Human Image from the Viewpoint of Mutanabi

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Abstract

Man is an unknown creature whom no one knows except god. No one is completely aware of his manners and the secret of his inner world and complicated soul. Sages and talented persons could understand some aspects of his character through god revelations and their personal experiences and register them in their works. Abu Teieb Ahmad Ibn Hussein known as Mutanabi, an Arab poet in 4th century, is one of those personalities who have a special viewpoint toward human. He is well-known for his wisdom poetry that depicted man's good and evil manners and described human being from different angles. This paper aims to extract a complete picture of human in Mutanabi's poetry using the descriptive–analytical method and represent his viewpoint toward him according to it. Results show that the good human in Mutanabi's thought has these characteristics: generosity, rationalism, courage, love, liberality, honor, humility, and policy; while the evil one is characterized with: stinginess, jealousy, materialism, ignorance, hypocrisy and duplicity.

Keywords: Mutanabi, Human image, Good man, Evil man, Arabic poetry.
Introduction:

Among all amazing creatures of the world, human is known as the lord of all. Human has 2 selves: ego and superego which are not only separate from each other but they form one concrete self. Man's character is combined of his thoughts, wishes and trends which originated from his nature; thus his difference with animal is limited in man's perception of himself and the universe, attractions affecting him and the quality in impressibility from selections and attractions.

Human intrinsically is neither good nor bad, but he is an empiricist organism which has a potential gift to behave in different manners. Man in his birthday is like a white paper which is free of all kinds of writing. He is considered a responsive being that respond to any environmental motives.

Recognition of good human and offering a rational and scientific criterion in this area was the concern of man in history, so it is normal for man's history to be full of theories, wishes, and legends in this field. So, divine religions, intellectual schools, philosophers, mystics and religious leaders, all of them differently considered this problem and spoke of it.

Mutanabi, Abbasid poet, has also dealt with the problem of human in his poetry and thought and depicted him. Thus a research in his works will help us to know the characteristics of mankind better; so, in this paper, with a descriptive-analytical method, we will study his viewpoint toward human to get across his thought about him.

Research goals:

1. Explanation of Mutanabi's viewpoint toward good and bad characteristic of human.
2. Acquiring a general image of human in Mutanabi's thought for the recognition of his personality.

Research questions:

1. What is Mutanabi's viewpoint toward good and evil qualities of human?
2. How the offered image by the poet can help us to recognize man's character better?

Review of Literature:

It should be remembered that in the last centuries, Arab and Persian poets and prose writers were always considered with human image in their literary works. They have written valuable works in this field. We can mention some works, like: "human in ancient arab poetry" by Abd-alghani Ahmad Zeitooni, and "human in contemporary poetry" by Muhammad Mukhtari. Furthermore some researches have been done in Iran and Arabic countries universities, which we can refer to some theses like: "man in Abu-al'ala's poetry" by Mahnaz Zamani and also "an analysis and study on Badr Shaker Sayyab's human poetry" by Farhad Rajabi and etc. So we
can say that the study of human characteristics in Mutanabi's poetry is regarded a new research and no one did such a work in this area before.

**Mutanabi's life:**

"Mutanabi was born in 915 A.D. / 303 A.H. in Kufa city, Kanda district, in a poor and unknown family, so he is known as Kandi too. His father belonged to south Arabs and his occupation was to transfer water to people, so they called him by Abdan Saqqa. Mutanabi lost his mother in childhood and his grandmother devoted with the task of raising him" (Fakhouri, 1386 A.H., p. 435). He acquired his first teachings in his birthplace Kufa (Aswar, 1384 A.H.: 2). Mutanabi lived with Bedouin Arabs and corrected his dialect. He also composed poetry from his childhood and soon surpassed all his contemporary poets (Zakawati Qaragozloo, 1382 A.H., p. 45). He felt a great soul in himself from the beginning of his adolescence, a soul tried to be brave and to be generous (Zeif, 1987 A.D., p. 342).

