

## THE PRINCIPLES OF BALANCE AND THE EMERGENCE OF HUMANITY AWARENESS IN 'ALI AHMAD BAKĀTSĪR'S *SALLĀMAH AL-QASS*: ISLAMIC LITERARY PERSPECTIVE

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### Abstract

The worship of a servant to God will fall short of perfection without paying attention and treating those around them with respect. 'Ali Ahmad Bakātsīr, through *Sallāmah al-Qass*, told a young man who solely practices solitary worship in his daily life and then suddenly falls in love with a sweet-voiced entertainer girl who changes his life. This paper aims to show the principles of balance and their impact on raising humanity's awareness in the novel, which can be classified as a textual-formalistic puritan Islamic literary work from an Islamic literary perspective. The data collection was carried out based on the work literature study method. The data were obtained by carefully reading the figures' words, thoughts, and attitudes leading to a predetermined formal object. The data analysis method used was the interpretive method. The principles of balance found in the novel are (1) balance between individual worship and social worship, (2) balance between physical and spiritual life, and (3) balance between worldly life and the hereafter. These principles raise humanity's awareness, namely (1) other people outside of oneself need to be considered, not abandoned, and (2) one should not justify the good or bad of the other by only looking at their outward actions. Thus, the three principles of balance proposed by 'Ali Ahmad Bakātsīr in *Sallāmah al-Qass* show Islamic values, which are expected to be a guide for the life of Muslims. This is because this work is a puritan Islamic literature committed to implementing Islamic teachings for its adherents or believer.

**Keywords:** Islamic literature, *Sallāmah al-Qass*, the principles of balance

### الملخص

لن تكون عبادة العبد لله كاملة حتى يهتم بشؤون الناس من حولهم ويتعامل معهم بشكل جيد. يناقش علي أحمد بكاتير قضية دينية اجتماعية من خلال الشخصية الروائية سلامة القس وهو شاب يمارس العبادة الفردية في حياته اليومية ولكنه فجأة يقع في حب فتاة ذات صوت جميل. تُظهر هذه الرواية، التي يمكن تصنيفها على أنها عمل أدبي إسلامي متمم نصي شكلي، أن تقوى الفرد يجب أن تكون مصحوبة بالتقوى الاجتماعي. لذلك فإن غرض هذه المقالة هو إظهار مبادئ التوازن في الرواية من منظور الأدب الإسلامي وأثرها في تكوين الوعي الإنساني. تم جمع البيانات بناءً على طريقة الدراسة المكتبية. وتم الحصول على البيانات من خلال قراءة الكلمات والأفكار والمواقف التي تعود إلى موضوع رسمي محدد. طريقة تحليل البيانات المستخدمة هي الطريقة التفسيرية. مبادئ التوازن الموجودة في الرواية هي: (١) التوازن بين العبادة الفردية والعبادة الاجتماعية، (٢) التوازن بين الحياة الجسدية والروحية، (٣) التوازن بين الحياة الدنيا والآخرة. تعطي هذه المبادئ الوعي الإنساني أن (١) الآخرين خارج الذات من الشخص يحتاجون إلى الاهتمام، و (٢) يجب على المرء ألا يبرر الخير أو السيئ لشخص آخر من خلال سلوكه الخارجي. وهكذا، فإن مبادئ التوازن الثلاثة التي اقترحها علي أحمد بكاتير في سلامة القس تظهر القيم الإسلامية التي من

المتوقع أن تكون قاعدة حياة المسلمين. وهذا على خلفية أن هذا العمل الأدبي أدب إسلامي متشدد ملتزم بتطبيق التعاليم الإسلامية لأتباعه

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأدب الإسلامي، سلامة القس، مبادئ التوازن، الوعي الإنساني

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic literature, which has become a matter of debate among experts and academics, continues to develop. Islamic literature continues developing, which has become a matter of debate among experts and academics. The debate (Mansur, 2010:1) can be grouped into two poles: "puritanism and liberalistic orientations". The first group defines 'Islam' in a more 'descriptive' sense, while the second defines it in a sense that tends to be 'normative'. However, whatever the definition, Islamic literature (al-Areqi, 2016:685) is rooted in the same two sources, namely the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad.

In the mid-20th century, Islamic writers and intellectuals in the Middle East, particularly Egypt, were actively involved in the call for Islamic literature. Sayyid Qutub, Muhammad Qutub, and Najib al-Kailaniy were the pioneers who wrote on the topic. Islam and literature are two exciting elements to collaborate. Literature has a beautiful language that can entertain, and Islam entered literature as a science (Abukhudairi, 2015:34-47). Among the Arab writers who are grouped as writers of Islamic literature is 'Ali Aḥmad Bakāšīr (1910-1969) the so-called Islamic writer who exerted his efforts to reflect the Islamic values and culture in literature (al-Areqi, 2016:685) and *Sallāmah al-Qass* which is the material object of this paper is one of his famous works.

