Conferences were held to establish legally binding obligations for countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The urgency to curtail emissions of greenhouse gases demands a global shift away from fossil fuels and, by implication, may constrain development by stifling

economic growth and advancement. It certainly placed a burden and threatened the material interests of powerful economic and political interests. The COP26 conference in Glasgow in 2021 reemphasized the need for global action to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. Compared to previous events, COP26 was regarded as largely successful in raising awareness about the urgency to take action on climate change (if not successful in the urgency of actually implementing the actions). With colonial history reinscribing the North-South divide, the core contest between competing demands of various countries in reaching the ideals of development has been the major, if not the single, cause of the fragility of collective climate efforts.[13] For legitimate reasons, bringing people out of poverty and hunger remains the utmost priority for many in developing countries.

The toxic intersection of several crises (poverty, hunger, pandemics, climate emergency, more) puts us in an impossible situation. On top of everything else, it is practically unthinkable to fulfill what the energy transition needs to curb carbon emissions and rescue the planet while the Global South remains marching on the road to historical redemption, pursuing more development in order to break the "middle-income trap" (cf. e.g., Felipe, Abdon, & Kumar 2012; Paus 2017; Lanonne 2021; Lin n.d.). An idea of voluntary simplicity (Alkatiri 2021b) would certainly be unattractive for the secular Southerner majority. On the other hand, the uneven causes and impact of climate change between North and South is widely known. On the issue of climate justice, scholars focus on efforts that often secure privileged populations while harming, excluding, and criminalizing populations whose lives have been made precarious by climate change, or where the response to the climate crisis is also reinforcing discrimination, segregation, and displacement among marginalized peoples (Rice, Long, Levenda 2021).

Just as arduous is the challenge on the issue of global plastic pollution, also with a similar pattern of cause called 'waste colonialism'. 'Waste colonialism' is much like the nasty habit of careless and greedy people throwing their rubbish over the fence into their neighbor's garden. Without adequate pollution control and environmental legislation, and with mindless plastic overconsumption ns into the bargain, the Global

South became the dumping ground for the developed world. In the full-ness of time, the unmanaged plastic waste and industrial pollutants from developing countries fetched up in world oceans, contaminating fish and seafood for the entire world population.[14] Marine pollution and climate change are both the ultimate "commons problem", as ecologist Garrett Hardin defined it (Hardin 1968). Revolutionary changes are needed by everyone, in every part of the world—without reinscribing older patterns of exploitation.

The Global South

The contrast between China and sub-Saharan African countries as follows draw a picture of the diversity among nations commonly grouped into the "Global South". China is largely regarded as one of the developing countries, but on ideological grounds it is excluded from the "Third World." In 2005, one in six people in China lived below the World Bank's "dollar a day" poverty threshold, a third below the "two dollar a day" threshold, the median annual consumption was about $1,200 at purchasing power parity, and 20 percent of young children were stunted by malnutrition. But national economic growth was stellar and supported by substantial investments in capital equipment and infrastructure. The scale of China's production, markets and military gave it a significant voice in international affairs, millions live in urban enclaves of prosperity, and life expectancy at birth was 72 years. The situation was very different for people in the worst-off among sub-Saharan African countries – for example, Malawi, where, despite recent strong growth, median consumption was less than a third of China's, the per capita level of investment less than a tenth, the scale of the economy was globally negligible, and life expectancy was 48 years (Miller 2010:7). How can one develop a common environmental framework when even countries of the so-called "Global South" are already facing such disparate conditions?

Colonial and postcolonial rules established the structure of economic, political and social frameworks in the (ex)colonized regions. The structure of these frameworks is important because the distributions of benefits and burdens resulting from them fundamentally affect people's

lives. My work (Alkatiri 2017b, 2018a) investigates economic, political, and social tensions in Indonesia, a country in the Global South that has the world's largest Muslim population and has been accentuated with the political and economic dominance of the Christian and Chinese minority (Chua 2004). Historical accounts narrated by Utama (2016: para 4-6) make Indonesia a concrete example of Schumacher's critiques about how Third World development failed to bring incommensurable 'noneconomic factors' into the calculations of policy makers. The anti-Chinese resentment that it brings lasts to this day (Koesoemawiria 2021):

> While Dutch rule kept native Indonesians to farming work, the Chinese were told to run the businesses. Therefore, once Indonesia gained independence, virtually every retail store in Indonesia was owned by a person of Chinese ethnicity.... The stereotype that the Chinese were very economically minded lasted long into the 1950s and 1960s during the regime of Indonesia's first president, Sukarno... Suharto [the second president] needed growth in the economy, so during that period the Chinese were given opportunities to promote economic growth in the country, where the next two decades would be known as a time of great economic prosperity in Indonesia with Chinese-Indonesians at its helm...

My article on Indonesia (Alkatiri 2021b), a country with an abundance of natural resources, contends with the crucial task of exiting the present collision course between global civilization and finite biosocial reality. Yet due to economic development, a significant part of the Indonesian population has become attached to their level of prosperity, feel entitled to keep it, and will not accept restraints on their lifestyles.

Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Millions of people suffer extreme poverty, illness, and insecurity in the Global South. Extreme poverty and hunger are the most daunting challenges to emission reduction attempts, because of the economic

disruption the latter portends. When the COP26 was held in 2021, about 957 million people across 93 countries were going hungry (Lagada 2021). Hunger and malnourishment were on the rise even before the global COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated matter. Thirty countries recorded a Global Hunger Index above 23, with Somalia ranking the highest at 50.8. A number of other Muslim-majority countries besides Somalia were on the list, including Yemen, Sierra Leon, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Djibouti, Sudan, Pakistan, Mali, and Burkina Faso. India, which has a 213 million Muslim population, was affected by hunger and malnourished with an index of 27.5. The immensity of the issue defies the numbers that can be marshalled to represent it.

Weather-related events, including those associated with climate change, have also impacted food availability in many countries and thus contributed to the rise of food insecurity. We need to anticipate the negative effects from climate change that will cause changes in global weather patterns and cycles, which will be both unpredictable and long term. Poor regions are the most vulnerable in the near future, in terms of failing harvests, higher prices, and malnutrition. This multifaceted crisis will only increase pressure in other areas of the world to increase production, while basic living conditions in deprived areas further decrease.

The more I thought about it the more I am convinced that a spiritual worldview is the only way to *transcend*—not solve—this deadlock. Spiritually-infused governance like that promised by a Green Caliphate seems the only way to imagine solidarity, sharing food supplies across territorial borders, welcoming climate refugees, and promoting simple living for solidarity with the needy. The practice of altruism and selfless concern for the well-being of others does not belong to modern rationality. In the modern scientific worldview, Hamilton's theory of altruism even suggests that any seemingly generous behavior must be driven by some kind of selfish motivation (see Alkatiri 2021a, 96-102, for the case of the scientist George Price)! Elsewhere, the utilitarian school of thought, in which religious principles play no substantive part, may end up in nihilistic apathy at best or 'Prometheus acts' of the worst kind. Miller (2010) notes that utilitarianism gives rise to extraordinary demands, as seen in the dramatic thought experiments this ethical system encourages.

On the other end of the spectrum, the intractable linkage between poverty and hunger reminded me of a letter written by the fourth Caliph of Islam, Sayyidina ʿAli ibn Abi Talib. ʿAli was appointing Malik al-Ashtar as governor of Egypt. When he came to advising him about the poor, ʿAli began the passage with the exclamation, "Allah, Allah!" to stress its urgency. He continued: "This is onerous for the governors, but God makes it light for those who aspire to the Hereafter, who restrain their soul in patience, and trust in the truth of that which is promised by God" (Nahj 1999: 377; Reza 1996: 542-3; Shah-Kazemi 2006: 92). In the words of ʿAli, the poor, the destitute, the crippled, the orphans, the elderly, are "those who are in most need of justice from you" and should be treated in a manner such that "God may excuse you on the day you meet Him." In this worldview, the spiritual element is what makes practicable an ideal that otherwise would be a heavy burden. The "burden" of having to help those who are weak and helpless – and assisting those who will bring no political benefit – is transformed into inescapable duty concomitant upon one's spiritual conviction. More on Caliphate governance is discussed below under Section 4.

The Modern Framework for International Justice and Transnational Power

There is no unanimity even on the frameworks for improving the situation of the global poor. The distributive justice paradigm, developed in philosophy by John Rawls and others, reaches a limit when confronted with diverse populations, unsound governments, and global markets (Scott, William, Baker, et al. 2011). Meanwhile, within the framework of greenhouse justice, the question of distributive justice at the global level is gaining importance. Greenhouse gas emission damages others at no cost to the agent responsible. A few theories of externalities have been offered in reference to this problem – Pigou's carbon tax, or Coase's carbon trade – but they still function under conditional assumptions about certainty, governmental efficacy, and international cooperation, whereas the practice of such frameworks have to contend with multiple jurisdictions, a global scale, a long term horizon, major uncertainties, unequal competition, the balance of power between North and South,

and, above all, the weak representation of those most affected (the Global South and future generations).

Against this complicated background, many come to the moral certitude that affluent people in the Global North have a vast, largely unmet responsibility to help deprived people in the Global South escape these terrible conditions. Philosophers Peter Singer and Thomas Pogge have influenced this camp. Pogge criticized heartless, self-centered Western politics, by which

> One third of all human deaths are due to poverty-related causes, to malnutrition and to diseases that can be prevented or cured cheaply. Yet our politicians, academics and mass media show little concern for how such poverty might be reduced. They are more interested in possible military interventions to stop human rights violations in developing countries, even though such interventions – at best – produce smaller benefits at greater cost. This Western priority may be rooted in self-interest. But it engenders and is sustained by a deeply flawed moral presentation of global economic cooperation. The new global economic order we impose aggravates global inequality and reproduces severe poverty on a massive scale. On any plausible understanding of our moral values, the prevention of such poverty is our foremost responsibility. (Pogge 2001:6)

Likewise, Peter Singer puts forward a Principle of Sacrifice: "If it is in our power to prevent something very bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything else morally significant, we ought, morally, to do so" (Singer 1972: 241). Everyone thus has a duty not to spend money on luxuries or frills, and to use the savings thus secured to help those in dire need. Singer even condemns buying clothes beyond the need to keep oneself warm; he insists that everyone who is not needy has a duty to donate until donating more would impoverish him (Singer 1972: 235).

