

ABDURRAUF AL-SINGKILI'S CONCEPT OF *INSAN KAMIL* IN FACING THE CRISIS OF MODERN HUMAN MORALITY

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DOI : http://dx.doi.org/10.30983/islam_realitas.v8i1.5487

Submission: 10 April 2022	Revised: 16 June 2022	Published: 30 June 2022
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Abstract

This paper explores Abdurrauf al-Singkili's (1615-1693) concept of *Insan Kamil* in light of contemporary moral problems. The study of *Insan Kamil* raises human awareness about the essence of his identity as a servant of God, is crucial. It is even more so at a time when secular values and worldviews eliminate religion and God by making utilitarianism, pragmatism, materialism, and hedonism the moral foundation of humanity. Therefore, serious efforts are needed to resolve this moral quandary. The concept of *Insan Kamil* of Abdurrauf al-Singkili, a vibrant Indonesian intellectual well-known in several scholarly fields, discusses the meaning, purpose, and nature of human life and can be employed as an antidote to the present crisis. This library research drew on a wide range of authoritative sources utilizing documentary techniques to collect the data and employing content analysis methods to address the issues. This paper concludes that the concept of al-Singkili's *Insan Kamil* can be an antidote to today's moral dilemma, particularly regarding human attitudes that adhere to utilitarianism, materialism, pragmatism, and hedonism way of life. This finding demonstrates that the *Insan Kamil* concept is a viable answer to the current moral predicament.

Keywords: Abdurrauf al-Singkili, *Insan Kamil*, Modernity, Moral Crisis, Sufism.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan memaparkan konsep Insan Kamil Abdurrauf al-Singkili dalam kaitannya dengan problematika moral kontemporer. Kajian tentang Insan Kamil yang membangun kesadaran manusia tentang hakikat jati dirinya sebagai hamba Tuhan menjadi sangat penting. Terlebih lagi jika hal ini dikaitkan dengan hegemoni nilai-nilai dan worldview sekular yang mengeliminasi agama dan Tuhan karena utilitarianisme, pragmatisme, materialisme, dan hedonisme dijadikan sebagai landasan moral kemanusiaan. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan upaya yang serius untuk mengatasi dilema ini. Konsep Insan Kamil Abdurrauf al-Singkili, seorang intelektual Indonesia yang dinamis dan kenamaan di beberapa bidang keilmuan, yang membahas tentang makna, tujuan, dan hakikat hidup manusia dapat digunakan sebagai penangkal krisis ini. Artikel ini adalah riset kepustakaan yang menggunakan teknik dokumenter untuk menghimpun data dari berbagai sumber otoritatif berupa buku, artikel, dan berbagai bahan penerbitan lainnya. Data yang terkumpul dianalisis menggunakan metode analisis konten. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa konsep Insan Kamil al-Singkili dapat dijadikan sebagai jawaban untuk mengatasi krisis moral manusia modern dewasa ini, khususnya dalam menangani sikap manusia yang menjadikan utilitarianisme, materialisme, pragmatisme, dan hedonisme sebagai pandangan hidup. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa konsep Insan Kamil adalah penawar unggul bagi krisis moral manusia modern saat ini.

Kata Kunci: Abdurrauf al-Singkili, *Insan Kamil*, Krisis Moral, Modernitas, Tasawuf.

Background

Studying the concept of *Insan Kamil* in modern times is essential because it is one of the most fundamental issues in Sufi teachings. The

delineation of this idea formally began with Ibn Arabi (1165-1240), and it was subsequently developed in a more detailed manner by al-Jili

(1365-1424).¹ The discussion of this issue spread throughout the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago through the charismatic scholar, Abdurrauf al-Singkili and many of his students in diverse isolated places. Given the importance of this subject, Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), a modern Muslim philosopher, proposed this concept as a response to and critique of the Greek and Western philosophical ideas of the perfect human, which focuses solely on the perfection of the physical and mental model while ignoring spiritual and divine dimensions. This established the foundation for the relevance of human studies as one of the remedies to the contemporary morality dilemma.

Insan Kamil is Sufi teaching about the nature and purpose of human life. This topic is particularly significant to present research because most people are beginning to detach themselves from the purpose and essence of their creation. As a result, unethical behavior emerges, contributing to contemporary issues of morality. All of this was brought about by the Westernization and globalization.² The West is here not only to bring technological advancement but also a plethora of anti-God values to every facet of human life.³ This is consistent with Muhammad Iqbal's statement that the concept of *Insan Kamil* can both be a remedy and a critique.⁴ Nonetheless, because globalization and Westernization have become a

historical phenomenon in society, it continues to spread widely throughout the country. The nation's unwillingness to reject this process is a portal to Western values, causing a loss of morality and morals and leading to harmful action. This circumstance can be referred to as the "loss of *Adab*,"⁵ borrowing the term of al-Attas. Confronting this situation, the authors picked Abdurrauf al-Singkili and his notion of *Insan Kamil*, which he established in the Archipelago to overcome the contemporary morality crisis.

The authors are interested in studying Singkili's concept of *Insan Kamil* in facing the crisis of modern human morality for four fundamental reasons. First, al-Singkili is a Malay-Indonesian Archipelago scholar with a well-defined network of chains of transmission (*isnad*). Al-Singkili also spent 19 years studying with authoritative scholars in Arabia (Doha, Yemen, Jeddah, Mecca, and Madinah).⁶ Second, al-Singkili is a well-known scholar with numerous writings in various religious areas, one of which is Sufism, which guided mankind in all ages.⁷ He acquired direct certification from Sheikh al-Qushashi after being appointed caliph in the Shattariyah Sufi Order. He did not only know about Sufism but practiced it throughout his life. Third, the situation and conditions in the Aceh region resulted in theological and political tensions due to Nuruddin al-Raniri's (d. 1658)⁸ *fatwa* prohibiting Hamzah Fansuri's (d. 1590)⁹

¹ Muhammad Iqbal, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia: A contribution to the History of Muslim Philosophy*, vol. 2001 (London: Luzac and Company, 1908), p. 116.

