

MASHAITS: ISLAMIC INTERPRETATION OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHICAL HERITAGE

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ABSTRACT

The article reveals the influence of Greek philosophy on the formation of Islamic philosophy in the east in the 9-13th centuries, the development of falsafa and the emergence of the direction of the Mashshaites - Eastern peripatetics. The development and influence of Arabic-speaking peripatetism was prepared by two main factors, and first of all - the spread of Aristotelism in the territories that later became part of the Arab caliphate, in the period immediately preceding the Arab conquests. The second factor in the development of Arabic peripatetism was the active translation movement of the 9–10 centuries, as a result of which the Greek philosophical heritage was translated into Arabic. One of the main issues in classical Arab-Muslim philosophy was the relationship between philosophy and religion. The peculiarity of the development of the Mashshaite philosophy was that in the field of the spread of the Muslim religion, the scholasticism did not form and did not develop, as was the case in medieval Europe, i.e. philosophy and religion were not connected with each other so that there was a question of the subordination of one of them to the other. However, it was not possible to avoid clashes in the views of the Mashshaites and Orthodox theologians. This can be seen in the ontology and epistemology of Islamic philosophy.

The relatively free understanding and commentary of Greek thinkers outside of close connection with theology and dependence on it gave rise to teachings for which the Arabs retained the Greek name "philosophy" - falsafa. The ideological and theoretical basis of the concepts of Arab philosophers were the teachings of Plato, Aristotle and the Neoplatonists. Since the philosophy of Aristotle became the predominant element in the views of Arab thinkers, their teachings are united in the direction of Arab Aristotelianism, and its representatives are called mashshaites (from the Arabic mashiya - to walk), i.e. peripatetics. Falsafa is rightfully considered the actual philosophy of the Arabs and secular philosophy,

closely interconnected with science. Two directions are distinguished - Eastern and Western. The main representatives of the first: al-Kindi (800-879), al-Farabi (870-950), Ibn Sina (Latin: Avicenna, 980-1037), the second - Ibn Tufayl (1110-1185), Ibn Rushd (Latin: Averroes, 1126-1198). The first "philosopher of the Arabs" was the Mu'tazilite al-Kindi (9th century), whose work went far beyond theological topics. He was the first to explain and disseminate the teachings of Aristotle, often not distinguishing it from Neoplatonism. Al-Kindi wrote the work "Treatise on the Number of Books of Aristotle and What is Necessary for Mastering Philosophy." In it, he reports on the number and order of reading the books of the Greek thinker. In his opinion, without reading the Stagirite you will not master philosophy. But before you start with Aristotle, you need to familiarize yourself with mathematics. Mathematics is the threshold of philosophy in the sense that it teaches how to think and prove.

Al-Kindi was followed by a number of famous Arab philosophers. First, al-Farabi, whose fame is indicated by his title "Second Aristotle" ("Second Teacher"). Under the influence of Farabi's works, in particular his commentary on Aristotle's "Metaphysics", another great philosopher of the East, Ibn Sina, came to Aristotelianism. The development of Arab Aristotelianism was also completed by the greatest and most famous philosopher of the Middle Ages, Ibn Rushd. He was recognized as the most profound interpreter of Aristotle and, accordingly, was nicknamed "the Great Commentator".

In the teachings of the Mashshaites, ontology was built on the views of Aristotle and the Neoplatonists; epistemology almost entirely went back to Aristotle; the ethical and political doctrine used the ideas of both Plato and Aristotle. The initial category of the ontology of the Arab Aristotelians is the concept of God. But, unlike the mutakallims, philosophers rationalize it to a greater extent, expressing it through philosophical concepts, even replacing them with them. God is the first cause, and the one, and the first mind. For example, al-Kindi writes that the goal of metaphysics is to explain that Allah is the active and final cause of everything, as well as the truly one. In one of Farabi's works, the first being, the necessary being and the first cause functions as God. God, as understood by Ibn Rushd, is the eternal first mover. The idea of God - the first cause - is manifested in its elevation above all other causes, i.e. a hierarchy of causes is built, as it was with the Neoplatonists, unlike Aristotle: for him, the causes form a horizontal row, for the Neoplatonists - a vertical one. The very terms "first cause", "first mover" are characteristic.

