

THE PHILOSOPHICAL-ARTISTIC INTERPRETATION OF HUMAN PERFECTION IN ALISHER NAVOI'S GHAZALS

Amanov Abdijabbor Sattarovich

Acting Associate Professor, Ph.D., Department of Uzbek Language and Literature, Namangan State University

Abstract:

This article analyzes the concept of the “Perfect Human Being,” which occupies a central place in the lyrical heritage of the great thinker Alisher Navoi, through the example of one of his philosophical ghazals. The study explores, from a scholarly and philosophical perspective, the individual's withdrawal from the social environment, the ontological struggle between the nafs (ego) and the spirit, as well as the stages of attaining the Sufi state of fana.

Keywords: Navoi, perfect human being, seclusion, nafs, vortex metaphor, himmat, fana, spiritual freedom.

Introduction

Alisher Navoi is one of the great thinkers of Eastern thought who placed the human being at the center of the universe. His rich literary heritage, especially his lyrical creativity, is not only a source of artistic pleasure, but also has special significance as a philosophical school that educates the human spirit, purifies the heart, and leads one toward understanding the essence of existence. In Navoi's work, the human being is interpreted not simply as a biological or social being, but as a complex spiritual creation striving toward divine truth, passing through the test of the contradiction between the nafs and the spirit, and moving toward inner perfection.

In Navoi's view, the human being is not a “ready-made” existence. He does not acquire his essence all at once, but attains perfection through constant search, suffering, inner struggle, spiritual purification, and the stages of fana. In this sense, the poet's ghazals are not merely expressions of love or lyrical experiences, but a spiritual school, a lesson of heart education and spiritual maturity that reveals the inner mechanisms of human perfection.

In Navoi's lyrics, the concept of the “perfect human being” occupies a central place. This concept is closely connected with Sufi philosophy, in which a person renounces his “Self,” the desires of the nafs, worldly interests, and even the trade of the hereafter, striving toward Absolute Truth. The perfect human being is a person who has understood himself, overcome his nafs, purified his heart, regarded service to the people as a form of service to God, and attained spiritual freedom.

In this article, the concept of the “perfect human being” is analyzed from a Sufi-philosophical point of view on the basis of the following ghazal by Alisher Navoi:

Bo'lmish andoq munqati' ahli zamondin ulfatim,
Kim, o'zum birla chiqishmas ham zamone suhbatim.
Ey xush ulkim, tutmish erdi vahsh ila sahroda uns,

Muhish ahvole manga kim, bor o'zumdin vahshatim.
Istaram qochmoq adam vodiysidinkim, kirkali
Vomiqu Farhodu Majnun bas g'uluvdur xilvatim.
To'lganurmen o'zlugumdin chiqq'ali bukim erur,
Dard vodiysida sargardon quyundek hay'atim.
Ey ajal, tan xirqasin kuydurki, bo'lmish bas og'ir,
Bu malomat o'qlari birla tikilgan kisvatim.
Ey falak, anjum ushoq toshin yig'ib boshing'a ur,
Chun fano mayxonasi xishtidin o'ldi turbatim.
Yetti ko'kni ko'k varaqdek sovurg'ay har taraf,
Toqi minoyi aro chirmalsa ohi hasratim.
Qo'y duru feruza bahs inkim, nujumu charxni
Nilufar bargi uza shabnamcha ko'rmas himmatim.
La'ldek boshim osilsun g'arqai xunob o'lub,
La'l tikkan saltanat tojig'a bo'lsa rag'batim.
Turfa ko'rkim, xalq komi birla umrum bo'ldi sarf,
Turfaroq bukim birovga yoqmadi bir xidmatim.
Ey Navoiy, ikki olamdin kechib toptim visol,
Bu ikki butxonadin ermish bu yo'lda ofatim. [1, 112–113-b.]