In 948 A.D. Mutanabi was introduced to Seif Al-Dawla, literature loving Emir of Hamdanid court, by Abu al'ashair Hamdani. But jealous people tried to affect Emir's concern toward him and succeeded finally. This event reflected in Mutanabi's poems in the form of grief (Blachere, 1985 A.D., p. 159), thus he went to Kafoor's territory in response to his call (Blachere, 1985 A.D., p. 165). But he could not achieve his desires there, so "he returned to Iraq. He stayed at Kufa a while then went to Baghdad in 353 A.H. he wanted there to join Muhallabi, the vizier of Al-Bawya, but for the enmity of vizier's retainers, he abstained and dedicated himself to the explanation of his poems" (Aswar, 1384 A.H., p. 9). Ibn Al-Amid, Vizier of Rukn Al-Dawla invited him to go to Orajan (now Bebahan), Mutanabi accepted this invitation and in 354 A.H. went there (Blachere, 1985 A.D., p. 337). Okbori Says: "he has not shown modesty in his poetry to anyone like Ibn Amid" (Ukbori, 2003 A.D., p. 301).

After a brief stay with Ibn Amid, he then went to Shiraz in acceptance of an invitation by Azod Al-Dawla (Ibn Khallikan, 1978 A.D., p. 3/505). He there composed six odes, an Orjooza (an ode in Rajaz prosodic meter), and a stanza, which are known as Shirazyiat (Husein, 1986 A.D., p. 368).

Mutanabi decided to return to Iraq and when he reached a place named Deir Aqoul a man named Fatek Ibn Zeid Asadi, whom Mutanabi satirized before bitterly, attacked him with some of his men and finally Mutanabi was killed and his self-written divan was scattered in the desert (Qeirawani, 1959 A.D., p. 1/75). Mutanabi's divan, after Maqamat Al-Hariri is the most famous book read by Arabic literature lovers. People never have seen a man like Mutanabi. He is a prophet in his poetry and his miracles are included in its meaning. All Islamic poets owe to Mutanabi for his fantastic adoption of meanings. His divan is well-known among Arabs and Persians and they all esteem it (Samarqandi, 1385 A.H., pp. 42,43).
Good vs. Evil:

In Mutanabi’s viewpoint people are different: some are good and some are evil, some righteous and some wicked. He believes that individuals are divided into various categories. Here we refer to some differences mentioned in his divan, with a bit of explanation:

Friend vs. Foe:

He believes that everyone has friends and foes at the same time that should be treated differently. For instance, one should be loyal to his friends and sacrifice what he has for them even his life, for a friend is closer to man than himself:

أنّي لنأسف لوقت حياتي لأنني أحببتك رغم أنك محبوب

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., p. 1/189)
Meaning: you are my dear friend but I seek refuge with god to love anyone who does not love me.

He also says that the worst place is where no friend can be found:

شرب أهل البلاد مكان لا صديق به وشرب ما يكسي الإنسان ما يصم

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., p. 2/294)
Meaning: the worst place is where no friend can be found and the worst thing acquired by man is what defames him.

Furthermore he says that wise people want friendship for its own sake, while foolish ones love each other for the sake of beauty.

ويحب العاقلون على التصافي وحب الجاهلين على الوضاء

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/410)
Meaning: wise people love each other for the sake of friendship but the love of foolish ones is for outward beauty.

Mutanabi speaks about enmity and says that the enmity among people should not lead to hatred; for, human love, justice and manhood are contrary to hatred, and if someone had hatred toward his enemy, will be away from these sublime values:

من عياء الزعامة والرغبة نذّر أن تباغّا إلّى الأحقاق

http://www.ijhcs.com/index.php/ijhcs/index
Mutanabi believes that animosity must be removed by kindness and favor, but when kindness loses its effect, enemies should be destroyed:

(Боркуги, 1428 г.х., с. 2/232)

Meaning: he removes enmity of aggressors with his favor and kindness, but if their animosity could not be removed, he would destroy them.

He says that the best weapon is beneficence and affection; for, in this case, people will become advocates of the compassionate person.

(Боркуги, 1428 г.х., с. 2/506)

Meaning: his generosity acts as cutting swords against foes and his good deeds seem as long lances.