The novel tells the life of 'Abdur-Raḥmān, a young man who obediently worships his Lord. He has studied Islam and put it into practice by reading the Qur'an, praying in congregation in the mosque, doing i'tikaf, and fasting. His profound knowledge of Islam made him

known as al-Qass, a title for knowledgeable, pious people. He associates with people he considers righteous but avoids associating with those he considers sinners. He even hates them because he believes they are misguided people who can mislead others, making their presence around him a disaster. They must be kept away so that he and society are protected from their evil. However, his hatred for them changes when he dreams of being in heaven while a girl in hell calls his name and clutches his collar asking for help to be saved. Since then, he experienced many changes in his life because the girl, Sallāmah, turned out to be in the real world. That dream has become the turning point of his life.

From the story above, it can be conveyed that good behavior that focuses on oneself concerning God cannot be perfect when relationships with fellow humans do not receive a portion of goodness. Islam teaches that all things must be balanced without exaggerating or undermining one another. In the Qur'an, a verse that shows balance is QS. Al-Mulk: 3 related to the balance in the creation of the universe.

الذي خلق سبع سموات طباقا ما ترى في خلق الرحمن  
من تفوت فارجع البصر هل ترى من فطور

*'He is the One' Who created seven heavens, one above the other. You will never see any imperfection in the creation of the Most Compassionate. So look again: do you see any flaws?*

Syihab (2016:43) refers to balance as *wasatīyyah*, namely balance in all matters of worldly and ukhrawi life which

must be accompanied by efforts to adapt to the situation at hand based on religious instructions and objective conditions that are being experienced without eliminating the two poles and then choosing what is in the middle. *Wasatiyyah* is a balance that is accompanied by the principle of not being lacking and not exaggerating, nor is it an attitude of avoiding something difficult or running away from responsibility because Islam teaches partiality to the truth in all situations at all times and places. As for Qardhawi (2006: 45-46), he refers to balance as *tawāzun*, namely a balance between two roads or two directions that face each other or are contradictory where one of the two directions cannot affect itself and ignores the other and cannot take the rights that are more and more than others.

Based on this, the problems to be answered are what are the principles of balance and their influence in raising humanity's awareness in the novel from the Islamic literary perspective? The approach to Islamic literature in the following analysis will base itself on the various opinions of literary experts regarding Islamic literature.

Islamic literature as a term has been found in literary history for a long time, but it refers more to the meaning of 'mass' or 'period', as the term 'Ṣadrul-Islam', does not yet refer to a theory or criticism ('Abbūr, 1996:22). In short, ad-Dāyīm, (2002:241) call it 'adabun maḍmūnun bid-darajah al-ūla' which means 'main class literature' and al-Kailāniy (1407 H:36) define it as follows.

*"Islamic literature is a beautiful and influential artistic expression, sourced from a believer's soul, an expression of life, humanity, and the universe, following the basics of Muslim aqidah, generating pleasure and benefit, moving feelings and thoughts, and a catalyst for taking attitudes and any activity."*

Islamic literature as a literary product pays attention to aesthetics as

literature in general. It is an expression of a soul who believes in life and the universe and is in line with the Islamic faith and is not just entertainment, but it must also provide benefits for the readers in determining attitudes towards something. Therefore, Islamic literature in its aesthetics must provide positive added value for its readers in living real life. Islamic literature must meet certain conditions that apply to a text called 'literature' as stated by Badawi (1993:46-69) Islamic literature should fulfill aesthetic conditions required in literature or it will be classed as preaching rather than artistic writing'. Therefore, as a product of art, Islamic literature should not be trapped into or in the form of religious preaching. It must be following its essence as an art product that has characteristics of beauty or aesthetics. Al-Areqi (2016:688) states that writers and critics of Islamic literature believe that Islamic literature is a combination of art and values.

*"Islamic literature is the beautiful expression of the universe, life, and mankind. It is the art that prepares the perfect meeting of beauty and truth. Beauty is a fact in this universe and truth is a peak of that beauty. As such, they have met in the story whereby all the facts of the universe are gathered."*

The beauty of imagination and aesthetics of Islamic literature in Subh (1992:54-55) includes four things, namely: (1) 'adamu jumūh al-khayāl; the absence of wild imagination, (2) *an yakūna al-khayāl muqayyadan bi al-fikr al-Islāmiy*; imagination must be tied in Islamic thought, (3) *irtibāṭu suwar al-khayāli bi at-ṭawāwiri al-Qur`āniy al-mu`jizi*; the attachment of imagination images to the miraculous depictions of the Qur'an, and (4) *an yansakha al-khayālu suratān min al-gazwāti wa al-ma`rakati al-Islāmiy wa al-buṭūlāti ar-rā`i`ati*; imagination produces a beautiful picture of *gazwah* and *ma`rasah Islamiyyah* and heroism.

