

A Comparative Analysis of The Intrinsic Elements in Bumi Cinta and Ketika Cinta Bertasbih by Habiburrahman El Shirazy

Choeirul Azhar

^{1,2,3} Department of Tax Accounting, Universitas Pamulang, Indonesia

Article History

Received : 15 June 2025
Revised : 30 June 2025
Accepted : 6 July 2025
Published : 7 July 2025

Corresponding author*:

Choeirul Azhar

Contact:

choeirul2000@gmail.com

Cite This Article:

Azhar, C. (2026). A Comparative Analysis of The Intrinsic Elements in Bumi Cinta and Ketika Cinta Bertasbih by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. *Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin*, 5(04), 48–61.

Abstract: This study aims to compare the intrinsic elements of Bumi Cinta and Ketika Cinta Bertasbih by Habiburrahman El Shirazy using a structural literary approach. A qualitative descriptive method with comparative analysis was employed to examine the similarities and differences in theme, characterization, plot, setting, point of view, language style, and moral message. The data consisted of textual excerpts selected from both novels and analyzed based on the structural theory of fiction proposed by Nurgiyantoro. The findings indicate that both novels consistently promote Islamic values through themes of faith, love, and moral integrity while employing similar narrative perspectives and religious language styles. However, they differ in narrative setting, plot structure, character development, and conflict. Bumi Cinta portrays the struggle to maintain faith within a secular environment, whereas Ketika Cinta Bertasbih emphasizes responsibility, perseverance, and spiritual maturity in a religious setting. These findings demonstrate Habiburrahman El Shirazy's ability to express consistent ideological values through diverse narrative structures, thereby contributing to comparative literary studies and the appreciation of contemporary Indonesian Islamic fiction.

Keywords: Comparative Literature; Intrinsic Elements; Structural Analysis; Indonesian Novels; Habiburrahman El Shirazy; Islamic Literature.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.56127/jukim.v5i04.2899>

INTRODUCTION

Literary works are generally regarded as creative representations of human life, reflecting social realities, cultural values, and the author's interpretation of human experiences. Through literary texts, authors communicate ideas, beliefs, emotions, and moral perspectives that enable readers to understand various dimensions of human existence. Among the many forms of literary expression, the novel occupies a significant position because it presents a comprehensive narrative through interconnected events, characters, settings, and conflicts that collectively construct meaningful representations of life (Abrams & Harpham, 2015). Consequently, novels have become one of the most widely appreciated literary genres due to their ability to combine aesthetic expression with social and moral reflection.

As a form of narrative fiction, a novel is structurally composed of intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Intrinsic elements refer to the internal components that directly construct the narrative, including theme, characterization, plot, setting, point of view, language style, and moral message (Nurgiyantoro, 2013). These elements are interconnected and function collectively to establish narrative coherence, aesthetic quality, and interpretative meaning. Therefore, the analysis of intrinsic elements represents one of the most fundamental approaches in literary criticism because it enables readers to understand how a literary work is structurally organized and how meaning is generated through textual relationships (Stanton, 2012).

Among contemporary Indonesian novelists, Habiburrahman El Shirazy is widely recognized for integrating Islamic values into modern literary narratives. His novels not only portray romantic relationships but also emphasize religious commitment, moral integrity, perseverance, and spiritual

development within contemporary social contexts. Consequently, his works are frequently categorized as Islamic inspirational novels that combine entertainment with religious education. Two of his most influential novels, *Bumi Cinta* and *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih*, share a similar central theme of love grounded in Islamic values while presenting substantially different narrative settings, character development, and conflict structures.

One of the most distinctive differences between these novels lies in their geographical and socio-cultural settings. *Bumi Cinta* is set in Moscow, Russia, a predominantly secular environment where the protagonist's faith is challenged by moral temptations and ideological conflicts. In contrast, *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* takes place in Cairo, Egypt, a city strongly associated with Islamic scholarship and religious traditions. These contrasting settings significantly influence the nature of the protagonists' struggles. While Muhammad Ayyas in *Bumi Cinta* confronts external temptations within a permissive society, Khairul Azzam in *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* experiences internal conflicts arising from family responsibilities, educational commitments, and personal aspirations within a religious environment. These differences suggest that narrative setting functions not merely as a background but also as an important determinant of characterization, plot development, and thematic construction.

The comparison between these two novels is particularly significant because both were written by the same author. Comparative literary studies often examine works produced by different authors to identify similarities and differences in literary style, ideology, or cultural perspective (Damono, 2009). However, comparing two works written by a single author offers a different scholarly contribution, as it reveals how the same writer reconstructs narrative structures while maintaining a consistent literary identity. Such analysis provides deeper insight into the author's artistic flexibility in developing themes, characters, conflicts, and settings without abandoning his distinctive ideological perspective.

