AI-FARĀBI'S POLITICAL THEORY

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own work unless otherwise stated in the text and that the thesis has been composed by myself.

Byoung Joo Hah
ABSTRACT

The first aim of this thesis is to comprehend the political thought of al-Fārābī (d.950) as fully as possible. Special attention is given to his views on types of non-virtuous states and international relations. It goes on to assess whether there is any possibility that his theory of state can be extended to a world state. Lastly, the thesis is concluded by setting out al-Fārābī's position in Islamic mediaeval political philosophy and in the world history of political thought.

The thesis consists of an introduction, five main chapters, and a conclusion. The introduction deals with the character of al-Fārābī as a political thinker in general and examines previous studies of al-Fārābī's political thought. The first chapter discusses al-Fārābī's concept of 'political science' and his basic philosophical views. The second chapter examines his doctrines of happiness, society and political education. The third chapter is concerned with al-Fārābī's framework of the virtuous state. The fourth chapter focuses on the types of the non-virtuous state. The fifth chapter centres on al-Fārābī's view of international relations. The conclusion presents al-Fārābī's contribution to Islamic political thought and the results of this analysis of his political works.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION (i)
ABSTRACT (ii)
TRANSLITERATION AND NOTATION (vii)
LIST OF TABLES (ix)

INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 1

1. ISLAMIC POLITICAL THOUGHT AND AL-FARĀBĪ ....................... 1
2. PREVIOUS STUDIES OF AL-FARĀBĪ'S POLITICAL THOUGHT ........... 17
3. THE AIM OF THIS THESIS .................................................. 27

1 AL-FARĀBĪ'S BASIC PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWS AND HIS POLITICAL THOUGHT 34

1.1 AL-FARĀBĪ'S CONCEPT OF 'POLITICAL SCIENCE (AL-‘ILM AL-MADANĪ)' AND HIS ACTUAL WORKS ........................................ 34
1.1.1 The Meaning of 'Political Science' .................................. 34
1.1.2 Relations between His Scheme of 'Political Science' and His Actual Works ......................................................... 47

1.2 COSMOLOGY, EMANATION AND INTELLECT .......................... 48

1.3 THE FACULTIES OF THE SOUL AND PROPHECY .................... 63
1.3.1 The Faculties of the Soul ........................................... 63
1.3.2 The Imaginative Faculty and Prophecy ........................... 70

1.4 VIRTUES (AL-FADĀ‘IL) AND FIRST HUMAN PERFECTION ........... 72

iii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>HAPPINESS</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1</td>
<td>The Meaning of Happiness</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2</td>
<td>Means and Ways to Happiness</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>SOCIETY</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1</td>
<td>Man and Origin of Society</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2</td>
<td>Classification of Society</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3</td>
<td>Various Types of City, Community and the World</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>CITY</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1</td>
<td>Ranks of City</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2</td>
<td>People's Activities in the City</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>POLITICAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1</td>
<td>Instruction (al-Ta'lim)</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2</td>
<td>Education (Ta'dib)</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>THE VIRTUOUS STATE</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>THE VIRTUOUS CITY (AL-MADINAH AL-FADILAH)</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1</td>
<td>Ranks of the Virtuous City</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.2</td>
<td>People's Activities in the Virtuous City</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>THE VIRTUOUS RULER</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1</td>
<td>The Ideal Virtuous Ruler</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.2</td>
<td>The Actual Virtuous Ruler</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>FORMATION OF AL-MADINAH AL-FADILAH (THE VIRTUOUS STATE)</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 TYPES OF THE NON-VIRTUOUS STATE

4.1 A BASIC FRAME FOR CLASSIFICATION OF THE NON-VIRTUOUS STATE

4.2 STATE WITH RECOGNITION OF HAPPINESS

4.2.1 The Wicked State (al-Madinah al-Fasiqah)

4.2.2 The Changed State (al-Madinah al-Mubaddalah)

4.3 STATE WITHOUT RECOGNITION OF HAPPINESS

4.3.1 The Ignorant State (al-Madinah al-Jahiliyyah)

4.3.1.1 The Subsistent State (al-Madinah al-Daruiriyyah)

4.3.1.2 The Mean State (Madīnat al-Nadharah)

4.3.1.3 The Depraved State (Madīnat al-Khissah)

4.3.1.4 The Honourable State (Madīnat al-Karamah)

4.3.1.5 The Dominating State (Madīnat al-Taghallub)

4.3.1.6 The Democratic State (al-Madinah al-Jama’iyyah)

4.3.2 The Erroneous State (al-Madinah al-Dallah)

4.4 SYNTHETIC VIEWS ON THE NON-VIRTUOUS STATE

5 VIEWS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 Al-Farābī's Stance on the Actual State

5.1.2 Two Premises of the Natural Existents

5.2 GENERAL CONCEPT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

5.3 FORCEFUL SOLUTION TO INTERNATIONAL COMPLICATIONS
5.3.1 Mutual Concord (Taḥābib) and Relations (Irtībāt) 218
5.3.2 International Justice and Customary Law 227
5.3.3 Balance of Power and Emergence of Charismatic Man 230
5.3.4 Conquering and Voluntary Trade 239
5.4 PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO INTERNATIONAL COMPLICATIONS 241
5.5 THE ATTEMPT TO FORM A THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS 244

CONCLUSION 250

1. LATER HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF AL-FARABI'S POLITICAL THOUGHT 250
2. CONCLUDING REMARKS 260

BIBLIOGRAPHY 268
TRANSLITERATION AND NOTATION

TRANSLITERATION OF ARABIC

Arabic characters have been transcribed as the system of United States Library of Congress as outlined in Cataloguing Service Bulletin 49 (November, 1958) with the exception that the tā' marbūtah is written a h when not in idāfah.

NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS

All page references of al-Fārābī's works are to the followings unless otherwise noted. All the English translations in the footnotes or in references are incorporated in the text of the English translation and commentary as follows:

\[\text{EI}^1: \text{Encyclopaedia of Islam} \text{ 1st Edition.}\]
\[\text{EI}^2: \text{Encyclopaedia of Islam} \text{ 2nd Edition.}\]


LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Al-Farabi's System of Cosmology, Emanation and Cognition ............................... 61
Table 2. Al-Farabi's Classification of Society I ........ 90
Table 3. Al-Farabi's Classification of Society II .... 167
Table 4. Lineage of Knowledge ......................... 252
INTRODUCTION

1. ISLAMIC POLITICAL THOUGHT AND AL-FĀRĀBĪ.

Since the birth of Islam in the seventh century, political ideas have continued to change with the times. Sometimes these ideas have started a new era of advancement in the Islamic world, sometimes they were strongly opposed by the thought of the time.

Three main strands of political thought seem to have emerged in Islam. Of the three, the political thought of the jurists is the first. Their formulation, which is most truly Islamic, is in some measure an expression of a religious ideal in opposition to practice.\(^1\) In the early days of Islam, at least before the coming of the falasifah (the philosophers), political ideas were, in a strict sense, not political thought within a systematic

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frame, but rather, they occurred in scattered passages in works dealing with other subjects including fragmented ideas which are extracted from passages of al-Qur'ān (hereafter the Koran) and were only related by implication to what could be regarded as "political matters." It is common knowledge that early Islamic scholars have shown less interest in political science than in other studies. They wrote few works dedicated to political science and there was no systematic study of political science or political system. In other words, they felt that the study of political regimes and the analytical theory of political life could not be carried out independently of religious considerations, and thus cannot be a science in its own right; due to the subordination of politics to fiqh and Islam.

The later juristic scholars, on the contrary, have devoted themselves to identifying the political views expressed in their ideas. Their political thoughts are entangled in theological and juristic treatises, and in theological commentaries and preachings. These scholars, at first, fused the fragmented ideas which were related

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3 Ibid., p.123.
to politics with the political views which were mainly focused on the ruler or leader, al-Khalīfah (hereafter the Caliph).4 By the eleventh century, their work began to include ideas which showed a development in the nature of authority, dealing with the origin of the state, the concept of the ruler and the citizens of the state. Such writers included al-Mawardi (974-1058) and al-Ghazālī (1058-1111). In theologico-juristic theories, the ruler should be subject to al-Shari‘a (hereafter the Sharia), the Islamic law as it had been developed by the jurists. "Although the jurists attempt some extent to rationalise the history of the community, there is at the same time a tendency for their political thought to become bound by tradition,"5 to meet the variable systems composed of


peoples and communities of diverse tribes and varying cultures and societies. The jurists debated and expanded the idea of Caliphal legitimacy and its legacy in terms of an ideal Caliphate (al-Khilâfah). They particularly emphasised the obedience of citizen to the ruler, regardless of whether the ruler is a usurper or not.6

The second strand of thinking is the formulation put forward by the administrators and writers of manuals of conduct for rulers and governors, the Mirrors for Princes such as Ibn al-Muqaffa7 (8C). They stress the Divine Right of Kings and are interested in the practice of this concept, rather than governmental theory or the theory of state. Their concepts of king are based on justice, not on religion.7 On the other hand, their emphasis on the ruler, directly appointed by God and directly responsible to Him, coupled with the concession of power to the ruler by his subjects, denies responsibility to the citizen, and contributes to the abolition of personal liberty.8 An independent political theory cannot, therefore, be expected as the matter stands.

8 Ibid., pp.422-23.
The third strand is the political ideas of the Muslim philosophers, the falāsifah. They are often referred to as Neoplatonists and are generally known to us as those who came under the influence of Greek philosophy. Their central ideas are that the state is founded and grounded by the law and they identify the philosopher-king with al-Imām (hereafter the Imam). It is known that during the Islamic period from the tenth to the twelfth century, this political philosophy in its broad sense was predominant among the falāsifah. The falāsifah, in those days, encountered Greek political ideas and transformed them into an integral part of their own general framework. In particular, the falāsifah seem to have been familiar with the Alexandrian summaries of Plato's Republic and Laws.

9 The term 'falāsifah' is explained in the following: "... From the Greek philosophos the Arabs formed a word faylasūf, of which the plural is falāsifa. The corresponding abstract noun is falsaфа, 'philosophy' ..." W. M. Watt, The Formative Period of Islamic Thought (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973), p.204.


Erwin I J Rosenthal recognises that the falāsifah occupy a particular position in the realm of political thought, and he places them between the theologico-juristic treatment of the state on the basis of the divinely revealed law and the historico-political approach as the result of the study of the actual state built upon power as portrayed by the Mirrors.\textsuperscript{12} As Fauzi M Najjar properly indicates, the falāsifah seem to understand that political philosophy in Islam centres around the relationship between philosophy and society, governed by the revealed law. According to him, the law prescribes for the believer, not only dogmas or beliefs regarding divine beings, revelation and the hereafter; but it also provides rules (ahkām) and limits (hudūd); hence, governing his relations and transactions with his fellow believers, as well as his relations to those who are entrusted with authority over him.\textsuperscript{13}

Even though Erwin I J Rosenthal regards the starting point of the study of Islamic political thought as the Caliphate, he also recognises the importance of the falasifah's contribution to political thought in gen-


eral. They are in a very special way the best qualified exponents of an attempted synthesis between the two cultures and ways of life of Greece and Islam. He enumerates four important reasons for the necessity of the study of falasifah as follows:

First, their political philosophy represents the meeting of the political philosophy of Plato and Aristotle with the indigenous theory of the Caliphate; that is, on the sure foundation and against the firm background of the Sharia, which is equally binding for all Muslims. Secondly, their political philosophy is, like that of their Greek masters, an integral part of their general philosophy, but at the same time, is largely conditioned by their recognition of the authority of the Sharia. Thirdly, therefore, they make a determined attempt at a real synthesis between Platonic and Islamic concepts on the basis of the common ground of the central position of law in the state, despite the existence of fundamental differences. Lastly, they are viewed as Muslim philosophers, which means that their metaphysical standpoint is not one of complete independ-

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15 Ibid.
ence, but is conditioned by the Sharia of Islam. It is well known in general that this group of scholars which includes al-Fārābī (Alpharabius, d.950), Ibn Sīna (Avicenna, d.1037) and Ibn Bājjah (Avempace, d.1138) have adapted and developed a synthesis of neo-Platonical political philosophy, though there are differences among them.

In general, according to Erwin I J Rosenthal, they share almost the same views. These scholars, excepting Ibn Bājjah, are Muslim philosophers first and followers of their masters Plato and Aristotle second. In this sense, Rosenthal's opinion is that the falāsifah can be studied as a paradigm of political thought in mediaeval Islam. What is more, from the point of view of political theory, their importance cannot be exaggerated. Although they had little influence on the course of events in the Islamic state,¹⁶ their impact on the political thought of later jurists is, however, not negligible.

The politico-social rise or fall of a culture necessarily goes with its moral rise or fall, but the case seems to be different for intellectual development. Greek philosophy ended in AD 529 with Justinian’s (483-565) formal closing of the Academy of Athens. Many lead-

¹⁶ Ibid., p.4.
Neoplatonic philosophers took refuge at the Persian court of Kisra Anushirwan and translated the Greek works they had brought with them into Persian or Syriac. This migration was one channel through which Greek knowledge originally left the homeland, reaching the Arab world and, later, Europe. The political and moral decline of the Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad began in about the middle of the ninth century. In fact this period of political and moral decline was the period during which Muslims everywhere lost their solidarity and the three Caliphates broke into small states or sundry dynasties. And this was the period when the Muslim intellect reached its full flowering. It was during this period of political and moral decline, that illustrious philosophers such as al-Fārābī flourished.

Under these circumstances, al-Fārābī and no doubt others, perhaps felt that with the coming of Islam, Greek knowledge and its universally accepted ideals could be

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adapted to the intellectual environment in the new situation which had arisen, one favourable to building a philosophically more ideal society. They speak of gradual reform and put some of their best efforts into political philosophy. Al-Farabi and his followers seem to have had a more developed concern with social or political questions, than Christian or most ancient pagan philosophers had had. The political orientation of Islam itself suggested this.

In terms of political thought, al-Farabi is a spe-


cial case. A product of the Baghdad School under Abū Bishr Matta b Yunus (d.940),\textsuperscript{21} he differed from it in a number of ways, introducing some major changes in ontology, evincing an exceptionally uncompromising attitude towards religion.\textsuperscript{22}

Al-Fārābī was the first Muslim thinker who sought to harmonise the political philosophy of Plato with the divine law of Islam.\textsuperscript{23} Already, Plato had suggested that a well-ordered society requires doctrines which should be perceived by the population to be divinely revealed, doctrines which are not necessarily true in themselves but would lead the people to behave in ways that are best for the society and for themselves. Al-Fārābī also applies

\textsuperscript{21} The related subjects are fully discussed in professor Ian Richard Netton's book of \textit{Al-Fārābī and His School} (London: Routledge, 1992).


this point of view in his teachings and his own conception within the framework of Islam.24

The task of harmonising philosophy and religion, or reason and revelation determines al-Farabî's basic philosophical system. In his analysis of this question he chooses neither to subordinate it to a revealed truth, which he feels unable to recognise as such, as does al-Kindî, or later al-Ghazâlî, nor to isolate religion and philosophy, as does Ibn Bajjah. Nor does he follow the few Muslim outsiders like al-Râzî (d.925?), who set out to condemn religion altogether as superstition.25 However, al-Farabî explicitly distinguishes between philosophical truth and religious symbols which illustrate the same truth. According to al-Farabî, philosophy uses the method of demonstration (al-barâhîn al-raqîniyyah), while religion uses the method of persuasion (al-iqnaʿât).

The model on which al-Farabî builds in order to solve this problem is undoubtedly Plotinus, from whom he takes the emanation theory. In other words, al-Farabî's

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main scheme of the prophetic revelation is the well-known theory of intellectual cognition, originally proposed by Aristotle in his book of *De Anima*, and developed by his later commentators, especially by Alexander of Aphrodisias. Al-Farabi explicitly treats the question of prophecy and develops it on the basis of the cognitive nature of the human soul. In his description of this, al-Farabi restricts the number of the incorporeal intellects to ten, whereas Aristotle mentions much greater numbers, and he does not speak of the emanation of the intellects from God.

It is often said that al-Farabi is the first Islamic political philosopher to understand the problem of tension between philosophy and revelation, and to provide a solution for it. Al-Farabi explores in great detail

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28 One of his main points is Plato's political philosophy, which enables him to substitute the Imam for the philosopher-king of Plato's *Republic* and the Sharia for the laws.
basic questions about the relationship between and the
harmony among philosophy, human law, or philosophical
leaders and revelation, prophecy, revealed law, and the
Imam. It is believed that he establishes the place of
political science in the city, the community and the
inhabited world (al-ma‘mūrah).

He tries to formulate the first ruler-philosopher-
Imam-legislator as the virtuous ruler and as the second
or probably actual virtuous ruler as well. This attempt
developed into formulating the virtuous state, as the
ideal or the actual one, which can be expanded into the
virtuous, inhabited world. Al-Farābī's classification of
the non-virtuous states, mainly the ignorant states, or
presumably the actual states can be placed under an indi-
vidual framework. However, some of them may be traced
from Plato's concept of states.

Furthermore, he unfolds his views of international
relations, or relations among actual states. This point
supports the fact of the extension of al-Farābī's
virtuous city state to the world state or the inhabited
world. However, Islam, according to Ann K S Lambton,
knows no theory of an international society of states.29
Nevertheless, it is astonishing that in Al-Madinah al-
Fādilah al-Fārābī gives a full description of the general

rule among states which are envisaged as ignorant and erroneous ones in his works. These ideas expressed in al-Farābī's works are at least clues hopeful for those attempting to trace the ancient classical theory of international relations, such as Cicero's (d. 43 BC) or Thucydides' (d. 400 BC?), of which there remains no extant manuscript. Al-Farābī's principles of the balance of power, war and the peaceful solution to interstate order are striking principles which Guicciardini discovered through the works of classical historians; most notably in Thucydides' Peloponnesian War.  

These subjects are mainly discussed in al-Farābī's political works, such as Iḥṣā' al-ʿUlūm, Taḥṣīl al-Saʿādah, Al-Madinah al-Fadilah, Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, Fusūl al-Madani, and Kitāb al-Millah. In his analysis of political thought, al-Farābī's methodology is easily observed in all his political works. His distinct rhetorical style appears in a metaphorical form. Conspicuous are his reviving and adopting traditional Greek analogies, especially in 'Fusūl al-Madani'; where he compares the philosopher or statesman with the physician, in a similar manner to the Stoic way and the Platonic

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31 Max Pohlenz, Die Stoa II;82.
method in the Republic. And Greek parallels exist also for the comparison of the state with the human body. Next, it appears that al-Fārābī's own terminology is at times generally abstract. It is usually found that he does his best to avoid being too explicit in naming actual people, groups or views. And whenever he discusses probably real existing groups, he omits to name them, preferring to call them by other general names, for example 'the ancients, the people, the tribe.' From this, Richard Walzer (1901-75) points out that al-Fārābī prefers abstract arguments in an often very irritating way.

If 'western' is interpreted as referring to the tradition begun by Plato and Aristotle, then al-Fārābī's main political works, Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, Fuṣūl al-Madānī, Tahṣīl al-Saʿādāh and Kitāb al-Millah might be exceptions to this generalisation. He also writes a trilogy called Philosophy of

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33 Ibid., p.22. More details will be discussed in each of the related chapters of this thesis.

Plato and Aristotle which includes and attempts to outline the basic structure of all knowledge.35

2. PREVIOUS STUDIES OF AL-FARÂBÎ'S POLITICAL THOUGHT.

It is well-known that M Steinschneider's monograph on al-Farabî, Al-Fârâbî (Alpharabius, 1859), was instrumental in bringing al-Farabî's work to light. Following this, a revival of interest continued and an abundance of works on al-Farabî followed: Friedrich Dieterici edited Alfrâbî's Philosophische Abhandlungen (1890) and Alfrâbî's Abhandlung Der Musterstaat (1895), and translated it into German from the London and Oxford Arabic manuscripts known as Al-Madinah al-Fadilah (1900).

After a long absence of critical evaluation of al-Farabî's writings, Dieterici's editing of Al-Madinah al-Fadilah, offered the possibility of a viable route into al-Farabî's political ideas, although Dieterici fails to develop al-Farabî's political theory in an independent way. It is certainly possible to some degree that around 1926, scholars met with al-Farabî's political views through becoming acquainted with manuscripts in

Haydarabad such as Rasā'il al-Fārābī, which includes Tahṣīl al-Sa'ādah, and Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, among others. One scholar who introduced al-Fārābī as a political thinker or philosopher was Leo Strauss. Strauss presented Philosophie und Gesetz in 1935 and in the same year Erwin I J Rosenthal published Maimonides' Conception of State and Society.

Before further development of al-Fārābī's political ideas as an independent subject could be possible al-Farābī's edited works needed to be made available to scholars who were not native Arabs. However, exploring and editing al-Farābī's manuscripts themselves took precedence over all other efforts. As previously mentioned, after the first modern edition of al-Farābī's political work, Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, by F Dieterici in 1895, in 1900 he translated the book into German, and then Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah in 1904.


Finding, editing, and translating al-Fārābī's political works resulted in many scholars concentrating their concern on al-Fārābī's political views. Many articles and books followed the original cataloguing or translation; including "Quelques remarques sur la science politique de Maîmonide et de Fārābī (1936)" of Leo Strauss36 and H K Sherwani's paper on "Al-Fārābī's Political Philosophy (1937)." D M Dunlop's "Al-Fārābī's Aphorisms of the Statesman (1952)" followed by *Fuṣūl al-

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Madani in 1961 established him as an expert. In 1954 Fauzi M Najjar presented *The Political Philosophy of Al-Farabi as a Rationalistic Interpretation of Islam* as a requirement for Ph.D. degree in Chicago. He tried to analyse materials on al-Farabi's political thought which were available then. In 1955 A J Arberry wrote "An Arabic Treatise on Politics" and Erwin I J Rosenthal presented "The Place of Politics in the Philosophy of al-Farabi." By presenting their political articles they were endeavoursing to re-interpret al-Farabi's thoughts. In 1958, similarly, Fauzi M Najjar presented "Al-Farabi on Political Science" and Muhammad Saghir Hasan al-Ma'sumi wrote "Al-Farabi's Political Philosophy."

Further progress was made in 1958 with the publication of Erwin I J Rosenthal's *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*. His book offered an opportunity to perceive Islamic political thought as a whole, and in a systematic way. Rosenthal's book should be the basic text for students and scholars studying Islamic political thought and Islamic political thinkers.\(^{37}\) Not only in its explication of the whole history of medieval Islamic political thought, but also in its presentation of the

\(^{37}\) To compare this, Majid Fakhry's *A History of Islamic Philosophy* seems to occupy a similar position in general philosophical subjects.

In 1963, Muhsin Mahdi took another step forward by writing a chapter on "Al-Farābī" in *History of Political Philosophy* edited by Joseph Cropsey and Leo Strauss. He also edited *Mediaeval Political Philosophy* with Ralph Lerner and led scholars to access them without difficulty. Also, in the same year, Richard Walzer presented "Aspects of Islamic Political Thought: Al-Farābī and Ibn Khaldun." In 1967 Aminul Islam gave his presentation of "Al-Farābī's Philosophy: Its Spiritual and Ethico-Political Significance."

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38 Ibrahim Madkour wrote it under the title of "Al-Farābī" in the book volume one.

39 He also wrote Greek into Arabic in 1962.
Wider and deeper study of al-Fārābī's political thought in the 1950s and 1960s by western scholars, including native Arabists and Islamists, resulted in a reevaluation of al-Fārābī as a political philosopher or political thinker by making it possible to exhume and study a great political mind which had been buried and neglected by history and position him in his rightful place in the history of Islamic political thought and in the world.

Partly as a result of all this intellectual activity, in 1968 Lee Cameron Mcdonald could not but recognise and stress the political thought of al-Fārābī, even though he merely mentions al-Fārābī's political ideas through one foot note; "... 'western' as referring to the tradition begun by Plato and Aristotle, Alfarabi's Political Regime might be an exception to this generalization...."40 Thereafter, al-Fārābī, as a political philosopher, not simply a philosopher as often found, is mentioned in any encyclopaedic publications related to political subjects.

Furthermore, in 1968, W Montgomery Watt wrote Islamic Political Thought. This, however, is not a search for al-Fārābī's deep political ideas, but rather a

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wider study which attempts to cover the whole range of Islamic political thought, in a similar vein to Rosenthal's *Political Thought in Mediaeval Islam*. It is proper that this book gives an opportunity to arrange Islamic political thought systematically. Also in the same year, Mahdi's edition of *Kitāb al-Millah*, promoted people's interest in al-Fārābī's political works. In 1970, Farouk A Sankari wrote "Plato and Al-Fārābī: A Comparison of Some Aspects of Their Political Philosophers." Two years later, C E Butterworth gave his paper, "Rhetoric and Islamic Political Philosophy." The following year saw the arrival of D P Brewster's "Al-Fārābī's Book of Religion." In 1979, two new works appeared, Kramer's "Al-Fārābī's Opinions of the Virtuous City and Maimonides' *Foundations of the Law.*"

In 1981 Ann K S Lambton published *State and Government in Mediaeval Islam*. She did not deal with al-Farābī's political thought in the main text, but she added a section on al-Farābī as an appendix, probably because of a time lag in publishing it. In 1983 Saiyid Ali Sajjad presented "Al-Farābī's Classification of

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61 In this year F W Zimmermann publishes another critical edition of al-Farābī's book of *Al-Farābī's Commentary and Short Treatise on Aristotle's De Interpretatione* standing comparison with R Walzer's *The Perfect State* thereafter.
States with Particular Reference to His Imam-State." In 1986 Hans Daiber's small, monographic study of al-Farābī's political views was published under the title of The Ruler as Philosopher: A New Interpretation of al-Farābī's view. Also in 1986, Bayraktar Baytrakli wrote "Definition of Politics in al-Farābī and His Ideas on the Origin of State."

As aforementioned, al-Madinah al-Fādilah was first edited by Dieterici, and in 1900 it was translated into German by the same author. Later it was translated in 1949 by R P Jaussen with others into French, and then in 1961-62 by Alonso Alonso into Spanish. Nevertheless, despite the popularity of Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, its English version did not become available until 1985. Richard Walzer's edition is not a simple, English translation, but a critical evaluation of al-Farābī's Al-Madinah al-Fādilah. His extremely detailed analysis and explanation give us many guideposts and directions for the study of al-Farābī's political thought. He makes a full investigation without overlooking even a word. He failed to publish his book while he was alive, so the date of issue of his book seems have been delayed by about 10 years. This, of course, delayed progress in studying and developing al-Farābī's political thought somewhat. However, this book contributes in at least two
ways to the study of al-Farabī's political thought. Firstly, he edited *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah* systematically, making future study of *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah* easier than before. Secondly, his translation satisfies a deep-felt need for a good translation of *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah* into English. This English edition, which is a very critical one, opened a new academic environment by inviting scholars to concentrate on al-Farabī's political thought.

After the publication of Richard Walzer's *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah* towards the end of the 1980s, many studies came out. In 1986 Hans Daiber gives his own interpretation of al-Farabī's philosophical ruler, as mentioned above. In 1987, O A Abouzeid submitted a Ph.D. thesis which is entitled *A Comparative Study between the Political Theories of Al-Farabī and the Brethren of Purity at the University of Toronto*. And in 1988 Yusuf Kamil Umar wrote *Strauss and Farabi*. Umar and Abouzeid seem to maintain the progress of analytic thinking in the study of al-Farabī's political thought.

After L C McDonald (1968) acknowledged the importance of al-Farabī's political thought in history, D E Luscumbe more firmly located al-Farabī's political thought in its proper context in *The Cambridge History of Mediaeval Political Theory*, edited by J H Burns in 1988. Recently, while writing this paper, M Galston's *Politics and Excellence: The Political Philosophy of al-Farabī* came to our attention. M Galston attempts to formulate
al-Fārābī's political thought as a complete theory and there is some degree of accord with his approach and the aims of this thesis.

It could be generally stated that the scholars who have explored, edited, and translated al-Fārābī's political works and have presented theses or books, focused on almost the same themes in similar terms. They generally comprehend and suggest that the philosopher ruler, the Imam philosopher, or the philosopher-Imam-legislator is the central idea in his political thoughts. They also appear to be in accord with the fact that al-Fārābī is the first Islamic political philosopher who recovers and develops the classical tradition of Greek political thought. However, in discussing the problem about whether 'religion' is subordinate to philosophy or not, they are in disagreement. This stems from discrepancies in interpreting al-Fārābī's phrase "religion is an imitation of philosophy."

Though they investigate al-Fārābī's political thought and produce many academic works, they in general, except for Richard Walzer, fail to search for details of al-Fārābī's view of international relations. It is true that Richard Walzer recognises the importance of al-Fārābī's descriptions of international relations in *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*. However, he does not have an opportunity to arrange this idea on its own, he just puts
his comments, in detailed footnotes. None of the above scholars give a full treatment of al-Fārābī's non-virtuous states. Even M Galston's *Politics and Excellence* which has already been mentioned as having a degree of accord with the aims of this thesis, still falls short in respect to the above matter.

3. THE AIMS OF THIS THESIS.

The first aim of this thesis is to comprehend al-Fārābī's political thought as fully as possible. Then the thesis will examine whether his main political theory is ideal or practical. Furthermore, special attention will be given to his views on international relations. This is an area of al-Fārābī's political thought which has so far received scant attention scholars. These views on relations between states are found in their fullest form in *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah* and this will be examined in detail.

It will go on to assess whether there is any pos-

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42 His interpretation of al-Fārābī's view of international relations (in chapter 18 of *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*) is different from mine. Rather his suggestion seems to be self-contradictory, although it can not be judged only by his book which was published long after his death. More detailed discussion will follow in chapter five of this thesis.
sibility that al-Farābī's theory of state can be extended to a world state. Lastly, this thesis will be concluded by setting out al-Farābī's position in Islamic medieval political philosophy and in the world history of political thought.

To attain these aims, my strategy will be oblique. I would like to investigate and arrange al-Farābī's political ideas from various angles. Many scholars are apt to confine al-Farābī only in the category of Islam itself. Some of them limit al-Farābī to Islam, so that they can limit him as only a Muslim, and they then interpret and evaluate his Islamic political thought within these constraints. In this sense, al-Farābī's political thought is confined within the limits of this Islamic boundary. Thus, they do not feel the need to evaluate al-Farābī's political thought in the wider sphere of the history of political theory. On the other hand, there are other scholars who only seek to assess al-Farābī's thought within the context of the Greek ideas which influenced him. Furthermore, little attempt has been made to set al-Farābī's political thought within the context of the history of political thought. The reason for this is usually explained as due to the fact that al-Farābī does not appear to have been aware of Aristotle's Politics.  

43 On the other hand, Solomon Pines seeks other pos-
It is undeniable that al-Farabī is a Muslim thinker, as many scholars have stressed. At the same time, I would like to view al-Farabī as an independent political scholar, in order to put his religious thinking on a firm basis of political theory. And the position of al-Farabī ought to be established in both Islamic and world history of political thought.

It is however still difficult to analyse and formulate his political views systematically by reference only to his available works. It seems premature to judge al-Farabī's whole political theory. Too many of the basic facts are not presented completely. Some of his existing works have come to us in an incomplete form. Therefore, it may never be possible to give a complete map of his political theory. Nevertheless, it is not appropriate to delay the study of al-Farabī's political thought, even though there is a possibility that some different interpretations of al-Farabī's political thought may come to light in the future. In general, scholars have now accepted that the political works attributed to al-Farabī are genuinely his.44 The extant possibilities in his work "Aristotle's Politics in Arabic Philosophy," Israel Oriental Studies 5, pp.150-60.

