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Qalbun Salīm and the Development of Islamic Character: A Comparison of Sya'rawi's and Ruh Al-Ma'ani's Exegeses

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Abstract

In the modern era, moral crises and character degradation require strengthening the spiritual dimension of Islamic education. One Qur'anic concept relevant to addressing this challenge is *qalbun salim* (a sound heart). This study aims to analyse the concept of *qalbun salim* through a comparative examination of the interpretations of Muhammad Mutawalli al-Sya'rawi in Tafsir al-Sya'rawi and Mahmud al-Alusi in Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani, as well as its implications for Islamic character formation. This study is a qualitative, literature-based research (library research). The primary data sources are Tafsir al-Sya'rawi and Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani, whilst the data is analysed using comparative and content analysis methods. The results of the study indicate that both exegetes interpret *qalbun salim* as a heart free from shirk, hypocrisy, and various diseases of the heart. The difference lies in the fact that al-Sya'rawi places greater emphasis on the aspects of human nature, faith, and social relevance in character formation, whilst al-Alusi highlights the spiritual dimension, *tazkiyatun nafs*, and the purification of the heart from various inner ailments. These findings indicate that *qalbun salim* is a crucial foundation in the formation of Islamic character through the strengthening of faith, the control of desires, and the cultivation of righteous deeds. The integration of these two perspectives yields a more comprehensive approach to the development of Islamic character education that balances the aspects of faith, morality, and spirituality.

Keywords: *Qalbun Salīm*, Islamic Character, Tafsir Sya'rāwī, Tafsir Ruh Al-Ma'ani

INTRODUCTION

Considering the moral crisis and character degradation facing society in the modern era, character education has become increasingly important in shaping character, not only focusing on external aspects but also addressing the inner aspects of human nature that foster a strong, stable character grounded in noble values. In Islamic theology, humans possess an innate potential to embrace the values of goodness from God. The concept underscores that

character formation is not merely a pedagogical process but also a spiritual-existential one. The Islamic perspective on character education emphasizes not only outward behavior but also the cultivation of the heart, soul, and awareness of spiritual responsibility to Allah SWT.¹ Therefore, studying the concept of the heart is crucial to a deeper understanding of the foundations of Islamic character.

One of the key concepts in spiritual cultivation is the nurturing of a qalbun salīm. The term qalbun salīm appears twice in the Qur'an: in Surah As-Syu'ara, verses 88–89, and in Surah Ash-Shaffat, verses 83–84. Scholars explain the meaning of qalbun salīm as a heart that is free from shirk, hypocrisy, and carnal desires that prevent humans from the truth. Qalbun salīm is closely related to the process of character building and self-control in human life.

Research on the qalbun salīm has been conducted from various perspectives. Previous studies have examined the qalbun salīm as a key element in the foundation of spiritual values within the process of psychological healing, serving as a medium for spiritual therapy in addressing depression, drawing on the thematic exegesis of Ahmad Mustafa Al-Maraghi.² Another study explains that qalbun salīm is not merely a moral-spiritual concept, but rather an epistemological organ possessing the cognitive capacity to comprehend holistic truth, as well as serving as a center of integrative knowledge that unites empirical observation, logical reasoning, and spiritual intuition into a unified cognitive process, referencing Ibn Kathir's Tafsir and Al-Azhar's Tafsir.³ Meanwhile, studies examining Asy-Sya'rawi's Tafsir and Ruh Al-Ma'ani's Tafsir generally focus on the methods of interpretation, the intellectual styles, and the personalities of the respective exegetes. Meanwhile, the study reveals significant changes in the concept of qalbun salīm as the foundation for character formation, examined from a psychological perspective related to As-Sya'rawi's fitrah approach and Al-Alusi's tazkiyat al-nafs approach. The relationship among the three main components of qalbun salīm can provide a broader perspective not only on Aqidah but also on the moral and spiritual aspects of the formation of Qur'anic character.

