AL-FARABI ON HUMAN

Tien Rohmatin

Abstract: The Discourse about humans to this day continues to be actual and contextual and has always been an important issue. The question of who, what, and where humans are is still a matter of debate among scientists, philosophers, and theologians. In general, among philosophers, scientists, and theologians, humans are understood in three ways: First, the group that holds that humans are only material that occupies space, can be seen, touched, measured, counted, and so on. The second group is having a view that human nature is only the spirit. While the third group has a view that humans are made up of matter and spirit perfectly and simultaneously or consist of body and spirit (soul). This paper describes the thoughts of a Muslim philosopher, al-Farabī about humans. Al-Farabī is a Muslim philosopher who is known as al-Mu‘allim al-Thānî (Second Teacher) after Aristotle who was nicknamed al-Mu‘allim al-Awwal (First Teacher). An honorary title was given to him for his ability to review the thoughts of Greek philosophers, especially Aristotle. Humans according to Al-Farabi are two-dimensional beings. The physical dimension is in the form of a material body and the spiritual dimension consists of the soul (al-nafṣ) and spirit (al-rūḥ).

Keywords: Human Philosophy; Natural Philosophy; Al-Farabi; Materialism, Spiritualism

Kata Kunci: Filsafat Manusia, Filsafat Alam, Al-Farabi, Materialisme, Spiritualisme

Introduction

Some scientists and philosophers understand humans as physical-material beings that are real, clearly visible, touchable, and quantifiable. This understanding is embraced by the flow of materialism with figures including Anaximenes (585 BC-528 BC), Anaximandros (610 SM-545 SM), Thales (625 SM-545 SM), Demokritos (460 SM-370 SM), Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679M), Lamettrie (1709-1715), Feuerbach (1804-1877), Spencer (1820-1903), and Karl Marx (1818-1883).

For materialism followers, matter is the essence of all things that exist in nature, including humans. The main characteristics of physical or material reality are that matter occupies space and time, has a broadness (res extensa), and objective nature. Therefore, the material can be measured, identified, counted, and observed. Meanwhile, the spiritual realm or the soul, which does not occupy space and time, cannot be called the essence of reality, and therefore its existence is denied. The things that enable humans to move, stand, walk, think and do activities, according to materialism, are all movements from the human brain.

The flow of spiritualism states the opposite, namely, that man is his spirit/soul. According to this school, the essence of all that exists is the spirit or soul. Matter or body is a shadow. This school in classical times was embraced by many philosophers: Plato (477SM-347SM), Spinoza (1632-1677M), Leibniz (1685-1753 AD), Berkeley (1685-1753 AD), Immanuel
Kant (1724-1881 AD), J Fichte (1762-1814 AD), F. Schelling (1755-1854 AD), and G. Hegel (1770-1831 AD). They believe that humans are not only bodies, physical, but there is something that moves and controls the life of the body and that is the main thing, namely the soul. The spirit does not occupy space, and cannot be seen, touched, and proven by the five senses. The premise of this school is that the spirit is the most valuable essence, higher in value than the body and matter. For example, when someone is dead, which means there is no soul anymore, then it is said to him “he has gone”, “he has passed away” and so on.8

While other groups believe that humans are not only material (body) or soul, but a combination of body and soul. This theory was embraced by a group called dualism with its characters namely Plato (427-347 BC), Aristotle (384-322 BC), Rene Descartes (1596-1650 AD), Fechner (1802-1887 AD), and A Schopenhauer (1788-1860 AD). This group considers that humans are essentially made up of two substances, namely the material substance and the spiritual substance, or the body (matter) and the soul (spirit). Each of both substances is an original element whose existence does not depend on the other.

In the Islamic world, Muslim philosophers from al-Kindī (801-873 AD), al-Farabī (870-950 AD), Ibn Sīnā (980-1037 AD) to al-Ghazālī (1058-1111 AD) understood humans as a dualistic creature, two elements, physical and spiritual, creature consisted of body and soul. The explanation of the dualism of Muslim philosophers mostly emphasizes two terms, namely the body (al-jasad/al-jism) and the soul (al-nafs), while the dualism understood by al-Farabī to explain human nature uses three terms, namely al-jasad/ al-jism, al-nafs, and al-rūḥ. This paper will prove the view that Al-Farabī was the first philosopher to introduce human nature in three elements: al-jism, al-nafs, and al-rūḥ.

West Philosophers’ Views on Humans and The Essence of Materialism

Materialism as it is known is an understanding in philosophy that has the view that matter is everything. The matter is the only substance. All things matter and all phenomena are the results of material interactions. Materialism does not recognize the existence of non-material things such as God, Angels, Jinn, Spirits, and so on.

The notion of this materialism started with the ancient Greeks where the philosophers of that time interpreted the form by returning it to matter, namely water, air, or something else. Figures who have this view include Thales (625-545BC), Anaximenes (585-528BC), Heraclites (540-480BC), Empedocles (490-430 BC), Democritus (460-370 BC), and
others. This view developed and reached its peak in the modern age.\(^9\)

Among the most mature thought of ancient materialism is Democritus, the founder of atomism. According to this view, all matter that exists is made up of atoms that fill space. These atoms are innumerable entities and cannot be further divided. Among its properties, it has shape and size. It can be circular, perforated, or curved. The sizes are also different and cannot be divided. The atoms are constantly moving and from motion to one another compound with each other and form a certain variety of forms. From there, an object is formed. If the atoms separate from each other, then the object is destroyed.\(^{10}\)

The view of materialism continues to grow. Based on these developments, the materialists have different views in their detailed explanations. However, they share the same view that a mind is a form of matter that has special features over other matter because it has the power, type, and motion of life and thought. According to them, there is no such thing as spirit, spirit or reason apart from matter, because matter has occupied a space in the mind and given it life, motion, and thought. The intuitional phenomena that exist are nothing but a description of the function of the mind.\(^{11}\) To see a broader description, here are the thoughts of some materialism figures.