44 Cf. Ibn al-Nadīm (10C)'s Fihrist Vol.7;321-22, Ibn Šā'īd al-Andalusi (d.1169-70)'s Tabaqāt;71-72, al-Baihaqī (d.1169)'s Tārikh Hikma (=Tatimmah);17, al-Ghazmawī (12C)'s Itmām al-Tatīmah, al-Qiftī (d.1248)'s Ikhbār al-‘Ulamā’ bi Akhbār al-Ḥukamā';183-84, Ibn Abī
works of al-Fārābī which deal in some way or other with political thought are: *Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah*, *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, *Fuṣūl al-Madani*, *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*, *Kitāb al-Millah* and *Iḥṣāʿ al-ʿUlam*.

In discussing the chronology of three of these books, namely *Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah*, *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah* and *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*, Erwin I. J. Rosenthal puts *Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah* first, *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah* next, and *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah* last in this order.⁴⁵ Yasin, on the other hand, states that *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*, which includes the explanation of happiness, should be the first and *Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah* the last.⁴⁶ D. M. Dunlop gives a more detailed analysis of the chronology of al-Fārābī's works. He divides the works into two groups depending on whether the terms malik al-sunnah and jihād appear or not. Among them he views *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah* as the first and he adds *Fuṣūl al-Madani* as the last.⁴⁷ This process of chronologically ordering al-

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Uṣagbiʿah (d.1269)'s *ʿUyūn* ... Vol.3;229-33, and Brockelmann's *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur* Vol.1;210-13, supp.1;375-77, 957-58.
Farâbî's work is necessary in order to understand the evolution of al-Farâbî's political thought with the changing times. When this is accomplished, a more decisive evaluation of al-Farâbî's thought can be made with less ambiguity.

Nevertheless, in this thesis for the most part, the chronological discussion will be ignored and it will instead concentrate on understanding al-Farâbî's political ideas. Though it is proper to say that al-Farâbî is a great thinker who revives Plato's thought, whether directly or not, there is no substantial evidence that al-Farâbî's work is merely derivative.

Additional supporting material for al-Farâbî's political thought is found in the two works, *Ihsâ' al-'Ulûm* and *Kitâb al-Millah*. It is quite possible that al-Farâbî's political thought is fully formulated by the time of writing *Ihsâ' al-'Ulûm* and *Kitâb al-Millah* and can be comprehended by reference to these texts. *Kitâb al-Millah* includes the concept of malik al-sunnah, as a successor, who does not have philosophy or views on international relations. This fact may suppose that *Kitâb al-Millah* seems to reflect the existing situation, thus it might have been written well after *Ihsâ' al-'Ulûm* which does not contain the same concept. His explanation
of both concepts forms the basis of his political scheme, which is developed throughout his four main political works, *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, *Al-Madinah al-Fadilah*, *Fusūl al-Madani* and *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*. There seems to be no major change of position regarding these basic concepts in these works, except in quality or degree.

He concentrates mainly on types of non-virtuous state in *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, and international relations in the last two parts of *Al-Madinah al-Fadilah*. In both works he deals with metaphysical points which should, in al-Fārābī's opinion, be related to politics. In *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah* he focusses on the first and general rulership, and finally formulates 'the first ruler, philosopher, Imam, and the lawgiver or the legislator.' He does not give a detailed statement of the non-virtuous states and the successor to the first ruler.

The basic framework which appears in all al-Fārābī's works is consistent with the main context of his political thought, and his *Iḥṣāʿ al-ʿUlūm*, *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah* and *Kitāb al-Millah* are mirrors of the other political works. It is, therefore, possible to systematise his political theory within the framework of the concept of 'political science (al-ʿilm al-madani)' as described principally in the two works.
On the other hand, it is proper to understand that each of al-Farabi's political works is based on a conception of the necessity for a ruler and an understanding of the purpose of that ruler.
CHAPTER ONE

AL-FARABI'S BASIC PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWS AND HIS POLITICAL THOUGHT

1.1. AL-FARABI'S CONCEPT OF 'POLITICAL SCIENCE (AL-‘ILM AL-MADANI)' AND HIS ACTUAL WORKS.

1.1.1. THE MEANING OF 'POLITICAL SCIENCE'.

First of all, it is necessary to discuss the general concepts of the political terms such as 'political philosophy,' 'political thought,' 'political theory,' 'political science,' 'politics,' and so on, in order to try to understand al-Farabi's general ideas of political issues more concisely.

A 'political philosophy' puts forward universal explanations to solve the general problems of the organisation of society and seeks to justify the concepts and theories in political thought or theory. Thus, the concept of justice, which may be generally accepted in ordinary political thought and activity, may also be the subject of philosophical analysis, in order to understand
its full significance.1 Leo Strauss seems to think of 'political philosophy' as the attempt to know both the nature of political things and the right, or the good political order. He describes political philosophy as "the conscious, coherent and relentless effort to replace opinions about political fundamentals with knowledge related to them."2 He also says "It is essential to political philosophy that it be set in motion, and be kept in motion, by the disquieting awareness of the fundamental difference between conviction, or belief, and knowledge."3 Therefore 'truth' may be regarded as the primary concern to political philosophers, and the treatise the proper medium of political philosophy.

Leo Strauss stresses the classical political philosophy; he says "When we describe the political philosophy of Plato and of Aristotle as classical political philosophy, we imply that it is the classic form of political philosophy. ... Hence their political philosophy is comprehensive; it is both political theory

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3 Ibid.
and political skill; ... These characteristics of classical political philosophy appear with the greatest clarity in Plato's *Laws*, which is his political work par excellence."⁴

'Political thought' can be described as one which includes thoughts, theories, and values which motivate policy, and political behaviour, and it implies the theories through which people attempt to analyse each other's political behaviour, the values by which they judge it, and the mechanisms, such as law, whereby they attempt to control it.⁵ "By political thought, says Leo Strauss, we understand the reflection on, or the exposition of, political ideas; by political idea we may understand any politically significant 'phantasm, notion, species, or whatever it is about which the mind can be employed in thinking' concerning the political fundamentals."⁶ He adds, "Hence, all political philosophy is political thought but not all political thought is political philosophy. Political thought is, as such, indifferent to the distinction between opinion and knowledge: ... A political thinker who is not a philosopher

is primarily interested in, or attached to, a specific order or policy: ... Political thought which is not political philosophy finds its adequate expression in laws and codes, in poems and stories, in tracts and public speeches inter alia: ... ."7

'Political theory,' may be explained, according to Leo Strauss, as, "By political theory, people frequently understand today comprehensive reflections on the political situation which lead up in the last resort to principles accepted by public opinion or a considerable part of it; i.e., they dogmatically assume principles which can well be questioned."8 And it may be defined as an attempt to unite the empirical truths about human political reactions with the moral truths of what is politically desirable by designing human political nature.9

'Political science'10 is generally one subject,

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7 Ibid., p.13.
8 Ibid.
10 In a modern sense, says David Easton, "Political Science is the study of the authoritative allocation of values for a society. It focuses on the 'political system', ... ." David Easton, A Framework for Political Analysis (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), pp.16-22.
among academic disciplines, and perhaps it includes political theory, political philosophy, political economy, and other political subjects. It is mainly the study of the nature, distribution, and dynamics of power, usually at the national or international level, sometimes a very micro level.\(^{11}\) As Leo Strauss has said, "Political Science is an ambiguous term: it designates such investigations of political things as are guided by the model of natural science, and it designates the work which is being done by the members of political science departments."\(^{12}\) He also adds "Just as genuine knowledge of natural things began when people turned from sterile and vain speculation to empirical and experimental study, the genuine knowledge of political things will begin when political philosophy will have given way completely to the scientific study of politics ... At the top of the ladder we find the great statesman who possesses political knowledge, political understanding, political wisdom, political skill in the highest degree: political science (politikē epistēmē) in the original meaning of the term. ... Originally political philosophy was identical with political science."\(^{13}\)


Finally 'politics', as the art or science of government, may be explained as the art of controlling and reconciling the various diverse interests within a state. This view of politics as involving the recognition and conciliation of opposing interests is now widely accepted.\textsuperscript{14}

In *Kitāb al-Tanbih* al-Fārābī first classifies the sciences as two; the theoretical sciences which are subdivided into mathematics, physics and metaphysics, and the practical sciences which are subdivided into household, ethics and science of state.\textsuperscript{15} He deals with al-fiqh (jurisprudence) and al-kalām (theology)\textsuperscript{16} in his works of *Iḥṣā' al-Ūlūm* and in *Kitāb al-Millah*.\textsuperscript{17}

In *Iḥṣā' al-Ūlūm*, *Kitāb al-Millah* and *Tahṣīl al-Sa'ādah*, al-Fārābī chose the Arabic term al-'īlm al-madani, which can be translated into 'political science' or 'science of state' literally, to define his political theories.\textsuperscript{18} He gives the following definition of politi-


\textsuperscript{15} *Kitāb al-Tanbih*, pp.19-21.

\textsuperscript{16} Some statement denoting 'fiqh' and 'kalām' will be appeared in Fauzi M. Najjar's "Political Philosophy in Islam," *Islamic Quarterly* 20-22(4), pp.123ff.

\textsuperscript{17} *Iḥṣā' al-Ūlūm*, pp.107-13.; *Kitāb al-Millah*, p.6,9.

\textsuperscript{18} *Iḥṣā' al-Ūlūm*, pp.102-3.; *Kitāb al-Millah*, p.11ff.
cal science: Political science inquires into the diverse cases of deliberate (irādiyyah) acts and customary practices. It inquires into the dispositions (al-malakāt), the morals (al-akhlāq), the inclinations (al-sajāyā), and the habits (al-shiyam) that lead to these acts and customary practices. It inquires into the ends (al-ghāyāt) for the sake of which they are performed. It inquires into how they must exist in the human being (al-insān). It inquires into the way to order them in human beings as they must exist in human beings. It inquires into the way to preserve them for human beings. All of these aim at happiness. However, al-Fārābī maintains that true happiness cannot be attained in this life. Therefore anything which does not aim at the ultimate happiness aims at a lesser good or a presumed happiness.

In this way the role of political science distinguishes the acts and the customary practices in order to make clear the ones, through which true happiness is attained. These are good (al-khayrāt), beauty (jamilah) and virtues (al-faḍā’il), while the others are evils (al-shurūr), abominations (al-qabā’ih), and deficiencies (al-

naqā'īṣ). These must all exist in human beings in the same way that virtuous acts and customary laws are distributed in the states (al-mudun) and the ummas (al-umam, the communities) in accordance with a certain order and are practised in them is a similar manner. Al-Fārābī, then, introduces the concept of rulership (riyāsah) which is the cornerstone of his political ideas. It is riyāsah which establishes these acts, customary laws, disposition, morals in the states and the ummas."

Al-Fārābī describes this rulership as being realised through office (mihnah), such as kingship (al-malakiyyah) and royal authority (al-mulk). He suggests that 'politics (al-siyāsah)' is the performance of kingship. And then he divides the rulership into two; the first virtuous rulership (al-riyāsah al-fādilah) and the second ignorant rulership (al-riyāsah al-jāhiliyyah). The latter is subdivided into the depraved rulership (al-riyāsah al-khīssah), and the honourable rulership (al-riyāsah al-κārāmah), in accordance with its ends and purposes.

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20 The discussion of the Umma will be also in chapter two 'Happiness, Society and Political Education.'


22 The word 'office' was deemed the most appropriate translation of the Arabic 'mihnah.'
He suggests that this office of the virtuous rule involves two aspects;\(^{23}\) first are the general rules (al-qawānin al-kulliyyah) and second is the aspect which a human being achieves through political acts (al-a‘māl al-madaniyyah). He particularly suggests that 'philosophy of state (al-falsafah al-madaniyyah)' or 'political philosophy' presents the general rules about voluntary acts, customary practices and the forms (al-rusūm) according to which they should be determined with due regard to particular situations and times: namely how, with what, and by how many things, they are to be determined. Then he explains two parts of a science which can determine what political philosophy cannot explain,\(^{24}\) and which are needed for effective rulership. The first part of which includes understanding what happiness is, realising the difference between the true (al-ḥaqīqah) and the supposed (al-maẓnūn), enumerating the general voluntary acts, customary practices, morals, general voluntary habits that are to be distributed in the states and the communities, and recognising the difference between the virtuous and the non-virtuous.

The second part explains how to order the virtuous habits and behaviour (al-sayr) within the states and the

\(^{23}\) Iḥṣā‘ al-‘Ulūm, p.104.; Kitāb al-Millah, p.14b,14d.

\(^{24}\) Iḥṣā‘ al-‘Ulūm, pp.104-5.; Kitāb al-Millah, pp.15-16.
communities, making known the acts of kingship by which virtuous habits and acts are established and ordered in the people of the states, and acts by which to preserve what has been ordered and set up. This part, according to al-Farābī, also enumerates the non-virtuous functions, customary practices and dispositions established in non-virtuous states. These are diseases (al-amrād) to the virtuous state. He then enumerates the diverse causes (asbāb) and directions (al-jihāt) for virtuous rulership and the virtuous state's customary practices and cautions against it being transformed into ignorant rulership. He also enumerates measures (wujūh al-tadābīr), and means (al-ḥiyal), by which things ought to be restored to their previous state once they have been altered into the non-virtuous.

He then explains the things which the office of virtuous kingship is composed of.25 They include the theoretical and the practical sciences (al-ʿulūm al-naẓariyyah wa-l-ʿamaliyyah) and other qualities acquired through the experiences of the states and the communities. Al-Farābī is concerned to maintain the virtuous state continuously. He explains that the successor to the previous virtuous king should possess the

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same characters (al-āhwal) and conditions (al-sharā'īṭ). The sons of the kings and the others should have the conditions and the natural characters (al-āhwal al-ṭabīʿiyah) of their predecessors, and he suggests how the successor, who is gifted with these natural characters, must grow up and how he should be educated, in order to gain the kingship and become a virtuous king.26 Unusually, in his work of Kitāb al-Millah, al-Fārābī concedes that the successor or the second ruler does not need philosophy if his rule is based on the customary law which is already established by the qualified first ruler.27 Here al-Fārābī also develops a view of international relations by saying that there should be harmony (itḥilāf), and relations (irtibāt) among the virtuous communities just like his same ideas of the universe.28

In Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah al-Fārābī gives another account of political science,29 though it is not fully described. There, he states the concepts of political science (al-ʿilm al-madani) as follows: Political science ought to make known what are the good (al-khayrāt), virtues (al-

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27 Kitāb al-Millah, p.18.
28 Ibid., p.27.
29 Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah, p.16.
fadā'il), good acts (al-ḥasanāt), evils (al-shurūr), the deficiencies (al-naqā'īṣ), misdeeds (al-sayyī'āt), and how they are accomplished so that they become known, intelligible, and distinguishable from each other: It also consists in knowing the things by which the people of states achieve happiness through political association (al-ijtimā' al-madani) to the extent that an innate disposition equips each of them for it.

In explanation of this, al-Fārābī uses his overall philosophical approach to the hierarchical order of the world. The city encapsulates the cosmological order of the world:

"Just as in the world there is a first principle, then other principles subordinate to it, beings that proceed from these principles, other beings subordinate to these beings, until they terminate in the beings with the lowest rank in the order of being, the nation or the city includes a supreme commander, followed by other commanders, followed by other citizens, who in turn are followed by other citizens, until they terminate in the citizens with the lowest rank as citizens and as human beings. Thus the city includes the likenesses of the things included in the total world."30

30 Ibid. (Fauzi M Najjar's English translation, p.61).
Arranging anew al-Farābī's whole scheme of 'political science,' it may be seen that he first suggests the scope and objects of political science, and then he introduces the rulership, which can be realised through kingship or royal authority. Then he separates the rulership into virtuous and non-virtuous. That is, the virtuous has three faculties, theoretical science, practical science and a practical experiential faculty. The non-virtuous kingship does not need theoretical or practical philosophy and has only the experiential faculty.

His definition of al-siyāsah, that is the performance of kingship, means 'politics' in terms of the general idea of 'politics,' as the art or science of government. In terms of terminology al-Farābī's definition of political philosophy, which he limited to the definition of the general rules underlying political science, is far removed from Leo Strauss' definition of classical political philosophy. However, when we look at his wide-ranging definition of political science, which also includes his limited political philosophy, we can see that he is, indeed, describing the classical political philosophy.

31 Please refer to pages 35-36 of this chapter.
1.1.2. RELATIONS BETWEEN HIS SCHEME OF 'POLITICAL SCIENCE' AND HIS ACTUAL WORKS.

It is quite apparent that al-Fârâbî's whole scheme should enable us to interpret his political ideas in conjunction with his extant works. It should, therefore, be possible to systematise his views on political thought within the framework of his 'political science (al-‘ilm al-madani)' as described principally in his works, *Iḥṣā’ al-‘Ulūm*, *Kitāb al-Millah*, and *Tahṣīl al-Sa‘ādah*.

Up to now, it has appeared that al-Fârâbî's view of 'political science (al-‘ilm al-madani)' ignores the concepts of Islam. However, when he formulates his model state, 'Al-Madinah al-Fādilah,' he combines the philosophical concepts with Islamic law. Presumably he tries to maintain the concept of 'political science (al-‘ilm al-madani)' as a science in itself.

In this respect, he seems to have been influenced by the Greek philosophical methods, especially Plato and Aristotle. "These are," says al-Fârâbî, "found in Aristotle's book of Politics and in Plato's book of the Republic...". And it appears that he is likely to have formulated his view of political science before forming his full scheme of the virtuous state, which includes

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32 *Iḥṣā’ al-‘Ulūm*, p.105.
reference to Islamic views: such as the Imam and Islamic practice. In other words, it probably means that he had a proper understanding of political science, or of Plato's and Aristotle's political thought before he included Islamic concepts.

1.2. COSMOLOGY, EMANATION AND INTELLECT.

Al-Farabī's *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, which was known in mediaeval times as *The Treatise on the Principles of Beings* [or *Existents*], unfolds a discussion of the principles of existents: 1) the First Cause, 2) the second causes (from the second to tenth cause), 3) the Active Intellect (al-'aql al-fa‘al: the eleventh cause), 4) the soul, 5) form (al-ṣūrah) and 6) matter (al-māddah). These six are the principal factors of existing bodies and accidents. The work explores these exist-

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I followed the translation of Fauzi M. Najjar which appeared on his edition of *Al-Farābī's the Political Regime* [*Al-Siyāsā al-Madāniyya* also known as the *Treatise on the Principles of Beings*] (Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, 1964).

ents, their nature, their inter-relations and status.\textsuperscript{35} Al-Fārābī also opens \textit{Al-Madinah al-Fādilah} with an account of the existent (al-mawjūd) and causation.\textsuperscript{36} The work devotes its first fourteen chapters to a discussion of the higher existents, and then proceeds to the political chapters which conclude it.

The First Cause, the second causes and the active intellect, are neither bodies, nor do they exist in bodies. The other three factors, soul, form and matter are also not bodies, but exist in bodies. The bodies are also of six types: the heavenly bodies, man (rational animals), animals, plants, minerals, and the four elements. Therefore, these six bodies form the universe.\textsuperscript{37}

Al-Fārābī starts by enumerating the qualities of the First Existent, the One (wāhid) or God. The First Existent is the First Cause of everything in the universe and the origin of all the other existents. He is the most excellent (afdal) and the perfect (tāmm) existence. God is beauty (al-jamāl), and He is not only truth (al-ḥaqīqah) but also an object of love (ḥubb). God is then surely knowledge itself; He is therefore the Highest

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah}, pp.1-39.

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Al-Madinah al-Fādilah}, pp.5-53.

In other words, al-Farabi defines the First Existent as the Intellect which is absolutely and perfectly the Knower of all knowledge (ma'īlum), thus identical with Knowledge itself.38

Moreover, no contrary (dīdd), no division of substance, no imperfection can be attributed to the First Cause or God; for contraries such as he envisages could fight and destroy themselves. And that which is capable of being destroyed cannot be self-sufficient or eternal and is therefore caused.39 "Al-Farabi may perhaps have in mind here something like the dualist theology of a religion like Zoroastrianism which posited two great divine powers, Ahura Mazda (or Ohrmazd) and Ahriman,40 in perpetual conflict."41


39 Al-Madinah al-Fadilah, pp.7-10.

40 These terms have been used by Zoroaster and his followers. Ahura Mazda (or Ohrmazd) is the supreme creator (deity) and opponent of Ahriman. Ahriman (or Angra Mainyu) is the evil spirit: Refer to The Penguin Dictionary of Religions, ed. by John R Hinnells (London: Allen Lane, 1984), p.28.

Although much of al-Fārābī's doctrine is Aristotelian, the origin of his metaphysics cannot be defined with any certainty. The formula of 'God is Pure Intellect' seems to resemble Mu'tazilite kalām, the existence of attributes superadded to the divine essence is denied.42 On the other hand, the concept of 'The First (al-awwal)' which parallels God is from neo-Platonic sources and it is used in the same context by Proclus.43

In accordance with the Aristotelian dictum that only an actual thing can bring about actuality in a potential thing,44 al-Fārābī describes the First Intellect which brings the potential intellect of its subordinate into actuality. The first emanation (fayḍ) from the First Existent or Cause is the second intellect45 which is the

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43 Ibid.
44 Aristotle, Metaphysics 9.8 1049b, 24-25.
45 'The second intellect' was generally named 'the first intellect' probably because the fact that the theory of 'ten intellects' can be enumerated from the first to the tenth intellect. It is, however, proper that 'ten intellects' comprise the second to the eleventh intellect; for al-Fārābī attributes the First Intellect to God. Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, pp.19-20.
purest and the closest existent to God and to perfection. This second intellect, once actualised, provides the same assistance to its subordinate and at the same time forms its own heaven. This heaven is the first heaven (al-sama' al-wula) which is the first of all the heavenly bodies (al-ajsam al-samawiyyah).

In the same manner, the second intellect emanates the third and at the same time, forms the fixed stars (al-kawakib al-thabitah). And then the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh intellects are emanated. Each of them (except the eleventh intellect) respectively forms Saturn (zuhal), Jupiter (al-mushtari), Mars (al-mirrikh), the Sun (al-shams), Venus (al-zuhara), Mercury ('utairid), and the moon (al-qamar). Each of the planets has its own soul and body.46

Al-Farabi's account of the emanation (fayd) of things from the First Existent is given in a very systematic way, and from an Islamic standpoint in a very heterodox way.47 These intellects have much in common with Aristotle's prime movers. And the connection


between the intellects and the spheres which the intellects each form is also propounded by the Arab Aristotelians. Al-Fārābī's description of the First and of its emanation of actuality on secondary existents including each formed celestial body plainly differs from the 55 spheres and sub-spheres of Aristotle. Al-Fārābī restricted the number of the incorporeal intellects to ten. Aristotle did not mention the emanation of the intellects from God. On the other hand, the doctrine of emanation is of neo-Platonic provenance, but the neo-Platonists did not have the conception of a doctrine of ten incorporeal intellects. These two elements are contributed by al-Fārābī to the doctrine.

These intellects comprise the heavenly body with the terrestrial region which is beneath the heavenly body. In the terrestrial body the process of development is altered in the sense that from the imperfect entity the more perfect one comes out or its transition is from the potential to the actual one. At the lowest level lies prime matter which is pure potentiality, then its hierarchy continues in ascending order. According to Al-

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Fārābī, the four elements, 1) earth (al-ard) 2) water (al-mā') 3) air (al-hawa') and 4) fire (al-nār), follow. And then minerals (stones and plants), animals and finally man who constitutes the top of the terrestrial and heavenly bodies.  

Al-Fārābī's ten intellects (except the First Intellect, i.e., God) are intermediaries between God and man. The closest one of the intellects to us is the lowest one which is the eleventh or Active Intellect (al-‘aql al-fa‘‘āl) and thus this Active Intellect is the direct intermediary or mediator between God and human being.

In order to complete the system, al-Fārābī elaborates a hierarchy of intellect within the human soul. Souls have three grades: souls of celestial bodies, souls of Man (the rational animals) and souls of

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50 Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, pp.20-22.

51 Ibid., pp.43ff; Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, pp39ff. Al-Farābī first postulates the existence of five faculties in the human soul; appetitive faculty (al-quwwah al-ghādhiyyah), sensory faculty (al-quwwah al-hāssah), desiring faculty (al-quwwah al-nuzū‘iyyah), imaginative faculty (quwwah al-mutakhayyulah), rational faculty (al-quwwah al-nātiqah). Its details will be followed in the next section of this chapter: Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.43ff; Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, p.34ff.; Tahṣīl al-Sa‘ādah, p.16ff.
animals (the irrational animals). Al-Farābī proceeds to explain how to reach the 'first perfection (al-istakmāl al-awwal)' of a human being. He defines the mental properties of the rational faculty as those which are in substance (jawāhir) actual intellects and actual intelligibles; that is, mental properties free of matter (ashyā‘ al-barī‘ah min al-māddah), and as such they are not actually knowable through their very substances, e.g., stones (al-ḥijārah), plants (al-nabāt), generally, whatever is body itself or is in a material body and matter itself, and whatever depends on matter for its substance, because they are neither actually intellects nor actually intelligibles.52

Al-Farābī says that it is 'human intellect (al-‘aql al-insānī),' which comes about in a human being by nature from the very beginning. It is a disposition (hay‘ah) that is in matter itself which is prepared to receive the impression of the intelligibles, which is itself potentially (bi-l-quwwah) intellect and is also potentially intelligible. Although they are potentially intelligibles and can possibly become actually intelligibles, their substances are without the capability (kifāyah) to be actually intellectualised by

52 Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.43.
themselves. Neither the rational faculty nor whatever is provided in a human being by nature has the capability to become actually intellect. To be actually intellect it needs something else which enables it to be moved from potentiality to actuality, and it also becomes actually intellect only when the intelligibles come about in it.\textsuperscript{53}

Again Al-Fārābī says that when the potential intelligibles occur to be intelligised, that is, in order to be actual intelligibles they need something else which transmits them from potentiality to the situation where they can be made actual. Al-Fārābī calls it the mediator (al-fā‘il) that is an essence (dhāt) which transmits them from potentiality to actuality, and its substance (jawhar) is actually intellect and is released from matter. He illustrates this process with an analogy to the sun. This analogy is repeated several times in this work and is similar to an Aristotelian metaphor. Al-Fārābī says this:

It is that intellect which precedes the 'material intellect (al-‘aql al-hayūlānī)' which is only potentially intellect. It is something like the light which the sun (al-shams) provides to the sight of the eye (al-bāsār), since its relation to the 'material

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., p.44.
intellect' is like the relation of the sun to the sight of the eye. For eyesight is a faculty and a disposition in matter and is, before it sees, potentially sight (dau'), and the colours (alwān) are potentially seeable and visible before they are seen. But neither is the faculty of sight in the eye (al-‘ayn) itself sufficiently qualified to become actually sight nor are the colours themselves sufficiently qualified to become actually seen and viewed.

Al-Fārābī again applies his view in the light of the above passages to the next stage of his treatise. First, he gives an account of recognition of light like the aforementioned, that is, he says that in the same manner that this intellect actually informs the material intellect with something which it impresses on it, which is connected with the material intellect as the light is with sight. Sight sees, according to al-Fārābī, the light through light itself, which is the cause of seeing, and the sun which is the cause of light sends light, by which it sees the things which are potentially seeable and visible, and they then become actually seen and viewed.

In an analogous fashion, according to him, the

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\(^{54}\) *Ibid.*
material intellect becomes aware of the very thing which corresponds to the light, and through it comes to actually realise the intellect which is the cause of having that thing impressed on the material intellect, and also through it, the things which are potentially intelligibles become actually intelligibles, and the material intellect becomes actually intellect after having been potential intellect. 55

Al-Fārābī defines the meaning of the material intellect as, 'the passive intellect (al-‘aql al-munfa‘il).’ Al-Fārābī, says that the passive intellect is made aware of something by the actual intellect. The passive intellect then becomes actually intellect. Following this, similar steps are repeated until the acquired intellect (al-‘aql al-mustafād) is attained. Even though al-Fārābī omits the exact process which gives rise to the acquired intellect at this stage, he gives an explicit account of that intellect, in explaining the speculative qualities which the virtuous ruler has to satisfy first of all, in the other part of Al-Madinah al-Fādilah and also the same part of Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah. 56 Despite this omission, the 'acquired

55 Ibid., pp.44-45.

intellect,' is logical and perfectly consistent with his whole descriptions in the other works.

Further, according to al-Farābī, when the acquired intellect becomes the actual intellect, it becomes 'the Active Intellect', ranking tenth (from the second to eleventh cause) among 'the separated things' (al-ashyā' al-mufāriqah) below the First Cause. The meaning of, 'the separated things' in these works seems to be regarded as those things which are released from matter; free from matter, in the sense of the original meaning of the word. According to al-Farābī, the intelligibles come about in the rational faculty through interaction with the sensibilities which exist in the imaginative faculty, and operate when something which corresponds to light comes about in the rational faculty from the active intellect; that is, these are the first intelligibles which are common to all human beings.57

Al-Farābī divides these first intelligibles into three kinds: The first is that of the principles of practical work (al-mihan al-‘amaliyyah); the second is that which makes man aware of beauty (al-jamīl) and ugliness (al-qabīḥ); the last is to be used for knowing the existents which are beyond the scope of man's

57 Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.45.
actions, and their principles (mabādi’) and ranks; such as the heavens, the first cause and the other principles. When these intelligibles exist in human beings, there comes about, naturally, reflection (al-ta’ammul), deliberation (rawiyyah), speculation (fikar), a longing (tashawwuq) to deduce, a desire (nuzū’) towards some of what he has understood at first and a longing or an aversion towards some of what he has deduced. Al-Fārābī terms the latter 'will (al-irādah)' when it results from sensing and imagination. Whereas when it results from deliberation and reasoning (nuṭq), he names it 'choice (al-ikhṭiyār).'</p>

Al-Fārābī's doctrine of the intellect is clearly based on Aristotle. Al-Farābī himself declares that his doctrine depends on the third part of De Anima of Aristotle. His conception of the acquired intellect does not appear in Aristotle's work. Al-Fārābī's acquired intellect forms a link between human knowledge and revelation, as a separate intellect. It is, therefore, different from the acquired intellect as found in

58 Ibid.

the theory held by Alexander of Aphrodisias and al-Kindi. It seems to be the outcome of al-Fârâbî's mystical tendency and his dependence upon Plotinus' system.\textsuperscript{60}

The whole system of this part of al-Fârâbî's explanation can be outlined as in table 1.\textsuperscript{61} It is a synthesis of al-Fârâbî's aforementioned cosmology and emanation with Human cognition.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{61} As mentioned in footnote 45 page 51, God is sometimes mentioned as independent of the Intellects which would then number 10.
Table 1. Al-Fārābī's System of Cosmology, Emanation and Cognition.
1.3. THE FACULTIES OF THE SOUL AND PROPHECY.

1.3.1. THE FACULTIES OF THE SOUL.

In order to understand how al-Fārābī sees man in society, it is necessary to examine briefly his views on the nature of man's soul. In this way his political philosophy can be seen in the context of his view of the nature of man.