Conversely, Richard Miller regards Singer's commitment as a stern philosophical premise that no one would pay attention to, and disagrees with Pogge's position because he believes that someone can be wrongfully

exploited while he is made better off (Miller 2010: 4). Miller reasons that the North has a moral responsibility to help the global poor but only as a *limited* duty by not taking advantage of their deprivation when pursuing the North's own goals. Nonetheless, Miller acknowledges that the international relations as they have evolved at present, constantly give people in developing countries reason to resent governments, firms, and people in developed countries (231). He asserts, nevertheless, that the colonial legacy in the Global South has become a bitter pill to swallow for the troubled conscience in the West, who do not merit the Southerners' resentment because they too have to "pay the price of alienation from their government and unease at their own prosperity" (231). A good portion of Miller's book is dedicated to explaining the nature of American empire (especially as it steers the course of development in the Global South) and the moral obligations it generates. While he argues that climate change negotiations should be driven by each country's equal willingness to make sacrifices, he contends that the US, as the world's predominant power, has a residual duty to meet the basic needs of those whose development policies it has molded (Miller 2010: 5, 117-209).

To theorize the new forms of human justice, Miller examines a series of ways in which conduct originating in the Global North affects lives in the Global South. They are:

i Exploitation in the Transnational Economy ("People in developed countries take advantage of people in developing countries in deriving benefits from bargaining weakness due to desperate neediness. To express appreciation of the equal worth of people in developing countries and a proper valuing of their autonomy, people in developed countries must be willing to use the benefits to relieve the underlying desperate neediness," 3)

ii Inequity in International Trade Agreements ("The governments of major developed countries, led by the United States, take advantage of bargaining weaknesses of the peoples in developing countries, often due to desperate neediness, to shape arrangements far more advantageous to developed countries than reasonable deliberations would sustain. This creates a duty of a citizen of one of these countries (especially pressing in the United States) to support new measures that reasonable deliberations would yield," 3)

iii Negligence in Climate Harms (granting "the American combination of contribution to the harm and reluctance to contribute to its remedy," "there is little agreement on what standard of international equity should govern humanity's response to global goal in limiting future climate change". Miller proposes what he calls "a model of fair teamwork, as the equitable way of coping with the current tendency to cause unintended climate harm, [by which] people everywhere should seek an impartially acceptable allocation of sacrifices in a joint effort to keep global warming within bounds," 4)

iv Imperial Irresponsibility ("Global justice should identify moral responsibilities due to ways in which some governments exercise power over lives in foreign countries... the violent destruction inflicted and sponsored by the United States generates large responsibilities. Extensive violent destruction in developing countries within the fairly recent past generates a correspondingly extensive duty of repair, even if this violence is not unjust. In addition, systematic tendencies toward injustice in this violence create a political duty of a U.S. citizen to take part in movements to reduce abuses of destructive power," 5)

In the first half of the 20th century, deeply indebted to anticolonial thought from South Asia and Africa, postcolonial theory emerged as a body of thought that was primarily concerned with the social, political, economic, and historical impacts of European colonial rule around the world. Much of postcolonial theory is concerned with the lingering forms of colonial authority after the formal end of colonial empire. (That is, the prefix 'post' in postcolonial is not meant to imply that the work of colonialism has ended.) From a postcolonial theory perspective, Miller's argument is an attempt to reimagine politics and ethics from the center of the new imperial power. While Miller seeks to bring greater nuance by pointing out the dilemmas faced by citizens of developed countries in opposing their own governments, his notion of limited moral duties opens his argument to charges of self-contradiction. He writes, in analogy,

I have done nothing wrong if I bump into my neighbor because he has rushed onto the sidewalk without looking to see who is

coming. (In contrast, if I intentionally push him, I do wrong and am responsible for the consequences even if he thoughtlessly missed an opportunity to dodge my push). (Miller 2010: 84)

In doing so, he glosses over the "three axes that define development" in developing countries, as identified by Arturo Escobar (2011). These are, namely, development's forms of knowledge, as they are elaborated into objects, concepts, theories, and the like; the system of power that regulates its practice; and the forms of subjectivity fostered by this discourse, through which people come to recognize themselves as developed or underdeveloped.

I have noticed similar tendencies among Western-educated Southerners to avoid, ignore, or trivialize colonial legacies precisely in shaping developmentalist ideologies in the South, and to turn a blind eye to the attendant economic inequality in postcolonial structures. Without taking these postcolonial elements into account, the promotion of libertarian maxims according to which reduction in government intervention in the economy will better respect liberty and/or self-ownership of its citizens has, in my observation, led Indonesian liberals – including the Muslim supporters enumerated by Fakih (2015) and Rahim, Nazi & Goje (2017) – to the service of corporatist development and oligarchy.[15] In a striking contrast to Schumacher's propositions discussed earlier, Global Southern liberals, intentionally or not, tend to support the neo-liberal argument that the global poor simply need more developed technology; they tend to believe that their conditions can be repaired by full and free trade relations. This position is summed up by libertarian philosopher Jan Narveson:

There is no sound basis for thinking that we have a general and strong duty to rectify disparities of wealth around the world, apart from the special case where some become wealthy by theft or fraud. The nearest thing we have to a rational morality for all has to be built on the interests of all, and they include substantial freedoms, but not substantial entitlements to others' assistance… The true savior of the world's poor is the businessman, not the

missionary. What we do need to do is strike down barriers to commerce, rather than requisition "aid." (Narveson 2004)

Miller's broader objective to re-theorize principles of human justice is comparable to the UN's attempt to reconceptualize development in Sustainable Development Goals. Such attempts seem far out of touch with eco-alarmism in the present-day environmental debate. James Lovelock, who first articulated the idea that it is too late for the project of sustainable development, argues that we should strive for *sustainable retreat* instead:

> The error they share is the belief that further development is possible and that the Earth will continue, more or less as now, for at least the first half of this century. Two hundred years ago, when change was slow or non-existent, we might have had time to establish sustainable development, or even have continued for a while with business as usual, but now is much too late; the damage has already been done. To expect sustainable develop-ment or a trust in business as usual to be viable policies is like expecting a lung-cancer victim to be cured by stopping smoking. (Lovelock 2006: 4)

The Islamic environmental governance proposed by this article is addressed to a world realizing the specter of natural resource exhaustion, global pollution, climate change, and food crisis, all to a scale that could well undermine the prospect of global civilization. Both the North and South need to adopt limiting principles to enable our societies to say "enough".