**L. Feuerbach**

Feuerbach was a student of Hegel\(^{12}\) who provides a critique of Hegel’s core idea which states that God (the invisible) is primary, while humans (the visible) are only the puppets. Feuerbach states that humans are not shadows. Humans are real and undeniable.\(^{13}\) Based on this statement, it is very clear that only humans are recognized for their existence. Other than humans -God, angels, and spirits- are rejected.

Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach, a German philosopher in his work The Essence of Christianity, as quoted by Jonathan Wolff, stated that the reason why humans worship God is not that God created humans in His image, but because humans created God in their image.\(^{14}\)

Humans, according to Feuerbach, were not created by God, but God was created by humans. The process consists of three stages: (1) Human experiences that he can ask questions continuously, that he has a consciousness that seems infinite. Consciousness can contain anything. The boundaries were never found. (2) “Infinity” which was at first only a property of consciousness, was eventually made into something independent, outside of humans. “Infinity” began to be written in large letters by humans. “Infinity” was made by God. (3) This “God”, who is
only a creation of man, is honored in the service. That means humans become servants of their creation. Humans see themselves as “creatures” of their creation. Or, he has projected his freedom beyond himself, namely upon his creation. But in doing so, a human loses something. He is alienated from himself. To be free from alienation disease, the process must be returned. Humans must understand that “God” is only a creation of himself, so he is no longer a servant. Man, who has become a creature of his creation, the object of his object (and therefore is not free), can become free again after understanding his mistake.\(^\text{15}\)

Feuerbach is famous for his statement “Homo homini Deus “Human is God for others”. Or it could be written “Human is God for others” because the most sublime creature is man. That called “God” is a dream of humans. The word “God” must be replaced with “human nature”. Religion must be replaced by politics. Because human has been alienated from themselves for too long. Now, Feuerbach says, man must be returned to himself.\(^\text{16}\)

In his work Das Wesen des Christentums (The Nature of the Christian Religion) as quoted by Harry Hamersma, Feuerbach explains that the task of philosophy is “to turn God’s friends into human friends, to turn believers into thinkers, to turn people who worship into people who work. transforming future inhabitants of heaven into disciples of this world, turning Christians who call themselves ‘half angel, half animal’ into one hundred percent human”.\(^\text{17}\)

Religion according to Feuerbach as quoted by Franz Magnis Suseno, is only a human projection. God, angels, heaven, and hell do not have a reality of themselves, but only images formed by humans about themselves, so that it is human’s imagination about his nature.\(^\text{18}\)

“Religion is a human act against himself, or more precisely against his essence, but the treatment of its essence is like against other creatures. The divine essence is nothing but human essence or human nature which is separated from individual human boundaries, and becomes real, physical, and objectified, which means that it is seen and worshiped as another creature that is different from it. Therefore, all the characteristics of the divine essence are the characteristics of human essence.”\(^\text{19}\)

Feuerbach’s view is based on an assumption about how humans become themselves. To be oneself, one must become an object for oneself. So, he must objectify himself by projecting himself outside of himself to see his essence. Feuerbach describes it as an artist who can realize and see himself as an artist when he succeeds in projecting his talent or essence into the form of a work of art, namely a painting. It is by looking at his objectification
that he knows himself. So does religion. Religion has a positive value because it is a projection of human nature. But unfortunately, humans forget that the projection is himself. He was so impressed by the projection that he regarded it as an independent reality. And that means humans do not try to be themselves according to that image. Instead of trying to realize his essence, he passively expects blessings from him. Thus, religion alienates man from himself.\textsuperscript{20}

Therefore, according to Feuerbach, humans can only eliminate their isolation and become themselves when they leave religion, religion in its meaning as belief in an almighty God. He must draw religion into himself.\textsuperscript{21} Feuerbach’s views were accused of demeaning theology. However, this assumption was rejected by Feuerbach. He corrected the accusation by stating that theology was very important, not as teaching about God, but as anthropology. Theology teaches a lot about human nature. Man is the center, beginning, and end of religion. All human relations are religious. Theology is anthropology. This means that the object of religion, which is called Theo, “God”, only explains human nature. God is not of human origin. Rather, man is the origin of God. Allah is a book in which all the most sublime feelings and thoughts are written, a genealogical album that includes all the names of the most sacred and beloved objects.\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{Karl Marx}

All writers on Marx agree that his thought was influenced by three important components of the most advanced thought of his time, namely classical German philosophy, French socialism, and British economics. Marx is the sharpest person in looking at a social life, namely that life is driven by economic motives. His sharpness about economic motives made him accused of being the most reductionist person in looking at a social life. In philosophy, Marx is a person who holds the view that humans are economic creatures: homo economicus. Human relations, according to him, are economic relations, to be precise, production relations. In the relations of production among humans, Marx always saw that those are oppressed in human history. There are two contradictory positions (bipolar opposition), employer-slave, landowner-cultivator, and so on until the fever of industrial capitalism penetrated Europe, namely the bourgeoisie versus the proletariat.\textsuperscript{23}

Humans according to Marx as quoted by Ismail Syarafa, are something in nature or a collection of three-dimensional objects formed from flesh, blood, bones and so on which apply to the natural laws that have been revealed by science, as these laws apply to matter. other than humans. Marx
and other materialist thinkers denied the immaterial existence of the spirit and other immaterial existences. On that basis, he denies the existence of God and considers the problem of divinity and metaphysics as a big lie that tries to take the position of the natural sciences which in Marx's view are the only sciences that can solve various problems of reality, including the laws that govern the development of individuals and society.24

Marx's serious concern was focused on the liberation of the workers. According to Marx, workers are among the people who have always been disadvantaged in history. If the workers want to make changes, they must be the drivers of history. The movement was carried out continuously until later history recorded that this workers' movement did not succeed and did not provide changes where it should, the Marxist revolution was even successful in non-capitalist countries such as Russia and China.25

Karl Marx mapped his theory into dialectical materialism and historical materialism. In dialectical materialism, the matter is the only reality. Dialectical materialism is a whole process of continuous change. The material factor is always the determinant, while the consciousness factor must be determined by the created material state. Thus, the movement of society, the movement of history, of course, is returned to the material condition.26

Historical materialism views humans as historical actors. This means that as actors and creators of history, humans can make history, either on a large or small scale. Humans in the conception of adherents of this view can only be understood as long as they are placed in a historical context.27

