

The Main Principles of Living Together in al-Fārābī's Virtuous State

Fârâbî'nin Erdemli Devleti'nde Birlikte Yaşamının Temel İlkeleri

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ABSTRACT

As a Turkish philosopher, it is important in terms of indicating the news perspectives that brought to Islamic political philosophy in al-Madīna al-Fāḍilah and his other works, which al-Fārābī wrote with a different point of view. Al-Fārābī's thought of virtuous state, which he framed with moral principles, stands in a original place in terms of signifying what should be, although it is claimed to be utopian. The Second Teacher divides the state into two as virtuous and unvirtuous in general. Besides, the most basic point to be underlined in al-Fārābī's understanding of ideal or world state within the virtuous society is that all individuals in there have an comprehension of living together and for this reason they agree on certain principles. Some of these principles are related both the ruler and ruled. Nevertheless, al-Fārābī emphasizes other principles such as justice, co-operation, love and merit. These teachings put forward by the philosopher exactly coincide with the universal principles that humanity reached as a result of various experiences in the modern period. In this study, we will examine the principles that al-Fārābī emphasized in his ideal state and try to evaluate how these will contribute to the opinion of living together.

Keywords: Islamic Philosophy, Al-Fārābī, Virtuous State (City), Living Together, Helping Each Other, Love.

öz

İlk Türk-İslâm filozofu olarak Fârâbî'nin yeni perspektifle kaleme aldığı el-Medinetü'l-fâzıla ve diğer eserlerinde İslâm'ın siyaset felsefesine getirdiği yeni bakış açılarını göstermesi açısından önemlidir. Ahlâkî ilkelerle çerçevesini çizdiği Fârâbî'nin ideal devlet anlayışı her ne kadar ütöpik olduğu iddia edilse de olması gerekeni imlemesi açısından da farklı bir yerde durmaktadır. İkinci Muallim, devleti genel anlamda erdemli ve erdemsiz olmak üzere ikiye ayırmaktadır. Fârâbî'nin erdemli devlet içinde ele aldığı ideal veya dünya devleti anlayışında, altı çizilmesi gereken en temel husus, toplumdaki bütün bireylerin birlikte yaşama anlayışı içerisinde olmaları ve bunun için de belli başlı prensiplerde fikir birliği etmeleridir. Bu prensiplerden bazıları hem idareci hem de halkla ilgilidir. Fârâbî'nin üzerinde durduğu bu ilkelerin belli başlıları adalet, yardımlaşma, sevgi ve liyakattir. Filozofun ortaya koyduğu bu öğretiler, modern dönemde insanlığın çeşitli tecrübeler neticesinde ulaştığı evrensel ilkelerle birebir örtüşmektedir. Bu çalışmada biz, Fârâbî'nin ideal devletinde vurguladığı ilkeleri irdeleyip, bunların birlikte yaşama düşüncesine nasıl katkı sunacağını değerlendirmeye çalışacağız.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İslam Felsefesi, Fârâbî, Faziletli Devlet (Şehir), Birlikte Yaşama, Yardımlaşma, Sevgi.

INTRODUCTION

Some of the most important aspects which separate al-Fārābī from other Muslim philosophers are his new perspectives that he introduced to the philosophy of politics. His work titled *al-Madīna al-Fāḍilah* which he wrote in this field is also a very significant work in that it shows new points of view that Islam has brought to the philosophy of politics. At the centre of Fārābī's philosophy of politics there are the ethical principles. In this meaning, he draws attention to the fact that there is a relation between ethics and politics. While he was constituting the idea of virtuous city at the same time, he connected it with epistemology, ontology and metaphysical teachings.¹ However this aspect of the subject is beyond the scope of our study. It has been seen that al-Fārābī explained the state by establishing relations between the state and human body.

Before mentioning his understanding of living together in the virtuous state that has the potential to turn into a world state project, we need to deal with some issues relating to this, such as whether it is a utopia or not and its characteristics. Since, some researchers have claimed that al-Fārābī's works, particularly titled *al-Madīna al-Fāḍilah*, is a utopian work. And then, we will evaluate on al-Fārābī's thought of virtuous city or society in terms of contributing to the idea of living together.

In this article, mainly descriptive and text analysis methods was used. In addition to this, the definition of concept and sometimes comparative methods was also employed in order to seize upon the subject better.

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¹ The following studies can be looked at as samples regarding the relationship with the aforementioned teachings: Nanang Tahqiq, "The Relation of Metaphysics to Political Theory in the Thought of al-Fārābī", *Refleksi* 1 (June-August 1999), 43-58.