Knowledge Sharing

From my observation, the vast majority of common people in the Global South are far from being informed about the looming crisis. Their willing-ness, let alone their ability, to do anything serious about the impending catastrophe as a result of dependence on fossil fuels is still a long way

off. By contrast, a Green Caliphate can ensure the dissemination of environmental knowledge.

Like almost all environmental issues, the debate over climate change is a debate over culture, worldview, and ideology. It is a truism that scientists can only set the parameters for understanding the technical aspects of a particular scientific issue but they do not have the final word on whether society accepts or even understands their conclusion. As a result, while scientific consensus on climate change exists, the *social consensus* does not exist. The growing partisan divide over the issue is present everywhere, even in the Global North. There is no broad socially accepted belief on the issue of climate change, in the sense of "beliefs that represent those on the political left, right and center, as well as those whose cultural identifications are urban, rural, religious, agnostic, young, old, ethnic or racial" (Hoffman 2012:32). Hoffman insightfully connects this predicament to the question of how people interpret and validate the opinions of the scientific community, the answer to which can be found not in physical sciences but social science disciplines of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and others. He points to the fact that people's interpretation of complex scientific issues is based on their prior ideological preferences, personal experience, and values, all of which are heavily influenced by their referent groups and their individual psychology. The cultural process of interpreting complex scientific information such as climate change begins with the psychological notion that humans are 'cognitive misers'. Humans have limited cognitive ability to fully investigate every issue they face. Accordingly, people everywhere employ ideological filters that reflect their identity, worldview, and belief systems, and these filters are strongly influenced by group values. This leads to the notion of 'cultural cognition': people tend to endorse the position that most directly reinforces the connection they have with others in their referent groups. In doing so, they cement their connection with their cultural groups and strengthen their definition of self.

Psychology explains this tendency as being driven by human's innate desire to maintain a consistency in beliefs by giving greater weight to evidence and arguments that support preexisting beliefs, and by expending disproportionate energy trying to refute views or arguments that

are contrary to those beliefs. Instead of investigating complex issues, they often simply learn what their referent group believes and seek to integrate those beliefs with their own views. This analysis suggests the promise of intra-faith communication to disseminate climate change knowledge.

Redefining Islamic Principles of a 'Good Life'

The main contention of this article should be clear by now: that consumer society and techno-industrial society are inherently unsustainable. Without addressing the fundamental problem of 'overshoot', all technological attempts (electric vehicles, renewable energy, green buildings, new urbanism, etc.) will be of no avail. They will simply be another form of denial and delusion to maintain the economic-growth-bound status quo. Among the most important tasks of global environmental governance under the Green Caliphate is redefining Islamic principles of a 'good life' against a world where the pursuit of production, efficiency, and short-run profit are dominant.

The starting premise of this article is that the root cause of sustainability problems as scientifically understood are (i) the nature of consumption, (ii) the nature of economy, and (iii) the cultural definition of 'a good life'. Brown (2001) argues that insatiable consumer culture in modern life originated from the matrices of European colonial capitalism. The fixation on 'self-actualizing our potential' is the defining feature of modern culture. In most cases, modernization of the Global South is identified with westernization. While pre-modern society lived in sufficiency, limited wants, a satiable self, simplicity, community, security, collective and cooperative production, and thereby, minimalism and sustainability, modern society is driven by improvement, insatiable wants, self-actualization, self-realization, self-development, more is better, economic growth, insatiable freedom, and individualism.

Both Karl Marx and John Stuart Mill promulgated the latter paradigm, although Marx was troubled because of the absent material preconditions for a world in which all people are democratically and justly able to develop in this way. For Marx, the essential ingredient for

insatiable self-actualization is the absence of class society; for Mill, it was the liberation of the market. In a similar fashion, Thorstein Veblen's theory of Leisure Class in sociological economics contends that people always try to be more and to have more in an endless effort to achieve social esteem and self-esteem. Veblen maintained that both the rich and poor feel self-esteem by how others judge them, so they are constantly comparing themselves with those both above and below them. A spiritual worldview offers a striking contrast to this incessant anxiety. The Sufi has always taught that man is in quest of 'the Infinite'. Even his endless effort toward the gaining of material possession and his dissatisfaction with what he has, is an echo of this thirst which cannot be quenched by the finite. This is why the Sufi considers the station of contentment (*rida*) to be an exalted spiritual condition attainable only by those who have reached the proximity of the Infinite and have shed the bonds of finite existence.

