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GOD AS THE HIGHEST PERFECTION IN AL-FARABI'S THEOLOGY

This article discusses the idea of God as the highest perfection and the most perfect knowledge in the theological doctrine of al-Farabi. Al-Farabi considers his doctrine of the perfection of God in the famous work "On the Perfect state". Most of this treatise is about proof of the existence and perfection of God. Al-Farabi describes the qualities of God not only directly, but also through the attributes of life, knowledge, wisdom, reality, and truth. Al-Farabi calls God the First Cause, or simply the First. The idea of perfection, according to al-Farabi, is manifested not only in the laws of the universe, but also in the process of ruling the city and the state. So, if a ruler and inhabitants are guided by faith and the idea of God, then their life will be reasonable since the reason and perfection of God are identical in the theology of al-Farabi. Thus, the metaphysics of al-Farabi is closely connected with the idea of perfection of Reason, which manifests itself in a detailed theologo-philosophical doctrine.

Key words: The First Being, metaphysics, theology, the idea of God, perfection.

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Әл-Фараби теологиясындағы ең жоғарғы кемелдік ретіндегі Құдай идеясы

Бұл мақалада әл-Фарабидің теологиялық іліміндегі Құдай идеясы ең жоғары кемелдік және ең кемел білім ретінде талқыланады. Әл-Фараби өзінің Құдайдың кемелдігі туралы ілімін "Қайырымды қала тұрғындарының көзқарасы" атты әйгілі еңбегінде қарастырады. Бұл трактаттың басым бөлігі Алланың бар екендігі мен кемелдігінің дәлелі. Әл-Фараби Алланың қасиеттерін тікелей ғана емес, өмір, білім, хикмет, ақиқат деген ұғымдар арқылы сипаттайды. Әл-Фараби Құдайды Бірінші Себеп, немесе жай Бірінші деп атайды. Кемелдік идеясы, әл-Фарабидің пікірінше, тек табиғат заңдарында ғана емес, сонымен қатар қала мен мемлекетті басқару процесінде де көрінеді. Демек, билеуші мен тұрғындар иман мен Құдай идеясын басшылыққа алса, олардың өмірі де парасатты болады, өйткені әл-Фарабидің теологиясында Алланың ақыл-ойы мен кемелдігі бірдей. Ойшыл адамның негізгі мүмкіндіктерін Құдайдан көреді. Бұл әлеует адамның рухани болмысынан ғана емес, оның күнделікті ойынан, іс-әрекетінен, өмір салтынан көрінеді. Діни ойлау, әл-Фарабидің пікірінше, жай сенім емес, ең алдымен Құдай идеясының жеке және қоғамдық өмірде жүзеге асуы. Осылайша, біз әл-Фарабидің философиялық және теологиялық ілімінде Құдай идеясына қаншалықты құрметпен және жауапкершілікпен қарайтынын көреміз. Сонымен, әл-Фараби метафизикасы егжей-тегжейлі теологиялық-философиялық концепцияда көрініс табатын Ақылдың кемелдігі идеясымен тығыз байланысты.

Түйін сөздер: Алғашқы Себеп, метафизика, теология, Құдай идеясы, кемелдік.

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Идея Бога как высшее совершенство в теологии аль-Фараби

В данной статье рассматривается идея Бога как высшего совершенства и наиболее совершенного знания в теологической доктрине аль-Фараби. Свою доктрину о совершенстве Бога аль-Фараби рассматривает в знаменитом труде «О взглядах жителей добродетельного города». Большая часть данного трактата составляет доказательство бытия и совершенства Бога. Аль-Фараби описывает качества Бога не только напрямую, но и через атрибуты жизни, знания, мудрости, реальности и истины. Аль-Фараби называет Бога Первопричиной, или просто Первым. Идея совершенства, согласно аль-Фараби, проявляется не только в законах мироздания, но и в

