



The Interpretation of Ethical Categories in the Works of Al-Farabi

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Annation. *There is no doubt that Eastern culture, philosophy, and the philosophies of ancient social life served as the foundation for the advancement of Western culture, science, and technical achievements. If we go back to history, we can see genius figures such as Al-Khwarizmi, Abu Reikhan Beruni, Abu Nasr Farabi, Abu Ali ibn Sina (Avicenna) originated in the East. Among them there were six scholars who had a strong influence on the world civilization e.g., Al-Khwarizmi, Al-Farabi, Akhmad Al-Fargani, Abu Reikhan Beruni, and ibn Sina, all five representatives of the East were born in Uzbekistan; however, one of them Ibn Rushd (Averroes) was of the Spanish-Arab origin.*

Knowledge increases by knowledge and thought leads to another thought. History witnesses a number of places where the scientific discoveries of the world were made, obviously, those places achieved strong links and advancement in different fields. For example, Baghdad and Khorezm that had the status of “Dar al-Hikma” (Hall of wisdom) in the 9-11th centuries, were one of the well-known centers of science development. Another sample may refer to the times of Mirza Ulugbek and Ali-Shir Navai when the main concentration was on the advancement of science.

Many scientists and scholars of both East and West throughout the Renaissance period attempted to understand human behaviour in a social way. They were also eager to know about the nature of human being, to determine the ways to educate and perfect them. With the help of this knowledge they wanted to find the right means of managing the human communities and strive to create rules for justice-based regulations and governance.

The socio-philosophical heritage of our outstanding scholars covers all aspects of human activity. In particular, the works of Abu Nasr Farabi, one of the earliest Islamic intellectuals, preserved up to the present time, can be of high importance for both individuals and the society as a whole. The problem of human and the improvement of society, which is closely tied to this problem, takes a central place in Farabi’s philosophical teachings.

Farabi’s famous treatises such as “*The Attainment of Happiness*” (“*Kitab at-tanbih ala sabil as-sa’ada*”), “*The Civil Politics, The Political Regime*” (“*Kitab as-siyasi al madaniyya*”), and especially “*The Virtuous City*” (“*Arsu ahli madinatul-fazila*”) serve as valuable heritage leading to human happiness.

The great thinker states: “Happiness is such a goal that it can be attained via virtuous deeds such as acquiring knowledge, studying different arts (e.g., jobs, handcrafts etc.) and doing various activities worthy of the acquired knowledge and skills.” In this context, the term “art” refers to a very wide spectrum of efforts occurring in the society. First of all, it is necessary to acquire and master knowledge about beauty and goodness in order to educate people on the path to happiness. Knowing the truth and having verified and accurate knowledge is the main goal of philosophy. “The art (science) that aims at achieving beauty and goodness is called philosophy or, in a broad sense, wisdom” says Farabi in his book “*The Virtuous City*.”

In his work “*Aphorisms of the Statesman*” (“*Kitab fusus al-madaniyya*”), the scholar says the following about the qualities of a perfect person: “Human body tends to be healthy and sick, the same qualities are equally relevant to human’s soul (nafs). The harmony between the internal condition of the soul and its



numerous components is an expression of the well-being of the soul. This, in turn, makes it possible for someone to constantly do virtuous and noble deeds and possess impeccable manners.”

Farabi thinks about not only spiritual, but also physical development of a person. The scholar’s teachings lay a strong emphasis on the human problem and the issues related to perfecting the society, establishing a virtuous society, and developing certain strategies to open the doors of happiness to a person.

According to the thinker human virtue is not only an abstract concept with a certain content, but also a unique moral trait measured by practical actions on the path to spiritual perfection of a person. Virtue is a clear manifestation of a person’s efforts to pursue beauty and goodness. The scholar defines virtue as the following: “It is a set of internal (moral) traits that motivate a person to do good deeds and display excellent behavior. Passions that encourage a person to do bad and evil deeds are called beastliness (razolat), they are the expressions of a person’s flaws or imperfections.”

Farabi makes a distinction between wisdom and justice: according to the scholar, a state governor who does not possess these two qualities risks destroying the country. His moral ideal is the image of a perfect person. A perfect person is a mature man with active mind. It is a master who has a high thinking ability and shows the way to happiness with the skill of educating people science and art.

The works of Farabi were widely read throughout the globe in the 12th and 13th centuries after being translated into Latin, ancient Jewish, Persian, and later other languages. Many libraries and institutions across the world keep the copies of the works duplicated in recent centuries. At the Institute of Oriental Studies named after Beruni in Tashkent one can find 107 treatises of the Eastern philosophers, including “*The Collection of Manuscripts of Judges*” (“*Majmuat rasoil al-hukamo*”) that constitutes of 16 treatises in the Arabic language. This unique manuscript is very significant in studying the works of the scholar. Farabi’s treatises included into the collection were partially translated into Uzbek and published in 1975.

Farabi was renowned as a great scientist in his time. There are various stories and legends about him created by the peoples of the East. The scientists of the medieval period such as Ibn Khallikon, Ibn al-Qifti, Ibn Abi Usabi’a, and Bayhaqi studied the works of the scholar and developed his concepts and ideas in their works. The works of Al-Farabi were specifically examined by ibn Rushd, who also added his own commentaries on them (e.g., “*Al-Farabi’s opinions on syllogism*”, “*Explanations of the propositions expressed in Abu Nasr’s work on logic*”, “*Al-Farabi, in particular, various commentaries on his “Organon” etc.*). The formation of his philosophical doctrine, known as Averroism, was initially associated with the teachings of Farabi and Ibn Sina. Averroism was widely spread as an advanced direction representing scientific advances and had an impact on the worldview of many advanced thinkers and intellectuals of the Renaissance period.

Progressive humanity respects Al-Farabi’s heritage and deeply studies his works. Specific contributions to the study of the scholar’s heritage have been made by a number of European scientists such as B.M. Schrenschneider, Carra de Vaux, T.W. Buhr, R. Hammond, R. de Erlange, F. Deterici, G. Farmer, N. Rishar, G. Ley etc. and the Eastern scientists such as Nafisi, Umar Farrukh, Turker, M. Mahdi and others. In the following years, several studies and works dedicated to Farabi’s works and teachings were created. The moral views and teachings of the thinker today serve as a model for educating the young generation and the development of the scope of the reforms being carried out in our country.