Man, according to al-Fārābī, can be divided into two parts - the apparent and the hidden. The apparent part is his body which can be perceived by means of his sensibilities. The hidden part can only be known through explanations and interpretations: it comprises the faculties of his soul.62

Al-Fārābī explains that a human being has his own soul in which there are five faculties; nutritive faculty (al-quwwah al-ghāḍhiyyah), sensory faculty (al-quwwah al-hāssah), desiring faculty (al-quwwah al-nuzū‘iyah), imaginative faculty (quwwah al-mutakhayyulah), and rational faculty (al-quwwah al-nāṭiqah). His statements of a human being having five faculties occurs both in Al-

Siyásah al-Madaniyyah and Al-Madinah al-Fādilah. Al-Madinah al-Fādilah deals with it in more detail than the other work.

The nutritive faculty, as the lowest degree, according to al-Fārābī, which a human being has in his soul, is made up of many faculties. The nutritive faculty can be divided into one ruling faculty which is also in the heart and the auxiliaries. In the same manner the sensory faculty can be divided into one ruling faculty and the auxiliaries. Here he explains that the auxiliaries are made up of the five senses (al-hawāss al-khams); the senses of feeling (al-malmūs), hearing (al-aşwāt), sight (al-mubaṣṣirāt), smell (al-rawā'īh), and taste (al-ṭu'ūm). Subsequently al-Fārābī explains that the desiring faculty has the faculties of 'desire to do' and 'desire not to do.' The ruling desiring faculty is also in the heart and the auxiliaries are distributed in parts of the body. In other words the desiring faculty motivates the will (al-irādah) which is desire for and decision (ḥukm) about what to accept or what to reject. Next al-Fārābī

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64 Ibid.
explains that the imaginative faculty is one by itself in the heart unlike the other faculties, and that it holds the sensibles (al-maḥṣūsāt) after they have been realised by the senses.  

Finally al-Farābī states that the rational faculty, which has neither dependents nor auxiliaries, governs the imaginative faculty and all the ruling faculties of the desiring, sensory and nutritive faculties. However, he does not explicitly locate this faculty in any of the organs of the body. The rational faculty can be subdivided into two: theoretical rational (al-nāṭiqah al-nażariyyah) faculty and practical rational (al-nāṭiqah al-ʿamaliyyah) faculty. The latter is subordinate to the former. The theoretical rational faculty is, however, not subordinate to anything else but has as its aims to help the human being to reach happiness.  

According to al-Farābī, once a human being comes into existence, it is the nutritive faculty which is the first faculty to arise in him, and next the sensory faculty. Then another faculty arises together with the senses. It consists in a desire for the things perceptible in order to realise whether to desire to get them.

65 Ibid. 

66 Ibid.
or not. Then afterwards the imaginative faculty arises in him by which he holds the impressions of sensibles (mā irtasama fī nafsih min al-mahsūsāt) in the soul after these sensibles have left visible things received by the senses. This faculty enables him to join some of the sensibles with each other and to separate others in different combinations and separations, among them some are false (kadhibah) and some are true (sādiqah). A desire for imagining things is joined with this faculty as well. Finally the rational faculty arises in a human being, by which he recognises the good (al-jamīl), the abominable (al-qabīh), and by which he possesses the arts and sciences. A desire for realising things is joined with this faculty as well.67

Al-Fārābī describes his view of the relationship between the desiring faculty and the other three faculties, the rational, imaginative, sensory, as the process of realising knowledge of something (‘ilm al-shay’). In this case the nutritive faculty is regarded as already present. First, when desire comes about to know a thing which is to comprehended by the rational faculty, the deed (al-fi‘l) by which the desire is achieved is performed through another faculty which is

67 Ibid.
the speculative faculty (al-quwwah al-fikriyyah) within the rational faculty.

Al-Farabi recognises the need of another faculty (al-quwwah) and another quality (māhīyyah), which are not dealt with by the theoretical sciences which deal with only the intelligibles that are not various at all as stated above. According to him, the speculative faculty is the quality and the faculty by which one finds out and distinguishes the various accidents of the intelligibles whose particular instances are made to exist by the will, when one attempts to bring them into actual existence by the will at a determined time in a determined location, and when a determined event takes place, whether the time is long or short, whether the area is large or small.⁶⁸

When there is desire to know a thing which is to be comprehended by the sensory faculty, the deed by which it is achieved will come about as a deed of the body and a deed of the soul, e.g., sensing, itself, is a deed of the soul. Lastly, when desire comes about for an imaginative thing, in this case, it is achieved through the following three ways; firstly, through the direct deed of the imaginative faculty, such as imagining what is wished for and expected or imagining what has happened in the past.

⁶⁸ Taḥṣīl al-Saʿādah, p.20.
or wishing for something that the imaginative faculty has put together; secondly, by something which is forwarded to the imaginative faculty from what is obtained by the sensory faculty, which is changed into something else which is imagined as a thing to be feared or trusted; thirdly, through some deed of the rational faculty which has reached the imaginative faculty.\(^6^9\)

His views on the rational faculty are expanded in *Tahsîl al-Sâ‘âdah*.\(^7^0\) He explains that when man imagines actual existence outside the soul, the states and accidents in it at one time are different from those it has at another time after or before; the same is the case with regard to different locations; the accidents and states it has when existing in one country (bilâd) are different from those it has in another. Al-Fârâbî regards this man as an intelligible (*ma‘qûl wâhid*).\(^7^1\)

Consequently, al-Fârâbî's view of the intelligible is related to man and the inhabited area without any specification of them: Therefore, whoever has to bring any of them into actual existence outside the soul ought

\(^{6^9}\) *Al-Madinah al-Fâdilah*, pp.34-37; *Al-Siyâsah al-Madaniyyah*, p.43ff.

\(^{7^0}\) *Tahsîl al-Sâ‘âdah*, p.17.

to understand the various accidents that must associate it in the specific term at which he seeks to bring it into existence and in a determined location in the inhabited area of the earth. Thus he should understand the accidents that must associate what is willed to exist from hour to hour, from month to month, from year to year, from a long period, or in some other long term of determined length, in a determined area of large or small amount. And he should understand which of these accidents are usual for all nations, for some nations, or for one city over a long term, usual for them over a short term, or have a connection with some of them particularly and over a short term.\textsuperscript{72}

In this analysis, al-Fārābī uses the traditional classifications and definitions, credited to Aristotle, of the various faculties with which man has been endowed. Al-Fārābī's explanation of the cognitive faculties (or the part of psychology) are common to most of the mediaeval and contemporary philosophers or scholars.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{72} \textit{Ibid.}, p.19.

1.3.2. THE IMAGINATIVE FACULTY AND PROPHECY.

In the fourteenth chapter of *Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah*, as a separate section in addition to his first explanation of it with other faculties, al-Fārābī adds a supplementary explanation of the imaginative faculty (quwwah al-mutakhayyulah). It seems to be probable that this statement has a significant implication in forming his major political idea of 'the ideal ruler' who has the capability of prophecy as one of his attributes. Al-Fārābī starts to account for the imaginative faculty on the premise "The imaginative faculty is a mediator (mutawassit) between the sensory faculty and the rational faculty. When all the auxiliaries of the sensory faculty actually sense and perform their deeds, the imaginative faculty is acted upon by them and occupied with those sensibles which the senses (al-hawāṣs) bring to it and impress upon it, and it is also occupied with serving the rational faculty and with supporting the desiring faculty." 

Al-Fārābī explained prophecy on rational grounds and gave it a scientific interpretation. He seems to borrow this interpretation from Aristotle's theory of dreams.


which had already been introduced to the Arab world. Al-
Kindi had paid great attention to this theory. It sup-
poused that dreams are images forwarded by the imagination
the capacity of which increases during sleep after get-
ting rid of the activities of wakefulness. Aristotle,
however, denies that dreams are revealed by God, and
never admits prophetic predictions through sleep, other-
wise the populace and the masses would claim foretelling
the future.\textsuperscript{76}

There is also contrast between Plato's theory and
al-Fārābī's. Plato explained that the soul is composed
of three parts which progress in a descending hierarchy:
The first is the rational part which treats the pursuit
of learning and love of wisdom: The second is the
spirited part or thymos which is the faculty of noble
indignation: The third is the appetitive faculty (here
the nutritive faculty) which pursues bodily desires of
food, sex, and drink. Plato comprehends that the three
parts of the soul work in harmony in the sense that the
spirited and appetitive parts are absolutely governed by
and subordinate to the rational part.\textsuperscript{77} Plato's
'philosopher king' has perfected his rational faculty to

Cit.}, p.465.

\textsuperscript{77} Francis Conford, \textit{The Republic of Plato} (Oxford:
the highest degree. Al-Farabī's first ruler, however, can be perfected by his imaginative faculty.

1.4. VIRTUES (AL-FADĀʾIL) AND FIRST HUMAN PERFECTION.

From the aforementioned psychological observations, al-Farabī proceeds to consider the nature and divisions of virtue and whether, as Aristotle had enquired in the *Nichomachean Ethics*, II, i, virtue arises in us by habituation or nature.78

Al-Farabī's descriptions of virtues are mainly given in both works of *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*79 and *Fuṣūl al-Madānī*.80 In the first work, he deals with the process of intelligising the existents and the related things as its first end, while in the latter he describes various kinds of each of the virtues by giving their meanings. In *Fuṣūl al-Madānī*81 al-Farabī defines virtues (al-faḍāʾil) as the appearance of the soul (al-hayʿat al-nafsāniyyah) by which man performs good and the beautiful actions (al-afʿal al-jamīlah).

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79 *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*, pp.2-29.
80 *Fuṣūl al-Madānī*, [2,9,10,31,32].
81 Ibid., [2].
In *Tahsil al-Sa'ādah* al-Farābī discusses the human qualities (*al-ashyā' al-insāniyyah*) as a means of reaching happiness. In short, nations and people of cities can achieve happiness through human things. Al-Farābī explains that human qualities enable them to obtain not only worldly happiness (*sa'ādah al-dunyā*) in this life but also the utmost (*al-quṣwā*) happiness in the next life. Al-Farabī suggests that human qualities are of two kinds: virtues and arts; virtues include theoretical virtues (*al-fadā'il al-nazariyyah*), speculative virtues (*al-fadā'il al-fikriyyah*), moral virtues (*al-fadā'il al-khalqiyyah*), and arts are generally termed practical arts (*al-ṣina'āt al-'amaliyyah*).\(^{82}\)

As in his other analysis, he also defines the opposite conceptions of virtues, which are vices (*al-radhā'īl*), deficiencies (*al-naqā'īs*), and depravities (*al-khasā'īs*), as the states of the soul by which man performs evils (*al-shurūr*) and ugly actions (*al-af'āl al-qabīḥah*), even though he merely does this by simply numerating the opposite concepts of the virtues after finishing his account of the virtues.\(^{83}\) This is conspicuously absent from the *Nichomachean Ethics* but fig-

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\(^{82}\) *Tahsil al-Sa'ādah*, pp.2-29.

\(^{83}\) *Ibid.*

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ures prominently in al-Fārābī’s *Fuṣūl al-Madani*. Its discussion, however, follows familiar Neo-Platonic lines.\(^8^4\)

In *Fuṣūl al-Madani*, al-Fārābī suggests that the first perfection is the state where a man performs the actions of all the virtues. He is not merely born with innate virtue. His perfection consists in his accomplishment, not in his acquiring the qualities by which the actions come. Al-Fārābī gives this instance:

... the perfection of writer is that he performs the actions of writing, not that he acquires the art of writing, and the perfection of the doctor, is that he performs the actions of medicine, not that he acquires the art of medicine merely, and similarly in every art.\(^8^5\)

Al-Fārābī also says that it is performed only by voluntary actions, some of these are mental and others bodily actions. Moreover, it is performed not by actions which happen accidentally (*af‘āl ittafaqat*) but by definite (*mahdūdah*) and determined (*muqaddarah*) actions, which are brought about through definite and determined appearances and characters, for among voluntary actions


\(^8^5\) *Fuṣūl al-Madani*, p.25.
there are some which are obstacles to happiness. He also regards this happiness as the good (al-khayr), which performs for the sake of itself, and through itself nothing is pursued to obtain something else. He names that as the greatest human achievement.
CHAPTER TWO

HAPPINESS, SOCIETY AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

2.1. HAPPINESS.

2.1.1. THE MEANING OF HAPPINESS.

Al-Farābī, in general, shapes his view of happiness by reference to people. Happiness is an end (ghāyah) such that is attained by the virtuous actions (al-af'āl al-fādilah), just as knowledge results from learning and study, and the arts result from learning them and preserving in their actions.¹

In other words, Al-Farābī regards happiness as 'the last perfection (al-istikmāl al-akhir)' which can be reached through the intelligibles by one who has reached the first human perfection, which means the state where one holds the first intelligibles in one's soul.² Al-Farābī's remarks on and uses of 'the last perfection' appear both in Fuṣūl al-Madani and in Al-Siyāsah al-

¹ Fuṣūl al-Madani, p.71.

² Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, p.46.5-8.
Madaniyyah, though in the latter he actually uses the term 'the utmost perfection' (al-kamāl al-quswā) instead of 'the last perfection.'

Al-Fārābī thinks of happiness as 'the good.' Happiness is sought for its own self, as the one thing which is never sought in place of something else and as the perfect state beyond which there is nothing greater for man to attain.

In Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah and Fuṣūl al-Madani, Al-Fārābī's descriptions of happiness are found; happiness is 'the absolute good (al-shayr 'alā al- atlāq),' and it is that which is chosen and desired for itself; and is never chosen, at any time whatever, for the sake of anything else.

In the following pages of Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, al-Fārābī proceeds to define 'the good.' He explains that the good is everything which is useful for the achievement of happiness, or by which it is attained; not for its own self, however, but because it is useful with respect to happiness. In Fuṣūl al-Madani, he says that

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3 Fuṣūl al-Madani, p. 25.; Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p. 44.15.


everything is the good when it is useful for the attainment of happiness, and in *Kitāb al-Millah*, he says that happiness is attained by the good. Accordingly, al-Fārābī separates the good into two categories. One of these is the happiness, outlined above, which is the good in the sense of the end attained. The second good is everything which is, in any way, necessary for the attainment of happiness.

It is not surprising then, that al-Fārābī articulates the opposite concept of evil (sharr) as whatever obstructs happiness in any way.

Al-Fārābī's definition of 'Happiness' includes both happiness in corporeal life, and in the after-life. This conception bears some resemblance to St. Augustine's dualism although some are different from each other. St. Augustine explicitly developed the principle of dualism. He postulated that on the ground of man's original sin, man had fallen from grace into sin and error, thereby incurring the penalty of eternal damnation, and that the earthly city would be swallowed up in flames and that the good and the faithful would be gathered unto God, and

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7 *Fuṣūl al-Madani*, p.25.
8 *Kitāb al-Millah*, p.2.
dwell in the Heavenly city in perfection and felicity [happiness] forever. He clearly and sharply distinguished between this world and the next, and the earthly city and the heavenly city.\(^{10}\)

It is reasonable to state that al-Fārābī's metaphysical stance exhibits this dualism. This view can be found throughout the whole of his political ideas and works. Although al-Fārābī comments that the final supreme happiness will be achieved in the after-life,\(^{11}\) his real concerns, as far as his political works are concerned, are centred on happiness in this life.

This fact makes al-Fārābī's main political scheme somewhat entangled, as a result of the uniform application of this dualism to his political thought, just as his application of a metaphysical frame to his political theory makes it complex. Instead of dwelling on the question and providing a clear explanation of dualistic happiness, al-Fārābī chooses to concentrate on the actual happiness which man can reach.

This happiness, according to al-Fārābī, implies the degree of perfection in its own existence which the human

\(^{10}\) St. Augustine, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans* [hereafter *City of God*], (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1954), 474.

\(^{11}\) *Kitāb al-Millah*, p.11,14.
soul reaches, beyond material or physical concerns, for it is generally free from the body (al-ashyā' al-barī'ah 'an al-ajsām) and 'the substances' (al-jawāhir), but its rank is below the active intellect (al-'aql al-faʻāl).12 In the same manner, this statement also appears in his works of Fusūl al-Madani and Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah.13

Al-Farabī, therefore, puts a diversity of types upon happiness, that is, in Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah he gives the reason why it is various in its type; in other words, happiness attained by the peoples of cities differs in quantity (al-kammiyyah) and quality (al-kayfiyyah).14 He says that this difference is a result of the different superiority (tafādal) they acquire through political action (fiʻāl al-madaniyyah). More details of this appear in Al-Madinah al-Fādilah; there he states that various types of happiness achieve differing superiority in three ways, in species (nawʻ), quantity, and quality; he gives this comparison:

Each of the arts (al-sanāʻi) has a different superiority according to its species, in the

12 Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.46.8-10.

13 Fusūl al-Madani, p.25.; Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.44.

14 Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.51.
way in which various species of the arts exist, one being more virtuous than the other; such as weaving (al-ḥiyākah) and the art of cloth merchant (ṣīnāʿat al-bazz); the art of manufacturing perfumes (ṣīnāʿat al-ʿiṭr) and the art of sweeping (ṣīnāʿat al-kunāsah); the art of dancing (ṣīnāʿat al-raqs) and the art of jurisprudence (ṣīnāʿat al-fiqh); wisdom (al-ḥikmah) and rhetoric (al-khaṭābah).15

In this respect, according to al-Fārābī, different arts have a different superiority. Moreover, the people who practice the arts belonging to the same species have different superiority with regard to the quantity of their knowledge. For example:

Among two writers (katibān), one of them knows more of the parts of the art of writing (al-kitābah), while another knows fewer of them. That is, this art comprehends the knowledge of some language (shayiʿ min al-lughah) and some rhetoric and some calligraphy (khaṭṭ) and some arithmetic (al-hisāb). One of them will master calligraphy, and rhetoric, another language and another rhetoric and calligraphy, and another all four.16

Lastly, in the same passage, al-Fārābī explains that


16 Ibid., p.65ff.
there also exists a qualitative difference in superiority insofar as two writers may know the same parts of the writing, but one of them is more perfect and better trained than the other.17

From these above passages, it can be seen that al-Fārābī identifies various types of happiness which have different superiority and which can be achieved in this life. Thus, his concern is to establish order by acknowledging a social stratum.

2.1.2. MEANS AND WAYS TO HAPPINESS.

Al-Fārābī starts to depict the first step of achieving happiness by saying that people of cities and communities can attain earthly happiness in this life and supreme happiness in the next life, which communities and people of the cities are looking for, through the human qualities: 1) theoretical virtues (al-fadā'il al-nazariyyah), 2) speculative virtues (al-fadā'il al-fikriyyah), 3) moral virtues (al-fadā'il al-khalqiyyah), and 4) practical arts (al-šina'at al-`amaliyyah).18 In short, according to al-Fārābī, at first through theoreti-

17 Ibid., p.66.6.

cal perfection (al-kamāl al-naẓarī) happiness can be achieved. Theoretical perfection is a state comprising knowledge of four things, and then these four are realised in certain men and have actual existence in communities and cities. When man reaches the extent that he knows how to make these particular instances exist in communities and cities, that is, the four human things by which the utmost happiness (al-sāʿādah al-qūṣwa) is achieved, it can be realised in communities and cities. 

Al-Farābī also maintains that man can reach happiness only when the active intellect first gives the first intelligibles which constitute the first knowledge; this state is the first perfection which enables man to reach the last perfection, i.e. happiness.

Al-Farābī describes the process of recognising happiness by the faculties in this way: When man knows happiness, he desires it by the nutritive faculty, deliberates by the rational practical faculty upon what

19 Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah, p.16.15-16.
20 Ibid., p.29.
21 Ibid., p.36.12-15.
22 Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.46.5.; Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.44.
23 Fuṣūl al-Madani, p.25.

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he has to do in order to attain it, uses the means of the nutritive faculty, to do the actions he has discovered by deliberation, and his imaginative and sensitive faculties assist and obey the rational and aid it in arousing him to do the actions by which he attains happiness, everything that originates from man will be good. A similar description of this appears in *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah.*

It is only in the city that the voluntary good comes into being, in other words, the good action is the voluntary action which helps in attaining happiness, and the innate nature (al-hay'āt) and characters (al-malakāt) from which these actions proceed are the virtues and the good actions (khayrāt). And the actions which are obstacles to happiness are the bad things (al-af'āl al-qabīḥah), the evil actions (al-shurūr). The natural disposition and characters from which these negative actions arise are defects (al-naqā'īs), vices (al-radā'īl) and base (al-khasā'īs) qualities.

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24 *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, pp.43-44.
26 Ibid., p.46.16-18.
27 Ibid.
29 *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, p.46.19-21.
As to voluntary evil, it originates in the manner that will be discussed below. Neither the imaginative, nor the nutritive faculty perceives happiness. Not even the rational faculty perceives happiness under all conditions, except when it strives to apprehend it. Therefore, whenever man neglects to perfect his rational theoretical part, he fails to perceive happiness and hasten towards it, or rather, comes to hold something other than happiness.30

In *Fusūl al-Madani*, al-Fārābī makes a detailed explanation of happiness. According to him, among the rational theoretical aspects of wisdom or philosophy (*al-hikmah*) is specifically knowledge of the utmost causes (*al-asbāb al-quswā*) of every last existent (*mawjūd muta’akhkhir*). The utmost end on account of which man exists is happiness, and the end is one of the causes, when wisdom is that which acquaints one with what is the true happiness (*al-sa‘ādah fī al-haqqah*). Also some wisdom alone possesses knowledge of the one, the first perfection, and knows how each one desires it and how much each takes as its share of perfection. Man is one of the existents which desires perfection from the first one (*al-wāhid al-awwal*), then knows the greatest perfection (*a‘zam al-kamāl*) which man desires from the first,

30 *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, p. 44.
happiness. That is, wisdom then acquaints one with the true happiness, and intellectualising (al-ta‘aqqul) acquaints one with what must be done to attain happiness. These two then are the ingredients in the perfection of man, so that wisdom is that which gives the utmost end, and intellectualising the means by which the end is attained.31

2.2. SOCIETY.

2.2.1. MAN AND ORIGIN OF SOCIETY.

In addition to these central ideas, al-Fārābī shows much interest in 'society' in his main works. First, it is necessary to understand the Arabic terms which al-Fārābī uses as meaning 'social group.' Throughout his political works he usually uses 'ijtimā‘' and 'jama‘ah'; the first may be understood as social group or society and the latter as union or large society. Al-Fārābī, however, is not interested in distinguishing between the two words, instead he uses both of them to mean society. But from his use of the phrase "ijtimā‘ jamā‘at," it may be said that he intends to give a wider meaning to 'ijtimā‘' than 'jama‘at.'

31 *Fusūl al-Madani*, p.49.
Al-Farabī's proposition, given in his account of 'human nature' in *Al-Madinah al-Fādīlah*, may be a suitable starting point for the discussion of the origin of a society. He states that: "the First Existent (al-mawjūd al-awwal) is the First Cause (al-sabab al-awwal) of the existence of all the existents, and it is free from any deficiency (al-maqṣ), while on the contrary, all the other things must have some kinds of deficiency, either one or more."\(^{32}\)

Al-Farabī's philosophical stance has a dualistic look which was widespread in the mediaeval world view. Al-Farabī's dualism is somewhat different from St. Augustine's dualism, which originated from the principle of original sin\(^ {33}\), in that, in Al-Farabī's view, all the existents are deficient including man except for the first cause or the one.

Al-Farabī develops his view that man should differ in the degree of his quality like any other existents. As a result, man whose first aim is in seeking the utmost happiness cannot perform it for himself; that is, man must cooperate with others to achieve his end. Al-Farabī regards it as the condition of every man that man cannot

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\(^{32}\) *Al-Madinah al-Fādīlah*, p.5.

achieve perfection by himself without the aid of many other men,\(^3^4\) consequently, the natural disposition (al-
fiṭrah al-ṭabīʿiyyah) of every man is to join with another man, or men, in doing the actions he ought to perform.

Al-Farabi suggests two results of this human state; man needs to live in a neighbourhood and a society with other men in order to achieve perfection; and man is a kind of animal who seeks shelter (awā) and acceptance in the neighbourhood of the same species.\(^3^5\) He calls these the human animal (al-ḥayawan al-insī) and the political animal (al-ḥayawan al-madanī).\(^3^6\) Also in Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, he explains that man belongs to the species that cannot accomplish its necessary affairs, or achieve its virtuous state, except through the union of societies (ijtimāʿ jamāʿāt) in an inhabited world.\(^3^7\)

It may also be observed in Al-Madinah al-Fādilah puts forward his views about what brings the human societies (al-ijtimāʿāt al-insāniyyah) to exist in the inhabited world of the earth (al-maʿmūrah min al-ard).\(^3^8\)

\(^3^4\) Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah, p.14.
\(^3^7\) Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.39.
\(^3^8\) Al-Madinah al-Faḍilah, p.53.
Al-Farābī says that, in order to preserve himself and to achieve his virtuous perfection (afdal kamālāt), every human being is by his very nature in need of many things which he cannot provide all by himself; he in need of people who, each, supply him with some particular need of his. He thinks that everyone finds himself in the same relation to everybody else in this respect. Therefore, man cannot attain the perfection, for the sake of which his inborn nature was given to him, unless there are many societies of people who cooperate and come together; so that as a result of the contribution of the whole society, all the things are brought together which everybody needs in order to preserve himself and to attain perfection. This general view again appears in Kitāb al-Millah.39

Al-Farābī concludes that all men, therefore, have come to exist in great numbers, and have settled in the inhabited world of the earth, so that human societies have come to exist in it, some of which are perfect, others imperfect.

Furthermore, it seems that al-Farābī believes that the meaning of society is not a simple notion of a residential society, but includes the residence which

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contains people and the people whom the residences accommodate, of whatever material and wherever they are, under the earth or on it, of wood (khashab) or clay (țîn) or wool (ṣūf) and hair (sha’r), or anything else of which residences which shelter men are made.⁴⁰ Even though he does not mention directly the concept of society, it may be said that he seems to imply the idea of society.

2.2.2. CLASSIFICATION OF SOCIETY.

In *Al-Madînah al-Ғādilah* and *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, al-Farabî largely divides society into perfect (al-kâmîlah) and imperfect (ghayr al-kâmîlah). However, he uses the word of 'kâmîlah' and gives no mention of any difference between 'kâmîlah' and his other term 'fâdilah,' which appears more often throughout his whole political works, and which may be translated as both perfect and virtuous.

From his passage, "The most virtuous good and utmost perfection is, in the first instance, attained in a city not in a society which is more imperfect than it,"⁴¹ it is found that he simply differentiates the city from the other imperfect societies according to whether it is the

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⁴⁰ *Fuṣûl al-Madâni*, p.20.

⁴¹ *Al-Madînah al-Ғādilah*, p.54.
place where happiness can be achieved. That is, it could be said that he differentiates 'perfect' from 'imperfect' only due to the possibility that happiness can be attained and the city has the conditions and qualities which enable man to reach happiness in it. Therefore it is proper that distinguishing 'perfect' from 'imperfect' results from the functional classification of societies, i.e. from whether the society is a political unit or not. Otherwise, al-Fārābī's division of the virtuous and the deficient city, or state, which is in the domain of city as perfect, will contradict its corollary.

Table 2. Al-Fārābī's Classification of Society I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society (al-ijtimā')</th>
<th>Politically imperfect (ghayr al-kāmilah)</th>
<th>Politically perfect (al-kāmilah)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household (al-manzil, al-buyūt)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street (al-sikkah)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Quarter (al-mahallah)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Village (al-qaryah)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...(auxiliary organ)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>City (al-madīnah)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community (al-ummah)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The inhabited world</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(al-ma‘mūrah)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Al-Fārābī divides this imperfect society into four
categories due to their size⁴² as in 'table 2'. The biggest one is the society of village people (ijtimāʿ ahl al-qaryah), the next the society of people of the quarter (ijtimāʿ ahl al-maḥallah) and the society of street (al-ijtimāʿ fī sikkah), and the smallest is the society of household (al-ijtimāʿ fī manzil). Al-Fārābī describes the household as the smallest society among both imperfect societies and the whole society. In Fusūl al-Madani, he gives an explanation of what the household consists of; the household can be divided into four parts, husband (zawj) and wife (zawjah), master (mawlān) and servant ('abd), parent (wālid) and child (wālad), and property (qunyah) and the acquired acquisitions (muqṭanān).⁴³ His view of these four parts may be understood as the possible relationship between members of the household and the relationship between master and servant in general. According to him, the householder is the lord (rabb) and manager (mudābbir) of these parts and of their cooperation, who joins some of them with others and associates each person to the other, so that from them together there comes cooperation in actions and mutual

⁴² Ibid., p.53.

⁴³ Fusūl al-Madani, p.21.
help towards the perfection of a single aim and towards the complete establishment of the household with good things and their preservation of them.\textsuperscript{44} Al-Farabi compares this householder (al-manzillī), who is the lord and the manager of the household, to the manager of the politics in the city (mudabbir al-madaniyyah fī al-madīnah),\textsuperscript{45} and again to the body of man as well, as the city is compared with the body.\textsuperscript{46}

Among imperfect societies, according to al-Farabi, the smallest society, or household, is a part of the street, and in the same way the street is a part of the quarter, and the quarter a part of the village. In other words, the quarters which consist of the street and the household exist as parts of the city for the sake of the city; while the relation of the village to the city is one of service, though the village exists for the sake of the city as well as the quarter.\textsuperscript{47} Al-Farabi seems to describe the village, to some extent, as one type of independent society, probably based on many towns around

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., p.22.

\textsuperscript{47} Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, p.53.; Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.39.
the Arab world at that time, which served the city. This view may also be inferred from his use of Arabic word 'al-qaryah' which literally means village or small town.

Al-Farabī's classification of the perfect society like that of the imperfect society appears in his works, *Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah* and *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*. They are much the same. In *Fusūl al-Madani* and in *Kitāb al-Millah*, however, al-Farabī introduces the concept of city, and he uses simply the words of city and community in describing virtues, without any preceding classification of them.48 In both *Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah* and *Fusūl al-Madani*, al-Farabī explains that the largest perfect society is the society which unites all the societies in the inhabited world. Last is the union society of community (nation) and the small one the union society of the people of a city. Accordingly, he regards the city as the first place where the most virtuous good and the utmost perfection is attained,49 or which represents the first degree of perfection.50

Like the ranks of the imperfect societies, al-Farabī explains that the city is a part of the residence of a


49 *Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah*, p.54.

nation and the nation a part of all the people of the inhabited world (al-ma'ṣūrah). Also in Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, he says, "the quarter is in turn a part of the political association (al-jamā'ah al-madaniyyah), ...... the political society (al-ijtimā' al-madani) is a part of a community, and the community is divided into cities." It may be said then that he thinks of the city as one society where political things are dealt with. In Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah he does not use the word, 'al-ma'ṣūrah,' which he uses to indicate the largest society in Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah. Instead, he uses simply the largest societies which consist of many nations who associate and cooperate with one another.

2.2.3. VARIOUS TYPES OF CITY, COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD.

According to al-Fārābī, the actual good (al-khayr fī al-ḥaqqiqah) is such as to be attainable by choice (al-ikhtiyār) through will (al-irādah) but since evils (al-shurūr) are also due to will and choice, a city may be established to enable its people to cooperate in attain-

51 Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, p.54.
ing some aims that are evil. Thus, happiness is not attainable in every city.