1. UTOPIA AS A CONCEPT

The term of Utopia conceptually is defined in different ways. Relating to the origin of this word was said that More referred to two Greek words -ouk (that means not and was reduced to u) topos (place), to which he added the suffix ia, pointing at a place. Etymologically, utopia is thus a place which is a non-place.² Utopia as a word means "an imaginary place or state in which everything is perfect"³, and "a condition, place, or situation of social or political perfection, any idealistic goal or concept for social and political reform."⁴ As mentioned above, the term of utopia was used by Thomas More in the fifteenth century for the first time and More's work titled Utopia gave its name to a literary genre.⁵ Utopia as a concept means that "it is about how we would live and what kind of a world we would live in if we could do just that." This word sometimes is meant that "it embodies more than an image of what good life would be and becomes a claim about what it could and should be." Considering these definitions utopia is then not just a dream or imagination but a vision or project with a social and political aspect to be followed.⁶ We also think that al-Fārābī's virtuous city or society should be considered within this definition of the concept of utopia and we contemplate this issue should be taken into consideration throughout the article.

The word of utopia has been used for the above-mentioned context by a lot of societies or religions since ancient times. In this context, the first known examples of utopia are Plato's work titled *The Republic* (Politeia). And utopianism is generally described with unrealistic speculation, providing the adjective 'utopian' with its everyday sense⁷ Utopia has been viewed with the philosopher in search of an ideal system or society, considering the ongoing system of society when writing this type of work. For instance, Plato's aforesaid book reflects the theory of state which he idealized. It is also to be understood that the writer proposes a state or social order he idealized or fictionalized with this kind of work. It has been seen that both the utopian works written in West and philosophical novels or political books (*Siyāsatnāma*) written in the East in the Middle and New Age pursue a different goal.⁸ This shows that the writer has expressed some impediments at the administration of state with a realistic point of view beyond his fictionalization. Nevertheless, we need to stress that the philosophical novels or utopian works are only a style of writing, the important thing here is the context that it emphasizes.

As stated above, we stressed that the philosophical novels written in the East and utopian books written in the West are confused with each other. Actually, we should specify that although the works written in both cultures resemble each other in terms of style, there are differences between them. The authors of such works lived in different epochs, cultures and have a distinctive conception of the religion and world. For instance, while the reasons that prompted to More to write a Utopia are purely political, this issue is not significant factors in Ibn al-Bajja and Ibn Tufail. Nevertheless they have in common is the presence of not only realistic but also utopian in their social-political teachings.⁹ In addition, while utopias written in the West such as More's *Utopia* and Campanella's *Civitas Solis* are generally a genre applied by authors who can not express their views definitively on account of political or religious pressure, this approach does not exist in the thinkers of works written in the east whether utopia or philosophical novels. The utopian works do not belong to only the Eastern and Western world, but also it is possible to see these works from China to India and to South Africa.¹⁰ When we have a look at utopias generally we can observe that these are works which are written in the time of political and social disorders.

We can say that the idealistic and utopian works have been written based on reality even if the writings have been depicted as far from the real. The thinker who writes this kind of work usually cannot prevent current situations. But, he struggles to demolish and clear off these situations by thinking as an imaginary, idealistic and utopian style against the real.¹¹

In this context, we do not evaluate both al-Fārābī's works relating his philosophy of politics and his model state or society which he put forward in his works as an absolute fictive or utopian work, where we use the term of utopia means an imaginary or a non-place. With al-Fārābī's model of a virtuous (perfect) society or state, which he presented as suitable for his philosophy of politics, we think that he seeks what he sees as necessary. If attention is paid to the characteristics of residents of society and the rulers of a state which al-Fārābī idealized, it will not be overlooked that these have been presented as a goal necessary to reach rather than the utopia. For this reason, we think that ethical terms and principles such as virtue, happiness, helping each other, love each other which al-Fārābī put forward in the basis of his project of a world state will bring light nowadays both to the Islamic society and all human beings in terms of living in peace and tranquility.

2. AL-FĀRĀBĪ'S VIRTUOUS STATE AND ITS MAIN PRINCIPLES

Before al-Fārābī's ideas about world or virtuous state, we need to specify whether this idea was stressed or not prior to him. We can go back Ancient times both Socratic schools and Hellenistic time to trace the source of al-Fārābī's thought of ideal or world state. For instance Antisthenes who is accepted as a founder of Cynicism and his followers defended to the world citizenship which all humans live together and where nations are not separated by certain borders. This thought also influenced some of Stoic philosophers. Their such thinking stems from the idea that all human beings are sisters and brothers derived from the same source and serving the same purpose. In addition to this, the establishment of a world state is possible for the Stoic philosophers. As a result, it can be said that under

2 Fátima Vieira, "The Concept of Utopia", *The Cambridge Companion To Utopian Literature*, ed. Gregory Claeys (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 4.