Karl Marx's historical materialism approach rests on the proposition that the production and distribution of goods and services is the basis for assisting humans in developing their existence. He also stated that historical change occurred with the conflict of social classes. So, the social classes are historical changes, meaning that those who determine the course of history are social classes, not individuals.28

Marx's real aim was to free man from the pressures of economic necessity, so that humans may become fully human. Marx's concern is the emancipation of humans as an individual, the elimination of alienation, and the restoration of human's ability to fully relate themselves to each other and nature. Marx's goal, namely socialism, which is based on his theory of humans, is essentially prophetic messianism.29 Marx describes his historical method succinctly, as quoted by Erich Formm,

“How human produce his means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the actual means which human finds in his existence and which he has to recreate. This mode of production cannot be taken
for granted as a reproduction of the physical existence of individuals. But this mode of production is more likely to be a definite form of individual activity, a definite mode of human life. These individuals exist when expressing their lives. What they look like is similar to their production, that is, to what they produce and how they produce. The properties of individuals depend on their material conditions which in turn determine their production.”

According to historical materialism, the path and process leading to the liberation of mankind take place through the process of work. Because it is through work, humans realize themselves. This work takes on its pattern and form in the socio-economic structure, in the increasingly advanced production method, in the improvement of tools, and in a more humane work structure. Throughout this historical process, finally (after the long struggle to overcome the alienation of man in his work) the victory of the working class was achieved. For Marx, production patterns and labor relations determine the course of human history in a dialectical process that includes thesis-antithesis-synthesis. In this process, class struggle acts as a powerful motor.

The thesis here according to Marx is original communism that still is primitive and instinctive, a society in which production (hunting and fishing) and consumption are carried out together. The means of production are common property, but still primitive. The developed atmosphere is an atmosphere of freedom, togetherness, and brotherhood. There has been no attempt to control and suppress the rulers because the State does not yet exist. The antithesis begins in a developing society, where production and consumption are no longer run together. The means of production are no longer shared property. However, the status of ownership may be the property of individuals and must be defended against attempts of ownership by others. This is where the emergence of law, power, and coercion. In a patriarchal society, there has been great growth in private property, the wage system, and the power of human economic power. During this time, slavery and servitude began to develop. This antithesis culminated in the capitalist industrial age. In which the means of production are entirely being the property of a few capitalists, for their interest regulates labor relations which in turn harm the proletariat. The worker is alienated from the output of his work, from his fellow proletariat, and from his humanity.

Its synthesis, according to Marx in the Communist Manifesto as quoted by Van der Weij, is the realization of a classless society: “The old bourgeois society with its classes and class conflicts will be replaced by an association in which the free development of everyone is a condition for the freedom
of all people.\textsuperscript{33}

Thus, a society of worker humans will be formed who jointly own the goods of production and the means of production and also have the same working conditions and ways of communicating. Finally, humans can live together in freedom, equality, and brotherhood.\textsuperscript{34}

Jean-Paul Sartre\textsuperscript{35}

“Human is completely responsible for himself.” This statement does not only belong to the view of materialism but also the views of an existentialist figure, Jean-Paul Sartre. According to Sartre, existence precedes essence. Namely that human first exists: he materializes in the world, and encounters himself. If humans as existentialists imagine cannot be defined, then it is because the man was originally nothing. Humans will not become anything until he will become a figure that they formed themselves.\textsuperscript{36}

According to Sartre, a human exists primarily as a being who projects himself into a future and does so consciously. Humans are projections that have a subjective existence, which is different from the existence of creatures such as worms, spreading mushrooms, or cauliflower. Before that self-projection, nothing existed, not even divine intelligence. Man will gain existence only when he has become the person he is projected to be, not merely the person he wants to be. What we usually understand as “will” is a conscious decision after we make ourselves what we are. If existence precedes essence, then man is responsible for himself. So, the first effect of existentialism is to make every human being aware of himself.\textsuperscript{37}

The philosophy of existentialism deals with the way humans exist in the world. In other words, this philosophy focuses on how humans manifest and exist as the central theme of the discussion. This method only exists specifically in humans, because only humans exist. Animals, plants, and rocks do exist, but they cannot be called existence because they have no awareness of themselves and their surroundings.\textsuperscript{38}

In his work “\textit{L’Etre et le Neant}” (exist and not exist), a phenomenological ontology, as quoted by Dick Hartoko, Sartre explains that only humans exist, dealing with emptiness. Humans are destined to live freely, but freedom is a burden, even torture. Human is forced to fill their freedom but in vain.\textsuperscript{39}

In his ontology, Sartre distinguishes two kinds of existence: etre-en-soi, which exists within himself such as in things, and etre-pour-soi, which only humans enjoy. Human realizes themselves as a subject, not an object, and their consciousness constantly negates.\textsuperscript{40}
Short on al-Farabī

Al-Farabī’s full name is Abū Naṣr Muḥammad b. Tarkhan b. Uzalag or Auzalag al-Farabī, better known as al-Farabī. In the West, he is known as al-Farabius or Avennasr. Al-Farabī is the son of a Persian general who served as warlord of the Samani Dynasty and gained autonomous power over the Transoxania and Persian regions from 874-999M, while his mother was Turkish. He was born in Wasij, Farab District, Turkistan, Transoxania (north of Iran) in 259 AH/872 AD. Unfortunately, this city no longer exists, it was formerly located in Central Turkey.

Smart little Al-Farabī spent his childhood and basic education in his homeland. Little Al-Farabī started his basic education by learning the Quran. Learning the Quran at that time became a very popular tradition in the concept of classical Islamic education. The influence of the Quran is visible on the intellectual and spiritual side of al-Farabī. He also studied grammar, literature, and religious sciences, especially fiqh (Islamic law), the science of hadith, and the interpretation of the Quran. His great interest in linguistics makes him proficient in Turkistan, Kurdistan, and Persian. Then he continued his studies in Bukhārā, then he completed his higher education in Baghdad. Bukhārā at that time was ruled by Nasr bin Ahmad and was the capital of the state and the intellectual center of the Samanid dynasty which claimed to be Persians. Persian culture developed very rapidly. It was in Bukhārā that young al-Farabī learned about Islamic sciences such as fiqh, Persian language, culture, and philosophy as well as music. His musical skills were proved through his work al-Mūsīqah al-Kubrā until its peak when al-Farabī was trusted to carry out the task as a judge (qāḍī). However, position and position do not dazzle with the charms of the world and do not make him complacent. In the deepest recesses of his heart, he only feels interest and satisfaction, and comfort in his heart through the search and deepening of knowledge, studying philosophy and metaphysical truths. Finally, he left a very prestigious position as qāḍī.