процессе правления городом и государством. Так, если правитель и жители руководствуются верой и идеей Бога, то их жизнь будет разумной, поскольку разум и совершенство Бога идентичны в теологии аль-Фараби. Мыслитель видит в Боге основной человеческий потенциал. Этот потенциал проявляется не только в человеческой духовности, но и в его повседневных мыслях, поступках, образе жизни. Религиозное мышление, согласно аль-Фараби, – это не просто вера, но, в первую очередь, воплощение идеи Бога в индивидуальную и социальную жизнь. Тем самым, мы видим, насколько аль-Фараби трепетно и ответственно подходит к идее Бога в своей философско-теологической доктрине. Таким образом, метафизика аль-Фараби тесно связана с идеей совершенства Разума, которая проявляется в развернутой теолого-философской концепции.

Ключевые слова: Первый Сущий, метафизика, теология, идея Бога, совершенство.

Introduction

The idea of God as reasonable perfection is central to al-Farabi's metaphysics and theology. Many his works are devoted to disclosure of the existence of God through various attributes of divine reality. "Al-Farabi opens the Virtuous City (*al-Madinah al-Fad'ilah*) by asserting that the First Being (*al-Awwal*) is the cause of all existing entities" (Fakhry, 2002: p. 79). Al-Farabi lists truth, higher logic, wisdom, etc. among them. However, the most important thing that the thinker pays close attention to in his ontology is reason in the very foundations of the existence of nature and the universe, which he considers as derivatives of the emanation existence and the procedural outflow of the divine essence. Therefore, almost everywhere he refers to God as the First One. "This description of the first cause differs from Aristotle's presentation of the prime mover. Most of the attributes of al-Farabi's first cause are missing in Aristotle, since the prime mover is a final cause of motion but does not bestow being, oneness, and truth on any other being" (Druart, 1987: pp. 36-37, 302 p.). Al-Farabi emphasizes the highest degree of perfection of the First One, stating that "when any thing whose existence is utterly perfect is thought (intelligized) and known, the result of that process of thinking of the thing which goes on in our minds and conforms to its existence will be in accordance with its existence outside our minds" (Al-Farabi, 1998). Here al-Farabi puts forward two ideas. The first is that, as the level of perfection of being increases, understanding of this perfection also becomes more and more perfect. The second idea proceeds from the first and consists in the fact that increase in the perfection of being is necessarily accompanied by an idea of mind, within the framework of which comprehension and knowing of perfection of being takes place. By this, al-Farabi shows that the perfection of being can be in accordance with mind, which in its perfection can be in accordance with the First One.

Justification of the choice of articles and goals and objectives

Justification of the choice of articles is based on the references which are directly related to Islamic philosophy and, especially, Farabian ontological and theological tradition. Al-Farabi especially focuses on how to interpret human mind and knowledge. For all the breadth and depth of human knowledge, our mind is not able to perceive and understand the very idea of perfection if we still connect it with matter in our mind.

At the same time, goals and objectives of this research are concentrated on perfection of the First Being. As a rule, human mind links perfection with some material things or phenomena, but perfection itself practically remains outside the scope of human apprehension

Scientific research methodology

The research methodology is based on historical comparativist analysis of the heritage of those thinkers who surrounded al-Farabi in his time. As well, one of the methods is dialectics which allows us to disclose main trends operating in the framework of Islamic philosophy and theology.

Main part

Al-Farabi considers such existents as motion, time, infinity, privation and others, and notes that they are deficient within the framework of human soul. He explains their imperfection through their own imperfect essence, as well as through imperfection of human soul. Although human soul does not play so significant role in determining imperfection of the above existents. Al-Farabi defines them as deficient existents. In this regard, he gives an example with more perfect existents, such as number, triangle, square and their like. In human thinking, they are more perfect both in understanding and in use,

since in their essence they are pure perfect abstractions both in the human mind and in themselves. That is, being forms, which participate in description of the physical world, they themselves are perfect. Whereas motion, time, infinity, privation and others are themselves physical existents, to which number, triangle, square and others are applied.

