

FINDING AL-FĀRĀBĪ IN *THE WALKING DEAD*

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Abstract

In the 21st century, the world offers new philosophical ideas with new discussion platforms, which are technologically advanced visual fields. However, no study considers these modern products to be something that can be read with classical Islamic philosophy. As a post-apocalyptic show, *The Walking Dead* presents a world full of zombies where humans are trying to rebuild their civilization. Therefore, we aim to study this adventure of civilization with the ideas of al-Fārābī, who was one of the most important political philosophers in Islamic thought. This study's purpose is to compare *The Walking Dead* universe with al-Fārābī's political philosophy to bring his ideas to the contemporary world. Thus, the study helps us learn al-Fārābī's philosophical system and shows us how he can still be effective in the modern age. Hopefully, this study proves that this kind of research can adapt the ideas of past thinkers to the current age and creates a connection between past and future thinkers.

Key Words: Al-Fārābī, *The Walking Dead*, political philosophy, the ultimate happiness, civilization, the Virtuous City, zombies.

Introduction

“Drink from the well, replenish the well,”¹ says King Ezekiel in *The Walking Dead* (*TWD*) to show the importance of living together. As the show proves many times, people need to live together, and living together requires having politics. The show is about rewriting the history of human civilization in a post-apocalyptic world. The story starts with the spread of a virus that causes people to turn into walkers, known as zombies. Thus, the world we know, including civilized societies and governments, is ruined, and people start to rebuild a world in which they can feed and protect themselves. Today, philosophical discussions have moved to more visual fields. Television series and movies provide an opportunity to discuss theories and ideologies. The creation of parallel universes gives us a field in which to look at our facts as an outsider so we have a better chance to understand the world in which we live. These parallel universes carry past thinkers’ ideas to different dimensions where those ideas can be discussed by being harmonized with other theories. Shows such as *Lost*, *Westworld*, *Game of Thrones*, or *Supernatural* create these kinds of fields. All have a breaking point that separates their universe from ours, and from that point, human history restarts. At first sight, these shows can seem to be all about those breaking points – an island, a robot, a throne or supernatural creatures – but actually, they discuss the facts we know about our world. Likewise, *TWD* can seem to be only about zombies; however, it also tells a new history of civilization from hunter-gatherer societies to civilized cities by verifying humanity’s political nature.

TWD provides rich settings for discussions of human nature and political thought. Academic research about gender, politics, and ethics occur surrounding *TWD*, as do many discussions about the philosophy of zombies. Among the works of Islamic thought, however, such studies about *TWD* are hard to find. Ozan Sağsöz’s work of “The Walking Dead İçin Bir Mukaddime”² is the only example that studies *TWD* with a classical Islamic thinker. Sağsöz analyzes the show using

¹ Frank Árpád Darabont, prod., *The Walking Dead*, TV Series, Season 7, Episode 2, AMC, 2010.

² Ozan Sağsöz, “The Walking Dead İçin Bir Mukaddime,” *Mukaddime Notları: İbn Haldun’umu Öğreniyorum* (blog), March 12, 2015, <https://mukaddimenotlari.wordpress.com>, accessed April 10, 2017.

Ibn Khaldūn's famous work, *al-Muqaddimah*. Similarly, this work focuses on *TWD* and the philosophy of *al-Fārābī*. With this perspective, the effect of Christianity or nihilism and the place of post-Christianity in *TWD* communities should be mentioned. However, due to the article's limited scope, we focus only on *al-Fārābī*'s perspective. In addition, there are works focus specifically on those topics. For example, in his article "Duality and Dissolution in the Post-Apocalypse: Nietzsche's Cycle of Morality in AMC's *The Walking Dead*," Roy John Gonzales highlights that *TWD* can be examined in terms of Nietzsche's ideas about the cycle of morality from acting for the sake of sustaining communities toward egoistic self-sufficiency and then revaluing the sake of the collective to re-create the civilization.³ Additionally, in her article "'I Kick Arse for the Lord!' Christianity, Coloniality, the Zombie, and the Indian," Gabriel A. Judd examines the conflict between Christianity and zombie culture to draw an analogy between Indians and Western Civilization.⁴

Al-Fārābī was a philosopher who lived during the 10th century and who has been accepted as the second greatest philosophy teacher after Aristotle. His works on metaphysics, logic, and political philosophy had a major influence on later thinkers. His theories on political philosophy were especially important, and he became one of the most important names in this field. He was the first to assert an ideal form of state and an organization for a virtuous community in Islamic thought. He defined virtuous and unvirtuous societies and explained why people need to live together, why the Virtuous City is the best environment for them to reach the ultimate happiness and what the essential qualities of leaders are.

Therefore, this work argues that *al-Fārābī*'s understanding of human nature and his identification of virtuous and unvirtuous communities can be read correspondingly with the survivors and communities in *TWD*. To that end, *al-Fārābī*'s opinions on human nature and communities are examined through the social evolution of humanity in *TWD*. Ultimately, the show is helpful for understanding *al-Fārābī*'s political ideas. It hopefully answers why humans are political

³ Roy John Gonzales, Jr., "Duality and Dissolution in the Post-Apocalypse: Nietzsche's Cycle of Morality in AMC's *The Walking Dead*" (Master's thesis, Texas, TX: Texas A & M International University, 2016).

⁴ Gabriel A. Judd, "'I Kick Arse for the Lord!' Christianity, Coloniality, the Zombie, and the Indian" (Final Paper, Seattle: University of Washington, 2013).

creatures, why they come together, and finally what the Virtuous City is.

This work focuses on three topics: “Being A Political Creature,” “al-Fārābī’s Unvirtuous Cities,” and “The Virtuous City: The Kingdom.” In the first part, the question of why people are political creatures is discussed through al-Fārābī’s explanations, and here, the first seasons of *TWD* are considered because in these seasons, characters are just starting to establish small groups similar to hunter-gatherer communities. In the second part, different communities of *TWD* are compared with al-Fārābī’s unvirtuous communities. Here, the first political organizations, such as the Scavengers, Woodbury, Alexandria, and the Savivors, that are founded in regional areas are the main tools of discussion. In the final part, al-Fārābī’s creation of the Virtuous City and Ezekiel’s Kingdom are compared.

This order is chosen for the discussion because the show starts with the world that was reset by an apocalyptic moment and follows a certain chronological order in the construction of a human civilization. Therefore, the best arrangement is to see how al-Fārābī starts conceptualizing human nature, then describes different communities and finally presents the Virtuous City.

I. Being a Political Creature

TWD starts with a sheriff named Rick who wakes up in a hospital and learns the world ended. A virus spread globally and caused people to turn into a type of cannibal called the walkers. No government or authority is left, similar to the beginning of history. The only ones left are the walkers, who are irrational creatures, and the survivors, who try to build a life for themselves in the new world.

Rick’s search for his wife and son ends in an adventure of founding a civilization. The group’s formation, people’s reaction to the new world, and their struggle between death and life have explanations in al-Fārābī’s political philosophy. Al-Fārābī makes a connection between ethics and metaphysics to shape his political philosophy. Therefore, the first part of this chapter describes how he built the basis for his political philosophy. In the second part, the definition of “the beastly man” is the key point of our discussion, and finally, his creation of communal life is analyzed.

