

# Philosophy of Al Farabi

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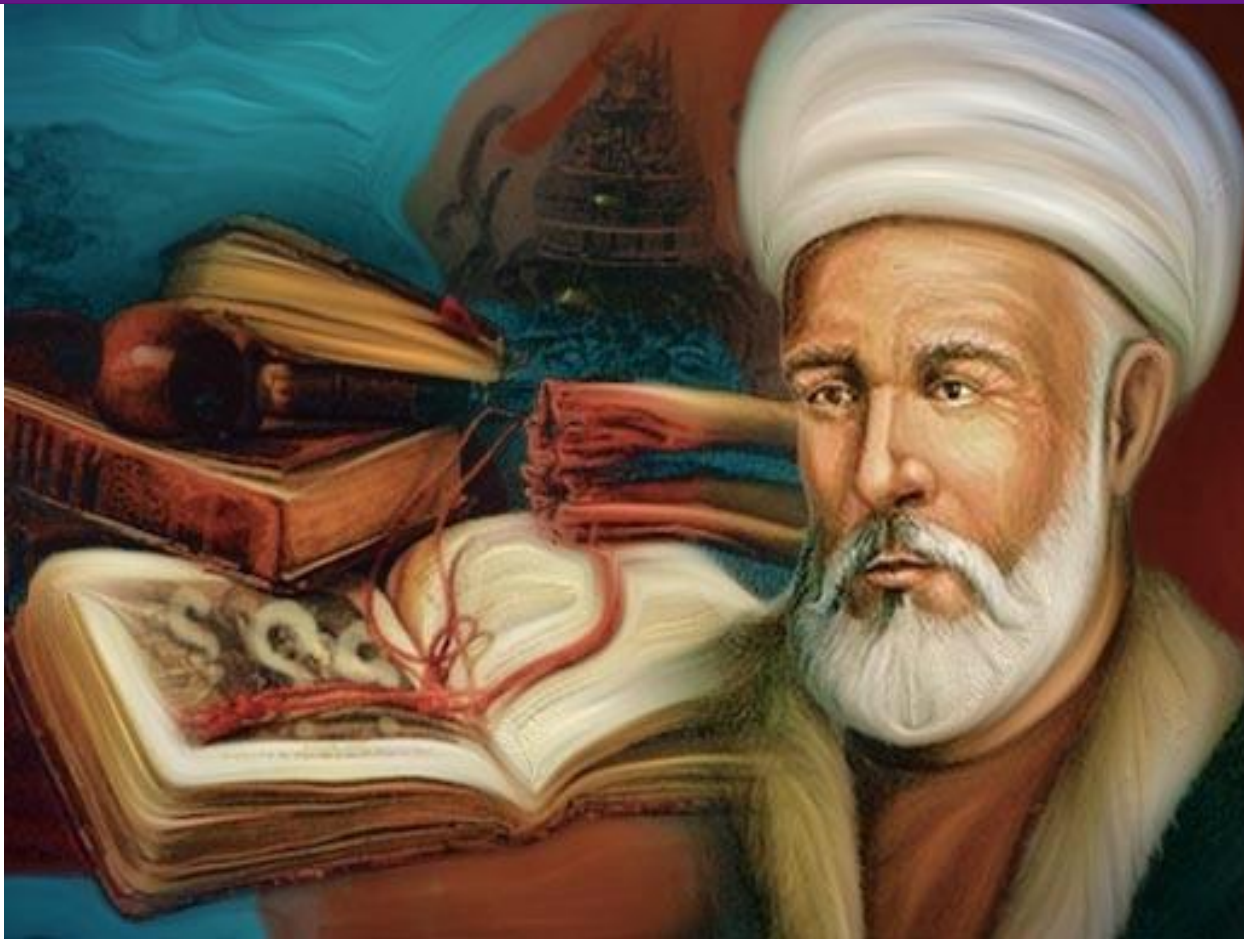
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**Abstract:** *article is about the science that al-Farabi contributed to the history of philosophy.*

**Keywords—** Al Farabi, philosophy, Islamic theology, West and East, “true happiness”.

1. Al Farabi (870-950) is one of the prominent philosopher of classical thinking. He well known as synthesizer of the classical Hellenic philosophy and Islamic theology in the medieval Islamic Golden Age. He was born in Farab/Turkestan and be famous as second master after Aristotle in Islamic world. Indeed, Al Farabi was remarkable thinker in many fields like cosmology, logic and music beside of the dialectic philosophy. Al Farabi explained and commented philosophical ideas of Aristotle and Plato by metaphysical, psychological and philosophical implications of the Islamic principles. Therefore, Farabi has been perceived as an excellent represent of the “renaissance” of the Islamic thinking in the medieval age. Many thinks that Al Farabi inspired from Plato's Republic and Laws for his idea of the ideal society. Additionally, Farabian epistemology described as the Neoplatonist, because of the Aristotelian influence also. Like other all-classical philosopher, Al Farabi also says that the ultimate goal of life is to reach to the “true happiness”. However, according to the Al Farabi the

meaning of the true happiness related with the idealized personality, which may achieve by the self-philosophical enlightenment.<sup>2</sup> In this point, core principles of the creation of ideal personality depends on the collaboration and solidarity. Because, everybody have different talent and nobody may reach to the ideal maturity and perfect personality without contribution of diversification of others. In this point, Al Farabi gives crucial role to the politics to provide necessary conditions for suitable collaboration and solidarity between humans in socio-political level also. Therefore, the meaning of politic is not related only distribution allocation of resources but also related with the harmonizing of different talent by providing ideal condition for development of society by collaboration. Additionally, Al Farabi agree with classical philosophers (Peripatetic) about general functionality of politics and he calls politics as a kind of art like the others. However, differences of Al Farabi is that he explain this functionality by Islamic theology in a special kind of socio-political form also.