This research is a literature review employing a qualitative approach and the muqaran (comparative) exegesis method, focusing on the concept of qalbun salīm in Surah As-Syu'ara verses 88–89 and Surah Ash-Shaffat verses 83–84, according to Tafsir As-Sya'rawi by Muhammad Mutawalli Asy-Sya'rawi and Tafsir Ruh Al-Ma'ani by Mahmud Al-Alusi. Data were collected through documentary research and analyzed by identifying the concept of qalbun salīm in each exegesis, comparing their similarities and differences, analyzing the results using the perspectives of Islamic psychology and character education theory, and formulating implications for the formation of Islamic character. The selection of these two exegetes was based on their distinct exegetical styles: Asy-Sya'rawi with a tarbawi approach (education and community development),⁴ and Al-Alusi with a Sufi approach (spirituality

¹ Feri Indra Irawan, Cucu Munaroh, Hilman Rasyid, Hasan Basri, "Pendidikan dan Pembentukan Karakter Peserta Didik Perspektif Teologi Pendidikan Islam", *Journal of Education and Social Culture*, Vol. 01, No.1, Juni 2025, p. 41.

² Sayid Sabiq Rifa'i, *Qalbun Salim: sebagai Media Terapi Spiritual dalam Menghadapi Depresi (Kajian Tafsir Tematik Ahmad Mustafa Al-Maraghi)*, (Malang: Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2025).

³ Azmi Izuddin, Mochamad Ramadhan, "Epistemologi Qalbun Salim: Strategi dan Pendekatan Quran Tarbawi Melawan Dehumanisasi Pendidikan", *Al-Ikhsan Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 2025.

⁴ Ahmad Husnul Hakim, *Ensiklopedi Kitab-Kitab Tafsir*, (Jakarta: eLSiQ Tabarakarrahan, 2019), p. 279.

and purification of the soul)⁵ This contrast allows for a broader understanding of qalbun salīm and its relationship to human character formation.

DISCUSSION

Qalbun Salīm in the Perspective of Islamic Psychology

Ibn Sina defined the soul as an eternal, non-material substance—the life-giving principle that animates the body and enables humans to think and perceive metaphysical reality. Meanwhile, Al-Ghazali emphasized the spiritual and moral aspects of the soul, namely as the true essence of humanity whose purity must be maintained through worship, remembrance of God, and self-reflection to achieve closeness to Allah.⁶ In understanding the soul, Ibn Sina employs a philosophical-rational approach, viewing it as an independent, immaterial substance with the intellectual capacity to attain universal knowledge.⁷ Al-Ghazali places greater emphasis on the ethical and spiritual dimensions, where the soul serves as the core of all human actions that determine well-being in this world and the hereafter.⁸ As for the heart (qalb), according to Al-Ghazali, it is a subtle and divine element that constitutes the essence of humanity, functioning to perceive abstract and metaphysical matters, and must be anchored in the Qur'an and Sunnah.⁹ Thus, a person's spiritual quality is determined by the heart's ability to control the soul and maintain its connection with the spirit.

According to Al-Ghazali, a qalbun salīm is a heart that functions perfectly and is capable of distinguishing truth from falsehood. Ibn Qayyim adds that a sound heart (qalbun salīm) means a pure and clean heart, encompassing the purity of the heart (taharah al-qalb) as well as the health of the heart (sihah al-qalb), characterized by abstaining from carnal desires and placing one's trust in Allah.¹⁰ A healthy heart is free from shirk, sincere only to Allah, filled with love, trust, repentance, fear, and hope in Him alone,¹¹ thereby giving rise to truth in knowledge, intention, deeds, and a strong will.¹²

Malik Badri's thought aligns with this concept, as he emphasizes the importance of understanding the soul within the framework of Islamic spirituality integrated with scientific psychology. Malik Badri argues that mental disorders and mental health issues must be understood by considering the spiritual and religious factors that influence a person's mental well-being.¹³ In this context, qalbun salīm reflects a state of psychospiritual health that balances spiritual needs with the regulation of the soul's impulses.

Qalbun Salīm is characterized by, among other things: a deep fear of Allah and piety toward Him, feeling moved and awed when hearing the Qur'an, a tender and devout heart

⁵ Muhammad Abu Shabah, *al-Isra'iliyat wa Mandhu'dat fi Kutub at-Tafsir*, (Kairo: Maktabah as-Sunah, 1392 H), p. 122.

⁶ Amrinuddin, Alfian Zuhdi, Agustiar, "Konsep Multilayer Ruh alam Al-Qur'an: Analisis Interdisipliner", *Al-Muqaddimah-Journal of Educational and Religious Perspectives*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Januari 2026, p. 117.