3 Albert Sydney Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1690.

4 Robert Ilson (ed.), *Reader's Digest Great Illustrated Dictionary* (New York: The Reader's Digest Association Limited, 1984), 2/1813.

5 Thomas More, *Utopia*, çev. Paul Turner (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 20.

6 Ruth Levitas, *The Concept of Utopia* (Bern: Peter Lang Publishers, 2010), 1 vd.

7 Hans-Herbert Kögler, "Utopianism", *The Oxford Companion To Philosophy*, ed. Ted Honderich (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 939.

8 It can be given the following works about it: in West Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*, Campanella's *Civitas Solis* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, in East Ibn Bacce's *Tadbir al-Mutawahhid*, İbn Tufeyl's *Hayy İbn Yaqzān*, İbnü'n-Nefis's *Fādil İbn Nātıq* etc.

9 Rauan Kemberbay-Garifolla Yessim et al., "Elements of Utopianism in The Views of Asan Qaigy, Confucius, Plato and Al-Farabi Comparative Analysis", *European Journal of Science and Theology* 16 (February 2020), 135.

10 See such examples: Joachim Kurtz, "Chinese Dreams of the Middle Ages: Nostalgia, Utopia, Propaganda", *Medieval History Journal* 21 (April 2018), 1-24; Christian Ersten, "Utopia and Distopia in the post-apartheid city: the praxis of the Future of Cape Town", *Social Dynamics - A Journal of African Studies* 45 (May 2019), 286-302.

11 H. Tevfik Mücahid, *Fārābī'den Abduh'a Siyasî Düşünce*, çev. Vecdi Akyüz (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık 2012), 22.

these views of both schools lies the obtaining happiness and getting pleasure and also the idea of getting rid of all kinds of limitations by emphasizing the law governs to the actions of man and process of nature.¹²

The point to be noted here is that while the nature of man¹³ is emphasized in both Cynic and Stoic philosophers, individual happiness and pleasure are moral prominent. However, as will be mentioned below, in al-Fārābī's virtuous state the happiness of people in society comes into prominence. The second teacher creates his understanding of society and virtuous or perfect state based on Aristotle's motto that man is a social or political creature (*zoon politikon*).

We should initially specify that al-Fārābī is the first muslim peripatetic philosopher who founds his opinions about state systematically. He grounds his understanding of politics on an epistemological and ethical basis. Al-Fārābī, who does not separate morality and politics from each other, implies that politics means that a human primarily knows something and then he/she converts his/her knowledge into action.¹⁴ On the one hand, the attention is drawn to the human's knowledge and practice by emphasizing with epistemology on the basis of politics, on the other hand the concepts of happiness and virtue come into prominence mostly when it comes to morality. Thus in al-Fārābī's opinion, the aim of the existence of humans is to reach to *the highest happiness*-al-sa'āda al-quswā-¹⁵

When al-Fārābī composes his philosophy of politics, he does not neglect the trilogy of knowledge, entity, and value which form the main subjects of philosophical thought. He tries to explain his understanding of state and society with particular words like philosopher, happiness, virtues and religion or nation (al-milla) which constitute this essential three trivets. In this context, when attention is paid to the names of his political works such as *The Virtuous City (al-madīna al-fāḍilah)*, *The Attainment of Happiness (Taḥṣīl al-sa'ādah)*, *Directing Attention to the Way of Happiness (Tanbīh alā sabīl al-sa'ādah)* all of titles he preferred are related to morality. We believe that these titles were deliberately entitled by the philosopher.

Al-Fārābī addresses by following Aristotle that man is a social being (*tamaddun*) and he must live in a society (*fitrah*) before explaining his project of a world state. Al-Fārābī on the one hand correlates the idea that a human is a social being with the nature (*fitrah*), on the other hand he determines that all habits of a human and capabilities which are brought innately are different. For this reason, according to al-Fārābī, when some humans come forward into certain affairs with correspondent virtues, some people also come forward into other occupations. Al-Fārābī follows Aristotle when he claims all men should be either the governor or the governed from their nature, creation.¹⁶ In this context, as al-Fārābī emphasized in his book titled *Taḥṣīl al-sa'ādah*, the most important characteristic of the human is to shelter and to live with his fellow man coming from his nature, and because of that the human is described as a social or civilized-political living being.¹⁷

Al-Fārābī who puts emphasis on the necessity of the human's living in society draws attention that man aims by his nature to reach perfection. He also stresses that the aim of perfection can only be fulfilled by depending on a society where all help each other.¹⁸ We can see in this point that al-Fārābī mentions an important principle which appears in the basis of his project of a world state. According to al-Fārābī, the aforesaid idea of helping each other should not be evaluated only materially but also humans should help each other especially about happiness and attaining it. Thus, humans who act with this feeling and thinking can construct a virtuous society. It is seen that al-Fārābī's mentioned project puts "We" rather than "I" at the center.