This ghazal demonstrates not only Navoi's high artistic mastery, but also the mature expression of his views within the framework of wahdat al-wujud and the philosophy of the tariqa. In the work, the process of renouncing one's “Self” and attaining fana in Absolute Truth is depicted in a dramatic and painful manner. In the inner structure of the ghazal, the idea of perfection is revealed step by step: first seclusion, then vahshat, then departure from selfhood, fana, himmat, service to the people, and finally the maqam of union.

Literature Review

The issue of the perfect human being in the work of Alisher Navoi is one of the widely studied problems in Navoi studies, Sufi studies, and philosophical literary studies. This issue serves to illuminate not only the artistic-aesthetic aspect of the poet's lyrics, but also their deep philosophical, ethical, and irfani content.

The given ghazal, included in Alisher Navoi's divan "G'aroyib us-sig'ar," is considered one of the main sources for understanding the poet's lyrical-philosophical views. In the ghazal, the painful states of the human spirit, escape from selfhood, fana, and renunciation of the world and the hereafter are expressed through artistic images [1]. This makes it possible to interpret the work not as an ordinary lyrical experience, but as a philosophical text about human perfection.

E. E. Bertels, while studying the works of Navoi and Jami, emphasizes that Navoi's Sufi views are organically connected with the traditions of Eastern classical literature. According to the scholar, in Navoi's lyrics, the concept of love often goes beyond the framework of physical or metaphorical relations and is interpreted as a spiritual process leading to divine truth [2]. In the present ghazal as well, the concepts of love, seclusion, and fana appear precisely in such a metaphysical meaning.

Najmiddin Komilov, in his studies on the relationship between Sufism and Navoi's work, pays special attention to the internal connection between the concepts of seclusion, fana, baqa, ma'rifat, love, and perfection. According to him, in Navoi's interpretation, seclusion does not mean complete withdrawal from society, but rather the process of cleansing the heart from excessive attachment to created beings and directing it toward the Creator [3, 156-b.]. This view serves as an important scholarly basis for understanding the first couplets of the ghazal. Ibrohim Haqqul pays particular attention to the issues of the human being's examination of his "Self," struggle with the nafs, and spiritual awakening in Navoi's work. The scholar emphasizes that Navoi confronts the human being more with the inner world than with the outer world; true ma'rifat also emerges precisely in this process of inner examination [4, 22–23-b.]. This idea helps to understand more deeply the meaning of such expressions in the ghazal as "o'zumdin vahshatim" and "o'zlugumdin chiqg'ali."

A. Erkinov, analyzing the issues of human dignity, freedom, and social responsibility in Navoi's work, emphasizes that the poet's views on the perfect human being are not limited only to individual spiritual perfection, but are also connected with service to the people, justice, generosity, and social usefulness [5, 51–53-b.]. The line "xalq komi birla umrum bo'ldi sarf" in the present ghazal is precisely the artistic expression of this social-spiritual idea.

In his work "Navoiyning qalb daftari," I. Sultonov analyzes the inner suffering, spiritual movement, and system of images in the poet's lyrics, showing that Navoi's images possess deep psychological and philosophical meaning. The scholar interprets the

image of the vortex as the painful movement of the human spirit between the material world and spiritual infinity [6, 82–83-b.]. This approach is important in explaining the process of spiritual transformation reflected in the central couplets of the ghazal.

The analysis of existing literature shows that in the given ghazal, Navoi's views on the perfect human being appear as a complete philosophical system. In it, the human being first becomes alienated from society and selfhood, then confronts the nafs, strives toward the maqam of fana, rejects worldly sovereignty, accepts service to the people as an act on the path to God, and finally attains union by renouncing both worlds.

Analysis and Results

1. Seclusion — the Initial Stage of the Path of Perfection

Already in the first couplets of the ghazal, the poet creates the image of a human being alienated from his contemporaries and even from himself:

Bo'lmish andoq munqati' ahli zamondin
ulfatim,

Kim, o'zum birla chiqishmas ham zamone
subhatim.

In this couplet, the concept of "being munqati'" carries the central semantic load. Munqati'lik means separation, breaking away from connection, and spiritual detachment. However, Navoi interprets this state not as ordinary social dissatisfaction or weariness of people, but as the first condition of spiritual perfection.

