

## PROBLEMS OF IGNORANCE IN SPIRITUAL CULTURE AL-FARABI'S PHILOSOPHY

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### ABSTRACT

This article provides a brief overview of al-Farabi's contribution to science. Abu Nasr al-Farabi was the greatest philosopher and scientist of his time. Initially, he completed his studies in Farabi and Bukhara, later he went to Baghdad, where he studied and worked for a long time. During this time, al-Farabi mastered several languages as well as various branches of knowledge and technology.

The article identifies specific problems of ignorance in the ethical philosophy of al-Farabi, founder of the actual political, ethical philosophy, especially Farabi synthesis of ancient and Muslim tradition, reveals the place of the Platonic political concepts in his system shows the influence of Farabi's ideas on the further development of ethical thought in Islam. In addition, the article clearly indicates the thoughts, treatises, where al-Farabi implacably and harshly criticized ignorant, weak and lazy managers, unworthy to lead even small communities. The scientist in his works gives the characteristic features of such a "ruler".

**Key words:** Contribution to Science, Various Branches, Scientific Treatises, Significant Works, the Existence of a Vacuum.

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### Әл-Фарабидің рухани мәдениет философиясындағы надандық мәселелері

**Аңдатпа.** Бұл мақалада Әл-Фарабидің ғылымға қосқан үлесіне қысқаша шолу жасалады. Әбу Насыр Әл-Фараби өз заманының ұлы философы және ғалымы болған. Бастапқыда ол Фараби мен Бұхарадағы оқуын бітіріп, кейін Бағдадқа барып, онда ұзақ уақыт оқып, жұмыс істеді. Осы уақыт ішінде Әл-Фараби бірнеше тілді, сондай-ақ білім мен технологияның түрлі салаларын меңгерді.

Мақалада этикалық философияның негізін қалаушы әл-Фарабидің этикалық философиясындағы надандықтың нақты проблемалары, әсіресе Ежелгі және мұсылман дәстүрінің Фарабидік синтезі, платондық саяси тұжырымдамалар жүйесіндегі орны ашылады. Сондай-ақ, Фараби идеяларының Ислам әлеміндегі этикалық ойдың одан әрі дамуына әсері көрсетілген.

Сонымен қатар, мақалада әл-Фарабидің тіпті кішігірім қауымдастықтарды басқаруға лайықсыз, әлсіз және жалқау басқарушыларды қатаң сынға алған ойлары мен трактаттары нақты көрсетілген.

Ғалым өз еңбектерінде осындай "билеуші" ұғымына тән белгілерге сипаттама береді.

**Түйін сөздер:** ғылымға, әртүрлі салаларға, ғылыми трактаттарға, маңызды жұмыстарға қосқан үлесі, вакуумның болуы.

## Духовная культура аль-Фараби проблемы невежества в философии

**Аннотация.** В этой статье дается краткий обзор вклада аль-Фараби в науку. Абу Наср аль-Фараби был величайшим философом и ученым своего времени. Первоначально он закончил учебу в Фараби и Бухаре, позже отправился в Багдад, где долгое время учился и работал. За это время аль-Фараби овладел несколькими языками, а также различными отраслями знаний и технологий.

В статье выявляются специфические проблемы невежества в этической философии аль-Фараби, основателя актуальной политической, этической философии, особенно синтеза Фараби древней и мусульманской традиции, раскрывается место платоновских политических концепций в его системе, показано влияние идей Фараби на дальнейшее развитие этической мысли в мире. Ислам.

Кроме того, в статье четко указаны мысли, трактаты, где аль-Фараби непримиримо и жестко критиковал невежественных, слабых и ленивых управленцев, недостойных руководить даже небольшими сообществами.

Ученый в своих работах дает характерные черты такого "правителя".

**Ключевые слова:** вклад в науку, различные отрасли, научные трактаты, значимые работы, существование вакуума.

### Introduction

The main ideological idea of Abu-Nasr Muhammad ibn-Muhammad ibn Tarkhan ibn-Uzlag al-Farabi at-Turki is that people, according to world laws, should maintain peace among themselves. Only then can they achieve true happiness, that is, live in harmony with themselves, with people and with the world, can they achieve kindness, beauty and truth.