A. Stay Standing or Choosing?

Al-Fārābī's philosophy can be said to start with the idea that human beings are not born with perfect natures but have to reach perfection through their will and choice. For him, being exposed to the attributes of matter is an imperfection. All the creatures that exist sublunary are exposed to the attributes of matter; thus, they are imperfect, however, humans are the most honorable possible creatures because they are capable of reaching perfection.⁵ Reaching perfection means reaching the ultimate happiness, which is humanity's ultimate purpose. Al-Fārābī arranges the human soul's (*al-naḥs*) five main faculties – nutrition, appetite, sense, imagination, and reason⁶ – and, as Ibn Khaldūn declares, reason – the rational faculty, or the ability to think – is humanity's greatest power⁷ because, with their rational faculty, people choose to be together and to form communities in which they can reach happiness. This togetherness is what being a political creature refers to. This ability makes people different from other creatures on earth. A zombie world is a perfect environment in which to see the difference between humans and irrational creatures in terms of fighting for happiness. Most of the classical philosophers thought that people must live in an order that will lead them to the First Cause, which is God. The intellect that people have is the thing that makes them capable of following God, but although zombies look like people, they do not have what people have. Delfino and Tayler stress the same thing in their work on the philosophy of zombies:

Zombies are everything we do not want to be. We're living, they're dead. We're intelligent, they're not. We're civilized, they're cannibalistic beasts. We hope for an afterlife of happiness, they represent an afterlife of horror. If humans are in the image of God, zombies are the reverse image of us – deformed, hideous, and bestial. Zombies force us to contemplate human nature itself and our worst

⁵ Şenol Korkut, *Fārābî'nin Siyaset Felsefesi* (Ankara: Atlas Kitap, 2015), 210.

⁶ Abū Naşr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿArkhān al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārāʾ abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, ed. Albert Naşrī Nādir, 5th ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1985), 87-89.

⁷ Ibn Khaldūn [Abū Zayd Walī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad Ibn Khaldūn], *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 46.

fears about it.⁸

Al-Fārābī continues to create a connection between the ultimate happiness and humanity's political nature and asserts that everything that helps the achievement of happiness is good and everything that prevents happiness is evil.⁹ Goodness and evil can be either voluntary or natural. Al-Fārābī claims that voluntary goodness emerges when people know what happiness is and try to reach it with their five faculties and voluntary evil emerges when people do not direct their faculties to knowing happiness but pursue other pleasures, sovereignty, and honor, or when they prefer these things despite knowing happiness.¹⁰ In al-Fārābī's ideal system, human beings gain goodness in three steps: first, by gaining virtues and skills; second, by being educated in sophisticated and civilized society; and third, by helping the rational soul to attain the level of will and free choice and all of these steps can only be achieved in the Virtuous City.¹¹ Therefore, aiming at the ultimate happiness and perfection makes people political creatures because to do so they need to live in the community.

As al-Fārābī states, "Human beings were created in a nature that needs many things to maintain their lives and to reach perfection, and it is not possible to deal with all those things by themselves,"¹² and "Humans are such a species that it is impossible for them to maintain their vital needs and to be the best at what they do without being together in one place."¹³ This sense of community separates humans from other creatures. Their need for each other is not derived from any animalistic impulses; it is an issue of will and choice.¹⁴ Similarly, Ibn Khaldūn indicates that although bees and locusts have a communal life similar to people, the reason for their togetherness is instinct rather than reason.¹⁵ He claims that for this reason, politics is born in cities:

⁸ Robert Delfino and Kyle Taylor, "Walking Contradictions," in *The Walking Dead and Philosophy: Zombie Apocalypse Now*, ed. Wayne Yuen (Chicago: Open Court, 2016), 51.

⁹ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah al-mulaqqab bi-mabādi' al-maujūdāt*, ed. Fawzi Mitri Najjar (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1993), 72.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 73-74.

¹¹ Korkut, *Fārābī'nin Siyaset Felsefesi*, 218.

¹² Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā' abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 117.

¹³ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 69.

¹⁴ Korkut, *Fārābī'nin Siyaset Felsefesi*, 210.

¹⁵ Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, 42.

people are rational creatures; therefore, their associations must be rationally regulated, they do not come together haphazardly without any aim; unlike other animal groups, they build a political system.¹⁶

In *TWD*, the difference between people and walkers is the same. When a walker group attacks the Atlanta survivors for the second time, Andrea is the first one call the walkers a “herd,” and when Glenn ask “What was that? All of them marching along like that?” Shane says, “A herd, that sounds about right.”¹⁷ Although togetherness provides the same things to both groups, which is the strength to maintain their lives and to find food, they separate themselves from the walkers because while the walkers come together aimlessly, whereas people come together voluntarily. A woman who despises Maggie because of her choice to get pregnant, says that “the point is stay *standing*,” implying that being pregnant means risking her life when many things already threaten people’s lives. However, Maggie rejects her position with a statement that shows the difference between walkers and humans: “No, walkers do that; I am *choosing* something.”¹⁸ Families are the smallest political unit of a community, and Glenn and Maggie embrace the sense of living in a community by choosing to raise a child. They are not creatures that can “march along” like that. Thus, while people establish a “community,” walkers form a “herd.”

B. The Third Option between Being the Butcher or the Cattle

People need to come together in communities because they are civilized creatures, but people exist who are not involved with communal life, people who live far from the cities. Because they lack the environment that could help them make strides towards perfection, they lose their rational and political human sides. Al-Fārābī calls them beastly men:

Then there are congenitally beastly ones among the humans, and these beastly ones are neither political creatures, nor have they any political communities. On the contrary, some of them are like pets, some of them are like wild animals, and some of them are like fierce creatures. Some of them reside in prairies, separately or in groups, live like wild beasts and there are those who live close to the cities. Some of them do

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 336.

¹⁷ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 2, Episode 1.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Season 6, Episode 13.

not eat anything except raw meat or weed, or they hunt for their prey like fierce animals.¹⁹

Due to civilization's end in *TWD*, many beastly ones exist whose rational faculties are blunt or have never been improved. They have a tendency to all evil deeds and establish this evilness in their own nature.²⁰ They become a threat to the survivors. Therefore, they start to distinguish themselves from beastly ones. When Rick is about to lose his mind, he faces a question that later became "the three questions" his group asked people before accepting them into their community: "How many walkers have you killed, how many people have you killed, and why?"²¹ These questions become the key for them to distinguish reliable humans from beastly ones. Because human beings are rational creatures, only they count how many people they have killed, and only they think about why they did it.

Rick meets with a woman while in the woods. The woman has a wildish look and could not be distinguished from a walker. When she says that she and her husband have to hide from people to protect themselves, Rick says, "We need numbers. People are the best defense against walkers or people. We help each other."²² However, she does not go with Rick to his community; rather, she chooses to die like an animal whose wild nature does not allow it to live among people. Apart from any community, she loses that which makes her human: her rational side. She cannot even distinguish walkers from humans. Her husband was a walker, and she was trying to feed him with Rick, like "a fierce animal hunting for its prey."

There are also the cannibals of Terminus. They lost their civilized side after the incidents they lived through, and they began to believe that this is the world's new order: "You're the *butcher* or the *cattle*,"²³ which means either you feed on people like a walker or you became food for others. While the survivors try to distinguish themselves from the walkers, the people of Terminus tend to resemble them; they

¹⁹ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 87.