In al-Fārābī's understanding of a virtuous state, based on happiness or in his philosophy in general, happiness being the highest good, which is sought merely in pursuit of happiness and is not wanted as an instrument for performance of any other thing. From this point of view, it is said that al-Fārābī's philosophy of politics focused on the target of how the human will know how to be happy both in this world and the next world (al-ākhirāt) and to fulfill it.¹⁹

Al-Fārābī witnessed the construction of both big kingdoms and small principalities and power domain of city-states. It is said that al-Fārābī's experiences influenced his categorization of political communities.²⁰ Al-Fārābī firstly divides societies into two as perfect (al-kāmilah) and imperfect (ghayr al-kāmilah). He also classifies perfect communities where virtue and happiness are performed completely. Following that, a big community should be evaluated as all human societies within the framework of the worldwide (ma'mūrah) community and middle community as part of nation (millah) and the smaller one being a city. There are also incomplete communities as their opposites. These communities are the village which is a servant of city and units of city like suburb, street and home.²¹

We will mostly focus on perfect societies, which are in the first group among al-Fārābī's classification of communities as we see that al-Fārābī makes his project of a world state concrete in complete or perfect societies. There is an important notion, the city (*madīnah*) which he emphasizes. According to him, if the residents of a city help each other their own volition and willingly to obtain happiness, that society becomes a perfect and virtuous one. Al-Fārābī does not ignore the reality that helping each other in society is not only in goodwill but also it can be in evil. However that community where humans help each other in evil is not described as a virtuous society.

12 William Turner, *History of Philosophy* (London: Ginn&Company Publishers The Athenaeum Press 1903), 87-89, 164-165.

13 This term is used through referring to the unchanged and necessary character for all human beings. Nearly all political doctrines and beliefs are based on some kind of human nature, sometimes explicitly formulated but often only implicitly. It is possible to see this approach especially in the theories are put forward in the political philosophy from ancient times to the present. See details: Andrew Heywood, *Key Concept in Politics and International Relationship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Publisher, 2015), 91-92. <http://www.toaz.info/doc-viewer>.

14 About al-Fārābī's teachings details relating morality and politics see: Charles E. Butterworth, "Ethical and Political Philosophy", *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, ed. P. Adamson - R. C. Taylor (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 275-280.

15 Ebū Nasr el-Fārābī, *Kitābu Tahsīlī's-sa'āde*, ed. Ali Bū Melham (Beirut: Dār ve Maktaba al-Hilāl, 1995), 75.

16 Ebū Nasr el-Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehli'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, ed. Albīr Nasrī Nādir (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1986), 117. See for comparison: Aristotle, *The Politics and The Constitution of Athens*, ed. Stephen Everson (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 13.

17 Ebū Nasr el-Fārābī, *Taḥṣīl al-sa'ādah*, ed. Salahaddīn el-Havvārī (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-Asriyya, 2012), 32.

18 Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehli'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, 117.

19 Fārābī, *Kitābu Tahsīlī's-sa'āde*, 16.

20 Ibrahim Madkour, "Al-Fārābī", *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, ed. M.M. Sharif (Delhi: Adam Publishers, 2001), 1/450-452.

21 Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehli'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, 117-118; Ebū Nasr el-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-Siyāsah al-madaniyyah*, ed. Fevzi Mitri Neccār (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1993), 70.

When al-Fārābī emphasizes the importance of helping each other in a virtuous society, he compares the help in society with the organs of the body. Both of them generate an harmony through helping each other.²²

Al-Fārābī implies that this issue has an epistemological and ethical aspect emphasizing that helping each other for individual in society for goodwill and happiness is conscious and willed. He also expresses that the highest goodness and the biggest perfection can be reached initially only in the city and not in a community lower than it.²³ Then, as moral elements in al-Fārābī's political and social philosophy, helping each other and achievement of common happiness unite people and this is formed in the virtuous city or society.²⁴

According to some researchers, al-Fārābī's emphasis on the city itself and not on the communities bigger than this can be thought of as a reflection of bad situations and dissociation in the Abbasid's khilāfah. Some associate this with the fact that al-Fārābī was influenced by Plato and Aristotle's ideas who limited the city-state as an ideal political unit. In addition to these, according to another opinion, al-Fārābī's virtuous city intends a civilized society, not a city-state. As pointed out above, their social and cultural structures and al-Fārābī's are different. But it must be difficult to say the same for Plato. We know that he lived in city-state, but we don't ensure how he intertwined with different cultures. In short, this and similar experiences also affect the human being's perspective and world-view.²⁵