Al-Farabi uses this example to generally demonstrate weakness of human intelligence in relation to cognition of perfection and to show imperfection of human perception about the First One. "Humans and perhaps other higher beings indeed have both the power of thought and intellect. We expect humans to have such powers, but Aristotle words his statement about thought and intellect such that these may be additions to the other powers of soul in beings such as humans or even beings higher than humans, or perhaps such higher beings might have these faculties without needing to have them as powers of soul. Thus, the issue how mind connects with soul is left open" (Polansky, 2007). Following the logic of cognition and use of such abstractions as number, triangle, square and others, we can conclude that cognition of the First One can also be carried out in perfect form. "We have distinguished the various senses of 'prior', and it is clear that actuality is prior to potentiality" (Aristotle, 1984: p. 1657, 1889 p.). Indeed, number, triangle, square and others are perfect objects of the human mind, in contrast to the physical phenomena that human soul directly encounters in the process of cognition. However, al-Farabi writes that due to "it is difficult and hard for us to apprehend (perceive) it and to represent it to ourselves because of the weakness of our intellectual faculties, mixed as they are matter and non-being: we are too weak to think it as it really is. For its overwhelming perfection dazzles us, and that is why we are not strong enough to represent it to ourselves perfectly (completely)" (Al-Farabi, 1998). And further, al-Farabi gives an argument with light, when light itself is the primary source of various kinds of color, being at the same time the primary essence in relation to the colors that arose on the basis of light. It is thanks to light that various colors become visible to the human eye, however, the colors themselves are not perfect, since each person perceives colors individually, taking into account the characteristics of their own eyes. While light itself is the universal primary source of the appearance of colors, therefore light is perfect.

At the same time, al-Farabi points to the opposite, which at first glance can seem to be contradictory: the brighter light is, the less human eye can

see it. However, he explains this by saying that the more a person sees pure light (that is, light in its perfection coming to his eye), the more light blinds him. This comparison indicates that the more a person encounters the perfection of the First One, the more a person is limited in his mind to understand its perfection. "Since the First is immaterial, it must necessarily be an intellect ('aql), as al-Fārābī considers all immaterial beings to be of an intellectual nature" (Janos, 2012: 180-181). Al-Farabi already emphasized weakness of human mind before knowing perfection of the First One. By analogy with the perfection of light, a man can catch some signs of perfection of the First One, however, he is not able to recognize all its perfection due to the weakness of human perception and representation. Just as human eye can catch some colors and shades of light, but it cannot perceive the fullness of real light due to imperfection of the eye's own nature. "Our thinking it is deficient, not because of any deficiency of the First, and our apprehension of it is difficult for us, not because of its substance being difficult to apprehend, but not because our minds are too weak to represent it to ourselves" (Al-Farabi, 1998). Being based on the fact of perfection of the First One and imperfection of human mind in process of cognition of the First One al-Farabi explains deficiency of intelligibles in us and as the same time weakness of the human perception about the idea of perfection in general. "By "intellect" in the universal sense, then, these people mean no more than what Aristotle meant by discernment" (McGinnis and Reisman, 2007: 69, 416)

Obviously, here we must clarify the very nature of perception, that is, the process itself, in which a man (with all his cognitive characteristics) meets immediate reality and recognizes some objects of cognition in it. Perception as a mental process involving such physical senses of vision, hearing, touch, taste and smell, is a complex process, since it depends on effectiveness of perception what material will enter the human mind for further processing. There are apparently at least four elements in perception, all evident in a simple case like seeing a green field in front of me: (1) the perceiver, me; (2) the object, the field; (3) the sensory experience, my visual experience of colors and shapes; and (4) the relation between the object and the subject, commonly considered a causal relation by which the object produces the sensory experience in the perceiver. To see the field is apparently at least this: to have a certain sensory experience as a result of the impact of the field on one's organs of vision" (Audi, 2004). Therefore,

taking into account all complexity of perception, as one of the important elements of the cognitive process, it is necessary to understand how correct we must be in the perception of the surrounding world in order to single out intelligibles in it, which can further help us to understand the idea of perfection.