From Bukhārā, al-Farabī headed for Harran, a city in Turkey, one of the centers of Greek culture in Asia Minor. Harran al-Farabī studied Greek philosophy with a Nestorian Christian scientist and a prominent Alexandrian school of philosophy from Merv, namely Yuhana b. Hailan (908-932). Together with this teacher al-Farabī pursued various sciences until Yuhana invited al-Farabī to study Greek philosophy in Constantinople. The two of them (teacher-student) lived in this city for 8 years.

In 922 AD, al-Farabī returned to Baghdad. He returned to study ancient philosophy, especially the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle with another teacher, Abū Bishr Mattā b. Yūnus is an accomplished
commentator, and translator. The results of this study made Al-Farabī very master with deep mastery of the thoughts of Plato and Aristotle, which he then combined with the knowledge he owned both about the Quran and other Islamic sciences.\textsuperscript{51}

At that time, Baghdad was led by a very young caliph aged 13 years, namely the caliph Muqtadir Billāh (908-935 AD). His very young age and lack of experience and knowledge made al-Muqtadir unable to position himself as a ruler and could not create a solid and independent government. As a teenager growing up, the caliph loved to have fun, play with girls and drink alcohol. He entrusted government affairs to his mother and his confidants. This condition made al-Muqtadir’s government weak, trust in him faded, political turmoil continued to occur, and Baghdad became an unstable country until finally he was killed by his confidant who harbored anger and heartache.\textsuperscript{52}

While in Baghdad, al-Farabī spent much of his time studying various disciplines. His persistence and seriousness made al-Farabī became an expert in various fields of science such as religion, language, philosophy, \textit{mantiq} (logic), physics, divinity, natural sciences, ethics, sociology,\textsuperscript{53} medicine, chemistry, urban science, environmental science, jurisprudence, military science, and music. Regarding his expertise in the art of music, there are sources, that state that he created a musical instrument similar to the piano and wrote a book about music which is considered one of the important books in the field of music. He is also known to be good at playing musical instruments. He is a perfectionist in terms of rhythm and music playing. He is also good at evoking and influencing the soul of his listeners through the music he plays.\textsuperscript{54} While in Baghdad al-Farabī was busy teaching, researching, writing, and reviewing philosophy books. His famous students were Yahyā b. ʿAdī (893-974 AD).\textsuperscript{55} Al-Farabī is also said to have taught logic to a grammarian, Abū Bakr b. al-Sarrāj (d. 928M), who in turn taught al-Farabī Arabic grammar.\textsuperscript{56}

Al-Farabī distanced himself from the political struggles and conflicts that took place in Baghdad. In the year 330 AH/945 AD,\textsuperscript{57} because the political situation in Baghdad worsened, al-Farabī left for Damascus which was then ruled by the Ikhsidīyah dynasty. In this area, he did not stay long. When he arrived in Damascus there was a political conflict between the Ikhsidīyah and Hamdānīyah dynasties. The areas of Aleppo and Damascus are controlled by Hamdānīyah.\textsuperscript{58} He then went to Egypt. After living for some time in Egypt, al-Farabi returned to Damascus, then to Aleppo at the invitation of Sultan Sayf al-Dawlah al-Hamdānī (916-967M), the crown prince of the Hamdānīyah dynasty. During this period, the Sultan
initiated a meeting of scholars, scientists, and scholars: poets, philologists, philosophers, and other experts. From this moment a very positive academic culture was built. There is no racial bias (ethnicity) or prejudice (prejudice) that can damage the scientific and cultural atmosphere so academics from Persia, Turkey, and Arabia discuss, debate, disagree, and agree without any personal conflict between them. At this meeting, al-Farabi met with famous poets such as al-Mutanabbi’ (d. 965M), Abu al-Faraj (d. 968M), and the linguist, Ibn Khalawayh (d. 980 AD). The presence of al-Farabi in their midst created a deep impression and great admiration for the Sultan and other scholars. They were impressed and amazed by al-Farabi’s intelligence, humility, and intelligence in linguistics, philosophy, and musical talent. Therefore, the Sultan invited him to move to Aleppo. In Aleppo, al-Farabi was given a special occupation and position.59

Other awards and honors that Al-Farabi received include recognition from historians. Al-Farabi is considered linked between Greek philosophy and Islamic thought. They value and respect and recognize him as a great philosopher. There are at least six prominent historians—in their respective works—who appreciate the greatness of Al-Farabi, among others:

First, Ibn al-Nadim (d. 995 AD) is a biographer who is famous for his work al-Fihrist. Second, Ibn Ṣayd al-Andalusi (d. 462H/1070M) a qâdi, scientist, and historian praised al-Farabi in his book Tabaqât al-Ummam.60 Third, Zahir al-Dîn al-Bayhaqi. Fourth, al-Qafṭî (d. 646 H/1248 AD), the author of the book Ikhbār al-Ulamā’ bi-Akhbār al-Hukmā’. Al-Qafṭî said that al-Farabi paved the way for later figures to understand the thoughts of Greek philosophers.61 Fifth, Ibn Abi Ḥusaybī ’ah (d. 668H), the author of the book ‘Uyun al-’Anbā’ fi Ṭabaqāt al-Âṭibbā’, and the sixth Ibn Khalikān (d. 1282M) a Kurdish Muslim scholar who is known for his commendable work Wafayât al-A’yan praised against al-Farabi: “al-Farabi was a well-known Wiseman, author of various works in the fields of logic, music, and other sciences. He is also the greatest Muslim philosopher. He developed an elaborate emanations scheme, linked to the metaphysics and cosmology of Plotinus (d. 270) and Proclus (d. 450), known as Neoplatonism. He wrote the first Islamic political treatise entitled, Ārā’ Abl al-Madinah al-Fadilah (Opinions of the Residents of the Main City). This work is inspired by Plato’s Republic. He was also the first outstanding logician to paraphrase or comment on Aristotle’s entire corpus of logic, known as the Organon.62