In our opinion, the thing that al-Fārābī qualified as perfect and virtuous and which strengthened the world state position is related to the city and urbanization. Al-Fārābī's attachment of importance to the city was to demonstrate the dependence of the residents in a city in terms of the above-determined epistemological and ethical principles and the reflection in practice rather than its geographical location or population. Otherwise, the size of the state in al-Fārābī's opinion should not be a priority issue. In that case, al-Fārābī devoted the world state to a human community worldwide (ma'mūrah) which has been described as the big one among the complete communities. He means another middle one of the complete societies, a nation (millah) which is part of them in the world. A small community is within the framework of city but the world state (*mamūrah*) includes nations and they also include cities. Consequently, there is a city in the basis of al-Fārābī's thought of world state. If the city becomes perfect, it is possible for the world to be perfect, which nations create. That is, according to the philosopher, a virtuous, perfect, universal or world state which includes all nations only comes into existence when they help each other to achieve happiness.²⁶

Al-Fārābī's sayings about a virtuous or perfect city generate the basis of his project of a world state.²⁷ According to al-Fārābī, the highest goodness and happiness is performed only in this city. In that society there is a virtuous and perfect city because the people living there help each other. Briefly, the perfect and virtuous city and residents of it depend on helping each other for happiness. As can be seen al-Fārābī emphasizes that a virtuous city, which is the smallest unit of the perfect world state, is installed on goodwill and happiness and individuals in this city should fulfill the idea of helping each other. He centered a universal principle or virtues in his project of a world state: Living together or a society whose people help each other for goodness. It is quite interesting that as al-Fārābī makes reference to the mentioned city: he does not say anything about the religion of the people living there. Although al-Fārābī seems to be making an Islamic expression by using the notion of an ummah²⁸, what he avoids from this issue is overlooked. Thereby al-Fārābī uses the notion of an ummah as a synonym of the nation. It is also remarkable that he as a muslim philosopher does not mention to Qur'anic verses and hadiths when referring to the aforesaid principles such as happiness, helping each other and so on.

In al-Fārābī's understanding of virtuous city or project of world state, the influence of Aristotle is as important as the Plato especially in ethics. In this context, we see that al-Fārābī's emphasis on two virtues, such as happiness and helping each other, which should be in the individuals of the virtuous city, in Aristotle as well. According to the first teacher, the happiness also a virtue and it is an activity of the soul. Similarly, he thinks that the friendship is also a virtue and also no one can imagine to live without friendship. So, Aristotle pays attention that the most important point about friendship is helping each other or beneficence. For him, the sign of friendship is to live together.²⁹

In order to better understand al-Fārābī's political and social philosophy, not only should the model of virtuous city focused on, but also his descriptions of vices should be paid attention to so that the codes of the project of world state can be better evaluated. For instance, he addresses that people live in the virtuous city help each other to achieve the happiness, but he does not explain the matters in detail. On the other hand, when al-Fārābī describes the ignorant cities and their attributes, what is meant by helping each other obviously becomes. This is valid for the subject of happiness. First of all, the inhabitants of ignorant city don't know the happiness and they are unaware of it. Even if happiness is told to them, they neither understand nor believe it. The good things they know are physical health, wealth, sensual pleasures, respect, dignity and so on. Similarly, for them, the helping each other also becomes to obtain the material things such as health and wealth. In addition to these, al-Fārābī stressed that for the inhabitants of ignorant there is neither natural nor volition mutual love and connection between people. It is also necessary for every person hates to everyone, for everybody dislikes to all human beings. That is, two people interact with each other only in case of necessity and unite with each other only in case of need.³⁰

22 Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehlī'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, 118 vd.

23 Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehlī'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, 118.

24 Rauan Kemberbay-Garifolla Yessim et al., "Elements of Utopianism", 137.

25 See for the details about the differences between Plato and al-Fārābī's political views: Abdurazzaq A. Al-Mudhareb, *The Political Philosophy of Plato and Al-Farabi: "The Republic" and "The Virtuous City"* (Wassington: American University ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1988), 37-47; Talip Kabadayı, "The Perfect State in Plato and Al-Farabi", *Afyon Kocatepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 6/2 (Aralık 2004), 246-248.

26 Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehlī'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, 118.

27 İhvân-ı Safâ, who is al-Fārābī's contemporary, described the necessary basis of state as saying: "Friendship is essential for love, love is also essential for improving the social order." In İhvân-ı Safâ's philosophy of politics there is no understanding of a world state like in al-Fārābī's ideal state, although he puts ethical principles to the foundation of a state order. See for details: Godefroid de Callatay, *İkhwan al-Safa' A Brotherhood of Idealists on the Fringe of Orthodox Islam* (Londra: Oneworld Academic Publications, 2005), 104-106.