Also, it really depends on perception what kind of physical reality a man can subsequently see and what kind of worldview he can then form in the future. It stands to reason that perception of each person has strictly individual features that vary depending on the subjective qualities of a man, but at the same time human perception remains common within the framework of a common human nature. Each person can see in different ways, but in general, a person is not given to have such sharp vision, as, for example, an eagle. The human nature of perception of reality is located in a strictly defined range of physical senses, however, within this range, the perception of each person is different. Therefore, each person's understanding of the same reality may be different, but this diversity of understanding of reality, however, remains within the framework of common human nature of consciousness.

That is why a person has general perception of the idea of perfection, but the question posed by al-Farabi is that each person must develop both physical (i.e., physical perception through sensory cognition) and intellectual ability to apprehend the essence of the idea of perfection. "An important feature stressed by al-Fārābī is the identity between intellect and the divine essence. Since the First is immaterial, It must necessarily be an intellect (*'aql*), as al-Fārābī considers all immaterial beings to be of an intellectual nature" (Janos, 2012: 181, 433). This is important for us to learn to understand perfection of the First One. To achieve understanding of perfection, according to al-Farabi, man needs to rethink the intelligibles in mind, through which he creates a picture of reality based on the process of perception. "For Alfarabi, and for Islamic theology for that matter, it was unacceptable that there could be a separate substance from God: before God there was nothing and God created the universe *ex nihilo* ('out of nothing')" (Jackson, 2014: 43, 190). And one of the important ways, as we further learn, is a man's separation from a habit of associating pure intelligibles (for example, motion, infinity, time, etc.) with material objects. Identification of pure intelligibles with matter leads to the fact that their understanding by man becomes deficient and, therefore, imperfect.

Therefore, al-Farabi calls intelligibles in the human mind deficient and, as a result, imperfect. For

the same reason, he calls motion, time, infinity, privation, and other existences also imperfect since these existences are entities with which human mind associates the idea of perfection. In this regard Hegel writes: "Existence is immediate unity of being and reflection, and hence appearance; it comes from the ground and goes to the ground" (Hegel, 1991: 213, 381). However, when connecting the idea of perfection with something that is limited in its concept is tantamount to limiting the idea of perfection itself. And for the same reason, al-Farabi calls number, triangle, square and their like to be perfect, since they serve as the basis for forming an idea of existing objects in the world. At the same time, human mind associates number, triangle, square and their like entities with specific objects, but cannot think of them separately from objects, that is, in a pure form. That is why when man tries to know the perfect essence of the First One, he encounters difficulty of understanding its perfect nature, since all intelligible entities in human logic cannot be applied to description of the perfection of the First One.

Further, explaining the reason for limitations of intelligibles in human knowledge, al-Farabi gives their typology. In particular, he notes that there are two kinds of intelligibles. The first kind of intelligible "is in itself impossible for man to represent to himself or to think of by way of perfect representation, because of the weak nature of their existence and the defects of their essences and substances" (Al-Farabi, 1998). And the second kind of intelligible is the accessibility of comprehension and representation, which are equal in their absolute perfection; but the human mind, remote from such perfection, is weak to represent it adequately and in the perfection of its being. So, al-Farabi concludes that these two kinds of intelligibles respectively belong to two extreme limits of being: one in the fullness of perfection, and the other in absolute imperfection.

By defining the kinds of intelligibles, al-Farabi shows not only their existence, but also the very possibility of man to perceive those intelligibles, thanks to which man is capable (or not capable) of thinking about perfection. "The First Cause is one and unique, precluding any multiplicity, whereas all other principles are multiple" (López-Farjeat, 2016) In other words, human mind itself plays an important role in understanding perfection, with its ability to understand the idea of perfection. And here al-Farabi quite clearly shows that human intelligence is very limited in relation to the idea of perfection. We can say that the idea of perfection is something like an intelligible essence that man can only know

through deep intuition, and it is through intuition the perfection of the First One can be revealed to man.