Previous studies concerning Habiburrahman El Shirazy's novels have predominantly examined individual works from various perspectives, including the sociology of literature, literary psychology, and religious values. For example, Wandira et al. (2017) analyzed *Bumi Cinta* using a sociological approach and concluded that the novel portrays the struggle to preserve faith through a mixed plot structure and an omniscient third-person point of view. Although these studies contribute to understanding the individual characteristics of the novels, they generally focus on a single literary work. Consequently, comparative studies examining the intrinsic structures of *Bumi Cinta* and *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* remain relatively limited. This limitation indicates a contextual and analytical gap within Indonesian comparative literary studies, particularly regarding how a single author constructs different narrative frameworks while consistently conveying similar ideological values.

Based on this gap, the present study aims to compare the intrinsic elements of *Bumi Cinta* and *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy using a structural literary approach. Specifically, this study analyzes similarities and differences in theme, characterization, plot, setting, point of view, language style, and moral message. By examining these intrinsic elements comparatively, this research contributes to the development of comparative literary criticism by demonstrating how identical religious values can be represented through distinct narrative structures. Furthermore, the findings are expected to enrich the study of Indonesian literature and provide useful references for literary appreciation and teaching in higher education.

RESEARCHMETHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design using a comparative literary analysis approach to examine the intrinsic elements of *Bumi Cinta* and *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. Qualitative research is appropriate for literary studies because the data consist of textual units, including words, sentences, dialogues, narrative events, and descriptive passages, rather than numerical measurements. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), qualitative research seeks to interpret meanings embedded in textual or social phenomena through systematic description and analysis. The comparative approach was adopted to identify similarities and differences in the intrinsic structures of the two novels based on structural literary theory (Damono, 2009).

The primary data sources consisted of the novels *Bumi Cinta* and *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* (Volume 1) written by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. The units of analysis comprised textual excerpts representing the intrinsic elements of each novel, including theme, characterization, plot, setting, point of view, language style, and moral message. A total of 50 textual data units were analyzed, consisting of 25 excerpts from

Bumi Cinta and 25 excerpts from *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih*. These excerpts were selected because they adequately represented the seven intrinsic elements investigated in this study.

Data were collected using close reading and document analysis techniques. Both novels were read repeatedly to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their narrative structures. Relevant textual passages were subsequently identified, recorded, and classified according to the intrinsic element they represented. Document analysis is widely recognized as an appropriate qualitative technique for examining textual materials because it enables researchers to interpret written documents systematically while preserving their contextual meanings (Bowen, 2009).

The analytical framework was based on the structural theory of fiction proposed by Nurgiyantoro (2013). Seven intrinsic elements were examined: theme, characterization, plot, setting, point of view, language style, and moral message. Each element served as an analytical category through which similarities and differences between the two novels were systematically identified and interpreted.

Data analysis followed five sequential stages. First, identification was conducted by locating textual passages containing intrinsic elements within each novel. Second, the identified data were classified according to the seven analytical categories. Third, each textual excerpt was described and interpreted using Nurgiyantoro's structural framework. Fourth, a comparative analysis was performed by juxtaposing corresponding intrinsic elements from both novels to identify their similarities and differences. Finally, the findings were synthesized to formulate conclusions regarding Habiburrahman El Shirazy's narrative consistency and variation in constructing Islamic-themed novels.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the analysis, the researcher employed persistent reading and theoretical validation. Each selected excerpt was reexamined to ensure its consistency with the theoretical definitions of intrinsic elements proposed by Nurgiyantoro (2013). This verification process minimized potential misclassification and strengthened the credibility of the analytical findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This section presents the findings of the comparative analysis of the intrinsic elements in *Bumi Cinta* and *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. The findings are organized into comparative tables to facilitate the identification of similarities and differences in the intrinsic structures of both novels. Table 1 presents twenty-five data units extracted from *Bumi Cinta*, whereas Table 2 contains twenty-five corresponding data units from *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih*. Each data unit is accompanied by an analytical explanation based on the structural theory of fiction proposed by Nurgiyantoro (2013). Following the presentation of both datasets, the discussion examines each intrinsic element comparatively and concludes with a summary of the major similarities and differences presented in Table 3.

The parallel presentation of the two datasets was intentionally designed to enable direct comparison between corresponding intrinsic elements. Both tables follow an identical organizational structure, beginning with theme, followed by characterization, plot, setting, point of view, language style, and moral message. This arrangement allows each analytical category in *Bumi Cinta* to be systematically compared with the corresponding category in *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih*, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of Habiburrahman El Shirazy's narrative consistency and variation.