² Hamid Fahmi Zarkasyi, *Misykat: Refleksi Tentang Westernisasi, Liberalisasi, dan Islam* (Jakarta: Insists, 2012), p. pendahuluan.

³ Ilyas Ba Yunus dan Farid Ahmad, *Sosiologi Islam Dan Masyarakat Modern* (Bandung: Mizan, 1991), p. 54; Hamid Fahmi Zarkasyi, *Liberalisasi Pemikiran Islam* (Ponorogo: CIOS Institut Studi Islam Darussalam Gontor, 2008), p. 3; Syed-Muhammad-Naquib-Al-Attas, *Islam And Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: Istac, 1993), p. 165.

⁴ H. C. Hillier and Basit Bilal Koshul, *Muhammad Iqbal: Essays on the Reconstruction of Modern Muslim Thought, Muhammad Iqbal: Essays on the Reconstruction of Modern Muslim Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), p. 35.

⁵ Syed-Muhammad-Naquib-Al-Attas, *Islam And Secularism*, p. 105.

⁶ Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah Dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII Dan XVIII* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2013), p. 238.

⁷ Oman Fathurrahman, *Tanbih Al-Masyi Menyoyal Wabdatul Wujud Kasus Abdurrauf Singkel* (Bandung: Mizan, 1999), p. 29.

⁸ Nuruddin al-Raniri was a well-known and highly respected scholar from Aceh in the 17th century. For further information, see Ahmad Daud, *Allah dan Manusia dalam Konsep Syeikh Nuruddin Ar-Raniry*, 2nd edn (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2002).

⁹ Hamzah Fansuri, who flourished in the 16th century, was a great Sufi and incomparable Malay poet. He pioneered the Islamic scholarly tradition in the Malay Indonesian Archipelago. For further reading, see Syed-

teachings, which later colored the Sufi perspective that he taught as an answer to the problem at that time.¹⁰ Fourth, although al-Singkili lived in the early modern period, his idea of *Insan Kamil*, which explained the method of purifying the soul to produce noble morals, can help the current modern moral predicament.

Regarding the authors' search for literature that discussed Abdurrauf al-Singkili, there are several works on a couple of subjects. First, in the area of Sufism in general.¹¹ Second, focusing on certain of al-Singkili's books, such as *Umdah al-Muhtajin*,¹² *Daqa'iq al-Huruf*,¹³ and *Tanbih al-Māshī al-Mansūb Ilā Tariq al-Qushashī*.¹⁴ Third, there is a study related to a particular concept in Sufism, such as *wahdatul wujud* (oneness of being),¹⁵ death, remembrance,¹⁶ tawhid,¹⁷ and the philosophical basis of his Sufi thought.¹⁸ Fourth, there is work discussing the moderation of Abdurrauf al-Singkili's thoughts.¹⁹ So far, based on the above observation, there is no research on his concept

of *Insan Kamil*, which is the intention of this paper.

The primary data sources for this research are al-Singkili's writings which deal directly with the concept of *Insan Kamil*. The three key sources in this regard are al-Singkili's *Daqa'iq al-Huruf*, *Tanbih al-Māshī*, and *'Umdat al-Muhtajin*. In contrast to previous works that used these three writings to examine Sufi issues separately and disjointedly,²⁰ this paper will use all three works to build al-Singkili's thoughts on *Insan Kamil* in an integrated and coherent manner. Data from the three main sources and other secondary sources were acquired utilizing documentary techniques. The data that has been collected was analyzed using the content analysis methods.

Biography of Abdurrauf al-Singkili

Abdurrauf bin Ali al-Jawi al-Fansuri al-Singkili,²¹ was born in 1615 in Singkel, in a village called Suro.²² Al-Singkili was the son of a cleric in Singkel, Sheikh Ali al-Fansuri, he was known

Muhammad-Naquib-Al-Attas, 'The Mysticism Of Hamzah Fansuri', *Nuevos Sistemas de Comunicación e Información* (Mc GILL, 2021).

¹⁰ The problem at that time was al-Raniri's very violent attack on Hamzah Fansuri and Syamsuddin Sumatrani, who were accused of disseminating the aberrant teaching of *wujudīyyah*. See Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Comments on the Re-Examination of Al-Raniri's Hujjatul-Siddiq: A Refutation* (Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Culture Malaysia, 1986).

¹¹ S Kartika, 'Konsep Tasawuf Menurut Syekh Abdul Rauf Assingkely', *Academia.Edu*, 1 (2020), 1–16 <https://www.academia.edu/download/65757167/Uas_Silvia_Kartika_Konsep_Tasawuf_Menurut_Syekh_Abdul_Rauf_Assingkely.pdf>.

¹² Damanhuri, 'Umdah Al-Muhtajin: Rujukan Tarekat Syatariyah Nusantara', *Ulumuna: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 17 (2013).

¹³ Ahmad Rivauzi, 'Pemikiran Tashawuf Abdurrauf Singkel dalam Kitab Daqa'iq Al-Huruf: Studi Budaya Naskah Nusantara', *Suluab, Vol.16, No.20, Juni 2015 16*, 16.20 (2015), 16–35.

¹⁴ Rasyad, Hermansyah, and Zulkhairi, 'Tanbih Al-Māsyī Al-Mansūb Ilā Tariq Al-Qusyasyī: Analisis Uslub Bahasa Arab dalam Karya 'Abd Ar-Rauf As- Singkili', *Journal Adabiya.*, 2016, 62–82.