Of course, awareness is the first step to any change. Accordingly, cultural transformation among devout Muslims necessitates the cultivation of sustainability literacy, to understand the inescapable laws of Conservation of Mass and Thermodynamics which necessarily limit the growth pursued in the 'development' ideology. In this way, the ulema and Muslim leaders will be sufficiently informed to devise an "environmental Shariah" that correctly situates human society within the context of Earth's limited natural energy flows and resource stocks. Given the physical constraints of the planet, the currently dominant ethical framework and the endless rat-race of modern life have placed humanity in a 'riverbed' of self-destruction, as Bossel (1998), Lovelock (2006), and others contend. Technological fixes can temporarily improve conditions but they cannot move us out of this riverbed of unsustainability. The future path of humanity will have to follow a different riverbed.

Here is where Muslims need to redefine a genuinely Islamic development model and its parameters. An Islamic development paradigm should not aim at fostering heedlessness of God and one's own inner reality, or being stifled by the prison of one's own creation. Diverging from the dominant Eurocentric development paradigm, an Islamic development must begin with its own criteria of human happiness, which

does not envisage life as a big marketplace where humans are free to roam around and choose objects at will. Psychologists have contributed a set of critiques of consumerism in the context of climate change, and Muslims can draw on these in redefining Islamic conceptions of the good life (see for example, Spence, Pidgeon and Uzzell 2009). If we consume less, we may end up being happier people. Furthermore, following the traditional classifications of *Maqasid al-Shariah*, this article urges Sharia-based countries to redefine the utilization of natural resources and the objectives of their 'development' into (i) necessities (*daruriyat*), (ii) needs (*hajiyat*), and (iii) luxuries (*tahsiniyat*) in the light of Islamic values, as formulated by Al Shatibi (2006). Finally, this article suggests the need for *ijtihad*[16] for the planet on three fundamental issues in the Muslim communities: (i) the hegemony of the development and economic growth paradigm, (ii) the sovereignty of nation-states and their competing interests, and (iii) the birth control issue vis-à-vis overpopulation.

Restoring Tawhidi Worldview

It is a fact that Muslim-majority countries are not less attracted to industrialization than the West and do not reveal any less destructive trends towards the environment. The majority of Muslims no longer hold the sacred view of nature. Elsewhere (Alkatiri 2021a) I have addressed the underlying philosophical causes and pointed out how the disenchantment of nature is linked to the forces that have been central to modernization and secularization in the Muslim world. While recognizing the 'development paradigm' and 'development discourses' that dictated the environment-development relationships in the (ex)colonized world, I was intrigued nonetheless by the blatant apathy and indifference about environmental problems among the Ulama at large and the absence of ecological issues being espoused as an integral part of Islamic teachings in their *da'wa*. Among the consequences of modernization in Islamic world is the loss of the esoteric view of Islam and, concomitantly, the sense of sacredness associated with natural world. The advancement of the rational scientific *Weltanschauung* and the application of subject-object dualism into religious thought has expunged the esoteric

dimension of Islam and drained the religion of its ability to answer existential questions intellectually.

In modern environmental studies, Darwin's evolutionary biology has been broadly espoused for promising to cultivate a 'relational thought' that would refuse the separation between human and nature. Yet there are bewildering antinomies produced by interpretations of Darwin's theory of evolution. Darwin's ideas have given rise to numerous social, psychological, and ethical dilemmas. The evolutionary worldview needs to be replaced by a unitive (*Tawhidi*) worldview to remedy these perils. Even though the eco-alarmists believe it's already too late, the true believers in God, in the 'unseen' (*ghayb*), will remain hopeful for God's mercy. Muslims must change their attitude towards nature in order to fundamentally address the harmful impact of their activities on the environment. They need to reclaim a sacred view of nature, by which humanity is a part of nature instead of separate from it. Of course, Muslims believe in the eschatological *qiyamah*—even if this does not forestall the climate catastrophe, it is still virtuous to revive the central theological anthropology of Islam whereby human is both vicegerent (*khalifah*) and servant (*ʿabd*) of God. The vicegerents are responsible on earth to God for their actions; they are custodians and protectors of the earth, which they are given authority to control on the condition that they remain faithful as the *khalifah* of God.

4. Caliphate as the 'Fourth World'

Cut the Vicious Circle, let the Muslims free to heed the call of Eco-Jihad

Previous sections laid out challenges that cannot be met by making marginal adjustments here or there. As fundamental lifestyle changes towards social-environmental responsibility are becoming more critical, devout Muslim communities should be given an equal chance as part of civil society to pursue climate and energy transition actions. More generally, it is high time to rediscover the moral force in the world's religions in relation to the natural world, toward fostering sensibilities of reverence, respect, restraint, redistribution, and responsibility.

In February 2022, the United Nations Environment Programme held the 'Faith for Earth' dialogue to explore the potentials of faith actors inspiring their followers to engage in environmental actions. On the other hand, despite laudable academic works in Western universities to articulate authentic Islamic views of nature (including my contribution to this discourse in Alkatiri 2021a), there is a bitter irony to the failure of mainstream discourse to stand up for the communitarian rights of devout Muslims to develop themselves outside the rigid frames carved by the states and nationalist elites. Drawing upon ethnographic data and experiential understandings from my engagement in the community, I have argued for the potential of a global network of local Muslim communities to heed the clarion call to eco-jihad. This possibility is seeming more plausible, given the help that the latest digital communication technologies might provide. At the same time, however, I found two major handicaps on the way to operationalizing an Islamic environmental vision: the persistence of nationalism and intra-Muslim rivalry. I have observed that intra-Muslim conflicts have intensified over the last few decades due to Western counterterrorism discourses and practices (Alkatiri 2018b, 2019, Mustapha 2021). Drawing on postcolonial theory and secularization theory, I have analyzed the colonial and domination practices of nation-states in both destroying the environment and marginalizing Muslims on cultural, political, and economic fronts (Alkatiri 2017b, 2018a, 2023). The Orwellian control of official religion and extermination of any expression of alternative visions of Islam in Indonesia proved to be unassailable obstacles to pursuing the path of eco-jihad (Alkatiri 2015). The neutralization theory of hatred (Sell et al. 2021) may help to shed light on how Islamophobia and religious extremism constantly and mutually amplify each other in a vicious circle, pitting different factions in Muslim communities against one another.