Table 1. Intrinsic Elements of *Bumi Cinta*

NO.	INTRINSIC ELEMENT	EVIDENCE FROM THE NOVEL	ANALYTICAL DESCRIPTION AND THEORETICAL INTERPRETATION
1	Main Theme	The struggle of Muhammad Ayyas, an Indonesian Islamic boarding school graduate and postgraduate student, to preserve his faith and moral integrity while living in Moscow, a secular society that celebrates individual	According to Nurgiyantoro (2013), the theme represents the central meaning underlying the entire narrative. The principal theme of <i>Bumi Cinta</i> is the protagonist's spiritual struggle to maintain his faith within a

		freedom and is distant from religious values.	permissive environment, serving as the foundation for the development of all narrative events.
2	Secondary Themes	The search for identity and divine guidance experienced by non-Muslim characters such as Yelena and Linor; criticism of atheism and Zionism; and the historical tragedy of the Sabra and Shatila massacre.	Secondary themes appear only in particular parts of the narrative and reinforce the principal theme without replacing it (Nurgiyantoro, 2013). These complementary themes strengthen the novel's broader discussion of faith and spiritual perseverance.
3	Thematic Levels (Shipley)	The narrative encompasses physical struggles (Ayyas resisting sexual temptation), social interaction within Moscow society, psychological conflict, and ultimately spiritual submission to God.	Shipley's thematic classification, as cited by Nurgiyantoro (2013), categorizes themes into physical, organic, social, egoic, and divine levels. <i>Bumi Cinta</i> develops progressively toward the highest level, namely the spiritual or divine theme.
4	Major Character	Muhammad Ayyas, a graduate of the Islamic University of Madinah pursuing postgraduate research on Islamic history in Russia, is portrayed as intelligent, devout, and morally steadfast despite numerous temptations.	The protagonist is the character who receives the greatest narrative attention and maintains relationships with most other characters throughout the story (Nurgiyantoro, 2013). Ayyas fulfills these characteristics consistently.
5	Minor Characters	Yelena, Linor (Sofia), Dr. Anastasia Palazzo, Devid, Madame Ekaterina, Aunt Margareta, and Imam Hasan Sadulayev.	Supporting characters appear according to their relevance to the protagonist and contribute to the development of the plot without becoming the central focus of the narrative (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
6	Protagonist	Muhammad Ayyas embodies faith, patience, moral purity, and devotion, becoming the central figure who earns readers' sympathy.	A protagonist represents values that correspond with readers' expectations and moral ideals, thereby generating empathy and emotional support (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
7	Antagonist	Linor Lazarenko, a Mossad agent, orchestrates a conspiracy to frame Ayyas as a terrorist. In addition, the secular environment of Moscow itself functions as an antagonistic force challenging his faith.	Nurgiyantoro (2013) explains that antagonistic forces may be represented by individual characters, internal conflicts, or environmental conditions. In this novel, both Linor and the secular social environment function as antagonistic elements.
8	Flat and Round Characters	Ayyas is portrayed as a relatively flat character whose religious principles	Flat characters display a limited range of personality traits, whereas round

		remain consistent, whereas Linor is a round character whose personality develops from hostility toward Islam to spiritual transformation.	characters exhibit psychological complexity and personal development (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
9	Static and Dynamic Characters	Ayyas remains consistently faithful throughout the novel, whereas Yelena and Linor experience significant moral and spiritual transformation.	Dynamic characters undergo substantial changes during the narrative, whereas static characters remain essentially unchanged (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
10	Expository Characterization	The narrator explicitly introduces Dr. Anastasia Palazzo as an intelligent, attractive, conservative woman from Novgorod who firmly adheres to her principles and possesses proficiency in several foreign languages.	Expository (analytic) characterization presents a character directly through the narrator's description of physical appearance, personality, attitudes, and behavioral traits (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
11	Dramatic Characterization	Ayyas' unwavering faith is demonstrated through his actions and dialogue, such as lowering his gaze, reciting <i>istighfar</i> , and resisting Yelena's and Linor's temptations by recalling the story of Prophet Yusuf and Zulaikha.	Dramatic characterization reveals personality indirectly through dialogue, actions, thoughts, emotional responses, and interactions, allowing readers to infer character traits independently (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
12	Plot Structure	The novel employs a mixed plot. The main storyline follows Ayyas' research journey in Moscow, while several flashbacks reveal the histories of supporting characters, particularly Linor's Palestinian background.	Plot refers to a sequence of causally connected events. According to Nurgiyantoro (2013), a mixed plot combines chronological progression with flashback techniques to enrich narrative complexity.
13	Narrative Events	Significant events include Ayyas' arrival at Sheremetyevo Airport, his reluctance to share an apartment with two unrelated women, intellectual discussions with Anastasia, and Linor's conspiracy to implicate him in a terrorist bombing.	Narrative events represent transitions from one situation to another and function collectively to advance the storyline. Functional, connective, and referential events interact to maintain narrative coherence (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
14	Conflict	The novel combines Ayyas' internal struggle to preserve his faith against sexual temptation with external conflict arising from Linor's deliberate attempt to frame him as a terrorist.	Conflict constitutes the central dramatic force within fiction. Nurgiyantoro (2013) distinguishes between internal (psychological) and external (social or environmental) conflicts. <i>Bumi Cinta</i> integrates both forms effectively.
15	Climax	The narrative reaches its highest tension when Linor's	The climax represents the point at which narrative

