

ARISTOTLE AND FARABI'S VIEWPOINT ABOUT PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEA

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ABSTRACT: *Idea theory is the most important part of Plato's theory, since it is predominant on all part of his philosophy, knowledge, and morality or even politic. Plato's viewpoint is the base and basic of many philosopher and philosophy historian's view. Aristotle as the best and nearest Plato's student found and a presented a different way than his teacher, in spite of his respect to Plato, this knowledge separated his way from his teacher. According to Aristotle, there is no other world than sensible word and there is no externally world of general. However, general beings are just human mind created and this is human mind, which creates general. Aristotle does not accept existence of self before body, therefore he rejects Plato's view who said science and knowledge is remind. However, Farabi tried to show that Plato and Aristotle's different viewpoint had the same direction. Since he believes that philosophies are the same and these differences are just in surface. Author of this article tries to analysis Aristotle and Farabi's viewpoint and show their general structure.*

KEYWORDS: Idea, Sensible, Knowledge, Plato, Aristotle, Farabi.

INTRODUCTION

Plato's theory of idea is the most important and basic of Plato's philosophy. Its acceptance or rejection will lead to proof or deny of his philosophy or at least major part of his theory. In other word, this theory is the foundation of Plato's philosophy. It is Plato's ontology and epistemology.

According to Plato, knowledge should have two features:

- A) It should match with its concept, it means without any error.
- b) It should be about "what exists", so it is not about "what is not" or "what is going to be". It is just about "what is" or fixed being. (Copleston, 2001, p 172).

Plato believes there are many difference between Idea world and sensible world, in brief:

- There is one instance in idea world, in spite of sensible world.
- Idea world is the perfection world, whereas sensible world is imperfection world.
- Idea world is fixed, whereas sensible world is changing.
- Idea world beings are absolute whereas sensible world beings are relative.
- Idea word beings are ever forever, whereas sensible world beings are not.
- Wisdom world beings don't need place, whereas sensible world beings need place.
- And at last, wisdom world being are substantive, whereas sensible world beings are not.

It is needed to say, Plato's sensible world means two thing:

- a) image, or mirror of Idea world;
- b) sensible things (Foroughi, 1989, p 20).

Plato said, as we know the highest degree of science, then our knowledge belongs to idea world. In other word, Plato considers the higher degree of knowledge is more true than lower degree, therefore he believes the more we move up from sensible to wisdom world, the higher beings we will reach (Dadjoo, 2011, p359).

Therefore, it is possible to conclude Plato's knowledge has following features:

- 1 Sensible things are not possible to defined as singular;
- 2 Plato is not skeptic, it means he believes it possible to gain true knowledge;
- 3 True knowledge is general type, but a general in Ideal world, not in sensible world;
- 4 The highest general, is highest knowledge, it means the more we move up, the higher degree of knowledge we can gain, reversely the more knowledge of trifle, knowledge will be further than the truth;
- 5 True knowledge is not related to the time.

Aristotle's viewpoint about Plato's idea

Idea theory is presented to explain survive and stability element among beings, and ration for being errorless of true knowledge and its general orientation, with different feed back during history, agreement or disagreement.

There are many different critics for idea theory, since its presented by Plato, up to now. But Aristotle's critic is more important, since it is the eldest one and Aristotle himself is Plato's student, and a great philosopher. Aristotle has confessed Plato's theory is great, but at the same time criticized about it and said "Plato I love, but I love Truth more", to show his respect to his teacher. (Durant, 1991, p 59)

Aristotle has criticized Plato's philosophy, briefly as follows:

- 1- According to Plato's philosophy, relations and denies need to have idea, since if we want to image a common image for different things, we will need to establish form for it, whereas it is not possible according to Aristotle, to find forms for relation. In other word, he believes" there is no clear reason for idea philosophy and according to others it can be conclude there are something which we think there is no ideas for them (Aristotle, 1988, p 34).
- 2- Aristotle believes idea philosophy is useless for three reason:
 - a) Idea philosophy just make sensible things double without any reason. Plato tried to explained pluralism of the world by idea philosophy whereas he just added many other things as ideas to sensible things. In other word Aristotle believes Plato is similar a person who cannot count, this person think if numbers be double, it is easier

to count. So Aristotle concluded supposing too many other things in Idea world cannot help to explain pluralism of the world. (Copleston, 2001, p 336)

b) Plato's idea form for our knowledge about things is useless. In other world, there is no new knowledge about sensible things by ideas, because these are not the form of nature of things in this world, and they are outside, not inside of the world things. (2001, p 337)

c) Plato's idea theory is useless for explanation of movement of the things, because idea forms are not moving whereas sensible things are moving. In other word, Aristotle believes idea philosophy cannot explain changing in the world. He said, it is not effective for our knowledge, because it cannot explain most important thing in the world, i.e. changing (2001).

- 3- Aristotle, also believes idea philosophy is impossible theory, because of following reasons:

First, Plato believes idea forms are essence of the thing, in other word they are nature of the things. But Aristotle said it is impossible essence of thing be outside of it. In other word, if idea form are essence of sensible thing and separated how they can consist them. (Aristotle, 1988, p 36)

Second, it is impossible, because it cannot explain interaction between idea form and sensible nature world. Aristotle believe Plato has used the word "of " to show this relation as he said sensible things are of "idea form", but it is not clear rational relation and it is doubtful (1988).