Human happiness, which synthesizes goodness, beauty and truth, thus becomes an absolute value on the scale of the universe. Any absolute value is the ideal, the point to which any person should strive and strives. Abu-Nasr explains in detail why different peoples have different understandings of happiness. The reasons, from his point of view, are the same, which explain the existence of different peoples of different religions. It is surprising that al-Farabi does not give any preference to Islam in his understanding of happiness. From this we can conclude that in the philosophy of Abu-Nasr al-Farabi, there is an implicit position that human happiness is higher than religious dogmas and commandments.

Above, we have repeatedly encountered such a position, when philosophical

truths are higher than religious ones. More precisely, not so. Al-Farabi at-Turki's idea is somewhat different, although very similar. The truth is one. And only philosophy can know it in its full, precise, and perfect form.

Religion, on the other hand, uses its figurative and symbolic means to bring these truths to unenlightened people, simplifying their presentation for clarity, and rejecting and retreating from conceptual forms for accessibility. If there is a mistake in understanding happiness, then it is not philosophy or religion that is to blame, but specific circumstances, where there may be both subjective and objective reasons and conditions. To achieve true happiness, it is necessary to know what true happiness is [5].

According to Abu-Nasr al-Farabi at-Turki, philosophy, penetrating in its knowledge to the foundations of the universe, reveals the laws and principles of existence, the knowledge of which gives a person the meaning of true happiness. Philosophy and literature (the poetry of Saadi, Khayyam and other poets of this era) is focused on understanding this very question – what is the meaning and purpose of human life. That is why we see the philosophy of poetry and the poetry of the philosophy of Arabic-speaking think-

ers and poets, which has been admired for centuries.

Al-Farabi's thoughts on the unselfishness of the path to happiness are interesting. If a person refuses or refrains from evil actions in the hope of obtaining greater benefits (abstinence in a short earthly life in order to obtain eternal pleasure in Paradise), then, according to Abu-Nasr, this is not the true path to happiness. This is either trade, or hypocrisy – in any case, not a true desire to achieve true happiness. Happiness is not a reward for something, for some feelings, thoughts, words or deeds. True virtue has a cause and all the conditions that determine it in itself. It can not be traded for a reward in the afterlife, the other world. Such a virtue is not a virtue, but rather a vice. The reward for virtue is virtue itself, which does not require external additional "pushes".

The motivation of virtue is absolutely independent and self-sufficient. Virtue is the result of the life of a virtuous person who follows justice in his feelings, thoughts, words, and deeds, without claiming any additional reward for his virtue other than virtue. Al-Farabi said "you must be satisfied that you are virtuous, as". If this does not bring you happiness, then you only consider yourself virtuous without being so; your virtue is only external, ostentatious, calculating, hypocritical, etc.

Happiness is when evil, ugliness, lies are repugnant to a person, as if by "nature". Happiness cannot come to a person who even puts faith in the line of the pursuit of material "profit" in eternal life. Virtue is self-sufficient and self-valuable for achieving happiness. To be virtuous is happiness. If such a variant of happiness is realized, then a person is not afraid of death, because true virtue in this life is the guarantor of true happiness, i.e., both earthly (finite) and otherworldly (eternal).

In the face of death (on earth), a virtuous person does not lose his dignity, does not fall into fear and confusion, does not

cling to it by any means. A happy person leaves the earthly life without suffering, despair and fear. The absence of fear of death does not mean the desire to bring it closer. A happy person has already achieved happiness in his virtuous life, so it is logically meaningless for him to rush to the eternal world, where eternal happiness awaits him. Logically, the al-Farabi system, in our opinion, seems to be perfect... Except for one thing: the original-virtue is self-sufficient. This is a hypothesis, and an axiomatic one at that. Virtue, in our opinion, is not a priori, as al-Farabi admits. That is, it is not just inherent in a person. This is first. Secondly, the mere accumulation of knowledge, as the entire history of mankind before and after Farabi has shown, can not achieve virtue either for an individual, or for society, or for humanity. Virtue must be motivated from within a person, but determined by external conditions: whether by God, nature, society, local cultural environment, family, or anything else.

Al-Farabi is not an atomist, in this sense, not a supporter of the philosophy of Epicurus. But there are echoes of epicureanism in the idea that when a happy person dies, it is not him who should be mourned, for just as he was happy in the finite world, so he will be happy in the eternal world; but his fellow citizens, who without him have reduced the chances of achieving virtue, should be mourned [1].