²⁰ Fārābī [Abū Naşr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṭarkhān al-Fārābī], *Fusulü'l-Medeni: Siyaset Felsefesine Dair Görüşler*, ed. D. M. Dunlop, trans. Hanifi Ozcan (İzmir: Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1987), 33.

²¹ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 3, Episode 6.

²² *Ibid.*, Season 4, Episode 1.

²³ *Ibid.*, Season 5, Episode 1.

choose to live like them. They are together to hunt, and they do not have any other purpose. They isolate themselves from the outside world and they draw people into their trap to eat them. Al-Fārābī states that, “Those who are not beneficial but dangerous must be treated like wild animals,”²⁴ so the survivors killed cannibals to protect themselves and to prevent them from hurting people.

Al-Fārābī likened beastly humans to animals, which is the opposite of civilized and rational human beings, and the people of Terminus and the woman in the woods are likened to the walkers, who are the new antithesis of civilized and rational human beings in *TWD*. These people are corrupted; they were not born as cannibals. Beastly humans are also not born like that; they are the ones who cannot improve towards the perfection because they did not engage in the communal and civilized life. Their unvirtuous side grew in the isolated and uncivilized life of animals. All people are born with an imperfect nature, and they are left to improve their voluntary evil or voluntary goodness by their will and choice. Either they can be the most glorious creatures, or they can be inferior even to animals.

Plato discusses a dilemma that a man can be drawn into. He believes that if a man has to choose between living like a beast and dying, he should choose death.²⁵ Rather than being a butcher, humanity should choose to be cattle because being the butcher means losing one’s humanity. In *TWD*, the survivors are faced with the same question. A scientist gives them the opportunity to die without feeling any pain. They choose not to do so, but after a while, when Rick’s son was shot, his mother regrets refusing the scientist’s offer. She says, “If he survives, he ends up just another animal who doesn’t know anything except survival.”²⁶ She is aware that people are not like other creatures, which only care about survival. Likewise, while Maggie looks for Glenn, Sasha says, “We should be searching for food and shelter instead,” and Bob says in return, “maybe we didn’t survive just to keep surviving.”²⁷ Life is not only about searching for the necessary needs because doing so is what animals or the walkers do. For humans as rational creatures, life must be something else. Otherwise, we end

²⁴ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 87.

²⁵ Muhsin Mahdi, tr., *Alfarabi: Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle*, rev. ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 63-64.

²⁶ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 2, Episode 3.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Season 4, Episode 10.

up being like the beastly ones. As al-Fārābī said, humans are given reason and free will, and with these faculties, either they can give meaning to their life or they can choose to live like an animal. To Plato's question, al-Fārābī probably would suggest that a man does not have to choose between the two. A third option exists, which is building a meaningful life by searching for happiness, and, as previously asserted, people cannot build a life by themselves. For this reason, Bob and Sasha do not leave Maggie by herself but stand by her in her search for Glenn.

C. The Rule of Making It Together

The question of "what is community" is one of al-Fārābī's main questions. He distinguishes complete communities (*al-ijtimā'āt al-kāmilab*) from incomplete communities (*al-ijtimā'āt al-nāqışab*). Complete communities are cities, nations (*ummah*) and societies, and incomplete communities are families, streets, neighborhoods, and villages.²⁸ In his estimation, communities must have sciences, arts, and education to explain their virtuousness because these factors represent completion. With education, each person has a different expertise; thus, the virtues arise. Without all of these, an environment is not created that will help people achieve the ultimate purpose which is happiness, and incomplete communities have no education in the sciences or arts; therefore, we cannot talk about the virtuousness of incomplete communities; as art belongs to the city, virtuousness belongs only to the city.²⁹

Al-Fārābī also notes three things that connect people in the community: love, collaboration, and hierarchy. At the beginning of the apocalypse, people first try to reach the ones to whom are related. In the Atlanta camp, almost all members have a family bond with one another, and even the fight for the leader corresponds with being a father.³⁰ The smallest units of communities are families; families are parts of streets, streets are part of neighborhoods, and neighborhoods are part of cities.³¹ Like organs working together for the sake of the body, families work in the same kind of order, they are superior to one

²⁸ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā' abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 117-118.

²⁹ Korkut, *Fārābī'nin Siyaset Felsefesi*, 288.

³⁰ James Aston, "The Post-apocalyptic Family in *The Walking Dead*," <https://www.academia.edu>, accessed April 10, 2017.

³¹ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā' abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 118.

another in different ways, and they work together for the sake of the house and the city.³² Glenn's words about being together describe the same thing: "We can *make it together*, but we can only make it together."³³ While he is referring to keeping his family together, a resident of Alexandria invites them to join that community with the same words Glenn used. Thus, collaboration starts in the family, then moves to the city; if families come together around the same purpose and work in mutual assistance, a city emerges. *Al-Fārābī* mentions a kind of hierarchical order in this formation by comparing it with the body's organization. As he implies, a city must have a leader, much as a body must have a heart; some members are closer to the leader in their works, and others are farther.³⁴ Thus, everybody in the collaboration has a different responsibility. The same thing is notable in *TWD*; while Rick is the heart, Glenn is the strategist "city guy" who runs to city centers to scavenge. Dale and Hershel represent the group morality, and Daryl is the muscle, with his hunting and tracking skills.

Different parts of cities – like individuals, families, and neighborhoods – hold on to each other with love. Love first emerges in the city with participation based on merits, which means people come together around the same thoughts and purposes; then, mutual love emerges among the people.³⁵ When they start to help each other, to benefit from each other, love based on profit arises; finally, when they start to enjoy each other, love based on enjoyment emerges.³⁶ This love builds a connection among the city's members. In *TWD*, they come together around the idea of "there is us and the dead. We survive this by working together, not apart,"³⁷ similar to what Glenn says about making it together. Out of their collaboration, the love based on benefit is born. When they spend substantial time together, and because of the many incidents they live through, they start to share a love based on enjoyment. Glenn prays for his friends, Daryl puts himself in danger for Carol's daughter, and Carol starts to care about Daryl more than anyone else. Once they have this connection, they become a strong community. This phenomenon is similar to what Ibn Khaldūn calls the

³² Fārābī, *Fusulū 'l-Medeni*, 37; *al-Fārābī, Kitāb ārā' abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 118.

³³ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 5, Episode 10.

³⁴ *Al-Fārābī, Kitāb ārā' abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 120-121.

³⁵ Fārābī, *Fusulū 'l-Medeni*, 52.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 53.

³⁷ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 1, Episode 2.

group feeling (*‘aşabiyyah*). He identifies it as the feeling that “makes for mutual support and aid and increases the fear felt by the enemy.”³⁸ The group feeling is accompanied by difficulties that the group lives through and is stronger in Bedouin communities than in safe cities.³⁹ With the group feeling, Rick’s group becomes a strong group that other groups are afraid of. When they first enter Alexandria, the difference between the two communities is obvious. While Rick’s group members see each other as family and have the courage to risk their lives for each other, the people of Alexandria do not have this strong connection because they have been living in safety since the beginning of apocalypse.

