

Al-Farabi's Philosophy of Education

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Al-Farabi significantly contributed to Philosophy, Science, Sociology, Medicine, Logic, Mathematics, Music and Education as an Arab philosopher, who was the most rationalistic of the entire philosopher, and was also a practicing Sufi. He always tried to understand the intellectual framework of the world and society. He wanted to restore unity in politics seeking guidance from Quran. He believed the first aim of knowledge was knowledge of God and His attributes. The core of his philosophy is the unity of society which is to be achieved by unity of thought, wisdom and religion, just as there is unity and order found in the universe. For him, education is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values for happier life. Al-Farabi prescribes persuasive and instructional strategies for common people while for elites, he recommends demonstration method. Sound character, intellectual competence and demonstration skills are the basic components of effective teaching. There should be sequence in learning starting with the language, then logic, seven forms of mathematics, natural sciences, human sciences, jurisprudence and academic theology. The concept of evaluation means the measurement of learning outcomes. Different instruments may be used to test knowledge and intelligence. The capacity for deductive and critical thinking understands the relationship between parts of information and to arrive at the understanding of whole. The purpose of this paper is to present, in as brief and systematic way, the philosophy of education of Al-Farabi and the influence it exerted on Medieval Thought.

Keywords: Philosophy, Education, Society, knowledge, Mathematics

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