		conspiracy is exposed, culminating in her shooting and the revelation of her true identity as Sofia, a Palestinian survivor of the Sabra and Shatila massacre.	tension reaches its highest intensity before moving toward resolution (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
16	Plot Principle: Plausibility	Ayyas' consistent resistance to temptation appears credible because his religious upbringing and educational background have established his moral character from the beginning of the story.	Plausibility refers to logical consistency within the fictional world, enabling readers to accept the events as believable according to the narrative's internal logic (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
17	Plot Principle: Suspense	Readers remain uncertain about Ayyas' fate after he is falsely accused of terrorism and anticipate whether Linor's scheme will succeed or ultimately fail.	Suspense maintains readers' curiosity by delaying the outcome of important events, thereby sustaining narrative engagement (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
18	Plot Principle: Surprise	The revelation that Linor is actually Sofia, a Palestinian orphan rather than Madame Ekaterina's biological daughter, constitutes an unexpected narrative twist that significantly alters readers' interpretations.	Surprise occurs when narrative developments deviate from readers' expectations, creating dramatic impact and enhancing the effectiveness of the plot (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
19	Setting (Place)	The story takes place in Moscow, Russia, including locations such as Smolenskaya Apartment, Moscow State University (MGU), Professor Tomskii's office, restaurants, medical centers, and the Moscow Cathedral Mosque.	Spatial setting refers to the physical locations where events occur. Detailed descriptions contribute to narrative realism and strengthen readers' immersion in the fictional world (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
20	Setting (Time)	The narrative unfolds during the snowy winter season, with regular transitions between morning, afternoon, evening, and night, closely associated with Islamic prayer times.	Temporal setting indicates when events occur and contributes to the chronological organization and realism of the narrative (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
21	Social and Cultural Setting	The novel portrays Moscow as a secular society characterized by permissive lifestyles, free relationships, organized crime, intelligence operations, and a Muslim minority striving to preserve Islamic values.	Social setting encompasses cultural practices, beliefs, customs, social relationships, and patterns of behavior that shape the narrative environment (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
22	Atmospheric Setting	The harsh winter climate of Moscow reinforces feelings of loneliness, tension, and psychological pressure experienced by Ayyas as he confronts temptation, conspiracy, and isolation.	Beyond establishing place and time, setting also creates emotional atmosphere that complements the psychological condition of the characters (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
23	Point of View	The novel is narrated from an	An omniscient third-person

		omniscient third-person perspective, enabling the narrator to reveal the thoughts, emotions, and motivations of Ayyas as well as other major characters.	narrator possesses complete knowledge of all characters and events, including internal thoughts and emotions (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
24	Language Style and Imagery	The narrative employs abundant figurative language, including personification, metaphor, simile, and hyperbole. Moscow is metaphorically portrayed as a city cloaked in white, while winter is personified as wearing a ceremonial robe.	Language style includes figurative language, rhetorical devices, and imagery that enhance both the aesthetic quality and expressive power of literary texts (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
25	Moral Message	The novel emphasizes the importance of preserving faith, moral integrity, patience, and devotion to Allah regardless of time or place, while affirming that genuine peace can only be attained through spiritual commitment.	Moral messages may be conveyed explicitly or implicitly and generally reflect ethical, religious, and social values intended to influence readers' attitudes and character development (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).

Table 1 demonstrates that *Bumi Cinta* possesses a comprehensive and coherent intrinsic structure. The novel is centered on the protagonist's struggle to preserve faith within a secular environment, supported by a carefully constructed combination of characterization, internal and external conflicts, a mixed plot, and a detailed depiction of Moscow as both a physical and symbolic setting. The integration of these intrinsic elements illustrates Habiburrahman El Shirazy's ability to align narrative structure with Islamic moral values. As suggested by Nurgiyantoro (2013), the interrelationship among intrinsic elements creates narrative unity, enabling the setting, characterization, plot, and moral message to function collectively in reinforcing the central theme of spiritual perseverance. These findings provide the analytical foundation for comparison with *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* presented in Table 2.