II. Al-Fārābī’s Unvirtuous Cities

Al-Fārābī believes that many unvirtuous ideas occur among unvirtuous communities. Some claim that the most successful tyrant is the perfect one; they want to make others their slaves because they suppose that everything exists just for them.⁴⁰ Others believe that it is natural to keep what you have for yourself and try to seize people’s goods; the one who is most successful defeating others is the happiest.⁴¹ Finally, some people argue that no emotional connection occurs between individuals and that they are only connected by the necessities.⁴² Thus, while the Virtuous City aims at the ultimate happiness, unvirtuous cities aim at physical power or superiority.

When people come together with such ideas, naturally, this association does not produce virtuousness. Despite the general perception that peaceful cities or democratic cities are good, al-Fārābī does not regard them as virtuous; thus, his definition of unvirtuous cities must be understood in order to understand his concept of the Virtuous City. Al-Fārābī’s political philosophy encompasses four types of unvirtuous cities. First is the wicked city (*al-madīnah al-fāsiqah*). These people know real happiness and everything that the people of the Virtuous City know, but they act like an ignorant city.⁴³ The second

³⁸ Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, 98.

³⁹ Sağsöz, “Walking Dead Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme I,” *Mukaddime Notları: İbn Haldun’umu Öğreniyorum* (blog).

⁴⁰ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā’ abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 152.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 133.

is the city that intentionally changes its character (*al-madīnab al-mubaddalab*). The people of this city have the same opinions and deeds as the Virtuous City, but they change them.⁴⁴ Third is the city that misses the right path because of the wrong judgment (*al-madīnab al-ḍāllab*). The people of this city aim at the ultimate happiness and believe in what the people of Virtuous City believe, but they do not have the right information about those beliefs; their first ruler is usually a fraud.⁴⁵ Last is the ignorant city (*al-madīnab al-jāhilab*), whose people do not know the ultimate happiness; even if they are taught what it is, they neither understand nor believe in it; thus, they seek what they think is good, such as bodily health, wealth, earthly pleasures or honor.⁴⁶ Al-Fārābī focuses on the ignorant cities, which are the city of necessity (*al-madīnab al-ḍarūriyyab*), the city of wealth and riches (*al-madīnab al-nadbālah*), the city of depravity and baseness (*madīnat al-khissab wa-l-suqūṭ*), the city of honor (*madīnat al-karāmab*), the city of tyranny (*madīnat al-tagballub*), and the democratic city (*al-madīnab al-jamā'iyyab*). Ignorant cities are formed for one of four reasons: for basic necessities, via a tyrant, out of disagreement about the kind of attachment that should exist, or from the idea of peaceful cities. Each of the ignorant cities is centered around one of these four reasons. Al-Fārābī formed his classification based on Plato's ideas. Compared to today's states, which mostly focus on democratic discourses, both philosophers' ideas may seem unusual, but their perspective is different due to the situation of their times. *TWD* uncovers this difference by forming different types of states at the beginning of civilization. Therefore, in this chapter, both ignorant cities and unvirtuous reasons are analyzed through *TWD* communities.

A. The City of Necessity: the Scavengers

Al-Fārābī indicates that some cities are formed without any attachment among their members, hate is normal in them and they only come together for mandatory things, and when this necessity that brings them together is removed, they return to hating each other.⁴⁷ In *TWD*, this kind of formation can be seen among the Scavengers and among the hospital community in which Beth ends up. Both groups

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 131.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 153.

might be considered examples of the city of necessity, which is also the first of the ignorant cities. “People of this city cooperate for obtaining bodily necessities like eating, drinking, clothing, housing, and sexual intercourse.”⁴⁸ They have many methods such as farming, raising livestock, hunting, and robbery to acquire necessities.⁴⁹ Neither the hospital nor the Scavengers come together through any kind of attachment or commitment. The only thing that brings them together is the need for things that keep them alive. Therefore, unvirtuous rules run them. However, when al-Fārābī talks about people’s political nature, he does not mean that the only reason they come together is to acquire vital necessities. The city of necessity is unvirtuous because its members come together *only* for vital needs; therefore, arts, sciences or artisanship cannot be produced, so merits and virtues cannot exist. The doctor of the community in the hospital says, “art isn’t about survival; it is about transcendence and being more than animals, rising above.”⁵⁰ He appears to not believe in people’s ability to do art in this post-apocalyptic world. Although Beth tries to prove otherwise, the people of his city do not have the capacity to form a community that would produce arts and sciences. The only thing that keeps them together in the hospital is their fear of the outside world in which they cannot find food or protection. The Scavengers in a heap of trash, are in a similar situation. Their code – “we take; we don’t bother”⁵¹ – explains why they are called Scavengers. As their name implies, they scavenge only what they need to maintain their lives, and anything more than that is only more trash to them. In addition, they use a primitive language. The actor who plays their leader discloses a connection between their language and their social character:

It’s very succinct, clear, and to the point. And as you can see from the heap and how all the trash is used, there’s nothing that is wasted. In this case, it’s the word; there’s no need for extraneous words, it’s just what you need and direct. The rest is just to be dropped back in the trash.⁵²

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁴⁹ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 88.

⁵⁰ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 5, Episode 4.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Season 7, Episode 10.

⁵² Lesley Goldberg, “Did ‘The Walking Dead’ Just Officially Introduce the Whisperers?” *The Hollywood Reporter*, February 19, 2017,

Whether they will become more sophisticated is unclear because they start to communicate with other communities, but for now, they seem to be a practical group that only focuses on necessities.

The difference between the beastly ones and the people of the city of necessity should be explained. Al-Fārābī describes them as two distinct groups because what makes the beastly ones unvirtuous is that they do not or cannot live in a community. However, like the Scavengers, the city of necessity can organize into a union and cooperate. Its people collaborate for their vital needs; they can produce policies, so a difference remains between them and the animals. They are just the most primitive communities; therefore, they are unvirtuous, but as a city, they are the most inclined to be the Virtuous City.⁵³

B. The City of Honor: Woodbury

Woodbury is the first community in *TWD* that reminds us of the Virtuous City. As al-Fārābī declared, the city of honor is the best city out of the ignorant cities; however, if the desire for honor is too extreme, then this city may become a city of tyranny.⁵⁴ People of this city cooperate to gain honor and fame among other communities and to be treated with respect.⁵⁵ The Governor wants only to be respected and to be known in return for what he gives people. He canonizes Woodbury in his rhetorical speeches and its people canonize him. The bond that people of Woodbury have is based on a shared leader and a shared place. The Governor and the city itself are the most glorious things. In her words, “years from now, when they write about this plague in the history books, they will write about Woodbury,”⁵⁶ Andrea highlights this glory. Their desire is not only to fulfill vital needs, gain enormous wealth, or subdue others but also to gain fame in history and be respected for their achievement. Al-Fārābī considers this behavior unvirtuous because without any association in beliefs or deeds, these people only come together around a sanctified city and a sanctified leader. When the ruler’s blessings for his or her people start to

<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/live-feed/walking-dead-who-is-jadis-are-they-whisperers-alpha-977624>, accessed May 30, 2017.

⁵³ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 102.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 94.

⁵⁵ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārāʾ abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 132.

⁵⁶ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 3, Episode 9.

disappear, the bond they have will weaken, and finally, it will vanish.⁵⁷ Likewise, when the sanctity attributed to the city and its leader are lost in the first attack on Woodbury, the social bond also vanishes because the only thing that binds them together is this sanctity. Therefore, instead of staying and fighting to protect what they have, people want to leave.

