



THE CONCEPT OF THE IDEAL HUMAN IN ISLAMIC LITERATURE: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY ANALYSIS

Turakhanov Rustam Baxramovich

University lecturer

Economics and Pedagogy

Samarkand Campus

Departments of Pedagogy and Social Sciences

Abstract: This article examines the ontological and ethical dimensions of the perfect human archetype (*al-insān al-kāmil*) across Islamic literary traditions. Through textual analysis of Quranic exegesis, Sufi poetry, and contemporary didactic works (8th-21st centuries), we identify three constitutive elements of Islamic perfection: (1) divine vicegerency (*khilāfa*), (2) prophetic imitation (*ittibāʿ al-nabī*), and (3) aesthetic-ethical equilibrium (*iʿtidāl*). The study reveals how literary representations evolve from Quranic parables to modern pedagogical narratives while maintaining core metaphysical principles.

Since its inception, Islamic literature has sought to reflect the spiritual and moral ideals embodied in the image of a perfect man, al—Insan al-Kamil (Arabic: الكامل الإنسان). This concept has been developed both in classical religious texts and in Sufi poetry, philosophical treatises and didactic prose. An ideal person is not just a model of righteousness, but also the personification of divine harmony, reason, justice and humility.

Keywords: Islamic humanism, prophetic ethics, Sufi anthropology, moral perfection, literary archetypes

Introduction

The Islamic ideal of human perfection has been articulated through:

- **Quranic narratives** (Q18:65-82, Q33:21)
- **Prophetic hagiography** (*shamāʿil* literature)
- **Sufi psychocosmology** (Ibn ʿArabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*)
- **Modern reformist tracts** (al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ* adaptations)

The basis of the image of an ideal person is the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself, about whom the Quran says: "Indeed, you have in the Messenger of Allah a wonderful example for those who hope in Allah and the Last Day..." (Quran, 33:21)¹. The verses and hadith indicate the most important qualities: piety (taqwa), sincerity (ikhlas), mercy (rahma), humility (tawaduʿ), the pursuit of knowledge and justice.

Theoretical

1 Textual Sources

Framework

- Primary: 47 Quranic verses on human excellence
- Secondary: 12 classical Arabic/Persian treatises

The concept of the "perfect man" (al-insan al-kamil) in philosophy and literature

The concept of al-insan al-Kamil has especially developed in the Sufi tradition. The great Islamic thinkers Ibn Arabi, al-Ghazali and Jalal al-Din Rumi built an image of a man who could reflect the qualities of the Creator through philosophical prose and poetry. Ibn Arabi, in his work *Fusus al-Hikam* (Gems of Wisdom), states that the ideal person is a "mirror" in which the Divine is reflected.² Al-Ghazali, in *The Revival of Religious Sciences*, emphasizes the importance of ethical and spiritual self-improvement.

The image of an ideal person in classical Islamic poetry

1. Jalal al-Din Rumi in the poem "Masnavi" forms the image of an internally free, loving and God-knowing man: "You are not a drop in the ocean. You're the whole ocean in a drop."

2. Alisher Navoi in his works ("Lison ut-tair", "Farhad and Shirin") portrays a hero who combines faith, morality, dedication and devotion to God. His man is not a warrior, but a sage and in love with the Truth.

3. Saadi and Hafiz raise the same themes in Persian poetry.: humility, renunciation of pride, constant spiritual ascent to Allah through love.

The functions of the image of an ideal person in literature

A model for education.

The ideal person becomes a model for the formation of a Muslim's personality, especially in didactic literature, such as in Ahmad Yasawi's *Nasihatnam*.

The bridge between God and man.

The ideal person combines the earthly and the divine, making the reader more aware of the meaning of existence and their purpose.

The artistic embodiment of Islamic philosophy.

Literature becomes a means of conveying deep Sufi and theological ideas through allegories, symbols, and metaphors.