The twenty-five analytical units summarized in Table 1 indicate that Habiburrahman El Shirazy consistently integrates the secular setting of Moscow into almost every intrinsic element of the novel. The setting functions not merely as a physical background but also as a determinant of the protagonist's temptations, the nature of the conflicts, and the emotional atmosphere of the narrative. Consequently, the intrinsic elements are closely interconnected, supporting Nurgiyantoro's (2013) argument that narrative elements operate as an integrated system to establish the unity of a literary work.

Table 2. Intrinsic Elements of *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* (Volume 1)

NO.	INTRINSIC ELEMENT	EVIDENCE FROM THE NOVEL	ANALYTICAL DESCRIPTION AND THEORETICAL INTERPRETATION
1	Main Theme	The struggle of Khairul Azzam, an Al-Azhar University student in Cairo, to balance academic aspirations, family responsibilities, and personal relationships in accordance with Islamic teachings.	According to Nurgiyantoro (2013), the theme constitutes the central meaning that underlies the entire narrative. The novel's principal theme originates from realistic life experiences encountered by the protagonist.
2	Secondary Themes	Devotion of the eldest son to his family, friendship, and the	Secondary themes appear in particular sections of the

		lives of Indonesian students in Egypt who sell traditional Indonesian food to finance their education and support their families.	narrative and reinforce the primary theme without replacing it (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
3	Thematic Levels (Shipley)	The narrative explores physical struggle (Azzam's hard work), social relationships among Indonesian students in Egypt, and ultimately spiritual submission to God regarding destiny and marriage.	Based on Shipley's thematic classification cited by Nurgiyantoro (2013), the novel develops from physical and social dimensions toward the highest level, namely the divine or spiritual theme.
4	Major Character	Khairul Azzam, an Al-Azhar student renowned for his cooking skills and small business selling tempeh to finance his education and support his younger siblings.	The protagonist is the character who receives the greatest narrative attention and maintains relationships with most other characters throughout the story (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
5	Minor Characters	Eliana Pramesthi Alam, Mr. Ali, Ustadz Mujab, Furqon, Husna, and several supporting characters who appear at specific stages of the narrative.	Supporting characters contribute to plot development according to their relationship with the protagonist without becoming the central focus of the narrative (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
6	Protagonist	Khairul Azzam embodies diligence, honesty, responsibility, and religious devotion, making him the primary object of readers' sympathy.	A protagonist represents values consistent with readers' moral expectations and therefore becomes the central figure who receives empathy and support (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
7	Antagonistic Force	The principal opposition originates from internal struggles and situational circumstances rather than a single antagonistic character. Anna's engagement to another man becomes the primary obstacle to Azzam's aspirations.	Nurgiyantoro (2013) explains that antagonistic forces may emerge from individual characters, psychological conflicts, or situational conditions. Internal conflict predominates in this novel.
8	Flat and Round Characters	Azzam is portrayed as a round character whose personality reveals multiple dimensions, including perseverance, compassion, emotional vulnerability, and spiritual maturity. Most supporting characters remain relatively flat.	Round characters display psychological complexity and development, whereas flat characters possess relatively limited and consistent traits (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
9	Static and Dynamic Characters	Azzam develops throughout the narrative as disappointment in love strengthens his maturity and reinforces his commitment to family responsibilities.	Dynamic characters undergo significant personal transformation, whereas static characters remain largely unchanged throughout the narrative

10	Expository Characterization	The narrator directly introduces Eliana as the intelligent daughter of the Indonesian Ambassador, fluent in English and French and well known through Egyptian television appearances.	(Nurgiyantoro, 2013). Expository characterization explicitly describes characters through direct narrative explanation (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
11	Dramatic Characterization	Azzam's moral integrity is revealed through his behavior and internal reflections, particularly when he resists temptation by reciting <i>istighfar</i> and redirecting his thoughts toward religious values.	Dramatic characterization presents personality indirectly through dialogue, behavior, thoughts, and emotional reactions (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
12	Plot Structure	The story follows a chronological sequence tracing Azzam's life in Egypt, beginning with cultural activities, his intention to propose to Anna, emotional disappointment, and his eventual decision to prioritize family obligations.	Plot consists of causally connected events organized into a logical narrative sequence (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
13	Narrative Events	Significant events include Azzam's meeting with Eliana in Alexandria, his preparation of grilled fish, his proposal plans through Ustadz Mujab, and Husna's letter requesting financial assistance for Sarah's surgery.	Narrative events function as transitions between situations that collectively advance the storyline (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
14	Conflict	The primary conflict is internal, reflecting Azzam's struggle between his desire for marriage and his responsibility as the eldest son, intensified by Anna's engagement to another man.	Internal conflict dominates the narrative, illustrating psychological struggles rather than direct confrontation with external antagonists (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
15	Climax	The climax occurs when Azzam learns that Anna has accepted another proposal, compelling him to relinquish his hopes and devote himself to his family's future.	The climax represents the highest point of narrative tension before the movement toward resolution (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
16	Plot Principle: Plausibility	Azzam's decision to prioritize family responsibilities is credible because his role as the family's primary provider has been consistently established since the beginning of the narrative.	Plausibility ensures that narrative events remain logically acceptable within the fictional world (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
17	Plot Principle: Suspense	Readers remain uncertain whether Azzam will succeed in proposing to Anna, as information concerning her circumstances is revealed	Suspense maintains readers' curiosity by delaying important narrative outcomes (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).