The poet cannot get along with the people of his time, but this alienation is not limited only to the external environment. By saying "o'zum birla chiqishmas ham zamone subhatim," he indicates that he cannot come to terms even with his inner "Self." This state expresses the inner contradiction that arises in the process of human self-understanding. A person who enters the path of perfection first moves away from the noise of the outer world, and then comes face to face with the complexities of his inner world.

According to Navoi's philosophy, the first stage of the path of perfection is withdrawal from "kasrat," that is, from multiplicity, noise, external attachment, and worldly connections. As long as the human heart is occupied with external interests, reputation, status, and the desires of the nafs, it cannot turn toward Absolute Truth. Therefore, seclusion is not escape from society, but a spiritual state necessary for purifying the heart, preparing the spirit for inner silence, and understanding one's own essence.

According to the Navoi scholar Najmiddin Komilov, seclusion is not a complete rejection of society, but the cleansing of the heart from created beings and its orientation toward the Creator [3, 156-b.]. This exact

meaning is embodied in the present couplet. The poet's separation from his contemporaries is not social indifference; on the contrary, it is preparation for genuine spiritual communication.

Thus, in the first stage of the ghazal, Navoi depicts the perfect human being not as a passive ascetic fleeing from society, but as an active spiritual subject who has begun a deep examination of his own spirit.

2. Vahshat — the State of Fear of One's Own Nafs

In the next couplet, the state of seclusion deepens further and rises to the maqam of vahshat:

Ey xush ulkim, tutmish erdi vahsh ila sahroda uns,

Muhish ahvole manga kim, bor o'zumdin vahshatim.

In this couplet, Navoi uses the traditional images of the desert and vahshat in a new philosophical meaning. Usually vahshat is interpreted as a concept connected with the external world, the desert, wildness, and distance from people. However, here Navoi expresses vahshat not as something coming from the external environment, but as a spiritual state arising from the human being himself. For the poet, the most frightening thing is not the desert or loneliness, but one's own "Self," one's own nafs.

The line "manga kim, bor o'zumdin vahshatim" reveals one of the deepest dramatic points of human spirituality. When a person confronts his defects, hidden vices, nafs-driven desires, and inner weaknesses, he becomes afraid of himself. This fear is not ordinary fear; it is considered a sign of spiritual awakening. For a person who is not afraid of himself does not examine himself, does not recognize his nafs, and does not strive to overcome it.

In this couplet, Navoi contrasts external vahshat with inner vahshat. It is possible to live with wild animals in the desert, but it is much more difficult for a person to free himself from the vahshat of his own nafs. In this respect, the couplet expresses an important idea of Sufi anthropology: the greatest enemy of the human being is not in the external world, but in his own inner being.

As Ibrohim Haqqul emphasizes, in Navoi's interpretation, the human being approaches true ma'rifat through the examination of his "Self" [4, 22–23-b.]. Therefore, vahshat is not a spiritual crisis, but a necessary stage of self-understanding.

3. The Valley of Adam and a Seclusion Beyond the Heroes of Love

In the third couplet, the poet expresses even more openly his aspiration toward fana and the valley of non-being:

Istaram qochmoq adam vodiysidinkim, kirgali

Vomiqu Farhodu Majnun bas g'uluvdur xilvatim.

In this couplet, the concept of "adam vodiysi" has special philosophical significance. Adam is not ordinary non-existence, but means renunciation of selfhood, rejection of nafs-based existence, and the melting away of the personal "Self" before Absolute Truth. In Sufism, this state is close to the maqam of fana. Fana is the human being's renunciation of seeing himself as an independent existence and becoming annihilated in the existence of God.

The couplet mentions such traditional heroes of love as Vomiq, Farhod, and Majnun. In Eastern literature, they are famous as symbols of love, devotion, and loyalty. However, Navoi says that even their entering into his seclusion would be "g'uluv," that is, excess. With this, the poet raises his spiritual state to a level higher than ordinary love experience.