⁷ Reza Nurcahyadi, Yasser Mulla Sadra, Alam Khaerul Hidayat, Riswan, "Konsep Jiwa dalam Tasawuf Islam sebagai Jawaban atas Krisis Spiritual Manusia Modern", *Aqidah-TA: Jurnal Ilmu Aqidah*, Vol. XII, No. 1, 2026, p. 7.

⁸ Kasori Mujahid dan Farid Al-Fani, "Islamic Worldview: Konsep Jiwa Menurut Imam Ghazali", *Tsaqofah: Jurnal Penelitian Guru Indonesia*, Vol. 5, No.2, Maret 2025, p. 1436-1440.

⁹ M. Alfanny Fahmil Ulum, Muhammad Fahmi, "Konsep Pendidikan Qalbu menurut Imam Ghazali", *Maharot: Journal of Islamic Education*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2023, p.192-194

¹⁰ Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah, *At-Tafsir Al-Qayyim*, (Beirut: Darul Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, 2005), p. 464.

¹¹ Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah, *Ighātsat al-Lahfān min Mashāyid asy-Syaithān*, (Beirut: Cetakan Al-Maktab Al-Islami), p. 11-12.

¹² Ibnu Taimiyah, *Majmu' Fatawa Syaikhul Islam Ahmad bin Taimiyah*, (Madinah: Muijamma' Al-Malik Fahd Li Thiba'at Al-Mushaf Asy-Syarif, Jilid 10, 2004), p. 301.

¹³ Jarman Arroisi, "Psikologi Modern Perspektif Malik Badri (Analisis Kritis atas Paradigma Psikoanalisa dan Behaviorisme)", *Al-Qalb: Jurnal Psikologi Islam*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2021, p. 1-13.

in remembering Allah, submission to the truth, frequent repentance, finding comfort in remembering Allah, glorifying the signs of Allah, humbling oneself and surrendering to Allah especially during times of difficulty, and a heart free from hatred and resentment toward fellow believers.¹⁴ According to Al-Ghazali, the signs of attaining a qalbun salīm include al-khauf (fear), al-raja' (hope), al-ikhlas (sincerity), tawakkul (surrender), and mahabbah (love). Al-khauf is the fear of Allah that drives one to restrain one's desires and reduce worldly pleasures. Al-raja' is hope in Allah by exerting all efforts in faith and obedience.¹⁵ Al-ikhlas is the essence of all deeds by eliminating any focus on anything other than Allah, unbound by praise or worldly gain.¹⁶ Tawakkul is relying on Allah when facing difficulties, grounded in knowledge and faith in the Oneness of Allah.¹⁷ Mahabbah is love for Allah as the pinnacle of spiritual stations, which gives rise to longing, tranquility (uns), and contentment, while obedience is the fruit of that love.¹⁸

The Quranic verse mentioning qalbun salīm appears twice: in Surah As-Syu'ara, verse 89, and in Surah Ash-Shaffat, verse 84. In addition, several hadiths also discuss the sound heart (qalbun salīm), including a hadith narrated by Bukhari from An-Nu'man bin Basyir,¹⁹ Mirza Husain An-Nuri Ath-Thabarsi in *Mustadrak Al-Wasa'il*,²⁰ a narration by Al-Quthb Ar-Rawandi in *Lub al-Lubab*,²¹ as well as other narrations explaining Surah Ash-Shu'ara verse 89.²²

Islamic Characters in the Qur'an

Personality comes from the Arabic word *syakhshiyyah* or *syakbhasha*, which means to define something in both its outward and inward aspects. In *Lisan al-Arab*, *syakhsh* refers to a human figure or anything that possesses stature and presence.²³ In *Al-Mu'jam Al-Wajiz*, *syakhshiyyah* means the traits that distinguish one person from another; for example, *syakhshiyyah qawmiyyah* means possessing independent traits, will, and existence.²⁴ In psychology, personality is defined as a combination of innate biological tendencies, instinctive drives, tastes, and instincts, as well as tendencies acquired through experience or responses to social stimuli, encompassing a person's motivations, emotions, desires, moral character, views, and beliefs.²⁵

¹⁴ Muhammad bin Saud, *Al-Qalb fi Al-Qur'an wa Atsaruhu fi Suluk Al-Insan*, ..., p. 111-114.

