

Islamic Literature and Al-Iltizam (Commitment) in the Short Story “Al-Kabus” from the Anthology Al-Kabus wa Qasas Ukhra by Najib Al-Kailani

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Abstract

Arabic literature has developed since the Jahiliyah period and continued until the emergence of Islam. Then, Islamic literature was born which played an important role in conveying Islamic values and teachings. This study discusses one of the concepts in Islamic literature initiated by Najib al-Kailani in his book *Madkhal Ila al-Adab al-Islami*, namely al-Iltizam (Commitment). The purpose of this study is to reveal how Najib al-Kailani, a figure who initiated the concept of al-Iltizam in Islamic literature, applies his own concept in building stories, characters, and messages conveyed in his work in the form of a short story entitled “al-Kabus”. This study is a library research with a qualitative descriptive type, which focuses on the analysis of narratives in the literary work. The results of this study indicate that the concept of Al-Iltizam or commitment in Islamic literature has a very important role in forming literary works that are not only aesthetic but also meaningful, and contain Islamic teachings and values in them. Thus, al iltizam in Islamic literature can be a powerful means to spread moral and spiritual messages, as well as to shape the character of a better society.

Keywords

Al-Iltizam (Commitment), Islamic Literature, Al-Kabus, Najib Al-Kailani

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A. Introduction

Arabic literature had already emerged among the people during the Jahiliyyah period. This can be seen from the discussion of how Arabic literature was compiled based on the period that began before Islam ('Asr al-Jahili).¹ Arabic literature was used by Arabs in poetry, speeches, and in buying and selling. And this tradition continued until the Arab region was Islamized. This interaction caused Islam and literature to spread widely in the Middle East. This shows that many people enjoyed literature as an art form.² Literature is the creative work of an individual. Literature itself is an art form in which language is the medium. In essence, literature is a reality of life that is expressed by writers in the form of literature.³ Arabic literature is one of many things in the world that has developed over the years. Arabic literature, which began in the pre-prophetic era and focused on worldly matters, has now become a means of promoting Islam and contributing to the development of civilization.⁴ In addition, Arabic literature also serves as a means of spreading Islamic teachings, shaping religious identity, and strengthening cultural ties among Muslims.⁵

Arabic literature is the most valuable product for the Arab people, containing many historical heritages for the Arabs, traditions, customs, culture, and various other aspects of life. It cannot be denied that the development of Arabic literature existed even before the advent of Islam.⁶ Even the position of literary figures in Arab society is also considered important. This is because, if a group has a poet, it is regarded as a source of pride. A poet can recite their poetry, and if it is appreciated by many, it will elevate the status of their tribe.⁷ As mentioned earlier, literature has been known since the Jahiliyyah period, which is the period before the arrival of Islam. Therefore, literature has certain characteristics that correspond to the location and time of its creation. In general, the development of literature can be divided into five phases: Jahiliyyah literature, the Sadrul Islam and Umayyad periods, the Abbasid period, the late Abbasid and Turkish periods, and modern or contemporary literature to the present day. Because the Jahiliyyah people always used literature as their everyday language, literature developed rapidly during the Jahiliyyah period. Even when there were wars between tribes,

¹ Qois Azizah Bin Has and Muhammad Zaky Sya'bani, “Integrasi Sastra Arab Dan Islam Serta Pengaruhnya Terhadap Sastrawan Muslim Modern,” *Al-Fathin Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* Vol. 3 No. (2020).

² Has and Sya'bani.

³ Lala Lailatul Badriyah, Rijal Mahdi, and Ahmad Fadhel Syakir Hidayat, “Analisis Struktur Novel Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck Dan Majnun Laila (Kajian Sastra Bandingan),” *Borneo Journal of Language and Education* 3, no. 1 (2023): 1–14.

⁴ Mukhtar I Miolo et al., “Perkembangan Sastra Arab Jahiliyyah Hingga Abbasiyah Serta Perannya Terhadap Peradaban Dunia,” *A Jamiy : Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 12, no. 1 (2023): 36, <https://doi.org/10.31314/ajamiy.12.1.36-53.2023>.

⁵ Niko Rifana, “Peran Sastra Arab Dalam Pengembangan Budaya Dan Agama Islam : Dari Masa Pra-Islam Hingga Era Modern,” *Siwayang Journal* 3, no. 1 (2024): 21–26.

⁶ Saddam Reza Hamidi and Furna Khubbata Lillah, “Sejarah Dan Perkembangan Sastra Arab Kawasan Asia Barat (Arab Saudi, Bahrain, Irak Dan Iran),” *Agastya: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Pembelajarannya* 13, no. 2 (2023): 163–82, <https://doi.org/10.25273/ajsp.v13i2.16001>.

⁷ Roisah Fathiyatur Rohmah, “Perkembangan Sastra Masa Umayyah Dan Abbasiyah Serta Munculnya Kritik Sastra Manhaji,” *Ihya Al-Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 1, no. 2 (2022): 17–27.