Therefore, Islamic literature is a manifestation of subtle thoughts and

feelings based on a belief system (*aqidah*) and value orientation (*akhāq*) that form the Islamic worldview for believers (Shukri, 1992:411-421). Nonetheless, Islamic literature is seen as a mere 'beauty' and has a practical function in human life, especially for Muslims. Kubarek (2016:54-58) said that the 1980s had witnessed the rise of fundamentalism and the development of a new type of literature, referred to as "Islamic literature" which aimed to oppose the moral degradation promoted by secular Western-style literature on the one hand, and on the other hand, to shape attitudes and moral standards that are consistent with Islamic principles. He explicitly mentions Islamic literature as a form and tool of the mission targeting primarily Muslims who have changed their lifestyle under the influence of Western culture. Therefore, Islamic literature is a tool in restoring the majority of Muslim societies whose lifestyles have changed under the influence of Western culture.

Using the opinion of European researchers who classify literature as literature "for" and literature "against" to assess products categorized as Islamic literature, Kubarek (2016:57) said that Islamic literature can be defined as literature to promote the model of attitudes and behavior desired by Islam, and on the other hand, oppose the influence of Western culture, ideology, and economy and challenge the ruling regime which is considered to represent the interests of the West. That matter is in line with Mohammad (1982) who mentions that Islamic literature is literature that promotes Islamic belief systems or teachings; praises and elevates Islamic figures; criticizes the reality that is not following Islamic values; and criticizes the understanding of Islam that is considered not following the spirit of early Islam, or at least, literature that does not conflict with Islamic principles. Therefore, Islamic literature tends to be defined as literature with a purpose, not 'art for art's sake', which is to promote Islamic teachings in the interest of Islamic da'wah: inviting people to follow the Islamic way

of life, whether they are already 'Muslims' or have not formally become 'Muslims'.

There are two essential elements in Islamic literature: artistic expression or beautiful expression and Islamic perception. And its existence as a trend in literature does not doubt the existence of arguments and clear evidence from the legal text and the rational evidence delivered by its supporters (Ramadona, 2020:189).

Islamic literature deals with the features of all aspects of Islam and can be found in all literary genres, such as short stories, novels, poetry, or drama (Hassan, 2016:43-52). The themes of Islamic literature according to Subh (1992:54-55) are (1) moral values in the Qur'an and Hadith, (2) *sharia, fiqh, mu'amalah*, and agreements, (3) *sīrah* of the Prophet and companions, (4) Islamic history, (5) history of the civilization of Islam in the world, (6) Islamic solidarity, (7) counter against weakening the Arabic language, (8) solving the problems of Muslims all over the world, (9) the struggle against cultural backwardness, (10) the war against heresy, superstition, and heretical groups, (11) counter against the Zionist, (12) counter evangelization of the cross Christianity, and (13) counter atheism, Marxism, materialism, and communism.

Several studies related to Islamic literature can be seen in the following description. "The Aesthetics of Islamic Literature: A Study of the Novel *Di Bawah Lindungan Ka'bah*" (Hidayati, 2007) formulates the aesthetic concept of Islamic literature and discovers the aesthetic elements of the novel as a work of Islamic literature. The analytical method used is *verstehen*, inductive, and heuristic. Islamic literary aesthetics is an assessment of the aesthetic elements contained in literary works written by a Muslim based on Islamic aesthetic insights. The study of aesthetic elements is carried out through two aspects, namely the external aspect which refers to the visible external structure, and the inner aspect which refers to Islamic aesthetic insights contained in the content, meaning purpose, and function

of the work towards the quality of life improvement and the religiosity of its readers. Research reveals that the aesthetic elements contained in the aesthetics of Islamic literature are: (1) the existence of *muṭābaqah*/harmonization between elements, (2) the use of *isti'ārah*, (3) the existence of *taṣawwur*, or conceptualization so that the reader can understand the world through the senses in a rational way, (4) the existence of plasticity and visuality, namely persuasive aural qualities that draw the reader into an imaginary world of text and make it part of a world of meaning, (5) conveying the truth that functions as *zīkrullah* and self-purification. *Di Bawah Lindungan Ka'bah* contains all the aesthetic elements of Islamic literature so the novel is a work of Islamic literature with high aesthetic value.

"Theocentric Humanism in Minangkabau Islamic Literature: A Study of Minangkabau Nazam (Putra, 2015) searches a view of theocentric humanism in Minangkabau *nazam*. Theocentric humanism is the idea of humanity that considers that humans are free and independent beings, and have full authority over themselves according to religious values or belief in God, the creator of humans. *Nazam* is a genre of poetry that is loaded with theocentric humanism values that are full of Islamic overtones. In this study, the values of theocentric humanism in the Minangkabau *nazam* were analyzed using Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic technique. It was concluded that the values of theocentric humanism, especially humanism in Islam, are a movement for fostering and teaching moral values. There are three elements of morality taught in theocentric humanism/Islamic humanism, namely (1) morals towards Allah SWT, (2) morals towards oneself, and (3) morals towards other people and the social environment.