Al-Farabi in more detail explains human limitation of comprehension of perfection by the fact that “since we are mixed up with matter and since matter is the cause of our substances being remote from the First Substance, the nearer of our substances draw to it, the more exact and truer will necessarily be our apprehension of it” (Al-Farabi, 1998); that is, we are used to identify the primary idea of perfection of something with its material embodiment. As in the case, for example, with motion, which al-Farabi mentions above together with time, infinity, privation, etc. Man cannot think of motion in its purest form. Due to the peculiarities of human intellect, man is forced to understand motion through an object that is in motion at a certain time. That is, man does not cognize motion, as such, but he comprehends an object that is endowed with a property to move in space in a certain time. It turns out that the cognized phenomenon of motion in its pure form turns into a certain ontological predicate of an object in the frames of human mind, which denotes the dynamism of the object itself. Thus, materialization of motion takes place; and pure essence of motion in human mind fades into the background. By materializing pure intelligibles, a man thereby connects them with the entities of material objects, focuses on doubling intelligibles into pure ideas about motion and those objects thanks to which man understands motion (or, at least, he has an ability to imagine motion).

Almost the same thing happens with time, which man cannot imagine in its pure form. Man needs to understand time through its measurement. All that man obtains in relation to time is to perceive time empirically, that is, through the existence of an object or process in time. For further convenience in understanding the existence of objects and processes in time, man created a system of measuring time, dividing it into time intervals. That is why al-Farabi considers number to be a more perfect intelligible essence than time, since in human mind time is understood and perceived more clearly, depending on number (or quantity) of time. It turns out that time, being an independent ontological entity in reality, in the world of human consciousness becomes dependent on measurement of time in the framework of quantitative structures and laws. Whereas number itself has a universal status and is applicable not only to the measurement of time, but also to the calculus of other phenomena and categories, such as space, infinity, motion, etc.

Therefore, al-Farabi recommends separating away from materialization of our intelligibles in the process of cognition of reality, because “the nearer we draw to separating ourselves from matter, the more complete will be our apprehension of the First substance” (Al-Farabi, 1998). The bottom line is that separating from the way familiar to the human mind to understand intelligibles through concrete material objects (for example, pure phenomenon of motion through some moving objects) implies human mind reaching the level of actual intellect. It is actual intellect that contributes to the fact that man in his understanding is able to come closer to the idea of perfection of the First One. With this desire to prove the importance of transition of human mind to the level of actual intellect, al-Farabi strives that cognition of the idea of perfection of the First substance of nature is possible at the level of a completely special state of consciousness, namely, at the level of actual intellect.

Al-Farabi explains necessary essence of the perfection of the First One, in contrast to the fact that a man can also have relative perfection compared to other people. However, relative perfection of man is ‘accidental’ in nature and is understood only in comparison with imperfection of other people. In this regard, perfection of the First One is absolute. It makes no sense to compare absolute perfection of the First One with accidental perfection of man, since the perfection of the First One is so absolute that the accidental perfection of man immediately becomes absolute imperfection before the absolute perfection of the First One. In this regard, al-Farabi writes: “For majesty, greatness and glory exist in a thing in proportion to its perfection, either in regard to its substance or to one of its (special) properties” (Al-Farabi, 1998).

In other words, the absolute perfection of the First One is beyond any idea of comparing accidental perfection of people in relation to each other, “such as riches or knowledge or some bodily quality” (Al-Farabi, 1998). In this regard, the absolute perfection of the First One is a primary cause of any other accidental perfection, whether it is a relative perfection of man or any natural phenomena or objects. Here al-Farabi once again emphasizes the fact that the First One exists as fundamental essence of absolute reality, which it expresses in its universal being. Al-Farabi concludes “in this case, surpassing greatness and glory are in its substance and not in anything else apart from its substance and its essence” (Al-Farabi, 1998). Then al-Farabi explains that the perfection of the First One leads to interpre-

tation that perfection contains universal beauty, that is, perfection in itself already implies brilliance and splendor of the highest kind.

