On the Relation of City and Soul in Plato and Alfarabi

Ishraq Ali[1], Qin Mingli [2]

ABSTRACT

Abu Nasr Muhammad Alfarabi, the medieval Muslim philosopher and the founder of Islamic Neoplatonism, is best known for his political treatise, Mabadi ara ahl al-madina al- fadhila (Principles of the Opinions of the Inhabitants of the Virtuous City), in which he proposes a theory of utopian virtuous city. Prominent scholars argue for the Platonic nature of Alfarabi's political philosophy and relate the political treatise to Plato's Republic. One of the most striking similarities between Alfarabi's Mabadi ara ahl al-madina al- fadhila and Plato's Republic is that in both works the theory of virtuous city is accompanied by a theory of soul. It is true that Alfarabi's theory of soul differ considerably from that of Plato's Republic. However, we propose that notwithstanding the differences, the two theories of soul do play an identically important role in the respective theory of virtuous city. The present article explores the relationship between the soul and the city in Plato's Republic and Alfarabi's Mabadi ara ahl al-madina al- fadhila, and intends to show that in both works the coexistence of the theory of soul and the city is neither coincidental nor a casual concurrence of two themes. Rather, the concept of soul serves as a foundation on which Plato and Alfarabi erect their respective theory of perfect association. Thus, Alfarabi's treatise resembles Plato's Republic not only in the coexistence of the theory of soul and the city, but also in the important role of the concept of soul in the theory of virtuous city.

Keywords: Alfarabi's Mabadi Ara Ahl Al-Madina Al- Fadhila, City-Soul Analogy,Plato's Republic, Soul, Virtuous City.
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1.   Introduction

Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Uzlugh ibn Tarkhan Farabi, commonly known as Alfarabi, is considered to be the first systematic Muslim philosopher and the founder of Islamic Neoplatonism. Though very little is known with certainty about his life, he was probably born in Farab, located in the present day Uzbekistan, around 870 AD. He spent the major portion of his life in Baghdad, the seat of Abbasid Caliphate, where he studied logic with Abu Bishr Matta and Yuhanna ibn Haylan, the prominent logicians of the time. In the later part of his life, he moved to Aleppo and became a part of the Hamdanid court. In the Arabic sources he is known as the "second master" after Aristotle. His major works include Kitab al-musiqa al-kabir (The Great Book of Music), Kitab ihsa al-ulum (The Book of the

[1] Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Dalian University of Technology PR China. Email: ishraq.ali@mail.dlut.edu.cn
[2] Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Dalian University of Technology PR China. Email: mlqin@dlut.edu.cn

Enumeration of the Sciences), Kitab al-huruf (The Book of Letters) and Risala fil-aql (Epistle on the Intellect). However, he is best known for his political treatise, Mabadi ara ahl al-madina al- fadhila (Principles of the Opinions of the Inhabitants of the Virtuous City), commonly known as "The Virtuous City" in which he proposes a theory of utopian virtuous city.[3]

Alfarabi is considered to be a link between the Greek and Islamic thought as he was the first Muslim philosopher who adopted and introduced the Greek philosophy in the Muslim world. Walzer (1991) understands that Alfarabi relied on Aristotle for his theoretical philosophy, but "in political science he preferred to follow Plato's Republic and Laws". Similarly, Pines (1974) in introduction to his translation of Maimonides Guide of the Perplexed comments that "Alfarabi's position, as far as political philosophy is concerned, is largely Platonic". Rosenthal (1958) also acknowledges that Alfarabi has "drawn upon" Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, but considers his Political philosophy as mainly influenced by Plato.

Alfarabi's political treatise, Ara, is often related to Plato's Republic. Fakhry (2002) argues that Alfarabi's Ara is "inspired by Plato's Republic". Likewise, Walzer (1985) suggests that "the political section" of Ara is mainly based on an extinct "commentary on Plato's Republic" that might have been "written in the sixth century A.D.". There is no doubt that the major works of Plato, including The Republic, were available to Alfarabi and he was fully conversant with them. He viewed the philosophy of Plato as the true philosophy and followed the Republic by treating "the whole of philosophy proper within a political framework" in his major political writings including Ara (Strauss, 1945). Most importantly, he borrowed the Platonic idea of a virtuous city ruled by a philosopher king and used it in Ara.