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they fought with literature. So, it is not surprising that literature flourished during that period.⁸

During the time of Sadrul Islam, literature continued to be created and developed. However, the progress that occurred during the Jahiliyyah period was not as rapid as the progress that occurred during this period. During this period, the Quran was revealed, the Qur'an is the holy book of the Muslims, believed to have been sent by Allah to Prophet Muhammad as the greatest miracle. As the final holy book, the Qur'an is meant to serve as guidance for all of humanity until the end of time, not just for the Arab people among whom it was revealed.⁹ And many poems written during the Jahiliyyah period were abandoned because they were not in accordance with Islamic law. This shows that Arabic literature underwent changes since the arrival of Islam in Arabia. Arabic literature no longer focused on worldly matters or desires. Instead, it changed into a message addressed to humanity.¹⁰ During this period, writers were captivated and distracted by the Qur'an. They were more interested in the literary values contained in the Qur'an, and they preferred to memorize it and apply the values contained therein. Even writers who did not have time to write poetry were more interested in preaching to Muslims. Therefore, literature experienced a decline during this period.¹¹ The miracle of the Qur'an in terms of linguistic beauty is indicated by the fact that Arab poets are unable even to comprehend, let alone produce poetry comparable to the Qur'an.¹²

During the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, literature experienced rapid development. Society began to progress during the Umayyad period and reached its peak during the Abbasid period.¹³ The Abbasid period, which lasted from 750 to 1258 M, is considered the peak of Islamic civilization and is referred to as the “golden age” in various fields of knowledge and art. During this period, Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid Dynasty, became an intellectual center respected throughout the Islamic and Western worlds. The Abbasid caliphs supported the development of knowledge, including literature, which ultimately resulted in significant progress in literacy and education in the Arab world.¹⁴ The Abbasid period made a significant contribution to Islamic civilization, particularly in the field of literature, namely Arabic literature, which experienced significant progress. The Abbasid government viewed Arabic literature as “Al-adab al-Islami,” or Islamic

⁸ “Sastra Arab Di Masa Abbasiyah Awal,” accessed November 20, 2024, <https://faristinichsan.blogspot.com/2012/05/sastra-arab-di-masa-abbasiyah-awal.html>.

⁹ Maryam Nur Annisa et al., “Semantic Analysis of The Relation of The Meaning of The Words Human and Jinn in The Qur'an,” *Borneo Journal of Language and Education* 3, no. 2 (2023): 122–34.

¹⁰ Miolo et al., “Perkembangan Sastra Arab Jahiliyyah Hingga Abbasiyah Serta Perannya Terhadap Peradaban Dunia.”

¹¹ Roisah Fathiyatur Rohmah, “Pengaruh Pemerintahan Terhadap Kritik Sastra Arab Masa Umayyah Dan Abbasiyah,” *'A Jamiy: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 10, no. 2 (2021): 271–83.

¹² Puji Sumeh Pangestu et al., “Eksistensi Hiperbola Dan Personifikasi Dalam Surah Yasin (Studi Balaghah: Bayan Dan Badi’),” *Borneo Journal of Language and Education* 5, no. 2 (2025): 187–201.

¹³ Rohmah, “Pengaruh Pemerintahan Terhadap Kritik Sastra Arab Masa Umayyah Dan Abbasiyah.”

¹⁴ Muhammad Izzat Ramadhan and Andi Abdul Hamzah, “Abad Keemasan Islam : Periode Abbasiyah Sebagai Zaman Keemasan Sastra Arab,” *Ajamiy: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 14, no. 2 (2025): 636–53.

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literature, which was a focus of attention during their reign.¹⁵ Because essentially, religion and literature are two things that are interconnected. A literary work will be more meaningful and beneficial if it contains lessons within it. Thus, the connection between literature and the values of religious teachings is often referred to as a moral message. The relationship of literature with Islam itself is evident in the content of the Quran, which has provided much inspiration for scholars and writers at that time to write books and literary works.¹⁶

According to Brighsy, Islamic literature is a beautiful artistic expression of Muslim writers about their life experiences through an Islamic perspective.¹⁷ Meanwhile, according to Al-Basha, Islamic literature is an expression that focuses on how life, the universe, and humanity influence the writer's conscience, based on an Islamic understanding of God and His creation.¹⁸ Meanwhile, Najib al-Kailani defines Islamic literature as works produced by Muslim writers that describe their views on humanity, life, and the universe based on Islamic teachings. This literature is not limited to a specific time or place, but is universal in nature and encompasses all literary works produced by Muslim writers, both in Islamic countries and outside the Islamic world, in various languages.¹⁹ Islamic literature is one of the genres of literature, which is a part of literature in general, namely an art that uses language as a medium, combining reality and imagination, and has characteristics or categories with an Islamic nuance.²⁰

