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Analysis of intrinsic elements in the *novel Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the intrinsic elements in the novel *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy using a structuralist approach supported by literary psychology. The elements examined include theme, characterization, setting, plot, and moral values that build the narrative structure of the novel. This research employs a qualitative descriptive method. The primary data source is the novel *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* (2007). Data were collected through close reading, note-taking, and classification of relevant textual evidence and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that the novel highlights themes of struggle, love, and Islamic spirituality. The main character is portrayed as religious, responsible, and hardworking, while the setting reinforces Islamic cultural values. Overall, the novel reflects strong moral and religious messages that are relevant to daily life.

Keywords

Intrinsic elements, Islamic literature, literacy psychology, novel analysis, and structural analysis

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Introduction

Literary works closely relate to human life by reflecting experiences, values, and societal ways of thinking. Authors can express ideas and moral messages through literature, which readers can interpret in various ways. One of the most widely read forms of literature is the novel. A novel usually presents a structured narrative built from several intrinsic elements such as theme, characters, setting, plot, and moral messages. These elements interconnect and collectively shape the story's meaning and together shape the meaning of the story (Rokhmansyah, 2018).

In literary analysis, a structural approach is commonly used to understand how these intrinsic elements are arranged and how they support the overall meaning of a text. This approach focuses on the internal structure of the work itself. In addition, literary psychology is often used to see how characters think, behave, and develop within the story. Combining these two approaches helps in understanding both the structure of the text and the human aspects reflected in it (Weiland, 2023).

One of the Indonesian novels that contains strong moral and religious values is *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. The novel's readers widely engage with it, as it explores and discusses themes of struggle, love, and Islamic values through the life journey of its main character. The novel also demonstrates the integration of religious values—how they can be integrated into daily life, education, and social relationships. Due to its strong moral content, scholars often study this novel in academic research (Sari, 2019).

In addition, the novel also reflects social realities faced by young people in balancing education, religion, and personal life. The main character's journey illustrates how determination, patience, and spiritual strength play an important role in shaping personal identity. This makes the novel not only a literary work but also a medium of character education. The combination of narrative structure and moral teaching makes it suitable for more profound literary analysis, especially from structural and psychological perspectives. Understanding these aspects can help readers appreciate how literature contributes to character building in society.

However, many previous studies tend to focus only on moral or religious values in general. Detailed analysis of intrinsic elements combined with psychological aspects is still limited. This creates a need for a more complete study that examines how the structure of the novel and character psychology work together in building meaning.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the intrinsic elements in *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* using a structural approach supported by literary psychology. The analysis focuses on theme, character, setting, plot, and moral values. The study is expected to provide a clearer understanding of how these elements shape the meaning of the novel and contribute to literary studies.

Literature Review

The nature of novels and the intrinsic elements in literary works

A novel is one form of literary work that portrays human life through complex and profound narratives. As a fictional work, a novel functions not only as entertainment but also as a medium for conveying moral, social, cultural, and religious values that provide

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lessons for readers. According to Nurgiyantoro (2018), a novel is a fictional prose work capable of presenting human life problems more broadly and deeply than other literary forms. Through systematically developed characters, plot, and setting, novels provide emotional and reflective experiences for readers.

In literary studies, intrinsic elements are important components that build the overall structure of a novel. Intrinsic elements include theme, characters and characterization, plot, setting, point of view, language style, and moral messages. Stanton (2012) explained that intrinsic elements are internal components forming the structure of literary works, creating a unified story. The theme becomes the main idea underlying the story, while characterization illustrates the personalities and psychological development of the characters. Furthermore, plot logically organizes events, enabling readers to clearly understand conflicts and resolutions.

The study of intrinsic elements is important to understand the meanings contained within literary works. Semi (2013) stated that intrinsic element analysis helps readers understand relationships among story components and grasp the messages conveyed by the author. In religious novels such as Ketika Cinta Bertasbih, intrinsic elements not only build conflict and aesthetic value but also convey spiritual and moral values related to human life.