Further to what has been advanced in Section 2, this article begins to articulate the notion of a Green Caliphate. Ovamir Anjum (2019) offers a comprehensive analysis of the extant literature and advocates a contemporary return to the political imagination of the caliphate. Strictly speaking, the caliphate refers to the political-religious governance[17] of the Muslim community and the lands and peoples under its dominion in the centuries

following the demise of the Prophet Muhammad. The loss of the Ottoman Caliphate after the First World War marked the global end of caliphate governance. Against the background of the failure of development and state building in the Muslim world, along with the mutually-reinforcing phenomena of despots and terrorists, Anjum contemplates the caliphate as the only civilizational alternative that can safeguard the interests of the most vulnerable. He proposes a reimagination of the caliphate

> as a confederation of government in the core regions of Islam that protects a range of human rights for all, provides political and economic stability to these regions, and allows Muslims to develop a variety of local political arrangements while embracing the larger religious and cultural unity of these regions. Such an order would not only be in accordance with the divine command but also is the only long-term alternative to the mutually reinforcing coterie of despots and terrorists. (Anjum 2019: 52)

Anjum notes the 2018 *New York Times* reporting on the continuing power of the idea of the caliphate among a significant portion of Muslims worldwide. These people include those who abhor ISIS and categorically condemn its violence as well as its religious outlook. My ethnographic work corroborates Anjum's claim (e.g., Alkatiri 2018a, 145-53). Like democracy, liberalism, capitalism, or socialism, caliphate is a notional category. The political unity of Muslims and the continuity of Prophetic governance is one such ideal that has been part of Muslim identity throughout history. Anjum identified various Muslim interpretations of the caliphate: some construed establishing the caliphate as an obligation regardless of its efficacy (complying with Imam al-Ghazali), and others (like Ibn Taymiyya and Imam al-Haramayn al-Juwayni) emphasized its rational nature. Anjum himself seems to agree with the latter, in his response to detractors who object that this proposal is undesirable, unfeasible, and unnecessary (6-11). Furthermore, considering the circumstances of Muslims worldwide, who have least benefitted from the industrial revolution (and whose resources were controlled by colonial powers), Anjum contends that the caliphate may be the only

way to avoid the further spiraling degradation of Muslim societies and states into terrorist fiefdoms (6). Nonetheless, he warns proponents of the caliphate, against romanticizing it: "the caliphate is not an institution that can magically, merely by dint of a declaration, guarantee Muslims' independence and well-being. Nor did it last continuously and unproblematically throughout its thirteen centuries of existence" (8). Any attempt to reenact such a global institution must make a compelling case for its ability to address political, social, economic, and ecological challenges confronting Muslims (9).

In my opinion, the most relevant feature of the caliphate system lies in the prospect of caring for Muslims on the margins in the looming food crisis by which climate change threatens the Global South. Anjum notes, "Islamic tradition brings no differentiation of rights and duties of Muslims based on regional or territorial affiliation. Numerous scriptural commandments of solidarity and mutual support make it impossible to cut off Muslims in one region from the needs, suffering of other Muslim except on pragmatic grounds" (46). This article is a response to Anjum's appeal for resurrecting the caliphate whose ecological governance, as far as this article is concerned, would be in the spheres of both everyday human behavior and the production and treatment of natural capital. The former sphere obtains with both the global network of local devout Muslim communities and Sharia-based countries. The mode of production and treatment of natural capital, by consequence, applies only to the latter. We still need to imagine how to liberate global devout Muslim communities from being subjects of the state, and to bind them under the Green Caliphate's environmental governance. An international consensus is needed to support the legitimacy of global Islamic environmental governance for the devout members of the *Ummah*.

Having been disillusioned by the failure of modern ideologies to solve the problems of Muslim societies, Muslim thinkers have increasingly turned to Islamic models for help. In this regard, Pervez Manzoor (1988) distinguished between 'Sharia-oriented' thought and 'fundamentalist' thought. The former focuses on civil society institutions which foster Islamic practices without necessarily coming into conflict with the state. In contrast, the latter demands nothing less than the capture

of political power at the level of the state. By referring to debates on de/centralization in ecological politics, my PhD puts forward a third model to be considered: relocalization with local governance as a bottom-up model of Muslim community movement. This would facilitate a Dar al-Islam-focused environmental governance for the Ummah within minimal state frameworks. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, I argue that Islamic governance should be organized organically around the center of God's sovereignty (Alkatiri 2018a). Perhaps fortuitously, my proposed model resonates with one proposed by Seyyed Hossein Nasr:

> one can envisage the possibility of the rise, once again, of a trend in the future towards a kind of Islamic political thought which combines the ideal of the unity of the Islamic world, based on culture, Divine Law, intellectual life, etc., with separate political units which embrace the majority peoples and cultural zones of the Islamic world, such as the Arabic, the Persians, the Turkish, etc... (Nasr 1994: 313)

Such a project of 'the unity of Islam as a world civilization' certainly depends on creative interpretations of Shariah. Only such a creative reinterpretation would enables it to work under modern conditions and yet be in consonance with the Islamic conscience, toward lending meaning and cogency to the moral and civilizational aspirations of Muslims today.