		gradually.	
18	Plot Principle: Surprise	The revelation that Anna has already become engaged unexpectedly overturns both Azzam's expectations and those of the readers.	Surprise introduces unforeseen developments that strengthen the dramatic impact of the plot (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
19	Setting (Place)	The novel is primarily set in Alexandria—including Cleopatra Beach and Al Haram Hotel—and Cairo, the center of Indonesian student life in Egypt.	Spatial setting establishes the physical environment and contributes to narrative realism (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
20	Setting (Time)	The story unfolds during the transition toward spring, accompanied by changing times of day and Islamic prayer schedules.	Temporal setting situates narrative events within a coherent chronological framework (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
21	Social and Cultural Setting	The novel portrays the lives of Indonesian students in Egypt, Islamic religious traditions, entrepreneurial activities, and intercultural interactions between Indonesian and Egyptian societies.	Social setting encompasses customs, beliefs, cultural practices, and patterns of social interaction that shape the narrative context (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
22	Atmospheric Setting	The peaceful sunset over Alexandria creates a tranquil and religious atmosphere that reflects Azzam's spiritual contemplation.	Atmospheric setting reinforces characters' emotional states while strengthening the narrative mood (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
23	Point of View	The novel employs an omniscient third-person narrator who has access to Azzam's thoughts, emotions, and internal reflections.	Omniscient narration enables comprehensive presentation of characters' internal experiences (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
24	Language Style and Imagery	The narrative contains rich figurative language and imagery, including metaphors portraying nature as glorifying God and comparisons likening female beauty to sapphires and blooming white roses.	Figurative language and imagery enhance aesthetic expression and strengthen the emotional impact of literary narratives (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).
25	Moral Message	The novel emphasizes diligence, honesty, responsibility toward family, and complete trust in God when facing destiny, particularly concerning marriage and personal aspirations.	Moral messages communicate ethical, religious, and social values either explicitly or implicitly throughout the narrative (Nurgiyantoro, 2013).

Table 2 demonstrates that *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* also exhibits a coherent and comprehensive intrinsic structure. The narrative centers on balancing education, family responsibility, and love within an Islamic ethical framework. Unlike *Bumi Cinta*, where external temptations dominate the protagonist's struggle, Khairul Azzam's character develops primarily through internal conflict and personal responsibility. The religious setting of Cairo functions not as a source of ideological opposition but as an environment that nurtures perseverance, discipline, and spiritual growth. Consequently, the intrinsic elements collectively

emphasize moral maturity and responsibility rather than resistance to a hostile social environment. This structural distinction becomes more evident in the subsequent comparative discussion of both novels.

Comparison of the Intrinsic Elements

Theme

Both novels share a common central theme of love guided by Islamic values. In both narratives, the protagonists strive to preserve their faith and moral integrity while confronting personal challenges. However, the context in which faith is tested differs significantly. In *Bumi Cinta*, Muhammad Ayyas faces external temptations within the secular and permissive environment of Moscow, where his religious commitment is continuously challenged. In contrast, *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* portrays Khairul Azzam's struggle through family responsibilities, educational commitments, and marriage within the religious setting of Cairo. Although both novels ultimately emphasize devotion to God, they approach spiritual struggle from different narrative perspectives.

According to Shipley's thematic classification, as cited by Nurgiyantoro (2013), both novels develop toward the highest thematic level—the divine theme. Nevertheless, *Bumi Cinta* emphasizes physical and psychological struggles before reaching spiritual submission, whereas *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* prioritizes social responsibility before arriving at the same religious conclusion. This demonstrates the author's ability to express similar ideological values through different thematic developments.

Characterization

The protagonists of both novels are portrayed as devout young Muslims who consistently uphold Islamic principles. Nevertheless, their character development differs considerably. Muhammad Ayyas remains relatively static throughout the narrative, maintaining unwavering faith despite numerous temptations. Conversely, Khairul Azzam undergoes significant personal growth as emotional disappointment strengthens his maturity and commitment to family responsibilities.