The novel Ketika Cinta Bertasbih by Habiburrahman El Shirazy is one of the popular novels frequently studied because it combines romantic elements with Islamic values. Themes of life struggle, love, and spirituality become the novel's main strengths. The main character, Khairul Azzam, faces challenges as a religious, hardworking, and responsible person, making him a role model for readers. Additionally, the Egyptian setting with strong religious nuances reinforces the atmosphere of the story and the Islamic values conveyed by the author.

Analysis of intrinsic elements Readers' understanding of narrative structure also closely relates to the analysis of intrinsic elements. to readers' understanding of narrative structure. By understanding the relationship between theme, character, setting, and moral message, readers can see how the author constructs conflicts and effectively conveys moral lessons. Therefore, intrinsic element studies become one of the important approaches in literary research because they reveal more profound meanings contained in literary works.

Literary psychology approach in novel analysis

Literary psychology is one approach in literary studies used to understand the psychological aspects of characters, authors, and readers in literary works. This approach views literature as a representation of human life filled with inner conflicts, emotions, motivations, and psychological experiences. According to Endraswara (2020), literary psychology is a literary study that utilizes psychological theories to comprehend the actions and mental conditions of characters in literary works.

In novels, characters become important elements reflecting human psychological dynamics. Characters function not only as actors in the story but also as representations of values, conflicts, and life experiences encountered in real life. Minderop (2018) explained that the literary psychology approach helps researchers understand personality, motivation, and internal conflicts influencing story development. Through this approach, readers can understand the reasons behind characters' behavior and the psychological messages conveyed by the author.

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The novel Ketika Cinta Bertasbih contains many psychological aspects worthy of analysis. The main character, Khairul Azzam, is portrayed as someone facing economic pressure, educational struggles, and love conflicts in his life. Despite facing many hardships, he remains patient, responsible, and religious. These psychological conditions reflect a person's inner struggle to maintain principles and religious values amid life challenges.

Besides the main character, other figures in the novel also display complex psychological characteristics. Anna Althafunnisa is portrayed as a gentle, intelligent, and devout Muslim woman, while Furqan experiences inner conflict due to the illness he hides. These psychological conflicts strengthen the story dynamics and make the novel feel realistic and closely connected to human life.

The literary psychology approach also helps reveal the relationship between the emotional experiences of characters and the moral messages conveyed by the author. In this novel, values of patience, sincerity, and surrender to God become the main messages delivered through the characters' life journeys. Thus, literary psychology not only helps understand characterization but also clarifies the moral and spiritual meanings contained in the novel.

Through literary psychology studies, readers can understand that literary works are not merely fictional stories but complex portrayals of human life and psychological conditions. Therefore, this approach is highly relevant for analyzing Ketika Cinta Bertasbih because it reveals the depth of character and life messages conveyed by the author.

Religious and moral values in the novel Ketika Cinta Bertasbih

Literary works often serve as a medium for conveying moral and religious values to readers. Religious novels: Through stories closely related to human life, religious novels can build spiritual awareness. Stories closely related to human life can build spiritual awareness. According to Wellek and Warren (2016), literature reflects social reality and functions as a means of moral education that can influence readers' ways of thinking and behavior. In the context of modern Indonesian literature, religious novels have become one of the rapidly developing genres because they successfully combine entertainment with spiritual messages.

The novel Ketika Cinta Bertasbih by Habiburrahman El Shirazy is widely recognized as a work rich in Islamic values. The characters' behavior, dialogues, conflicts, and resolutions in this novel reflect religious values grounded in Islamic teachings. The main character is consistently portrayed as prioritizing honesty, patience, hard work, and surrender to Allah in facing life's challenges. These values provide moral examples for everyday life.