The philosophy of Abu-Nasr Muhammad ibn-Muhammad ibn Tarkhan ibn-Uzlag al-Farabi at-Turki is systematic and well thought out logically in terms of composition. The doctrine of virtue (ethics) is logically interwoven with the doctrine of virtuous and ignorant cities. Remembering the characteristics of the ignorant (necessity, exchange, baseness, ambition, power, collectivity) cities, we can tell which of their inhabitants and why death may be terrible: for their understanding of happiness was wrong. When they die, they lose wealth, power, fame, and other illusory symbols of

happiness, in their understanding. All this is perishable, mortal, transitory. In the face of death, the inhabitants of ignorant cities understand the illusory nature of their aspirations in life. Al-Farabi might have recalled the parable of Alexander the Great, who ordered that when he lay on his deathbed, a coin should be placed in his open palms so that everyone could see that even he, the great king, could take nothing with him to the afterlife. The same is said of Abu Nasr Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Tarkhan Ibn Uslag al-Farabi al-Turki. However, in our opinion, this position can be understood and interpreted differently. There is only this life, and to be happy in this, earthly, finite life, is the highest meaning and the highest goal of being and knowing a person. Abu-Nasr says that vicious people repent before they die, but this is also a lie, hypocrisy, hypocrisy, caused by the fear of missing out on otherworldly happiness [2].

### **Methodology**

Al-Farabi connects moral problems not only with the social aspects of human existence, but also with the problems of psychology: virtue is associated with freedom, with will, with freedom of choice. Freedom of choice is connected with the will, with the fact that "a person gives preference to what is possible to choose"

1. The ethical aspects of virtue are connected, as we have seen above, with politics, which is most clearly seen in the description of virtuous and ignorant cities. Everything in al-Farabi is systematic and interrelated: ontology, epistemology, metaphysics, cosmology, ethics, sociology, religion, psychology, and all other problems. Philosophy, as we have already said, plays a major role in the achievement of human happiness. "As we achieve happiness only when we have lovely and beautiful is innate in us only through the art of philosophy, then it must be that it is due to the philosophy we achieve happiness".

2. The pursuit of philosophy requires, as we have already said, a virtuous soul, without which it is impossible to attain true knowledge. The dialectic of al-Farabi's thinking, if you do not delve into the details, may seem like a simplified circular scheme. A virtuous soul, which is self-sufficient, is needed for the study of philosophy, which gives true knowledge about the universe, about nature, about society, about man, about his body and about his soul. But on the other hand, it is true knowledge that makes a person's soul virtuous. At least, without true knowledge, it is impossible to achieve true virtue. And philosophical training begins with the art of logic. "Since the goods with which man is endowed are some more specific, and others less so, moreover, the most specific of the goods for man is the human mind, for man became man through reason, and since the good that this art applies is the human mind, then this art applies those goods that are most specific to man".

3. In order to break the circle of "virtue-knowledge-virtue and knowledge-virtue-knowledge", al-Farabi distinguishes two types of virtue: reasonable (wisdom, sharpness of mind, quickness of mind) and dianoetic (justice, generosity, courage, moderation). Remember that the virtues of Abu-Nasr are a priori, i.e. innate. Nature gives a person a certain predisposition, but this side of life can not be attributed to moral moments. Natural predisposition can only be considered as makings. "Measure in everything" – this truth al-Farabi learned from ancient philosophy and conducts everywhere. Natural inclinations, for example, can also not be taken to the extreme, claiming that someone is completely predisposed to virtue, and someone else is completely predisposed to vices. He writes: "A man cannot be endowed from the very beginning by nature with virtue or vice, any more than he can be a born weaver or scribe".

4. From birth, a person has only a predisposition to morality. This predisposition

must be developed into the habit of performing moral actions. Again, we see the relationship of many aspects of human existence and thinking. Here "virtuous soul", "good will", "accidental and necessary", "free choice", "wisdom", "habit", "ruler", "inhabitants", etc. – all this leads to the fact that during the life of a person a "beautiful disposition" is developed. According to him: "Politicians make the citizens of the cities good by teaching them to do good", that is, by teaching them to do good. They develop the habit of doing good deeds in people.

5. Islam as a religion most clearly demonstrates this in the detail of a number of actions, ranging from simple hygienic to the highest religious (for example, the regulation of the time of prayers). A good temper, generated by habits, in the philosophical sense, is the observance of measure in everything: feelings, thoughts, words and deeds. The most vivid example of the active use of dialectical concepts as a method of not only cognition, but also being is the example of how al-Farabi suggests to train oneself to moral actions. The method is simple: you need to force yourself to do the opposite of what you want. Then, from the unity of opposites, we get the "average", which is the measure.