However, one of the most striking similarities between Alfarabi's Ara and Plato's Republic that has not received enough attention is the presence of a theory of soul along with the theory of virtuous city in both works. It is true that the Republic's theory of soul differ considerably from that of Ara, and scholars like Marmura (2005) rightly points out that while Alfarabi's theory of city is Platonic, his theory of soul is largely Aristotelian and Neoplatonic. However, we propose in this article that notwithstanding the differences, the two theories of soul do play an identically important role in the respective theory of virtuous city. The present article explores the relationship between the soul and the city in Plato's Republic and Alfarabi's Ara and intends to show that, in the Republic as well as in Ara, the coexistence of the theory of soul and the city is neither coincidental nor a casual concurrence of two themes. Rather, the concept of soul serves as a foundation on which Plato and Alfarabi erect their respective theory of perfect association. Thus, Alfarabi's Ara resembles Plato's Republic not only in the coexistence of the theory of soul and the city, but also in the important role of the concept of soul in the theory of virtuous city.

2.   Methodology

This is an exploratory research as we intend to explore the relationship between the concept of soul and city in Plato's Republic and Alfarabi's Ara. Therefore, we have employed the qualitative research method. The primary data for the research is the text of Plato's Republic and Alfarabi's Ara. The text of Plato's Republic and Alfarabi's Ara that we have used is the second edition of Allan Bloom's translation, The Republic of Plato, published in 1991 and Richard Walzer's critical edition, Alfarabi on the Perfect State, published in 1985 respectively. Not only the content but also the structure of the primary data is evaluated in order to explore the relationship between the concept of city and soul in Ara and the Republic. The secondary data for the research, that is used to support our assertion, includes books and journal articles related to the political philosophy of Plato and Alfarabi.

3.   City and Soul in Plato's Republic

Contrary to the incomposite nature of soul proposed in Phaedo, Plato argues for a tripartite soul in the Republic. In the Republic IV, he identifies Reason (logistikon), Appetite (epithumêtikon) and Spirit (thumoeides) as the three parts of the human soul.[4] Reason is "the part of the soul with which it calculates", the one which does "the finest job of guarding against enemies from without on behalf of

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[3] "Mabadi ara ahl al-madina al fadhila" is hereafter referred to as "Ara".
[4] At the Republic 443d, Plato points towards a possibility of other parts of soul in-between the famous three parts, but they are neither explicitly named nor characterized. For a detailed discussion on the parts of soul in Plato see, Reeve (2013).

all of the soul and the body" through deliberation, it "possesses within it the knowledge of that which is beneficial for each part and for the whole composed of the community of these three parts"…, "that with which a human being learns" and "is always entirely directed towards knowing the truth as it is; and of the parts, it cares least for money and opinion" which makes it "appropriate for us to call it learning-loving and wisdom-loving" (Plato, 1991). As "it is wise and has forethought about all of the soul", it is proper for it to rule (Plato, 1991). Appetite, the largest part of the soul, is "the part with which it loves, hungers, thirsts and is agitated by the other desires, the irrational and desiring, companion of certain replenishments and pleasures" (Plato, 1991). It is multi-morphic in nature and, thus, has "no peculiar name to call it by" but, Plato calls it "the desiring part on account of the intensity of the desires concerned with eating, drinking, sex, and all their followers" (Plato, 1991). As it is evident that "such desires are most fulfilled by means of money", it is also called "the money-loving part" (Plato, 1991). When this part rules the soul, it makes the person say that, "compared to gaining, the pleasure in being honored or in learning is worth nothing, unless he makes some money from them" (Plato, 1991). Spirit, the third part of the soul, is "irresistible and unbeatable" and "makes every soul fearless and invincible in the face of everything" (Plato, 1991). It is the part of soul "with which we are spirited" and since it aims at "mastery, victory and good reputation", it is appropriate to call it "victory-loving and honor-loving" (Plato, 1991). Furthermore, it is a natural "auxiliary to the calculating part" and "if it is not corrupted by bad rearing", "it sets its arms on the side of the calculating part" in case of a faction in the soul (Plato, 1991). However, when the Spirit rules in the soul of a person, he considers "the pleasure from money to be a vulgar thing and, on the other hand, the pleasure from learning- whatever learning does not bring honor- to be smoke and nonsense" (Plato, 1991).