His view of this probably implies that his schematised city should coexist with the actual cities at that time. That is, since he needs to recognise the existence of cities which are incompatible with his first city, he cannot help introducing the concept of 'city' which implies its diverse meaning. Then his planned city can be drawn from both his ideal and the existent cities as well. Accordingly he can proceed to his idea of the virtuous city.

He argues that the city in which people aim through the union of societies (ijtimā') at cooperation, with respect to the things by which true happiness can be attained, is the virtuous city (al-madīnah al-fādilah); the society where there is cooperation to acquire happiness is the virtuous society and the community in which all of its cities cooperate for these things through which happiness is attained is the virtuous community. In the same way, the virtuous inhabited world (al-ma'mūrah al-fādilah) will come about when all the communities in it cooperate for the purpose of reaching happiness.\(^5^4\)

\(^5^4\) Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.54.
From this point, it is quite clear that al-Fārābī intends that the city is the smallest political association where man's happiness can be achieved, and he believes that forming a virtuous city naturally enables the forming of the next society of community, and then, the whole society of the world as in his aforesaid scheme. Accordingly, he is content that his main concern is related to the city, and he gives a full description of the city, instead of that of the community and the whole world.

Again, in *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, al-Fārābī gives an explanation of 'community'; a community is differentiated from another by two natural things, the natural character (al-khulq al-ṭabī‘iyyah) and the natural habit (al-shiyam al-ṭabī‘iyyah). Cities also differ according to language, i.e., according to idiomatic expression.

Al-Fārābī also explains the first natural cause (al-sabab al-ṭabī‘i al-awwal) of differences between communities. The following is a summary of his main points:

First is the difference in the parts of the celestial bodies (ajzā‘ al-ajrām al-samāwiyāt) that face them, such as the first sphere (al-kurāh al-awwaliyyah) and the sphere of the fixed stars (kurat al-ḥawākib al-thābitah), and then the difference in the positions of the inclined sphere from the various parts of the earth and the variation in their proximity and remoteness.
From this there arises a difference between the parts of the earth that are the communities' places of residence; for from the beginning, this difference results from the difference in the parts of the first sphere that face them, from the difference in the firmed stars that face them, and from the difference in the positions of the inclined spheres with respect to them.55

From the above mentioned various parts of the earth, different vapours rise from the earth; since each vapour rises from a certain soil, it is akin to that soil. And the difference in the vapours engenders a difference in the air and water, inasmuch as the water of each country is generated from its underground vapours, and the air of each country is mixed with the vapours that work their way up to it from the soil. In the same way, from the difference of the fixed stars and of the first sphere that face it, and from the difference in the positions of the inclined spheres.56

From all these chemical differences, there follows a difference in the plants and species of irrational animals. As a result of which, communities have different food stuffs (aghdhiyah). And then from the dif-

55 Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.40.
56 Ibid.
D ifferent food stuffs follows differences in the materials and crops that go into the composition of the individuals who succeed the ones who die. Again, from this, there comes differences in the natural character and natural habits. Moreover, the differences in the parts of the heavens that face them, and in the air, bring about differences in the natural character and natural habit as well. Furthermore, from the cooperation and joining of these differences bring different mixtures which bring about differences in the natural character and habit of the nations.\textsuperscript{57}

According to al-Fārābī, it is in this manner and direction that natural things fit together, are joined with each other, and occupy their respective ranks; and this is the extent to which the celestial bodies contribute to perfection and the other perfections are given by the Active Intellect in man only.\textsuperscript{58}

From these states, it is clear that al-Fārābī explicitly means that the communities, presumably the actual communities, are various according to not only the celestial bodies, but also the Active Intellect which influences man to achieve his aim. The connotative mean-

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., pp.40-41.

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
ing of al-Farābī's 'community' might well be the concept 'nation' in a modern sense. It is proper that his conception of community is clarified by his definitions, such as the natural history of earth, cosmos, and environmental and cultural scope.

2.3. CITY.

2.3.1. RANKS OF CITY.

Al-Farābī's main concerns with the city are expressed in relation to the ranks of order in the city and the obligations or duties of the people of the city. He divides the people of the city into various ranks of order according to their natures (fiṭār) and the good manners (al-adāb) they have formed in ruling and serving; that is, he broadly divides the people of the city into three categories; such as, the ruling class, the serving and ruling class, and the serving class. In other words, al-Farābī's division (which is based on Aristotle) between rulers and ruled is formed by an hierarchical order.


Among them, according to al-Fārābī, the first ruler is the highest ruler who orders the various groups and every individual in each group, and who gives each a rank of order. Therefore, there will be certain ranks of order that are close to his own, others slightly further away, and still others that are far away from it: Namely, from the first ruler, they will descend gradually until they become servant ranks of order void of any element of ruling and below which there is no other rank of order.  

In Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah, al-Fārābī explains that the king and his subordinates occupy their places primarily by nature and only secondarily by virtue of the will, which perfects his natural propensity. In other words, al-Fārābī believes in an 'innate nature of ranks.' Again, in Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, he illustrates the line of command that conveys the command of the first ruler to those who are governed and govern.

After having ordered these ranks, if the first ruler wishes to issue a command about a certain matter that he wishes to enjoin the people of the city or a certain group among them to do, and to arouse them towards it, he intimates

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61 Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.53.
62 Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah, p.29,37.
this to the ranks closest to him, these will hand it on to their subordinates, and so forth, until it reaches down to those assigned to execute that matter.63

Both here, and especially in *Tahsīl al-Saʿādah*, al-Fārābī's descriptions of communities and people of cities make the distinction between those who are the leading class (al-khāṣṣah) and others who are the public (al-ʿāmmah).64 Al-Fārābī argues that the public should confine themselves, or should be confined, to theoretical cognitions that are in accordance with common opinion (al-raʿy al-mushtarak)65 while the leading class reach their conviction and knowledge on the basis of premises subjected to thorough inquiry.

Therefore, according to al-Fārābī, whoever thinks that he is not confined to what is in accordance with common opinion in his inquiries, believes that he is of the 'upper class' and that everybody else is the public. Thus, the competent practitioner of every art comes to be called one of the 'upper class,' because people know that he does not confine himself, with respect to the objects

63 *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, pp. 53–54.
64 *Tahsīl al-Saʿādah*, pp. 36–38, 50–51.
65 It is accepted common opinion without reflection.
of his art, to what is according to common opinion, but investigates them exhaustively.

Another explanation of the public and the upper or leading class which al-Farabi gives is that whoever does not hold a political rulership (riyāsah madaniyyah) or does not possess an art that establishes his claim to a political rulership, but either holds no art at all, or only has ability in his subordinate art in the city, is said to be the public; and whoever holds a political rulership or holds an art that enables him to desire a political rulership, is of the leading class. Thus, whoever thinks that he possesses an art that qualifies him to assume political rulership or thinks that his position has the same status as political rulership, e.g. a man with prominent ancestors or who holds great wealth, calls himself one of the leading class.

In the above passages, al-Farabi's choice of the word 'al-khāṣṣah' and 'al-‘Ammah' do not appear anywhere in his other works, it is possibly either because he intends to divide people of the city broadly into two groups whom two methods of instruction are applied to; the methods of persuasion and imaginative representation and certain demonstrative methods,\(^6\) or because it is an

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actual description of the people of cities insofar as he uses political rulership, public, and communities without confining them only to cities.

Some of al-Farabi's illustrations of the city also appear elsewhere in his main political works, *Fusūl al-Madani*, *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*, and *Kitāb al-Millah*. Here, it is usually compared to human bodies and, or, natural existents.

First, in *Fusūl al-Madani*, al-Farabi compares the city with the household; that is, the householder who is the lord and ruler of the household is similar to the ruler of the city in the city. And then he compares both the city and the household with the human body, probably because the household is the small part of the city. He gives two cases: First, just as the body is composed of different parts of a limited number (maḥdūdah al-ʿadad), some more, some less base (akhissā'), adjacently arranged in order, each fulfilling a certain function, and all their actions mutually helping towards the perfection of the aim in man's body; so too, the city and the household are each composed of different parts of

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destined number, some more, some less virtuous, adjacently arranged in order, each doing a certain action independently, and their actions mutually helping towards the perfection of the aim of the city or household, except that the household is part of city and the households are in the city, so the aims are different: yet there is brought together from these different aims, when they are perfected and united, mutual help towards the perfection of the aim of the city.\(^6\)

Al-Farābī gives another comparison between the city and the household and the human body:

This again may be in comparison with the body, since the head (al-raʾs), chest (al-ṣadr), belly (al-baṭn), back (al-zahr), hands (al-yadayn), and feet (al-rijlayn) are related to the body as the households of the city to the city. The action of each of the powerful limbs and organs (aʿdāʾ) are different from the action of the other, and the parts of each one of these principal members help one another by their different actions towards the perfection of the aim in that principal member. Then there is joined from the different aims of the principal actions, mutual help towards the perfection of the aim of the whole body. And similarly, the states of the parts of the households with regard to the households and

\(^6\) Ibid., p.22.
the states of the households with regard to the city, so that all the parts of the city by their joining together are useful to the city and useful for the continued existence of the one through the other, like the limbs and organs of the body.\footnote{Ibid.}

In *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah* al-Fārābī makes another comparison between the city and the natural existents:

Thus the city becomes similar to the natural existents (*al-mawjūdāt al-ṭabī‘īyyah*); the order (*marātib*) in it is similar to the order of the existents, which begin with the First and terminate in the primary matter (*al-mādhdh al-awwalā*) and the elements (*al-ustuqssāt*); and the way they are linked and fitted together will be similar to the way the existents are linked and fitted together. The manager (*mudābbir*) of the city will be like the First Cause, which is the cause for the existence of all the other existents. Then the order of the existents gradually keep descending, each one of them being both ruler and ruled, until they reach down to those potential existents, that is, the primary matter and the elements, that possess no ruling element whatever, but are subservient and always exist for the sake of others.\footnote{*Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, p.54.}
In *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah* and *Kitāb al-Millah*, al-Fārābī briefly draws another comparison between the city and celestial bodies and between the city and the natural existents.\(^{72}\) He says, in *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*, that it will become evident that the politically united society (*al-ījtimāʿ al-madani*) and the whole group (*al-jumlaḥ*) that result from the united society of the citizens (*al-madaniyyūn*) in cities correspond to the union of the bodies in the whole world. Therefore, one will come to see what are included in the whole, which is constituted by the city and the nation, the similarity of what are included in the whole world, just as:

In the world, there is a first principle, then other principles subordinate to it, existents that proceed from these principles, other existents subordinate to these existents, until they terminate in the existents with the lowest rank in the order of existents.\(^{73}\)

Like this, according to al-Fārābī, the community or the city includes a first principle, then other principles, and then other citizens, who in turn are followed by other citizens, until they terminate in the citizens with the lowest rank as citizens and as human beings; thus,

\(^{72}\) *Kitāb al-Millah*, p.22,27.

\(^{73}\) *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*, p.16.5ff.
the city includes just what the whole world includes.74

It is true that a metaphorical methodology, as has been seen, is of great concern to al-Fārābī throughout his political works. It is also a fact that the comparison of the city or state with the human body exists in Greek parallels. And in al-Fārābī's forming the class of the city, the principle of cosmology, i.e., the ranks of the celestial body and the principle of the natural existents are also applicable.

2.3.2. PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES IN THE CITY.

In Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, al-Fārābī generally gives two possible consequences of the way in which people of the city proceed: the way to the true, utmost happiness and its opposite.75 First, according to him, as every citizen of the city does what is entrusted to him, either by knowing it on his own or by being guided to it by the ruler, he acquires, by these actions, the good states of the soul. Al-Fārābī gives this illustration:

Just as by continued practice in good writing a man acquires virtues in the art of writing,

74 Ibid., p.16.
75 Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, pp.51-53.
which is a state of the soul; and the more he continues practising, the more firm his virtues in writing become, the greater the pleasure he takes in the resulting state, and the stronger the delight of his soul in that state.\textsuperscript{76}

From this passage, it may be seen that al-Fārābī stresses that the people of the city should continue practising and training their actions to the highest, and he believes that practising and training help them to achieve their aims.

On the contrary, according to al-Fārābī, when the actions of the people of a city are not directed towards happiness, they may acquire bad states of the soul. On this point, he also draws the same comparison:

Just as when the actions of the art of writing are badly performed, they produce bad writing, so, when the actions of any art are badly performed, they produce in the soul bad states, corresponding to the [badly performed] art.\textsuperscript{77}

From this, we see again that al-Fārābī believes that happiness is not attainable in every city.\textsuperscript{78} In this context it is becoming clear that his opinion, 'a city is

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., p.51.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., pp.52-53.
\textsuperscript{78} Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, p.54.
the least place where the happiness can be attained by man,' may mean that the city is the potential place where there are well-arranged conditions for the attainment of happiness, not that the city is the very place where happiness can be attained.

In other words, it may be said that city is a functional place where happiness can be realised through political activities. At the same time, the city can easily be the place where the bad can be achieved through bad political activities. Accordingly, the classification of city or state is formulated according to the ruler, the citizen, and other variables, not according to the city itself. The city is perfect because this is the only place where there is a possibility that happiness can be attained. Thus, the other societies where happiness cannot be achieved are imperfect.

As a corollary, once a city exists, the imperfections exist in it, whether other variables, such as the qualities of ruler and people of the city, are well prepared for attaining happiness in the city or not.

2.4. POLITICAL EDUCATION.

Al-Farabî's explanation of how the four human 'things' originate is found in Tahsîl al-Sa'âdah. These 'things' are: theoretical virtues (al-fâdâ'il al-
nazariyyah), speculative virtues (al-fadā'il al-fikriyyah), moral virtues (al-fadā'il al-khulqiyah), and practical arts (al-sinā'at al-'amaliyyah). He describes their achievement by two methods (tariqayn), that is, 'instruction (al-taʿlīm)' which inculcates the theoretical virtues by word (qawl) alone, and 'education (al-ta'dīb)' which inculcates the intellective virtues and the practical arts by word (qawl) or by act (fi'il), in communities (al-umam) and cities (al-mudun).

Al-Fārábī also comments briefly on instruction and education in Kitāb al-Millah. He does not furnish us with a detailed explanation, only that the successor: "... ought to be reared, educated and disciplined so that he becomes a perfect king." The ideas contained in this simple phrase are explicitly developed into a complete theory of education within his whole political scheme. According to al-Farābī, instruction, which is the training of the mind, comes first, then follows the training of personality, which education accomplishes.

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79 Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah, p.29.

80 The related subjects were already discussed in '2.2. Society' of this chapter.

81 Kitāb al-Millah, p.18.

82 Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah, p.30.
education with an element of time, but his general view is in fact that both instruction and education ought to be carried out together.\footnote{Bayraktar Bayraklı, "The Philosophy of Education of Al-Fārābī," Hamdard Islamicus 10(3), 1987, p.29.}

2.4.1. **INSTRUCTION (AL-TAʿLĪM).**

Within the scope of his political thought, al-Fārābī's idea of 'instruction,' and 'education' seems to be mainly concerned with the typical political education of rulers who are no longer the theoretically virtuous rulers, rather than actual rulers or Imams. His use of the plural forms when referring to Imams (al-aʾimmah) and kings (al-mulūk) might well give more evidence that he indicates the actual rulers or Imams themselves.

According to al-Fārābī the theoretical sciences (al-ʿulūm al-naẓariyyah) should be taught to Imams (al-aʾimmah), kings (al-mulūk), and persons who hold the theoretical faculties.\footnote{Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah, p.30.}

Firstly, they should know the first premises (al-muqaddimāt al-ūlā) and the first knowledge (al-ʿulūm al-ūlā) in all of the theoretical sciences. Secondly, they should know the diverse situations (ahwāl) of the
premises and their various orders (tartīb). Thirdly, they should know all the logical (al-mantiqiyyah) methods employed in all the theoretical sciences. Lastly, they should be made to pursue a course of study and form the habits of character from their youth until their maturity in keeping with the scheme described by Plato.85

At this point, al-Fārābī places emphasis on the definition of kings separately: that is, kings amongst them will be gradually incorporated into the ruling classes until they are fifty years old; they will be positioned in the classes of the highest rulership (al-riyāṣah).86 They are those who should not be confined to what is in accord with common opinion (al-ra'y al-mushtarak); they ought to be instructed in theoretical thinking by methods of persuasion (al-iqna'iyyah); they should understand many theoretical concepts by means of imagining (al-takhayyul) them; and these methods of persuasion and imagining methods should be discerned by the intellectual virtues. Al-Fārābī also states that common people, on the contrary, should comprehend only the similitudes (mathāl) of these principles, which should be established in their souls by persuasive methods.87

85 Republic VII; 521c-521b.
86 Tahsīl al-Sa'ādah, p.30.
87 Ibid.
separate account of kings also seems to mean that he intends to stress the role of government more than anything else.

Al-Farabi's instruction is to be understood as a way of creating theoretical virtue in cities and communities, in the first place, by talking, or words.

2.4.2. EDUCATION (TA'DIB).

Al-Farabi says that the rulers should be acquainted with the acts of practical virtues and the practical arts by either of two methods. The first method is that of 'persuasive words' (al-aqāwil al-iqnā'iyyah) or persuasion, or 'words of influence' (al-aqāwil al-infi'aliyyah), and the other methods that inculcate these acts and situations of character into the soul. The other way is 'the compulsive method' (tariq al-ikrāh) which is to be applied to the undisciplined and the obstinate among those people of cities and communities who do not voluntarily (tawān) give their approval to what is right.

In the words of al-Farabi, as the virtue, or the art of a king is developed by adopting the acts of those

88 Ibid., pp.31-32.
89 Ibid.
who have the specific virtues, and the arts of those who possess the specific arts, it follows that the virtuous and the masters of the arts, whom he employs to discipline the communities and the people of the cities, constitute two basic groups. The first is a group retained by him to educate those who are capable of having their character formed voluntarily. The next is a group retained by him to educate those who are such that their character can be formed only by compulsion. It might be said that a king or ruler can educate people with their voluntary acquiescence or by compulsion. Al-Fārābī also illustrates that the king is just like the heads (arbāb) of families, guardians (al-qawwām) of children and youths, but the king has greater power than the others.

Al-Fārābī’s view of the method of compulsion (ṭārīq al-ikrāḥ)90 can be related to the art of war; that is, the faculty that enables one to surpass others in controlling and leading armies (al-juyūsh), in making efficient use of armament, and in using the right warriors in the right place, in order to conquer the communities and the cities that do not accept the ultimate happiness which man should achieve, that is the ultimate happiness (al-sādah al-quswā). In this analysis al-Fārābī defines

90 Ibid.
war (al-ḥarb) which has this purpose as 'just' war (‘ādil).\textsuperscript{91}

The method of the persuasive words is envisaged as operating under the auspices of the other group who are retained to educate communities and people of cities with their voluntary acquiescence.\textsuperscript{92} This group consists of those who have the rational virtues and arts. Al-Fārābī discusses exhaustively twelve guiding principles for governing or educating people of communities and cities.\textsuperscript{93}

(1) It is necessary for the king to bring the theoretical, intelligible methods that can be applied to each, and to search out all the convincing or persuasive methods that can be applied to it.

(2) He ought to form the imaginative forms of these theoretical matters and their similitudes.

(3) He needs to know all the acts of the particular virtues and arts that fulfil the aforementioned conditions.

\textsuperscript{91} This will be dealt with in chapter five '5 Views of International Relations.'

\textsuperscript{92} Taḥṣīl al-Saʿādah, p.32.

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., pp.33-36.
(4) He ought to express himself in common, easily understood language.

(5) He ought to adopt words which assist his right character and which are affective and moral, which activate people's souls to become devout, obedient, undemanding, and docile, and which activate people's souls to become antagonistic, impudent, and disdainful with respect to everything contrary to these acts.

(6) He ought to adopt these two kinds of words respectively, with other kings who comply with him and with those who contradict him, with men and followers adopted by him and with ones adopted by those who oppose him, and with the virtuous and with those who oppose them. In relation to his own followers he ought to adopt words by which their souls become devout and obedient, while in relation to his opponents, he ought to adopt words that make their souls become antagonistic, impudent, and disdainful.

(7) He ought to use words in two kinds of ways; the first that should be used occasionally, daily, and temporarily, and not preserved, nor kept permanently, or in writing; the second that should be preserved and kept eternally, orally and in writing, which would be in two books, a book of opinions (al-ārā') and a book of acts.
(al-af'āl). These two books comprise the words which he pursues in order to preserve among them and establish for them the matters that will not be forgotten, and the words with which he rebuts the opponents of these opinions and acts. The sciences, therefore, that educate communities and cities and that aim at achieving the purpose of the highest ruler (al-ra'īs al-awwal), may be three grades (rutab); the first belongs to the sciences which constitute the book of opinions; the second to the sciences which consist of the book of acts; the third to those sciences which have not been recorded in a book.

(8) He ought to look into the different kinds of communities. He ought to investigate human characteristics and acts within each community and the natural laws behind them.

(9) He ought to look into those things which all communities partake and into all the acts, laws and methods that are shared by every group in every community.

(10) He ought to perceive all these things, formulate the actual acts and the characters with which every community is able to be made upright and led to happiness, and designate the kinds of convincing words that should be
adopted among them.

(11) He will ascertain what every community is capable of, having subdivided every community and looked at which group is fit for preserving the theoretical sciences, and decided who should preserve the theoretical sciences, or the imaginative theoretical sciences (al-naṣāriyyah al-makhīlah). If these groups exist in communities, says al-Farābī,94 then the four sciences (al-ʿulūm) can grow; i) theoretical sciences through which the existing things (al-mawjūdāt) become intelligibles through certain proof (barāhīn); ii) convincing methods by which these intelligibles (al-maʿqūlāt) are attained; iii) the sciences that consist of the similitudes of these intelligibles proved by convincing methods; and iv) the sciences elicited from these three for each community.

(12) He ought to search out groups of men or individuals, who may be instructed in what constitutes the happiness of certain successful communities, who may preserve what can educate a certain community alone, who may learn the

94 Ibid.
convincing methods that ought to be adopted in educating that community, and then they ought to follow the mind of the highest ruler.

Al-Farabi says that these twelve are the modes (al-wujud) or methods (al-turuq) through which the four human things are realised in communities and cities by which the ultimate happiness (al-s'adah al-quswa) is attained.

In the matter of 'education' he also explains how the highest ruler (al-ra'is al-awwal) governs the others, including other lower rulers in communities and cities. From this point of view, the highest ruler ought to be the central governor of the empire.

Al-Farabi prefers the methods of convincing or persuasive words to the methods of compulsion even when governing opponents, judging from his sayings "...use words... that activate people's souls to become antagonistic, impudent, and disdainful with respect to everything contrary to these acts."95 and "...in the matter of his opponents he ought to adopt words that make their souls become antagonistic, impudent, and disdainful."96

In respect of the compulsive methods, he defines explicitly the just war as the one which has as its first

95 Ibid.
96 Ibid.
aim, his aforementioned ultimate happiness.

Among his twelve guiding principles for governing people of communities and cities under the methods of the persuasive words, the first to the seventh are his description of political power and laws with which political power may be exercised, "...the words with which he rebuts the opponents of these opinions and acts." These seem to be related to the political art of intra-communities or intra-cities also. In the eighth to the last principles he advances an explanation to establish the order of international relations, that is, of inter-communities and inter-cities.98

In both cases al-Fārābī seems to firmly establish the authority of the highest ruler, as he says: "... Therefore the sciences, ...that aim at achieving the purpose of the highest ruler, ... those sciences which have not been recorded in a book." and "... ought to follow the mind of the highest ruler."99

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97 Ibid.

98 A full discussion of al-Fārābī's international relations will be given in chapter five '5 Views of International Relations.'

99 Taḥṣil al-Saʿādah, p.34.
CHAPTER THREE

THE VIRTUOUS STATE

3.1. THE VIRTUOUS CITY (AL-MADİNAH AL-FÂDILAH)

3.1.1. RANKS OF THE VIRTUOUS CITY.

In *Fusül al-Madani*, al-Farābī describes five ranks of virtue within the virtuous city: First, the most virtuous (al-afâdil) are the wise (al-ḥukamâ') and intellectual men (al-muta‘aqqalûn), and those with ideas on great matters; Second, are the holders of faith (ḥamalat al-dîn) or the faithful and interpreters, such as preachers (al-khutabâ'), eloquent speakers (al-bulaghâ'), poets (al-shu‘arâ'), composers (al-mulahhinûn), writers (al-kuttâb), and the like; Third, assessors (al-muqaddirûn) such as accountants (al-ḥussâb), engineers (al-muhandisûn), doctors (al-ātibba’), astrologers (al-munajjimûn), and so on; Fourth, warriors (al-mujâhidûn) such as fighters (al-muqâtalâh), guardians (al-hafazah) and the like; Last are the rich, those who are the acquirers of wealth in the city, such as farmers (al-falâhin), shepherds (al-ru‘âh), merchants (al-bâ‘ah),
and the like.¹

Next al-Fārābī proceeds to order the social stratum in the virtuous city by giving three cases: Firstly, when a man performs an action (ʿamal) to achieve some end but utilises something which is the end of an action performed by another man, then the first is leader (raʾīs) and precedes the second in the city. Al-Fārābī gives 'horsemanship' as its example,

For example, horsemanship (furūsiyyah), its end is excellence (jūdah) in the use of arms (silāh), the one who is the cavalier (fāris) uses the reins (al-lajim) and the horse's equipment, which are the end of the art of making the reins. He is, therefore, the leader preceding the maker of the reins, and likewise the trainer of the horse (rāʾid al-fars). And so in other activities (al-aʿmāl) and arts.²

Secondly, when two people have the same end and one of them accomplishes that end better, and is more perfect in virtue, possessing the ability to use his intellect (taʿqqual) to discover all that will bring him to that end and is more capable of using other people to realise that end, then he is the leader over the second, who does not

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¹ Fuṣūl al-Madānī, p.53.

² Ibid.
have this ability.

Below him is the man who imagines the end at the same time, but does not have perfect deliberation (rawiyyah kāmilah) to accomplish all by which the end is achieved. Yet when he is given a principle of deliberation (mubda' al-rawiyyah), such as if something is drawn for him of what he has to do, he imitates the pattern of that which has been drawn and discovers the rest.

Below him is the man who does not imagine the end at the same time and who also has no deliberation, but when he is given the end and it is represented to his imagination, and he is then given a principle of deliberation, he is able to imitate the remainder of the pattern which has been drawn for him, and he goes to work or sets another to work on them.

Below him is the man who does not imagine the end and has no deliberation; even if he is given a principle of deliberation, he cannot discover the rest. But if he is directed to do what has to be done in the attainment of the end, he remembers the end and is always humble and obedient. He is swift to perform all that he is advised to do, even if he does not know to what end the action will lead him, and is well suited to do the thing as he has been charged. This man is always a servant (khādim) in the city, or rather, he is naturally a slave (‘abd). While the others are subordinates (mar'ūson) and leaders (ru'asā'). Everything the slave and the servants are
skilled in doing, the leader must be skilled in employing another to do.

Thirdly, when two men are both performing an action where a third uses their action to accomplish some end, but one of the two one does the thing more nobly and more usefully for the accomplishment of the third man's end, the man whose action is nobler and more useful takes precedence in rank over the man who is responsible for an action which is base (akhass) and lesser in usefulness to accomplish the end.3

Al-Farabi's two types of the order of social stratum mentioned here, do not contradict each other, at least in the context of his basic frame of the city classes. His systematic classes of the city arise naturally from his cosmological and natural order of ranks. In this context, his basic structure of the ranks of the virtuous city is consistent with those of the city in general.4 His first classification of the ranks of the city gives a more detailed social classification than Plato's wide division of three classes, such as the ruler, the soldiers, the works.

Al-Farabi again describes the ranks of the virtuous

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3 Ibid., p.56.
4 See chapter two '2.3.1. Ranks of City.'
city by analogy. Two analogies appear in *Al-Madinah al-Fadilah*. First, he compares the virtuous city to the healthy (ṣahīh) and complete (tāmm) body, all of whose limbs and organs cooperate to fulfil the life of the animal and to preserve it in this state.

The limbs and organs of the body are different and their innate nature (fitar) and faculties have different order of superiority, there being among them one ruling organ or limb (al-ʿudw al-raʿīs), the heart (al-qalb), and organs which are close in rank to that ruling organ, each having been given by nature a faculty by which it performs its proper actions following the natural aim of that ruling organ. Other organs have by nature faculties by which they perform their actions according to the aims of those organs which have no intermediary (wasitah) between themselves and the ruling organ; they are in the second rank. Other organs, in turn, perform their functions according to the aim of those which are in the second rank, and so on until eventually organs are reached which only serve and do not rule at all.⁵

According to al-Farabī, the parts of the city too are different by nature, and the innate natures have a different order of superiority; there is the man who is

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⁵ *Al-Madinah al-Fadilah*, p.54.12-19.
ruler, and there are others whose ranks are close to the ruler, each of them with a natural appearance (hay'ah) and character through which he performs an action which follows the intention of this ruler; these are the holders of the first ranks.⁶

Al-Fārābī arranges the order of the others below this first rank into those who perform their actions according to the aims of the people closest to the ruler. The parts of the city continue to be arranged in this way, until, eventually, we reach those parts who perform their actions only according to the aims of others, while there does not exist any people who perform their actions according to their aims. These, then, are the people who serve without being served in turn, and who are in the lowest rank.⁷

Al-Fārābī, however, also notes the difference between the virtuous city and the healthy body, in that the limbs and organs of the body are natural, and the appearances which they have are natural faculties, while although the parts of the city are natural, their appearances and the characters, by which they perform their actions in the city, are not natural but voluntary

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(irādiyyah). As he puts it in other words, the parts of the city are born with an innate nature of different superiority, which enables them to do one thing and not another. Nevertheless, they are not parts of the city by their innate nature but by the voluntary characters which they acquire, such as the arts and their like; that is, the natural faculties in the limbs and organs of the body correspond to the voluntary characters and the appearances in the parts of the city.8

Again, al-Farābī argues that the ruler of the city is the most perfect part of the city. His specific attributes epitomise the best of everything which anybody else shares with him; below him are the people who are ruled by him and who rule others:9

The ruling organ in the body is by nature the most perfect and most complete of the organs in itself and in its specific attribute, and it also has the best of everything of which only other organs have a share; below it, in turn, are organs which rule over organs inferior to them, their rule being lower in rank than the rule of the first and indeed subordinate to the rule of the first; they rule and are ruled.10

8 Ibid., p.55.4-11.
9 Ibid., p.55.16-18.
10 Ibid., p.55.13-16.
Al-Farābī also illustrates the ruling organ as follows:

The heart (al-qalb) comes to be first and becomes then the cause of the existence of the other organs and limbs of the body and the cause of the existence of the faculties in man and of their arrangement in the ranks (tatarattab murātib) proper to them. When one of its organs is defective, it is the heart which supports that which causes that defectiveness (al-ikhtilāl) to vanish.¹¹

In an analogous fashion, according to al-Farābī, the ruler of the city must come to be the first, and will subsequently be the cause of forming the city and its parts, and the cause of the presence of the voluntary characters of its parts and of their arrangement in the order proper to them. When one part is defective, he supports it with what causes its defectiveness to vanish.