Affection vs. anger:
Mutanabi also brings affection and anger in front of each other and he gathered them in a line of his poetry:

(Боркуги, 1428 г.х., с. 2/347)

Meaning: he has such a kindness that can vitalize bones and such a wrath that succeeds the guilt’s crime and is greater than it. (His anger is not equal to the crime, so his punishment is much more).

Wisdom vs. folly:
Mutanabi has called up wisdom and folly together and says that the difference of wise people with foolish ones is that the first group will consider the exterior while the other one will see the interior layer.

(Боркуги, 1428 г.х., с. 2/410)

Meaning: wise people love each other for the sake of friendship but the love of foolish ones is for outward beauty.

http://www.ijhcs.com/index.php/ijhcs/index  Page 998
Sacrifice vs. egoism:

In another line, he gathered sacrifice and egoism together and says:

کُلُّ یُرِیذُ رجَالَةَ لِحیاتِهِ یَا مَنْ یُرِیذُ حیاتَه لِرجالِهِ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/101)

Meaning: all people want to have friends in order to save their lives, but I want my life to save my friends. (Others sacrifice their friends to live more, but I sacrifice myself for my friends.)

Fear vs. bravery:

Unlike fear and cowardice, bravery and courage have a high position among positive characteristics. Wise poets like Mutanabi, dealt much with these human qualities in their poetry:

وَلَوْ عَنِ الحیاةِ یَقِیِ ِلۡحیَیَّ لَعَدَّنَا أَضْنَآئۡنَا الشُّجَعَانَا

وَإِذَا لَمْ يَکُنِّ مِنِ الدِّمَوتِ ۚۚۚ فَمِنَ العِجْزَ ۚ اۢنَّ تَکُونُ جِیانَا

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/473)

Meaning: if man could have an eternal life by keeping himself far from fighting (being coward), brave people (who take part in wars) were the most astray. But since there is no escape from death, cowardice is regarded a weakness.

The poet also sees that self-preservation is common among the coward and the brave, but the methods taken by each to defend themselves are different:

فَخَبَبَ الجِیانِ النَّفَسَ أَوۡرَدةَ التَّقُیَّ وَخِبَبَ الشَّجاعِ النَّفَسَ أَوۡرَدةَ الْخَرَبِ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 1/123)

Meaning: coward man will abstain from war to preserve his [secular] life but the brave one will take part in war to save his [spiritual] life. (The purpose of each is life-saving).

Honor vs. inferiority:

Mutanabi in the most part of his poetry dealt with honor and inferiority and he is also against oppression, so he says: live with honor or fight the oppressor and die:

بَینِ طَفَنِ القَلَا وَخَفَقِ الْبَنَوْدِ عَمْشَ عَزِیَّاً ۚ اَوۡ مَشَكِرمَا

وَاطْلَبَ الْعَرَّ فِی ٌ نِظَآیَ وَذُرُ الْدَّ لَوْنَوْ کَانَ فِی جِنُانِ الْخَلْوِ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 1/123)
Meaning: live venerated or die with honor between lance stabbing and flag vibration. And seek honor even in the fire and leave the inferiority even in paradise.
Mutanabi sees that man's glory and his abstaining from inferiority will bring him courage and bravery:

أَنْفُسُ الْكَرِيمُ مِنْ الْذِّيْنَىْ تُشْرَكَةُ
وَالْعَزَّ مُضْضَعُ وَلَسْنَ بَخَافٍِ

Meaning: Having lofty ideals and abstaining from inferiority will lessen the number of foes in man's eyes. Disgrace is like brine (cannot be drunk easily), and one who is afraid of others' sayings will not fear of his death.

Nobility vs. ignobility:

Mutanabi also dealt with nobility and ignobility as contradictory concepts. He says that if you accompany noble people, they will appreciate you to an extent that they may become your clients. But if you honor ignoble people it will lead to their revolt:

إِنْ أَنتُ أَكْرَمْتَ الْكَرِيمِ مُلْكَةُ
وَإِنْ أَنتُ أَكْرَمْتَ الْفَلْحِيَّ تَعُرَّدَا

Truth vs. lying:

He points to another important problem and says that lying and truth are against each other and each of them should obtain its proper position.