Plato establishes an analogous relationship between the soul and the city. Like soul, Plato's ideal city is also composed of three parts: money making class, honor-loving guardians and wisdom-loving philosopher king(s) corresponding to Appetite, Spirit and Reasoning part of the soul, respectively. Just city, like just soul, must be harmonious in such a way that each part performs its own function for which it is naturally best suited and should not interfere in other parts' function. Like Reason in the soul, the philosopher king is wise and the appropriate ruler of the city. Similarly, the guardians in the city, like the Spirit in the soul, are courageous and natural ally of the philosopher king. The appetite in the soul and the money-making class in the city are desirous and lovers of money. Reason rules and controls the Appetitive part of soul. Spirit helps and carry out what the Reason demands. Similarly, the philosopher king in the city rules and keeps the money-making class in check with the aid of the guardians.

City-soul analogy of the Republic is one of the most debated philosophical devices. Although, philosophers disagree on the interpretation and the extent to which the analogy holds but, nonetheless, all agree on its existence. The analogy basically stands for the structural and functional sameness of the city and the soul. Santas (2013) argues that the relationship between the city and the soul in Plato's Republic is like that of "a house and the architect's plans according to which the house was built". However, the important question here is whether the soul precedes the city and serves as "the plan" according to which Plato builds the city or vice versa? Let's have a look at the order of Plato's exposition.

In the Republic I, Socrates refutes the definitions of justice proposed by his interlocuters. He also refutes Thrasymachus' contention that injustice is more advantageous than justice and settles that justice, rather than injustice, is not only "profitable" but also "virtue" and "wisdom". However, Glaucon and Adeimantus are not satisfied at Socrates's response and Thrasymachus' retirement from the argument. In the opening part of the Republic II, they vigorously rebuild Thrasymachus' argument about the nature of justice and injustice, and ask Socrates to refute it.[5] In order to carry out the inquiry, Socrates commences the process of creation of a city that finally culminates in Book IV in the form of a tripartite perfect city. It is after the construction of the tripartite city that Plato lays down the theory of the tripartite soul. The order of Plato's exposition seems to suggest the primacy of the city over the soul. It gives the impression that Plato constructs the tripartite city and then follows it as a model or "plan" to

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[5] Ferrari points out that Glaucon and Adeimantus are "reluctant quietists" who are interested in political career but do not indulge in it because they see their democratic society as defective and not worthy of their efforts. They have decided instead to seek individual excellence, the perfection of their souls. Since Thrasymachus' view represents the prevailing understanding of justice and injustice, they ask Socrates to refute it as the refutation of the prevalent view will ultimately justify their decision. For details see, Ferrari (2003).

construct an identical tripartite soul. However, a deeper consideration reveals that this assessment of the city-soul relationship is inaccurate.

Socrates devises the following strategy in order to discern the true nature of justice and injustice, and their relative advantages:

"If someone had, for example, ordered men who don't see very sharply to read little letters from afar and then someone had the thought that the same letters are somewhere else also, but bigger and in a bigger place, I suppose it would look like a godsend to be able to consider the littler ones after having read these first, if, of course, they do happen to be the same… there is, we say, justice of one man; and there is, surely, justice of a whole city too… city is bigger than one man… so then, perhaps there would be more justice in the bigger and it would be easier to observe closely. If you want, first we'll investigate what justice is like in the cities. Then, we'll also go on to consider it in individuals, considering the likeness of the bigger in the idea of the littler" (Plato, 1991).

Socrates shows reluctance to carry out the inquiry demanded by his interlocuters. He maintains that he lacks the wit (like a man who don't see sharply) required to carry out the extraordinary enterprise of ascertaining the true nature of justice (to read little letters from afar). The city-soul analogy is employed to solve this problem. The basic reason that Socrates gives for the consideration of the city prior to the soul is his thesis that, as Rosen (2005) puts it, "city is the soul writ large". City is isomorphic but bigger than soul and "there would be more justice in the bigger (city) than the smaller (soul). It is easier and "godsend" for a short-sighted person to observe justice in a city where it is bigger in size and then proceed to the smaller soul, "considering the likeness of the bigger in the idea of the littler". Thus, the occurrence of tripartite city prior to the tripartite soul in the Republic is not a matter of primacy but that of expediency.