The data collection was carried out based on the work of literature study method. The data were obtained by listening carefully to the main characters' words, thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors that lead to the formal object that has been

determined, namely the principle of balance in Islam. The data analysis method used was the interpretive method, which involved interpreting the data based on the perspective of Islamic literature.

### ***Sallāmah al-Qass* as Textual-Formalistic Islamic Literature**

This novel can be grouped into puritanical Islamic literature which views Islamic literature as textual-formalistic because it refers to monotheism as the foundation of Muslim belief, morality as a guide for noble behavior, and Islamic history as a reference regarding the behavior of noble people who brought change to the world. All three—monotheism, morality, and Islamic history—are shown explicitly in narratives and dialogue between characters.

Monotheism is the belief that God is only one and has full authority over all things. This belief is commonly referred to as *tauhid* which is the core of Islamic teaching and is believed to be the teachings of the first prophet, Adam, to the last prophet, Muhammad SAW. The characters in the novel, such as 'Abdur-Raḥmān and Ibn Abi 'Ammār, believe in monotheism and God's absolute power over humans and all things. They worship Allah the Almighty by obeying His commands such as praying, fasting, reading the Qur'an, and seeking and spreading knowledge which they do for the sake of Allah. As for other figures, such as Ibn Suhail and Sallāmah, even though they did not practice worship as well as 'Abdur-Rahman and Ibn Abi 'Ammār, they believed that Allah is One.

Related to morals as an indicator of puritan Islamic literature, this novel teaches the implementation of Islamic teachings that its adherents can emulate. This is in line with the commitment of Islamic literature as literature that aims not only as entertainment but also to promote the model of attitudes and behavior desired by Islam. As the discussion will be presented later, this novel contains moral teachings, such as patience in accepting God's destiny, the enthusiasm to seek knowledge, hard work to get what the



characters want, loyalty, and affection between people.

As for the history of Islam, this novel uses the al-Haram Mosque in Mecca as its main setting. Mecca is the hometown of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, the prophet of Islam and the Ka'bah in the al-Haram Mosque is a symbol of Muslim unity because all Muslims everywhere must face the Ka'bah when performing prayers. Islamic history can also be seen from the names of the pious people mentioned including the companions of the Prophet: Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, Umar ibn al-Khattab, Usman bin 'Affan, Abu Hurairah, and a jurist, interpreter, and narrator of hadith from the tabi'in, Atha' bin Abi Rabah. All of them are figures in Islamic history who are role models for Muslims.

Therefore, it is obvious that this novel has a characteristic of Islamic literature that is committed to or carries the mission of Islamic *da'wah*. Among the verses of the Qur'an that are quoted, Yusuf: 24 is quoted at the beginning of the novel.

ولقد هممت به وهمّ بما لولا أن رأيت برهان ربّي.

(Bakāšīr, 1943:3)

*'Indeed she (the wife of the Egyptian ruler) liked Yusuf and Yusuf too if he did not see the guidance of his Lord.'*

The fragment of the letter refers to the story of the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) with the wife of an Egyptian ruler who seduced him. Yusuf would have accepted the woman's invitation if he had not received guidance from his Lord. Therefore, he eventually refused the invitation of his master's wife. The opening of the novel in the form of this verse indicates that the story in the novel is related to the story of Yusuf in the Qur'an. As for the hadiths of the Prophet quoted among them is the hadith about marriage as follows.

النكاح سنتي فمن رغب عن سنتي فليس مني.

(Bakāšīr, 1943:10)

*'Marriage is my sunnah. Whoever does not like my sunnah, then he is not one of my groups.'*

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### The Principles of Balance in the Novel *Sallāmah al-Qass*

The principles of balance or 'at-tawāzun' are defined by 'Usmān (Tt.;8-9) in *At-Tawāzun fil Islam* as follows.

إعطاء كل شيء حقه من غير زيادة ولا نقص، أو النظرة المعتدلة للأمر بين أطراف متناقضة.

والمقصود: البعد عن طرف الإفراط والحماس الزائد والغلو والتشدد والمبالغة، كذلك البعد عن الطرف الآخر وهو التفريط والتهاون.

*'Giving to everything as it should be, without addition or subtraction; moderate views on things between the opposing parties. It means avoiding exaggeration, the enthusiasm that exceeds the limit, hyperbole, extreme, and exaggeration, and away from the other side, which is neglect and belittling.'*

Balance is a broad and comprehensive meaning that includes all human actions religiously, morally, economically, politically, and socially. Realizing this balance can be done in three ways, namely (1) having comprehensive knowledge from the Qur'an and Hadiths, (2) reading the lives of the Companions to find out the application of balance and moderation in their lives, and (3) abandoning conjectures and lustful desires.