In addition, the historian Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406 AD) and the philosopher Ibn Sina also gave al-Farabi high respect and praise. Ibn Sina admitted that he had taken many benefits from al-Farabi when writing his
The influence of al-Farabi in addition to Ibn Rushd (d. 595 H), and Ibn Maymun (d. 601 H), also reached medieval Christian philosophers who studied al-Farabi’s books and the works of Ibn Sina. The Christian intellectual and philosophical tradition were heavily influenced by Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina. Al-Farabi, the philosopher who is remembered as a polite, modest, and low-profile person died in 950 AD. At that time, he was 80 years old. Sultan Sayf al-Dawlah also prayed and carried his body to the cemetery outside the gates of the city of Damascus.

During his lifetime al-Farabi was a prolific writer. Some of his works include: (1) al-Jamʿ Bayn al-Raʾyay al-Hakimin, Aflaṭūn wa-Aristūtālis (Bringing together Both Opinions of the philosophers of Plato and Aristotle), the English edition of the Book of According between the ideas of the Divine Plato and Aristotle; (2) Ārāʾ Abl al-Madinah al-Fāḍīlah; (3) al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyah (Civil Government); (4) Sharḥ Risālat Zayn al-Kabīr al-Yūnānī (Comments on Zeno’s work); (5) Haqiqāt Ghārd Arīstūtālīs fi Kitāb Mā Warāʾa al-Ṭabīʾah (The essence of Aristotle’s understanding of Metaphysics), 6. Iḥṣāʾ al-Ulūm (Epistemology); (7) Risālat fi al-Agl (Division of Intellect); (8) Risālat fi mā Yanbagbīʾ an Yuqaddama Qabla Taʾallum al-Falsafah (Treatise that must be studied before studying philosophy); (9) Kitab al-Musīqah al-Kubrā (Book of music); (10) Book of Taḥṣīl al-SAʿādah (Book of how to get happiness); 11. Treatise al-Tanbihʿ alā Sabil al-SAʿādah; (12) ʿUyūn al-Masāʾil; (13) Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam; (14) al-Dawa al-Qalbīyah.

Human Creation

In describing humans, Al-Farabi uses the terms body (jism), soul (al-nafs), and spirit (al-rūḥ). Jism is discussed as something physical in nature, originating from the material realm, while the soul (al-nafs) and spirit (al-rūḥ), both are discussed as something spiritual, originating from the amr realm or the divine realm. All three, jism-nafs-rūḥ unite as a whole human being. The body is also called jism, body and ʿalan, the soul with the term al-nafs, and the spirit with several terms, namely al-rūḥ, al-sīr, and al-bāṭin.

Humans are created from the mixture of four balanced elements which are then combined with divine elements in the form of spirit (al-rūḥ) and soul (al-nafs). As stated by al-Farabi in Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam,
الخلق و من عالم الأمر، لأن روحك من أمر ربك وبدنك من خلق ربك
إن الإنسان لمسقسم إلى سر وعلن: أما علنه فهو الجسم المحسوس بأعضائه وامشاجه،
وقد وقف الحس علي ظهره (و) دل التسريح علي باطن، واما سره فقوي روحه.

From this statement, according to al-Farabī, humans are creatures composed of natural elements in the form of bodies / jism which are ‘alan (real), and divine elements in the form of spirit, nafs, and ‘aql which are sirr (hidden). Furthermore, in Kitab al-Siyasah al-Madaniyyah, al-Farabī states that every creation in this world consists of a body (jism) and a soul (al-nafs).

قال أبو نصر: المبادئ التي بها قوام الأجسام والأعراض التي لها ست أصناف لها ست مراتب عظمى كل مرتبة منها تحوز صنفا منها، السبب الأول في المرتبة الأولى، الاسبان الثواني في المرتبة الثانية، العقل الفعال في المرتبة الثالثة، النفس في المرتبة الرابعة، الصورة في المرتبة الخامسة، المادة في المرتبة السادسة. ... ثلثة من سائر المراتب ليست هي أجساما ولا هي في أجسام: وهي السبب الأول والثواني والعقل الفعال. وثالثة هي في أجسام ولكنها ذاتها جسمًا: وهي النفس والصورة والمادة. والاجسام ستة أجناس: الجسم السماوي والحيوان الناطق والحيوان غير الناطق والنبات والجسم المعدني والاستفسات الأربع. والجملة المجمعة من هذه الأجسام ستة من الأجسام هي العالم.

Al-Farabī stated that the principles that make up the body (Ajsām) and its phenomena consist of six levels, namely: God as the First cause is in the first level; the second level is the second creation in the form of ten minds (al-Thawānī); at the third level is the Active Intellect (al-‘aql al-fā’āl); at the fourth level is the Soul (al-nafs); at the fifth level is Form (al-Ṣūrah) and at the sixth level is Matter (al-Mādah). The first three (God, Ten Intellects, and Active Intellect) are not bodies and do not exist in the body, while the other three (soul, form, and matter), exist in the body, but are (essentially) not the body itself. Bodies in nature consist of six categories, namely the mass of heaven (al-jism al-samawī), the body of humans (al-jism al-insānī), the body of animals (al-jism al-hayawān), plants (al-jism al-nabāt), solid objects (al-jism al-ma’danī), and the four elements (al-istiqṣāṭ).

When discussing jism in Kitab al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah, al-Farabī explained that in this world there are six kinds of jism, namely al-jism al-samawī (celestial bodies), al-jism al-hayawān al-nāṭiq (human body), al-jism al-hayawān ghayr al-nāṭiq (animal body), al-jism al-nabāt (plant body), al-jism al-ma’danī (metal/solid object) and al-jism al-istiqṣāṭ al-arba‘ (four elements).