The main function of God in ontology is to be the creator of the world. The essence of the concept of the origin of the world, built on the Neoplatonic model, expresses the principle of emanation: the world is an emanation from the divine. Thus, al-Kindi points out that the emanation of unity from the first, truly one, is the acquisition of a single essence by each sensually perceived thing. The emanation itself was understood as an epistemological process. According to Farabi, things arise as a result of the necessarily existing knowing itself as an ordered series of goods. Its knowledge is the reason for the existence of a thing that serves as the object of its cognition. Thus, emanation is the creation of the world from God's own essence, from which follows pantheism - the identification of God with the Universe. The necessarily existing (God) is the world in the form of unity, and the world is the same essence as God, but only in the form of plurality. God and the world are similar in essence, but different in form. The pantheism of the Mashshaites led to the idea of the co-eternity of God and the world, which contradicted the dogma of the orthodox about the beginning of the world in time. Another concept of the creation of the world is based on the Aristotelian model: things are created by moving causes when they act on matter, which represents the possibility of being something. According to this principle, the Mashshaites considered God as the first moving cause, and the emergence of the world as a consequence of its action. God, being the cause, acts with necessity; therefore, the world also creates by necessity, and not by its own free will, as the theologians insisted. Secondly, the world is also a necessary

consequence of the action of the divine cause, and not just a “possibly existing”, which it had to be as a creation. According to al-Ghazali, the philosophers thus made the world equal to God - “necessarily existing” - and questioned the recognition of the creator of the world. Philosophers were forced to defend themselves against such accusations by introducing a distinction between “necessarily existing in itself” and “necessarily existing due to another.” Thirdly, from the necessary nature of the connection between cause and effect, God and the world, it followed that they could not exist without each other, that they always exist simultaneously. It is impossible for there to be a cause and for its effect to lag behind. Therefore, it is impossible to allow the actions of the eternal creator to lag behind the existence of the creator himself. Allah is endowed with the “eternal will” to create the world. From this (as with emanation) followed the coexistence and co-eternity of God and the world. Al-Kindi believed that Allah is the creator of the universe from nothing. But Farabi already proves that the world arose from matter. Ibn Rushd has a proof of the existence of matter: the world is possibly existing, but the possibility of arising is an attribute that requires a substrate; such a substrate is matter. Possibility, therefore, is an attribute of matter. As a result, philosophers came to a complete break with creationism.

Ibn Rushd developed this thesis in the form of a series of consequences. From the fact that matter is the beginning of things that arise and precedes them, he concludes that it itself never arises (meaning the first matter, matter without form). Only forms that exist in matter arise. The assumption of the eternity of matter made it exist simultaneously with God. The second part of the Mashshaite ontology is the doctrine of the structure of the world. Its central point is the hierarchical structure of the world in the form of various spheres: rational, celestial and elemental, which appear as a result of emanation from the original. Farabi cites the following system of the world. The first mind creates the necessarily existing; from it arises the second mind and the highest sphere with its matter and the form inherent in it - the soul, etc., up to the last, tenth, active mind, which serves as the cause of the existence of the earthly soul and, through the heavenly spheres, the cause of the existence of the four elements. The immediate cause of the elements are the celestial bodies, the order of which is established by Allah. The nature of the celestial sphere is special: it is neither warm nor cold, neither heavy nor light. Its movement has its source in the soul, not in nature. The cause of movement is gravity to resemble the mind, detached from matter. Each of the celestial bodies has its own mind.

The structure of the world in Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd is similar. Minds that control the celestial spheres flow from God. The lowest mind is active, controls the sublunary (earthly) world and guides human thinking. If we consider specific connections within nature, then natural factors, natural forces act as causes. Such natural causes in the “supralunar world” will be planets, and in the “sublunary” - some other natural causes. Ibn Rushd believed that the denial of causes leads to the denial of reason, for reason is the comprehension of existence by its causes.

The main question of the gnoseology of the Mashshaites is the question of the relationship between philosophy and religion. Philosophers related them as knowledge and revelation (faith). Al-Kindi recognized that there is divine knowledge, for the acquisition of which neither labor, nor mathematics and logic are needed. It is not characteristic of ordinary people, but only of prophets. The divine knowledge of prophets is higher than the human knowledge of philosophers.

Ibn Rushd compared philosophy and religion as knowledge in concepts and knowledge in images, allegories. The concept here plays the role of hidden meaning, interpretation of figurative allegories, therefore philosophical knowledge is placed above theological. This is evident from Ibn Rushd's division of people into three categories, depending on the form in which people possess knowledge of the truth. The first are

philosophers, whose knowledge has a rational (conceptual) expression; the second are educated people who require one or another explanation of the truth: rational or figurative; the third are those people for whom one allegorical explanation of all things is enough. Thus, one and the same knowledge, one and the same truth receives a double expression: both in concepts (in philosophy) and in allegories (in the Koran and theology). This position is then interpreted as the so-called "doctrine of double truth", according to which contradictory statements were simultaneously allowed, because at the same time a judgment could be true in philosophy and false in theology.