The term Islamic Literature emerged as a call to incorporate Islamic values into all aspects of Muslim life, such as culture, thought, science, politics, economics, and society. This term is also used to describe a type of literature that departs from an Islamic perspective or vision, and aims to convey the suffering and hopes of Muslims in particular and humanity in general. In addition, these literary works aim to organize the creative experiences of Muslim writers using beautiful, artistic, and interesting language styles, as well as to spread messages of thought and feeling that are in accordance with Islamic teachings in various rich and diverse literary forms and styles.²¹ It is called Islamic literature if a literary work has the following characteristics: literature aimed at increasing faith in Allah SWT, literature that is bound by Islamic religious values, does not neglect Islamic aspects, and literature that can build the soul of both the author and its readers.²²

¹⁵ Abdul Halim, “Adab (Sastra) Pada Masa Daulah Abbasiah,” *Parepare: Istiqra’* 5, no. 1 (2017): 78–82.

¹⁶ Aulia Ridhatul Hanifah et al., “Pandangan Islam Terhadap Ilmu Sastra,” *Jurnal Religion: Jurnal Agama, Sosial, Dan Budaya* 1 (2023): 125–43.

¹⁷ Muhammad Hasan Brighsy, *Al-Adab Al-Islami, Ushuluhi Wa Simatuhu* (Beirut: Muassasah ar-Risalah, 1997), 114.

¹⁸ Abdurrahman Ra’fat Al-Basha, *Nahwa Madzhab Islami Fi An-Naqd Wa Al-Adab* (Ar-Riyadh: Mathabi’ Jami’ah al-Imam Muhammad bin Sa’ud Al-Islamiyah, 1985), 113.

¹⁹ Najib Al-Kailani, *Madkhal Ilā Al-Adab Al-Islāmī* (Qatar: Maṭābi’ al-Duhā al-Ḥadīthah, 1987), 26.

²⁰ Muhammad Saukani and Lukmanul Hakim, “Analisis Afinitas Sastra (Perbandingan Puisi ‘Mahallul Qiyam’ Simtudduror Dan Barzanji),” *Al-Fathin* 7 (2024): 37–58.

²¹ Rabih b. Khawiyya, “الأدب الإسلامي قراءة في المصطلح والمفهوم,” n.d., <https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fdergipark.org.tr%2Fen%2Fdownload%2Farticle-file%2F654693&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>.

²² Dian Rizky Azhari, M Yoesoef, and Turita Indah Setyani, “Mendiskusikan Definisi Sastra Islam Dan Sastra Islami Dalam Kesusastraan Indonesia Masa Kini Discussing the Definition of Islam Literature and Islamic Literature in Indonesian Literature Today Pendahuluan Penyebutan Novel Islami Mulai Digunakan Secara Mas,” *Diglosia: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pengajarannya* 5 (2022): 763–78.

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Abu al-Hasan al-Nadwi (1914-2001) became a leading figure in this call. As mentioned by al-Basha, al-Nadwi was the first person to write about and give serious attention to this idea. When he was appointed a member of the Arab Academy of Sciences in Damascus, he presented a paper calling for the importance of developing Islamic literature and paying attention to it. Thus, al-Nadwi is considered one of the main pioneers who first raised this idea. Apart from al-Nadwi, there was also Sayyid Qutub who called for the existence of Islamic literature in his book entitled *at-Tarikh Fikrah wa Minhaj*. He was followed by Najib al-Kailani in his book entitled *al-Islamiyyah wa al-Mazahib al-Adabiyyah*.²³ In addition, Najib al-Kailani also wrote a special book that serves as an introduction to Islamic literature, entitled *Madkhal Ila al-Adab al-Islami*.

In this study, the researcher wishes to discuss one of the concepts in Islamic literature explained by Najib al-Kailani in his book *Madkhal Ila al-Adab al-Islami*, namely Al-Iltizam. Najib al-Kailani states that Islamic literature is responsible literature, and Islamic responsibility is (Al-Iltizam) or a commitment that comes from the heart of a believer and his faith. This commitment is deeply rooted in the Book of Allah that has come (in clear Arabic language).²⁴ Based on this definition of al-Iltizam, the author concludes that it is consistent with the definition of Islamic literature mentioned at the beginning of this book, namely that according to Najib al-Kailani, there are seven criteria that define Islamic literature, namely Beautiful and influential artistic expression, Originating from a faithful soul, Translated from life, humanity, and the universe, in accordance with the principles of Muslim faith, providing entertainment and benefits, stirring emotions and thoughts, and encouraging certain attitudes and actions. Al-Iltizam is born from a faithful soul, namely a Muslim who has complete faith in Islam in his heart. And this al-Iltizam is a responsibility for the author towards the message conveyed in his work, which must be in line with Islamic values. Najib al-Kailani emphasizes that this commitment is not merely an external obligation, but also stems from a Muslim's deep belief in the teachings of the Qur'an.