Regarding jism al-samawī (celestial bodies) al-Farabī stated:
والاجسام السماوية تسع جمل في تسع مراتب، كل جملة تشمل عليها جسم واحد

كري. فالأول منها يستحوذ على جسم واحد فقط، فيتحرك حركة واحدة دورية سريعة جدا. والثاني جسم واحد يستحوذ على أجسام تحركها مشتركة؛ ولها من الحركة اثنان فقط، يشترك جميعها في الحركتين جميعاً. والثالث، وما بعده الي تمام السبعة، يشتمل كل واحد منها على أجسام كثيرة مختلفة في حركات لم يخصص كل واحد منها ويشترك في حركات أخر، وحالة هذه الأجسام كلها واحد ويتغير في الأنواع، ولا يمكن أن يوجد في كل نوع منها الا واحد بالعدد، لا يشاركه شيء آخر في ذلك النوع. فان الشمس لا يشاركها في وجودها شيء آخر من نوعها، وهي منفردة بوجودها. وكذلك القمر وسائر الكواكب.

The heavenly bodies numbered nine systems in nine levels. Each system includes a circular object. The first celestial bodies contained only one object and moved in a very fast rotational motion. The second celestial body includes objects with different motions but only in two movements. They all move in one of these two movements. Starting from the third object to the seventh, each includes objects whose movements differ from one another. Each has a special movement but also participates in one movement together. All of these objects are one type with various variants. Each variation can't be more than one. Others couldn't follow it in that variant. So, the existence of a variant of the Sun is not imitated by others. It is single in that variant. Likewise, the Moon and other planets or stars.

The other jism that is created under the moon occurs from the activity of the heavenly bodies and the mixing of the four elements (al-istiqsāt): earth, water, air, and fire. Regarding the nafs, al-Farabi explained that in this world there are three kinds of nafs, namely anfus al-Ajsâm al-samawīyah (the soul of celestial bodies), anfus al-hayawān al-nāṭiq (human soul), anfus al-hayawān ghayr al-nāṭiq (animal soul).

The soul of the heavenly bodies (anfus al-ajsām al-samawīyah), is alone in its substance and moves forever. It is nobler, more perfect, and the supreme form of the souls of all kinds of animals. It is not in a potential position, not in time, not bound by time, but it is always actual (bi-al-fiʿli).

The souls (al-nafs) of the heavenly bodies differ in species and substance from the souls of al-nafs al-nāṭiq and ghayr al-nāṭiq. The souls of celestial bodies are nobler, more perfect, and more important (afḍal) than the souls of the animal species that surround humans. This is because it is
not potential at all (*bi-al-quwwah*), not only at a time but is always actual (*bi-al-fiʿli*) because its intelligible objects always appear in it from the beginning and it is always intellectualizing its intellection objects.\(^{76}\)

As for the existence of the souls of the celestial bodies (*anfus al-ajsām al-samawiyah*) above the Moon with a descending hierarchy to the ten intellects, from the most important, then the less important, then the more or less, until ending with the least priority. The supreme and most perfect existence is the First. Whereas everything created by the First, in general, the most important thing is that which is not material and does not come from matter, and then the Heavenly Objects. The supreme existence of the Separate Intellect (*al-ashyāʾ al-mufāriqah*) is the Second (First Intellect). Thus sequentially until the Tenth (Eleventh Form). Then the supreme existence of the Celestial Bodies is the First Heaven, then the Second Heaven (the Stars), then successively until it ends on the Moon (the Eleventh Heaven). The Separate Intellect (*al-ashyāʾ al-mufāriqah*), which is the existence after the First, is ten. As for the Celestial Bodies in total, there are nine, thus total is nineteen.\(^{77}\)

The human soul (*anfus al-ḥayawān al-nāṭiq*); as a spiritual chaplain according to al-Farabī, emanates from the Tenth Intellect. The soul is the form of the body. The unity of the two (soul and body) is accidental, meaning that the two have different substances and the destruction of the body does not destroy the soul. The human soul is called *al-nafs al-nāṭiqah*, and comes from the divine (amr) realm, while the body comes from the realm of Khalq in the form, and has an appearance, grade, and movement. The soul is created when the body is ready to receive it.\(^{78}\)

*Nāṭiq* animal power is the power by which humans gain knowledge and creativity (*ṣināʿāt*), distinguish good deeds and morals from bad ones, contemplate what to do and what not to do, and thereby know what is beneficial and what is harmful, what is delicious and what is hurtful. Among the attractive forces, there are theoretical (*naẓarīyah*) and practical (*ʿamaliyah*); Some of the practical ones are vocational/professional (*miḥaniyyah*), and some are ‘moralistic’ (*murwīyah*).\(^{79}\)

Overall, according to al-Farabī, the human soul has several potential souls, namely the plant soul, animal soul, and rational soul.

1) The Spirit of Plants. This soul has three powers, namely *al-quwwah al-ghādhiyyah* (nutritional power) which functions to provide food by turning food into body shape; *al-quwwah al-murabbīyah* or *al-quwwah al-munammīyah*, the power of maintenance or growth that carries out the function of growth, which is to lead the body to perfection and development; and *al-quwwah al-muwallidah* (generative power) which
carries out the generative function or gives birth, so that the human generation will survive. These three forces exist in plants, animals, and humans.\(^{80}\)

\textit{Al-quwwah al-ghadhīyah} has one main power and several supporting forces. The main force is in the mouth, while some of the supporting forces are distributed throughout the body. This nutritional power, both the main one in the mouth and the support in all parts of the body, the process always follows the purpose of its leader, namely the heart (qalb). According to al-Farabī, \textit{al-quwwah al-ghadhīyah} has two main powers, the first in the mouth and the higher in the heart.\(^{81}\)