Another example that allows us to compare Woodbury with the city of honor is the Governor's attitude towards Rick's group. When the Governor explains why his people should attack the prison, he says, "We gotta take out the group that's living there. Let the biters move back in."⁵⁸ The Governor does not want the prison to move his community there or he does not want to seize their goods; he only wants to destroy these people who are smart enough to take a prison full of walkers. The Governor does not want to lose the glory and the superiority he has. If Rick's group establishes a glorious community in the prison, the people of Woodbury will soon to hear about that community's reputation and the Governor will face the threat of not being the only honorable leader.

Although al-Fārābī considers the city of honor the best city among ignorant cities, he explains that if the desire for honor becomes too great, this city can become a city of tyranny. When his army cannot defeat Rick's group, the Governor kills all of his soldiers. The Governor is always a tyrant because of his extreme passion for glory and honor, but when he starts to reveal his true nature, even the people closest to him start to turn against him. Plato claims that the more wars a tyrant starts against his rivals to maintain his authority, the angrier his citizens become, and finally, the boldest of his influential partisans will find fault with his policy.⁵⁹ Likewise, the desire for honor makes the Governor such a tyrant that he kills the people closest to him in the process of building Woodbury and keeping it safe.

In short, the city of honor has the capacity to turn into a city of tyranny; al-Fārābī connects the city of tyranny, the city of wealth and the city of depravity with the city of honor based on this capacity for transformation. All of these cities place too much importance on

⁵⁷ Korkut, *Fârâbî'nin Siyaset Felsefesi*, 394.

⁵⁸ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 3, Episode 8.

⁵⁹ Plato, *Republic*, trans. John Llewelyn Davies and David James Vaughan (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1997), 288.

wealth, honor or pleasure, and when they cannot gain these, they use tyrannical methods to obtain them by force; thus, they become tyrants.⁶⁰ In addition, a city may include all of these goals, like the Saviors.

C. The City of All Unvirtuousness: the Saviors

The Saviors are the biggest villains among the communities of *TWD*, and it might be claimed that they carry all unvirtuousness al-Fārābī compiles for the city of wealth and riches, the city of depravity and baseness, and the city of tyranny.

First, they are similar to the city of wealth and riches because they are always hungry for more. The only purpose of the city of wealth is to accumulate more than it needs, the richest is the most superior, and to gain wealth, people use the methods of the city of necessity such as farming, raising livestock, hunting, and robbery.⁶¹ Likewise, the Saviors trade with others or plunder them, and they accumulate wealth for wealth's sake alone, unlike the Scavengers. The Scavengers do not desire wealth; they use everything they have, and all else is just trash. However, the Saviors must have more than others. When the Saviors come to Hilltop, they do not just take food or weapons. They also take a painting that belongs to Hilltop's leader, not because they care about art but because others cannot have something that the Saviors do not. That would be the opposite of the Saviors' goal of being the richest.

Second, the Saviors are similar to the city of depravity and baseness because they are also fond of everything that gives them earthly pleasures. In the city of depravity and baseness, people cooperate for somatic pleasures or for the pleasures of the imagination, such as entertainment, they want such things because they enjoy them, not because their bodies benefit from them; they assume that the one who has the most resources for play and enjoyment is the happiest.⁶² Negan tries to seduce Eugene with all of these resources along with tyrannical threats. Eugene is given the right to play Atari, to have whatever he wants. The fact that he carries the pickles that are given to him throughout an entire episode shows that he enjoys these privileges and he becomes closer to being one of the Saviors.

⁶⁰ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 98.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁶² *Ibid.*

The Saviors also resemble the city of tyranny. One of the unvirtuous reasons al-Fārābī underlined was coming together via a tyrant, and this seems the biggest reason for the Saviors' aggregation. For al-Fārābī, people of the tyrant city cooperate to gain superiority⁶³ and "some want power to spill blood, some want it to gain wealth and some want it to enslave others."⁶⁴ The Saviors seem to have all three features asserted in al-Fārābī's argument. They want the power to spill blood, and they want resistance from people because they enjoy subduing others. Al-Fārābī declares that those who subdue others for spilling blood do not kill a sleeper or steal from him.⁶⁵ The qualities that distinguish the Saviors' or the Wolves' from the murders of Rick's group can help explain al-Fārābī. The Wolves attack people just to kill and steal from them. They attack in the daylight because they enjoy killing. Similarly, the Saviors have a code to kill a person in each group they want to enslave. Killing and stealing become basic methods by which both groups gain dominance. While the Wolves mark the bodies of people they kill with their initials, the Saviors take their photos because they want to be known and to be feared. However, Rick's group attacks the Saviors in their sleep and kills them without facing any resistance. Although this attack seems more brutal, it is the opposite because Rick's group does not kill to have fun or to gain sovereignty. The Saviors are also tyrants because they use power to gain wealth. As stated previously, the Saviors use any method to gain wealth, except scavenging because they use other communities to do that. They force other cities to deliver what they have scavenged. While others serve them, the Saviors enjoy wealth, pleasure, and power. This phenomenon creates the third factor that makes the Saviors tyrants, which is enslaving others. The Saviors have a hierarchy based on tyranny. Negan is the head, the tyrant. He has men such as Simon and Dwight, and although they are Negan's slaves, they have the power to subdue others. Finally, there are the people at the bottom, who have no right to benefit from Negan's sovereignty. Al-Fārābī divides tyrant cities into three types using the same criterion: "Only one of the people (*bi-wāḥid min ablibā*: the leader) might be a tyrant, or half of the people might be tyrant or all of the people might be tyrant."⁶⁶ The Saviors may be included in the second group. Negan is the head of the

⁶³ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 94.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 97.

tyrants because he is the richest, the most tyrannical, and the one who receives all of the pleasure. The Savivors accept his authority by saying “I am Negan” because they are forced to have a deific respect for their leader. Their desire for wealth and earthly pleasures makes some of them tyrants over others. They may consider themselves the happiest community because of what they have, but neither Plato nor al-Fārābī regards this happiness as real. Plato’s words summarize the Savivors’ situation. He claims that those who are not familiar with wisdom and virtue, who only aim at perpetual banqueting and who fight with each other over these enjoyments, will never reach true pleasure but will only fill the unreal part of their nature with unreal things.⁶⁷

D. The Democratic City: Alexandria

Alexandria is the most apparent example of the democratic city in *TWD*. Deanna, the leader of Alexandria, identifies this place as “the start of sustainability.”⁶⁸ They claim to rebuild civilization away from the terrifying world behind the city walls. The basic idea of democratic cities is that people should not fight with each other because they belong to the same species: humanity.⁶⁹ Al-Fārābī describes the goal of democratic cities as “being free and doing whatever they wish without restraining their passions in the least.”⁷⁰ Although democratic cities are accepted as the best state formation today, both Plato and al-Fārābī regard them as unvirtuous. Plato believed that democratic cities did not have any order; in these cities, people could choose not to submit to the government or not to keep the peace even though others tried to do so.⁷¹ Al-Fārābī agrees with him in believing that all types of lives exist in democratic cities, but he does not reject the idea that virtuous people can also be there due to this diversity.⁷² In Alexandria, people such as Nicholas, Pete, and Aiden are corrupt. However, Deanna feels as though she cannot do anything to prevent their behaviors. Although Pete terrorizes his wife and sons, nobody stops him. When Rick offers to split them up, Deanna refuses him and says, “What happens if he

⁶⁷ Plato, *Republic*, 313.