28 The word of *ummah* has an area of wide meaning, it is not related to only human being or muslims. For example see: Al-Baqarah, 2/213; Al-An'am, 6/38.

29 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, çev. Terence Irwin (Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1999), 16, 119, 125 vd.

30 Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehlī'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, 131, 153. These descriptions of al-Fārābī about the residents of ignorant city remind us Thomas Hobbes's famous teaching that "*homo homini lupus - man to man is an arrant wolfe*". He also likened the state to man. However, Hobbes struggles to create his political philosophy by acting on the fact that man is a selfish creature. See for details: Thomas

As it is seen, the happiness in al-Fārābī's attributes of the ignorant city consists only of obtaining material things, and it does not comply with the understanding of happiness that is happiness is a good sought for its own sake, which the philosopher put forward in his moral philosophy. Likewise, the relationship between people in the ignorant city or society is also associated with materiality, and the connection and love among them comes from necessity. While al-Fārābī's stressing to the moral principles or virtues in the virtuous city for living together, he also highlights another moral maxim, which is these virtues should be fulfilled consciously (*al-ikhtiyār*) and with free will (*al-irāda*) of the individuals in that society. Thus, a virtuous city or society and world state can be created when the principles that al-Fārābī points out about living together are implemented.

In short, we can say that universal moral principles lie in the foundation of al-Fārābī's understanding of the project of world state such as living together, helping each other and so on in that society without paying attention to the religious and cultural identities of the inhabitants in there. As mentioned above, when his stressing on the term of conscious and free will, it is said that he also implied these notions such as freedom, mutual trust, compromise and tolerance. In fact, these are the basic principles of civil society.³¹ Additionally, al-Fārābī's emphasis on these principles evokes the understanding equality, accepting everyone as they are and establishing a model of multicultural society in the disciplines of modern politics and sociology. Thus, according to al-Fārābī, societies that adopt and apply these principles create a virtuous city, and a world state is formed from the combination of these cities.³²

3. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOVERNER OF VIRTUOUS STATE

Until now, al-Fārābī explained about the principles put forward by the individuals living in the virtuous city or society to live with their free will. In this city, helping each other in order to reach the happiness, which is the prerequisite for the living together and this fact also hints a harmony. The second teacher likens the harmony in the virtuous city to the cooperation between the organs in the healthy body. After that, he moves on to his ideas about the presidency. In fact, while drawing an analogy between the virtuous city and human body, on the one hand al-Fārābī continues to take attention to the main principles of living together in there, on the other hand he composes the understanding of virtues city or virtuous state (*al-mamūra al-fāḍilah*).

For al-Fārābī, the organs of the body are different from each other the natural creation of these organs is also superior. They have a leading organ -the heart- and organs which are close to this superior organ in terms of degree. Each of them is naturally endowed with a capacity by which it acts in accordance with purpose of the leading organ. The other organs, which are under the leading organ -the heart-, also perform in compliance with the goal of the one above according to their rank. There is also a leading person -like a heart in the body- in the city and other people whose degree are close to this person. Similarly, the conditions and works of the organs in the body are valid for the city. However, al-Fārābī does not neglect to take attention to this point that the organs of the body are natural and their abilities are natural capacities. On the other hand, although parts of the city are natural, the abilities and faculties with which these parts bring about their actions in the city are not natural, but voluntary (*al-irādī*).³³

The fact that al-Fārābī compares the parts and inhabitants of the city with the parts and functions of the organs in the body and that each part does its own duty is another aspect that shows the harmony in the society. Because, with these expressions, he emphasizes that everyone should implement their own mission, that is everyone should do own their job in the field in which they specialize. Just as the organs of the body do not interfere with each other's affairs and each part of body does what it does the best, the individuals of the virtuous city should behave in this way. For us, this is one of the most significant principles of living together in harmony.

As we have sometimes mentioned before, there are some differences between Plato's *The Republic* and al-Fārābī's *The Virtuous City*. One of them is the society and the abilities and missions of the individuals in city. So, this issue is related to the management of the city. For instance, Plato divided the society into classes such as rulers, guardians and producers or slaves. He explains the nature and missions of the individuals of each class in detail as rulers receive education in literature, music and gymnastics. According to Plato, the slaves, the lowest part of society, always produce and do heavy work by nature. Similarly, for the philosopher, members of the highest classes of city are not permitted to marry and also soldiers may not own property.³⁴

On the other hand, there is no classification in al-Fārābī's virtuous city or society, but there is only a categorizing in the form of the region where people live such as city, town, village, etc. Although the philosopher addresses that the residents or parts of city are natural, he emphasized that they acts their missions with their capabilities by voluntary. Also al-Fārābī does not set up rules strictly to the members of society like the Plato. As can be seen, in Plato's ideal state, the abilities of the individuals are ignored and their free wills are subordinated like the family which the smallest unit of society. However, these and similar issues are not seen in al-Fārābī's virtuous or world state. According to us, this is one of the most important differences between two philosopher. Since, while Plato was contemplating an imaginary utopian state with the above statements, al-Fārābī set forth in an utopia that can be realized or traced.