2) Animal Soul. This soul has two powers, namely the driving force (\textit{al-quwwah al-muḥarrikah}) and the power of understanding/perception (\textit{al-quwwah al-mudrikah}). The driving force is the force that is present in the muscles and nerves, and which induces the normal motion to accomplish the work the animal wants. This driving force sends a signal to the motion of the desire. The power of desire consists of two powers, namely the power of lust which tends to the achievement of desires that are primary, delicious, and useful; and emotional power which tends to avoid unwanted or harmful desires. The power of desire as a source of desire and endeavor is tasked with helping the senses, fantasy, and rational powers to determine and perform an action. The desire that comes from the senses or fantasy is generally called a will, while desire that comes from the mind or ratio is called endeavor. It exists only in humans. The desire that comes from the senses and fantasy is found in all animals.\(^{82}\)

The power of understanding/perception is divided into two powers: the power of external understanding (\textit{al-quwwah mudrikah min al-khārij}) namely the five external senses such as hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch; and internal understanding (\textit{al-quwwah mudrikah min al-bāṭin}). Which includes the power of internal understanding of the collective senses, conception, fantasy power, imagination power, and memory power (memorization).\(^{83}\)

3) Rational Soul. Al-Farabī called this soul the rational power or reason. This rational soul is a soul that becomes a human tool to rationalize rational things, distinguish between the beautiful and the bad, and produce science and industry. In rational power, al-Farabī distinguishes between practical power (practical reason) and theoretical power (theoretical reason). Practical reason is used by humans to analyze humanitarian work, moral and professional behavior (\textit{al-miḥan}), the results of creativity/work (\textit{al-ṣināʿāt}), and other skills. The practical reason consists of two, namely \textit{Miḥaniyyah} and \textit{Murwiyyah}. This power serves to assist the theoretical
power; while theoretical reason is used by humans to understand rational, general, and abstract things. This theoretical mind makes the soul a truly substantive and rational entity. This mind does not serve others, it was created so that humans can get happiness. This rational soul is also called al-Farabî as the potential of the human spirit.84

Then according to al-Farabî, the power of thinking (al-quwwah al-nāṭiqah) in humans makes them a living thing that can speak, think, acquire knowledge and produce works. Also with this power, humans can separate or sort between good and bad in behavior, deeds, actions, and morals. With reason, humans can consider the actions they want and don’t want to do; have an awareness of the benefits and harms; which brings benefits and harms; which produces happiness and suffering; which expands and constricts or hurts. This thinking power (al-quwwah al-nāṭiqah) is the human power by which humans can gain knowledge, increase intellectual and scientific property, and can produce great and quality works.85

The theoretical mind is divided into several levels, namely the potential mind (al-‘aql al-hayulāni),86 the actual mind (al-‘aql bi-al-fi‘lī), and the acquired mind (mustafād).87 As for the spirit, al-Farabî explains in Fusus, 88

Then according to this explanation, it can be concluded that humans have five spirit powers consisting of actions.90
1. Nabati (al-‘amal al-nabatī);
2. Animals (al-‘amal al-hayawānī);
3. Humans (al-‘amal al-insānī);
4. Animal perception (al-idrāk al-hayawānī); and
5. Human perception (al-idrāk al-insānī).91
Meanwhile, animals have two spirit powers: animal action and animal perception. As for plants, they only have one spirit power, namely vegetable actions. Vegetable actions (al-ʿamal al-nabātī), consist of actions in the form of nutritional abilities (al-quwwah al-ghadhīyah), namely providing food; actions in the form of the ability to grow (al-quwwah al-munammīyah) and the act of preserving species through the ability to reproduce (al-tawlīd al-quwwah al-muwallīdah).

Nutritional ability (al-quwwah al-ghadhīyah) has one main force and several supporting forces. The main force is in the mouth, while the supporting power is spread throughout the body. This nutritional power, both the main and the supporting process, follows the leader’s goal which is in the heart (al-qalb). According to al-Farābī, al-quwwah al-ghadhīyah has two main powers, namely those in the mouth and higher ones in the heart (al-qalb).

Animal actions (al-ʿamal al-ḥayawānī) always tend to do whatever he wants to fulfill their desires, drive out something that brings danger to them, and control fear and anger, and this is part of the power of the human spirit. As for human actions (al-ʿamal al-insānī), among them are the ability to choose (effort) that is good and useful for something that he will through in his life, doing good and fair to those who need it, giving him guidance and attention about useful things, good life, take care of health and so on.

Perception (al-idrāk) is the process of accepting al-mudrik (subject of understanding) to the image of al-mudrik (object of understanding). For example, the senses receive images of sense objects that are specifically related to them. Perception is an experience about an object, an event, or another thing, which is then managed in the mind and ends at a conclusion about the object.

Conclusion

Al-Farābī, like other Muslim philosophers, understands that human beings consist of two dimensions, namely physical and spiritual. The physical side is in the form of a body originating from the created world, while the spiritual side is in the form of the soul (nafs) and spirit (rūḥ) originating from the realm of divine orders (ʿalam al-amr). The body created from matter has a new, impermanent, mortal, and disintegrating nature. Meanwhile, the soul and spirit created from the realm of command through emanation have qadīm or eternal nature.

Epistemologically, humans, according to al-Farābī, have various abilities
(soul power), from the lowest abilities to the highest abilities. The lowest ability is the ability possessed by plants and animals such as the ability to provide nutrition for their body health, the ability to maintain and develop themselves, and to breed offspring (generative power), as well as the abilities possessed by animals and humans, namely the ability to move, but for knowing/perceiving up to the highest ability, it is only humans can think both theoretically and practically. The ability to think in humans is called reason (spirit).

With his sense, humans can acquire various knowledge, increase intellectual and scientific property and produce great and high-quality works. With this thinking power, humans can recognize the beautiful and the bad. With the power of thinking, humans can also give consideration and decide whether to do or not do an action and with the power of thinking, humans know everything that contains benefits, harms, pleasant and miserable.

Endnotes

1. Anaximenes believed that the origin of all things was air. Because there is air everywhere and air is the basic material that forms all things in the universe. See Zainal Abidin, *Pengantar Filsafat Barat* (Jakarta: PT.RajaGrafindo Persada, 2011), 87. See Ali Maksum, *Pengantar Filsafat dari Masa Klasik hingga Postmodernisme* (Jogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2009), 46.