⁶⁸ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 5, Episode 12.

⁶⁹ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā’ abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 164.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 133.

⁷¹ Plato, *Republic*, 276.

⁷² Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 100-101.

does not want to do that?”⁷³ She emphasizes that they cannot force or kill him because a civilization exists, but they let him do whatever he wants, although the things he does are not civilized. Therefore, al-Fārābī and Plato believed that democratic cities’ free environment could not prevent evil.

In addition, for al-Fārābī, the ruler must have particular attributes and a connection with the Active Intellect. Therefore, the democratic regime that creates no difference between the ruler and the ruled ones is not a virtuous system to him. The ruler’s attributes that al-Fārābī introduces show that a leader must have the capacity to make quick decisions, to repair any damage in the community, and to give people a common purpose. However, in democratic systems, the ruled ones give the instructions, while the leaders rule according to the desire of the people.⁷⁴ When Rick says, “this isn’t a democracy anymore,”⁷⁵ he means that whenever they need to make a decision, the situation becomes a fight because everybody wants something different. Eventually, Rick refers to this previous conversation and accepts that he was wrong about declaring a dictatorship. He continues to be the leader by finding a middle way between despotism and democracy. The problem of democracy arises again when Deanna wants to exile Rick from Alexandria by organizing a forum. Maggie says, “You let Rick in; you let all of us in. You talked to us; you decided. Now you want to put that decision on a group of very frightened people who might not have the whole story. That’s not leadership.”⁷⁶ Maggie criticizes Deanna’s leadership because Deanna does not take the responsibility of making a hard decision. Instead, she leaves the decision to the people who have limited knowledge about the situation.

Perhaps for these reasons, Rick’s group has difficulty living in Alexandria at the beginning, but later, they transform Alexandria because as al-Fārābī declares, founding a virtuous people’s regime is easier in democratic cities than in other cities.⁷⁷ In forthcoming seasons, Alexandria might evolve to become a virtuous organization, but for now, they seem to be at the start of sustainability.

⁷³ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 5, Episode 15.

⁷⁴ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 99.

⁷⁵ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 2, Episode 13.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, Season 5, Episode 16.

⁷⁷ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 102.

In conclusion, as al-Fārābī asserted, “some people of ignorant cities have peaceful souls, but some of them have wicked souls.”⁷⁸ While keeping the peace among people is the main purpose of the first group, the main purpose of last group is to be superior to others. Therefore, the Virtuous City must be right in between them.

III. The Virtuous City: The Kingdom

“Civilization starts when we stop running, when we live together,”⁷⁹ says Reg. Ibn Khaldūn, uses a similar description when he describes civilization as something that separates humans from other creatures: “It means that human beings have to dwell in common and settle together in cities and hamlets for the comforts of companionship and for the satisfaction of human needs.”⁸⁰ Thus, Reg’s words underline a transformation in *TWD*: the foundation of the first cities such as Alexandria, Hilltop, the Saviors, and the Scavengers. However, among them, the Kingdom is the first community that can be compared with what Plato, al-Fārābī, and other philosophers talked about: a virtuous city. King Ezekiel’s realm is the only kingdom in *TWD*, and it differs from other communities in terms of its ruler and its people. Because of Ezekiel’s tiger, his Shakespearean attitudes and his people’s enormous respect for him, Carol thinks that this place is like a circus⁸¹ at first. However, later, she becomes one of the King’s most trusted friends. Thus, this might be a good setting in which to understand al-Fārābī’s Virtuous City, which also appears to be a place whose reality is difficult to imagine.

A. Larger Than Life: King Ezekiel

One of the first things that constitutes Plato’s or al-Fārābī’s ideal cities special is that the first ruler must be a philosopher. They both believe that the leader must be someone who reaches perfection in happiness and wisdom. Because only philosophers can do that, the leader of the Virtuous City must be a philosopher. Of course, these philosophers must have the capacity to rule. Plato argues that as long as political power and philosophical wisdom cannot be united in one

⁷⁸ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā’ abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 166.

⁷⁹ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 5, Episode 16.

⁸⁰ Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, 43.

⁸¹ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 7, Episode 2.

person, the state will not reach deliverance.⁸² Al-Fārābī identifies the leader as, “The person who is at the highest level of humanity and happiness and whose soul is united with the Active Intellect.”⁸³ Ezekiel means the strength of God; thus, for the first time in *TWD*, a connection seems to exist between a ruler and God. Reaching God and acquiring the highest level of happiness and wisdom are important for al-Fārābī because the leader should organize the city in a harmony in which people cooperate to destroy evil and to gain virtues.⁸⁴ In addition, leaders must differentiate the good from the evil giftedly so they can organize this harmony. For this reason, the leader must be at the highest level of happiness and wisdom. For instance, when Carol first meets with Ezekiel, she tries to deceive him with her act of being an old and weak woman. She appears to believe in Ezekiel and to trust him, but Ezekiel does not believe her act. He offers her fruit to test her. When Carol does not accept the offer, he understands that Carol does not trust Ezekiel and she is not as much of a fool as she seems. Only then does Ezekiel realize Carol’s problem. He stops her when she tries to escape from the Kingdom, and he offers her a cure.

Al-Fārābī believes that the first ruler has to produce a *millab*, which aims to place a particular purpose in the community: “this *millab* is thoughts and acts that are limited by the leader and founded by him in accordance with the conditions of community.”⁸⁵ Ezekiel’s words written on the walls might be compared with al-Fārābī’s description, although they are not completely like al-Fārābī’s. Ezekiel’s words are something that none of the other leaders have in *TWD*. Moreover, these words are not all that makes Ezekiel first “good” ruler on *TWD*:

Unlike Alexandria’s leader Deanna, Ezekiel knows how to balance security and prosperity... Unlike the Governor, Ezekiel doesn’t rule to have power or control over other lives, but rather because people need somebody to follow. Ezekiel views leadership as a burden to bear, not as a way to gain power and domination over others. Unlike Negan, Ezekiel is not cruel. Unlike Rick, Ezekiel has built something sturdy and

⁸² Plato, *Republic*, 178.

⁸³ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā’ abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 125-126.

⁸⁴ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, 84.

⁸⁵ Fatih Toktaş, “Fārābī’nin *Kitābü’l-Mille* Adli Eserinin Takdim ve Çevirisi,” *Dîvân: İlmî Araştırmalar* 12, no. 1 (2002), 258.

sustainable. He is driven by intellect and patience, not raw emotion and reaction.⁸⁶

When Deanna tries to secure her community, her people live away from the real world behind walls and they weaken. When the Governor intemperately pursues honor and power, he turns into a tyrant, and his village is ruined. While Rick does everything to protect his people, he is faced with losing his humanity many times. However, Ezekiel protects his people by creating an environment in which they can learn how to fight, and he builds a valuable life for them that has a purpose. He becomes their leader because he believes that this protection is his responsibility, not because of any earthly desires. He finds a way to protect his people without losing his control and his humanity. Thus, Ezekiel might be compared with the philosopher king who provides his people a purpose to live for and a way of life to live with.