Al-Farabi connects any theoretical ideas with practice. That Abu-Nasr's ideas are more complex than just the unity of opposites is evident from his arguments about the relationship between science, philosophy and beauty. If the actions of man are great, it is closer to philosophy, even if you don't know the science, not to read a book than one that has read a lot of books, but not using them in practice. Virtuous actions have an advantage over the theoretical knowledge that is needed, but they must be supplemented by actions. All this is written in the system of the universe, at the base, at the beginning of which is Allah. The middle of the universe is the hierarchy of being, consisting of those spheres

that we have considered above. In the same aeon there is a person who is able to know it and act in it. At the opposite end from the beginning of the universe is the possibility of achieving true happiness. To be perfectly honest, it turns out that the world created by Allah depersonalizes him. And at the end of this chain remains the pure world of the earthly life of man. The belief in the human mind, the belief that a person can comprehend any depth of the wisdom of Allah, the belief that everything known is possible and should be applied in practice, reveals a high degree of humanism of the teachings of al-Farabi.

It can be said that in the virtuous city, al-Farabi portrayed his ideals, the ideals of his life, to some extent himself. He wanted harmony in himself and in the society in which he lives, as well as in every person. This harmony should be expressed in the fact that people should strive to maintain peace among themselves. People are not blind tools of God, but beings who are able to comprehend the truth of things and act according to the dictates of their bright mind.

6. A person must know the essence of things in order to have the power to create the world around him at his own discretion. Here is what Abu-Nasr writes: "A person must have a perfect understanding of the essence of things, and, moreover, he must be restrained and steadfast in the process of mastering [the sciences], must by nature love truth and its champions, justice and its adherents, not show selfishness in his desires, not be greedy in food, drink, naturally despise the passions, dirhams, dinars and all the like. He must take pride in what is reproved by men, be well-bred, easily submit to good and justice, and with difficulty succumb to evil and injustice, and possess great prudence".

7. The peace that people should maintain among themselves is not only the absence of war. We now understand that we are talking about the harmony of the

universe. People should keep the Peace... [3, 4, 9].

### ***The Ruler is an Ignoramus***

Abu Nasr was unapologetic and harshly critical of ignorant, weak, and lazy managers who were unworthy to lead even small communities. The scientist in his works gives the characteristic features of such a "ruler". This lack of wisdom that lead to all sorts of excesses in eating, drinking and debauchery, and attempt to stay in power, "he will by all means strive to perpetuate themselves and their child to keep a memory and to leave the power to the child or his family".

Like Plato, al-Farabi divides the types of political structure into five categories, of which the perfect city (corresponding to Plato's "aristocracy") is the best form of government, and the rest are imperfect types, which Plato himself characterizes as "degenerate", including timocracy, oligarchy, democracy and tyranny. Al-Farabi constructs a somewhat different four-part classification of "imperfect" communities.

Unlike Plato, he shows more interest in the opposite (*mudadda*), non-virtuous grads, devoting them to a detailed description of the last eight chapters of his treatise.

Al-Farabi divides the imperfect types of communities into the ignorant (*jahiliyya*),

1. the impious (*fasika*),
2. the changed one (*mubadilya*) and
3. stray (*dalla*) grady.

The number of individuals committed hail opposed to the so-called "weeds" (*nawabi*) among its inhabitants and "the savages".

The worst of these four communities is the ignorant city, whose people have never known true happiness, and even if they were given it, they would reject it. They worship imaginary values, which, from the point of view of al-Farabi, include such as health, wealth, pleasure, self-will and hon-

or, and they rely on the opposite as misfortune.

In turn, the philosopher divides the ignorant city into six varieties:

1. necessary (*al-madina ad-daruriyya*),
2. money changer (*al-madinah al-baddalah*),
3. lowland (*madinah al-hissa wa-s-sukut*),
4. ambitious (*madinat al-karama*),
5. power-hungry (*madinat al-tagallub*) and collective (*al-madina al-jama'iyya*),
6. free (*madinat al-ahrar/al-hurriyya*) [5,6].

People of the necessary city, which in Plato is not clearly qualified and does not have a name, do not strive for intellectual perfection, but are limited only to the things necessary for bodily existence – food, drink, clothing, housing, coitus, helping each other to achieve this in various ways, including agriculture, cattle breeding, hunting, robbery, arts and crafts.