أَهْذَا جُزَاءُ الصَّدِّيقِ إِنَّ كُنْتُ صَادِقًا
أَهْذَا جُزَاءُ الْكَذِبِ إِنَّ كُنْتُ كاذِبًا

Is this the reward of truth if I were honest; or this is the penalty of lying if I were dishonest?

Peace vs. war:

Mutanabi believes that oppression and aggression are parts of human nature. If there is no oppression it is because of weakness not for love of peace.

الظْلُمُ مَنْ شَيْءُ النَّفْوُسِ فَإِنَّ تَجَدُّ
ذَاعَقَةٌ فِلَعْطَةٌ لَا يُظْلَمُ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/278)

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/207)

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/257)

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 1/129)

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/396)
Meaning: oppression lies in human nature; so, if you see someone's self-possession, maybe he is unable to oppress. However Mutanabi hates war and he is a peace lover: he mentions this topic as follows:

(Alborqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/131)

Meaning: notwithstanding enemies' wishes, the peace was made; though enviers tried to keep it on and broadcasted news of war continuation. Your administration kept them away from achieving their goals. Those who encouraged enemies to keep fighting not only didn't reach their wishes but also caused friendship to be more sincere.

Now after exposing contradictory qualities in human nature, comes the turn of expressing Mutanabi’s viewpoint toward good and evil man.

**Goodness and badness:**

Mutanabi here describes the nature of the malignant and says that when human's deeds become wrong, he will become suspicious toward others and he cannot distinguish between right and wrong, and friend and foe:

(Alborqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/404)

Meaning: when man becomes wrongdoer, he will become suspicious toward people and he will confirm his leeriness and mistrust which he had accustomed to. So he shows his enmity towards his friends as a result of enemies' gossip and he will fall in a dark night of doubts. I know people, before being acquainted with their external complexion by their behaviors and speech. I forgive my friend's fault; for I know when I ignore his ignorance he will be regretful soon.
Characteristics of a good man:

Among Mutanabi's poetry we come across poems dealing with characteristics of good man. In his viewpoint right human is a person who obtained right properties while the evil one is someone who acquired vices and depravities. We now select what concerns us among these poems:

Munificence and generosity:

Munificence and generosity are qualities attracted people's attention of every religion and nationality and they are regarded a unique characteristic for mankind; so, he unlike other animals, pay attention to the needy. Mutanabi also dealt with these properties in different places of his poetry and encouraged people for it:


(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/232)

Meaning: the time told him a word and made him understand that he will be reprimanded in case of miserliness. You did me a favor when respected me and expressed your kind opinion toward me but the noble person tries to obtain good values.

Okbori says in explanation of these two lines of poetry: the time taught him that there is no eternality for property and wealth and he understood it. So he granted his wealth in order to acquire honor and glory (Ukbori, 2003 A.D., pp. 3/278,279).

Mutanabi also says in this area:


(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 1/407)

Meaning: property and wealth will be useless without generosity. Are long lances useful without hands?

Beneficence and charity:

Everyone who gives the poor a portion of his wealth will be popular among people. Moreover such a person will find a second life after death by his reputation among people:
Meaning: youth's reputation is his second life among people. His real need in this world is what feeds him and beyond it is considered nonsense.

Mutanabi also says:

وقالَ امْرُي ِي ُؤُلِي ِالْجِمْلَ مُحَبٍّ
وَكَلِمَكَانُ يَلْبِسُ ِالْمُرْطَبَ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/238)

Meaning: everyone who is charitable will be popular and each place that grows honor is regarded pure and clean.

فَأَخْسَنَ وَجَهُ فِي ِالْوَزْرٍ وَحَجَّ مُحَسَنٍ
وَأَيْمَنَ ُكَفَّ ُفِهْمَ َكَفَّ مُنْعَمٍ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/408)

Meaning: the most beautiful face among people is the face of beneficent person and the most auspicious hand is the hand of charitable one.