Next, al-Farābī draws a comparison between the virtuous city and the existents (al-mawjūdāt), because the relation of the First Cause to the other existents is similar to the relation of the king (malik) of the virtuous city to its other parts. He also says how the virtuous city must be arranged so that the parts of it

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¹¹ Ibid., p.55.18-20.
should imitate in their actions the aim of their first ruler according to their rank (al-tartīb) just like the existents. The following is al-Fārābī's main description of this:

The things which are free of matter are the ranks which are close to the First, below them are the heavenly bodies, and below the heavenly bodies the materials (al-hayūlāniyyah). All these existents go with the first cause, are led by it, and emulate it, but each existent acts according to its faculty, choosing its aim precisely on the strength of its established rank in the universe; that is, the last follows the aim of that which is slightly above it in rank, equally the second existent, in turn, follows what is above itself in rank, and in the same way the third existent has an aim which is above it. Eventually existents are reached which are linked with the First Cause without any intermediary whatsoever. According to their order of rank all the existents permanently follow the aim of the first cause. Those who are from the very outset provided with all the essentials of their existence are made to imitate the first and its aim from their very outset, and hence enjoy eternal bliss and hold the highest rank; but those who are not provided from the outset with all the essentials of their existence are provided with a faculty by which they move towards the expected attainment of these essentials and will then be able to follow the aim of the
In both his works Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah and Al-Madinah al-Fadilah, al-Farābī defines 'the weeds' (nawābit) in the virtuous city as, 'the position of the weeds' in the cities is like that of the darnel among the wheat, the thorns growing among the crop, or other grass that is useless, or even harmful to the crop or plants. Though these remarks appear in his description of the descending non-virtuous states, these should be included in the classification of the virtuous city as mentioned above. In both these works, unlike his other political works, al-Farābī uses some distinct terms, such as 'opportunists' (mutaqannisūn), 'the misinterpreters' (mubarrifah), and 'the apostates' (māriqah) as follows.

Al-Farābī gives four subdivisions of the weeds: First, one class tends to do actions which can be performed in the attainment of happiness in order to obtain something which is not virtue, such as honour, wealth,
and so forth, instead of pursuing the real end of achieving happiness. Al-Fārābī calls them the opportunists, and again divides the opportunists into two divisions; the misinterpreters and the apostates.

According to al-Fārābī, the misinterpreters are mubarrifah who are inclined to one of the ends of the people of the ignorant cities, but they are prevented from achieving such ends. Thus they resort to following the expressions of the lawgiver and the statements that embody his precepts, but they interpret them as they wish, and thereby, they make the thing they desire appear good.

The apostates do not, according to al-Fārābī, deliberately misinterpret, but they understand the laws of the city in a different way than that intended by the lawgiver, since they do not rightly understand the lawgiver nor do they realise their misconception of his statements. Thus, their actions will not conform to the intention of the supreme ruler.

Secondly, al-Fārābī explains another class who can imagine the things we mentioned, i.e. the virtuous city, yet they are not convinced of what they have imagined. Therefore, they use arguments to falsify the validity of

15 Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.74-75.
their virtuous city for themselves and for others. In doing so, they are not contending against the virtuous city; rather, they are looking for the right path and seeking the truth. Al-Farabi understands the procedure for dealing with such a person as being that he should have the level of his imagination raised to things that cannot be falsified by the arguments he has put forward. If he is satisfied with the level to which he has been raised, he should be left. Otherwise, if he is again not satisfied, and discovers here certain places susceptible to contention, then he should be raised to a higher level. The process should be repeated until he becomes satisfied with one of these levels. If it happens that he is not satisfied with any one of these levels of imagination, he should be raised to the level of the truth and be made to comprehend those things as they are, at which point his mind will come to rest.

Thirdly, al-Farabi identifies another class as those who falsify whatever they imagine. Whenever they are brought to a higher level, they falsify it, even when they are conducted to the level of the truth - all this in the pursuit of domination alone, or in the pursuit of ennobling another of the aims of the ignorant cities that

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16 Ibid.
is desired by them. They falsify them in every way they can. They do not like to listen to anything that may establish happiness and truth firmly in the soul, or any arguments, that may ennable and imprint them in the soul, but meet them with such sham arguments as they think will discredit happiness. Many of them do so with the intention of appearing to have a pretext for turning to one of the aims of the ignorant cities.

And lastly, al-Fārābī says¹⁷ that the other class imagines happiness and the principles of beings, but their minds are totally lacking in the faculty to recognise them, or it is beyond the power of their minds to recognise them adequately; therefore, they falsify the things they imagine and come upon the places of contention in them, and whenever they are raised to a level of imagination that is closer to the truth, they find it to be false:

Nor is it possible to raise them to the level of the truth because their minds lack the power to comprehend it. Many of them may find most of what they imagine to be false, not because what they imagine truly contains places of contention, but because they have a defective imagination, and they find these things false because of

¹⁷ Ibid., pp.75-76.
their defective minds, not because these things contain a place of contention. When they are unable to imagine something sufficiently, or to discover the real points of contention in the places where they are to be found, or when they are unable to comprehend the truth, many of them think that the man who has apprehended the truth and who says that he has apprehended it, is a deliberate liar who is seeking honour or domination, or else they think that he is a deluded man. So they try their best to make them false, thinking that all men are deluded in every thing they claim to have apprehended.

Expanding on this, al-Farabī identifies five groups who can be led: 18

1) Some of them to a state of perplexity in all things.

2) Others to think that no apprehension whatever is true, and that whenever someone thinks that he has apprehended something, that he is lying about it and that he is not sure or certain of what he thinks. Al-Fārābī believes that these individuals occupy the position of ignorant simpletons in the eyes of reasonable men and in relation to the philosophers. For this reason,

18 Ibid.
according to al-Farābī, it is the duty for the ruler of the virtuous city to look for the weeds, keep them occupied, and treat each class of them in the particular manner that will cure them; by expelling them from the city, punishing them, gaoling them, or forcing them to perform a certain function even though they may not be fond of it.

3) Others to think that the truth consists of whatever appears to each individual and what each man thinks it to be at one time or another, and that the truth of every thing is what someone thinks it is.

4) Another group to exert themselves to create the illusion that every thing that is thought to have been apprehended up to this time is completely false, and that although a certain truth or reality does exist, it has not as yet been apprehended.

5) The fifth and final group to imagine, as if in a dream, that there is a truth, and it occurs to them that the ones who claim to have apprehended it may have done so, or perhaps that one of them may have apprehended it. They feel that they themselves have missed it; because they require a long time, and have to toil and exert themselves, in order to
apprehend it, when they no longer have sufficient time or the power to toil and persevere; because they are occupied by certain pleasures and so forth to which they have been accustomed and from which they find it very difficult to free themselves; because they feel that they cannot apprehend it, even if they have access to all the means to it.

Finally, al-Fārābī gives quite a long description of concluding remarks on the weeds as follows:¹⁹

Consequently, they regret and grieve over what they think others may have attained. Hence, out of jealousy for those who may have apprehended the truth, they think it wise to endeavour, using sham argument, to create the illusion that whoever claims to have apprehended the truth is either deluded or else a liar who is seeking honour, wealth, or some other desirable thing, from the claim he makes. Now many of these perceive their own ignorance and perplexity; they feel sorrowful and suffer pain because of what they perceive to be their condition, they are overcome by anxiety, and it torments them; and they find no way to free themselves of this by means of a science leading them to the truth whose apprehension would

¹⁹ Ibid.
give them pleasure. Hence they choose to find rest from all this by turning to the various ends of the ignorant cities, and to find their solace in amusements and games until death comes to relieve them of their burden. Some of these - I mean the ones who seek rest from the torment of ignorance and perplexity - may create the illusion that the true ends are those that they themselves choose and desire, that happiness consists of these, and that the rest of men are deluded in what they believe. They exert themselves to adorn the ends of the ignorant cities and the happiness [that they pursue]. They create the illusions that they have come to prefer some of these ends after a thorough examination of all that the others claim to have apprehended, that they have rejected the latter only after finding out that they are inconclusive, and that their position was arrived at on the basis of personal knowledge - therefore theirs are the ends, not the ones claimed by the others.

These, according to al-Farabī, are the classes of the weeds growing among the citizens of the city. Al-Farabī believes that with such opinions, they constitute neither a city nor a large multitude, rather they are submerged by the citizen body as a whole.
3.1.2. **PEOPLE’S ACTIVITIES IN THE VIRTUOUS CITY.**

First al-Farabi stresses the fact that everyone in the virtuous city must have assigned himself a single art with which he busies himself solely and a single work to which he attends, either in the class of servant or master, nor must he go beyond it. And then he gives three reasons why none of them is left to pursue many works, nor more than a single art:

First, every man is not always suitable for every task and art, rather, one man is sometimes better than another, for one task for work rather than another. Second, every man who attends to a task or an art does so more perfectly and becomes more proficient therein and skilled in the task when he devotes himself to it from his childhood and grows up with it. Lastly, many tasks have particular times; when these are left late, the tasks are not performed. It sometimes happens that there are two tasks to be done at the same time and if a man is occupied with one of them, he has no time for the other, nor can he undertake it on a second occasion. For this reason there must be assigned to each of the tasks one man so that each one of them may be undertaken in its own time.20

From this view, it may be said that he describes social status on the premise that every man has different qualities, though without mentioning how to find the appropriate tasks.

In *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, al-Fārābī gives an explanation of people's obligations in the virtuous city; each one of the people of the virtuous city is required to know the highest principles of the existents and their order, happiness, the first rulership of the virtuous city, and the ruling ranks of order in it; then, after that, the destined actions that, when performed, lead to the attainment of happiness. Al-Fārābī adds that these actions are not merely to be known; they should be done and the people of the city should be directed to do them.

Following this, al-Fārābī explains the ways people recognise the principles of existence, their order, and so on (as stated above); the first way is intellectualising them and the second is imagining them. According to him, to form them is to have their actual existents, which are impressed in man's soul, and to imagine them is to have impressed in man's soul their images (*khayāl*),

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21 *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, p.55.2-5.

similarities (mathālāt) of them, or resemblances (taḥākā). Al-Fārābī says:

This is like what occurs with regard to visible things (al-ashyā' al-mar'iyyah), for instance, man. We see him himself, we see similarities, we see the images reflected in water and other reflecting substances, and we see images of his similarities reflected in water and in other visible things. Our seeing him looks like forming the intellect for the principle of the existence, happiness and so forth; and our seeing him in water or our seeing similarities look like the imagination and our seeing similarities or our seeing in a mirror is our seeing resemblances, similarly our imaginations for this is actually forming the imitations rather than forming things in themselves.  

Al-Fārābī explains the various actions of the parts of the virtuous city in Al-Madīnah al-Faḍilah; those which are close in the rulership (al-ri'āsah) to the ruler of the city perform the most noble voluntary actions and those below them less noble actions, until eventually the parts are reached which perform the most menial actions (akhass). Al-Fārābī also illustrates it:

The limbs and organs close to the ruling organs perform the natural actions, which are by

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23 Ibid., p.55.11-17.
nature the aim of the ruler, the most noble ones; the organs below them perform those actions which are less noble, and eventually the organs are reached which perform the menial actions.24

At this point al-Fārābī gives some reasons why such actions are menial, too:

It is due to the menial nature of their subject matter (mawḍūʿ); attaining their actions may be greatly useful, such as the actions of the bladder (al-mathānāh) and the action of the lower intestines (al-amʿāʾ al-suflīyy) in the body; and probably due to their less significant usefulness, and probably due to their being very easy to perform.25

It is the same in the city and in the whole which is composed by nature of well-arranged coherent parts; they have a ruler whose relationship to the other parts is analogous to the one just described.

In the above passages, it is probable that al-Fārābī intends that every part has its own perfection which can be achieved by performing its action completely, even though the parts are various in degree and the menial

24 Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.56.1-5.
25 Ibid., p.56.7-10.
nature does not mean the opposite of the good. In other words, it may be said that the difference among the parts results in the limited nature of each of them.

3.2. THE VIRTUOUS RULER

3.2.1. THE IDEAL VIRTUOUS RULER

In *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah* and *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah* al-Fārābī gives, using a metaphysical method, a description of the human spirit which fulfils the qualities required of the highest ruler (al-ra'īs al-awwal). He deals with it in more detail in *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah* than in *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*. The first step to becoming the highest ruler, after having fulfilled every qualification, condition and obligation required, is that a person has to achieve the spiritual qualities. His reasoning is as follows:

A person, who naturally has the passive intellect (al-‘aql al-munfa‘il) in the theoretical faculty (al-quwwah al-nazariyyah) of his rational faculty (al-quwwah al-naṭiqah), makes the passive intellect perfect itself

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27 These have been fully discussed in chapter one '1.2 Cosmology, Emanation and Intellect' and '1.3 The Faculties of the Soul and Prophecy.'
by interaction with all the intelligibles (al-ma‘qūlāt); once it is so, the passive intellect becomes the actual intellect (‘aql bi‘l-fi‘l), that is, the acquired intellect (al-‘aql al-mustafād). Finally the acquired intellect becomes the Active Intellect (al-‘aql al-fa‘‘āl) according to the reciprocal actions of matter (al-māddah) and form (ṣūrah); he should be in union with the Active Intellect.

Then, al-Fārābī describes the First Cause (al-sabab al-awwal) emanating his mind, by way of revelation (wahy), through the Active Intellect. In an order opposite to the first, the revelation descends through the medium of the acquired intellect to the passive intellect; in the end he can realise what the First Cause emanates.28

As has been seen in chapter one of the thesis, al-Fārābī’s doctrine of emanation of the intellects from God is not exactly that of Aristotle, but that of the neo-Platonists.29 The main frame work of al-Fārābī’s principle of the prophetic revelation is the doctrine of

intellectual cognition. This opinion is obscurely mooted by Aristotle in his work of *De Anima*, but is developed later by his commentators, especially by Alexander of Aphrodisias. After that he should be a person, who may anticipate what is to come and may know the specific things through the imaginative faculty (al-quwā al-mutakhayyilah) which is an innate nature with the rational faculty above mentioned.

This person should, according to al-Farābī, be the highest ruler, who has achieved his perfection, who has been actual intellect, and who has been intellectualised, and this person should be a wise man (ḥakīm), philosopher (faylasūf), and prophet (nabiyy). The same summarised description also appears in *Kitāb al-Millah.*

In *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, we find a description of the prerequisite natural dispositions (khaslah) that the highest ruler must possess. Al-Farābī numbers these qualifications as twelve and describes them as follows:

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30 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De Anima*; 84.


32 Each title of the twelve qualifications is named according to the meaning described in each one.

33 *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, pp. 59-60.
1) A sound body; the highest ruler ought to be a person born with healthy, strong limbs and organs, which function normally and in harmony with all of the other faculties.

2) A good comprehensive faculty; he ought to excel in comprehending and perceiving whatever occurs in his mind. He has a clear idea of any abnormal situation which people may face.

3) A good memory; he ought to memorise everything that he happens to know, see, hear, and understand.

4) A good reasoning power; he ought to be perspicuous and follow through a train of reasoning whenever he meets problems.

5) A good power of expression (al-‘ibār); he ought to express what he is going to say fully and to his satisfaction.

6) A scholarly talent; he ought to like to learn and he should be able to acquire knowledge without any agony.

7) Moral truth (al-ṣidq); he ought to like to give thought to truth and truthful people, while, on the other hand, he ought to blame untruth and untruthful people.

8) Asceticism; he ought to born as a ascetic with
no desire to eat rich foods, enjoy luxuries, or physical pleasures.

9) High moral dignity; he ought to value honour, and should be generous and broad-minded.

10) No desire of wealth; he ought not to be blinded by money (al-dirham and al-dinar), and require only a little amount.

11) Justice (al-‘adl); he ought to defend and maintain what is right. He should not oppress people unjustly and unfairly. He should lead them to overthrow injustice, and he should prevent them from acting in a wicked way.

12) Bold decision-making and good power of execution, i.e. administrative ability; he ought to be strong in making up his mind, and carrying forward his scheme. He should not be a person who betrays any weak point or any fear.

Al-Farabi’s following classification of the non-virtuous states should be based on these twelve qualifications for the first ruler. In other words, any non-virtuous state happens when the ruler (or people) excessively pursue one, two or more of the twelve qualifications separately or in combination with each other, and when a ruler who is born with or has acquired contrary dispositions governs people, and so on.34
These twelve qualifications of the highest ruler seem to be a psychosomatic system involving the bodily and spiritual faculties. The spiritual faculties can be again subdivided into two categories: intellectual faculties, and ethical faculties. As to his qualifications, the first, 'sound body,' seems to be the physical or bodily faculty. The second to the sixth are related to the intellectual faculties. The others are looked upon as ethical faculties. It is already known that these qualifications seem to be taken from Plato's description of the philosopher-king. The exception to this is the ability to be eloquent (the fifth qualification) which Plato never mentions because he did not allow poetry and poets in his ideal city.

Only a person who has the above mentioned twelve qualifications can reach the next grade. That is to say, only the above type of person may become the highest ruler who should meet the basic four conditions (sharā'it). Firstly, he holds the highest human rank. Secondly, he has attained happiness (sa'āda) perfectly.

34 See chapter four '4.1. A Basic Frame for Classification of the Non-virtuous State.'

35 Republic V;471c-VI;487.

36 Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.59.
Thirdly, his soul and the active intellect (al-‘aql al-‘al) are combined into one. Finally, he should know every action and how to obtain happiness.

Al-Farabī then adds three more obligatory conditions to the four conditions above that the highest ruler must fulfil.37 The first condition is that the highest ruler should be a good and imaginative rhetorician. The second is that he should lead people on to the right path to final happiness. Lastly, he should be competent at warfare (al-ḥarb).

Unlike the detailed description he provides of the highest ruler in Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, he briefly indicates only two points in Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah; firstly the highest ruler should understand every thing that he may meet, secondly he should lead others to the final happiness.38

In Fuṣūl al-Madanī, he refers to the attainment of happiness as the first obligation of the highest ruler.39 In this work he uses the term 'true king' (al-malik ‘alā al-ḥaqīqah) to refer to the 'highest ruler.' And he summarises six conditions that the true king must satisfy.

37 Ibid.
38 Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p. 49.
39 Fuṣūl al-Madanī, p. 27.
The true king should have wisdom (al-ḥikmah), complete practical wisdom (al-taʿaqqul al-tāmm), persuasive power, imaginative power, ability to wage holy war (al-jihād), and a sound body for the task of war. It is natural that both descriptions in *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah* and *Fuṣūl al-Madani* may generally fall under the first category.

The three obligatory conditions, indicated in *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, may be considered in relation to the qualifications of the highest ruler. The first refers to these intellectual faculties which are the preliminary qualifications by which the highest ruler has imagination and reasoning power and can then govern people by law, which he adds to the concept of the second ruler. The second refers to ethical qualifications which may be regarded as the obligations that the highest ruler should lead people into the right path, and then construct a just society, the virtuous state, where they can attain the final happiness. The third refers to the bodily qualifications which are connected to the ability to conduct war.\(^{40}\)

Next in *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, al-Fārābī advances that this person, who fulfils the twelve natural qualifications, the four fundamental conditions, and the

\(^{40}\) *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, p. 59.
three obligatory conditions altogether, should be the only ruler, Imam (al-Imām), the highest ruler of the virtuous state, and the ruler of the inhabited world (al-ma‘mūrah). He seems to combine all four characters in one person at this moment, namely, the virtuous ruler of the virtuous state. Even though he does not mention Imam exactly as the highest Imam like the highest ruler, he may be understood as the highest Imam or the virtuous Imam who seems not to be actual Imam. And the same may be said of the ruler of the inhabited world. As its corollary, it follows that al-Fārābī tries to form the virtuous ruler of al-Madinah al-Fādilah (the virtuous state), as one who should have the characteristics of Imam as well. This fact can be easily reasoned from his description of the obligatory conditions of the highest ruler above, 'much imagination which enables religious activity.'

In combination with his first formulation of the highest ruler, as aforementioned in Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, the highest ruler comes to be the virtuous ruler who should be identified with the wise, philosopher,

\[\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{41} Ibid.} \]
\[\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{42} See next section '3.2.2 The Actual Virtuous Ruler' for the qualifications of the philosopher.}\]
and Imam. Even though al-Farābī uses the word, 'prophet' (nabī) in his formulation of the highest ruler, it might not refer to the Prophet Muhammad, but the prophetic faculty which an Imam should have. He does not mention his exact conception of prophet anywhere. Also, it is unlikely that in formulating the virtuous ruler he supports the premise that the virtuous ruler should be equal to Muhammad and start from only him. Al-Farābī would rather form the virtuous ruler as one who may be the actual virtuous ruler, reflected by the real situation at that time. It can also be proved by his main use of the word 'Imam.'

From the previous points, it appears that the highest ruler becomes the philosopher, Imam, the true king as the ideal virtuous ruler. Consequently, it may be an appropriate measure that al-Farābī's virtuous ruler is composed of two separate concepts: the ideal virtuous ruler and the actual virtuous ruler in whom the actual situation is reflected.

3.2.2. THE ACTUAL VIRTUOUS RULER

At the end of his description of the character of the highest ruler, especially in Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, al-Farābī recognises that such a person is rare at the present time: "It is rare that there is a person who has
the complete qualifications."\(^{43}\) This makes it clear that al-Fārābī regards the idea of the highest ruler as the ideal virtuous ruler, and that his idea of the second ruler or next ruler is the actual virtuous ruler at that time. Regardless of the fact that at birth he may have been endowed with the potentiality of attaining the twelve qualifications, says al-Fārābī, after growing up he may be a ruler if he needs the six aforementioned conditions or the five exclusive of the imaginative faculty.

In this context, al-Fārābī introduces the important concepts of the Sharia (al-sharā'i') and the customary laws (al-sunnah). Thus his recognition of the rarity of the highest ruler, that is the ideal virtuous ruler, may have made him stress the importance of the original law. In *Kitāb al-Millah*, al-Fārābī admits that the successor or the actual virtuous ruler can be followed in accordance with the customary laws, even though he, unlike the ideal virtuous ruler, has no philosophy.\(^{44}\) In *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, a clearer definition of the principle of the law emerges. He states, "The ruler who reigns over the state by the statute of law which originated from the past Imams will be the king of law (malik al-sunnah)."\(^{45}\)

\(^{43}\) The same may be said of Plato in *Republic* [VI;491a8].

\(^{44}\) *Kitāb al-Millah*, p.18.

\(^{45}\) *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, pp.50-51.
Judging from his use of the terms king or monarch, his description of the law in this work is closer to the actual ruler than the previous formulation of the ideal virtuous ruler as originator of laws. This also clearly appears in Kitāb al-Millah. Al-Fārābī says;

... there are two kinds of virtuous rule. ... The former is that which institutes virtuous behaviours and habits for the first time in a city or community, ... This type of rule is undertaken by the first ruler. The ruler who succeeds the first follows the example of the first ruler ... is called ruler or king of law (malik al-sunnah).46

Al-Fārābī's words in Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, "If there exists such a man in the virtuous state, who fulfills the six aforementioned conditions after reaching maturity ..." may be inconsistent with his words in the same work, "This state can only be reached by a man in whom the twelve natural dispositions are found together ..."47 His following definition of the second ruler also shows a similar inconsistency. He says, "The second ruler, who is the successor of the highest ruler, will be someone in whom those twelve qualifications (tilka al-

46 Kitāb al-Millah, p.14b,18.
47 Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, pp.59-60.
sharā'īti) are found together from the time of his birth and his early youth and who will after reaching his maturity, be designated by the following conditions (sharā'īti)."

Despite this unresolved inconsistency, al-Fārābī, then describes the six conditions of the second ruler, which are different from the aforementioned four conditions and three obligatory conditions, which include the concept of law:

First, the second ruler ought to be wise (hakīm). Second, he ought to comprehend and memorise the laws (al-sharā'ī) and the customary laws (al-sunnah) with which the highest ruler has reigned over the state. Third, he ought to have excellent power for making a new law when it happens that no laws are available for a certain situation. Fourth, he ought to cope with new situations. Fifth, he ought to lead people by his word (al-qawl) to abide by the law. Sixth, he ought to have a sound body to serve and rule the military art (al-ḥarb).

Also in *Fuṣūl al-Madānī*, al-Fārābī explains six conditions for the second ruler as lawful king:

First, the second ruler ought to know the past laws

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49 *Fuṣūl al-Madānī*, p.54.
(al-sharā'ī) and customs (al-sunnah) which originate from the first Imams. Second, he ought to have excellent perception of places and situations. Third, he ought to create what is not laid down in past customs. Fourth, he ought to have a good opinion and practical wisdom (al-taʿaqqul). Fifth, he ought to have good rhetoric (khitabah), persuasion ('iqnā'), and imagination (takhayyul). Sixth, he ought to have power of performing holy war (al-jihād).

These two sets of six conditions in *Fuṣūl al-Madani* and in *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah* are one and the same except for differences in order and the forms of description. But in *Fuṣūl al-Madani* his use of al-jihād and king reminds us that this work is more closely related to a description of the actual Islamic world.

In *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*, the actual virtuous ruler is described uniquely as 'philosopher' instead of 'ruler.' It may be divided into fourteen items as follows:50

(1) The philosopher ought to be born with theoretical knowledge (al-ʿulūm al-nazariyyah), that is he meets the conditions explained by Plato in *Republic*.

(2) He ought to have excellent comprehension and

50 *Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah*, p.44.
perception of the essentials.

(3) He ought to have a good memory.

(4) He ought to endure hardship of study.

(5) He ought to respect truthfulness (al-ṣidq) and people who tell the truth and are just (al-‘adl).

(6) He ought not to be greedy for desire.

(7) He ought not to indulge in excessive eating or drinking.

(8) He ought to despise by nature any appetite for money; al-dirham and al-dinar.

(9) He ought to have grace and evade humiliation.

(10) He ought to decide to do things by the right thing.

(11) He ought to follow laws (nawāmis) and customs (‘ādāt).

(12) He ought to have confidence in the teachings of religion (āra’ al-millah).

(13) He ought to give justice (al-‘adl).

(14) He ought to have virtues (fāḍā’il) which are generally recognised from his childhood.

In these fourteen qualifications, al-Farābī adds the extra concepts of 'the teachings of the religion' (āra’ al-millah), 'virtues' (fāḍā’il), and 'laws' (nawāmis) and 'customs' (‘ādāt), different from those in Al-Madinah al-Fadilah. Even though he does not mention the words
'sound body' here, he uses virtues, which may include the virtue of warfare as one of the practical virtues or arts, in its place. This seems to be more related to the actual virtuous ruler and to be expressed more directly than his first description of the ideal virtuous ruler.

Consequently, al-Farabi's idea of the second kind of ruler may be understood as successor to the first virtuous ruler. Thus, his first indications of the highest ruler as the virtuous ruler might be the ideal virtuous ruler as the first origin, theoretically quite like the system of Heaven in his metaphysics. His second ruler is similar to the actual virtuous ruler, or the model ruler, who might have the aforementioned qualifications. It may be regarded as appropriate that his following descriptions of rulership, which need not belong to only a virtuous person and which are classified as rulership which is the opposite of, or has diverged from, virtuous rulership, are closely related to practical rulership.

3.3. FORMATION OF AL-MADĪNAH AL-FĀDILAH (THE VIRTUOUS STATE).

'State' denotes a term in political science referring to political groups that enjoy legal sovereignty or form a regime. A state in the modern sense implies a population occupying a definite territory, subject to a
government which other states recognise as having some legal status.51 The state is often distinguished from society; Wilson and Kolb declare that the state is a part of society, not the whole of it. The same concept is promoted by Plato and Aristotle. Plato tries to attain in Republic, by the creation of a specialised class of governors detached from society by a system of communism, an attempt at once to differentiate 'state' from 'society' and to discover an organ for the realisation of the common good. In opposition to Plato, Aristotle suggests the conception of neutral and dispassionate law as the true sovereign of the state.52

Al-Fārābī describes the state as the place where political activities can be performed. His first state is a city-state where there are rulers and citizens and where each one tries to cooperate in order to achieve their own happiness. In accordance with the possibilities of realising happiness, al-Fārābī's state can be divided into various types.53 Among various states,


53 Refer to chapter four '4 Types of the Non-virtuous State.'
the virtuous state is the best place where order is well organised and where any member can attain happiness.

In order to form the virtuous state, there are some conditions. First, the highest ruler who has the twelve natural qualifications, the four fundamental conditions, and the three obligatory conditions,\textsuperscript{54} should exist. Secondly, the people or citizens of the state ought to follow the order of the first ruler. Both parties ought to perform their obligations, and to do so they should cooperate. They have to fulfil their functions which were acquired by nature or by education. Therefore, the virtuous state includes diverse ranks of people from the philosopher, or the first ruler, to the lowest, or the serving class.

In al-Farabî's analysis of the ranks of the virtuous state, he maintains that there are 'the weeds' (nawâbit) who seem to be opposite to the philosophers. The weeds are not included in the domain of classification of the ranks of the virtuous state as explicitly belonging to the virtuous city. It is undeniable that al-Farabî's fairly large description of the weeds in the virtuous state may well give rise to some confusion.

This point may occasion an inconsistency in his

\textsuperscript{54} The detailed discussion has already been seen in '3.2.1. The Ideal Virtuous Ruler' of this chapter.
scheme of the ideal virtuous state where the virtuous ruler and citizens should reside. Although it is true that a logical problem occurs in forming the virtuous state, the fact also reminds us of his concerns about the actual state instead of the ideal virtuous state.

As has been seen, al-Fārābī's great paradigmatic scheme in forming 'Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah (the virtuous state)' is relevant to his concerns about the actual state. Therefore, his al-Madīnah al-Fādilah is not likely to be a Utopia or Ideal State which cannot be realised practically. Nor is al-Madīnah al-Fādilah the Heavenly city, which St. Augustine presented in a systematic way in his City of God.

Although al-Fārābī admits the doctrines of dualistic happiness in this life and happiness in the after life, he does not give a full description of this anywhere in his political works, but only gives a brief allusion to this in the course of his theoretical analysis. He also seems to be more concerned with the idea that only the actual virtuous ruler could exist in the actual world. That is to say, al-Fārābī presents and formulates the actual virtuous ruler or rulership throughout his four works, Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, Fuṣūl al-Madani, and Tahṣīl al-Saʿādah. The ruler may, according to him, be one who has the obligations of promoting and maintaining a thoroughly law-abiding spirit. His diagram of the virtuous ruler
might well comprise not only the meaning of the virtuous ruler himself as the model, but also the lineal descent of virtuous rulership, including the legitimacy of law.

Thus al-Fārābī admits that the actual virtuous rulership may belong to one person or more, or a party or more. That is to say, he seems, in the end, to concede the possibility of more political systems. In *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, *Fuṣūl al-Madani*, and *Taḥṣīl al-Saʿādah*, al-Fārābī briefly describes the possible authorities. In *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, he stresses the wisdom (ḥakīm) which a person has to perceive first of all. In the case that there is no one person who possesses completely all the aforementioned qualifications, it is possible to have a political system where one person is wise and another meets the other qualifications, like a biarchy. Secondly if the first system is impossible, several people might each have one of the necessary qualifications, and they then could constitute a kind of representative system together, like an oligarchy. In *Taḥṣīl al-Saʿādah*, al-Fārābī says that a party (ṭāʿifah) can take the place of the person who has all the qualifications. This is loosely connected with his explanation in *Al-

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55 *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, p.61.