Al-Fārābī also tries to address how communities emerge. For Ibn Khaldūn, without a strong authority, man cannot exist.⁸⁷ Al-Fārābī describes the same need by comparing the human body to the community. Just as the heart is the first organ to exist and is the reason for the other organs' existence, the leader is the first one to exist and he is the reason for others' existence.⁸⁸ Ezekiel says,

People want someone to follow; it's human nature. They want someone to make them feel safe, and people who feel safe are less dangerous, more productive. They see a dude with a tiger, they start telling stories about finding it in the wild, wrestling it into submission, turning it into his pet. They make the guy *larger than life*, a hero. And who am I to burst their bubble? Next thing you know, they treat me like royalty. They wanted – they needed – someone to follow, so I acted the part.⁸⁹

Ezekiel does not choose to be a leader; instead, people follow him as a leader. He is the first to appear. As long as the leader lives, the

⁸⁶ Erik Kain, "The Walking Dead' Season 7, Episode 2 Review: Long Live King Ezekiel," *Forbes*, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/erikkain/2016/10/30/the-walking-dead-season-7-episode-2-review-long-live-king-ezekiel/#157e7d19fa9d>, accessed June 8, 2017.

⁸⁷ Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, 42.

⁸⁸ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā' abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 120.

⁸⁹ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 7, Episode 2.

community lives. As the heart gives a reason for other organs to work, the leader gives a reason for others to live. As the heart tries to prevent and repair any damage in the body, the leader tries to protect and cure his community. Herewith, al-Fārābī likens a leader to a doctor and claims that the leader must cure the sick in the community by helping those who are sick to reach the goodness in conformity with other parts of the community.⁹⁰ Likewise, both Morgan and Carol heal in Ezekiel's kingdom. They are opposite characters: Carol is a cold-blood murderer, while Morgan refuses to kill even in the war. When killing consumes her humanity, Carol starts to lose her sanity. She cannot stop killing despite wanting to; thus, she decides to live by herself away from people. However, Ezekiel offers her an isolated house outside the Kingdom but close to it. He says to her, "You can go and not go."⁹¹ Thus, he can visit her occasionally enough to protect her, and at the same time, she can have the space she wanted. Morgan, on the other hand, lost his mind when his son died, and he gains his humanity only after he decided not to kill at all. However, in the Kingdom, when the Saviors kill his student Benjamin, he almost loses his mind again. The only thing that keeps him sane is the world Ezekiel founded; as Benjamin says right before his death, "The world does drive people crazy now. But you made us *another world*."⁹² In the same episode when Morgan is about to lose his mind by deciding to kill all the Saviors, Carol stops him by offering the same solution Ezekiel offered her once, "You can go and not go."⁹³ At the end of the season, they both return to the community and join the war against the Saviors.

This section can rightly conclude with the twelve qualities that al-Fārābī attributed to the first ruler, which include those previously described regarding the first ruler. First, all the leader's organs must be complete, so he can use them properly. Second, the leader should have the capacity to understand and to envision everything that he has been told. Third, the leader's memory must be strong, so he cannot forget anything he understands, sees, hears or comprehends. Fourth, the leader must be clever to understand the real meanings behind the signs. Fifth, the leader must have the art of eloquence to express his thoughts in the best way. Sixth, the leader must love to learn. Seventh,

⁹⁰ Fārābī, *Fusulü'l-Medeni*, 37.

⁹¹ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 7, Episode 2.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Season 7, Episode 13.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

the leader should not be fond of earthly pleasures such as eating, drinking, sexual pleasure or gambling. Eighth, the leader must love honesty and honest people while being disgusted at lying and liars. Ninth, the leader must be magnanimous, and he must love exalted things. Tenth, possessions such as money should have no value to him. Eleventh, the leader must love justice and just ones, he must hate tyranny or dictatorship, and he should not hesitate to provide justice to the people. Finally, the leader must be determined to do whatever he thinks has to be done and to do it bravely.⁹⁴

B. Making Another World: the Kingdom

The Virtuous City is “the city whose residents cooperate to acquire the perfection in the things that are needed for real existence for continuity of existence, for making a living, and for gaining protection.”⁹⁵ For the survivors, having a civilized life while they were trying to protect themselves was difficult. The Kingdom is the first place that seems to provide both protection and a civilized life because Ezekiel creates an environment that neither weakens its residents nor deprives them of a valuable life. In the Kingdom, children receive an education, people exercise, and teenagers get defense education from disabled veterans. The citizens also have a proper army with war-horses and armor. While other communities still believe that giving birth to a child in this world is crazy, the Kingdom is full of children. The list goes on. The Kingdom has the best appearance in the show by giving hope to the belief that life can still exist:

The Kingdom’s purpose at this point in the story is to reinstate a belief that a good life is still possible -- though only if those in charge can make the tough but necessary decisions. The world will never be the same as it was before the apocalypse, but that doesn’t make living in it any less worthwhile. As Ezekiel so wisely explains, “*Embrace the contradiction.*”⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā’ abl al-madīnab al-fāḍīlab*, 127-129.

⁹⁵ Fārābī, *Fusulū l-Medeni*, 38.

⁹⁶ Sarah Moran, “How The Kingdom Changes The Walking Dead,” *Screenrant*, October 31, 2016, accessed June 8, 2017, <http://screenrant.com/walking-dead-kingdom-ezekiel-change-seaasn-7/>.

As al-Fārābī stresses about the people of the Virtuous City, “their life is the nicest and the most beautiful way of living among what others have.”⁹⁷

In addition, the people of the Virtuous City create a harmony by following their first ruler’s purpose.⁹⁸ Al-Fārābī identifies this harmony by explaining that virtuous communities have no disagreements because the purpose of virtuousness is goodness desired only for itself.⁹⁹ Corrupt people lived in Alexandria and Woodbury. Despite their leaders’ claims about providing a happy life, sickness was inside them, but in the Kingdom, even the warriors have a sense of virtuousness. Before the Kingdom’s introduction, none of the soldiers had been exactly “good.” In Alexandria, there were none. In Woodbury, soldiers were murderers who kill and lie like their leader. However, the Kingdom’s soldiers are the first that can be considered virtuous because like all parts of the Virtuous City, the warriors follow their leader’s purpose in pursuing the goodness that is desired only for itself. Thus, the harmony continues.

In the Kingdom, one person breaks the harmony. He tries the wrong methods to convince the King to fight with the Saviors. He tries to kill Carol, who was under the King’s protection, to make him angry with the Saviors; then, he tries to kill himself for the same cause, but because of him, the King’s heir dies instead. Al-Fārābī does not reject the idea that contrarian people such as Richard can occur in the Virtuous City. He calls them *al-nawābit*, which means *the weeds* that spring up among the plants. These people are a threat to the community, as weeds are to plants; therefore, the leader is responsible for handling them. Morgan and Carol may be considered weeds, and Ezekiel found a way to cure them both.

Some similarities between the Kingdom and the Virtuous City are presented to demonstrate the Virtuous City’s general framework. However, some differences also occur between the two universes, which make al-Fārābī’s philosophy distinctive. One difference is the place of God. For al-Fārābī, as long as the virtuous leader exists, religion will live and God will lead his people: “The art of the ruler is an art that has a connection with the revelation that comes from God.

⁹⁷ Fārābī, *Fusulü'l-Medeni*, 69.

⁹⁸ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā' abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 122.

⁹⁹ Fārābī, *Fusulü'l-Medeni*, 76.