¹⁵ M. Ihsan Dacholfany, "Al-Khauf dan Al-Raja' Menurut Al-Ghazali", *Jurnal As-Salam*, Vol. V, No. 1, 2014, p. 36-41.

¹⁶ Lathiefatul Aghniyah, Mahmud Arif, "Konsep Ikhlas Perspektif Al-Ghazali dan Relevansinya terhadap Pendidikan Agama Islam", *Al-Kindi: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Multidisipliner*, Vol. 01, No. 02, 2025, p. 124-128.

¹⁷ Ardiansyah Tammar, Achmad Abubakar, Muhsin Mahfudz, "Relevansi Tawakal dalam Kehidupan Sosial (Kajian Literatur Al Quran)", *Jurnal Farabi*, Vol. 20, No. 2, Desember 2023, p. 166-167.

¹⁸ Suyitno, "Cinta Dalam Kajian Tasawuf (Telaah Pemikiran Imam Al Ghazali)", *Jurnal Misbahul Ulum (Jurnal institusi)*, Vol.5, No. 1, Juni 2023, p. 56-57.

¹⁹ Abu Abdullah, Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Ibrahim bin Al-Mughirah bin Bardizbah Al-Bukhari Al-Ju'fi, Shahih Al-Bukhari, (Mesir: Al-Mathba'ah Al-Kubra Al-Amiriyyah, 1422 H), diriwayatkan oleh Imam Al-Bukhari dalam Kitab Al-Iman, Bab Fadhlul Man Istabrah'a Li Dinihi, 1/28 (52).

²⁰ Mirza Husain An-Nuri Ath-Thabarsi, *Mustadrak Al-Wasa'il*, (Saeid - Masyhad Al-Muqaddasah: Mu'assasah Alul Bait 'Alayhim As-Salam li Ihya' At-Turath, Jilid 1, 1986), p. 113.

²¹ Mirza Husain An-Nuri Ath-Thabarsi, *Mustadrak Al-Wasa'il*, (Mehr - Qom: Mu'assasah Alul Bait 'Alayhim As-Salam li Ihya' At-Turath, Jilid 15, 1988), p. 260.

²² Muhammad bin Ya'qub Al-Kulaini, *Al-Kafi*, (Beirut: Mansyurat Al-Fajr, Jilid 2, 2007), p. 160.

²³ Abu al-Fadl Jamaluddin Muhammad bin Makram Ibn Manzhur, *Lisan al-Arab*, (Beirut: Dar Shadir, 1414 H), p. 280.

²⁴ *Al-Mu'jam Al-Wajiz*, (Majma' Al-Lughah Al-Arabiyyah), p. 337-338.

²⁵ Muhammad Syahatah Rabi', *Ilmu Nafs al-Syakhshiyyah*, (Amman: Dar Al-Masirah, 2013), p. 41.

Personality, in a psychological context, is defined as character or disposition, a fundamental aspect of the human being that influences all thoughts and actions spontaneously because it is ingrained in the mind.²⁶ The essence of personality is a developed state of the soul, from which various actions arise naturally without being contrived.²⁷ In Islam, the concept of personality encompasses everything that distinguishes a person from others, including character, disposition, thoughts, beliefs, feelings, motivations, behavior, and relationships with one's environment.²⁸ An Islamic personality is a praiseworthy personality grounded in Islamic faith and imbued with Islamic values;²⁹ hence, it is referred to as a noble personality or the character of honorable people.³⁰

Thomas Lickona's theory of character education identifies three main components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Moral knowledge serves as the foundation for knowledge of right and wrong values. Moral feeling relates to experiencing moral values and building empathy, which can be strengthened by religious education through the values of love, compassion, and respect for others. Moral action is the outcome of character education, involving the implementation of moral values in daily actions.³¹ The concept of Islamic character aligns with this theory, where moral knowing is reflected in the understanding of tawhid and the ability to distinguish between right and wrong; moral feeling is evident in al-khauf, al-raja', al-ikhlas, tawakkul, and mahabbah toward Allah, which are the hallmarks of a qalbun salim; and moral action is manifested through worship and good conduct in accordance with Islamic law. Thus, a sound heart is not only related to the spiritual dimension but also plays a role in the formation of a holistic Islamic character.