There are several previous studies found on topics or studies that are almost similar to this study, both covering formal and material objects in this study. Here are some of the studies found:

First, a study conducted by Ahmad Badrus Sholihin (2021) entitled *Transformation of Islamic Values in the Madurese Version of the Poem of Prophet Yusuf: Islamic Literary Analysis*. This study aims to examine how Islamic values have changed in Madurese society and among people who speak the Madurese language. The author reveals three main points from the Madurese Poem of Prophet Yusuf using Najib Kailani's theory of Islamic literature. First, Madurese society sees the concept of the ideal Muslim in the symbolism of the protagonist (al-Bathal). Second, they are committed (al-Iltizam) to internalizing Islamic values, and third, they are bound (al-Irtibath) to Islamic values.²⁵

Second, research conducted by Lateef Onireti Ibraheem (2018) entitled *Al-Iltizam al-Islami Fi asy-Syi'r al-Arabi Fi Bilad Yorba Nigeria*. This study states that

²³ Al-Basha, *Nahwa Madzhab Islami Fi An-Naqd Wa Al-Adab*, 113.

²⁴ Al-Kailani, *Madkhal Ila Al-Adab Al-Islami*, 32.

²⁵ Ahmad Badrus Sholihin, "Transformasi Nilai-Nilai Islam Dalam Syair Nabi Yusuf Versi Bahasa Madura," *Al'Adalah* 24, no. 2 (2021): 77–92, <https://doi.org/10.35719/aladalah.v24i2.73>.

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consistency (commitment) is an important aspect of Islamic literary thought, which is a type of literature that creatively presents the Creator, the Universe, and Humankind in accordance with Islamic teachings and values. The purpose of this study is to examine the level of compliance (commitment) of Yoruba poets to Islamic teachings and norms in their works.²⁶

Third, research conducted by Yaqub Alhaji Abdullahi (2018) entitled *Al-Adib al-Muslim wa Qadhiyah al-Iltizam Fi al-Adab*. This study states that a writer is shaped by various influences, such as social, religious, economic, and political factors. Writers are merely a reflection of their backgrounds, which is why in many cases, when they write, they appear to be committed to certain beliefs, ideologies, and groups. Thus, the issue of commitment to certain beliefs and ideologies cannot be ignored in literary works. This study aims to provide an overview of what is expected of a Muslim in his work. To achieve this goal, this study focuses on the term commitment in literary works, the commitment of a Muslim writer, his views on Allah, humans, life, and the world.²⁷

Fourth, research conducted by Hidayatun Ulfa (2019) entitled *Principles of Politeness in the Short Stories “Al-Garib” and “Al-Jababirah” in the Anthology Al-Kabus by Najib al-Kailani*. This study investigates the types of politeness principles found in the Arabic language of the short stories “al-Garib” and “al-Jababirah” found in the anthology al-Kabus by Najib al-Kailani. In general, politeness principles regulate how speakers and addressees communicate to respect and appreciate each other. This study shows that the principles of politeness are applied in the delivery of the short stories “al-Garib” and “al-Jababirah” in the anthology al-Kabus by Najib al-Kailani. There are several utterances that follow the tact maxim, the generosity maxim, and the generosity maxim.²⁸

Based on the above statement, it can be stated that the purpose of this study is to reveal how Najib al-Kailani, a figure who initiated the concept of al-Iltizam in Islamic literature, applied his own concept in constructing the story, characters, and messages conveyed in his work, a short story entitled “al-Kabus”. In addition, the researcher will identify and examine the elements of Islamic literature found in the short story, so that the story can become a medium for da'wah or the delivery of Islamic teachings and values.

B. Method

This research is library research with a qualitative descriptive research design. Qualitative descriptive research is a study aimed at describing and explaining certain phenomena based on non-numerical data. The data used consist of words, narratives, and interpretations, thus not focusing on numbers or statistical analysis as the main data.²⁹ This research focuses on narratives or words generated from observations of the short story “al-Kabus” by Najib al-Kailani, which is the material

²⁶ Lateef Onireti Ibraheem, “Al-Iltizam Al-Islami Fi Asy-Syi'r Al-Arabi Fi Bilad Yorba Nigeria,” *El Harakah Jurnal Budaya Islam* Vol. 20, N (2018).

²⁷ Yaqub Alhaji Abdullahi, “Al-Adib Al-Muslim Wa Qadhiyah Al-Iltizam Fi Al-Adab,” *El Harakah Jurnal Budaya Islam* Vol. 20, N (2018): 267–85.

²⁸ Hidayatun Ulfa, “Prinsip Kesopanan Pada Cerita Pendek ‘Al-Gharib’ Dan ‘Al-Jababirah’ Dalam Antologi Al-Kabus Karya Najib Al-Kailani,” *Diwan Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra* 5, no. 1 (2019): 12–26.

²⁹ Muhammad Ramdhan, *Metode Penelitian*, ed. Aidil Amin Effendy (Surabaya: Cipta Media Nusantara (CMN), 2021).