¹⁵ Ali Masrur, 'Wahdatul Wujud Abd Rauf Singkel', *Khazanah: Jurnal Ilmu Agama Islam*, 1.3 (2003), 603–10.

¹⁶ Ahwan Mukarrom, 'Konsep Syekh Abdurrauf Singkel Tentang Kematian dalam Naskah Lubb Al-Kashf Wa Al-Bayan', *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 4.1 (2014), 133 <<https://doi.org/10.15642/islamica.2009.4.1.133-142>>.

¹⁷ Fuad Mahbub Siraj, 'Islamic Theology in the Seventeenth Century Aceh A Study on 'Abd Al-Ra'Uf Al-Singkili's Concept on Tawhid', *Epistemé: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman*, 15.1 (2020), 121–43 <<https://doi.org/10.21274/epis.2020.15.1.121-143>>.

¹⁸ Ahmad Rivauzi, 'Landasan Filosofis Pemikiran Tasawuf Abdurrauf Singkel', *Theologia*, 28.2 (2017), 299–328.

¹⁹ Taufik Kurahman, 'Moderasi Pemikiran Abdurrauf Al-Singkili di Tengah Gejolak Pemikiran Tasawuf Nusantara Abad Ke-17', *Esoterik: Jurnal Akhlak dan Tasawuf*, 07 (2021), 1–18.

²⁰ See, especially, footnotes no. 12, 13, and 14.

²¹ Fathurrahman, p. 25.

²² Nur Hadi Ihsan, "The Building of Scientific Tradition in History: The Intellectual Achievement of The Great Sufi Master of Aceh Abdurrauf Singkel (1615/20-1693)," in *Proceedings International Conference on Islamic Universities, Building Scientific Tradition with Asian Universities* (Ponorojo: Institut Studi Islam Darussalam (ISID) Gontor, 2011), pp. 217–27 (p. 218).

as the leader of the *Dayab* Simpang right of Singkel.²³ He received education directly from his father in *Dayab*. After completing his education with his father, he continued to Barus in *Dayab* under the authority of Hamzah Fanuri and *Dayab* in Pasai, led by Shamsuddin al-Sumatrani. He learned Arabic, history, logic, philosophy, literature, Islamic disciplines, and the Persian language there.²⁴

Al-Singkili then continued pursuing his knowledge in Arabia. His educational journey in the Arab world became the basis for his intellectual development in the future. Al-Singkili was a prolific writer. He wrote approximately 22 books covering the fields of *fiqh*, *hadith*, *tasawwuf*, interpretation of the Quran (*tafsir*), and other religious knowledge, including *Mir'ah at-Thullab fi Tashil Ma'rifah al-Abkam ash-Sbar'iyah li al-Malik al-Wahab*, *Bayan al-Arkan*, *Bidayah al-Balighah*, *Majmu' al-Masail*, *Fatihah Shaikh Abdurrauf*, *Sakarati al-Maut*, *Tanbih al-Masbi al-Mansub ila Tariq al-Qushashi*, *Umdah al-Muhtajin ila Suluk Maslak al-Mufarridin*, *Bayan Tajalli*, *Daqaiq al-Huruf*, *Umdah al-Ansab*, and others.²⁵

The Concept of al-Singkili's *Insan Kamil*

This study of *Insan Kamil* in Abdurrauf al-Singkili's thought will begin with a definition, then its characteristics and mission, followed by a description of the hierarchy, and finally a discussion of how to reach the *maqam* (station) of *Insan Kamil*.

Definition

Insan Kamil was originally coined by Husain Ibn Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 309 H/922 CE).

²³ A. Hasjmy, *Kebudayaan Aceh Dalam Sejarah* (Jakarta: Beuna, 1983), p. 202.

²⁴ Hasjmy.

²⁵ Azyumardi Azra.

²⁶ Yusuf Zidan, *Turâsunâ Al-Fikru Al-Sîfî Baina 'Abdul Karîm Al-Jilî Wa Kubarâ Al-Sîfîyah* (Mesir: Dar al-Amin, 1998), p. 85.

²⁷ Muhammad Iqbal, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia* (London: Messrs Luzac & Company), p. 119.; Zakaria Stapa. (2001). *Insan Kamil: Ciri dan Proses Pembentukan*. Afkar: Jurnal Akidah & Pemikiran Islam, bil. 2, Jun 2001. Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Malaya; and Saleha Idris, "Insan Kamil: Theological and Psychological

This term was later developed and popularized by Ibn 'Arabi (1164-1240).²⁶ The term was then thoroughly explored by a Sufi scholar, Abdul Karim al-Jili, in his book *al-Insan al-Kamil fi Ma'rifat al-Awakhir wa al-Awa'il*.²⁷

The term *Insan Kamil* consists of two Arabic words: *al-Insan* and *al-Kamil*. *Insan* in the *Lisan al-Arab* dictionary is said to derive from the word *أنس*,²⁸ which refers to the Prophet Adam, who has many abilities. The word *Insan* is also interpreted as *البشر* which means human.²⁹ At the same time, *al-Kamil* is linguistically derived from the root word *كَمَل*, which means the whole *التمام* or completeness, perfect.³⁰ The two meanings of the sentence indicate that *Insan Kamil* is an ideal human being who is the embodiment of the perfect human descendant of Adam. In terminology, Ibn Arabi explains what is meant by *Insan Kamil*. According to him, *Insan Kamil* is the mirror of God and the *surah* (image) from the *tajalli* (manifestation) of God, where he is the caliph on earth.³¹ The ideal human being is also likened to a large cupboard. Various essences from nature are positioned as shadows and representatives of God on earth.³² Then Ibn Arabi asserted that a perfect human being is an ideal human being in which the essences of divinity or the essences of *al-Haqq* become manifested to him. This is reflected in the deeds that do not praise the ugly and do not disobey the good.³³

Perspectives," *Asian Journal of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2017, p. 12.