Magnanimity and dignity:

Besides these poems Mutanabi points to some characteristics which man should have them to acquire magnanimity:

لَنْوَا ِالمشْفَقَةَ سَمَادَ ِالْنَّاسِ ُكَلُّهُمْ
الْجُوُدُ ُفَقَرَّ ِوَالْقَادِمَ ْفَقَالَ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/237)

People would become magnanimous if there was no hardship in obtaining it. Generosity will impoverish and bravery will kill them.

جُوُدُ ُالرَّجَالِ مِنَ ُالْأَيْدِي ِوَجُوُدُهُمْ
مِنَ ِالْنَّاسِ فَلَا كَانَوا ِوَلَا ِالْجُوُدُ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 1/336)

Meaning: men's generosity lies in their hands but theirs lies in their tongues; so, I wish they and their generosity hadn't existed.

Beneficence without reproach:

Allah says in the holy Quran:

"يَا أَيُّهَا ِالْذِّينَ أَمَّنَ َلَأَتَبَتْنَ ِصَدَفَكَمْ بَالْمَنَّ ِوَالْأَذُّ َكَأَلْدَى َكَفَّ ِالْقِفَّ مَالِ إِنَّ ِالْمَنَّ َنَاسٍ "

(=O you who believe! Do not make your charity worthless by reproach and injury like he who spends his wealth to show off to the people) (Baqara/264).
Mutanabi also sees that the generosity should be without reproach and hurt, otherwise it will be artificial and a sign of duplicity:

إِنَّ الْخَيْرَةَ لَمْ تَزَرعَ خَلاصةً مِنْ الأَلْدَى
وِلَنَنْفَسَ أَخْلَاقَ شَخْصٍ عَلَى الْفَتْحِ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/503)

Meaning: if generosity is not free from reproach and injury, it cannot lead to praise for its doer on the other hand, his money has been lost. Human nature has a code that implies that the act of bounty is a generosity or kind of duplicity.

Continuation of the goodness:

There is a tradition by the prophet Muhammad says: "Do good deeds properly, sincerely and moderately and know that your deeds will not make you enter Paradise, and that the most beloved deed to Allah's is the most regular and constant even though it were little." (Bukhari, 1407 A.H., p. 5/2373).

Mutanabi also sees that the most beloved generosity is the repeated one by its doer. He says:

فَغَدِّ بِهَا لَا عَدْمَهَا أَيِّدَا
خَيْرُ صَلاَتِ الْكَرِيمِ أَغْوُذُهَا

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 1/272)

Meaning: so repeat your bestow, I never be deprived from it. The most beloved generosity by the generous is the repeated one.

Rationalism:

Another quality which is concerned by Mutanabi is wisdom. Rationalism is human's special feature that has a lofty position in the viewpoint of the poet. He sanctifies it like bravery and believes that the wisdom is necessary to get high positions:

الْبَرَاءُ قَبْلَ شَجاعةُ الشَّجَاعَانِ
فَإِذَا هُمَا اجْتَمَعَا لِنَفْسٍ مَرْهَب
وَلَزِيَّدُ مَا طَغَنَّ الْفَتْحِ أَقْرَانَهَا

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/431,432)

Meaning: thought position is before courage of the brave. This is in the first position and that is in the second one. If they come together in a person he can be superior to others in every
place. And he perhaps influences his peers and with his wisdom before they can defeat him with sword and lance.

The poet speaks of his poems to be a garden which is watered by wisdom and thought:

(istani حَرْفُ، الْهَجَجِيَّةَ، السَّلَطَةُ، السَّمَثَامِيَّةَ)

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 1/181)

Meaning: I conveyed to him a garden of flowers out of my tongue, which was watered by wisdom, like watering of the clouds.

**Love:**

Love is the main purpose of life. Mutanabi classifies it as a quality of good human. He himself has perceived it and felt its taste so says:

(باقةُ ما منـَعَ الكلام الإنسـَانـَا، وأَلَّدَ شَكْوى عاشقـَـٰٰـۡـٰـٰـٰـۡـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰـٰ~

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/443)

Meaning: love is what prevents man from speaking fluently and it is the most delicious complaint declared by lover.