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object in this research. The primary data source is the anthology al-Kabus wa Qasas Ukhra by Najib al-Kailani. The data consists of a narrative in the short story “al-Kabus” which contains the concept of al-Iltizam (Commitment).

The observation method with note-taking technique was used as the data collection technique in this study. The observation method is a method used in the provision or collection of data whereby researchers observe the use or behavior in language learning.³⁰ Meanwhile, note-taking is an advanced technique in the listening method to facilitate data recording before analysis in the next stage.

C. Findings and Discussion

Biography of Najib al-Kailani

Najib al-Kailani was born into a religious family in 1913 in the city of Syaesyabah in Egypt. World War II broke out when he was eight years old, disrupting life in his village, especially the economy. The farmers sincerely surrendered all their crops for the war effort against the British. As a result, the people became even poorer, and robbery, theft, and gambling also increased. Najib al-Kailani witnessed with his own eyes how his family patiently and trustingly faced and lived their lives in these circumstances.³¹

During this period of crisis, Najib al-Kailani began his studies at Kuttub before continuing on to Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in Sinbath and Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Thantha, Egypt. He then continued his education at the Faculty of Medicine at Fuad University (now Cairo University) in 1951. Najib al-Kailani was brought to trial in 1955 for his active political involvement in the Muslim Brotherhood movement. He was sentenced to ten years, and after serving three and a half years, he was released. He completed his studies after leaving prison. He was imprisoned again for 1.5 years in 1960. He was transferred from one prison to another for nearly five years. He experienced various forms of threats and torture during his imprisonment.³²

Najib al-Kailani worked as a doctor at the Egyptian Ministry of Transportation and Railways after graduating from medical school. He then left Egypt in 1967 to work as a doctor in Kuwait and later in Dubai. Najib al-Kailani's last position was as Director of the Culture Department at the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Health, and he was also a member of the Gulf state's public health committee. He also frequently attended conferences attended by health ministers from Arab countries. After living abroad for approximately fifty years, he returned to Cairo in 1992. He continued to work despite his illness until he passed away on 5 Shawwal 1415 AH, or March 6, 1995.³³

Najib al-Kailani's involvement in the world of literature began with his passion and love for reading, especially literary magazines published at that time. He was particularly fond of reading al-Risalah, al-Tsaqofah, al-hilal, and al-Muqtathof. He

³⁰ Mahsun, *Metode Penelitian Bahasa: Tahapan Strategi, Metode, Dan Teknikny* (Depok: Rajawali Pers, 2017).

³¹ Zuriyati Zuriyati, “Sastra Islami Kontemporer Najib Al-Kilânî Dalam Memahami Manusia,” *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 5, no. 2 (2014): 326, <https://doi.org/10.15642/islamica.2011.5.2.326-338>.

³² Setyoni MP, “Najib Kailani Pelopor Dakwah Bil Novel,” *Suara Muhammadiyah*, 2023, <https://web.suaramuhammadiyah.id/2016/02/17/najib-kailani-pelopor-dakwah-bil-novel/>.

³³ A B Sholihin, “Keberpahaman Seorang Sastrawan; Konsep Al-Irtibath Dalam Sastra Islami Najib Al-Kailani,” *LPM IAIN Jember*, n.d., http://lpm.iain-jember.ac.id/download/file/Badrus_Solihin.pdf.

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became acquainted with many literary figures such as Sayyid Quthub, Mushthofa Shodiq al-Rofi'i, al-'Aqqod, al-Mazini, al-Manfaluthi, Thoha Husein, and Taufiq al-Hakim through these magazines. His passion began when he was still in junior high school. Najib al-Kailani started writing poetry at that time.³⁴ He believes that art, literature, and Islam are not contradictory or incompatible. If there are contradictions, they are actually the result of a partial understanding of Islam or attempts to avoid Islamic values in art and literature, or the secularization of aspects of art and literature. Art and literature have never been prohibited by Islam. In fact, Islam seeks to nurture and support them, by prioritizing normative and moral principles. Not by calling for unregulated liberalization to hide chaos under the name of art and literature.³⁵

Al-Iltizam (Commitment) in Islamic Literature

The term al-iltizam is one of the terms that has long existed in the literature of ancient civilizations such as Ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, and the Jahiliyyah era. However, the question of commitment received profound attention after the emergence of various modern literary movements such as social realism and existentialism. The Islamic literary movement was also not far behind in discussing the question of commitment more deeply and focused.³⁶

Najib al-Kailani clearly defines the meaning of al-Iltizam (Commitment) in his book, *Madkhal Ila al-Adab al-Islami*. He states that commitment in the broad sense of Islam is obedience. True obedience is faith, joy in the hearts of believers, and behavior that is in accordance with the truth of faith and everything related to it. Therefore, commitment is an act that begins with sincere intentions and firm determination, then produces results from realistic practices in various aspects of life. Indeed, commitment is harmony between a person and themselves, and between themselves and others. It contains Islamic values, laws or regulations, and the perceptions of believers towards their surroundings. The universe, its laws, animals, inanimate objects, and plants. These perceptions extend to connect worldly life with the hereafter, and the reference for all of this is the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet.³⁷