²⁸ Muhammad bin Makram bin Ali Abu fadhl Jamaluddin Ibnu Manzur al-Anshari al-Rufi'i al-Ifriki, *Lisânul Arab* (Beirut: Dar al-Shâdir).

²⁹ Muhammad bin Makram bin Ali Abu fadhl Jamaluddin Ibnu Manzur al-Anshari al-Rufi'i al-Ifriki.

³⁰ Muhammad bin Makram bin Ali Abu fadhl Jamaluddin Ibnu Manzur al-Anshari al-Rufi'i al-Ifriki.

³¹ Abdul Raziq Al-Qasyani, *Fusus Al-Hikam* (Kairo: Dar Afaq li al-Nashr wa al-Tauzi', 2016), p. 50.

³² Muhyiddin Bin 'Arabi, *Al-Insan Al-Kamil*, p. 4.

³³ 'Arabi.

Al-Singkili discussed *Insan Kamil* in his works³⁴ such as *Daqaiq al-Huruf*,³⁵ *Tanbih al-Masbi*, and *Umdat al-Muhtajin*. According to him, *Insan Kamil* is a mirror that reflects the shadow of *asma'* (names) and *sifat* (attributes) of God, and he is a believer who receives light from Allah so that he gets mercy by being made in good appearance (Muhammad) who later became the caliph on earth.³⁶ With this definition, the tendency of understanding experience by al-Singkili in learning and teaching the concept of perfect human beings is clear. He followed the footsteps of Ibn Arabi in defining the ideal human being, but later, his elaboration, as exposed in his work, demonstrated a slightly different understanding. Al-Singkili's explanation of the concept of *Insan Kamil* begins with a description of the human's *wujud* (being). Al-Singkili explains that in man there is the name of God marked by the depiction of human fingers, the fifth of which depicts the letters of the word of God, which begins with the little finger as *alif*, then the ring finger and middle finger as the two *lam* and the index finger and the thumb as the parable of the letter *ha'*.³⁷ This is based on the words of God Almighty that he quoted: "For you, no human being is other than me, nor am I other than him."³⁸ Al-Singkili then explains that *Insan Kamil* is a direct and perfect *tajalli* (manifestation) of Divine attributes.³⁹ Al-Singkili's attention to the concept of *Insan Kamil* became very important because this was the

ultimate goal of the series of *dhikr* that he presented in the Shattariyah Sufi Order.⁴⁰

Characteristics and Mission of Insan Kamil

Al-Singkili then explains the characteristics of *Insan Kamil*, which refers to the Prophet Muhammad. He explains that the perfect human being is the embodiment of Muhammad because the essence of Muhammad's body is a *tajalli af'al Allah*, his heart is a *tajalli asma' Allah*, his life is a *tajalli sifat Allah*, and his secret is a *tajalli dhat Allah*.⁴¹ This interpretation is in line with the description of *Insan Kamil* delivered by Ibn Arabi and al-Jili that the embodiment of the perfect human being is the Prophet Muhammad.⁴² Thus, there is a connection between the meaning of the perfect human being of al-Singkili with the two classical Islamic Sufi scholars, Ibn Arabi and al-Jili.

In addition, al-Singkili confirmed his explanation that *Insan Kamil* is a believer who becomes the caliph as the representative of God. He is given knowledge such as *bayat*, *qudrat*, *iradat*, *sama'*, *basar*, and *kealam*.⁴³ This statement is relevant to what Ibn Arabi wrote that *Insan Kamil* is a caliph who reflects God's *asma'* and *sifat* (divine attributes).⁴⁴ A perfect human being is a caliph on earth with a mission to make the world prosperous. Because a perfect human being is the only creature that reflects the various attributes of God and is a mediator of His grace,⁴⁵ he has a strong faith, courage, and a high sense of intuition.⁴⁶ This intuition leads him to behave in line with divine norms. This

³⁴ Rivauzi, 'Landasan Filosofis Pemikiran Tasawuf Abdurrauf Singkel'.

³⁵ Ini merupakan salah satu karya monumental dari Abdurrauf as-Singkel yang mana mengulas dua baris sanjak dari Ibnu Arabi P. Voorhoeve, 'Bayan Tajali', in *Seri Informasi Aceh Tahun XXXXIII Nomor 1, 2020* (Aceh: Pusat Dokumentasi Dan Informasi Aceh Banda Aceh, 2020), p. 49.

³⁶ Abdurrauf As-Singkili, *Daqaiq Al-Huruf* (Sumatera Barat: Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya Sumatera Barat, 2015), pp. 2–3.

³⁷ As-Singkili, *Daqaiq Al-Huruf*, p. 1.

³⁸ Rivauzi, 'Pemikiran Tashawuf Abdurrauf Singkel Dalam Kitab Daqaiq Al-Huruf: Studi Budaya Naskah Nusantara', pp. 16–35.

³⁹ Muliadi Kurdi, *Abdurrauf As-Singkili Mufti Besar Aceh Pelopor Tarekat Syatariyah Di Dunia Melayu* (Banda Aceh: NASA, 2017), p. 76.

⁴⁰ Tarekat ini bertujuan dalam menyatukan ibadah lahir dan batin dalam mengamalkan syariah. Kurdi, p. 72.

⁴¹ As-Singkili, *Daqaiq Al-Huruf*, p. 2.

⁴² Abdul Karim bin Ibrahim Al-Jili, *Al-Insân Al-Kâmil Fî Ma'rîfatî Awakbiri Wa Awâil* (Hijaz: al-Azhar Mesir, 2010), p. 203.