Ratna (2015) states that literary works reflect religious values through human relationships with God, others, and oneself. through human relationships with God, with other people, and with oneself. In this novel, the relationship between humans and God is reflected in the characters' habits of worship, prayer, and reliance on Allah SWT. Relationships among people are shown through mutual assistance, respect for parents, loyalty in friendship, and sincere love. Meanwhile, the relationship with oneself is illustrated through the characters' struggles to maintain their principles and face inner conflicts.

In addition to religious values, the novel also conveys strong moral values. Through the life journeys of its characters, the novel highlights the importance of education, family responsibility, and maintaining personal dignity. The realistic conflicts experienced by the characters strengthen these moral messages, enabling readers to understand the

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consequences of their choices and actions throughout the story.

Habiburrahman El Shirazy's success in conveying religious and moral values has made this novel widely accepted by society, especially among young readers. The novel not only provides entertainment but also develops readers' spiritual and moral awareness through inspirational and emotionally engaging stories. Therefore, studying the religious and moral values in Ketika Cinta Bertasbih is important to understand how literary works can function as a medium for character education and spirituality.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method using a literary structural approach supported by a literary psychology perspective. The qualitative approach was selected because this research seeks to investigate and interpret the intrinsic elements contained in the novel Ketika Cinta Bertasbih by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. Rather than measuring variables numerically, this study focuses on understanding how themes, characters, settings, plot structures, and moral messages are constructed within the narrative. According to Sugiyono (2019), qualitative research is appropriate for examining phenomena in their natural context by emphasizing interpretation and meaning based on available data. The research approach combines structuralism and literary psychology. The structural approach is used to analyze the relationship among intrinsic elements that build the unity of the novel, including theme, characterization, setting, plot, and moral values. Meanwhile, the literary psychology approach is applied to examine the psychological aspects reflected through the characters' attitudes, motivations, conflicts, and emotional experiences. The combination of these approaches allows the researcher to understand not only the structure of the story but also the psychological and moral meanings represented through the characters' lives.

The object of this research is the novel Ketika Cinta Bertasbih, written by Habiburrahman El Shirazy and published by Republika in 2007. The primary data consist of narrative passages, dialogues, descriptions of characters, settings, conflicts, and events that represent the intrinsic elements and psychological aspects of the novel. Secondary data were obtained from relevant sources, including literary theory books, previous research articles, and academic references related to structural analysis, literary psychology, and Islamic literary studies.

Data collection was conducted through intensive reading and note-taking techniques. The researcher read the novel repeatedly to fully comprehend the storyline and identify important textual evidence related to the research focus. Relevant data were then classified based on analytical categories, including themes, character development, setting, plot structure, moral values, and psychological aspects of the characters. This process helped organize the data systematically before interpretation.

The data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, selected quotations and narrative elements related to the research objectives were identified and categorized. In the data display stage, the collected data were organized into analytical descriptions to show relationships among intrinsic elements and psychological aspects. The final stage involved concluding by interpreting how these elements contribute to the overall meaning of the novel.

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To ensure the credibility of the findings, the study applied careful reading, repeated data checking, and theoretical comparison. The interpretation process was conducted by relating textual evidence to relevant literary theories and previous studies. Through this methodological process, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how intrinsic elements and psychological representations construct meaning in Ketika Cinta Bertasbih.

Findings

The analysis of *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* reveals that the novel is constructed through interconnected intrinsic elements that strengthen its narrative meaning. The elements examined in this study include theme, characterization, setting, plot, and moral values. These elements do not function separately but interact with each other to represent the struggles, spiritual journey, and personal development of the characters throughout the story.

Theme: Life struggle, love, and Islamic spirituality

The dominant theme found in the novel is the struggle of human life in achieving personal goals while maintaining religious values. The story presents the journey of Khairul Azzam, an Indonesian student studying in Egypt who faces various challenges related to education, economic responsibility, family expectations, and personal relationships. His experiences illustrate that success is not only determined by intellectual ability but also by perseverance, patience, and strong faith.