Based on this definition, the principles of balance found in the novel are as follows: (1) balance between individual worship and social worship, (2) balance between the life of the world and the hereafter, and (3) balance of physical and spiritual life.

### *The balance between individual worship and social worship*

Individual worship is worship that is directly related to Allah as Khaliq, by fulfilling Allah's rights, *ḥablun min-Allah*. Meanwhile, social worship is related to fellow beings, by fulfilling the rights of *ādamiy, ḥablun min an-nās, mu'āmalah*. The two types of worship do not stand alone but complement each other in shaping the balance of life for humans. Worship, for example, prayer, must contain

both individual and social dimensions.

Religion was revealed to guide mankind. These instructions do not apply only to oneself in the context of personal piety, but also at a macro level at the level of social piety. Personal with social piety runs linearly and blends together to form a balanced life for human relationships, both vertically and horizontally (Yurwanto, 2014).

Individual and social worship shows the personal piety of the performer. Believing Muslim is not enough to believe in their heart and swear their faith verbally, but must show proof of their faith in their pious behavior. Bisri (2016:37) defines it as *muttaqi*, piety, which is the piety of a devoted servant or in other words, a believer who does pious deeds, both ritual and social piety.

Social piety is needed in carrying out the transformation to be useful for oneself and others with an awareness of submission to the teachings of Allah. To achieve social piety, individuals must understand that Islam has a backflow to its adherents. Religion is not only understood as a ritual dimension or *hablun min-Allah* alone but also the social dimension or *hablun minan-nās*; religion is not only concerned with the ritual dimension to form individual piety but also forming social piety, and social morality (Zuhri, 2014).

‘Abdur-Raḥmān, the central character in the novel, was originally a character who prioritized prayer, remembrance, *i’tikāf*, fasting, and reading the Qur’an, which is categorized as individual worship. These activities are part of his daily life because they have been instilled from an early age by his parents. He has memorized the Qur’an since he was 10 years old and has studied religious sciences so that at a relatively young age, people call him *al-Qass*, the title of a pious person who is good at religious knowledge.

((القس))، وغلب عليه هذا اللقب حتى كاد لا يعرف إلا به. وكان اسم عبد الرحمن القس عنوانا للشباب العفيف الناشئ في عبادة الله، اللازم للمسجد، الفقيه

في الدين.

(Bakāšīr, 1943:5)

‘*Al-Qass, that laqab has overcome (name) himself until he is only known by that laqab. The name ‘Abdur-Raḥmān al-Qass is an ‘address’ for a young man who is very self-aware, active in worshiping Allah, always resides in the mosque, and is faqih in religion.*’

‘Abdur-Raḥmān’s life revolved around his house and the mosque and he only knew people who had the same interests as him, such as Abul-Wafā` and his two friends. He believed that worshiping God completed his life so that he did not need anyone else. He distanced himself from people who liked to have fun and he even thought that they were wicked people who must be kept away so that society can avoid their evil. However, his dream of a girl in hell with a flute in hand calling his name for help became a turning point that changed his life. The dream, which he initially ignored, became the determinant of his life's changes when he found the girl in the real world. Since then, he had felt confused and lost his composure in worshiping Allah. The dream had shaken the selfishness of his individual worship and made him realize that there were many people around him whom he had neglected, such as Ibn Suhail and the poets. Ibn Suhail was a rich man who owned an entertainment house that often entertained poets, singers, and writers. Ibn Suhail was also very concerned about the poor, even willing to go bankrupt to make them happy. He felt sad because he could no longer help them due to his bankruptcy. Ibn Suhail also never left the congregational prayer, fasting, worship in the month of Ramadan, and doing *i’tikāf* in his last ten nights. The thing that amazed ‘Abdur-Raḥmān the most was Ibn Suhail’s intention to give Sallāmah to him because the court decided to confiscate all of Ibn Suhail’s property,

The meaning of worship should not be narrowly defined as servitude to Allah in the worship of individual *maḥdah* only, but also *mu’āmalah* worship that is carried out in every movement and activity of

human worship to God. One's devotion to God should not cause one to forget the humans around them because human rights and obligations bind one. A person has the obligation of *amar ma'rūf nahi munkar* which must be done in a good and humane way, not by allowing, avoiding, or even hating those who have not behaved ideally according to Islamic teachings.

### ***The balance between physical and spiritual needs***

Islam respects the physical and spiritual as the two elements that make up human beings. Physically relates to the physical, biological, bodily, and outward including everything that is caught by the senses, and it relates to the fulfillment of physical needs. Among the physical needs are food, drink, and marriage. Meanwhile, spiritual relates to spirituality, non-physical, spiritual, including things that are not perceived by the senses, and it relates to the fulfillment of spiritual needs. When people's spiritual needs are met, they tend to have a calm and satisfying effect. Among the spiritual needs is a good relationship with God through individual mahdah worship such as prayer and reading the Qur'an and mu'amalah worship like a good relationship with fellow human beings, getting affection, and getting good treatment.