Differences also appear in the supporting characters. In *Bumi Cinta*, female characters such as Yelena and Linor experience substantial spiritual transformation, evolving from disbelief toward religious faith. In contrast, supporting characters in *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* primarily function to reinforce Azzam's personal journey rather than experiencing dramatic psychological development themselves.

Habiburrahman El Shirazy employs both expository and dramatic characterization in both novels. While the narrator directly introduces important characters through explicit descriptions, the protagonists' moral qualities are primarily revealed through actions, dialogue, and internal reflection. This consistent narrative technique illustrates the author's distinctive approach to character construction.

Plot

The two novels employ different plot structures despite both being driven by causally connected events. *Bumi Cinta* adopts a mixed plot, combining chronological progression with flashbacks that reveal the backgrounds of several characters, particularly Linor. In contrast, *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* follows a predominantly chronological plot that traces Azzam's educational, professional, and emotional journey. Conflict also differs substantially between the two narratives. *Bumi Cinta* integrates both internal and external conflicts, combining psychological struggles with physical threats and political conspiracies. Meanwhile, *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* focuses primarily on internal conflict, portraying Azzam's emotional struggle between personal aspirations and family obligations.

Although both novels successfully maintain suspense by gradually revealing important information, the nature of surprise differs. *Bumi Cinta* presents dramatic revelations involving hidden identities and terrorism, whereas *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* relies on emotionally driven surprises, particularly Anna's engagement to another man. Consequently, the climax of *Bumi Cinta* is action-oriented, while the climax of *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* is primarily psychological.

Events and Conflict

Major events in *Bumi Cinta* largely emerge from Ayyas' interaction with an unfamiliar secular environment, including his accommodation with two unrelated women, intellectual debates, and false accusations of terrorism. These events require him to defend his religious principles under continuous external pressure.

In contrast, the central events of *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* revolve around Azzam's efforts to finance his education, support his family, and pursue marriage responsibly. As a result, conflicts remain largely internal and emotional rather than externally imposed.

This distinction highlights two different narrative strategies. *Bumi Cinta* intensifies dramatic tension through the combination of external danger and internal temptation, whereas *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* develops emotional tension through personal sacrifice, responsibility, and acceptance of destiny.

Setting

Perhaps the most significant difference between the novels lies in their settings. *Bumi Cinta* is situated in Moscow, Russia, where winter landscapes, secular lifestyles, and cultural diversity create an atmosphere of isolation and moral challenge. Conversely, *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* takes place in Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt, where Islamic traditions and Indonesian student communities provide a supportive religious environment.

These contrasting settings directly influence the protagonists' spiritual experiences. In *Bumi Cinta*, practicing religious values requires resistance against a permissive social environment, reinforcing the theme of spiritual perseverance. In *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih*, religious practice forms an integral part of everyday life, shifting the narrative emphasis toward responsibility, patience, and personal maturity.

Beyond serving as physical locations, the settings also function symbolically. The cold, snowy atmosphere of Moscow reflects Ayyas' psychological pressure and loneliness, whereas the peaceful landscapes of Alexandria complement Azzam's spiritual reflection and emotional tranquility. These findings support Nurgiyantoro's (2013) view that setting functions not merely as background but as an integral narrative element shaping atmosphere, conflict, and characterization.

Table 3. Comparative Summary of the Intrinsic Elements

INTRINSIC ELEMENT	BUMI CINTA	KETIKA CINTA BERTASBIH
Theme	Preserving faith and moral purity within a secular and permissive environment (Moscow).	Balancing education, family responsibility, and love within a religious environment (Cairo).
Characterization	Muhammad Ayyas is portrayed as a static and morally steadfast protagonist; supporting female characters experience significant spiritual transformation.	Khairul Azzam is a dynamic and psychologically developing protagonist whose maturity increases through personal sacrifice.
Plot	Mixed plot combining chronological progression with flashbacks.	Predominantly chronological plot following the protagonist's life journey.
Setting	Moscow, Russia; snowy winter; secular society and Muslim minority.	Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt; religious environment and Indonesian student community.
Point of View	Omniscient third-person narrator.	Omniscient third-person narrator.
Language Style	Rich use of metaphor, personification, hyperbole, and Islamic expressions.	Rich figurative language, religious imagery, and descriptive symbolism.
Moral Message	Maintaining faith and moral integrity despite temptation and adversity.	Hard work, honesty, family responsibility, and trust in God's destiny.