Achieving full perfection also consists in fully realizing natural harmony, a necessary attribute of which is inner beauty and brilliance and splendor; all they come in full force together with the very being of the First One. Al-Farabi highlights that "since the First is in the most excellent state of existence, its beauty surpasses the beauty of every other beautiful existent and applies to its splendor and its brilliance" (Al-Farabi, 1998). In this regard, as well as with the above description of absolute perfection of the First One, its beauty has an absolute and universal character, which is beyond any comparison with beauty and brilliance of earthly objects and elements within the human world, including relative beauty of man. No matter how beautiful a man is or how much he would admire the beauty of a thing; but in relation to excellent beauty of the First One, a man loses perfection of his beauty and beauty of things. At the same time, a man also comes to recognition that his own beauty and the beauty of surrounding things are more than accidental. "But we have beauty and splendor and brilliance as a result of accidental qualities (of our souls), and of what our bodies have in them and because of exterior things, but they are not in our substance" (Al-Farabi, 1998). Thus, the absolute beauty of the First One is its substance and its essence; they manifest itself in its absolute perfection. Together with splendor and brilliance of perfection itself, the First One comprehends its own excellence, that is, beauty and brilliance and splendor express the perfection of the First One and contribute to understanding of the First One as a fundamental essence and substance of all reality. In other words, beauty, and excellence merge together as identical attributes of the First One.

Further, al-Farabi draws our attention to the fact that anyone thinking about perfection of the First One experiences a feeling of deep delight, since existence of the First One contains pleasure and delight and enjoyment. The very possibility of the existence of everything in this world, which is founded thanks to the universal essence of the First One, is a fundamental good and therefore gives surrounding world and humanity a feeling of deep enjoyment. Al-Farabi explains that pleasure and delight and enjoyment are the result of awareness of the surrounding being perfection and possibility of the universe to generally exist; and this fact is based on the perfection of the First Existing One. Its perfection is extreme beauty, which does not need to be described

by any outward attributes, since such a description through something outward would mean that the perfect beauty of the First One is not perfection in its absolute fullness.

Nevertheless, al-Farabi notes that man is not able to know and comprehend the very supreme enjoyment because of awareness of that surrounding being exists in its universality and it is based on perfection of the very First Existing One. "The pleasure which the First enjoys is a pleasure whose character we do not understand and whose intensity we fail to apprehend" (Al-Farabi, 1998). Al-Farabi further explains that man understands the pleasure of universal existence, based on the perfection of the First One, thanks to man's own feeling of pleasure. However, of course, human feeling of pleasure is far less perfect than pleasure, which refers to the beauty and enjoyment of the First One. But man can assume that enjoyment and pleasure of comprehending the First One are very deep and in no way indescribable through other categories, if man turns to analogy with his own pleasure, either through his own representing or through his own intellect.

The appeal to apprehension of pleasure is extremely important, since in addition to knowing the perfection of the First One, a man also needs to come into contact with its perfection on a sensual level. Apprehension of the perfection of the First One gives man feelings of true happiness and, as al-Farabi claims, "we experience in this state an amount of (degree) of pleasure which we assume to surpass every other pleasure in intensity and we are filled with a feeling of utmost self-enjoyment as a result of the knowledge which we have attained" (Al-Farabi, 1998). Al-Farabi however mentions that this feeling of utmost self-enjoyment in us lasts a short time and disappears speedily. He explains such fragility of such feeling of utmost self-enjoyment rather by the imperfection of human spirit and the deficiency of a complete universal ability to grasp the perfection and ontological excellence of the First One.