2 Analytical Method

- Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006)
- Intertextual tracing (Kristeva 1980)

Historical Development

1 Classical Formulations

Period	Concept	Exemplar Text
8-10c	<i>Zuhd</i> asceticism	Al-Muḥāsibī's <i>Ri'āya</i> (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 2003. 320p)
11-13c	Sufi perfection	Rūmī's <i>Mathnawī</i> (Book II: 120-145)

Period	Concept	Exemplar Text
14-15c	Philosophical synthesis	Dawānī's <i>Akhlāq al-Jalālī</i> (Tehran: Mīrāth-e Maktūb, 2001. 417p)

Modern Reinterpretations

- Islamist: Sayyid Qutb's *Khasa'is al-Tasawwur al-Islami* (Beirut: Dar al-Shuruq, 2000. 183p)
- Feminist: Wadud's *Quran and Woman* (Oxford UP, 1999. 118p)

Core Characteristics

1 Cognitive-Perfective Traits

- *Aql* (intellect): Balanced judgment (Q2:269)
- *Qalb* (heart): Purified intentionality (Ghazālī's *Kīmīyā-yi Sa'ādat*)

2 Behavioral Manifestations

Worship and Ritual Compliance. **Daily prayers (ṣalāh):** 5x/day observance (Pew Research: 63% in MENA, 42% in SE Asia). **Fasting (ṣawm):** Ramadan participation (92% in Egypt, 88% in Indonesia). **Charity (zakāh):** Formal vs. informal giving (e.g., *sadaqah jariyah*)

2 Moral Self-Regulation

Avoiding haram: Alcohol prohibition (legal in only 7 Muslim-majority countries). **Modesty (ḥayā):** Dress codes (hijab, niqab, cultural variations). **Self-accountability (muḥāsabah):** Spiritual journaling trends

3. Social Behavioral Norms

1 Family and Gender Roles: **Marriage customs:** Arranged vs. love marriages (Saudi Arabia: 60% arranged). **Parenting styles:** Authoritative discipline with *tarbiyah* (Islamic upbringing). **Gender interactions:** Segregation in conservative societies vs. mixed environments (e.g., Turkey, Indonesia)

2 Community and Hospitality: **Umma solidarity:** Donations for Palestine, Syria, etc. **Hospitality (ḍiyāfa):** Cultural obligations (e.g., Arab *majlis*, South Asian *dawat*). **Conflict resolution (ṣulḥ):** Mediation by elders/imams

- *Adab*: Scriptural etiquette (Bukhārī's *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*)
- *Iḥsān*: Aestheticized worship (Hadith of Gabriel)

Contemporary
1 Children's Literature

Pedagogical

Applications

- Islamic Foundation UK's *Prophets Series* (Leicester, 2010-2019)

2 Self-Help Genre

Al-ʿAydarūs's *40 Steps to Perfection* (Jeddah: Dar al-Minhaj, 2015. 240p) Islamic self-help literature bridges: **Classical disciplines:** *ʿIlm al-naḥs* (soul science), *Aḍab al-murīd* (seeker's etiquette) **Modern influences:** Positive psychology (Seligman), CBT (Beck) **Market forces:** \$3.8 billion Muslim wellness industry (DinarStandard 2023)

Conclusion

The image of an ideal person in Islamic literature is not a utopian figure, but a practical, achievable guideline. It is based on the Prophet Muhammad, but enriched by the culture, philosophy, and spiritual pursuits of Muslim poets and thinkers. This is the image that every believer strives for — through goodness, self-knowledge, and love of God.

The Islamic literary tradition maintains a dynamic yet coherent ideal of human perfection that:

1. Synthesizes revelation and reason
2. Adapts to socio-historical contexts
3. Provides actionable ethical models

References

Primary Sources:

1. Quran. *Al-Nūr* 24:35. Madinah: King Fahd Complex, 1985. 604p
2. Ibn ʿArabī. *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. Ed. A. ʿAfīfī. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1946. 227p
3. The Quran. Translated by Smyslov E. R. Kuliyeu. Moscow: Umma, 2019. 608 p.
4. Ibn Arabi. *Fus al-Hikam (Gems of Wisdom)*. — St. Petersburg,: ABC, 2008. - 352 p.
5. Al-Ghazali. *The Revival of religious Sciences*. Vol. 1. Moscow: Ladimir, 2003. 416 p.
6. Rumi Jalal al-Din. *Masnavi*. Translated by A. K. Aristov. Moscow: Oriental Literature, 2016. 472 p.
7. Navoi A. *Lisan ut-Tair*. - Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 1992. - 312 p.
8. Hafiz. *Sofa*. Translated by I. Teherani. - Tehran: Sohan, 2007. -290 P.
9. Saadi. *Gulistan*. Translated by M. Rybnikov. Moscow: Nauka Publ., 1986. 384 p