The theme of love is also an important element in developing the storyline. However, love in the novel is not portrayed merely as a romantic relationship between characters. Instead, it is presented as a form of responsibility, commitment, and spiritual consideration. The relationship between Azzam and Anna Althafunnisa reflects the idea that moral and religious principles should guide personal feelings.

Furthermore, Islamic spirituality becomes a central theme that influences the characters' decisions and behaviors. Religious values appear through attitudes such as patience, sincerity, responsibility, and reliance on God. Through these themes, the novel presents a connection between personal struggle and spiritual growth.

Characterization and psychological representation

The characterization analysis indicates that the main character, Khairul Azzam, is portrayed as a religious, hardworking, responsible, and determined individual. His personality is revealed through his actions, thoughts, and responses when facing various difficulties. Although he experiences economic challenges and emotional conflicts, he continues to maintain his principles and responsibilities towards his family and education.

From a literary psychology perspective, Azzam represents a character who experiences internal struggles but develops stronger emotional maturity through those experiences. His psychological condition demonstrates the relationship between external pressures and personal values. The conflicts experienced by Azzam contribute to his character development and show how individuals construct meaning from difficult life situations.

Other characters also contribute to the psychological complexity of the novel. Anna

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Althafunnisa is portrayed as an intelligent, gentle, and religious woman whose decisions reflect moral awareness. Meanwhile, Furqan represents a character experiencing inner conflict caused by personal problems and emotional pressure. The interaction among these characters strengthens the psychological dimension of the story.

Setting: Cultural and religious representation

The setting in *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* plays an important role in building the atmosphere and strengthening the cultural background of the novel. The Egyptian setting is not merely a geographical location but also represents an environment associated with Islamic education, religious tradition, and intellectual development.

The description of Cairo and the educational environment reflect the experience of Indonesian students studying abroad while maintaining their cultural and religious identity. The setting supports the development of characters because many conflicts and personal transformations occur within this social and cultural environment.

In addition, the religious atmosphere presented through places, activities, and social interactions strengthens the spiritual dimension of the novel. The setting becomes an important element that connects individual experiences with broader cultural and religious values.

Plot structure and conflict development

The plot of *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* follows a chronological structure that presents the journey of the main character from personal struggle to maturity and achievement. The storyline develops through various conflicts, including economic difficulties, educational challenges, family responsibilities, and relationship issues.

The conflicts experienced by the characters function as important mechanisms for character development. The challenges faced by Azzam encourage him to become more responsible and strengthen his commitment to his values. Characters achieve resolution not only through external success but also through emotional and spiritual growth.

The plot structure illustrates how continuous interaction between experience, reflection, and decision-making leads to personal transformation. Therefore, the storyline supports the main message of the novel regarding perseverance, faith, and responsibility.

Moral and religious values

The analysis indicates that the novel contains strong moral and religious messages. These values are represented through the characters' behaviors, relationships, and responses to conflicts. The main moral values found in the novel include responsibility, patience, honesty, perseverance, respect for parents, and sincerity.

Religious values are reflected through the characters' relationship with God, which influences their choices and actions. The novel emphasizes that personal achievement should be balanced with spiritual awareness and ethical responsibility. These values make the novel relevant not only as entertainment but also as a medium for character education.

The findings demonstrate that the intrinsic elements of *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* work together to construct a narrative that combines personal struggle, psychological development, and Islamic moral teachings. The integration of structural and psychological perspectives provides a more

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profound understanding of how the novel communicates its messages to readers.

The findings of this study further demonstrate that the intrinsic elements in *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* function as an interconnected system rather than separate components. The theme of struggle, love, and Islamic spirituality is strengthened through the development of characters, conflicts, and narrative settings. This relationship shows that the meaning of a literary work is created through the interaction among its internal elements. Therefore, analyzing only one element without considering its connection with other elements may result in an incomplete understanding of the novel's message.

