

## Evaluating Al-Farabi's Expectations of Religion Based on His Philosophical Views

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### Abstract

This article elucidates Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Fārābī's expectations from religion, drawing on his philosophical views. Al-Fārābī conceives religion as a comprehensive system that addresses human individual and social needs. He defines individual felicity as intellectual perfection and abstraction, and social felicity as the realization of a virtuous and just society. Among the salient features of his thought are: religion's alignment with higher human needs; its use of allegorical language in sacred texts for the general public; employment of philosophical theories to defend religious doctrines; and emphasis on religion's social function in accordance with historical circumstances. However, critiques include: (1) the idealistic nature of his conceptions of felicity and the virtuous city; (2) the reduction of religion to philosophy in his view of their relationship; (3) the failure, despite its breadth, to encompass all dimensions of religion, thus reducing it to select aspects; and (4) the undue difficulty of expecting religion to exclusively meet all cognitive, ethical, psychological, and social needs.

**Keywords:** al-Fārābī; expectation from religion; felicity; nation; religion and philosophy

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