The following explains the concept of al-Iltizam (Commitment) found in the short story “Al-Kabus”:

Table 1. Findings on the Concept of Al-Iltizam in Character Dialogue in the Short Story “Al-Kabus”

No.	Translate	Sentences
1.	“I swear by Allah... who are you? And where are we now?”	أستخلفك بالله... من أنتم؟ وأين نحن الآن؟
2.	“He is a traitor... I sentenced him to death some time ago.”	“إنه الخائن... لقد حكمت عليه بالإعدام

³⁴ MP, “Najib Kailani Pelopor Dakwah Bil Novel.”

³⁵ “Biografi Sastrawan Arab Najib Al-Kailani,” accessed November 20, 2024, <https://anwaralghifari.blogspot.com/2014/03/biografi-sastrawan-arabnajib-al-kailani.html>.

³⁶ Mohd Adi Amzar Muhammad Nawawi, Zulkarnain Mohamed, and Pabiyah Toklubok, “Sorotan Literatur Perbandingan Gagasan Sastra Islami Sayyid Sayyid ‘Abd Al-Raziq Dan Mohd Affandi Hassan,” *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 8 (2015).

³⁷ Al-Kailani, *Madkhal Ila Al-Adab Al-Islami*, 79.

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	<p>The stranger laughed heartily and said: "A traitor?" "Yes... he wrote his own confession." The foreign man's tears flowed, and he said: "If only you knew... Here, there are no falsified facts, no fabricated confessions... You will see for yourself... Those flying above your heads are chosen beings, beloved by God."</p>	<p>منذ فترة وجيزة" قهقهه الرجل الغريب قائلاً: "خائن؟" "أجل... لقد سجل اعترافاته بخط يده" وانهمرت دموع الغريب وقال: "ليتك تعرف... هنا لاتزور الوقائع, ولا تزيّف الاعترافات... ستري بمفسك... إن الطائرين فوق الرؤس هم صفوة الخلق, وأحباب الله..."</p>
3.	<p>"We are wretched, despicable people... They reached the stage and the spring in an instant... while we crawled in suffering and misery for years... Woe is us!"</p>	<p>"نحن الأشقياء الأذنياء... هم يصلون إلى المنصة والينايع في لحظات... ونحن نزحف في تعاسة وشقاء لسنين طويلة.. ياويلنا!"</p>
4.	<p>"And what is the solution?" "There is no solution except for Allah to bestow His mercy upon us... or for us to reach that stage." "Allah has bestowed His mercy upon me in many situations... Some of them tried to kill me, but I survived. Countries conspired against me, but I prevailed. The landlords, capitalists, and false preachers plotted against me, but I cut their throats... And I did not think that Allah would let me suffer like that..."</p>	<p>"وما الحل؟" "لا حل سوى أن يتداركنا الله برحمته.. أو نبلغ المنصة.." "لقد تداركني الله برحمته في مواقع كثيرة.. حاول بعضهم قتلي ونجوت.. وتآمرت ضدى الدول فانتصرت.. ودبر لى الإقطاعيون والرأسماليون وأدعياء الدين فقطعت رقابهم.. وما أظنك ترى أن الله سيتركني لأتعذب طمأ.."</p>
5.	<p>The prison warden said: "Have you prostrated yourself before Allah in gratitude?" When he did not answer, the prison warden continued: "Perhaps you are lying about what you said..."</p>	<p>قال السجنان: "هل سجدت لله سجدة شكر؟" ولما لم يجب استطرده السجنان: "ربما كنت تكذب فيما تقول.."</p>

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6.	<p>“You must ask yourself before they ask you... There is no room for lies here... Your hands, feet, eyes, and ears will testify against you... Everything in your heart will be clearly written down and announced before the court... The rights holders will come... Your supporters and loved ones will testify against you.”</p>	<p>”لا بد أن تسأل نفسك قبل أن يسألك.. فلا مجال للكذب هنا.. سوف تشهد عليك يداك ورجلاك وعيناك وأذناك.. وسيكون كل ما في قلبك مسطورا منشورا بوضوح أمام القضاء.. وسيأتي أصحاب الحقوق.. وسيشهد عليك أنصارك وأحبابك..”</p>
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The first data, shows that the author believes in God, namely Allah SWT. This is certainly because the author himself has strong beliefs or faith. Therefore, he makes the characters in this short story swear in the name of Allah, not in the names of others. The phrase “I swear by Allah” is a form of affirmation of divine consciousness, An acknowledgment that Allah is the highest authority of truth. In the concept of al-iltizām, the mention of Allah is not ornamental, but an expression of living faith. Characters do not swear in the name of themselves, power, or the world but rather Allah, which shows the ideological commitment of Islam in literary language, in accordance with the principle of Najib al-Kailani: tawhid is naturally present in the characters' dialogue.