It is important to note Plato's use of the word "idea" for the justice in the soul only. He does not use it while referring to the justice in the city. Keeping the doctrine of ideas in mind, it suggests that "the original of justice" lies "in the soul while its "copy" is in "the city" (Rosen, 2005). It would seem absurd to believe that the city, which contains the copy(s), is used as a plan "according to which" soul, that contains the original(s), is built. It is inappropriate to say that we draw "inferences about the soul from an inspection of the city"; on the contrary, "we make constant use of our knowledge of the soul in order to bring the city into existence" (Rosen, 2005).

In book II of the Republic, Socrates decides to construct a city expecting to find justice in it, but the pursuit of justice actually commences in book I. He starts the inquiry about the nature of justice in book I by questioning Cephalus, who is not even an Athenian. Thus, a soul is investigated prior to the city. City is larger than the soul and it is probable that "justice is more fully visible in the city than in the soul", but it cannot undermine the primacy of soul as we cannot "recognize justice in the city unless we had first discerned it in the soul" (Rosen, 2005; Annas, 1981). After all, the founding of the city stems from the desire of soul for justice.

At the Republic 435e-436a, Plato explicitly asserts the primacy of the soul over the city:

"Isn't it quite necessary for us to agree that the very same forms and disposition as are in the city are in each of us. Surely they haven't come here from any other place. It would be ridiculous if someone should think that the spiritedness didn't come into the cities from those private men who are just the ones imputed with having this character, such as those in Thrace, Scythia, and pretty nearly the whole upper region; or the love of learning, which one could most impute to our region, or the love of money, which one could affirm is to be found not least among the Phoenicians and those in Egypt" (Plato, 1991).

City is a collection of individuals and depends upon soul not only for its existence, but also its characterization. Plato suggests that a city acquires its "character", whether it is "spiritedness", wisdom, "love of money" or justice, from the souls that inhabit it. As soul shapes the city, it can be used as a reference point for the construction and ascertaining the nature of the city, but not the other way round. Prior to the construction of the city and enacting its "laws sensibly", we should "first decide what is a just life for the individual person" (Rosen, 2005).

Perhaps, the most striking evidence for the primacy of soul over city in the Republic is Plato's making the possibility of his perfect city dependent on the philosopher-king, a perfect soul. The philosopher-king is at the center of Plato's city. For the city to exist, the existence of the philosopher-king is a pre-requisite. Thus, the perfect soul precedes the perfect city. Plato proposes a scheme of primary and secondary education and training in order to obtain the perfect soul. Although, the primary

education is composed of two parts, music for soul and gymnastics for body, Plato later concedes that "a good soul by its own virtue makes the body as good as it can be", and both, music and gymnastics aim mainly at the improvement of the soul (Plato, 1991).

4.   City and soul in Alfarabi's virtuous city

Like Plato in the Republic, Alfarabi in Ara also ties his perfect city in an analogous relationship. However, unlike Plato, he compares his city with a healthy living body. Heart, according to Alfarabi, is the ruling organ of the body, followed by brain in rank. Brain serves the heart and rules all the other organs. The liver ranks after the brain, and is followed by spleen and so on. Each of these organs after Brain, serves and performs its function in accordance with the natural aim of the organ ranked above it, while rules the one which follows it. The rank ordering ends on the organ which only serves and does not rule. Correspondingly, in the city, Alfarabi suggests, there is a ruler and some people ranked close to the ruler who perform their actions "in conformity with the intention of that ruler; these are the holders of the first ranks" (Alfarabi, 1985). Then, there are those belonging to the second rank, who rules the people of the third rank but follow in their actions the people of the first rank. The ordering of the city continues in this way until the people of the lowest rank reach who serve, but are not served.