We see that al-Fārābī also explains the subject of the presidency through relating it to the human body. According to him, just as the heart first comes into being in the body, and if it is the reason for the existence of other organs and their abilities that will appear later, similarly then the ruler of the city must first comes into existence and he must be the reason for the emergence of other parts of the city.

Al-Fārābī puts forward the governor (*al-raīs*) as a constitutive element of the virtuous and perfect city. According to him, not any person can be a governor of the virtuous city. Al-Fārābī identifies the governor with different words like *imām*, *malik*, the first head (*al-raīs al-aw-*

Hobbes, *De Cive The English Version*, ed. Howard Warrender (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 24 vd.

31 A. Dybysbekovich Azerbayev-J. Nusupzhanovna Nurmanbetova, "Al-Farabi's Virtuous City as the Prototype of Civil Society", *European Journal of Science and Theology* 12 (December 2016), 201.

32 For the reflections of these ideas in the modern period see: Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (U.S.A.: Oxford University Press, 2000); Andrew Heywood, *Political Theory An Introduction*, Third Edition (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 116-119.

33 Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehli'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, 119-121.

34 Plato, *The Republic*, çev. Melissa Lane (London: Penguin Classics, 2007), 53 vd.

wal), philosopher and law-maker-wādī' al-nawāmīs-.³⁵ The above-aforsaid notions explain distinct aspects of governor. For this reason, al-Fārābī enumerates both the characteristics of a governor and uses the notions about him instead of giving him a name only with the notion because in al-Fārābī's opinion, a president (al-raīs) is a governor of both the virtuous city and the ummah and also all the world. Al-Fārābī specified attributions of the governor of the virtuous city must be in twelve items such as:

- 1) His organs must be complete and powerful,
- 2) He must understand everything told himself,
- 3) He must keep in his mind the things that he learned and comprehended, he must also have a perfect memory,
- 4) He must be very clever and perceptual,
- 5) He must be a conversationalist and a rhetorician,
- 6) He must like teaching and benefiting others and, he must not be exhausted by the fatigue of teaching and this fatigue must not give him pain.
- 7) He must not be greedy in point of food, drink and marriage, he must abstain from playing because of nature,
- 8) He must like truth, honesty and the tellers of truth, he must not like lies and liars,
- 9) He must be tolerant and has a feeling of honour and to be distinguished,
- 10) He must look down upon money and other earthly goods,
- 11) He must like justice and be judicious naturally, must not like persecution, injustice and cruelty. He must be just and encourage justice, he must give good and nice things to the oppressed people. When he was called to be just he must be far from any restrictions. On the contrary, when he was called to cruelty and an evil deed, he must be very gravene,
- 12) He must be very decisive of performing necessary things which he believed in and be brave, daring, courageous and very willing.³⁶

As it is seen, when al-Fārābī puts in order the characteristics that should be in a governor, he does not reckon the features of a Muslim governor or khalifa such as other Muslim philosophers described in their philosophy of politics. Al-Fārābī manifested the universal principles when asserting the description of a governor of a virtuous society and he claims that he should be a virtuous person without paying attention to his religion, language and nation because al-Fārābī's mentality relating to state or society is not pertaining to any religion, language or nation. But we should stress that the attributes of a governor which al-Fārābī determined as a Muslim philosopher above are valid points for the prophet of Muslims. However, al-Fārābī did not explain these definitively as if he defended only a religion.³⁷ This also indicates that al-Fārābī's project of the world state has been established on the idea of living together. We need to impress that al-Fārābī's project of the world state has been shaped within the framework of ethical principles generally. A virtuous city, society and state would be generated only through moving into the described understanding. This forms the contribution of al-Fārābī's understanding of ideal or world state to the most important aspect of living together.³⁸

Al-Fārābī stressed what the incomplete communities and the quality of their regime in detail after he evaluated the main characteristics of the virtuous society and state. His reference to an imperfect community and regimes is to provide an opportunity of comparison for the reader by showing the opposite of his virtuous society in accordance with saying "everything is known with its opposite". We do not evaluate the imperfect societies or regimes as these do not constitute a main point of our study. But we can say especially relating to them that: Imperfect societies and regimes are ignorant, sinful and they act in accordance with personal feelings and wishes. In this society, the idea of living together is not observed because of the dominant attributes mentioned there.³⁹