In summary, I seek to contribute to ongoing debates by venturing the idea of a Green Caliphate and introducing it to the Schumacherian vision of the "Fourth World":

> We envision a Fourth World, where government and economics are under genuine human control because the size of such units are small, sensible, and human scale, where there is a maximum of decentralized decision-making, and where the pace of change is regulated not by the appetites of an overmighty minority for profit and power, but by the day-to-day needs of small-scale human communities and the psychic capacities of their members to adapt. (McClaughry 1989: x-xi)

Given that the challenges at hand are so enormous, theoretical acceptance of an environmental practice by educated people is not enough. Muslim communities worldwide need leaders like those caricatured as 'hippies'[18] by the developmentalist ideologues, in order to speak to those who long for peace and dare to challenge the established social order, authoritarian politics, conservative modes of behavior, excessive consumerism, and unbalanced concentrations of wealth and power. These personalities could be there already among the Muslim communities around the world (Alkatiri 2021a).

5. Conclusion

The article makes a case for a faith-motivated global environmental governance. In light of the failures of conventional environmentalism on the one hand, and the widening inequalities and crises in the Muslim world on the other, there is every reason to put the Green Caliphate project at the top of the list of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). A global convention is needed to set devout Muslims free to pursue Islamic ways of living in ecologically-sound ways, and, given the presence of various schools and styles of Islam, under any social arrangement they wish. Above all else, there is plenty of evidence that suggests modern civilization as we know it will not make it to the middle of this century. We are very likely entering uncharted territory where we have to figure out new ways of living. Minimalism is going to be the defining theme of the coming future, including perhaps minimal states. Under those circumstances, the Green Caliphate could play very well across the global framework for a post-carbon world, to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Transition Network, Global Ecovillage Network, and other relocalization initiatives.

Endnotes

1   "What is crucial in statist religion, as I foresee, is the elevation of the collective and communal destiny of man to the forefront of public consciousness, and the absolute subordination of private interests to public requirements" (Heilbroner 1977: 95).

2   "Better that we should choose Brave New World and try to make it as benign as possible than to continue along the path of non-politics; for this would surely earn us – quite justly – the enmity of posterity" (Ophuls 1977: 171).

3   Since environmental issues entered the international agenda in the early 1970s, global environmental politics and policies have been developing rapidly (Najam et al 2006, Conca 2015). Global Environmental Governance (GEG) is defined broadly as the sum of organizations, policy instruments, financing mechanisms, rules, procedures, and norms that regulate the processes of global environmental protection. Climate change, and increasingly ocean pollution as well, are at the center of the global framework on environmental governance.

4   There are three scenarios that have been considered to predict imminent socio-ecological events on scientific grounds: Adaptation, Evolution and Collapse. Although we cannot predict the future, science informs us that the future can be predicted by the laws of nature, the restrictions of the planet, the constraints of ecological systems, the availability of resources, and the peculiarities of human individuals and human societies. Adaptation scenarios take for granted that technological innovation will solve everything. Evolution and Collapse scenarios require a radical change of attitude. Evolution insists that society will manage to preserve its coherence, although in a more localized form, and consume less energy and natural resources. Collapse scenarios are based on predictions of the impact of climate change, where the energy crisis will result in fracturing and disintegrating, whether at once or gradually, society as we know it.

5   The following are examples of initiatives being taken in the green community movement (Jackson and Svensson 2002, Hopkins 2008, Norberg-Hodge 2019):

- Local finance, with community banks, credit unions, local investing, local currencies and timebanks, cooperatives.

- Local business, which includes local business alliances, 'Buy local' campaigns, local business loyalty card networks.

- Community energy, where people come together to tackle diverse aspects of low-carbon energy transition. Community energy production is either funded and owned by local communities, or the investment comes from people outside the local communities.

- Community food and farming, with community supported agriculture (CSA) programs in which consumers link up directly with nearby farmers and receive a portion of the harvest throughout the year, farmer's market, permaculture, and farmland trusts. CSA has helped small-scale diversified farms to thrive in growing numbers, and farmland trusts protect arable land from development.

- • Community media, which includes community radio stations, independent TV channels and community-owned broadband.

- • Alternative schooling

- • Traditional and complementary medicine, focusing on prevention with herbal remedies, homeopathy, bodywork, relaxation techniques, and more, while continuing to draw on the emergency and life-saving care that allopathic medicine provides.

- • Community building strategies

- • Various resistance and renewal movements.

6 Drawing substantially on Seyyed Hossein Nasr's works and a unique research method, my use of the term '*Tawhidi* worldview' seeks to contribute to the literature on Islamic philosophy and mysticism. The idea of a unitive (*Tawhidi*) worldview has been deliberated by many scholars, including Ismail Al-Faruqi (1982), Osman Bakar (2010) and Masidul Alam Choudury (2019).

7 'Endogenous' refers to causes, goals, ideas, and motivations originating from within, rather than from without (Haverkort and Rist, 2007: 7).