⁴³ As-Singkili, *Daqaiq Al-Huruf*, pp. 2–3.

⁴⁴ Ibn 'Arabi.

⁴⁵ Seyyed Mohsen Mirri, *Sang Manusia Sempurna* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2004), p. 207.

⁴⁶ Hillier and Koshul.

intuition also helps the person to be able to realize the potential that exists in him.⁴⁷ This intuitive ability terms the human character consistent with good deeds in the form of morality attached to a perfect human being. In this way, it can be understood that in addition to being a religious human being, he becomes a place of *tajalli* (manifestation) of Allah; he is also a human being with high morals because these two things can never be separated from the character of *Insan Kamil*.⁴⁸

Hierarchy of Insan Kamil

Al-Singkili classified *Insan Kamil* into three categories: *mubtadi'* (beginner), *mutawassith* (intermediate), and *muntabi* (adept).⁴⁹ This classification has similarities with Ibn Arabi's three classifications of *Insan Kamil*: *al-Insa al-bayawan*, *al-Insan al-Kamil*, and *al-Insan l-Kamil al-akmal*.⁵⁰ *Insan bayawan* is a human being who is physically the same as *Insan Kamil*, but inwardly, he is very different from him because he behaves like an animal. In this case, Ibn Arabi assumes humans are like monkeys who physically resemble humans but are mentally different.⁵¹ Judging from al-Singkili's explanation which mentions *Insan mubtadi'* as the initial level of humans, it seems to have a correlation with *Insan bayawan*. Because in explaining *Insan Kamil*, al-Singkili notes that people who do not follow the Prophet Muhammad will be likened to a despicable appearance like that of an ape.⁵² As regards the second, the *mutawassith* of al-Singkili and *Insan Kamil* of Ibn Arabi, they both

presented the same concept. Ibn Arabi explained that *Insan Kamil* is a human being loved by Allah who knows himself as the eye of knowing his God, but in this case, his knowledge is not perfect.⁵³ While *Insan mutawassith* is a believer who follows the Prophet Muhammad and has knowledge about himself but has not yet reached the stage of the adept (*muntabi*). Finally, in the highest hierarchy, the *al-Insan al-Kamil al-Akmal* of Ibn Arabi is a man whose knowledge of himself is perfect as the eye knows his Lord. At the same time, the *muntabi* (adept) of al-Singkili is a human being who can unite the elements of *labut* and *nasut*, where humans are in a mortal state,⁵⁴ namely humans who know their God through pure knowledge, broad horizons of knowledge, and very high levels of closeness to Allah.⁵⁵ Both Sufis have similar views regarding the three levels of *Insan Kamil*.

The Way to Reach Insan Kamil

Al-Singkili then explains the way to *Insan Kamil*. In his book *Daqa'iq al-Huruf*, he explains how to follow the Prophet.⁵⁶ Humans who follow the Prophet Muhammad, Allah will give them a good appearance like the likeness of Muhammad. Still, if he does not follow the Prophet Muhammad, he is a disbeliever, then Allah will humiliate his appearance.⁵⁷ Following the Prophet Muhammad is a fundamental aspect of al-Singkili's Sufi teachings. There is no other choice for humans but to follow the teachings of the Prophet. This is what he wrote about in his work *Tanbih al-Mash'i*.⁵⁸

⁴⁷ Hillier and Koshul.

⁴⁸ Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruct Ion of Religious Thought in Islam* (California: Stanford University Press, 2012), p. 212.

⁴⁹ Abdurrauf As-Singkili, *Umdat Al-Muhtajin Ila Suluk Maslak Al-Mufradin* (Jakarta: Perpustakaan Nasional RI, 2014), p. 18.

⁵⁰ Ibn 'Arabi.

⁵¹ 'Arabi.

⁵² Rivauzi, 'Pemikiran Tashawuf Abdurrauf Singkel dalam Kitab Daqa'iq Al-Huruf: Studi Budaya Naskah Nusantara', p. 22.

⁵³ Ibn 'Arabi.

⁵⁴ Ahmad Rivauzi, 'Pemikiran Abdurrauf Singkel Tentang Pendidikan dan Implikasinya Pada Pondok Pesantren Nurul Yaqin Ringan-Ringan Pakandangan Padang Pariaman' (IAIN Imam Bonjol, 2014), p. 136.

⁵⁵ Yudhi Haryono, *Insan Kamil, Metode Memanusiakan Manusia* (Jakarta: Kalam Nusantara, 2005), pp. 150-51.

⁵⁶ Fathurrahman.

⁵⁷ Dalam hal ini as-Singkili mengutip firman Allah dalam alquran surah al Baqarah ayat: 65 Jadilah kamu kera yang hina Rivauzi, 'Pemikiran Tashawuf Abdurrauf Singkel Dalam Kitab Daqa'iq Al-Huruf: Studi Budaya Naskah Nusantara'.

⁵⁸ Fathurrahman, p. 66.