This balance between the physical and the spiritual is following the characteristics of Islamic literature which refers to its universal and comprehensive nature. Islam is not more concerned with one of them but views them as two dimensions that are equally important and must be fulfilled for the happiness of human life. Therefore, Islam supports humans in carrying out their religious obligations, including to God, fellow humans, and the universe. When people eat, for example, they are fulfilling their physical rights so that they can worship properly. Accordingly, eating is interpreted as an act of worship dimension.

Physical and spiritual needs can be fulfilled by the people themselves, such as eating, exercising, and so on. However,

some needs require the presence of others to be fulfilled because human is a social creature that requires the presence of others. Marriage and family life at a certain age are individual needs that must be met to create inner peace. For this reason, religion provides a lawful way out through marriage with a set of conditions and pillars that have been set. Therefore, the physical activity of getting married is also an act of worship to Allah. Marriage and having a family essentially also maintain human survival and the clarity of their lineage. On the other hand, avoiding marriage and family life for no reason is not justified in Islam.

In the context of this novel, the character Abdur-Rahmān was originally a human being who tended to only fulfill his spiritual needs with individual worship, barely involved with other humans they shared his interests. He deliberately distanced himself from people who were considered only concerned with physical pleasures, labeling them as *fāsiq* or sinners. His hatred of them is shown in the following quote.

فخرج عبد الرحمن وقال بصوت فيه حدة: (أتدعو لي  
إلى اللهو و الغناء يا ابن سهيل؟)

(Bakāšīr, 1943:52)

'*Abdur-Rahmān went away saying in a sharp voice: "Are you inviting me to have fun and sing, Ibn Suhail?"*

His distaste for poets was seen in his willingness to report to the mayor about Ibn Suhail's amusement house which was filled with poets who sang songs. He also regretted having accidentally heard the voice of Sallāmah singing so that his ears rang with the sound of Sallāmah's voice and the song she was singing. As a result, he changed, especially after seeing Sallāmah's beautiful face when he was forced to stop by Ibn Suhail's house.

Therefore, the conflict between the attitude of prioritizing spiritual needs and physical pleasures, in this context is against women, is the beginning of the realization that there is something that must be fulfilled for his balance. Both are not two



things that should be contradicted, but rather complement each other. With that realization, he became convinced that his choice to love Sallāmah was truly in the way of Allah because his fear of Allah was getting bigger.

وهل تدور الريية قط بخلد عبد الرحمن وهو ما هو في  
تقواه وورعه وفقهه ودينه وخوفه من الله وشدة محاسبته  
لنفسه؟

(Bakāshīr, 1943:86-87)

*'Does doubt apply to the persistence of 'Abdur-Raḥmān, is he still what he used to be, remains in taqwa, keeps himself, fidelity, religion, and his fear of Allah and his contemplation of himself is increasing?'*

Pleasure towards the opposite sex also strengthened his understanding of the verse of *kauniyah* and reproduced it as a beautiful literary art. He was able to compose beautiful verses for Sallāmah to sing. This was at the same time a turning point for his attitude towards art, especially poetry and poets after he had previously reproached it. However, this awareness goes through a process of inner conflict which implies doubt between his acceptance and rejection of the verse and Sallāmah.

'Abdur-Raḥmān had doubts about whether loving Sallāmah was an act justified by religion or the devil's whispers that turned him away from religion. The inner conflict ended in his decision to accept Sallāmah after he understood that marriage was even a *sunnah* of the Prophet that should be followed by those who love his *sunnah*. He seemed to have just understood the meaning of the hadith '*An-nikāḥu sunnatī*' even though he had memorized it for so long. His desire to marry Sallāmah intensified his fear of Allah. By loving Sallāmah, he felt that his tenderness of feelings and sensitivity to nature and his fellow humans increased. He loved people who had not been guided and believed that Allah created wisdom behind it. He also appreciated the existence of the universe as a beautiful creation and a huge

source of inspiration. Therefore, Islam, which views the principles of balance between physical and spiritual needs, calms people down and gives them confidence that physical pleasures are also worth worshipping.

### ***The balance between the life of this world and the hereafter***

Islam believes that human life is not only in this world but also in life after death, namely the afterlife. Islam teaches that humans must get good in living their life in those two periods. Both periods of life require the right attitude so that neither one of them is unequal. Life in the world requires everything that is generally in the form of material that allows humans to live a good life so that they can carry out their obligations to serve God and do good to others. Meanwhile, life in the afterlife requires everything that is more immaterial. In this context, the material can be a means for humans to get a good afterlife.