If we compare al-Fārābī's teachings of the first head (al-raīs al-awwal) and the regime with Plato's king-president, both philosophers emphasize that the ruler should be a philosopher or scholar, even though they are called by different names. As for the regime, as it is known Plato lives in democratic regime and he does not approve these forms of government such as timocracy, oligarchy, despotism and democracy. For him, the first and best regime is monarchy or aristocracy.⁴⁰ Unlike Plato, al-Fārābī lives in the regime of reign and while he mentions the opposite cities to the virtuous cities, he also expresses the above mentioned regimes that he does not adopt. Although he explains these cities or the names of regimes, he does not highlight any form of regime like Plato. The city model he emphasized is the virtuous city and its ruler. From this, it is understood that al-Fārābī focused on the main principles and virtues than the form of government. With these opinions, al-Fārābī stands close to Aristotle's understanding of politics. As is known, Aristotle classifies forms of government such as timocracy, oligarchy, monarchy and democracy in different ways. He puts some ethical and socio-economic principles as well as the principle of justice or common interest in its classification. Considering these, we can say that Aristotle has accepted the constitutional democracy and republican regime as

35 Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehlī'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, 123; Fārābī, *Tahşil al-saadah*, 52.

36 Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehlī'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, 127-128.

37 Another peripatetic philosopher Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) like Fārābī exhibited a different attitude from his predecessor about philosophy of politics particularly on government. In Ibn al-Sīnā's philosophy of politics, Islamic elements are more dominant. Looking at Ibn al-Sīnā's sayings on the president and law-maker, attention should be paid to it as it definitely has referred to the teachings of Quran. Ibn al-Sīnā's sayings such that the president must perform Quranic commands and prohibitions like his commandments as praying and fasting and avoidance of gambling and interest can be given as examples. Ebū Ali el-Hüseyn Ibn Sīnā. *Kitābu's-Şifā-Metafizik II*. çev. E. Demirli - Ö. Türker (Istanbul: Litera Yayıncılık, 2005), 200 vd.

38 Some Muslim philosophers like Māverdi, Gazzālī and Ibn Rüşd (Averroes) have placed ethical characteristics in their basis of understanding of state and society. See for details about their ideas: Gerhard Bowering (ed.), *Islamic Political Thought* (United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 2015). However, it is difficult to say that there is a project of a world state in the philosophy of these mentioned philosophers.

39 Fārābī, *Kitābu Ārāi ehlī'l-medīneti'l-fāzila*, 131-136.

40 Plato, *The Republic*, 275 vd.; Anthony Kenny, *A New History of Western Philosophy Ancient Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 1/59.

the best management style in practice. In short, for the philosopher all forms of government may turn into each other over time due to different practices.⁴¹

As a result, we can stress the main principles of living together in the virtuous city that led to al-Fārābī's project of world as following:

- 1) Individuals in the virtuous city have free will and choice.
- 2) The highest goal of the inhabitants in this city is to reach the happiness.
- 3) Humans love each other and also see each other as created beings of the same supreme being. They help and complete each other because of that issue.
- 4) All individuals do business in their area of specialty and finally they form a harmony.
- 5) The mentioned society consists of virtuous people and scholars.

These are very significant points for both human beings and all societies, since every man is a child of his/her society which affects him/her positively or negatively. That is why al-Fārābī emphasizes the issue of helping each other by omitting identity of race, nation, culture and religion etc. He also stresses upon merit when someone wants to get a job. It can be said that al-Fārābī prioritises idea of equality and justice in community. Briefly, al-Fārābī establishes the understanding of perfect or virtuous state (city) as love, helping each other, equality, justice and merit. At the same time, these are also codes of multiculturalism in our age.⁴²

CONCLUSION

Al-Fārābī has broken new ground with his project of a world state by referring to a virtuous state and society in the tradition of politics in Islam. The philosophy of state and politics which al-Fārābī has embodied for the first time in Islamic thought, particularly in his book titled *al-Madīna al-Fāḍilah*, has not entirely utopian characteristics as every utopia includes also some truths more or less. In addition, al-Fārābī in the aforesaid work has not limited his comprehension of politics just with political elements, he has commented on politics in connection with ontology, metaphysics and epistemology. For this reason, his understanding of the state cannot be dealt with without considering his opinion of knowledge, metaphysics and morality independently.

Al-Fārābī's thought of a world state is a project which centres the people living together. His reference to some ethical principles such as love, merit, justice undeniably shows that the project has many important contributory aspects to Muslim geography with a special meaning and in general to global peace. When al-Fārābī's time and its conditions are taken into consideration it is understood that he has offered a solution for both the disorders which occurred in his time and for all societies. Ethical principles to which al-Fārābī has drawn attention in his project and the fact that they have been accepted by all societies indicates the realization of it.

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