Following and imitating the Prophet is not only described by accepting *aqidah* and the practice of worship. Al-Singkili brings this example to the realm of morality, where humans act as implementers of God's rules.⁵⁹ In other words, al-Singkili invites people to be able to do theology which does not only refer to and is centered on the *rububiyah* aspect but also includes *ulubiyah* and *insaniyyah*.⁶⁰ This can be seen by the position of humans who act as divine beings given the task of caliph on earth. The consequence of this task is to be responsible for maintaining the stability of human life or other creatures.⁶¹ A human being will be consistent with religious values, brotherhood, and peace based on their trust in The Creator, Allah.⁶² This attitude of consistency is then marked by practicing the *shari'a* in its entirety and correctly. At the same time, inwardly, it is marked by reflection on all the deeds carried out based on *shari'a* law.⁶³

Al-Singkili emphasizes the importance of the *shari'a* aspect as the basis of human behavior. In Islam, the *shari'a* (divine law) occupies an important position that cannot be replaced. It should be that the figure of *Insan Kamil* is someone who truly fulfills and obeys *shari'a*.⁶⁴ It is the values of the *shari'a* that then form the noble morality inherent in *Insan Kamil*.⁶⁵ Furthermore, al-Singkili explained that achieving noble character can be done by consciously contemplating every action one performs.⁶⁶ This reflection then impacts human character, not only on the *rabbaniyyah* dimension, which gives birth to *iman*, *tauhid*, and *khauf* but also on the

human dimension, which realigns the purpose of humans in the form of sincerity in worshipping Allah for His pleasure.⁶⁷ That why the perfect human or *Insan Kamil* will truly become Muslim not only on the spiritual level of *rabbaniyyah* but also increase in the human intellectual aspect.⁶⁸ Indeed, God has given humans life, knowledge, *qudrat*, *iradat*, *sama'*, *basbar*, and *kalam*.⁶⁹ Humans will surely know their nature if they can optimize all these gifts. Knowledge of nature and identity can be achieved if a person can unite two *ma'rifah* at once, namely *ma'rifah tanzih* and *ma'rifah tashbih*.⁷⁰

Al-Singkili's *Insan Kamil* Facing the Modern Moral Crisis

Al-Singkili's concept of *Insan Kamil* can be used to answer the current moral crisis because he has offered a comprehensive analysis of this concept from all necessary angles, including the definition of *Insan Kamil*, its characteristics, mission, hierarchy, and how to achieve it. On the other hand, as a prominent scholar, al-Singkili has experienced various kinds of turmoil in the social conditions of society, especially in his homeland, Aceh, which at that time was experiencing a crisis due to conflicting teachings and doctrines. However, al-Singkili responded in a friendly and positive manner by implementing the Sufism-based reform movement he had learned. One of his methods was to instill the concept of *Insan Kamil*, becoming the caliph on earth to ensure the welfare of the planet and everything in it. As a result, it can be asserted that al-Singkili's concept of *Insan Kamil* can be utilized by modern

⁵⁹ Damanhuri, *Akhlak Perspektif Tasawuf Syaikh Abdurrauf Al-Singkili* (Ciputat: Puslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama, 2013), p. 203.

⁶⁰ Al-Singkili, *Daqaiq al-Huruf*, p. 23.

⁶¹ Mulyadhi and Kartanegara, *Nalar Relegius* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2007), p. 47.

⁶² Damanhuri, *Akhlak Perspektif Tasawuf Syaikh Abdurrauf Al-Singkili*, p. 213.

⁶³ Zidan, *Turāsūnā: al-Fīkṛ al-Sūfī Baina 'Abdul Karīm al-Jilī wa Kubarā al-Sūfīyah*, pp. 134–7.

⁶⁴ Mirri, p. 209.

⁶⁵ Damanhuri, *Akhlak Perspektif Tasawuf Syaikh Abdurrauf Al-Singkili*, p. 81.

⁶⁶ Damanhuri, *Akhlak Perspektif Tasawuf Syaikh Abdurrauf Al-Singkili*, p. 81.

⁶⁷ Damanhuri, *Akhlak Perspektif Tasawuf Syaikh Abdurrauf Al-Singkili*, p. 167.

⁶⁸ Hamid Fahmi Zarkasyi, *Minhaj: Berislam dari Ritual hingga Intelektual* (Jakarta: Insists, 2021), p. 10.

⁶⁹ Al-Singkili, *Daqaiq al-Huruf*, pp. 2–3.

⁷⁰ Kurdi, *Abdurrauf al-Singkili Mufti Besar Aceh*, p. 72.

contemporary society to address moral issues and problems by resolving them according to the mold of al-Singkili's thought, which is particularly pertinent to the culture of the nation, as will be elaborated further below.

The moral crisis that occurs in modern Western society is essential to study because morality is a reflection of the character of civilization. However, before studying further, it is necessary to understand the meaning of morals in the West and Islam. Elizabeth Anscombe writes that modern morals are a philosophy that emphasizes negative freedom based on an agreement that serves as a legal limit on every action.⁷¹ Meanwhile, Bernat Gert writes that morality is a universal public system that only applies to those who know it. Morality is rational because everyone knows it, while religion is not the source of morality because everyone does not know it.⁷²

In Islam, moral is more likely to be referred to as *akhlaq*. In this regard, the word moral cannot represent the word *akhlaq* because its meaning is too narrow. The word *akhlaq* is etymologically derived from Arabic, *khuluq*. In short, it can be interpreted as honor or good name, dignity.⁷³ Meanwhile, in terms of terminology, Imam al-Ghazali (1058-1111) stated that *akhlaq* is an expression of a permanent state in the soul, from which actions emerge easily without the need for thought and research.⁷⁴ For Islam, judging the goodness and badness of *akhlaq* is based on the *shari'a* and reason. Al-Ghazali again emphasizes that *akhlaq*

is not just an act that appears for a moment. Over time, *akhlaq* becomes a habit that brings people to live peacefully in line with the *shari'a*.⁷⁵ In response to the issue of *akhlaq*, Abu A'la al-Maududi (1903-1979) divides it into two categories: secular morals and Islamic morals. According to him, Islamic morals are behaviors that distance humans from animalistic traits that lead to destruction, which comes from God and is universal. While secular morality is the opposite, as modern Western humans today apply.⁷⁶

Syed Hossein Nasr sees what the West is doing today impacts the modern ethical and moral crisis.⁷⁷ Philip Graham Ryken more clearly states that morality has lost its foundation in the form of God and religion. Many people do things contrary to the moral values of religion and God.⁷⁸ This confusion is partly caused by the expansion of the Western world in bringing concepts such as utilitarianism, pragmatism, materialism, and hedonism.