56 *Taḥṣīl al-Saʿādah*, p.48.
**Madinah al-Fādilah.** In *Fuṣūl al-Madānî*, it is the same as above.\(^{57}\)

Al-Fārābī's theory of 'state' is not confined to the concept of the city-state. He consistently uses the word ummah (community) and the inhabited world (*al-ma‘ūrah*) with *al-madinah* (the city-state). Indeed, he does not actually use the word *al-madinah* while examining the state in full. It is, however, clear that he investigates the ummah and the inhabited world in the course of examining society in general and develops the concept of these two words.\(^{58}\) This tendency probably results from Al-Fārābī's logical style in stating his theory of politics as in other fields. Nevertheless, it is quite proper that his expanded concept of state develops into a theory of international relations which deals with actual states.

In *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, Al-Fārābī explains that there may be a number of virtuous communities and virtuous cities, for it is possible to replicate these things for each group (religious community) and each community, using matters that are different in each case,

\(^{57}\) *Fuṣūl al-Madānî*, p.54.

\(^{58}\) Refer to the full discussion in chapter two '2.2.3. Various Types of City, Community and the World.'
due to men, either by nature or by habit, being unable to comprehend and form these things, such as the principles of the existents, their order, and so on.⁵⁹

Al-Fārābī adds that because religion is but the impressions of these things or the impressions of their images, impressed on the soul, there may be a number of virtuous communities and virtuous cities whose religions are different, even though they all pursue the very same kind of happiness. In this context, it is necessary to examine briefly al-Fārābī's doctrine of religion. He does not differentiate religion (al-millah) from faith (din); he says, "the terms millah and din are nearly synonymous, so in general both mean 'religion'." The important thing is that al-Fārābī apprehends and permits there to be other virtuous religions which may be common to a city for it to achieve supreme happiness.⁶⁰ It seems that al-Fārābī admits the possibility of various types of virtuous cities or communities and thereby recognises the possibility of other virtuous religions. Thus he has a pragmatic approach in his world view and his political thought is not bounded by narrow nationalist or religious prejudices but is truly a world vision.

⁵⁹ Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.56.
⁶⁰ Kitāb al-Millah, p.27.
CHAPTER FOUR

TYPES OF THE NON-VIRTUOUS STATE

4.1. A BASIC FRAME FOR CLASSIFICATION OF THE NON-VIRTUOUS STATE.

It is plausible that al-Fārābī's classification of the city-state (hereafter, 'state'), which is in opposition to the virtuous state, results from a compromise between his dualistic stance on virtue and vice and the actual states. In other words, from his simple phrase, "the virtuous state is in opposition to such as the ignorant state, the wicked state, ..." This comes within the purview of his usual descriptive methodology of giving a contrary conception after the first conception. However, it seems to be inappropriate to regard al-Fārābī's analysis of the non-virtuous state merely as the opposite to the virtuous state. Rather it might be better be understood that by keeping the actual world in his mind, he tries to explain the non-virtuous state.

In dealing with the terms used by al-Fārābī to des-

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1 Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, p.61.
cribe the non-virtuous state, scholars have given various translations. Professor Erwin I J Rosenthal tries to make 'fāsiqah' correspond with 'vicious,' 'mubaddalah' with 'transformed,' 'jāhiliyah' with 'ignorant,' 'darūriyyah' with 'necessity,' 'nadhālah' with 'vile,' 'khissah' with 'base,' 'kāramah' with 'timocracy,' 'taghallub' with 'tyranny,' 'jāmā'īyyah' with 'democracy,' and 'dāllah' with 'erring.' Professor Muh-sin Mahdi's views largely coincide with Rosenthal's, although Mahdi prefers some different terms such as; 'immoral' for 'mubaddalah' and 'bare' for 'khissah.' The choice of each corresponding word for Arabic terms in this thesis may generally accord with those scholars' methods of classification. However, greater stress has been given to selecting a literal translation of each Arabic term of the non-virtuous in an attempt to understand the original implications of al-Fārábī in describing these states by such words.

This effort is preferred to avoid using exact Aristotelian or Platonic terminologies in case al-Fārábī's classification of non-virtuous states may have some different meaning. Even though they are, in general, derived from Plato², they are arranged systematically in accordance with the different ends which they

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² Republic VIII and IX.
aim at and they are more numerous.\(^3\)

In this context, the following translations are adopted for each non-virtuous state; 1) fāsiqah: wicked 2) mubaddalah: changed 3) jähiliyah: ignorant 4) darūriyyah: subsistent 5) nadhālah: mean 6) khissah: depraved 7) karāmah: honourable 8) taghallub: dominating 9) jama‘iyyah: democratic 10) dällah: erroneous.

E I J Rosenthal believes that al-Fārābī introduced the complicated and varied non-virtuous states deliberately, in order to assimilate Plato’s imperfect [non-virtuous] states to Islamic notions.\(^4\) He also believes that because al-Fārābī uses the terms he found in the Arabic version of the Alexandrian summary of the Republic, made by Galen, without showing much interest in the constitutions from the political point of view which we meet in al-Fārābī with greater variety and differentiation than in Plato.\(^5\)

It is applaudable that scholars have tried so hard to find suitable corresponding words for each Arabic term


and that each has suggested their own preferences. It is, however, regrettable that they all fail to build a whole modelic figure of al-Fārābī's classification of non-virtuous states. Erwin I J Rosenthal among them indicates that al-Fārābī divides this collective state into an association of states according to the aim pursued. It seems that they fail to comprehend that the non-virtuous states and the virtuous state are included as one system. Instead, they point out nothing further than the diversity and complication of the classification of the states and view the characteristic of each one separately.

6 Ibid., p.135.
Table 3. Al-Fārābī's Classification of Society II

| SOCIETY |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Politically Imperfect (ghayr al-kamilah) | Politically Perfect (al-kamilah) |
| Household (al-menzil) | The Inhabited World (al-ma'marah) |
| Street (al-sikkah) | |
| Quarter (al-maballah) | |
| Village (al-qaryah) | |
| City (al-madinah) | |
| Community (al-ummah) | |

The first group includes the virtuous states, and the second group includes the non-virtuous states, although he himself seems to have failed to build the exact formula of the rational classification among the states. The first group includes the virtuous states, the second group includes the non-virtuous states, and the third group includes the changed state from among Al-Fārābī’s states. Each state will be fully described in the next section of this chapter.

| Virtuous City (al-madinah al-fadilah) [Realisation of Happiness] | Ideal Virtuous City |
| City with Recognition of Happiness |
| Non-virtuous City [Failure of Realisation of Happiness] |
| City without Recognition of Happiness |
| Wicked City (ftsisigh) |
| Changed City (mubaddalah) |
| Ignorant City (Jahiliyyah) |
| Subsistent City (darriyyah) |
| Mean City (neddahah) |
| Depraved City (khissah) |
| Honourable City (karsah) |
| Dominating City (taghallub) |
| Democratic City (jam’tiyah) |
| Erroneous City (dillah) |

| One Ruler City (Monarchy) |
| Two Ruler City (Biarchy) |
| Multi-Ruler City |
| Mass-Ruler City |
It is feasible to try to arrange al-Farabi's diverse non-virtuous states, although he himself seems to have failed to build the exact formula of the functional relationship among the states. As al-Farabi differentiates the virtuous state from the non-virtuous state according to whether happiness is realised or not, so he generally divides the states into those where happiness is recognised and the other states where happiness is not recognised by the members of the states.

The first group includes the wicked state and the changed state from among al-Farabi's non-virtuous states. The other group can be divided two types of states: first the ignorant state; and second the erroneous state. Al-Farabi then subdivides the ignorant states into six: 1) the subsistent state; 2) the mean state; 3) the depraved state; 4) the honourable; 5) the dominating state; and 6) the democratic state. Thus, from this system, the whole classification model of al-Farabi's society, including subdivisions of city, can be proposed as in table 3, by being combined with the first general classification of society.

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7 Each state will be fully discussed in related section of this chapter.

8 See table 2.
4.2. STATE WITH RECOGNITION OF HAPPINESS.

Under this category, we can place al-Fārābī's two non-virtuous states, the wicked state (al-madinah al-fāsiqah) and the changed state (al-madinah al-mubaddalah). These states are at any rate associated with the virtuous state, even if only heretically. Although they are prepared to recognise the first premise, 'what the happiness is,' they do not practice it at all. Finally, according to al-Fārābī, they will be destroyed.

4.2.1. THE WICKED STATE (AL-MADĪNAH AL-FĀSIQAH).

Al-Fārābī slightly changes his approach in describing the wicked state, al-madinah al-fāsiqah; a term used identically in both Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah and Al-Madinah al-Fādilah. He depicts the characteristics of the wicked state by way of suggesting the common points and the differences between other ignorant states and the wicked state.

In his analysis of the wicked state, he indicates that such a state is one whose people at one time believed in and acknowledged the principles of reality.

and they believed in what true happiness (al-saʿādah) is;¹⁰ they knew God (Allāh), the First Being, the second order, the Active Intellect (al-ʿaql al- faʿ‘āl), and the ideas of the people of the virtuous state.¹¹ However, they did not proceed to live according to any of those things, rather, they desired and followed the purposes and aims of the people of the ignorant states, such as honour and domination.¹²

In Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, al-Fārābī holds that in accordance with his understanding of the destiny of the soul, the people of the wicked state will finally perish without attaining happiness,¹³ because the bad disposition which they possess in their souls cannot be separated, even after their deaths, resulting in the endless torture of their souls. In other words they separate themselves by their evil inclinations from the means by which they can get to true Happiness. Their bad disposition results in damage (ʿadhan) and then misfortune (al-shaqāʿ) in the end. Clearly, if such a kind of state existed, it would destroy itself immediately and al-Fārābī gives no examples of such a state.

¹⁰ Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.73.
¹¹ Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.63.
¹² Ibid.; Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.73.
¹³ Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, pp.67-68.
It has been claimed that al-fārābī's al-fāsigah is a legal term, supposedly used by Wāsīl b. ʿAṭāʾ, the founder of Muʿtazilism, to designate the perpetrators of actions contrary to the religious laws. In describing the wicked state, Erwin I J Rosenthal includes the Arabic sāqīta (fallen) in this state. He says, "In the Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, sāqīta is in one passage used for fāsīqa." This suggestion is not appropriate judging by al-Fārābī's original text.

Al-Fārābī locates al-sāqīta in the domain of the ignorant states as the parallel to al-khīssaḥ; "...mudun al-jāhiliyyah," (says al-Fārābī) "minhā al-ṣarūriyyah wa minhā al-nadḥalah wa minhā al-sāqītah wa minhā al-karrāmiyyah wa minhā al-jamā'iyyah." Other scholars do not attach any importance to this problem, rather, they naturally comprehend al-sāqītah as al-fāsīqah, among the ignorant states. Walzer suggests that this wicked state of al-Fārābī reminds us that the Shīʿī leader would have applied his verdict to all the orthodox caliphs and all the Umayyads and Abbasids, pos-


16 Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.80.
sibly without discrimination.17

4.2.2. THE CHANGED STATE (AL-MADĪNAH AL-MUBADDALAH).

Only in Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, does al-Farābī mention the changed state (al-madinah al-mubaddalah).18 His description of this seems to suggest a kind of wicked state, where the people have changed and now hold different views, though they were once like the people of the virtuous state.

It is possible, perhaps, that this kind of state is not actually determined in its desire to ignore true happiness, but has changed as a result of weakness. Al-Farābī does not make this clear, but he definitely appears to regard it as in some way different from the wicked state.

It is interesting to note that the meaning of the wicked state could be applicable to Plato's concept and Islamic terminology as well. According to Richard Walzer, the view of the wicked state would tally with the account of the fall of the perfect state in Plato, Republic19 and its transformation into several different

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18 Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, p.61,63,68.

19 VII;553d.

174
inferior states.\textsuperscript{20}

In addition, it appears that al-mubaddalah refers to communities, such as the Jews, who are said to have falsified the prophetic books.\textsuperscript{21}

4.3. STATE WITHOUT RECOGNITION OF HAPPINESS.

A state without recognition of happiness can be divided into two states: the ignorant state (al-madinah al-jähiliyyah); and the erroneous state (al-madinah al-dállah). The ignorant state is further subdivided into six states: the subsistent state (al-madinah al-darüriyyah); the mean state (madínat al-nadhálah); the depraved state (madínat al-khissah); the honourable state (madínat al-karámah); and the dominating state (madínat al-taghallub).

Al-Fārābī's account of international relations appears within this category of non-virtuous states. From this we can assume that he would like to consider the actual states as non-virtuous states which belong to the ignorant and erroneous state. In other words, he is undecided about the status of and relations among the actual states in his time.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.

4.3.1. THE IGNORANT STATE (AL-MADINAH AL-JAHILIYYAH).

Al-Farābī's choice of the Arabic terms, al-madinah al-jāhiliyyah, which may be translated as "the ignorant state," calls to mind the usage of the same term al-jāhiliyyah to pre-Islamic times. This suggests that he intends to indicate that this state is a perverted form, even though he is not referring to the real form of a state in pre-Islamic times. Indeed, the same term is used in his three main works, Al-Siyāsa al-Madaniyyah, Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, and Fusūl al-Madani, and comments with these words appear in both Iḥṣā' al-ʿUlūm and Kitāb al-Millah.22

In Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, al-Farābī categorised the ignorant state into forms, related more or less to the present types of state in the world.23 These were, the subsistent state, the mean state, the depraved state, the honourable state, the dominating state, and the democratic state.24 Al-Farābī utilises the aims of the


23 Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.58.

people in the ignorant states in *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*\(^5\) as one of the methods of classifying these states. Their purposes are also connected with their souls and bodies, as in the Greek and the Socratic or Platonic psychological ladder of souls for the states.\(^6\) In *Fuṣūl al-Madani*, al-Fārābī says:

> The circumstances for the policies of ignorant states and their relationship to souls are the same as the circumstances for seasons and their relationship to bodies. Just as some bodies are good in disposition and condition in autumn and some in summer, whilst some others are good in winter and the others in spring, so are the circumstances of souls related to the states.\(^7\)

In *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, al-Fārābī refers frequently to the ancients (i.e. the ancient philosophers) to describe the characteristics of the non-virtuous states.\(^8\) His purpose here would seem to be that he was trying to describe the status of the states as prototypes before actual states were formed.

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\(^5\) *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, p.62.


\(^7\) *Fuṣūl al-Madani*, p.87.

\(^8\) *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, pp.71-80.
According to al-Farabi, the first definition of the people of the ignorant states are those who do not know, understand or believe in true happiness. Instead, they think only of bodily health, riches, enjoyment of pleasure, freedom to follow their own desire, honour, or combinations of these factors.\(^{29}\) In other words, they consider misery as a defect of the body, poverty, no enjoyment of pleasure, no freedom to follow their own desire, or failing to be honoured as imperfections. The souls of the people of ignorant states, therefore, will be finally ruined as a result of being blended with those elements which belong to Man and animal, without being separated from the physical elements after their deaths. Even during their lives, their actions produce bad dispositions of the soul; just as writing which includes badly formed characters will be distorted.\(^{30}\)

In his analysis of the way in which states were formed, al-Farabi refers to the view of the ancient philosophers that states came about as a result of two motivating forces: people grouped together to work together on the basis of peaceful cooperation; people were brought together to form a state through one group

\(^{29}\) Ibid., p.61.

\(^{30}\) Ibid., p.67.
dominating others by force. Thus, either peace or war could bring the state into existence. This view of the origin of the state served for all types of state, including the ignorant state. In this analysis, we see some similarities with the rise and fall of states in ancient and modern international affairs. So, perhaps, this view was formed as a result of observations made by philosophers of existing and previous international relationships.

Al-Fārābī advances these views of the ancient philosophers in great detail, without showing any opposition to them. This would seem to indicate his approval of these views, because if he had wanted to oppose them, there is no justifiable reason for his failure to express that opposition.

Unlike in Al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah, al-Fārābī deals with the six types of ignorant states systematically in Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah. He is concerned mainly with the people of the states, with the ideal man or the ideal ruler, and the duties of those people, as well the duties of the ruler.

31 Ibid., pp. 79-80.

32 The full discussion of this view will follow in Chapter Five "Views of International Relations."
4.3.1.1. THE SUBSISTENT STATE (AL-MADĪNAH AL-DARŪRIYYAH).

Al-Fārābī categorises the subsistent state as the first type of all the ignorant states. He makes use of exactly the same Arabic term, al-madīnah al-darūriyyah, in both Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah and Al-Madīnah al-Fādīlah.33

It is generally acknowledged that the origin of al-Fārābī's madīnat al-taghallub can be traced from Plato's anankaiotate polis.34 Plato does not, however, include the indispensibility of the minimum state in the category of state classification, while al-Fārābī locates this state too under his frame-work of state classification.

The people of the subsistent state, says al-Fārābī, do their utmost to achieve the bare necessities and requisites for the sustenance of their body, by means of farming, shooting, pasturage, robbery (al-lusūsiyyah), and so on. They regard the virtuous man as he who possesses the optimum skill, management, and competence in gaining the bare necessities and requisites.

Al-Fārābī also states the duties of the virtuous man of the subsistent state: he ought to lead the people of

33 Ibid., p.62,80.; Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.58.
34 Republic II;369d.
the subsistent state to acquire the bare necessities and requisites; after that, he ought to teach the people so that they may preserve those things which they have acquired for themselves for ever; he ought to supply the people with these things, even from his own properties.\textsuperscript{35} It could be argued that al-Fārābī regards this first type of ignorant state as the basic and fundamental type of state in terms of the characteristics of all states, and not as a prerequisite step in order to be changed into the other types of the ignorant states, or even transformed into a different kind of state altogether. In other words, we should not presume that his idea of the subsistent state indicates only a starting point on the evolution to the other ignorant states, since the subsistent state has only its own aims as mentioned above, and the other type of ignorant states have different characteristics.

According to al-Fārābī, this subsistent state can only be subdivided according to the means by which it or its people attain their own aims. He does suggest that in the subsistent state there might be the use of subjugation or domination, similar to that of the dominating

state (madīnat al-taghallub). However, this would not mean that the state of madīnat al-taghallub is attained while it was still at the level of subsistent living. In addition, it may also use the means which are associated with the democratic state (al-madinah al-jamā‘iyyah), but similarly, as long as it is still at the level of subsistence it will remain al-madinah al-ḍarūriyyah.

4.3.1.2. THE MEAN STATE (MADĪNAT AL-NADHĀLAH).

Al-Fārābī uses the exact same Arabic term, madīnat al-nadhāla in both Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah and Al-Madinah al-Fādilah to describe 'the mean state.' The mean state as al-Fārābī describes it, can easily be identified with the Socratic Oligarchy, one of the five states or regimes defined by Plato. The people of the mean state, says al-Fārābī, support each other in two ways: 1) to obtain wealth, resources, and properties, and to have an abundant possession of the bare necessities, or their equivalents in terms of money; 2) to accumulate those things for themselves excessively, with

37 Ibid., p.72.
38 Republic VIII;550c.
the sole reason of desiring a level of possession which goes beyond the basic instinct of acquisition. In their excess love of wealth and riches, they tend to hoard them, using little beyond the minimum necessities for physical sustenance.

The people of the mean state, therefore, consider that the ideal man should be the wealthiest and the most adept at earning wealth and riches. Thus, their virtuous ruler is regarded as the one who can govern the people, and lead them to possess more wealth and to keep them wealthy at all times. They are concerned with such tasks as farming, shooting, pasturage, and robbery, which originated in the subsistent state as ways of obtaining the bare necessities.\(^3\) Then, like the subsistent state, the mean state may make use of the same means as taghal-lub and jamā‘iyyah to acquire wealth, but they still remain within their definition of the mean state.\(^4\)

Only once in *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, does al-Farābī use the Arabic word of madīnat al-yasār meaning the wealthy state,\(^5\) whereas in other places in *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah* and *Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah* the word

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\(^4\) Cf. chapter four '4.3.1.1. The Subsistent State.'

\(^5\) *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, p.68.
used is always madīnat al-nadhālah. However, it would seem that al-Fārābī's conception of the mean state approximates to that of the plutocracy, and that of the ruler of the mean state to that of the plutocrat, if we are to deduce anything from his use of the Arabic word, madīnat al-yasār, and if we disregard the strict significance of the plutocracy which means the political system where the state is ruled by only its wealthiest people, and of the plutocrat which means the one who is powerful only because he is rich.

4.3.1.3. THE DEPRAVED STATE (MADĪNAT AL-KHISSAH).

The characteristics of the Depraved State include epicureanism and hedonism. Al-Fārābī says that the people of the depraved state intend to cooperate to enjoy fully sensual pleasure or the imagining of that pleasure. They seek the pleasure of foods, drink, sex, and excessive expenditure, and so on. In order to understand al-Fārābī's conception of this form of state, it is helpful to refer to Al-Madinah al-Fādilah where he uses the term sāqīṭah alongside khissah. This seems to indi-

42 Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.62,80.
43 Ibid., p.80.
44 Ibid., p.62.
cate that there is an element of depravation involved in this state and the implication is that it is of a fallen nature. However in *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, he only uses the term *khissah*.45

This state is considered by the people of that ignorant state as the happiest and best state, because they are able to obtain the goals of the state after having acquired the bare necessities and wealth. Only then, will the one who possesses much wealth be able to employ it solely for enjoyment and pleasure. According to the people of the ignorant state, he will be the happiest, best, and the most admirable man. Such a man would correspond to the virtuous ruler, in their eyes. Again, as in the two previous ignorant states, the depraved state may use *taghallub* and *jamāʿiyah* in order to carry out its purposes.

4.3.1.4. THE HONOURABLE STATE (*MADĪNAT AL-KARAMAH*). In describing this state, al-Farābī uses the same Arabic term, *madīnat al-karāmah*, throughout *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah* and *Al-Mādīnah al-Fādilah*.46 His honourable state can be loosely correlated to Plato's

Timocracy. He supplies us here with his detailed ideas of the honourable state, such as the type of ruler of the honourable state, the qualifications of the ruler (which are classified in accordance with the types of merits), and the political process in a modern sense, as well as the aims of the people of the honourable state and their opinions. For the first time in describing the non-virtuous states, he mentions here the law (sunnah) concerning honour.

The people of the honourable state, says al-Farâbî, tend to relate to each other in terms of honour. This honour can be different or the same. When someone recompenses another, he may return one honourable gesture with another, which may be different and of greater value. He places the value of honour not on virtue (al-fadîlah) but on wealth, on enjoying pleasure, on gaining the bare necessities, on giving these three things to others, and on domination (al-ghalabah).

Al-Farâbî classifies the ruler of this state in terms of merit. The ruler merits more honour over those who merit less of it. Thus, he asserts that the one who merits more honour than any one else in the state ought

47 Republic VII; 543ff.
48 Al-Siyâsah al-Madaniyyah, pp. 60-61.
to be the ruler or the king. He depicts the qualifications of honour needed by the ruler on the following basis:

Firstly, in the case of honour based on ancestry and wealth, when honour is based only on an ancestor, the ruler should have a more distinguished ancestor than the others; when honour is based on wealth or riches, he should have a greater wealth than the others. Consequently, those who do not have the above mentioned attributes cannot lay claim to any rulership or honour. Secondly, in the case of other matters not dependent on ancestors or wealth; judgment will be based on matters which come outside these two basic qualifications and such a ruler will be of a lower category within the state.49

In addition, according to al-Fārābī, the ruler ought to benefit the people regarding wealth or pleasure; he ought to lead them to be honoured or supply them with other material possessions they might desire; he ought to provide them with these things from his own wealth, or he ought to enable them to gain and retain them. Thus, the virtuous ruler may be the one who supplies the people of the honourable state with those things without seeking

49 Ibid., pp.61-62.
anything for himself, except honour.\textsuperscript{50}

In the honourable state, the ruler can accumulate and set aside wealth, by means of taxation (al-kharāj), for example, or by dominating other places outside the state. He may do this for the benefit of the people of the state and sometimes even for himself, even though it is of no use to the others, like the use of money for political publicity in our times. The ruler can also elevate some of the citizens who are his associates to new ranks, and confer honours upon them, or give them gifts of money, land, housing, etc., for their services.\textsuperscript{51} It would seem that here al-Fāragī is describing one of the ways in which the honourable state begins to deteriorate.

Towards the end of his description of the honourable state,\textsuperscript{52} he recognises that the honourable state seems to be regarded as the virtuous state only when honour is given because of such things as wealth, pleasure, etc.. He also says that the honourable state will be changed into the tyrannical state (al-jabbārīn) and next into the dominating state (madīnat al-taghallūb), when the

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., pp.62-63.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., pp.63-64.
honourable state becomes excessive. As in the case of the subsistent state, the mean state, and the depraved state, the honourable state may use taghullub and jamā‘iyyah to achieve its ends.

4.3.1.5. THE DOMINATING STATE (MADINAT AL-TAGHALLUB).

In his analysis of the fifth category of ignorant state, al-Farabī discusses the different types of dominating state (madinat al-taghallub), and the qualities and characteristics of the people and the ruler. Al-Farabī uses here the same Arabic term, madinat al-taghallub, in both Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, and Al-Madinah al-Fādilah.53

Some people in the dominating state, according to al-Farabī, intend to dominate others through deception (al-mukhatalah), through usurpation (al-muṣalabah), and through both of them.54 To be their ruler or king a man has to meet these three qualifications: first, he ought to demonstrate great strength in leading the people of his state to dominate others from other states or communities; second, he ought to be skilled in deception; third, he ought to have and exercise wise judgment about

53 Ibid., p.58,64.; Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.62.
54 Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.64.
whatever means are necessary, so that they are able to continuously dominate others and are never dominated by others. However, al-Fārābī seems to be aware of the rights of the ruler (which he also mentioned with regard to the honourable state); the ruler can use laws (sunnah) and regulations (rusūm) for better achieving his aims.\(^5^5\) It seems that al-Fārābī has had to introduce a reference to laws in these states because, in many ways, these states resembled existing states and laws.

There are three types of dominating states in accordance with the aims of the people of the dominating state. There is one type whose people pursue domination for its own sake. The people of the second type pursue domination as a means for acquiring the bare necessities, wealth, the enjoyment of pleasure, and honour. Finally, there is the state whose people pursue domination for the sake of domination itself and for the other reasons mentioned. Each of these are subdivided further into three categories:\(^5^6\)

The first of these is the state whose people choose to dominate others outside the state for the sole reason of their need for association. They are all, therefore,


dominating. On this point al-Fārābī is likely to have had a sense that the existing states had a tendency toward this form of domination. In the second category is the state where both the dominated and the subjugator (al-qāhir) coexist in a single state. Each of the subjugators has their proper rank befitting their values, with the ruler in first place as the overall subjugator and the other subjugators respectively occupying their own places within a hierarchy of subjugation. Therefore, some of the people will be dominant and others not. The third kind of state is where there exists only one subjugator, the ruler, and all others are dominated. They are in a way his slaves (ʿabīd).

In a somewhat confused, additional section, al-Fārābī indicates that there is a further division of three types of dominating state.57 The first state, which dominates for the sheer pleasure of domination, seems to be a repetition of the category that has already been mentioned. However, here al-Fārābī places extra emphasis on the fact that the people of this state gain pleasure out of dominating others. He also refers to an example of this type of state that existed in his own time, and which he calls qawm min al-ʿArab.58 Perhaps he

57 Ibid., p.67.

58 Ibid. Al-Fārābī also mentions both the name of Turk (Al-Turk) and the Arab (Al-ʿArab) in the section on
is referring to the tribes who were a source of problems at this time.

The second type is similarly confusing and in some ways is merely a slight modification of the first. Here the people wish to dominate others because they regard domination of others as a laudable and praiseworthy act. It would seem that this is a slight change from the pleasure of domination to the honour of domination. It, too, could be seen as tribally of racially motivated, though al-Farābī does not explicitly mention that here.

The third type of dominating state is equally confusing and could be regarded as a state which only uses domination to achieve its aims. It does not want to harm others and will only do so to achieve its aims. It would seem that again this division is assigned according to motive. The motive of this state is not the pleasure of domination, nor the honour of domination but only the advantages that come to it through domination without domination being in any way an end in itself.

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Ibid., p.73.

the democratic state (al-madīnah al-jamāʿiyyah).
4.3.1.6. THE DEMOCRATIC STATE (AL-MADĪNAH AL-JAMĀ'IYYAH).

Al-Fārābī defines the democratic state (al-madīnah al-jamā'iyyah) as one in which all the people of the state exist freely and are able to do whatever they want, and as one which provides the people with equality before the law. Thus, there is no difference between the ruler and the ruled, the state includes all kinds of people, such as philosophers (al-hukamā'), rhetoricians, strangers from any race, and so on. There also exists all the motivating factors found in the other ignorant states, such as the need for bare necessities and requisites, the need for wealth of properties, the need for enjoyment of pleasure, the need for honour or praise, the need for domination, regardless of whether or not these motives are good or evil, and without any attempt to distinguish between them. However, alongside these motivating forces, the people in a democratic state also have the need for freedom.

The people of the democratic state, according to al-Fārābī, think of the virtuous ruler as the one who has sound judgment and good management; who enables the


people to obtain their diverse desires and purposes; who secures them against outside threat; who does not take any of the properties of the people, except the bare necessities for his own life. His idea of the democratic state, therefore, even though it generally stem from Plato and the ancient philosophers, approximates with the concept of a laissez-faire state or polity, which is based on the idea that governments and the law should not interfere with finance, or the conditions of people's lives. The people of the democratic state, thus, reject the real virtuous man or ruler who would control them, for the sake of their happiness. Instead, such rulers can attain office by means of bribery, because nobody can have any priority over anyone else in holding the position of ruler.

Nonetheless, al-Farabi calls this state the most admirable and happiest of all the ignorant states, just as Plato does. And al-Farabi places the democratic state and the subsistent state among the forms of the ignorant states, from which the virtuous state can be

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61 Ibid., pp.71-72.
62 Republic VIII;555b-562a.
63 Ibid., p.71.
64 Republic VIII;557.
developed. It could be said that al-Farabī's democratic state closely resembles some of the states that existed in those days. He, himself, refers to Arabs and Turks as examples of the democratic state. (Perhaps this is a reference to the kind of consultative process that goes on amid some nomadic tribes?)

4.3.2. THE ERRONEOUS STATE (AL-MADĪNAH AL-DĀLLAH).

Al-Farabī uses the same Arabic word for the erroneous state in both Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah and Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah. He deals briefly with the erroneous state (al-madīnah al-dāllah) in Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah. The erroneous state is that whose people have views which are different from the opinions of the people of the virtuous state. Therefore, the people of the erroneous state will not achieve true happiness. This state, seems to be in some way related to the wicked state, except for the fact that in the latter, happiness was at one time recognised, but in the former it never

65 Ibid., p.72.
66 Ibid., p.73.
67 Ibid., p.57.; Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, p.61,63,71,74,82.
68 Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.74.
was.

In Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, al-Farābī tries to explain in detail how the nature of existence affects people's views of existence. He gives two illustrations of this: Firstly, some people believe that happiness (saʿādah) and perfection (kamāl) can be obtained only after death and that there are virtues and virtuous actions (afʿal fādilah fī al-ḥaqiqah) by which happiness will be achieved after death. Thus, these people tend to think that the present existence is not natural. They consider that if they recognised what they observed as natural, they would be likely to adopt the views of the people of the ignorant state. They think, therefore, that their present existence is an obstacle (al-ʿāʾiq), which has to be destroyed in order for true happiness to be realised. Secondly, there are others who believe that their present existence is real existence, but with the other things, which are joined to it. Therefore, they believe, as al-Farābī phrases it, that, "what is not man is man and that what is man is not man." From these two views, according to al-Farābī, some people believe that the body is not natural and is the

69 Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, pp.68,80-82.