Alfarabi's different treatment of the analogy from Plato owes to his different understanding of famous body-soul problem. Plato has a dualistic understanding of the body and the soul, and considers them as two separate and distinct entities somehow united for a short period of time in this world. He (Plato, 1991) suggests that the soul is "immortal" and imperishable. It survives death and exists not only in the body but also before and after its temporary union with the body. He identifies the soul with the objects of the intelligible world and the body with that of the visible world, and considers the soul to be the true and the real self. Since he considers the soul to be the real self and its temporary union with the body insignificant, it is natural for him to relate his perfect city to the soul instead of an ensouled body. On the other hand, Alfarabi's hylomorphic explanation of the nature of the sublunary existents provides the context for his understanding of the body-soul relationship. Like Aristotle, he argues that the sublunary existents consist of matter and form, and that form is the actualization of matter which is only potentially being in its pre-form state. Furthermore, since matter is the "substratum for the subsistence of form", it is not possible for form to exist by itself separate from matter (Alfarabi, 1985). For Alfarabi, as for Aristotle, the body-soul relationship is a specific instance of the general doctrine of hylomorphism where the body is matter, the potentiality, and soul the form, the actuality of the potentiality. As the form cannot exist without matter, the soul cannot exist by itself and perishes with the body. Thus, for Alfarabi, body and soul represent an inseparable unity, and neither the soul nor the body but an ensouled body is the ultimate reality and the actual being. It explains his replacement of the soul with the living body in Plato's city-soul analogy. However, since Alfarabi conceives the soul as a sum of faculties for vital body functions and the faculties of soul in his theory of soul are, in fact, the faculties of a living body, his city-living body analogy is effectively city-soul analogy. Though Alfarabi's understanding of soul is different from that of Plato, his theory of soul, like that of Plato in the Republic, plays a crucial role in his theory of perfect city.

Alfarabi's Ara can broadly be divided into two parts. Its first portion deals with the unchanging eternal intelligible realm whereas in the second portion it descends down to the material world. Alfarabi uses his theory of soul as a bridge to connect the intelligible and material worlds.

4.1   The intelligible realm and the theory of emanation

Al-Farabi was the first to introduce Neoplatonism in the Arab-Muslim world which earned him the title of "Founder of Islamic Neoplatonism". The most central feature of Neoplatonism is the theory of emanation, formulated by Plotinus as a counter-narrative to the rival theory of creation ex-nihilo, "that sees all of creation as an unwilled, necessary, and spontaneous outflow of contingent beings of descending perfection from an infinite, undiminished, unchanged primary substance" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1998). Alfarabi calls this "primary substance the "First Cause" and the "One". He identifies the First Cause as God in his summary of Ara. He opens Ara with the characterization of the First Cause as the most perfect, permanent, eternal, utterly incorporeal, the first existent and the cause of all other existents. He asserts that it is intellect and intelligible as it is not in matter, the only thing that prevents

existents from being so. It is important to note here that Al-Farabi's identification of the First with intellect is, in fact, a departure from the Neoplatonic tradition of Plotinus who believed the One to be transcendent and above not only being but also thought.

According to Al-Farabi, the second incorporeal existent emanates from the first that is also both, intellect and intelligible. It intelligizes its own essence and the First (Alfarabi, 1985). Its thinking of the First necessitates the coming into being of third intellect which, likewise, thinks the First and its own essence. The third's thinking of the First results in the existence of the fourth intellect. The process continues until the tenth incorporeal existent below the First comes into being. Alfarabi calls this tenth and last intellect the "Active Intellect".

4.2   The material world and the excellent city

Al-Farabi's excellent city is a city "in which people aim through association at co-operating for the things by which felicity in its real and true sense can be attained" (Alfarabi, 1985). It is clear that the ultimate objective of association in his excellent city is the attainment of "felicity (Al Saadah) in its real and true sense". The qualification added to "felicity" owes to Al-Farabi's distinction between true and presumed felicity. He argues that things like honor, pleasure and wealth are mistakenly presumed by some to be felicity without being so. Unlike the presumed felicity, the true felicity can only come in the next life (Alfarabi, 2011). True felicity is the highest perfection of human soul "where it is in no need of matter for its support, since it becomes one of the incorporeal things and of the immaterial substances and remains in that state continuously forever" (Alfarabi, 1985). The soul long for "its original abode in the higher world", as long as it remains attached to the body (Fakhry, 2002). Thus, Al-Farabi's excellent city exists for the sake of the perfection of soul, its liberation from the body and consequent attainment of felicity.

Although, the felicity can only be attained in the afterlife, "the things (the means) by which felicity can be attained" belongs to this life in the material world. These are well defined and determined mental and physical virtuous voluntary actions "which arise out of definite and determined dispositions and habits" (Alfarabi, 1985). These actions are known to the ruler and it is he who establish them in the "excellent city" in an orderly manner. The attainment of felicity is ensured when the people of the city practice these actions in common following the instructions and intention of the ruler.