Utilitarianism is one of the moral patterns in the West. This concept emphasizes only the happiness that brings benefits to human beings.⁷⁹ Utilitarianism can also be understood as that right act promoting general happiness; right actions are mostly done to increase happiness. However, in this case, there is a note that, in this perspective, an act also does not need to be right to be used as a legal basis, as long as it brings a lot of happiness and is agreed upon by many people.⁸⁰ This concept then pervades modern humans where many commit crimes considered

⁷¹ Henri, *Moral Philosophy on the Thershold of Modernity*, *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*, 6(11), 951–952. (Finland: Springer, 2018), p. 104.

⁷² Bernard Gert, "Morality: Its Nature and Justification", in *Morality: Its Nature and Justification* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 8.

⁷³ Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Azhari, *Tabzib Al-Lughab* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turats al-Arabi, 2001), p. 18.

⁷⁴ M Kholid Muslih, *Epistemologi Islam Prinsip-Prinsip Dasar Ilmu Pengetahuan Dalam Islam* (Ponorogo: DIIP Unida Gontor, 2021), p. 307.

⁷⁵ M Kholid Muslih, p. 307.

⁷⁶ Abul A'la Maududi, *Ethical Vienpoint of Islam* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1996), pp. 14–6.

⁷⁷ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man* (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1990), p. 17.

⁷⁸ Philip Graham Ryken, "Written in Stone The Ten Commandments and Today Moral crisis", *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*, 6(11), 951–952. (United State Amerika: Crossway Books, 1967), p. 12.

⁷⁹ John Stuart Mill, 'Utilitarianism' (Canada: Batoche Books Kitchener, 2001), pp. 19–21.

⁸⁰ Isaiah Berlin and Bertrand Russell, *History of West Ern Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge), p. 572.

a truth, such as robbing to help the poor and orphans or other examples.

Ethical pragmatism is not much different from utilitarianism, which also puts modern humans in a moral crisis. Pragmatism emphasizes that morality and the value of goodness are speculative and subjective because everything is based on real use values and benefits,⁸¹ namely those that will benefit humans in terms of material and worldly satisfaction.⁸² This concept also shapes the human character of the one who only thinks about the material benefits of everything he does. This pragmatic attitude leads humans to be stoic towards social life because pragmatic humans only expect the benefits that exist in every case they live, no matter what way they do it. Here, all efforts to succeed in that goal can be justified.⁸³ This will trigger a moral crisis in society which can be seen in the many cases of corruption today to achieve wealth by using questionable methods to profit from the state.

Materialism is another such outlook. It is undeniable that materialism has become a characteristic of Western thought, later transmitted to hegemonic nations. Materialism is a view of life that makes physical matter or that maintains that reality is only what exists physically. This view makes material the only goal of human life in the form of high achievement of material welfare and material progress.⁸⁴ Materialism makes humans obsessed with looking for material values because nothing is more important than material wealth. Anthropocentric principles are evident in this

materialist view where man is the center of everything.⁸⁵ This then has a serious impact on the modern moral crisis. From this, it is found that many people are obsessed with only material things and ignore the norms and morals of life. They commit immoral acts to get to the end of their obsession.⁸⁶

Hedonism also brings humans to the crisis of modern morality. This understanding is the thought that the most important goal in life is to achieve worldly pleasures and happiness.⁸⁷ Hedonism is a human attitude that tends to the pleasures and fantasies associated with consumption.⁸⁸ Humans will become a society that only cares about the satisfaction of their desires because there is no final measure and value of happiness to be achieved in hedonism. So, hedonism plays a role in delivering humans as for wild creatures ready to prey on anything to get happiness. This then destroys society's morale by limiting humans to animalistic dimensions. The four attitudes above broadly focus on humans as creators who create beneficial goodness. This is a mistake because humans belong to God, whose existence is a form of loan from God only for a while.⁸⁹

In line with the outbreak of this modern morality crisis, the concept of *Insan Kamil* of al-Singkili deserves to be a viable answer. *Insan Kamil* is the embodiment of a perfect human being physically, mentally, and spiritually. He is a human with solid faith and reflects the goodness of Allah in the form of attributes and His names with which he becomes the caliph on earth as the representative of Allah.⁹⁰ Al-Singkili explains that

⁸¹ Gert J.J. Biesta and Nicholas C. Burbules, *Pragmatism and Educational Research* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003), p. 78.

⁸² Berlin and Russell.

⁸³ Nicolo Machiavelli, *Sang Penguasa* (Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1991), p. 37.

⁸⁴ "Materialism," *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary>, p. Accessed 2/3/2022.

⁸⁵ Ryuji Sasaki, *Marx, Engels, and Marxisms Series Editors* (Canada: Palgrave macmillan, 2021) <<http://www.palgrave.com/gp/series/14812>>.

⁸⁶ Fransisca Mulyono, Program Studi, and Administrasi Bisnis, 'Materialisme : Penyebab', 15.

⁸⁷ "Hedonism." *Merriam-Webster.Com Dictionary*, <https://www.Merriam-Webster.Com/Dictionary>, p. Accessed 3/2/2022.

⁸⁸ Daniele Scarpi, *Hedonism, Utilitarianism, Consequences of Exploring the and Consumer Behavior Customer Orientation* (Bologna: Palgrave macmillan, 2020), p. v.

⁸⁹ Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Prolegomena To The Metaphysics Of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1995), p. 45.