Both novels employ an omniscient third-person point of view, enabling the narrator to reveal the protagonists' thoughts, emotions, and spiritual struggles in depth. This narrative perspective effectively supports the exploration of moral consciousness, allowing readers to understand Ayyas' internal conflict in resisting temptation within the secular environment of Moscow and Azzam's emotional struggle in balancing love, education, and family responsibilities in Cairo. As argued by Nurgiyantoro (2013), point of view functions not only as a narrative technique but also as a means of controlling readers' access to the characters' psychological experiences. In addition, both novels consistently employ figurative language, religious expressions, and descriptive imagery to reinforce their spiritual atmosphere. However, *Bumi Cinta* presents more argumentative dialogues concerning faith, atheism, and Islamic values,

whereas *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* integrates religious messages into everyday conversations and personal experiences, demonstrating the author's flexibility in adapting language to different narrative contexts. Despite differences in narrative style, both novels convey a consistent moral message emphasizing faith, moral integrity, and complete trust in God's will. *Bumi Cinta* highlights spiritual perseverance in confronting temptation within a secular society, while *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* focuses on responsibility, diligence, patience, and acceptance of destiny within a religious environment. These findings indicate that Habiburrahman El Shirazy consistently maintains his Islamic worldview while varying the intrinsic structure of each novel. Similarities are evident in the theme, point of view, language style, and moral message, whereas differences emerge in setting, characterization, plot, and conflict. This comparative analysis supports Nurgiyantoro's (2013) structural theory that intrinsic elements function as an integrated narrative system and demonstrates the author's ability to express consistent ideological values through diverse narrative strategies, thereby enriching contemporary Indonesian Islamic fiction.

CONCLUSION

This study compared the intrinsic elements of *Bumi Cinta* and *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy using a structural literary approach. The findings reveal that both novels share several fundamental similarities, including the central theme of love guided by Islamic values, the portrayal of principled Muslim protagonists, the use of an omniscient third-person point of view, rich religious imagery, and moral messages emphasizing faith, sincerity, and submission to God. These similarities reflect the author's consistent literary vision in promoting Islamic values through contemporary fiction.

Despite these shared characteristics, the novels differ substantially in their narrative construction. *Bumi Cinta* develops its story through a secular setting, a mixed plot, a relatively static protagonist, and conflicts dominated by external temptation and ideological challenges. In contrast, *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* employs a religious setting, a chronological plot, a dynamic protagonist, and conflicts centered on personal responsibility, family obligations, and emotional maturity. These differences demonstrate Habiburrahman El Shirazy's ability to maintain a consistent ideological perspective while adapting narrative structures to different social and cultural contexts.

This study contributes to comparative literary criticism by illustrating how similar religious values can be expressed through diverse intrinsic structures. However, the analysis is limited to intrinsic elements and two selected novels. Future studies are encouraged to incorporate extrinsic approaches, such as literary sociology, literary psychology, or cultural studies, and to examine a broader range of the author's works to provide a more comprehensive understanding of his literary style and intellectual contribution.

REFERENCES

- Abrams, M. H., & Harpham, G. G. (2015). *A glossary of literary terms* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Anita, A., Wardarita, R., & Rukiyah, S. (2023). Deiksis dalam novel *Bumi Cinta* karya Habiburrahman El Shirazy. *Jurnal Bindo Sastra*, 6(2), 129–137.
- Bassnett, S. (2014). *Comparative literature: A critical introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Damono, S. D. (2009). *Sastra bandingan*. Editum.
- Dediyansyah. (2024). Analisis kohesi gramatikal dan kohesi leksikal dalam novel *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* karya Habiburrahman El Shirazy. *Sandibasa: Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*.
- Efendi, A. (2012). Realitas profetik dalam novel *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* karya Habiburrahman El-Shirazy. *Litera*, 11(1), 72–84. <https://doi.org/10.21831/ltr.v11i1.1148>
- Fatmawati, F. (2025). Dimensi liberasi dalam novel *Bumi Cinta* karya Habiburrahman El Shirazy. *Parole: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*.
- Kadir, N., & Dinar, S. S. (2023). Gaya bahasa dalam novel *Bumi Cinta* karya Habiburrahman El Shirazy. *Jurnal Bastra (Bahasa dan Sastra)*, 8(2), 292–299.
- Nurgiyantoro, B. (2013). *Teori pengkajian fiksi*. Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Rokhmansyah, A. (2014). *Studi dan pengkajian sastra: Perkenalan awal terhadap ilmu sastra*. Graha Ilmu.
- Sopiyahwati, S., Bachruddin, S., & Goziyah, G. (2024). Koherensi dalam novel *Bumi Cinta* karya

- Habiburrahman El-Shirazy. *Disastra: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*, 3(1), 1–10.
- Stanton, R. (2012). *Teori fiksi* (Sugihastuti, Trans.). Pustaka Pelajar. (Karya asli diterbitkan 1965)
- Wandira, W., Olang, Y., & Suryadi, T. (2017). Tinjauan sosiologi sastra dalam novel *Bumi Cinta* karya Habiburrahman El Shirazy. *Jurnal Kansasi*, 2(2), 67–72.