Furthermore, this expression reflects a deeper theological orientation in which language becomes a medium of spiritual accountability. The invocation of Allah's name signifies not only personal belief but also a moral framework that governs the characters' actions and speech. It can be argued that such linguistic choices reinforce the integration of faith and narrative, where religious values are embedded organically within the storyline. In this sense, the author does not merely construct fictional dialogue but also conveys a worldview grounded in Islamic teachings. Thus, the use of divine reference serves as both a narrative device and an ideological marker, illustrating how literature can function as a vehicle for religious consciousness and ethical reflection.

The second data, expresses the belief that justice before Allah is absolute. No truth can be changed or covered up by lies. This statement also reminds readers of the importance of honesty in discussing the actual facts. This is in line with Islamic values, which state that everything will be weighed fairly in the hereafter. This sentence reflects one of the commitments, that literary works can be used as a medium to convey Islamic teachings and beliefs to readers. It also describes what life will be like in the hereafter, where people who have lived good lives will be honored by Allah as His chosen ones. This is in accordance with Islamic teachings about the reward for righteous people. And the phrase “those who fly above their heads” indicates that they are in a high and noble place.

Moreover, this statement illustrates a strong eschatological dimension in the text, emphasizing the inevitability of divine judgment and the supremacy of truth. The concept of absolute justice here aligns with the Islamic doctrine that no deed, however small, escapes divine accountability. From a literary perspective, such expressions function as moral reinforcement, guiding readers toward ethical awareness and spiritual reflection. The imagery used in the phrase “those who fly

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above their heads” can also be interpreted symbolically, representing elevation in both spiritual rank and moral dignity. It suggests transcendence beyond worldly limitations, highlighting the ultimate reward for those who uphold truth and righteousness.

In addition, the narrative implicitly constructs a moral dichotomy between truth and falsehood, where truth is ultimately victorious under divine authority. This reinforces the didactic function of literature within an Islamic framework, as it not only entertains but also educates and shapes the reader’s moral consciousness. Therefore, the sentence does not merely describe a future reality but also serves as a reminder of ethical responsibility in the present life.

The third data, shows how miserable and suffering are those who deviate from Islamic teachings and values. This suffering can be considered the result of actions that violate Islamic law. From this sentence, it is also clear to see the difference between those who are blessed by Allah (those who are close to goodness and obedience) and those who deviate from Islamic teachings. The words “stage and spring” can mean true happiness in the hereafter due to obedience to Allah. However, “crawling in suffering” describes the challenges faced by those who abandon Islamic teachings. This reminds readers of the importance of remembering and practicing Islamic teachings and values to avoid misery in this world and the hereafter.

Furthermore, this contrast constructs a moral and spiritual binary that emphasizes the consequences of human choices within an Islamic ethical framework. The depiction of suffering is not merely physical but also spiritual, reflecting an inner state of disconnection from divine guidance. In this context, deviation from Islamic teachings leads to existential emptiness and moral disorientation. Conversely, the imagery of “stage and spring” symbolizes not only reward but also renewal, purity, and eternal contentment granted by Allah to the faithful.

From a literary perspective, such symbolic opposition strengthens the didactic function of the text, where imagery is used to internalize moral lessons in the reader’s consciousness. The phrase “crawling in suffering” evokes a sense of humiliation and degradation, suggesting a loss of human dignity as a consequence of abandoning divine principles. This reinforces the idea that adherence to Islamic values is not only a religious obligation but also a path toward preserving human honor and spiritual well-being. Moreover, the passage implicitly invites readers to reflect on their own moral standing, positioning literature as a medium of self-evaluation and ethical awareness. Thus, the narrative does not merely describe contrasting conditions but actively encourages a return to faith, obedience, and alignment with Islamic teachings as the ultimate source of salvation and peace.

The fourth data, specifically in the phrase “*There is no solution except for Allah to bestow His mercy upon us*” indicates that humans are limited and always depend on Allah's mercy. This is the essence of the concept of faith in Islam, that humans cannot solve their problems without the help and compassion of Allah. This shows that this writer believes in Allah's mercy and help for His servants. Therefore, in this sentence, he includes a message to remind readers of the importance of trusting in Allah when facing trials and difficulties. Meanwhile, the sentence “Allah has bestowed His mercy upon me in many situations...” shows the experience of a

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character in this short story (a leader) who always receives help from Allah despite facing various trials in his life. This conveys the message that Allah never abandons His servants who struggle in His way. This is in line with the concept of *al-iltizam*, where a literary work helps readers strengthen their faith. And the sentence “And I did not think that Allah would let me suffer like this” shows a deep belief in Allah's justice.