8 Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (Berger and Luckmann, 1991[1966]), in their sociology of knowledge and of religions, take the view that society is not a system or a mechanism, but rather, a symbolic construction composed of (1) ideas, (2) meaning, and (3) language. Along that line, they argued that Religion and Nationalism are each 'symbolic universes' under which realities are socially constructed. Such a concept of society, in my view, is more readily applicable to the study of Muslims in the context of a global world rather than the national Muslim societies mapped onto the bounded region of the nation state. A 'symbolic universe' can be imagined as a 'pair of glasses' that the person uses to make sense of social realities. It has the capacity to confer identity, to provide meaning, to legitimate and identify allegiances, and to do so with both cognitive and affective components. The 'symbolic universe' is comparable to what anthropologists call 'cosmologies', namely descriptive models of the world and normative models for action, which contain our most fundamental and important assumptions about the world, our place as human beings within it, and what constitutes a good and worthwhile life. Cosmologies also have a paradigmatic or epistemic character, and hence are socially sanctioned and rarely challenged. The difference is that a 'symbolic universe' is developed through the history of a particular human collective's interactions with others, and therefore it also has a capacity to confer identity as a 'cosmology' may not. The origin of the 'symbolic universe', according to Berger & Luckmann, is in the constitution of humans as world-constructors, fearing chaos, needing security and belonging and an explanation of death. Accordingly, for Berger and Luckmann, religion is a social construction, and hence, a human product. From my practicing Muslim background, I introduce the dimension of spiritual or mystical experience and meaning into the conceptual premises of a 'symbolic universe'. This modification

to Berger and Luckmann's model of sociology of knowledge and of religion sets a religious 'symbolic universe' apart, while better explaining Muslims' decisions to act voluntarily. The omission of the mystical dimension and its significance has, I argue, impeded the development of a sociology of religion which rings true from the interior perspectives of those who practice a religion – something that I contend is indispensable if religiosity in modern times is to be better understood.

9   For various references: Indonesia's Finance Minister (Bhwana 2021), India and China over coal (Cursino & Faulkner 2021), African group requests for $1.3 trillion a year (Ainger 2021).

10   For decolonizing the climate movement, see Prashard 2021.

11   The conversations within "Muhammad's nation" were extracted from my ethnographic accounts. The Environmentalist position (B) represents myself and my works (Alkatiri 2015, 2017, 2021a, 2021b).

12   Heidegger distinguished between 'calculative thinking' (goal-driven thinking) and 'meditative thinking' (deeply contemplative of "the meaning which reigns in everything that is") (1995/2003: 89). A product-oriented calculative thinking is the defining feature of modern rationality.

13   The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres admitted: "The collective political will was not sufficient to overcome some deep contradictions" (UN 2021: line 8).

14   On plastic waste and marine pollution in Indonesia, an archipelagic country and the world's second largest fish producer after China, see my work, "The Dilemma of Anti-Fish Campaign" (Alkatiri 2022).

15   In today's world, kindness is no longer enough. These authors enumerated a number of Indonesian Muslim figures regarded as 'liberal'. Among them is former President Abdurrahman Wahid. During his presidency, in an interview with Hutanuwatr and Manivannan (2004: 226-246), when they were discussing an Asian alternative to the Western model of development, Wahid said that he believes Islam is a way of life but did not see a clear concept of state in Islam (237). Wahid adopted a modern nation-state concept for Indonesia, instead, and infused it with the principles that characterized his pursuit of civil society ideals. Advocating libertarian maxims, Wahid wanted to reduce the role of the government. He declared in the cabinet that ministers should not try to curtail or challenge people's creativity. The government should only make plans and then coordinate with NGOs in organizing activities (229). On the other hand, while aiming at 'food sovereignty', he wanted to save the agriculture sector from foreign investment and multinational corporations and keep it, instead, for local communities and peoples (229). Wahid displayed an unfailing good presupposition of others that demonstrates the Indonesian *pesantren*'s characteristic of *husnu dzon* (*husn al-zann* in Arabic, thinking of others and their actions in positive light). Sadly, this virtuous practice is inappropriate to the exploitative world order under the Global North's 'empire' and the uneven distribution of power inherent in contemporary geopolitics. While Wahid wanted to change the strategy

towards economic growth, by not depending on foreign investment, export, and industrialization, and instead building a people's economy and catering for the domestic market (237), he continued to resist the interviewers' negative view of capitalism (230-232). He put forward his confidence in human agency and inherent good nature. Evoking a Sufi doctrine of esoteric possibility, he suggested that even the International Monetary Fund (IMF) can always be changed toward serving the people (233). Notably, the Rupiah went down steadily throughout his period in office. The interviewer provoked the discussion by suggesting that the international agency in control of the Indonesia's money wanted him to fail (233). Still, Wahid resisted this argument. From my "Green Caliphate" perspective, Wahid provides a full-circle experimentation of a civil society activist trying to apply the small-scale, largely homogenous community's contexts of Indonesia's Islamic *pesantren* to the vast, complex, and heterogeneous nation-state system – in this case, demonstrating the limits of the Rawlsian paradigm of distributive justice.

16 Ijtihad is the intellectual effort of trained Islamic scholars to arrive at legal rulings not covered in the schools of law, by reinterpreting the Quran and Sunna while taking into consideration the variables imposed by the fluctuating circumstances of Muslim society.

17 Hallaq (2012) contends, as my article (Alkatiri 2018a) also supports, that the modern nation state is far from compatible with Islam. The caliphate's Islamic governance is dissimilar to the modern 'state' in many ways, including the latter's demands of territorial sovereignty.

18 To be clear, these are the 'visionary hippies' explained by Robert (1969), not the other types.

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