The epistemological positions of the Arab Aristotelians concerning the process of cognition begin with its division, in accordance with cognitive abilities, into the sensory and the rational. But this division also has an ontological basis - the correlation between the objects of cognition and the cognitive powers. Thus, al-Kindi substantiates the two types of cognition by the existence of individual and universal objects (genera and species).

Sensory knowledge, sensation is the perception of the form of a thing, abstracted from the matter of this thing, so that the sensually perceiving acquires an image thanks to this form, Ibn Sina believes. He also notes that the forms of sensually perceived things reach the sense organs and are imprinted in them and are then perceived by the perceiving force. Sensually perceived forms bear the imprint of the conditions of their existence in matter. Ibn Sina points out that feeling takes form from matter together with material attributes: multiplicity, divisibility, quantity, place and position. In all types of sensory perception (even in representation), form is limited quantitatively and by position, so it cannot be common to all individuals. For example, a person is represented as one of the people.

Sensory perception has another feature or, more accurately, ability: along with and together with "material forms," the senses also accidentally perceive "immaterial forms" connected with them. The immaterial, but located in matter, writes al-Kindi, is perceived together with matter. For example, outline is perceived together with color as a color boundary. Another example of comprehension of the immaterial is the cognition of ideas, as narrated by Ibn Sina. Specifically, ideas for him are good and evil, which are immaterial in themselves, but reside in matter (things). The connection of ideas with matter is accidental, since neither outline, nor color, nor the position of an object indicate their essence (in our case, the essence of good and evil). For this reason, ideas cannot be sensed by external senses and in the form of perception of form. To perceive them, a special internal feeling is needed, the "power of conjecture." Thanks to it, the soul comprehends not only forms, but also ideas. For example, a sheep perceives both the form of a wolf (outline, color) and the idea of hostility (evil) in it. The sheep decides that the wolf should be avoided, and the lamb can be petted, i.e. it knows the ideas of good and evil.

Sensory knowledge among the Mashshaites is knowledge of individual objects, individual substances, primary in existence (being). It is an inconstant, short-lived, changeable knowledge. As Farabi writes, "knowledge obtained through sensations is reliable for us as long as we sense, and when the object perceived by our senses disappears, we will not know whether it is as we sensed it or not." Nevertheless, Ibn Sina says that the soul acquires premises from experience through sensory perception, finding a predicate for the subject, for example, in the judgment "man is a rational being"¹. Arab Aristotelians also considered rational knowledge as the perception of forms, but now as the perception of forms without material attributes. Hence the fundamental difference between rational knowledge and sensory knowledge: it is not accompanied by images. All objects of metaphysics: finite, infinite, body, emptiness - are not perceived in the form of an image, but are comprehended by the mind alone (in concept). According to Farabi, intelligible forms exist detached from matter in the supra-lunar world, they are given to the human mind actually. Ibn Sina believed the same. The speculative power receives impressions from universal forms abstracted from

matter. If the form is separated from matter in itself, then the rational soul simply perceives them. In this situation, knowledge has a direct (intuitive) and innate character. According to Farabi, ideas about necessity, existence, possibility are clear concepts established in the mind. He who knows something, knows what is already present in the soul: he who wants to know about pieces of wood, whether they are equal or not, turns to the soul, where the concept of equality is located. In the speculative power there are the first objects of rational perception. They are innate knowledge, unconsciously entering the soul. For example, the conviction that the whole is greater than the part.

Another situation arises when the mind deals with forms burdened with the attributes of matter. In the sublunary world, writes Farabi, intelligible forms are given in objects together with matter and must be separated from it in the course of cognition. Such intelligible forms are given to the mind only potentially. Thus, just as the senses have to deal accidentally with the immaterial, so the mind, comprehending the immaterial, has to encounter the material accidentally. Al-Kindi notes that the perception of the mind is accidental in relation to sensory representation. For example, the boundaries of color, i.e. outline, are comprehended by the mind. That which has no matter, but is contained in it, being in the sensually perceived, serves as an object of rational (conceptual), and not figurative knowledge. Consequently, the rational force comprehends forms only when they are completely abstracted from matter and its attributes. As a result of abstraction, we obtain the general or abstract objects (genus, species) in the soul. Farabi defined the general as follows: "The general is something that has such a property that two or more [objects] are similar to it"³. But the mind also forms the general (genus, species) with the help of the operation of generalization. Thus, Farabi speaks about the formation of the general (genus) of substances. Substances are the sky, the earth, stones, water, plants, animals. Their highest genus is the body. This means that the body is the general of all substances. Substances are arranged in a series of ascent from the particular to the general, i.e., by the degree of generalization. For example, palm tree - tree - plant - body. The general is formed insofar as there are individual substances. The ways of forming intelligible forms, the general, genera and species show that they are the products of the mind. The important worldview problem that arises here about the relationship between the general (thinking) and the individual (things) did not bypass the Arab Aristotelians. In particular, it is presented in the polemic between Ibn Rushd and al-Ghazali about the existence of possibility. Philosophers, Ibn Rushd expounds their position, consider color, animality and other general concepts to be fixed in the mind. They also claim that the general exists in minds, and not in objects of the external world. What exists in the external world are separate individual things, cognizable by the senses, and not by reason. More precisely, the general actually exists in the mind, and in the objects of the external world it exists in possibility. Reason is capable of actualizing this general, potentially contained in things. It detaches the nature of individual things from matter and makes it universal, writes Ibn Rushd. In other words, the mind extracts a concept from them in a form separated from matter. Therefore, Ibn Rushd concludes, the general is not identical to the nature of things of which it is a genus or species.