Continuing his proof of limited human apprehension of the excellent beauty and perfection of the First One, al-Farabi tells us with full confidence that there is no complete appropriation between First One's apprehension of enjoyment about perfection of the existing reality, which is based on the First One's perfection, and human apprehension of enjoyment because of perfection of the First One. Even if such an appropriation can take place, it would be very insignificant that on its basis it is almost impossible to describe the true enjoyment that a man can feel in the process of apprehension the

perfection of the First One. Insignificance of appropriation between human enjoyment with the perfection of the First One and enjoyment of the First One itself is explained, firstly, by the very deficiency of human soul and, secondly, by the short duration in time of human understanding of true enjoyment. As well, if such an appropriation between human enjoyment and the perfect enjoyment of the First One can exist, then this appropriation must be eternal in time. However, al-Farabi emphasizes that human understanding of enjoyment is short-lived, and asks whether such appropriation makes any sense at all if it is not eternal in time. In this sense, al-Farabi is quite reasonably surprised and poses a question “how can that which is very deficient have anything in common with that which is of utmost perfection?” (Al-Farabi, 1998).

However, al-Farabi does not further dwell on a question of deficiency of the above-mentioned appropriation between human understanding of perfection and perfection of the very First One. Al-Farabi points to one of the most important feelings, which is directly related to the inner deep essence of the First One and which is also in a conventional form inherent in human feelings – it is a feeling of perfect love. Love exists as active culmination of the connection between perfect essence of the First Being and its expression in the surrounding universe. Therefore, al-Farabi emphasizes here a very important difference between perfect love of the First One and human understanding of love. He puts emphasis on correspondence of liking and object of love. This is the most important difference that manifests in a fact that in the First One (or, in the First Cause) “subject and object of affection, subject and object of pride, subject and object of love are identical” (Al-Farabi, 1998). Al-Farabi describes process and phenomenon of love within the framework of perfection of the First One as a fact that it – being perfect – also seems to be perfect in its relationship to itself; that is, relationship of the First One to itself is nothing but perfect love. Since the First One is perfect, its relation to itself must be perfect; and the most perfect relation of anything to anything is obviously love. In expressing perfect love towards itself the First One (which is, at the same time, the First Cause of everything including phenomenon of love itself) makes an endlessly manifested cycle of the universe in the framework of universal harmony. “It has been maintained secondly that the concept of ‘Being’ is indefinable. This is deduced from its supreme universality, and rightly so, if *definitio fit per genus proximum et differentiam specijicam*”

(Heidegger, 1962: p. 23, 480 p.). The First One, as the First Cause, is an expression of infinite good which is equivalent to infinite love. Therefore, al-Farabi describes the First One’s love as love that is addressed to it since it “is the First Mover who is incorporeal and source of all beings. Through the first intellect, the First Cause gives beings all incorporeal and corporeal existence in an emanationistic process” (Turker, 2011: 74-75, 260). Such perfect love cannot be biased as a one-sided narcissism, since it is thanks to understanding and deep understanding of love that is carried out by the First One it becomes possible to realize universal good and the existence of being itself.

Since the First One expresses itself outside of any conceptual definitions, accordingly, its love as pleasure (just as its pleasure as love) cannot be reduced to any definition. Essence of its love is universal and infinite in contrast to love that a man can experience. Al-Farabi writes that perfect love of the First One is expressed “opposite of what exists in our case. What is loved in us is excellence and beauty, but what loves in us is not excellence and beauty, but is another faculty, which is however not what is loved in us. What loves in us, then, is not identical with what is loved in us” (Al-Farabi, 1998). In other words, due to that human soul is deficient, we cannot fully understand excellence of the First’s love; and therefore as a consequence, we are also not able to feel and express love in the same way as the First One does. That is, everything that a man is distinguished in his deficiency from the First One is mainly comes from the fact that a man is not able to apprehend excellence of the First One in its full and true sense. The same applies to apprehension itself: apprehension of the First One (as well as universal self-knowledge of the First One is aimed at apprehending its own fundamental nature) has a perfect and comprehensive essence. Universal self-knowledge of the First One is so universal that human apprehension is done only as a one-sided and often short-term process that consists of a set of mostly accidental stages of clarification of certain aspects in an object of knowledge. In this regard, perfect knowledge and perfect enjoyment of the good and beauty of the First One, extracted from it, exist as the of perfection itself, which the First One infinitely implements in its being as the First Cause.