70 Ibid., p.81.
cause of vices in the soul. Others believe that the body is natural for man but the accidents of the soul (‘awārid al-nafs) are unnatural. Therefore, they are the causes of people choosing things which are not really good. They recognise that to remove the accidents of the soul is to die voluntarily, and to separate the soul from body is to die naturally.

4.4. SYNTHETIC VIEWS ON THE NON-VIRTUOUS STATE.

Regardless of the first proposed model of al-Fārābī's variously divided non-virtuous states, these states can, actually, be subdivided according to the aims of each. As has been seen in the above explanations of the non-virtuous state, according to al-Fārābī, the subsistent state, the honourable state, and the dominating state can be subdivided.

In addition, al-Fārābī gives another way that each state can be classified. This is according to the number of rulers. This suggestion appears when he is describing the actual alternative forms for the virtuous state and the succession of rulership. It is likely that this classification could be applicable to the non-virtuous state as well, because there are no valid reasons against this beyond the fact that the non-virtuous state does not need to have only one ruler.

Classifying states in accordance with the number of
their rulers is a quantitative analytical method, rather than the qualitative method applied previously. It is true that al-Farābī's diversely divided state is a difficult framework to comprehend. However, it can be understood by bearing in mind that his political thought is imbued with his basic metaphysical idea of dualism. This principle means that each thing has its own quality and quantity, good and vice, and therefore, an unlimited number factors can be divided. Nevertheless, it is also possible that al-Farābī's whole scheme of states can be framed systematically as can be seen from the proposed chart of his classification of society.\(^7\)

It is true that al-Farābī's attempt to formulate the circulatory system of the non-virtuous state is very weak unlike Polybius (BC 204/5-122/8)' circulatory transformation system of regime: from despotic regime - monarchy - tyranny - aristocracy - oligarchy - democracy - noble ruler regime - despotic regime.\(^7\) Al-Farābī seems to leave the possibility that some non-virtuous states can be transformed into the other states including the virtuous state.

Although this fact contradicts his suggestion that

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\(^7\) See the table 3.

\(^7\) Polybius, *History of Rome* VI.
the non-virtuous state (where the people are not prepared to recognised happiness) cannot be transformed into the virtuous state, it is possible that this apparently contradictory view may reflect the virtuous state where the weeds (nawābiṭ)\(^7\) exist. It can be explained by a possible diagram that al-ファーابي's main concern is how to describe the exact actual states according to their characteristics and that what and how the realisation of an actual virtuous state is possible among the actual states. Furthermore, it is also quite probable that al-ファーابي's doctrine of the non-virtuous state comprises his theory of international relations. According to al-ファーابي, the subsistent and the democratic state can be transformed into the virtuous state, as those states are more similar to it than some other existing states.

As mentioned above, al-ファーابي's states are, mostly, derived from Plato, but they are arranged systematically in accordance with the different ends to which they aspire, and therefore, are more numerous.\(^7\) Richard Walzer, however, dissents from the opinion that al-ファーابي should be credited with the authorship of these various states. Walzer gives the reason that al-ファーابي's further

\(^7\) See chapter three '3.1.1. Ranks of the Virtuous City.'

classification of states is not made according to 'political' expediencies, economic considerations or the special circumstances of contemporary life.\footnote{Ibid., p.454.}

In his analysis of the non-virtuous states, al-Fārābī has given a picture which in some ways looks like a progression towards total evil. However, as he points out, the subsistent state is man's first steps toward statehood and, given the right circumstances, might develop into the virtuous state, rather than descend on the downward path to destruction. As far as the democratic state is concerned, it does not really belong to a scale of evil, but is rather a progression, which is not entirely bad, from the subsistent state. The other states seem to become progressively more evil as their inhabitants acquire greater scope to commit evil. In this progression the dominating state would seem the worst. This is the case because the wicked state and the changed state can only exist after having once been virtuous states, inasmuch as they have once recognised happiness.
CHAPTER FIVE

VIEWS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION.

5.1.1. AL-FARĀBĪ'S STANCE ON THE ACTUAL STATE.

As we have seen, in previous chapters, al-Farābī's analysis of the non-virtuous state can be broadly divided into two parts. His first description of the non-virtuous state, appears in the main political works, Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, and Fuṣūl al-Madānî. The description unfolds here as a part of the process of formulating his theoretical scheme of political ideas. In other words, this description can be framed within his political idea which is described in defining the concept of political science in his works of Iḥṣā’ al-‘Ulūm, Kitāb al-Millah, and Taḥṣil al-Sa‘ādah.

Al-Fārābī's separate description of the non-virtuous state, in which it is described with reference to its

people (qawm), appears only in chapters seven and eight of *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*.\(^2\) It is however, quite a lengthy explanation. In *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, al-Fārābī begins his explanation of the non-virtuous states, i.e. the ignorant and the erroneous state (al-dāllah), by saying that: "the ignorant and the erroneous states come about when their religions (al-millah) are derived from the mistaken opinions of the ancients (the ancient philosophers)," and "It is from these mistaken opinions of the ancients that religions have been derived in many of the erroneous cities."\(^3\)

From this, it can be seen that he explains the origin of the ignorant and erroneous states here in a different way than elsewhere in his political works in order to form the theoretical non-virtuous state, by saying;

The virtuous city (state) is opposite to such as the ignorant city (state), the wicked city (state), the changed city (state), the erroneous city (state) [the non-virtuous states].

We can infer that the reason for this is that al-Fārābī

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\(^2\) *Al-Madinah al-Fādilah*, pp.71-82.

\(^3\) Ibid., pp.71-72.
attempts to shape his theory of states with both theoretical and concrete explanations. His two separate chapters on the latter seems to be of some importance; not many people have interests about the international relations of al-Farabī's days. Certainly, al-Farabī himself never completely developed his critical theory of the actual state, partly because of the rather chaotic circumstances of his time and partly because of his limited understanding of the relationship between the virtuous state and the actual state. Presumably this may explain why al-Farabī always refers to the tribe instead of the state.

It is unfortunate that so few scholars have been tempted to investigate this part of al-Farabī's view of international relations. Most have failed to show any interest in these chapters and have ignored them. It is true, however, that there have been several scholars who have been concerned with al-Farabī's views of the ignorant and the erroneous states, which arise from the erroneous views of the ancients.

Even Erwin I J Rosenthal, who is extremely well versed in al-Farabī's thought as well as Islamic thought or philosophy, ignores these two chapters. Erwin I J Rosenthal simply combines the origin of the non-virtuous state, which is described in the part of the actual state, with the theoretical non-virtuous state, by saying, "The vicious states arise because their religion
is false and their opinions are corrupt."

To the best of my knowledge, Richard Walzer is the only scholar who has been deeply concerned about al-Farabi's two chapters through his effort to translate and annotate Al-Madinah al-Faḍilah. Walzer recognises its importance as well by saying, "..... the reader has to be aware of the realities of contemporary Islamic life which are efficiently illustrated in this indirect way." However, Walzer confirms that the description is not al-Farabi's own view and is mistaken, as can be observed from the passage below:

Al-Farabi emphasises in many places in these two chapters that he does not report his own views but views held by other unspecified thinkers of old. He evidently wants the reader to be in no doubt that the doctrines passed in review are wrong and that they are nowhere shared by him.\(^\text{922}\)

\(^{922}\)He does not refer expressly to ancient philosophical traditions in Chs. 1-17 since he accepts the views he puts forward in these chapters in his own name as truth.\(^\text{5}\)


From every point of view, it may be said that the reason al-Fārābī gives this long and full description of the non-virtuous state by referring to the tribe cannot be only due to the fact that he intends to offer opposition to some ideas. More attention ought to be paid to the structure of the work itself. Therefore, we are inclined to assume that al-Fārābī attempts to illustrate his contemporary world and explain the actual relations among the states when he discusses the non-virtuous state in an indirect way.

In these two chapters, he systematically explains how the non-virtuous state should establish and maintain the balance of power in international relations, establish world order, solve international complications, carry out peaceful talks and ties and coexistence, international justice and the principle of war.

This would seem to indicate that there was a significant purpose in explaining many factors in detail which are not dealt with fully elsewhere in his works. Other descriptions of the non-virtuous state are found in his other political works (including other chapters besides chapters 17-18 of *Al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*), which are also related to the situation of the actual state. Those discussions are, however, within the main frame of
his political scheme, except for his isolated expression of it in *Kitāb al-Millah* where he mentions that; "there are 'agreements (ithtilāf),' 'relations (irtibāt),' 'joining (intizām),' etc. among the parts of the virtuous communities ... like the parts of the universe according to their natural dispositions."\(^6\) We might assume that this statement gives another hint that he may have planned to describe international relations in his mind. At any rate, it would be, to some extent, appropriate to separate these two chapters from his main theoretical formulation of the virtuous and the deficient state. And then these chapters will be explored from a different perspective, without overlooking the fact that those ideas must be preceded by his main political scheme, "forming the virtuous state."

5.1.2. **TWO PREMISES OF THE NATURAL EXISTENTS.**

Al-Fārābī first explains the opinions of the ignorant state in relation to the natural existents which the people of the ignorant state believe:\(^7\) Some people (qawm) say that any existent which is observed continuously changes into something different from the

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\(^6\) *Kitāb al-Millah*\(^7\) *Al-Madinah al-Fadilah*, p.72.

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original, and thus its accuracy (*mađbūṭah*) cannot be grasped and realised, i.e. the original has already changed before reaching man's mind. Thus, it cannot but be realised as a different kind from what was realised the first time. This account seems to accord with his saying, "The ignorant city is the city whose people do not know the true happiness."  

Further, al-Farābī adds more significant meaning to the existent and he finds that the things which are observed are in opposition to each other, each of them seeking to destroy the other. In other words, according to al-Farābī, from its first outset it accompanies many things: The first of these is self-preservation, to defend and to protect itself against the action of its opposites. The second instinct is to destroy its opposite and to transform it into a body which is similar to it in species (*al-nawʿ*). Finally it is to make the other things serve it in what is useful for reaching its own best condition and for securing its lasting existence. Then these things also accompany the other things to subjugate every thing which refrains from them, and things to demand what is necessary for reaching its best existence (*afḍal al-wujūd*). Al-Farābī gives an instance by referring to the tribe:

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We see that many animals attack many other animals, and seek to ruin and destroy them, without having any apparent benefit from it, as if it were arranged by nature that nothing else but this particular animal should exist in the whole world or that the existence of any other animal would be regarded as harmful and that its very existence is arranged with this purpose in view, although there is actually no other harm in the other animal apart from the mere fact of its existence. Moreover even if the other animals do not have this intention, it tries none the less to enslave others in so far as it can use them.9

It is apparent from this passage that al-Fārābī seems to believe that this natural disposition brings about a desire for conquest (al-ghālib) (by means of destroying the other) and, therefore, that the best subjugator is regarded as the most complete (atamm)10 and as the most happy (al-asʿād),11 not only in the different species but also even in one and the same species. Thus, in these cities, the only way is to fight and overpower each other, and this is regarded as the best way. In this sense, there is a striking resemblance to

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9 Ibid., p.72.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid., p.73.
Thucydides' naturalistic world-view.\textsuperscript{12}

In the same manner, his premise of the natural existents in the erroneous state is basically the same as al-Farabi's principle of the erroneous state contained within his theoretical formation of the state. Al-Farabi argues that the people of the erroneous state have the same knowledge as the people of the virtuous city, such as knowledge of happiness (true happiness, sa'\=\text{\text{"}adah}), perfection (kam\=\text{\text{"}al}), virtues (fada'il), and actually virtuous actions. But, according to him, the people of the erroneous state assume that to admit that all of them are natural would necessarily entail adopting the assumptions of the people of the ignorant city, who do just this.

It can be thus easily inferred that his accounts are as same as "..... the city which aims at happiness in the next life, and holds a belief in God (Allah), the second order ....."\textsuperscript{13} and ".....for the sake of some of the ends of the people of the ignorant city although knowing what happiness is, ..... ."\textsuperscript{14}


\textsuperscript{13} Al-Madinah al-F\=adilah, p.63.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p.68.
These two views of the natural existents in the ignorant and erroneous states seem to be the premises on which his theory of international relations was developed. These two views are related fundamentally to his idea of the state, and more specifically the non-virtuous state. Even though al-Fārābī deals with them separately from the main political works, it is indeed likely that they are applicable to his original scheme of forming 'political science.'

5.2. GENERAL CONCEPT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

Things have changed a lot since Bentham said, "The word international, it must be acknowledged, is a new one; .... in a more significant way, the branch of law which commonly comes under the name of the law of nations ... ."\(^{15}\) The meaning of international relations too has changed much with the change of time. In a modern sense, two definitions are generally accepted. In the narrow sense, excluded now are many aspects of relations between states that are dealt with by specialists in institutions, such as disarmament and strategic studies. In a

broader sense, it includes features of domestic and international politics, behavioural responses, demands for change, and processes of decision-making.\textsuperscript{16} It is also generally accepted that international relations, as an academic discipline, has developed out of an interest in organising peace since world war.\textsuperscript{17}

In the late mediaeval ages, i.e. because the modern idea of international law among sovereign and independent states had not developed until the rise of national monarchies at the close of the Middle Ages,\textsuperscript{18} neither meaning of international relations is applicable. However, since international relations have mainly been based upon solving the eternal human problem of 'peace and war' throughout human history, the views current in the time before the Middle Ages may be designated roughly as doctrines of international relations.

In ancient times, intergroup relations were mainly based upon 'force.' 'Wars' were waged ruthlessly and

\begin{enumerate}
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were considered as the natural condition of mankind, whereas 'peace' was an exceptional condition, secured by special agreement.19 In Greek times, the relations among the states [cities] were governed by considerations of policy and expediency, and the Greeks distinguished between Hellenic and Barbarian cultures (This fact probably makes it difficult for their views to be applicable to the world at large.). In those days, there existed a system of independent states, who aimed to maintain a balance of power, and who were bound to one another by treaties and who settled some of their disputes by adjudication.20 The Romans' view of international relations was more primitive and elementary than that of the Greeks, Rome returned to the earlier idea of war as the natural order among states, although the Roman Empire, Pax Romana, is generally considered as the starting point of international law.21

In the two chapters of Al-Madinah al-Fadilah, under discussion here, al-Farabi does not express his descriptions of international relations directly; nor does he use the actual name of states. He chooses the Arabic

19 Ibid., pp.31-33.
20 Ibid., pp.58-59.
21 Ibid., pp.76-77.
term, ṭā'īfah (or pl. tawā'if) everywhere in these sections, which may be translated as 'group' and he sometimes uses persons (nafs) with ṭā'īfah,²² as applicable to the scope of his idea. This fact is apt to make us make the misjudgement that he does not have his own idea of international or inter-state relations. However, it is necessary that al-Fārābī's firm definition of ṭā'īfah be taken into account. He says:

When different groups (tawā'if) are distinguished from each other by one of these ties; tribe from tribe (qabilah), city from city (madinah), league from league (ahlaf), or community from community (ummah), the differentiations between them are like those between individuals.²³

This view goes beyond that of the Greeks who were mainly concerned with establishing a system of independent states, to maintain a balance of power among cities, or to be exact among the leading cities only.

It would seem then, that al-Fārābī believed that the actual extant states belonged to the category of the ignorant and erroneous states, which do not include all the types of the non-virtuous state, such as the wicked

²² Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, p.76.
²³ Ibid., p.75.
state and the changed state. From this point, it is possible to draw an assumption. In one passage, al-Fārābī describes the wicked state in terms of its people: "The people of the wicked state once knew the ideas of the people of the virtuous state, however, after that they desired and followed the purposes and aims of the people of the ignorant states."24 We may understand from this that the wicked state belongs to the category of the ignorant state. Similarly, he states that: "The people have changed and now have different views though they were like the people of the virtuous city."25 It may also seem to be a kind of the wicked state, as mentioned above, in the section on the changed state.26

Though this assumption, however, may be based on the fact that it is understood that al-Fārābī simply omits the changed state in Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah which appears in Al-Madinah al-Fādīlah. This may result in leading us to wrongly conclude that al-Fārābī's various classifications of the non-virtuous state are inconsistent. Despite this significant risk, there is one piece of distinct evidence that makes us turn to the first assumption again. Al-Fārābī's description, espe-

24 See chapter four '4.3.1 The Ignorant State.'

25 Ibid., p.61,63,68.

26 See chapter four '4.2.2 The Changed State.'
cially that of the ignorant state, as will be seen, may be considered as the whole description of international relations itself, in as much as he was able to give such a description. This may be supported by the fact that he gives full details of international relations not in the erroneous state but only in the ignorant state, and by giving the same premises of the natural existents applicable to the erroneous state as well as in the ignorant state.

It is possible that al-Farabī contradicts himself, when explaining the ignorant state in detail, and as a result, he fails to add a full discussion of the erroneous state, and he does not need to add it to the erroneous state again. Another possibility is, that he mentions 'Arabs and Turks' only in relation to the ignorant state\(^2\), because he cannot find a reasonable actual form of the real state which corresponds to the other types of non-virtuous state. Thus, when he views types of actual states, he can only explain the ignorant state, probably because the problem which he meets in his more theoretical development is exposed considerably. Despite his contradiction, it is clear that he tries to build, in a separate and fuller description, a doctrine.

\(^2\) Al-Farabī mentions both the name of Turk and the Arab in his description of the democratic state. *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, p.73.
of the actual state of international relations, judging by his two views of the natural existents as the premises. This starting point is in accordance with his forming the ideal state which is set out with the same subject.

Even though al-Fārābī introduces his views of international relations and deals with them under a complete, independent section, this does not mean that he should be credited with the invention of these views, as pointed out previously. Walzer confirms this, too:

I am convinced that Chapter 18 as a whole abbreviates a much longer coherent Greek treatment of the subject. It seems obvious that some sections are reported more briefly whereas others may be much nearer to the supposed Greek original ... ²⁸

Al-Fārābī first divides the people of the ignorant state into two main groups: The first group are the people of the ignorant state who think that war breaks out due to an outside cause,²⁹ in other words, they believe that the struggle for victory is just and good, and there are two ways to do so, by fighting (mujāhādah)


²⁹ Al-Madinah al- Fādilah, p.80.
and by deception (mukhātalah); and thus among them there are two subgroups, those who can afford fighting and then will perform it and those who cannot and thus will perform it by corruption (daghal), cheating (al-ghashsh), betrayal (al-khiyānah), conspiracy (al-mikīdah), hypocrisy (al-murā'ah, al-riya'), camouflage (al-tamwīh), and falsification (al-mughālatah).30

The second group are the people of the ignorant state who think that pacification (al-musālimah) is due to an outside cause,31 i.e., they are those who have sound souls (salīmah al-nufūs).32 According to al-Fārābī, regardless of their different ways, they lead to the pacification of the cities (al-mudun al-musālimah) among the ignorant states, some of them being the subsistent states (al-madinah al-darūriyyah), others the mean states (al-madinah al-nadhalah), others the depraved states (al-madinah al-saqītah), others the honourable states (al-madinah al-karāmah), and others the democratic states (al-madinah al-jamā'iyyah).

Al-Fārābī also says that the aim of the people of all, except the democratic states, is only one of the

30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
aims just mentioned. The people of the democratic state have many aims, comprised of all the aims of the other states, such as conquest (al-ghalabah) and defense (al-mudāfa‘ah), which the pacified states are urged to appeal to and are undertaken either by all the citizens or by one particular group. According to this, al-Fārābī divides the people of the state into two groups: those who can afford to conquer and defend, and those who cannot; thus they try to preserve their goods after they have possessed them.

5.3. FORCEFUL SOLUTION TO INTERNATIONAL COMPLICATIONS.

5.3.1. MUTUAL CONCORD (TAHĀBĪB) AND RELATIONS (IRTĪBĀṬ).

Al-Fārābī explains that from the aforementioned opinion, which is described as the first premise, there come many specific opinions of the ignorant ones in the states. These ought to be related to the view of international relations. He summarises those opinions under four categories, also referring to the tribe:33

First, some people maintain that mutual concord (tahābib) and relations (irtībāṭ) do not exist, neither by nature, nor by a conscious act of will, and that every

33 Ibid., p.72.
human being ought to hate every other human being and ought to show dislike to everybody. They are of the opinion that two people join forces only out of necessity and need, and further, that such an association is based on the agreement that one should be the commander and the other should submit himself to him. If some outside event compels them to associate and unite, their cooperation will continue while there is a need and for as long as an outside threat compels them. But when that emergency has passed, they ought again to dislike each other and separate. Al-Farābī describes this as the bestial opinion (al-ray al-sabu'ī) of human relations.

Second, there are others who think that since man cannot satisfy all his needs in complete isolation, and that man needs to be in league (al-mutawahhid) with assistants (muʿāzirūn) and helpers (maʿāwunūn), each of whom provides him with some of his needs.

Third, are those whose view is that this league should be brought about by force. A man who is in need of helpers gains mastery over people by force and enslaves them. With their help he gains mastery over others and enslaves them in turn. His helpers should not be his equals but the people who have been subjugated (maqhūr) by him. For example;

One who has the greatest physical strength and
the best weapons will prevail over some man and will, then, when the other one has been overcome, prevail with his help over some other man or a small group of people, and with their help over others, so that a number of helpers will be gathered round him gradually; once he has brought them together, he employs them as his tools (ālāh) and makes use of them in everything he desires.\(^{34}\)

The fourth and final group, whom al-Fārābī mentions, have the opinion that relations (irtibāt) and mutual concord (tahābib) have to be admitted to exist, but they disagree about the nature of the ties which unites people.

In these four specific opinions, though it is quite difficult to trace the exact matching origin of al-Fārābī's idea, the discussion contributes much the same as the ancient principles of international relations, which focuses on the fact that war should be waged ruthlessly and considered as the natural condition of mankind. And it might also imply the Roman principles of war which are known to return to the earlier idea of war, i.e. a more primitive doctrine of war than that of the Greeks. Al-Fārābī's words "the bestial opinion" make it more explicit.

\(^{34}\) *Ibid.*, pp.74-75.
The second discussion gives an explanation that it is due to an aspect of nature, which can be named social attribute, which is applicable to form a society.

The third view seems to be reminiscent of the well-known 'Roman policy': "Rome's policy was to sow discord among different nations, to aid the weaker in overthrowing the stronger, and finally to bring both under her own control."

These four views imply all the possible opinions which are related to 'relations (or ties).'

Following the description of the four different kinds of relations, al-Fāraḥī suggests that the following seven factors can unite people to each other:

(1) Common parentage (al-wilādah) establishes such a tie. This factor produces association, union, mutual friendship and co-operation between relatives so that they can subdue others and it makes it impossible for others to subdue them. Difference (failure to agree) and dislike are obviously due to different ancestry. To share a recent ancestor necessarily produces a stronger tie; but the more

36 Al-Madinah al-Fādilah, pp.74-75.
generally he is acknowledged as a common ancestor, the more the tie becomes necessarily weaker, and it will snap altogether when he is still more generally acknowledged and he has lived a very long time ago. Then, mutual dislike will take the place of 'mutual concord.' This mutual dislike will only be put aside in an emergency that is due to an outside event; when, for instance, an outside evil takes them by surprise and they can only defend themselves by gathering numerous forces.

(2) Common kinship (tanásil) produces a similar tie. Such kinship is brought about by inter-marriage between the men and women of different groups.

(3) A bond also exists between people who have a common first ruler, who brought them together in the first instance and became their leader, so that through him they became powerful and rich, or they obtained some other goods which the people of the ignorant state considered to be a good.

(4) The fourth type of tie is established by an oath or a treaty of alliance and contracts which stipulate what everybody provides by him-
self without showing dislike to the others or letting them down. Their forces are united to overcome others and to defend themselves against others.

(5) Another bond exists where people share a natural character and habit (al-khuluq wa al-shiyam al-ṭabī‘iyyah) and a common language. These three features account for the differences between communities. Every community is united by this kind of tie. They ought, then, to love each other and dislike those who do not belong to their own community.

(6) The 6th tie is one of proximity. Such a tie is brought about by sharing a common residence. The closer the proximity the stronger the tie; its closest form consisting in sharing the same house; next comes the sharing of the same road, next the sharing of the same neighbourhood (one should be kind to a neighbour who lives in the same road or the same quarter) finally, there is a tie between those sharing the same state or region in which the state is situated.

(7) Certain actions, events or situations can bring about a partial tie between small groups of people, a handful or even two. These include such situations as being together for a long time; sharing food and inebriating drink; shar-
ing a profession; sharing a misfortune which befalls them, (particularly when the misfortune is of the same kind and they are together, because one can then comfort the other); sharing some pleasure; or being together temporarily in places in which each may need the other: for instance during companionship in overland travel or on ships.

In his analysis of the factors which lead people to unite with each other, al-Farabi mentions not only ties between people, but also between states. His suggestions surely include all the possible factors in unity; such as ties between individuals, ties within family, etc. the clan system, the tribal system, friendship, expedient marriage, political ties. We can see that the fourth factor accounts for the relationship between powerful states and weak states. His fifth factor, is mainly a description of how to distinguish the differences between communities: "A community is differentiated from another by two natural things, natural character (al-khuluq al-ṭabī‘iyyah) and natural habit (al-shiyam al-ṭabī‘iyyah), and by something that is composite which is language (al-lughah), that is idiomatic expression (al-‘ibārah)."37

37 Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, p.40.
The importance of these seven factors is not only the ideas they themselves express, but also the significant possibility that the lost ideas of the ancient philosophers, and probably the Neoplatonists, can be retraced in part through them. As we have seen in discussing his ideas about the (theoretical) deficient state (above), al-Farābī modified some of Plato's earlier works and that he synthesises, rearranges, and adds his opinions to these and other thoughts which have been handed down. This is another factor which makes it more difficult for at least some views in his discussion to be properly traced to their origin.

Next, al-Farābī proceeds to classify the types of tied groups which result from the aforementioned factors. He explains that according to these factors there arise different ties, such as tribe to tribe, or state to state, or league to league, or nation to nation. The distinctions between them are like distinctions between individuals; for when individuals or groups differ in this respect, it comes to the same.38 From this, we may deduce again that his idea of the non-virtuous state goes beyond the limitation of the Greek city state.

Al-Farābī at least realises the importance of inter-

38 Al-Madīnah al-Fādilah, p.75.
national relations, although he fails to provide a more theoretically sound notion in a modern sense. This is hardly a criticism though, as this is not expected from mediaeval philosophers. After all, these accounts explain the origins of international societies and the reasons why they originate.

After completing the description of cordial relations between international societies, al-Fārābī proceeds to explain the conflict between them. According to him, they ought then to try to overcome each other and fall out with each other. The objects of their struggle for superiority include security, honour, wealth, pleasures and all the ways and means of getting them. Each group should aim at seizing by force all of the goods which the other group happens to own and at making them over to itself, this being the relation of everybody to everybody. Thus, the group which gains superiority over the other in this way is to be called successful, happy and blessed.

Al-Fārābī believes that these things are natural, both to every individual and to every group, and they closely follow the nature of the natural existents.39

39 Ibid.
5.3.2. INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE AND CUSTOMARY LAW.

In pursuit of the origin of international relations, al-Farābī develops a concept of justice in the ignorant (presumably actual) state, which may be understood as international justice, even in a modern sense. He says that what corresponds to nature is justice (al-‘adl). Justice, then, is identical with superiority gained by force, and it is justice too, to defeat by force every group of men which happen to cause disturbance. Thus, the one who is conquered physically loses himself in his defeat and perishes, or he loses his honour in his defeat and survives in an inferior status, perhaps enslaved by the victorious group to do their bidding.40 Therefore, the enslavement of the conquered by the victor is also just, and his doing what is most useful for the victor (al-qāhir) is also just.41

Al-Farābī again defines natural justice (al-‘adl al-ṭabī‘î) as virtue (al-fādilah) and knowing natural justice is knowing virtue. This is the morality (al-khayrat) of the victorious group (al-ṭā’ifah al-qāhirah). Al-Farābī adds more definitions of natural justice; when the victorious group takes possession of the spoils,

40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
those spoils ought to be distributed to those who contributed to their conquest, according to the standard of their contribution. Similarly, when honour is obtained through conquest, more honour should be given to those who fought better. And if property was the spoil they were fighting for, more property should be the reward for those whose contributions were greater.\footnote{Ibid., p.76.}

Al-Farabi's description of international justice or international morals, which includes the meaning of natural justice, is followed by his explanation of the origin of laws. He says that justice can be applied to other things, such as justice in buying (al-bay'i) and selling (al-shirā), or returning of deposits (radd al-wadā'i), or getting nothing by conquering or doing nothing wrong, i.e. people apply the term 'justice' primarily to actions which are the outcome of fear and weakness, and when a danger coming from the outside, they make it imperative.

Al-Farabi's explanation of the origin of international law is illustrated in this passage:

Regardless of whether they are two individuals or two groups, they each are equal in power or dominate in turn. If situation continues for some time, they get to know the conditions of each other; in the end this situation becomes tolerable. Accordingly they get together and
cannot help reaching fair terms; one concedes some part which would have been contended for in his own favour, as a result, they will share the benefit; and then each makes a contract (ishtarat) on condition not to aim at taking away anything from each other except according to peacefully negotiated contract (shara'it yaštalihan).43

We can see from this passage that al-Farābī's nascent international law emerges from customary laws governing trade and commerce, and the exchange of honours and favours, and so on. These customary laws are established through negotiations between individuals and groups.

Al-Farābī's concept of international justice in the actual state may be regarded as one which has the attributes of both morality and naturalness. Justice in this sense has two opposite meanings: on the one hand, justice can be recognised through force. On the other hand, it may bring into existence the international customary law. These two aspects can be traced back to Greek principles. As is generally accepted, in the early Greek period: "Booty was divided among the victors, and prisoners were usually put to death or sold into slavery, ...., and piracy, was regarded as honourable in the early

43 Ibid.
Greek period, ...."44

It is also generally recognised that such principles are supplanted by legitimate and peaceful commerce, just as al-Farabī suggests. Al-Farabī, however, recognises that this state of affairs can be reached only when a group feel weak in relation to another group and are afraid of others. It is possible that al-Farabī has the Rhodian Sea Law45 in mind, which served as the basis for commercial codes in the Middle Ages, but it is clear that al-Farabī understands the importance of the international law, and describes it very logically and completely. His choice of the Arabic terms, sharā’īṭ (contract or agreement) and al-sunan al-mawdū‘ah (the established customary law), supports this view as well.

5.3.3. BALANCE OF POWER AND EMERGENCE OF CHARISMATIC MAN.

Al-Farabī regards the establishment of customary law as accomplishing the balance of power among persons or groups, just as the Greeks did, though their views may be confined within limits, i.e. among only cities.46 In


45 Ibid.

46 See '5.3.1 Mutual Concord and Relations,' of this chapter, pp.223-24.
general, a necessary function of the balance of power is alliances, and the balance of power is a state of equilibrium between two groups.\textsuperscript{47} Al-Fārābī's idea of the balance of power coincides with this account as well.

In other words, al-Fārābī's view of the balance of power is applicable to its generally accepted modern meaning: "'Balance of Power'...... means such a 'just equilibrium' in power among the members of the Family of Nations ... ."\textsuperscript{48} and it refers to an actual state of affairs in which power is distributed among several nations with approximate equality.\textsuperscript{49} Al-Fārābī uses the Arabic word, 'al-takāfu' (equivalence),' to describe 'equilibrium' and 'equality.'