⁹⁰ Al-Singkili, *Daqaiq al-Huruf*, pp. 2-3.

the dimension of *Insan Kamil* is not only at the level of individual worship but also at the social level. *Insan Kamil* carries a mission to prosper the earth by carrying out the *shari'a* that Allah has sent down in the form of the Qur'an and Hadith. *Insan Kamil* will be the agent of the *din* who will give birth to civilization and bring humans to their nature.⁹¹ In this way, *Insan Kamil* can prevent and be a remedy to the moral crisis in society. The concept of utilitarianism, pragmatism, materialism, and hedonism is a form of ignorance of the true nature of humans; this ignorance then leads to a bias in the purpose of human life on earth.

In such conditions, education and an in-depth understanding of *Insan Kamil* taught by al-Singkili is needed. Possible treatment can be taken from the concept of *Insan Kamil* to face the modern moral crisis among them. The first is a response to utilitarianism. In utilitarianism, human life only focuses on seeking material benefits and uses (*hubb al-dunya*). Al-Singkili explains that humans are servants of God whose purpose in life is to worship Him.⁹² By nature, humans are servants of God whose form is that which God creates. Al-Attas mentions that human existence in the world is a human indebtedness to God. The consequence of that is that humans must repay their debts.⁹³ The return can be achieved by following the Prophet Muhammad, as emphasized by al-Singkili "there is no other way for you but to follow the teachings of your Prophet."⁹⁴ So it is very important to know the nature of man to know the purpose of his creation on earth. Utilitarianism is a human attitude that does not return to God because it does not know the nature of human existence in the world.

The second is a response to pragmatism. The human attitude only sees things according to the impact of their benefits. In pragmatism, morals are just a way to achieve goals. If morals do not help achieve goals, they will be abandoned because any effort or means to succeed in that goal can be justified.⁹⁵ Seeing this, humans lose their way of determining good and bad. In line with this, al-Singkili has explained that humans are caliphs on earth, where they have a mission to bring peace by following the *shari'a*.⁹⁶ In Islam, good and evil are based on the *shari'a* that Allah has sent down through which humans live their lives as perfect beings, *Insan Kamil*. *Shari'a* is important as the basis for carrying out human life. Without *shari'a*, humans will perish without direction and purpose.

Thirdly materialism. In materialism, human life is to love possessions and only obsessed with getting rich. In this case, al-Singkili wrote that humans should not label themselves with *al-Ghani al-Mutlaq* (The Most Rich) because only Allah has that power.⁹⁷ Modern humans compete to pursue material wealth, regardless of the path taken. Utilitarian and pragmatic morals are the characteristics of today's human beings. What al-Singkili found in the concept of *Insan Kamil* can be used as a treatment that wealth belongs only to Allah. Everything that humans have is only a temporary deposit that will eventually perish. Then al-Singkili emphasized the importance of remembrance of Allah so that humans can reach their nature and know the *ma'rifah* of their Lord.⁹⁸

Finally, a hedonic lifestyle is a form of human life that is only concerned with the pleasures and happiness of the world.⁹⁹ This attitude is vented by consuming and spending everything that can bring humans happiness. At

p. 41. ⁹¹ Al-Attas, *Prolegomena To The Metaphysics Of Islam*,

⁹² *Al-Qur'an al-Karim*, p. al-Zariyat: 56.

p. 46. ⁹³ Al-Attas, *Prolegomena To The Metaphysics Of Islam*

⁹⁴ Fathurrahman, *Tanbih al-Masyi...*, p. 66.

⁹⁵ Machiavelli.

⁹⁶ Al-Singkili, *Daqaiq al-Huruf*, pp. 2–3.

⁹⁷ As-Singkili, *Daqaiq Al-Huruf*, p. 3.

⁹⁸ Fathurrahman, *Tanbih al-Masyi...*, p. 69.

⁹⁹ "Hedonism." Merriam-Webster.Com Dictionary, <https://www.Merriam-Webster.Com/Dictionary/>, p. 3/2/2022.

this stage, humans have lost all their beliefs related to life after death, namely the afterlife. There is no concept in him of the day of reckoning where every human being will be responsible for what he has done and had while in the world. Responding to this, al-Singkili's description can be used as a remedy where people in meditation contemplate consciously everything that has been done.¹⁰⁰ That way, one will realize how weak a human being he is, and only God is Omnipotent over everything.

Conclusion

The depiction of the concept of *Insan Kamil* put forward by al-Singkili gives a clear picture of human nature, goals, hierarchy, and mission in the world. The *Insan Kamil* is a devout Muslim who is a mirror of the image of God, displaying Allah's names and attributes. As the caliph of Allah on earth, he has a mission to bring prosperity to the world, which he accomplishes via noble character, not only to oneself but also to society. Al-Singkili encourages people to not only be Muslim in the *rabbaniyah* dimension, which gives birth to *iman*, but also in the human dimension, which realigns humanity's purpose in the form of sincerity in worshipping Allah for His pleasure by imitating the Prophet Muhammad and adhering to the *shari'a*. All of this will be a countermeasure to the contemporary moral crisis, in which humans have been tricked by the world's brightness and have fled the essence of their existence. So, if the concept of al-Singkili's *Insan Kamil* is properly understood and practiced, it can at the very least reduce the recurrence of present moral crises.

The contemporary moral crisis manifests the crisis of divine values. This position is supported by several Muslim and Western scholars, including Syed Hossein Nasr, Abu A'la al-Maududi, and Philip Graham Ryken. Utilitarianism, pragmatism, materialism, and hedonism are Western ideas that remove

the divine dimension from life, focusing solely on human benefits. These concepts then trigger the crisis of modern morality today. Again, al-Singkili's concept of *Insan Kamil* is conclusively relevant to be employed as a compelling answer to today's moral problem.

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