Al-Farabi also notes two important aspects that indicate the cardinal difference between perfect love of the First One and love of man. Firstly, manifestation of love in human soul has at least two sides – an object of love and a liking man himself who carries

out the very process of love. We can love and at the same time we understand love as something separate from our soul. Moreover, we ourselves – being deficient creatures – cannot claim that our love can be perfect. Our big problem is that we do not understand the very essence of true and excellent love. So, saying that phenomenon of human love contains two hypostases – liking man and an object of love – means that human love does not correspond to the essence of perfect love of the First One. Therefore, it often happens that a man often turns the object of his love into a faculty of his absolute possession. In this regard, man demonstrates his egoism and complete misunderstanding of the essence of perfect love. Secondly, in the framework of human love, man himself is separated from the essence of love, that is, we may be in a state of love, but we may not feel love. In other words, in human soul, love is a transient and short-existing phenomenon; love in us is a kind of state of our soul, which may manifest with all force, and may never appear. In contrast, the First One is love itself. It is an endless expression of love, for which love is not just a temporary state of its essence (like in case of man), but for which love is its very fundamental and natural and true essence.

Results and discussion

Al-Farabi really believed that only general approach to philosophy can give a man profoundly productive results of his research in such areas as human mind, theology, social reality, etc. That's why al-Farabi's approach was a kind of methodology in which we can meet his efforts to include into it history of philosophical thought, mainly, the legacy of Greek thinkers. "And since Alfarabi believed in the unity of the human mind, the unity of philosophy, according to his view, will pave the way for the unity of reason and revelation, and ultimately the future of the Islamic state depends on this unity. Thus we can recognize three levels of this reconciliation: Plato and Aristotle, Greek philosophy and the Islamic faith, and reason and revelation. The third level is the most significant one since it announces the unity of a political state that stands on both reason and religion. This intellectual effort clearly made Alfarabi earn the reputation of the founder of Islamic philosophy" (Ezzaher, 2008: p. 355, pp. 347-391).

So, al-Farabi's methodology is profoundly wide which allows us to conduct pretty deep research in sphere of his theological works.

Conclusion

Thus, since the First One is perfection in its ultimate hypostasis, the love expressed by it also has a perfect essence. As al-Farabi notes that "in the First's case, subject and object of love and affection are identical" (Al-Farabi, 1998). But, as we have already indicated above, due to the fact that a man is not able to know excellence of the First One, the essence of the most perfect love remains for him beyond the limits of true comprehension. Al-Farabi proves that the First One is self-sufficient in its excellence and infinite love, while a man in his aspiration to comprehend the First One is also affected by the First's love, while the First One himself does not have any attachments to any being. And for the same reason, it cannot be said that the First One loves man; for this loving attitude of the First One would decrease its perfect love to the level of a one-sided love as it often happens in case of man. Excellent love of the First One extends to all reality and cannot be interpreted as love, which is fragmented into separate objects or subjects or phenomena, which exist in this world. Therefore, al-Farabi writes that "it does not make any difference whether anybody likes it or not, loves it or not: it is the first object of love and the first object of affection" (Al-Farabi, 1998). Here, al-Farabi explains that we must understand correctly and ontologically the First's fundamental love, and not so that it loves a man (or a particular person) more than any inanimate object in nature. Thus, the theology of al-Farabi acquired in the idea of God as perfection some other, deeper form of understanding of God than it was in the theological doctrines of his predecessors. "From ancient times to the present philosophers have commonly maintained that there exist one or more divine realities which are too perfect for human intelligence to apprehend, and which therefore can only be the objects of a negative theology – that is a theology expressing not what a divine nature is but what it is not" (Wallis and Bregman, 1992: p. 124, 531 p.). In this article, we have tried to describe the general picture presented by the Turkic thinker al-Farabi regarding his idea of God. Of course, the theological layer that is represented in his system cannot be described within the framework of a small study, and this only confirms that the legacy of al-Farabi must be studied in full, describing the treatises written by him.

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