Reason as a cognitive power has two sides: reason that perceives forms, and reason that separates forms from matter. This division goes back to Aristotle's treatise "On the Soul", which distinguishes between active and passive reason. Passive reason is the ability to perceive; active reason is the ability of abstraction and thinking itself. From Aristotle's assumption that active reason is something essentially separated from matter, the idea of pure rationality, distinct from the individual human mind, arose. This latter interpretation became widespread among the Arab Aristotelians. Active reason was identified with some kind of superhuman rationality. Farabi wrote about active reason, thanks to which the powers of understanding pass from a potential state to an actual one and become perfect reason. It is like

the sun, which enables the human eye to see and highlights (highlights) objects. It mediates the relation of the mind to things, endows it with logic, the apparatus of categories, etc. Being a faculty inherent in the entire human race, it possesses eternity and continuity of existence. Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd followed the same direction, also speaking of a single active mind, which alone is immortal.

The passive mind received a directly opposite interpretation. Ibn Sina believes that the soul has a speculative power, and when it is not complete, it is called the material mind. This power exists in every individual and is also called material because it is similar to the predisposition of the first matter to take form. This is the stage of a child, when there are no perceptions in the soul. The mind in a state of possibility passes to actual being thanks to the active mind. The Aristotelians claimed that the individual human mind as a possible and perceiving mind is inseparable from the body and perishes with it. In addition to dividing knowledge into sensory and rational, the Arab Peripatetics also divided knowledge depending on whether we accept it as true without proof or after proof. We are talking about two types of knowledge: intuitive, immediate, requiring no proof of its truth, and discursive, mediated by reasoning and accepted as true after logical proof. Knowledge obtained without any deliberation or argumentation includes: 1) knowledge accepted by the majority of people on the authority of a respected person; 2) well-known (obvious) judgments and views common among people, for example, "respect for parents is a duty"; 3) sensory perceptions expressed in statements such as "Zayd is sitting here", "now is day"; 4) the first intelligible principles (a part is less than a thing, a whole is greater than a part). "The existence of principles must be accepted. "Everything else needs to be proven," concludes al-Farabi.

Reasoning and proof take place when the mind not only perceives, but acquires the principles of knowledge in experience through induction, wrote Farabi. Further, assertions about what has no matter and is not connected with it are based on logical necessity (proof). Such is the assertion that outside the Universe there is neither empty nor filled space. It is not connected with the sensually perceived (i.e. matter) and is proved logically, namely analytically, from the concept of emptiness and the Universe. The inconsistency of a number of ideological positions of the Mashshaites with Islamic orthodoxy led to the fact that the clergy, mutakallims and Sufi mystics in the person of the aforementioned al-Ghazali spoke out against them. Orthodox theologians identified philosophy (logic) with heresy. These circumstances determined that the influence of philosophy (falasaf) in the spiritual life of Arab society was weakened. But if not in the culture of the Caliphate, then in the culture of the Western European Middle Ages, Arab philosophers played a significant role. Thanks to their high scientific and philosophical level, the work of Arab Aristotelians became a stimulator of the development of philosophy in medieval Europe, after Europeans became acquainted with the achievements of the Arabs in the 12th-13th centuries. Arab-Muslim philosophy, represented by the followers of Aristotle (Mashshaite Peripatetics) - al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd - built an essentially pantheistic worldview based on the consequences deduced from the teachings of Aristotle and the Neoplatonists. The main points in their philosophy were the provisions on the eternity of the world, the eternity of matter, the cause-and-effect relationships in nature, comprehended by reason. Their doctrine of the eternally existing single reason of the human race and the mortal soul of an individual also played an important role. All these provisions were later (in the 13th century) propagated and defended by the European followers of Ibn Rushd – the Latin Averroists.

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