Here Navoi interprets love not as a physical or metaphorical experience, but as a metaphysical phenomenon. His seclusion is not the loneliness of an ordinary lover; it is a spiritual space directed toward Absolute Truth. For this reason, even such heroes of love as Majnun, Farhod, and Vomiq are portrayed as if unworthy of entering this space.

In this couplet, an important aspect of the concept of the perfect human being is revealed: perfection is not limited to ordinary love, loyalty, or devotion. It requires a fundamental transformation of the human being's ideas about existence, selfhood, and all attachments.

4. Spiritual Transformation and the "Vortex" Metaphor

In the central part of the ghazal, spiritual transformation appears in its most dramatic form:

To'lganurmen o'zlugumdin chiqq'ali bukim erur,

Dard vodiysida sargardon quyundek hay'atim.

In this couplet, the expression "o'zlugumdin chiqq'ali" signifies the human being's desire to leave his "Self," that is, to be freed from the sphere of nafs-based existence. However, this process does not occur peacefully, calmly, or easily. The poet likens his state to "a wandering vortex in the valley of pain." The vortex is a symbol of constant movement, instability, inner force, rotation, and ascent.

Through the vortex metaphor, Navoi artistically embodies the dialectical contradiction between spirit and body. The spirit strives upward, toward infinity, toward God; the body binds it downward, to the material world. Therefore, constant movement, suffering, and struggle arise within the human being. This struggle is an inseparable condition of perfection.

According to I. Sulstonov, through the image of the vortex, Navoi expresses the painful movement of the human being between the material world and spiritual infinity; the vortex is the visual form of the spirit striving from the earth toward the sky [6, 82–83-b.]. This interpretation deepens the philosophical meaning of the given couplet.

Thus, for Navoi, perfection is not a state of calm. It emerges through inner movement, struggle with selfhood, suffering, and spiritual transformations. As a person strives to come out of his shell, he must pass through the valley of pain. Pain here is not suffering in the ordinary sense, but a means of purification.

Conclusion

The analyzed ghazal is one of the texts that embodies Alisher Navoi's philosophical views on the human being at the highest level. In it, human perfection is interpreted not as a linear and peaceful process, but as a complex dialectical process that takes place through suffering, rejection, inner struggle, spiritual transformation, and fana.

In the ghazal, the concept of the perfect human being is revealed step by step. First, the human being separates from the people of his time, withdraws from external noise, and confronts his inner world. In the next stage, he experiences *vahshat* from himself, that is, he understands the danger of his *nafs*. Then he strives to leave his selfhood, wanders like a vortex in the valley of pain, desires liberation from the bodily shell, and turns toward the *maqam* of fana. Through fana, the human being becomes a spiritual subject who stands above even the rule of fate. His sigh shakes the seven heavens, and his *himmat* does not see the universe as greater than a drop of dew on a lotus leaf. The perfect human being in Navoi's imagination does not desire worldly sovereignty, because true rule is rule over the *nafs*. He devotes his life to serving the people, but does not expect praise or gratitude in return for this service. In this respect, Navoi's perfect human being is not a passive ascetic completely withdrawn

from society, but an active, responsible, and sincere person who regards service to the people as a path leading to God.

The idea of “renouncing both worlds” put forward in the *maqta'* couplet forms the peak of Navoi's philosophy. For the poet, both this world and the hereafter, if they become goals on the path to reaching God, are “idol-houses.” Thus, true union is granted only to a heart that is free from all interests, even from the desire for spiritual reward.

In conclusion, this ghazal is a perfect Sufi-philosophical text embodying Alisher Navoi's views on the “perfect human being.” In it, the human being is interpreted as a free spirit who has overcome the *nafs*, is free from self-interest, regards service to the people as an act on the path to God, and is liberated from the attachments of this world and the hereafter. In Navoi's philosophy, the human being is not “*olami sug'ro*” — the small world — but “*olami kubro*,” the great world, possessing spiritual power equal to the universe. This ghazal retains its significance as a high moral-philosophical program that remains relevant for today's spiritual searches.

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