4.3   The theory of soul linking the two worlds

The emanation that originates from the First and results the coming into being of the ten separate immaterial intellects below the first, subsequently emanates from the Active intellect (the tenth separate thing below the first) into the rational faculty of the soul. This interaction between the Active intellect and the soul results in transferring the human intellect from potentiality to actuality. Under the influence of emanation from the active intellect the human intellect (material intellect) becomes Actual intellect and the sensibles stored in the faculty of representation, which were only potentially intelligible previously, become actually intelligible. In this way, the first intelligibles arise in the rational faculty of soul. These first intelligibles are common to all human beings which include the principles of morality, theoretical knowledge and productive skills (Alfarabi, 1985). Al-Farabi calls it "First perfection ", only a step towards the achievement of ultimate perfection, felicity. The "first perfection" equips one and makes him capable of "careful examination, deliberation, practical thought and desire to find out things" (Alfarabi, 1985).

Though the first perfection is important as it makes the human being a thinking being, the ruler (philosopher prophet) receives instructions conducive for the attainment of felicity from God (The First) through the interaction of the Active intellect (Angel Gabriel) with the faculty of representation rather than with the rational faculty. The Active intellect provides "intelligibles" and "particulars" to the faculty of representation of the ruler of Al-Farabi's virtuous city. The ruler receives "prophecy" about "divine things" through the intelligibles, and "prophecy of present and future events" through the particulars (Alfarabi, 1985).

The ruler of Al-Farabi's virtuous city receives guidance and instructions conducive for the attainment felicity in the form of revelations from the intelligible world through the faculties of soul. These revelations make him know the true felicity and the actions through which the felicity can be

attained. He sets the felicity as aim for himself and the people of the city. The revelations and prophecy guide him to make decisions conducive for the well-being of the people of the city and the ultimate attainment of the felicity.

In addition to the role of the theory of soul in linking the two worlds and ultimately becoming the foundation on which the theory of virtuous city rests, the importance and precedence of the concept of soul over the city can be seen in Alfarabi's making the organization, existence and health of his city completely dependent upon the ruler.

"The ruler of this city must come to be in the first instance, and will subsequently be the cause of the rise of the city and its parts and the cause of the presence of the voluntary habits of its parts and of their arrangement in the ranks proper to them; and when one part is out of order he provides it with the means to remove its disorder" (Alfarabi, 1985).

As in Plato's Republic, a perfect soul precedes the perfect city in Alfarabi's Virtuous City. The basic pre-requisite for his city is the existence of a person who has extraordinary mental, physical and spiritual qualities. Only if such an individual exists who has a perfect soul with perfect faculties capable of receiving instructions from the higher world and the perfect limbs that make him capable of leading people in the time of war and peace, there is a possibility of the existence of Alfarabi's perfect city that can ultimately lead to felicity, the ultimate goal of virtuous association.

In Plato as well as Alfarabi, the virtuous city is impossible without the presence of a perfect soul, the philosopher-king, prior to it.

5.   Conclusion

Though the theory of soul of Alfarabi's Ara is different from that of Plato's Republic, in both works it is employed to serve an identical purpose. In the Republic, soul provides a pattern that Plato follows for the construction of the city through analogy, and the concept of soul goes parallel to that of the city throughout the book, having identical organization and characteristics. The occurrence of the tripartite city prior to the tripartite soul in the Republic gives an impression that the tripartite city is used as a plan on which the concept of the tripartite soul is built. However, after a careful examination we saw that the impression is incorrect. It is not the city but the concept of soul that serves as plan, the foundation on which the tripartite city is built. Similarly, in Alfarabi's Ara, the concept of soul bridges the intelligible realm and the material world. In Ara, Alfarabi makes the transition from the higher immaterial world to the world of the virtuous city through the concept of soul. Though the virtuous actions must be performed in the virtuous city that belongs to material world, the source of the knowledge of virtuous action exists in the intelligible world. This knowledge is communicated from the intelligible world to the material world through the imaginative faculty of soul. Furthermore, Plato as well as Alfarabi clearly establishes the primacy of soul over the city by making the virtuous city dependent on the existence of a perfect soul, the Philosopher-king, that precedes it. Thus, we can reiterate that the coexistence of the theory of soul and the city in Plato's Republic and Alfarabi's Ara is neither coincidental nor a casual concurrence of two themes. Rather, the concept of soul serves as a foundation on which Plato and Alfarabi erect their respective theory of perfect association. Thus, Alfarabi's Ara resembles Plato's Republic not only in the coexistence of the theory of soul and the city, but also in the important role of the concept of soul in the respective theory of perfect city.

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