From a literary psychology perspective, the character development of Khairul Azzam represents the psychological process experienced by individuals when facing social, economic, and emotional challenges. His persistence, responsibility, and religious commitment illustrate how personal values influence decision-making and character formation. The conflicts experienced by Azzam are not merely narrative obstacles but also become important moments that reveal his psychological growth. Through these experiences, the novel presents the idea that difficulties can become a process of self-development and spiritual strengthening.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the religious values presented in the novel are closely connected with the social and cultural background of the characters. The moral messages regarding education, family responsibility, sincerity, and personal dignity are conveyed through the characters' actions and experiences. These values are not presented as direct instructions but are constructed through realistic conflicts and personal struggles. In this way, the novel functions not only as an artistic work but also as a medium for character education and reflection on human behavior.

The setting of Egypt also contributes significantly to the construction of meaning in the novel. The cultural and religious environment represented through educational experiences, social interactions, and Islamic traditions provides a context that influences the characters' identities. This finding supports the view that setting is not merely a background element but also plays an active role in shaping the narrative atmosphere and strengthening the author's ideas.

Overall, the integration of structural analysis and literary psychology provides a more comprehensive understanding of *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih*. The novel demonstrates how literary elements work together to represent human struggles, spiritual values, and moral awareness. Thus, this study contributes to literary research by showing that Islamic literary works can be examined not only from their religious messages but also from their narrative structure and psychological representation.

The study found that *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* contains five major interconnected intrinsic elements:

Intrinsic Element	Main Findings
Theme	Life struggle, love, and Islamic spirituality dominate the narrative
Characterization	Characters represent religious, psychological, and moral development
Setting	Egypt functions as a cultural and religious background supporting the story
Plot	Conflicts develop character maturity and spiritual transformation

Moral Values	The novel promotes responsibility, patience, faith, and ethical behavior

Overall, the findings show that the novel is not only a romantic narrative but also a literary work that represents Islamic values, psychological experiences, and moral education through its structural elements.

Discussion

The construction of meaning through intrinsic elements in Ketika Cinta Bertasbih

The findings of this study demonstrate that the intrinsic elements in *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* are not independent components but interconnected parts that construct the overall meaning of the novel. The theme, characterization, setting, plot, and moral messages work together to represent human struggles, spiritual awareness, and personal development. In literary studies, intrinsic elements are considered important because they form the internal structure of a literary work and determine how readers understand the meaning conveyed by the author (Nurgiyantoro, 2018; Ratna, 2019).

The dominant themes of life struggle, love, and Islamic spirituality indicate that the novel presents a meaning beyond a simple romantic narrative. The love relationship portrayed in the story is closely connected with responsibility, commitment, and religious values. This finding indicates that the author uses personal relationships as a medium to communicate ethical and spiritual messages. Similar studies on religious literature explain that Islamic novels often combine aesthetic expression with moral reflection, allowing readers to interpret religious values through fictional experiences (Kurniawan, 2020).

The theme of struggle becomes the foundation of the main character's journey. The challenges experienced by Khairul Azzam illustrate how individuals construct identity through perseverance, responsibility, and faith. Literary works frequently represent social and psychological experiences through conflicts experienced by characters, making them valuable sources for understanding human values and behavior (Wiyatmi, 2019).

Character development and literary psychology perspective

The characterization of Khairul Azzam represents one of the strongest elements in constructing the psychological dimension of the novel. His portrayal as a religious, hardworking, and responsible individual demonstrates the relationship between external challenges and internal development. From a literary psychology perspective, characters represent psychological experiences through emotions, motivations, conflicts, and decision-making processes (Minderop, 2018).

Azzam's psychological development indicates that difficulties do not only function as conflicts but also become opportunities for personal growth. His experiences with economic pressure, educational challenges, and emotional struggles reveal the process of forming maturity and self-awareness. Previous research in literary psychology suggests that character analysis can reveal more profound meanings related to human motivation, personality development, and moral choices represented in fictional narratives (Endraswara, 2020).