Third, forms of things are individual, same as other things they are form, whereas idea forms should be general not individual. For example, Idea human is an individual similar to Socrates, so if it is supposed that there many things with common name there shall be a new model for it, or we should place a third human, not as Socrates, but his mimic. And since Socrates and his Idea form have same nature there should be another human self-perpetuation and it is impossible sequence (Copleston, 2001, p 339).

Aristotle believes idea forms is impossible.

- 4- Disagree that "idea forms are the numbers" .

Aristotle also criticized if "idea forms are the numbers, how they can be cause?" "How it is possible that two type of number exist?", "if math is the nature and essence of things, what is the origin of movement?"(2001, pp 341, 342).

Therefore, the main difference between Aristotle and Plato is that: Our usual and sensible things are so important that they should belong to this world of sense, for two reason: First, our ordinary experiment are themselves fantastic enough without any need to philosophically ration, second Aristotle believes passing practical boundaries is impossible, so our knowledge is limited to the world of the sense and there is no need for idea world.

Although Aristotle has criticized Plato's philosophy idea form, but he has an ultimate agreed with Plato about one thing: Both Plato and Aristotle said knowledge subject is general, however Plato believes general as independent real existence, and sensible things

are imaginary without general, in fact the sensible things are shadow of general and related to them. (Papkyn, Sterols, 2001, p 280).

But Aristotle believes sensible separation of general is possible just in mind, not outside and sensible and sense is the door and basic of human knowledge about fact things and human mind understand general by induction (Foroughi, 1989, p 43).

Therefore, both try to discuss about general, and believe knowledge is knowledge of general. But Aristotle believes general implicit in partial things in his ontology, and called it as essence or nature of thing, and rejected Plato's philosophy who believes there are independent general beings as idea form.

Farabi's theory about Plato's idea form

Farabi, similar to Aristotle, believes sense is introduction and basic of any language and since he doesn't believe existence of self before body, therefore rejected this idea which said: science is reminding. (Golestani, 1991, p311), since Farabi did not believe existence of soul before body. He said: sense is tool for human knowledge and he can understand general beings by partial perception, and self is a possible knower.... Sense is a way which human self get knowledge in that way. (Alfahkhoori, Aljar, 1979, p 429).

But, sense cannot go further than the form and appearance of things, so essence of the world is hidden. But if human passes this degree of sensible knowledge to rational degree of wisdom, then he will know general or rational knowledge. Therefore, to reach this point, human mind should separate from imagination and sensible matter to get rational knowledge of wisdom. (Goelstani, 1991, p 310).

In other word, Farabi, tried to match between Aristotle and Plato. According to Farabi, Philosophy is the same basically, and these difference between philosophers are in appearance and form, not in content. Philosophers, in fact try to get the truth, so they should agree with each other. Therefore, Plato and Aristotle who are Philosophy Masters and founders, agree in basics, but their different viewpoints are about forms. (Davari Ardakani, 2010, p 197).

Farabi tried his best to match Aristotle viewpoint with Plato's remind reference and said they are the same in fact. He mentioned different various reasons for it: " We don't know anything without its descriptions. And it is not possible to recognize things except by some effects before these descriptions, it means anything related to unknown general is unknown. Therefore, knowledge means matching two similar things and it means resemblance. As we see Plato believe knowledge is nothing except reminding, and this philosophy in fact is the same as Aristotle 's philosophy. Since Aristotle mentioned in his final book of "Analysis": "Any knowledge is a result of previous knowledge. Since if we know something, then we will compare this one with the new one. Besides, we know partial things respect to our previous knowledge of the world. This is the same as Plato's viewpoint according to Farabi. (Halabi, 1994, p 111).

Overall, according to Farabi, Right knowledge is gained by active wisdom and this is illumination knowledge which is totally different from Aristotle's knowledge. (Golestani, 1991, p311).

CONCLUSION

Ideal world, is the most important and the main subject which Aristotle criticize Plato for it. Plato considered wisdom world as true world and sensible world as an image of wisdom world. In other word, Plato believes to get higher knowledge we should know more general, vise versa, if we know more partial things then we know more sensible things and so far from true knowledge. But Aristotle and Farabi did not believe Farabi's idea world and they rejected existence of a parallel world toward sensible world. Aristotle gave some reasons for rejecting idea world: 1) There is no idea form for relations; 2) It is a useless philosophy; 3) it is impossible; 4) he ejected that idea matches with the number. Generally, for the main difference between Aristotle and Plato, we can say:

Aristotle believes our practical sense are so important, which emphasizes our knowledge shall belong to the sensible world, for two reason: our experiments are themselves fantastic and rich enough without any need for philosophy subject higher than them. Second Aristotle believes it is impossible for human to go further than sensible world. Therefore, he believes, our knowledge is limited to sensible world without need of idea form world.

Farabi, in the one hand, agreed with Aristotle who said sense is the origin of our knowledge and he said: " Sense make it possible for human to know and human can understand general because he understood partial. " But in other hand he tried to show Aristotle and Plato had same direction. According to Farabi, philosophy is basically the same, and these difference are just in surface. So he tried to match Aristotle 's viewpoint with Plato's resemblance origin viewpoint and show they are the same.

But Farabi disagree Aristotle about true knowledge, since he believes true knowledge is gained by illumination by active wisdom, whereas Aristotle didn't mention any thing as illumination in his philosophy.

Farabi, same as Aristotle , believe there is no separated world for numbers and Plato's idea form world does not really exist. Therefore, he believes beings are not shadow of idea form, but they really exist and according to Aristotle they are essence and effects referred to first essence, i.e. God. So partial beings are possible or self existent and self consistent existent is God.

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