Love in his viewpoint is so sweet:

(للبيبى و بحنال من حوبىـهـ، والعـشـق كالمغـشـوق يغذـب قـرـبـهـ)

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 1/87)

Meaning: for the lover approaching the love tastes sweet like beloved, although he finally will be afflicted with it.

**Love for woman:**

Some of scholars and researchers believe that Mutanabi has never fallen in love. He, for his special code of ethics, respected society religious values and regarded Arabic culture and tradition, so he was completely away from the current trend of the age which is called by masculine ode (غزل مذكر) (Zeyyat, 1997 A.D., p. 411).

He himself says:

(وـمـن خـيْرُ الأُفْوَانِي فـأَلْفُوَانِي، ضـبَـياً فـي بواطَىـهـ ظـلَـامـ)

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/359)

Meaning: Who tries beautiful women will find that they are bright outside but at the same time dark inside.

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On the other hand he finds material and earthly love in the opposite direction of wisdom:

وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا نَظْرَةٌ بَيْنَ لَهَذَا وَلَا عَقَلٍ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/169)

Meaning: Love is a glance after a glance that when dwells in lover's heart, his wisdom will go away.

His heart is not created for loving beautiful eyes and necks:

لَمْ يُشَرِّكَ الْآذَرُ مِنْ قَلِبِّي وَلاَ كِتْبِي

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 1/335)

Meaning: the time has not left an empty space in my heart to accommodate love for eyes and necks.

**Liberality and self-esteem:**

Mutanabi emphasizes that human should be characterized with this quality and he encourages people in his poetry to liberality, self-respect and keeping away from humility:

وَلَسْ بَعْدُ أَنْ تَغْنِيّتْ كِرَامَتِي

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/168)

Meaning: the real humility in my life is when my dignity and esteem are humiliated, not when my food is worthless.

غَيْرُ أَنَّ الْفَتْقِيّ يَلَاقِيّ العَذَابَ

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/472)

Meaning: A chivalrous youth will confront gloomy deaths but he will not surrender to humility.
Meaning: A person who does not surrender to oppression deserves honor and dignity; he either will reach his goal or continue fighting for it. It is considered humility to envy abject person's life, because death is better than such a life. Who lives contemptibly will find humility easy; he is like a dead body which does not feel any wounds.

Modesty and humbleness:

Modesty and humbleness are regarded among the best characteristics a man can acquire. Mutanabi says herein:

لبنى بنو الحسن الشراDEN TAWASNUA
فيهات تكوين في الظلام مشاعر

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/217)

Meaning: Hasan's sons should increase their modesty; for it is impossible for their brightness to be concealed.
He also says in this meaning:

وينى التوابادع أ ينى متواعدا

(Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/329)

Meaning: he will find greatness to be seen humble, and he will find humility to be seen great.
In this line of poem, the poet describes his praised person and says he finds greatness in humbleness; so, he humbles himself and he finds humility in arrogance; so, he keeps himself away from it (Ukbori, 2003 A.D., p. 4/30).

Prudence and tactfulness:

Among the good qualities of human, prudence and tactfulness have a special place. This quality leads to success and salvation.
Mutanabi herein eulogizing Seif Al-Dawla, writes:

الرئى قبلى سجاعة الشجاعة
هوى أولى وهي المحمل الشهادي
فأذا هما اجتمعا فنفس مره
بلاغت من العلماء كل مكان
وترسم طاعان الفتح أفران
إدارة قبلى تطاعن الأفران
لولا الفضل لكان أذني ضيم

(Avowed, 1428 A.H., P. 2/431, 432)
Meaning: tactfulness is prior to the bravery of brave person. That is the first and this is the second. If they gather together in a person, he will reach lofty positions. And perhaps the chivalrous youth will affect his peers by his prudence before they can defeat him by long lances. If there was no wisdom for human, the weakest lion would be more honorable than man.

Characteristics of an evil man:

Herein we mention some human vices from the viewpoint of Mutanabi.

Stinginess and greed:

These vices are the worst human disorders in sages concern. Mutanabi like others has pointed to theirs consequences and warned people of having them:

(Man ينفَق الساعات في جمع ماله مخالف الفقر فالفقر فعل الفقر) (Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 1/405)

Meaning: whoever spends his life to collect wealth lest he become poor is regarded a poor man.