Other characters also contribute to the psychological complexity of the novel. Anna

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Althafunnisa represents intelligence, emotional stability, and religious commitment, while Furqan reflects internal conflict caused by personal problems and social expectations. These different character portrayals strengthen the realistic representation of human experiences within the narrative.

The role of setting in representing cultural and religious identity

The Egyptian setting in *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* functions not only as a geographical background but also as a cultural and symbolic space. Cairo is presented as a place of education, religious learning, and personal transformation. The environment influences the characters' perspectives and contributes to the development of the story's central themes.

The use of international settings in literary works often provides opportunities to represent identity, cultural interaction, and personal transformation. According to contemporary literary studies, setting is not merely a decorative element but can function as a meaning-producing structure that influences characters and narrative development (Abrams & Harpham, 2019). In this novel, Egypt represents a connection between Indonesian Muslim identity and broader Islamic cultural experiences. The educational and religious atmosphere strengthens the message that personal development is influenced by both individual effort and the social environment.

Moral values and the function of Islamic literature

The findings reveal that *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* contains strong moral and religious values expressed through characters, conflicts, and narrative events. Values such as patience, responsibility, sincerity, perseverance, and devotion appear consistently throughout the story. Literature can function as a medium of character education because readers encounter moral concepts through meaningful experiences presented by characters (Lickona, 2018).

The moral messages in the novel are not presented through direct instruction but through the experiences and decisions of the characters. This approach makes the values more meaningful because readers understand them through narrative situations. Studies of Islamic literature indicate that religious novels often combine artistic elements with educational purposes by presenting ethical models through fictional narratives (Sari, 2021).

Therefore, *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* represents how literature can serve multiple functions: entertainment, reflection, cultural expression, and moral education. The novel demonstrates that literary works can contribute to character formation by presenting examples of responsibility, faith, and social relationships.

Contribution of the study

This study contributes to literary research by integrating structural analysis and literary psychology to examine *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih*. While previous studies often emphasize religious values in Islamic novels, this research highlights how those values are constructed through the interaction between intrinsic elements and character psychology.

The integration of structural and psychological approaches provides a broader understanding of how literary meaning is created. As contemporary literary research emphasizes, interdisciplinary approaches allow researchers to examine literary texts not only as artistic

products but also as representations of social, cultural, and psychological realities (Bertens, 2018).

However, this study is limited to one literary work and focuses on textual interpretation. Future research may expand the analysis by comparing different Islamic novels, examining reader responses, or applying other theoretical perspectives to understand the broader cultural impact of Islamic literary works.

Conclusion

This study indicates that the novel *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy contains interconnected intrinsic elements that contribute to the construction of meaning throughout the narrative. Through structural and literary psychology approaches, the analysis reveals that the novel is built around several dominant elements, including themes of life struggle, love, and Islamic spirituality; character portrayals that reflect psychological development; settings that strengthen cultural and religious contexts; and moral messages that emphasize responsibility, patience, and faith.

The character of Khairul Azzam represents the central psychological dimension of the novel. His experiences demonstrate how personal struggles, social responsibilities, and spiritual values influence character development. The interaction between characters, conflicts, and narrative events indicates that the novel does not only present a romantic story but also represents a process of self-development and moral formation.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the intrinsic elements function collectively rather than separately. The theme is strengthened through character development, the setting supports the cultural and religious atmosphere, and conflicts become a medium for conveying moral values. Therefore, *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* can be understood as a literary work that combines aesthetic aspects with educational and spiritual meanings.

This study contributes to literary studies by demonstrating how structural analysis combined with literary psychology can provide a more profound understanding of Islamic literary works. However, the study is limited to one novel and focuses on textual interpretation. Future research may expand the discussion by comparing similar literary works or exploring readers' responses to understand the wider social and cultural influence of Islamic literature.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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