'Abdur-Raḥmān's attitude of staying away from worldly life is shown by a lot of solitude, away from the crowds of people who have fun: joking, making music, singing, eating, and drinking lavishly, especially with women. He viewed all of this as disobedience. Consequently, he always tried to stay away from places that allow him to meet them. As for economic life, he is supported by the land inherited from his father so that he does not have to work hard to support himself. The thought of becoming economically independent in the future also did not cross his mind. He was satisfied with his economic condition because he lived alone, and his life also did not require a lot of money because his activities were limited to worship, even fasting. Eventually, he did not feel any more economic demands. It did not occur to him that he should be able to help others with the wealth he earned. The tendency to not feel the need is formed by his apathy to the situation of the people around him.

However, this condition found its contradiction when 'Abdur-Raḥmān felt he needed a lot of money to marry Sallāmah,

which he had to buy from his master. However, his heart was first opposed to his shift in worldly orientation: his love for Sallāmah had turned him away from his *zuhud, wara'*, and *faqīh*, or those attitudes that enabled him to love Sallāmah. Then, he realized that the two should not be contradicted, but complementary; Sallāmah was needed to balance his life in this world and the hereafter. The world marked by wealth and women in this novel is a means for humans to carry out their religious obligations in the context of their afterlife. Working in the market was the solution he chose. People's amazement at his presence in the market proves how long he has solely spent time in the mosque.

وأى الناس ابن سهيل وابن أبي عمار يعملان في السوق  
ويضطربان فيه، فربما مر بهما من كان يعرفهما منهم  
فسبح الله وعجب من تقلب الأيام.

(Bakāšīr, 1943:151)

*'People saw Ibn Suhail and Ibn Abi Ammār working in the market and both were really working in the market. If anyone meets them and recognizes them, he will glorify Allah because he is amazed by the rotation of the day (human fate).'*

Mosques and markets seem to be very contradictory places. The mosque with the hereafter dimension; it serves for the benefit of the afterlife and the interests of life after death. On the other side, the market has worldly dimensions; it is for the sake of life before death in this world. The mosque is a place to seek and collect rewards or something abstract; while the market is a place to find and accumulate wealth. 'Abdur-Raḥmān's awareness of the need for a balance between the fulfillment of the needs of this world and the hereafter is illustrated in the following quotation.

فابتسم عبد الرحمن وقال: سأخرج إلى السوق وأشتغل  
سمساراً، وقد خرجت ذلك يا سلامة فنجحت فيه."  
فضحكت سلامة وقالت: "والمسجد يا عبد الرحمن؟"  
قال لها: "للمسجد وقت، للسوق وقت، ولك أنت

يا سلامة وقت...

(Bakāšīr, 1943:100)

*'Abdur-Raḥmān smiled as he said: "I will work in the market, keep myself busy as a broker. I did, Sallāmah, and I succeeded." Sallāmah laughed as she said: "What about the mosque, 'Abdur-Raḥmān?" He replied, "The mosque has a time, the market has a time, and you, Sallāmah, also have a time...'*

For 'Abdur-Raḥmān, work is worship to serve Allah by spending his wealth for others. With that awareness, he worked not only for his own sake. After he realized that wealth was important for the life of the world, he became very impressed with Ibn Suhail who used his wealth for the happiness of others and felt sad not because of his bankruptcy, but because he could no longer help the poor people he used to help. He felt that Ibn Suhail was a much better person than him. Moreover, Ibn Suhail also never left the prayer and added worship in the month of Ramadan. He realized that many of the companions of the Prophet were also traders and that did not reduce their piety at all. Life in this world must be supported by the fulfillment of worldly needs in the form of property, all of which are intended to worship for the afterlife.

### **The Influence of the Principle of Balance in the Emergence of Humanity Awareness**

The principles of balance in the novel Sallāmah al-Qass promote humanity's awareness. Humanity (Khalid, 2020) is a word for the quality that makes humans have the ability to love and be compassionate, to be creative, and not to become robots or aliens. Humanity also contains and emphasizes the function of socialization and integration (Shvachkina, 2020:101). Humanity always contains the concept of self and others and refers to positive traits or actions that arise as a result of respect for status as fellow human beings who have feelings. The humanitarian awareness that arises from the understanding of the principle of

balance above is formulated in two groups, namely (1) the awareness that other people around need attention, and (2) the awareness that one should not justify the good or bad of another by looking at their external actions or from one side only.

First, the awareness that other people around need attention. It means that they need enlightenment, especially those who have not received the guidance of Allah. They must not be abandoned and must be saved by getting along well with them and inviting them to speak according to their language. In the context of this novel, they are singers, entertainment house owners, and poets. Islam provides an opportunity for people who are not yet ideal in carrying out Islamic commands and prohibitions to make improvements because Islam does not recognize the word 'too late for its adherents to improve their quality.