Furthermore, these expressions reflect the concept of *tawakkul*, where human effort is accompanied by trust in Allah's will. Human limitation is portrayed not as weakness, but as spiritual awareness that strengthens reliance on divine mercy. From a literary perspective, the repetition of divine references reinforces the spiritual tone and serves as a strategy to instill faith-based values in the reader. The leader's experience illustrates an ideal model of faith, emphasizing perseverance and trust in Allah.

Moreover, the statement “And I did not think that Allah would let me suffer like this” expresses hopeful trust in divine justice rather than doubt, showing that faith is both doctrinal and experiential. Thus, within the framework of *al-iltizam*, the passage highlights literature as a medium for expressing spiritual struggle and strengthening faith, patience, and trust in Allah.

The fifth data, emphasizes the importance of being grateful to Allah for the blessings and mercy He has given, as well as the importance of honesty. Gratitude is one of the things that must and should be done in Islamic teachings. In the context of Islamic literature, this question can inspire the reader's soul and heart to always be grateful, especially after receiving mercy or help from Allah. The emphasis on gratitude reflects one of the forms of commitment in Islamic literature, which is to encourage readers to practice Islamic values in their daily lives. From this conversation, we can derive the moral message that our relationship with Allah should not be neglected, even in difficult situations. And don't forget to prostrate yourself as a form of gratitude, because prostration is a form of direct relationship between humans and Allah, while honesty reflects the relationship between humans and their fellow humans. These two aspects are the values that Islamic literature with commitment seeks to convey.

Furthermore, the act of prostration symbolizes a direct and intimate connection between humans and Allah, representing humility, submission, and spiritual consciousness. The warden's question also carries a subtle moral interrogation, linking inner faith with outward actions. From a literary perspective, this dialogue functions as a didactic device that reinforces both vertical (human-God) and horizontal (human-human) relationships.

Moreover, the juxtaposition of gratitude and honesty highlights the integration of ethical and spiritual dimensions in Islam. While prostration reflects devotion to Allah, honesty represents integrity in social interactions. This dual emphasis illustrates that true faith must manifest in both worship and moral conduct. Thus, the passage conveys that Islamic committed literature (*al-iltizam*) seeks not only to narrate events but also to shape the reader's moral and spiritual character through reflective and value-laden discourse.

The last data, describes that all members of the body will testify before Allah about what has been done during life in the world. Therefore, all human beings will be held accountable for their deeds and actions. The phrase “There is no room

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for lies here” reminds readers that all truths will be revealed before Allah. This message is in accordance with Islamic teachings, which emphasize the importance of honesty and sincerity in every aspect of life. This sentence deeply emphasizes to the reader that even though lies may be hidden in this world, in the hereafter everything will be revealed. As Allah says in Surah Yasin verse 65, which reads:

أَلْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

On this day, We will seal their mouths; and their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will bear witness to what they used to do.

This signifies that humans cannot escape their deeds, for their own bodies will bear witness. The phrase “Everything in your heart will be clearly written and announced before the court” illustrates absolute transparency before Allah. For no intention, thought, or feeling can be hidden. The phrase “The rightful owners will come... Your supporters and loved ones will testify against you” underlines God's justice, where the rights of others that have been taken and usurped will be demanded. In Islam, fulfilling the rights of others is an important obligation, whereas taking or reducing the rights of others is a sin.

Furthermore, this passage reflects a profound eschatological awareness, where the inevitability of judgment serves as a moral warning to the reader. From a literary perspective, the vivid imagery of bodily testimony and public accountability intensifies the emotional and ethical impact of the text. It transforms abstract theological concepts into concrete and relatable scenes, making the message more compelling.

Moreover, the emphasis on both external actions and internal intentions demonstrates the comprehensive nature of accountability in Islam. It suggests that moral responsibility is not limited to visible behavior but extends to the inner dimensions of the human self. Thus, the passage reinforces the didactic function of Islamic committed literature (*al-iltizam*), guiding readers toward self-reflection, ethical awareness, and a deeper consciousness of divine justice.

D. Conclusion

This study shows that the concept of al-Iltizam or commitment in Islamic literature plays a very important role in shaping literary works that are not only aesthetic but also meaningful. Through an analysis of the short story “Al-Kabus” by Najib al-Kailani, we can see how the author integrates Islamic values into the characters, themes, and messages conveyed. This work not only serves as entertainment but also as an effective medium of da'wah, capable of awakening readers' awareness of Islamic teachings and values. Thus, Islamic literature can be a powerful tool for spreading moral and spiritual messages and shaping a better society. Furthermore, this study shows that al-Iltizam is not only a theoretical concept but is clearly reflected in narrative elements such as dialogue, characters, and symbolism. These elements help internalize Islamic values and encourage readers to reflect on their beliefs and actions. In addition, Islamic literature with commitment can shape moral awareness by emphasizing the distinction between

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truth and falsehood. Therefore, al-Iltizam strengthens the role of literature as a medium for moral and spiritual guidance in contemporary society.

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