He designates deeds and thoughts in the virtuous religion (*millab*) only according to the revelation.”¹⁰⁰ Thus, for al-Fārābī, the ruler should have a connection with God in order to create a virtuous city. He simply implies that “God is also the ruler of the Virtuous City as much as he is the ruler of the universe.”¹⁰¹ Through this statement, he indicates a difference between the philosopher-prophet and the philosopher-king. He believes that prophets with a *sharī‘ah* (*millab*) were also philosophers, such as the Prophet Muḥammad. Additionally, the Virtuous City is more easily established by philosopher-prophets, who can also provide for its sustainability because philosopher-prophets are granted the strongest imaginative faculty.¹⁰²

Another difference between the Kingdom and the Virtuous City is the place of the ultimate happiness and perfection. Al-Fārābī argues that Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle believe that people reach two perfections because they have two lives, and they can only reach the last perfection in the afterlife provided they found the first perfection in this life.¹⁰³ Thus, for al-Fārābī, reaching perfection in this life is the prerequisite for ultimate happiness in the afterlife. In addition, the people of the Virtuous City should know the attributes of God, the attributes of spiritual creatures, the hierarchy among them and their situation according to God, how the universe existed and what it is, how the first creation occurred, God’s relation to the universe and to people, how revelation emerges, things about death and the afterlife and other things related to all of these concepts.¹⁰⁴ The people should know these concepts because only then can they try to find the right way to reach perfection in this world and then in the afterlife. These concepts make religion a vital part of al-Fārābī’s philosophy. However, *TWD* characters are usually uncertain regarding their belief in an afterlife or even in God. They seek an ultimate happiness, but this seeking does not seem to be connected with eternal life. While for al-Fārābī, perfection is about both this world and afterlife, for the people in *TWD*, perfection seems to be only about this world without a final aim.

¹⁰⁰ Toktaş, “Fārābī’nin *Kitâbü’l-Mille* Adlı Eserinin Takdim ve Çevirisi,” 259.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 272.

¹⁰² Korkut, *Fārābī’nin Siyaset Felsefesi*, 255-256.

¹⁰³ Fārābī, *Fusulü’l-Medeni*, 38-39.

¹⁰⁴ Toktaş, “Fārābī’nin *Kitâbü’l-Mille* Adlı Eserinin Takdim ve Çevirisi,” 259.

Conclusion

The purpose of this work was to show that *TWD* is not only a zombie show but also a philosophical discourse. While the show creates a dystopia, it forces us to ask ourselves why people need to live together, why they are political creatures and many other questions about the history of civilization. *TWD* demonstrates that the thoughts of ancient philosophers are not that old; their questions were the same as ours, and they also tried to answer them. Therefore, the *TWD* universe can be read correspondingly with al-Fārābī's political philosophy. First, humans' political nature was explained in comparison with zombies. Second, *TWD* communities were compared with al-Fārābī's unvirtuous communities. Finally, the resemblances between the Virtuous City and the Kingdom were examined to understand al-Fārābī's Virtuous City more clearly.

Here, al-Fārābī's virtuous city may or may not be a utopia. Some think that al-Fārābī was aware of the impossibility of finding an ideal ruler who holds all twelve qualifications, so he accepted the possibility that rulers might exist with fewer qualifications for the Virtuous City. Al-Fārābī presented two kinds of virtuous ruler, an ideal and an actual one, because al-Fārābī acknowledged that when a ruler who holds all qualifications cannot be found, then a second ruler who has fewer qualifications can come along.¹⁰⁵ In addition, "al-Fārābī implies the principle of separation of power within the state, although there is no distinctive mention of it."¹⁰⁶ Such assumptions refuse to accept al-Fārābī's Virtuous City as a utopia, unlike Plato's *Republic*, because he did not picture an unrealizable political state. Although the Virtuous City might not be accepted as actual, al-Fārābī's Virtuous City was more based on reality than Plato's. This distinction can be proved through the term *al-ma'mūrah*, which can be translated as "inhabited world." The term is distinctive and can be explained through *TWD*. The world, which is overrun by zombies, leads people to reorganize a society that consists of many city-states such as Alexandria, Hilltop, and the Kingdom. They are united against the biggest threat to a virtuous *ma'mūrah*, the Savivors. Al-Fārābī describes *al-ma'mūrah* as the union of nations for building happiness.¹⁰⁷ Many scholars think that with this

¹⁰⁵ Byoung Joo Hah, "Al-Fārābī's Political Theory" (PhD diss., Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1995), 262.

¹⁰⁶ Hah, "Al-Fārābī's Political Theory," 262.

¹⁰⁷ Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb ārā' abl al-madīnah al-fāḍilah*, 118.

term, al-Fārābī refers to a kind of global governance, which is different from the Greek political philosophers who imagined only a perfect Greek city. This distinction might be because he lived in a time when the Islamic civilization was rapidly growing and spreading, so naturally, he not only pictured a virtuous city but also a universal virtuous association. Orwin similarly argues;

Alfarabi could no longer take his bearings solely by the political thought of his predecessors Plato or Aristotle, whose primary point of reference had been the Greek *polis*. In an era in which “globalization” has become an inevitable cliché, Alfarabi’s assessment of the significance of the global community merits careful consideration.¹⁰⁸

Additionally, *al-ma‘mūrah* can be compared with *dār al-Islām* as a global political association. Thus, al-Fārābī’s idea of *al-ma‘mūrah* brings him closer to the actuality by making it possible to talk about a virtuous association from a global understanding of today. Likewise, *TWD* shows us how today’s world, which includes many global political associations, was first formed by discussing the attempt of many city-states to become one for a virtuous life by defeating wickedness. As Maggie implies at the end of season seven, “It started with both of you, and it just grew to all of us, to sacrifice for each other, to suffer and stand, to grieve, to give, to love, to live, to fight for each other.”¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, that al-Fārābī was a political idealist seems a foregone conclusion because of his expectations about religious factors in the political system. He idealized a virtuous and religious state in which people would live for the ultimate happiness. In addition, like most of the idealist political philosophers, he starts by formulating an ideal society and then explains how state officials would fit into it.¹¹⁰ Thus, considering him a realist is difficult even though his *al-ma‘mūrah* was not a pure utopia.

To conclude, studying classical thinkers such as al-Fārābī, Qinālīzādah, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Khaldūn, Avicenna, Plato or Aristotle to

¹⁰⁸ Alexander I. Orwin, “Can Humankind Deliberate on a Global Scale? *Alfarabi and the Politics of the Inhabited World*,” *American Political Science Review* 108, no. 4 (2014), 830, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055414000422>.

¹⁰⁹ Darabont, *The Walking Dead*, Season 7, Episode 16.

¹¹⁰ Rumea Ahmed, “Jurisprudence and Political Philosophy in Medieval Islam,” in *The Routledge Companion to Islamic Philosophy*, ed. Richard C. Taylor and Luis Xavier López-Farjeat (New York: Routledge, 2016), 61.

read contemporary fields is extremely important. This kind of research broadens horizons and creates more suitable work fields for this age. Discussions can be found among these philosophers' statements about living in communities, the ethics of war and peace, and values about this life and the afterlife. Therefore, reading them with different tools, which might be stories told through the screen or on the page, help us to reinterpret classical philosophy for this age. This process unites different minds from different cultures, as this study does by combining a product of American culture, a zombie apocalypse, with the philosophical system of a Muslim thinker. This synthesis shows that all humans seek answers to the same questions.

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