Islam appreciates those who are active in the field of art as long as their content brings people to piety to Allah, not disobedience to Him. Islam respects them as long as their activities are carried out fairly and are used for the good of Islam and do not violate the norms set by religion. Islam very clearly states this in Q.S asy-Syu'ara':224-227).

والشعراء يتبعهم الغاؤون، ألم تر أنهم في كل واد يهيمون،  
وأنتهم يقولون ما لا يفعلون، إلا الذين آمنوا وعملوا  
الصالحات وذكروا الله كثيرا وانتصروا من بعد ما ظلموا  
وسيعلم الذين ظلموا أي منقلب ينقلبون  
(QS. Asy-Syu'ara':224-227).

*'And the poets, they follow them, the astray. Do not you see, surely they in every valley, they wandering? And surely they, they say what not they do, except those who believe and do the righteousness and they remember the God much, and they help from after what they wronged. And soon they will know, those who wrong, which returnees, they return.'*

Art is a manifestation of culture as a result of human creation. Islam basically

approves every work that is in line with its teachings and forbids it if it deviates. These works of art must be an expression of a unique view of life following the perspective of Islamic norms and values (Rizali, 2012:1). Islam teaches beauty and gentleness as human fiṭrah and both are in line with Islam as a fiṭrah religion, so it is impossible if Islam does not recognize art (Safliana, 2008:1) and humans by nature also enjoy the beauty (Akromusyuhada, 2018:6). Poetry in Islamic art is one of the intellectual basic images of the linguistic category, in addition to the other three image categories, namely calligraphic images, dynamic or figurative images, and illustrated images (Hanash, 2017:68). Thus, this beauty becomes a tool for Islam to convey its teachings to its adherents. Islam is very broad and can be conveyed in various methods -considering the backgrounds of Muslims are also diverse - as long as the method is allowed by religion. Poetry is a medium, like other arts such as music, calligraphy, drama, dance, painting, and others. In this context, poetry – which is also then sung and accompanied by music – is a medium for conveying Islamic teachings to its adherents.

Second, the awareness that one should not justify the good or bad of another by looking at their external actions or from one side only. 'Abdur-Raḥmān initially looked down on the people around him who worked in the arts. However, this view changed after getting to know them better and their behavior. He then becomes friends with Suhail, the owner of an art house, who turns out to be diligent in fasting and is willing to sacrifice his wealth for the pleasure of his friends around him. Meanwhile, 'Abdur-Raḥmān only cares about himself and makes friends with people he considers good. After getting to know and associating with Suhail more intensively, he realized that a person has reasons, intentions, or goals that are not internally known to others so other people do not have the right to judge someone's good or bad only from outward actions. A person also cannot say that another person is not good just because he knows one act

that he thinks is not good, even though he does not know the whole life or behavior of the person he is judging. Al-Qur`an forbids a person to feel he is good or feel better than others as mentioned in Q.S. An-Najm:32.

فلا تزكوا أنفسكم هو أعلم بمن اتقى

(QS. An-Najm:32)

'So don't you purify yourselves. He aware with one pious.'

This awareness requires humans to respect other people regardless of their profession as long as it is permitted by religion. It's too early for someone to judge others based on their profession. Likewise, it is too early for someone to judge others only from one action he has done, while there are still many other actions or deeds that he does which are indicators of his goodness. It may be that someone sees that others only care about entertainment which seems to be a futile act, but it turns out that he always fasts and prays at night, spends a lot of time helping the poor as a charity, and always wants happiness for others. In addition, it turns out that he is also kind and humble. Thus, Islam encourages someone not to judge others are bad, while he is good. By looking at the goodness of others honestly and objectively, someone will feel that other people are maybe better than himself so that self-motivation to be better continuously arises.

## CONCLUSION

After analyzing the novel *Sallāmah al-Qass* from an Islamic literary perspective, the following conclusions were obtained. Based on the narrative, this novel can be grouped into textual-formalistic puritan Islamic literature because it refers to monotheism as the foundation of Muslim belief, morality as a guide for noble behavior, and Islamic history. Sources of Islamic law are also stated explicitly and implicitly, both in narration and dialogue between characters. The principles of balance that were found following the analysis are (1) the balance between individual worship and social worship, (2) the balance between the physical and the spiritual, and (3) the

balance between the life of the world and the hereafter.

The principles of balance promote awareness of humanity. First, the awareness that other people around need attention. It means that they need enlightenment, especially those who have not received the guidance of Allah. They must not be abandoned and must be saved by getting along well with them and inviting them to speak according to their language. Second, the awareness that one should not justify the good or bad of another by looking at their external actions or from one side only. One should not judge other people are bad when he is good.

From the analysis, it can be seen that Islamic literature is mostly aimed at *da'wah* purposes to promote Islamic teachings without losing its essence as a work of art based on the principle of beauty or aesthetics, in this case, the beauty of language. Therefore, Islamic literature is proven to be not just a religious lecture, but a fictional product that has benefits and provides entertainment value for its audience.

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