In the Islamic perspective, personality traits are divided into two categories: noble character (akhlak mahmudah) and despicable character (akhlak madzmumah), and further divided into two aspects: one's character toward Allah SWT and one's character toward His creatures other than Allah.³² The personality toward Allah reflects an attitude of vigilance, obedience, responsibility for one's trust, acceptance of Allah's decrees, and making His pleasure as the primary goal,³³ which is manifested through the five daily prayers with devotion, congregational prayers, supererogatory prayers, zakat, fasting during Ramadan and supererogatory fasts, the Hajj and Umrah, as well as reading and reflecting upon the Qur'an with sincerity.³⁴

Personality towards God's creatures is categorized into personality towards fellow human beings, towards living beings other than humans (plants and animals), and towards inanimate objects (the environment and the universe).³⁵ Attitudes toward fellow humans include: being dutiful and respectful toward parents, recognizing their contributions, fearing

²⁶ Abdul Majid dan Dian Andayani, *Pendidikan Karakter Perspektif Islam*, (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2012), p. 12.

²⁷ Muhammad Jalaluddin Al-Asqalani Ad-Dimasyqi, *Mau'izhah Al-Mu'minin min Ihya' Ulum Ad-Din*, (N.C: Al-Maktabat At-Tijariyyah Al-Kubra, N.Y), p. 505.

²⁸ Syadiah Ahmad At-Tal, *Kepribadian dalam Perspektif Psikologi Islam*, (Yordania: Dar Al-Kitab Ats-Tsaqafi, 2006), p. 66.

²⁹ Jamil Shaliba, *Al-Mu'jam Al-Falsafi*, (Mesir: Dar Al-Kitab Al-Misri, Jilid 1, 1978), p. 112.

³⁰ M. Imam Pamungkas, *Akhlak Muslim Modern, Membangun Karakter Generasi Muda*, (Bandung: Marja, 2012), p. 25.

³¹ Nadiya Ulya Rahmatika, Wahab, Syamsul Kurniawan, "Desain Pendidikan Agama Terintegrasi Karakter: Reinterpretasi Gagasan Thomas Lickona dalam Menyikap Krisis Desain Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama di Abad 21, *Jurnal Dinamika Pendidikan Nusantara*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Februari 2025, p. 354-356.

³² Marzuki, *Pendidikan Karakter Islam*, (Jakarta: AMZAH, 2015), p. 32.

³³ Marzuki, *Pendidikan Karakter Islam*, ..., p. 32.

³⁴ Muhammad Ali Al-Hashimi, *Syakhsbiyyah al-Muslim*, (Beirut: Dar Al-Basha'ir Al-Islamiyyah, 2002), p. 13-31.

³⁵ Marzuki, *Pendidikan Karakter Islam*, ..., p. 32.

disobedience, and fostering good relationships with friends;³⁶ maintaining and nurturing family ties with relatives even if they hold different beliefs and do not reciprocate;³⁷ being friendly and generous toward neighbors, desiring good for them just as one does for oneself;³⁸ and in social life, respecting those who are older and of higher standing, associating with people of noble character, bringing benefit and preventing harm, and being active in enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil.³⁹

The fundamentals of Islamic character development include: first, faith in Allah SWT, which fosters peace and tranquility and places a person under His protection, where tawhid brings a sense of security and salvation in this world and the hereafter; second, performing acts of worship embodied in the pillars of Islam as a practical application of faith, the fruit of which is upright morals and good behavior, so that obedience shapes the Muslim personality to stay on the straight path, be active in society, experience the sweetness of faith, and produce only good; third, being a good example and a pious role model by shaping one's character based on the Qur'an and following the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions; Fourth, knowledge that enhances a Muslim's character by showing the path to truth and goodness and illuminating their life's journey; Fifth, education aimed at applying knowledge in daily life, because Islam honors knowledge through its application in real-world practices that have a profound impact on a person's soul, heart, emotions, and behavior; sixth, language and culture, which play a vital role in shaping consciousness—not merely as tools of communication but as integral parts of human consciousness, existence, and thought; and seventh, befriending the righteous, as Allah commanded the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his followers to be patient in associating with sincere believers and devout worshippers who constantly pray to their Lord, seeking His pleasure.⁴⁰