2. According to Anaximandros, the arche (principle) of everything is not an element that can be observed by the five senses, but something that is not visible. According to him, the principle that underlies everything is to Apeiron, the infinite”. See Zainal Abidin, *Pengantar Filsafat Barat*, 86. See Ali Maksum, *Pengantar Filsafat*, 45.

3. Thales, who is considered the first Greek philosopher, stated that the principle of the universe was water. Everything starts with water and ends in water too. See Zainal Abidin, *Pengantar Filsafat Barat*, 85. See Ali Maksum, *Pengantar Filsafat*, 44.

4. Democritus explained the shape and relationship between atoms. Atoms make up matter. The dense matter is made up of dense and strong atoms that make this object (iron) very hard. On the other hand, finer objects, such as water and air, are made of finer atoms. See Zainal Abidin, *Pengantar Filsafat Barat*, 96. Lihat Ali Maksum, *Pengantar Filsafat*, 56.


12. His full name was Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). One of the leaders of German idealism. Subjective idealism (Fichte) and objective idealism (Schelling) were synthesized into absolute idealism. Basic belief: “understandable idea” and “reality” are the same. Rationality and reality are the same. All reality is a great “occurrence” and this occurrence is a “spirit occurrence”, the spirit which becomes according to dialectical stages: thesis-synthesis-antithesis. In Hegel’s system, it can be divided into three parts: Logical science (in a broad sense), natural philosophy and spiritual philosophy. See Dick Hartoko, *Kamus Populer Filsafat*, 36.
34. Jean-Paul Sartre, born in Paris France, June 21, 1905-15 April 1980. He comes from a family of scholars. His father was a major French naval officer. His mother was the daughter of a professor at the Sorbonne University. Since childhood he was educated in religious education by his grandfather and he was even baptized, in the development of his age and thinking he actually did not follow any religion and did not even believe in God. And now he is known as the main figure of French existentialism. Dick Hartoko, *Kamus Populer Filsafat*, 95. Ali Maksum, *Pengantar Filsafat dari Masa Klasik hingga Postmodernisme*, 222.
41. Wäbysy Murtiningsih, *Para Filosof dari Plato sampai Ibnu Bajjah*, 244-245.
43. In his childhood, al-Farabi was an intelligent child and diligent in learning. His extraordinary interest in the rational study, made him always feel dissatisfied with all that he had obtained in his hometown. Al-Farabi, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, 7. Budi Yuwono, *Ilmuwan Islam Pelopor Sains Modern*, seri 2, 150.
45. His ability in the field of language was demonstrated in a meeting between al-Farabī and the ruler of the Hamdani dynasty, Sultan Saif Ad-Daulah. At that time Sultan Saif Ad-Daulah was in the assembly with scholars and some of his slaves. When al-Farabī came, Sultan Saif Ad-Daulah spoke to his slaves in a language that (according to Sultan Saif Ad-Daulah) only they could understand. The Sultan told his slaves by saying: “Indeed, this Shaykh has bad behavior. I want to ask him a few things. If he is unable to answer, then burn him.” Al-Farabī suddenly said using that language, “O ruler, be patient. Because an affair is determined by its consequences.” Sultan Saif Ad-Daulah was amazed by Al-Farabī’s ability. He asked, “You master this language?” He replied, “Yes. I speak more than seventy languages.” Because of this incident, the Caliph gave Al-Farabī a good and trusted position. Budi Yuwono, *Ilmuwan Islam Pelopor Sains Modern*, seri 2, 151.
46. Al-Farabī continued his education to Baghdad because he followed his father who changed assignments in Baghdad. At that time al-Farabī was still very young, and here al-Farabī for the first time studied Arabic and Greek and studied various disciplines such as philosophy, logic, mathematics, ethics, politics and music through his teacher named Abu Bisyir bin Matra (Matthew) bin Yunus. M.M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, 451. Lihat Abu Nashr Al-Farabi, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, 7. Budi Yuwono, *Ilmuwan Islam*, 150-152.
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50. Wahyu Murtiningsih, Para Filosof dari Plato sampai Ibnu Bajjah, 245.


56. Someone mentions the year 942 AD. A Khudori Soleh, Wacana Baru Filsafat Islam, 60.


63. Najati, Jiwa dalam Pandangan Para Filosof Muslim, 60.


65. Najati, Jiwa dalam Pandangan Para Filosof Muslim, 63-64.

66. You are composed of two substances, one of which is form, form, conditioned/qualified, measurable, moving, stationary, occupying space, and dividing; the second differs from the first in these qualities and does not associate with it in its essence; it is perceived by reason, but imagination cannot perceive it. Humans are a collection of the created world and the ‘amr realm because the human spirit is from God’s command (amr), while the human body is from God’s creation. Al-Farabī, Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam, 71-73.
86. Acquired mind (al-ʿaql al-mustafād) is a mind that has been able to capture a mere form that is not associated with matter and has the ability to communicate with the Tenth Intellect/Active Intellect (al-ʿaql al-fāʾāl). Al-Farabi, *Kitāb al-Siyāsah al-Madaniyah*, 33. Sirajuddin Zar, *Filsafat Islam, Filosof dan Filsafatnya*, 88.
87. The human spirit that originates or belongs to the natural substance of the command (ʿa`lam amr) is described by al-Farabi as a substance (jawhar) that is not formed with a certain form (la` yatasyakkal bi shu`rotin), is not composed with a certain composition (wa-lā yatakhollaqu bi kholaqatin), not specified with a signal (wa-lā yataayyan bi-isharah), not tossing and turning between motion and stillness (wa-lā yataraddad bayna ḥarakatin wa-sukūnin). Because of this, he can perceive that nothing has passed and the future is yet to come. He glorifies the realm of Malakūt and is traced by the realm of Malakūt. Al-Farabi, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, 71-72.
88. The power of the human spirit is divided into two parts: the part related to action and the part related to awareness/knowledge. Actions are divided into three parts: vegetative actions; animal actions; and human actions. While perception is divided into two parts: the perception of animals (animals) and human perception. And these five things are all owned by humans. And besides humans also have this power. Al-Farabi, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, 74.
95. Al-Farabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, 75-76.

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**Tien Rohmatin**, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta | tien.rohmatin@uinjkt.ac.id