2. The political philosophy of Al Farabi stands on the ontological bases. He was tried to find an answer to the core problem of philosophy about that how to be get “true happiness” also. According to the Al Farabi, the meaning of “true happiness” is that to achieve idealized personality by some kind of self-philosophical enlightenment. Moreover, the keywords of this achievement are the collaboration and the solidarity. Because, according to Al Farabi, nobody may able to get this ideal level alone without collaboration and solidarity, because of the diversifications and distribution of talents. In this context, the politics has play important role because of its mission about distribution of resources and regulation of social dynamics. This mission are important for collaboration and solidarity. Therefore, the politics (ilmi siyosat) is a kind of art to reach to the true happiness as a source of theory and praxis in the way of personal perfection and maturity.
3. In Al Farabi philosophy, the human cannot live alone or isolated from communal life because of his social nature. Hence, everybody need help from others to get over all requirement of the life. This obligation creates the community where everybody needs each other to preserve themselves and to attain perfection. This

community serve to the pleasure and acquisition of wealth by self-realization for everybody. In shortly, it is obviously clear that humankind needs to collaboration and solidarity to get true happiness. Politics is a kindof art or practical science for organizing community to reach this objective. In the philosophy of Al Farabi, ethics and politics are inseparable in this context. Because ethics is phenomenological approach to the true happiness and the policy is practice of it.

4. Majid Fakhriy has described al- Farabi as ‘the founder of Arab Neo-Platonizm and firt major figure in the history of that philosophical movement since Proclus. This should be borne in mind as we survey the metaphysics of the philosopher whom the ‘Latin Middle’[after Aristotel]. It should be noted that al-Farabi was an Aristotelian as well as a Neoplatoinst: he is said, for example, to have read On the Soul two hundred times and even the Physics forty times. It should then come as no surprise that he deploys Aristotelian terminology, and indeed there are are of his writings that are quite untouched by Neoplatonizm. Furthermore, al-Farabi tried to demonstrate the basic agreement between Aristotle and Plato on such matters as the cration of the world,the survival of the soul and reward and punishment in the afterlife. In al-Farabi’s conception of God, essence and existence fuse

absolutely with no possible separation between the two. However, there is no getting away from the fact that it is Neoplatonic element which dominates so much else of al-Farabi's work. We see this, for example, in the powerful picture of the transcendent God of Neoplatonism which dominates al-Madina al-fadila. We see this too in al-Farabi's references to God in a negative mode, describing the deity by what he is not: he has no partner, he is indivisible and indefinable. And perhaps we see the Neoplatonic element most of all in the doctrine of emanation as it is deployed in al-Farabi's hierarchy of being.



5. Al-Farabi also wrote a commentary on Aristotle's work, and one of his most notable works is Al-Madina al-Fadila (اراء اهل المدينة الفاضلة ومضاداتها) where he theorized an ideal state as in Plato's The Republic.
6. These brief summaries show how hard it is to ascribe any concrete doctrine to al-Farabi. But one can say something about his general emphasis and themes. He learned from the Greeks, but he wrote for Muslims. He did not attempt to explain Greek practices such as the cult of Zeus or elections by lot to his readers, most of whom would have recognized only the worship of Allah and the rule of the Caliph and his successors. Greek thought as al-Farabi presents it sheds light mainly on issues that concerned his audience. Al-Farabi returns repeatedly to such central Islamic themes as law, prophecy, political succession, and jurisprudence. He

retains the ancient Greek concern with the virtuous city, but enlarges the size of the virtuous community to a nation or many nations, again reflecting the global ambitions of Islam and the imperial conditions of his time. Al-Farabi's physics and metaphysics also appeal to Muslim tastes. He tends to present an immaculately ordered, ranked, and harmonious cosmos led by a single God who embodies every kind of perfection. Even al-Farabi's logical writings are far from being mere repetitions of Aristotle's. In an important passage in the Book of Demonstration, al-Farabi explains how logic needs to be completely reformulated in order to fit the premises familiar to his readers and the Arabic language of his time.

7. Finally, we can say that, Al Farabi is prominent philosopher of the classical thinking as the synthesizer of the Aristoteles, Plato and Islamic thinking in the intersection of both West and East. His ideas is compatible with the modern political theories, definitions and concept. Therefore, Al Farabi may a reference from Eastern world and Islamic teaching for the modern political contemplations such a democracy, international integration, cosmopolitanism etc.

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