The poet warns people not to spend their life in collecting money and property in order to avoid the risk of poverty. He also repeats this theme in a panegyric for Ali Ibn Ibrahim Tanookhi ans says:

(بَنِي الغنى للنَّاس لَو عفَّلَوا فَهَم لَامَعَالُهُم وَلمسَن لهُم) (Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/351)

Meaning: Richness can afflict wealthy people with wretchedness if they had known; but poverty cannot do so with the poor. They are slaves to their wealth not masters of it; and disgrace will remain but the injury will be healed speedily.

Worldliness:

It is regarded a psychic disorder that leads to many vices. It has been the source of many sins and moral faults from the old ages. Mutanabi has also dealt with this problem in his poetical work; for example:

(أبِدا تَسْتَرَذ مَا تَهْبُ الذَّنَّ) (Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/351)

(وَهَيْ مُغْضُوَّة عَلَى الْفَنَّر لَآنَح) (Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/351)

(رَيْ لَذِة أَنْثى أسْمُهَا تَنَاسُ أَمُ ل) (Borqouqi, 1428 A.H., P. 2/351)

http://www.ijhcs.com/index.php/ijhcs/index
Meaning: World always gets back what has bestowed to man; so, I wish its generosity had been stinginess. It is a beloved that is unfaithful to man and violates its treaty and breaks its promise. Its behavior is like that of beautiful women; so I think for such a resemblance its name is feminine in Arabic. World does not lead to a favorite end. For, two unpleasant conclusions will await us: old age or death:

(meaning)

Meaning: what does human expect from world; there is not a better option between its two unpleasant terminations (both are equally unpleasant). So human should understand that there is not welfare in the world. Says Wahedi: "the best option is to remain alive till the old age, but it is unpleasant too" (Wahedi Neishabouri, p. 2/431).

Ignorance:

In Mutanabi's opinion Ignorance is regarded an unpleasant quality and bad characteristic for human. Allah says in the holy Quran:

(meaning)

Mutanabi believes that for ignorant people life is like death and death is like life. In other words such a person does not enjoy his life:

(meaning)

Meaning: there are some individuals among people whose lives resemble their deaths and their deaths are like their lives.

Affectation and pretension:

Affectation and pretension are considered two evil characteristics which some do in order to obtain people's attention, their affection and sometimes financial profit. Mutanabi bitterly blames affectation done by people and says that their appearance will change speedily:

(meaning)
Meaning: The quickest change in your decisions will happen when you are pretending and using affectation for an action which is opposite to your nature.

He somewhere else says that an act done by pretension is not valuable and man should be away of it:

(بُورقوقى 1428 أ.ه.، پ. 1/322)

"لَنَّ جَلَّ الْجَلَّ، لَنَّ لَا لَكَمْ فَطَرَأٌ" (بُورقوقى 1428 أ.ه.، پ. 2/114)

Your valuable patience is what has been take place naturally without any affectation; a blackened eye with kohl differs from a natural black eye.

He also says in the same meaning:

(بُورقوقى 1428 أ.ه.، پ. 1/184)

The pretended beauty of town women's faces is not like that of Bedouins who are slender. Beauty of urban women has been obtained by makeup, so is artificial but that of Bedouin women is genuine and unpretentious.

Conclusion:

In Mutanabi's viewpoint human has two dimensions material and spiritual that its material existence does not play any role in evaluating him, on the other hand its spiritual dimension will distinguish him from animal and makes him honorable.

Regarding his poetry we can say that human is a mixture of positive and negative qualities that the heavier scale pan (between these two) will draw his final personality which makes him worthy or non-worthy for Mutanabi's friendship.

In Mutanabi's poetry, human is divided into two groups good and evil. In his opinion good man has qualities such as: munificence and generosity, beneficence and charity, Magnanimity and dignity, Rationalism, love, liberality and self-esteem, modesty and humbleness, and prudence and tactfulness. He also describes the evil man to have such qualities: stinginess and greed, worldliness, ignorance, and affectation and pretension.
References

The Holy Quran