The Greeks were mainly interested in maintaining a balance of power among the leading cities, such as


Sparta, Athens, and Thebes as a method of regulating national life.\textsuperscript{50} They realised, however, that merely establishing an independent state system, which aims to maintain a balance of power by treaties or the like, could not establish peace for ever; on the contrary, wars are frequent.\textsuperscript{51}

Al-\textsuperscript{F}arab\textsuperscript{i} puts forward a similar view and discusses it explicitly. First al-\textsuperscript{F}arab\textsuperscript{i} proposes another situation which follows after the international customary law has been successfully established. According to him, even though the law has been established, it will be broken again when the parties do not feel the need to maintain their mutual relationship. This situation could arise when they no longer share a common cause, or when one of them becomes stronger than the other. In this case the stronger party may break the contract (al-shari\textsuperscript{t}ah) and aim at victory over the weaker party.\textsuperscript{52} After that the balance is destroyed and a state of non-equivalence among groups exists.

Al-\textsuperscript{F}arab\textsuperscript{i} explains that according to circumstances, this lost balance can be restored again. He suggests two


\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Ibid.}, p.59.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Al-Madinah al-F\textsuperscript{a}dilah}, p.76.
cases of this. First, it may happen that the two groups are again troubled by outside forces and are forced by expediency to cooperate together and to abandon attempts at conquering (al-taghālub) each other. Thus, they continue their alliance as long as it is needed. In the second case, they may both think of something they wish to take by force, and realise that the best way to achieve this is to aid each other and make common cause with each other. Thus, they would each abandon their struggles with the other as long as this situation remains, (or, they fight with each other again).

According to al-Fārābī, due to any of these reasons, the balance of power between the scattered groups (al-fīraq) can be established again and may last for a long time. Al-Fārābī then goes on to discuss a further situation which may come about after, a relatively long period of equilibrium. He says that a new generation, who have grown up under such circumstances without knowing how it arose, will think that justice is as they find it. They will fail to realise that it is just fear (khawf) and weakness (da‘f), and justice will, therefore, be disguised in that way.

53 Ibid.
54 Ibid., pp.76-77.
55 Ibid., p.77.
Next, al-Farābī argues that this situation may finally produce a charismatic man. He presents this procedure very systematically. This man may be a person who has feared and felt weak, and who has felt that he cannot afford to take others by force; instead he makes political capital out of a kind of ideological or religious belief.

That is, according to al-Farābī, there are a Divinity (ilāh), who governs the world and the high spiritual existents (rūḥāniyun), and leaders (madbbariyun) and the nobles (mushrafiyun), who deal with all the other affairs (al-af'al); if they praise and pray to Divine and the high spiritual existents, and sing their praises and yield to them, and believe in and revere them in this world, they may be rewarded and compensated with precious goods in the next world; otherwise, i.e. if they do not follow any of these things and prefer material gains in this life, they will be punished with horrible evils in the next world.56

Al-Farābī comprehends that these things are kinds of tricks (al-ḥiyal) and intrigues (al-makāyid), produced by a person who is unable to conquer others because he is too weak to gain these goods by force in a surprise attack (musālātah) or open fighting (al-mujāharah).

56 Ibid.
At last, according to al-Fārābī, these political stratagems, such as tricks, intrigues, and traps (masāyid) are enough to raise the tension of the people and therefore overpower them.

As a result, according to al-Fārābī, they will abandon some, or all of their goods which the man who used these disguises will enjoy. Regardless of that, once they trust such a man, they are mistakenly considered to be virtuous even though they hide their true stratagem.57

Moreover, al-Fārābī explains that the charismatic man is mistakenly seen as a man who does not want all these goods for himself. Thus, his disguised appearance enables him to enjoy high esteem, to be revered, and to be entitled to all the other goods. As time goes by, according to al-Fārābī, everybody submits himself blindly to him and loves him absolutely, whatever he does or says cannot be refuted; on the contrary, even the evil he does is considered by everybody as good.58

Al-Fārābī describes this kind of leader as one who achieves his own evil aims, once he has succeeded in taking a position of absolute sovereignty. According to al-Fārābī, he finally succeeds in depriving the people of

57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
honour (al-kārāmāt), rulership (al-ri‘āsāt), property (al-amwāl), pleasure (al-ladhdhāt), and freedom (al-ḥurriyyah), under the guise of it being the sake of these goods themselves.

According to al-Farābī, he himself gains these things sometimes by surprise attack (mūşālatah) and sometimes by deception and intrigue (taţārud). He explains this as being the same in the case of animals:

As the shooting of wild beasts (sayd al-wuhūsh) is carried out partially by surprise attack (mūşālatah) and open fighting (al-mujāharah) and partially by deception (mukhātalah) and intrigues.59

As a result, people may fail to behave properly, and cannot pay attention to whether he is right or not and cannot dispute his claim anymore, so that the holder of charisma can obtain whatsoever he desires henceforth. Al-Farābī explains that paradoxically, after he has succeeded in taking absolute power and every thing he wants by force from people, everybody has to obey his orders, even though some people later come to recognise what is right and what is wrong.60

Al-Farābī’s holder of charisma should be thought of

59 Ibid., pp.77-78.
60 Ibid., p.78.
as a dictator with extraordinary powers, who dictates all political action to his subjects and demands complete obedience from all other people, and what is worse, people under the dictator's powers even compete with each other to be more devoted to him. Thus, when the dictator violates whatever laws he likes, everybody believes that he is successful and wise, and he is highly esteemed and honoured by them.

Al-Farābī, however, adds that there are other people who have a different opinion. These people are able to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong. However, even though they exist, they themselves can only submit to him because they are in fear of his absolute power. In other words, they fear that they might be deprived of whatever they have, so they choose to pretend to praise and support him.61

In this analysis, al-Farābī divides the kinds of people under absolute sovereignty into two. The one group consists of those whose ideologies and religious beliefs are already distorted by the balance of power. The others are those who feign their loyalty to the dictator in fear of prejudice or retaliation.

Al-Farābī understands that the balance of power

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61 Ibid.
itself among people or states can be maintained for a long time to secure peace, and that even though the balance of power may continue to exist for a long time, it comes to an unrighteous end, instead of establishing the permanent peace. That is, under al-Fārābī's analysis, the long continuance of a balance of power brings about a charismatic dictator who might be interpreted in terms of a myth of his divine nature, insight, or moral attributes.\textsuperscript{62}

In sum then, it may be said that al-Fārābī believes that the balance of power is not a permanent solution to settle peace among struggling states or groups, but merely a temporary establishment of peace. To make matters worse, any long existing balance of power, helps to give birth to a charismatic despot. His ideas are very much in line with the modern sense, in that even in the present time many people take a sceptical view of the establishment of any permanent peace among nations regardless of whether it is achieved by force or peaceful measures.

5.3.4. CONQUERING AND VOLUNTARY TRADE.

Next, al-Fârâbî mainly gives an explanation of how to maintain the state in the sense of preserving goods acquired by force. After people have acquired goods through physical conquest, they feel the need to preserve, keep, and even add to them, in order not to lose them. Al-Fârâbî suggests four ways of achieving this by referring to people as well.\(^63\)

(1) Some people maintain that they ought to always strive to take others by force and should proceed to overcome another after they have succeeded in doing so to one.

(2) Others wish to provide, preserve and add to their resources from themselves by voluntary commercial transactions (al-mu‘amalah al-irâdiyyah) such as buying and selling, mutual credit and the like; and from others by physical domination.

(3) Others take the view that they should increase their fortune in both these two ways but only from others. Therefore, two groups exist who are concerned with both purposes: conquering

\(^63\) Al-Madinah al-Fâdilah, pp. 78-79.
and voluntary commercial transaction. In other words, one would increase and add to their fortune through trade, and the other would achieve more goods from others by conquering them. Some of these people believe that the business group ought to include their women (ināth) and their male warriors. Among them, those who turn out to be unfit to fight ought to undertake trade. Those who can neither fight or trade ought to excluded.

(4) Others, however, take the view that the traders ought to include other people, such as strangers (ghurabā') who have been subjugated and enslaved, because they think that they can fight and achieve properties for themselves, and so, will supply and increase them for the state.

In this discussion, al-Fārābī actually shows how to preserve and increase their fortune after they have achieved something from others by conquering. According to one of the views which al-Fārābī suggests, they will not fight each other, though he does not mention what the group consists of and mean, however, they will do so against the others (ghayr). And according to another view, they believe that women and weaker men who cannot afford to fight any more are to undertake trade, probably
because they have no ability to fight, instead men ought to be in charge of the conquering.

Al-Farābī describes these people as those who have the view that they intend to use force. It is easy to point to the ancient as well as to the Islamic instances of this.

5.4. PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO INTERNATIONAL COMPLICATIONS.

Al-Farābī turns next to explain the different opinions of those in the ignorant state. His discussion presumably includes his views of the actual virtuous state as well. Even though he does not give as long a description of this, his explanation can be clearly divided into three subdivisions:

First, conquering (al-taghālub) among the existents is between different species only, whereas for all those who belong to the same species, the very species (al-nawʿ) is a tie (rābiṭ), and they have to live in peace with each other for its sake. In the case of mankind (al-nās), common humanity (al-insāniyyah) is this tie, and hence men ought to live in peace with each other, because they all belong to the common species 'man.' They may, however, prevail by force over other animals, which they can make use of, and leave alone those from which they cannot benefit. Those animals which are not only useless but also harmful should be deprived of their
existence altogether; but those of them which are not harmful should be left alone.

Second, under these circumstances, the goods which men acquire from other men ought to be obtained by voluntary transactions; and those which are usually acquired from all the other species ought to be obtained by force, since animals have no rational ability (nuṣṭq) and hence cannot enter into voluntary transactions by consent.

Last, this behaviour is natural to man, whereas a man who tries to overcome other men acts, in doing this, against the rule of nature. However, since it is unavoidable that certain communities (ummah) or groups (ṣā'ifah) will exist who abandon what is natural to man and aim at obtaining by force, from other groups, goods which are not their own, the natural nation or group is compelled to have people in its midst who are set aside both for defense against such aggressors when they attack, or for fighting to recover any possessions of the natural nation, which the aggressors have taken by force. There will be, then, in each group two forces, one for war and defense, and one for establishing peaceful relations. But the defense force is not meant to act of its own accord, but only if an attack from the outside compels it.

It should be evident from this discussion, that al-Farabi’s idea of ‘world peace’ is exceptional and
extraordinary when compared to Plato's and Aristotle's. As Richard Walzer has pointed out, both Plato and Aristotle are content to stop at peace among the Greeks only. But, the idea of the demand for world peace is commonly accepted from the time of Alexander the Great. According to al-Farabi, even among the non-virtuous states (i.e. the probably actual states), there exists the possibility of world peace, as it is natural to the species. Through shared humanity man can produce ties and then seek peace among themselves.

Al-Farabi does not intend to include this exceptional, defensive war within the realm of wars which are started of one's own accord. His exception that men can fight each other when they are compelled to defend themselves against outside aggression makes sense in terms of modern international relations, such as those recognised by the U.N. Al-Farabi does not intend to include this defensive war within the realm of war which imply conquering for one's own benefit.

64 Republic V; 469b ff., 470c 5.
5.5. THE ATTEMPT TO FORM A THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

It is well known that the foundation of Thucydides' political thought is a theory about the causes and patterns of political activity or behaviour. In his book, *Peloponnesian War*, he discusses the causes and the nature of the war between the ever-active, innovating sea-power of Athens and the slower-moving, more cautious land-power of Sparta.66

Thucydides suggests three psychological causes which induce men to engage in political activity or behaviour to seek control over one another or to yield to another's control. These are (1) the desire for security or safety (asphaleia) or fear (phobos, deos) which Thucydides often employs interchangeably with the first two expressions; (2) the desire for honour, prestige, or glory (doxa, time); and (3) the desire for wealth, gain or profit, and the material well-being which it brings (ophelia, kerdos).

Thucydides says,

And the nature of the case first compelled us to advance our empire to its present heights;

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fear being our principal motive, though honour and interest afterwards came in [1.33].

These are the prime movers of the world of politics, and they appear over and over again. Thus in the Funeral Oration, Thucydides makes Pericles say that in the maintenance of law and order, "fear is our chief safeguard."

William T. Bluhm says that many writers since Thucydides' time, Machiavelli and Hobbes for example, have recognised the political importance of these impulses (desires): Probably the most recent reformulation of the Thucydidean causal factors is that of Harold Lasswell, an American political scientist, who has referred to "safety, income, and defence" as "representative values."

In the preceding discussions of al-Fārābī's international relations, these factors are also evident. Al-Fārābī's view of international relations starts from the formulation of international society based on the four causes of the allies, or ties, and the seven factors

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68 Ibid., p.2.37.
70 Al-Madinah al-Fāḍilah, p.72.
which enable them to unite together.\(^7^1\) He then explains the causes of conflict or war among those groups. In his analysis, al-Fārābī clearly states that:

... the objects of their fight for superiority being security, honour, wealth, pleasures and all the ways and means of getting them...\(^7^2\)

Al-Fārābī's description includes wider variables, which are known to him, than those of Thucydides.

Also, in discussing the ways to overpower one another, Thucydides and al-Fārābī have almost the same suggestions. Thucydides suggests two ways of building political power or overpowering others, such as by the use of force, which is the most obvious way, and more subtle ways which contribute to much the same result.\(^7^3\) Al-Fārābī also illustrates force on the one hand, and political stratagem of tricks (al-ḥiṣāl), intrigues (al-maḵāyīd), and entrapment (maṣāyād) on the other hand.\(^7^4\)

In addition, al-Fārābī's description of the principles of balance of power appears to be well organised,

\(^7^1\) Ibid., pp.74-75.: See '5.3.1 Mutual Concord and Relations' of this chapter.

\(^7^2\) Ibid., p.75.


\(^7^4\) Al-Madinah al-Fadīlah, p.77.
while those of Thucydides are scattered throughout his *Peloponnesian War*. As Bluhm has pointed out, Thucydides' theory of the balance of power found in the *Peloponnesian War* is presented in this way, as an implicit statement, rather than as an explicit or propositional treatise itself.\(^75\)

Thucydides and al-Fārābī both concur with Augustine's dualistic view\(^76\) and also with some of his views on international relations, although they have somewhat different opinion of the principle of 'original sin'.\(^77\)

According to Torbjörn Knutsen, Augustine's arguments on war and peace are heavily reflected in Aquinas.\(^78\) It seems to be an oversight that Knutsen stresses that Aquinas' primary contribution to the theory of international relations lies in his elaboration of the ancient idea of natural law by combining the idea of man as 'by nature a social and political being' without illustrating any Arabian thinker, although he certainly recognises the contribution of the mediaeval Arab greats to western


\(^76\) Refer to introduction '1. Islamic Political Thought and al-Fārābī, pp.14-16.

\(^77\) Augustine, *The City of God*, p.474.

thought, whether directly or indirectly.

Aquinas' revival of the argument of Aristotle's that man is by nature a political being and of Augustine's writings on war and peace appear throughout al-Farabi's political works, as mentioned earlier in this paper. It is already well-known that al-Farabi influenced the work of St. Thomas Aquinas directly, or through the work of Albertus Magnus who gave lectures to Aquinas.79

These days, Karl W Deutsch's ten fundamental categories are good criteria for judging what we want to know about international relations. His terms are (1) nation and world; (2) war and peace; (3) power and weakness; (4) international politics and international society; (5) prosperity and poverty; (6) freedom and oppression; (7) perception and illusion; (8) activity and

apathy; (9) revolution and stability; (10) identity and transformation. In this context, al-Fārābī's separate description of actual states ought to be understood as a theory of international relations which parallels that of Thucydides. We have seen that al-Fārābī's analysis includes more than eight of Deutsch's criteria.
CONCLUSION

1. LATER HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF AL-FĀRĀBĪ'S POLITICAL THOUGHT.

Al-Fārābī's influence on political thought can be seen in three different periods: the days of falāsifah; the Islamic dark ages from the fall of Abbasids; and the Arab awakening period of the nineteenth century.

It is generally acknowledged that al-Fārābī profoundly influenced contemporary or later falāsifah in the first period. Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna, d.1037), among them, is one such faylasūf who depended on al-Fārābī's synthesis of the virtuous (ideal) state of Islam with that of Plato's philosopher-king. In the system of Ibn Bājjah (Avempace, d.1138) like al-Fārābī's, the regime is framed by the ruler of the state, equated by al-Fārābī with a prophet or Imam.1 Ibn Rushd (Averroes, d.1198)

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similarly maintained that the supremacy of the Sharia is regarded as the virtuous revealed law and the Islamic equivalent of Plato's ideal state. Another faylasūf, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d.1209), attempted to reconcile philosophy and theology, and adapted the theory of the philosopher-king to suit an Islamic ideal. Rather later, Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī (d.1274), who is known to have been strongly influenced by al-Fārābī's works, adopted al-Fārābī's classification of city and society, but developed it further and applied it more narrowly to Islamic civilisation. Al-Tūsī, who is a Shi'ite, incorporates the Greek and al-Fārābī's conception of the virtuous city in his work.

In the second stage, after the demise of the Abbasid calipate (the Islamic Dark Ages), there seems to be three main trends of thought. The first group includes the writers who drew their main inspiration, whether directly or indirectly, from al-Fārābī and, through him, from Plato and Aristotle. The second are those who were influenced by the conception of the philosopher-king but

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interpreted it in terms of Sufism. The last are those who were in the main line of the earlier mirrors.4

Among the first group are al-Ghazālī (d.1111) and Ibn Taymiyyah (d.1328).5 Although Ibn Taymiyyah seems to oppose the theory of intelligence of al-Fārābī, it is apparent that he was influenced by al-Fārābī's principle of the first ruler in the virtuous state.6 In the case of al-Ghazālī, he mainly rebuts al-Fārābī's basic philosophy including the falāṣifah. He also called them unbelievers, although he seems to have appreciated that al-Fārābī was the most scholarly among them.7

Finally, in the nineteenth and twentieth century after a long absence, interest in al-Fārābī's political thought, was revived as scholars once more began to study Islamic thought. Wilfred Cantwell Smith and H A R Gibb commented that, "The future of Islam depends on the recognition of its past."8 Since then, many scholars

8 Manfred Halpern, The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa (Princeton: Princeton
have concentrated on searching and studying the ancient Islamic legacies including their political thought.

The result of this tendency meets the problem of harmonisation between Islam and Western civilisation, just as during the Golden Islamic Mediaeval Ages when they confronted almost the same problem between Islam and Reason. C E Butterworth explains this situation as the confrontation between legitimacy and prudence.9

The genealogical table 4 proposed here illustrates this. It is a synthesis of C E Butterworth's suggestion with the other opinions noted in this study.


**Table 4. Lineage of Knowledge**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&lt;10-14C&gt;</th>
<th>&lt;19-20C&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī</td>
<td>Abū al-Aʿlā Maudūdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimacy</td>
<td>Hasan al-Bannā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abū al-Maʿālī al-Juwaynī</td>
<td>Sayyid Qutb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibn Taymiyyah</td>
<td>Ali Shariʿatī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vs</td>
<td>Ayātollāh Khomeini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abū Nasr al-Fārābī</td>
<td>Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prudence</td>
<td>Muhammad ʿAbduh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibn Sīnā</td>
<td>Muhammad Iqbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibn Rushd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mangol Bayat Philipp appears to agree with this opinion. Philipp believes that the theory of model government proposed by Kirmani, who was a contemporary of al-Afghānī, was influenced by the Greek legacy, and that this influence reached him through al-Fārābī's political thought.¹⁰

Mahmud Shaltut has claimed that the origin of Islamic socialism can be traced back to al-Farābī's origin of society found in his work, *Al-Siyasah al-Madaniyyah*. Although many later scholars follow al-Farābī's, it is regrettable that their writing is inferior to al-Farābī's logic and rhetoric.

One reason for this has been suggested by 'Abd al-Rāziq. He argues that the rulers of the time discouraged scientific inquiry into the doctrines or principles of state, just as the theologians attacked philosophical studies that in their judgment would undermine the fundamental precepts of Islam. In those days it seems that the rulers endeavoured to restrict free investigation into any subject that might question the legitimacy of their authority.

Similarly, in mediaeval Europe, no systematic work of western political thought appeared until John of Salisbury published *The Politiaticus* (Statesmen's Book) in 1159. Scholars in the Mediaeval Ages only

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13 Lee Cameron Mcdonald, *Western Political Theory: From
encountered Ibn Rushd's *Commentaries on Aristotle* in the thirteenth century. And then they were more interested in his work on natural philosophy, physics, and metaphysics than in his ethical works. The scholars, therefore, when they created a Latin brand of Averroism, failed to appreciate Ibn Rushd's place in the history of political thought. They also failed to understand Islamic political thought in general, and in particular its Platonic inheritance.  

We can assume that in the writings of al-Farabī, the Europeans could have studied an extensive political philosophy that is indirectly meaningful to Christian states, and they have would certainly been made aware through these writings of the existence of Aristotle's treaties on *Politics* and *Ethics*. But none of the 'political' works of al-Farabī such as *Al-Madinah al-Faḍilah*, which are well known and popular all over the Muslim world, from Spain to India, was ever translated into mediaeval Latin, despite the fact that an important

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Greek legacy was examined in a new and original light by al-Farabi.\textsuperscript{16} One reason for this neglect must be due to the fact that a considerable amount of the Islamic treasures remain in Arabic to which few western scholars have access. The other reason is the lack of knowledge of Arabic-Islamic civilisation on the part of western writers.\textsuperscript{17} This omission is not due to mere accident, but to some very basic differences between the Muslim and the mediaeval Christian ways of thought and life, which manifest themselves even at the highly sophisticated level of philosophical abstention. Political thought is often unfortunately entangled with theological treatises, biblical commentaries and sermons.

In other words, Arabic-Latin versions of metaphysics, logic and psychology helped the school-men in their own search for abstract truth. But Platonic 'political' thought as applied to Islamic situations in the tenth century is of little value to them, and thus they did not embark on latinising any of these texts.\textsuperscript{18}

Islamic political thought on the eve of the arrival in


\textsuperscript{17} Fadhil Zaky Mohamad, \textit{Foundations of Arabic-Islamic Political Thought} (Baghdad: Ministry of Culture and Guidance, 1964), p.9.

the Christian West of Aristotle's Politics was, therefore, more interesting than western Christians realised in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.¹⁹

Latin translations of al-Fārābī's works are less widely available than Hebrew versions in mediaeval Europe.²⁰ Mediaeval Jews did not hesitate to translate Arabic texts into Hebrew, since they were closer to the Muslims than to the Christians.²¹ Parts of Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, were translated from Arabic into Hebrew in the thirteenth century.²² Among them, is Maimonides (1135-1204) the representative who appears to reflect al-Fārābī's political thought. He mainly follows al-Fārābī's theory of prophecy and the principles of the philosopher-prophet-legislator as the ideal ruler.²³

Much the same is the case with regards al-Fārābī's international relations. Ann K S Lambton asserts that

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²⁰ Ibid., p.333.
Islam had no critical theory of an international society of states in those days, and thus it failed to evaluate al-Farābī's view of international relations. In western Europe while feudalism was being developed, theorising on the nature of international relations in the modern sense of the term, or even rediscovering it through the ancients, was not possible. Professor Torbjörn L Knutsen points to two reasons for this. The first reason is that mediaeval life was intensely local and gave no nourishment to geopolitical speculations. The second is that the church had a virtual monopoly over education, and all theorising reflected the omnipresent obedience to the axioms of the Christian religion.

It is possible only through St. Thomas Aquinas, who is known to reflect al-Farābī's theology probably by way of Albertus Magnus, who is a thirteenth century theologian, philosopher, and teacher. Aquinas' revival of the theory of international relations is an elaboration of the ancient idea of natural law, and as such has a striking resemblance to al-Farābī's.

As I stated in the 'Introduction' to this study, it is obvious that the real evaluation of al-Farabi's political thought has just begun recently with many scholars' attempting to find and arrange his original works.

2. CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Plato began his political philosophy with some propositions to define the questions of philosophy, "What is the good society and what is justice?" Like Plato, al-Farabi begins by saying that man, like other living things, is not perfect even in his own degree, therefore, he needs to cooperate with others to fulfil his basic needs, such as food, shelter, and clothing, and furthermore, to attain happiness, which is man's final aim. Al-Farabi's idea, that politics ought to bring happiness to human beings, echoes Aristotle's maxim that a good government is that which makes its citizens happy. The dual influences are synthesised and adapted within a metaphysical structure of the theory of emanation which is derived from Neoplatonism, probably from Plotinus and Porphyry.

According to Erwin I J Rosenthal, al-Farabi makes an outstanding synthesis between Plato's philosopher-king on

\[27\] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1.3;1094a–1094b.
one hand and the ideal Muslim ruler on the other hand; that as a matter of fact, he merges Greek and Islamic qualifications into a higher and superior synthesis.²⁸ Like most scholars, Rosenthal believes that al-Fārābī's principle of the first ruler is a similar conception to Plato's ideal ruler. This idea of al-Fārābī also seems to be an Islamic version of Plato's utopia.²⁹

However, judging al-Fārābī's whole political work, this claim is not valid. On the contrary, it is quite apparent from his political discussions that he is mainly concerned with the actual situation of the time. Al-Fārābī's paradigmatic formulation of the first ruler-philosopher-Imam-legislator has been shown here to be an ideal virtuous ruler. It appears that his ideal virtuous ruler ought to be formulated before his second or alternative ruler, that is, it implies its major premise. In the case of the actual states, al-Fārābī realises that it is very hard to recognise the first original ruler who has the attributes of the highest ruler-philosopher-Imam-legislator. It is, however, not clear whether his original model of the ideal first ruler means the prophet Muhammad, or the theoretical origin according to natural


theory.

It is obvious that this vagueness cause a serious confusion in his whole scheme. Nonetheless, al-Fārābī's main focus is on the ruler who develops from the actual virtuous ruler who has fewer qualifications than his ideal virtuous ruler. In this scheme, al-Fārābī admits that there are various ruling systems according to its ruling number. He seems to believe that these systems are much the same as actual states. His idea implies the principle of the separation of power within the state, although there is no distinctive mention of it. This is also supported by his recognition of the lawful king (malik al-sunnah) which appears in both *Fuṣūl al-Madani* and *Kitāb al-Millah*.30 In *Kitāb al-Millah*, in particular, al-Fārābī admits that the ruling system by sunnah is possible, without even a philosophy, once the first ruler is qualified.31

It appears that al-Fārābī's various types of the non-virtuous states, though they have striking resemblances to Plato's, refer to the actual state. In his usual, logical way, al-Fārābī does not mention the actual names, except on rare occasions. From this, it may be


31 *Kitāb al-Millah*, p.18.
assumed that al-Fārābī is pessimistic about the non-virtuous states, i.e. the actual states. There is one obvious clue to verify this assumption. In the analysis of the democratic state, among the non-virtuous states, he mentions the two names, 'Arabs and Turks,' as an example of one sub-democratic state where they love domination and pleasure.\(^{32}\) In view of the fact that this state is somewhat lesser in its baseness, it together with the subsistent state, which corresponds to the basic state, might be transformed into an actual virtuous state, as he seems to indicate.\(^{33}\) It is certainly true that he leaves at least the possibility that the virtuous state can arise from the actual non-virtuous state.

It is an inevitable consequence of this that al-Fārābī's main scheme may contradict the statement that the democratic state, which belongs to the non-virtuous states, cannot recognise true happiness. As a matter of fact, the democratic state cannot be transformed into the virtuous state, at least logically. The same problem arises from the fact that the virtuous state includes the weeds which theoretically ought not to exist in the virtuous state. This cannot be explained in any other

\(^{32}\) *Al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, p.73.

way except that the problems stem from the contradiction in attempting to harmonise the theoretically framed state and the actual state.

In his analysis of international relations, al-Fārābī gives quite detailed descriptions of his view. As R Walzer recognises, this view reflects the ancient, or the mediaeval principles, among the actual states. Al-Fārābī's view of inter-states ought to be evaluated properly, not only because his ideas can be traced back to other ancient views, most notably Augustine's, but also because al-Farabī arranges these views separately and furnishes us with a systematic description. This claim is all the more plausible in view of the fact that Thucydides, who is regarded as the original political thinker of international relations, fails to deal with them in a separate work.

In al-Farabī's whole political thought, he does not confine it to the city-state. He consistently uses the word 'ummah (community)' and 'al-ma‘mūrah (the inhabited world)' with 'madīnah.' It is appropriate that he investigates ummah and the inhabited world in the course of examining society in general and develops the concept of these two words.

Al-Farabi seems to believe that forming a virtuous city naturally or logically enables the forming of the next society of community, and then, the whole society of the world as in his scheme. That is the reason why al-
Farabi gives a full description of the city, instead of that of the community and the whole world though he mentions the diverse community by natural character and the natural habit. It is quite proper that his expanded concept of state develops into a theory of international relations which deals with actual states.

In al-Farabi's view of a compromise between philosophy and religion, or reason and revelation, we can detect a clear suggestion that religion is an imitation or symbol of philosophy which is generally known to us. He would rather regard 'religion' as a kind of second qualified concept, in terms of practical religion, i.e. the way to manage the people in order to forward the truth of Allah.

However, al-Farabi stresses the imaginative faculty by which the ruler or Imam can realise the truth from God. He appears to believe that the ruler or Imam can be closer to the perfect one. However, it seems that even though there is no qualified highest ruler or Imam existing in the actual states, in his days, he sees the need to provide authority to the actual ruler or Imam (who cannot be equal to the first ruler or Imam at least in a theoretical sense), so that he can solve the actual problem of giving legitimacy to the actual rulers or Imams to keep order among actual states.

While al-Farabi's view of religion appears to be connected with formulating and extending his virtuous
inhabited world (al-ma‘mūrah), where there are the virtuous communities which have each their virtuous religion,\(^{34}\) he has to recognise and allow the fact that there exists many virtuous religions besides Islam; accordingly he can build the virtuous inhabited world, which includes virtuous subunits.

There are some scholars who rebut al-Fārābī and regard him as someone who discusses prophecy in a wholly secular context without even the slightest reference to Islam.\(^{35}\) Furthermore, some blame his unhistorical and abstract characterisations as one of the sources of corrupt beliefs among Muslims.\(^{36}\) On the other hand, most others are likely to understand that despite al-Fārābī's confusing view of religion and prophecy, he ought rather to be considered a Shi‘ite in view of his characterisation of the first ruler-Imam.

Regardless of such opinions, it is necessary to evaluate al-Fārābī's political thought in accordance with whether his political thought has any value as a politi-

\(^{34}\) *Kitāb al-Millah*, p.27.


cal theory. It is in this sense that R Walzer evaluates al-Fārābī's political thought as a serious attempt at proposing a radical reform of the Islamic Caliphate.\textsuperscript{37} The present endeavours to search for al-Fārābī's political thought and the efforts being made to appreciate it in the context of world political history are indicative of these concerns. Although we are not entitled to regard him as the first and perhaps the only system-builder in Islam,\textsuperscript{38} it is appropriate that we consider al-Fārābī as the founder of political thought among the Arabs. It is true that he did not have an opportunity to join the government in order to practise his theory, and that he did not comment anywhere on the reasons.


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