The next trait of an unfit manager is indifference to the development of education and science in the country. The following lists the ignorant ruler's predilection for honours for uncharacteristic virtues and, as a result, the desire for violence and coercion. The unfit ruler has no concept of justice and truth, he multiplies evil, self-serving laws are passed under him, the desire for wealth is exalted: "They strive to be the richest among the inhabitants of the city in order to earn honors".

Abu Nasr himself attached great importance to education and argued that the future of a country where science does not develop is uncertain. Al-Farabi's philosophical reflections are of universal importance, and they are also important for Kazakhstan.

Unprecedented steps are being taken to improve the social well-being of scientists. "About the soul" – a hundred times [8, 10].

Many of al-Farabi's statements about science have become catch phrases. Here



is an example from history, when a certain ruler named Sayf al-Dawl invited". Abu Nasr to the palace and asked: "Teacher, what is the future of our state? The scientist instantly retorted: "If you want to know the future, then show me your youth". Many people know this expression, but they do not remember that it belongs to al-Farabi for many years.

The great mentor thus pointed out the importance of the education of the younger generation: "To ensure balance, each state should rely on two wings: one – health (medicine), the second – education. If medicine heals the body, then education is spiritual food".

Moreover, spiritual food, that is, education, according to al-Farabi and other thinkers of the East, should begin with 7-8 years. And here a reasonable question arises: how justified is today's education of children from the age of 6? Are we not thus robbing them of their childhood? By the way, in Soviet schools, education from the age of 7 was introduced precisely on the recommendation of al-Farabi.

When teaching, he considered it necessary to use persuasion, and he himself urged his students to repeat the exercises, for example, in calligraphy: "As a result of long diligent exercises in writing, a person becomes perfect in this art, and the longer he does it, the stronger and more perfect he becomes". In this regard, the famous German scientist Hegel pointed out that al-Farabi himself read Aristotle's "Physics" 40 times, "Rhetoric" – 200 times, "On the Soul" – 100 times. That is, he not only recommended repeating the exercises, but also showed an example. [10]

Abu Nasr demonstrated by his own example what ethical qualities a mentor should possess: "The norm of a teacher's behavior is that he should not show either excessive severity or excessive indulgence, since severity turns the student against the mentor, and indulgence leads to disrespect for his person, neglect of his teach-

ing and his science". "At the same time, al-Farabi made demands on the student: "On his part, diligence and perseverance are required, which are like water, drop by drop, breaking through a stone".

Kazakhstan follows the recommendations of a great teacher and thinker in its educational policy. In this regard, the adoption of the Law "On the Status of a Teacher" was timely, thanks to which the teacher became more protected in social and legal terms. The document provides for mechanisms that reduce the weekly workload of teachers, as well as the paper routine and all kinds of reports. There were bans to attract teachers to social and political events that were not typical of their profession. [7]

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, I would like to propose a number of measures to perpetuate the name of al-Farabi. First of all, this is the development of a textbook "The Great Thinker al-Farabi" for schools and colleges, written in an accessible and understandable language. I also propose to introduce a separate paragraph for studying the works of al-Farabi in school textbooks on the "History of Kazakhstan" for the 11th grade. There is a need to restore the university discipline "History of Kazakhstan" (from ancient times to the present day), in which to start studying the life and work of al-Farabi, because in the discipline "Modern History of Kazakhstan" there is no information about this outstanding person, as there are no materials on the history of the Golden Horde, Abay. Given that every year the number of students from other countries, including our fellow countrymen from the 5 million Diaspora and irredenta, increases in our universities, the urgency of this problem increases. The only condition is that the new materials must not repeat the school course.

We should also consider the possibility of creating an institute of farabiology with branches in the regions of the country. It should be reminded about the founder of this scientific direction: we did not fully comprehend the scientific contribution of Academician Akzhan Mashani, who, despite the directives without a pronounced national identity, dared to return the name of Abu Nasr al-Farabi from oblivion and present it as the greatest national pride of Kazakhstan. In this regard, we recall the words of Abu Nasr himself that every citizen is responsible for the fate of the country: "Just as a father is responsible for the actions of his children, so every nation is responsible to its own history".

We, scientists, have an honorable duty to study and cherish for future generations all that was created by the genius of al-Farabi.

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