Islamic character development has seven main foundations, each closely related to the concept of *qalbun salīm* (a sound heart). First, faith in Allah SWT is rooted in a heart free of shirk, because pure belief in Allah is the primary foundation of a sound heart. Second, worship is related to a sincere heart free from *riya'* and seeking only Allah's pleasure, where sincerity is the core of every act of worship. Third, a good example is the exemplary character of Prophet Ibrahim, who possessed a sound heart, as the Qur'an states. Fourth, knowledge relates to a heart free from doubt and uncertainty, for true knowledge can purify the heart from hesitation. Fifth, the application of knowledge relates to the continuity between belief, intention, and action, so that knowledge is not merely understood but also put into practice. Sixth, language and culture are closely related to a heart always anchored in Islamic values, where language serves as a means of internalizing them. Seventh, befriending the righteous relates to a heart free from envy, resentment, and hatred, because associating with good people will purify the heart of these ailments. Thus, these seven foundations of Islamic character formation contribute integrally to the realization of a sound heart (*qalbun salīm*).

Interpretation of “Qalbun Salim” in Sya’rawi’s Tafsir and Ruh Al-Ma’ani’s Tafsir

Tafsir Asy-Sya’rāwī is a book of exegesis compiled by his students from his sermons and lectures delivered at various scholarly forums.⁴¹ The name *Tafsir Asy-Sya’rāwī* is derived from the author's real name, Muhammad Mutawallī Asy-Sya’rāwī. In fact, Asy-Sya’rāwī

³⁶ Muhammad Ali Al-Hashimi, *Syakhsbiyyah al-Muslim*, ..., p. 55–60.

³⁷ Muhammad Ali Al-Hashimi, *Syakhsbiyyah al-Muslim*, ..., p. 104–116.

³⁸ Muhammad Ali Al-Hashimi, *Syakhsbiyyah al-Muslim*, ..., p. 119–122.

³⁹ Muhammad Ali Al-Hashimi, *Syakhsbiyyah al-Muslim*, ..., p. 218–235.

⁴⁰ Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Sa’id Raslan, *Marabil wa Simat Bina’ asy-Syakhsbiyyah fi as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah*, (Mesir: Kuliah di Masjid Syarqi, 2022), p. 30–50.

⁴¹ Abdul Mun’in Salim, *Metodologi Ilmu Tafsir*, (Yogyakarta: Teras, 2005), p. 45.

himself emphasized that his book is not a tafsir in the general sense, but rather a spiritual reflection that descends into the heart of a believer when reading one or more verses of the Qur'an.⁴² As for the writing of *Tafsir Ruh Al-Ma'ani*, it began when Al-Alusi had a dream in which he was commanded to fold the heavens and the earth, with one hand raised toward the heavens and the other toward the earth. This dream occurred on a Friday night in the month of Rajab in the year 1252 AH and served as a sign that he was commanded to write a tafsir. He began writing his exegesis on the 16th of Sha'ban 1252 AH, at the age of 34, during the reign of Sultan Mahmud Khan bin Sultan Abdul Hamid Khan.⁴³ Al-Dzahabi explains that Al-Alusi completed his exegesis before his death.⁴⁴

In terms of interpretive sources, both commentaries – *Tafsir Ruh Al-Ma'ani* by Mahmud Al-Alusi and *Tafsir As-Sya'rawi* by Muhammad Mutawalli Asy-Sya'rawi – employ the iqtirani method, which combines tafsir bi al-ma'tsur (narrative-based interpretation) and tafsir bi al-ra'yi (reasoning-based interpretation). However, in terms of explanatory approach, *Tafsir Ruh Al-Ma'ani* employs the muqarin and ijmal methods, whereas *Tafsir As-Sya'rawi* uses the bayani (detailed explanation) method. In terms of breadth, both have an ithnabi style (extensive and detailed). Regarding the scope and order of the verses being interpreted, *Tafsir Ruh Al-Ma'ani* employs the tahlili method. At the same time, *Tafsir As-Sya'rawi* combines the tahlili and maudhu'i methods.

In terms of interpretive approach, the *Tafsir Ruh Al-Ma'ani* is characterized by Sufi symbolism, fiqh, and linguistics. At the same time, the *Tafsir As-Sya'rawi* has a more diverse approach, namely educational, guidance, scholarly, literary, and the miraculous nature of the Qur'an. In terms of school of thought, both exegetes follow the Shafi'i school. In terms of structure and characteristics, the *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* Commentary begins with an introduction that includes the names of the surahs and the status of the verses, supplemented with hadith references and discussions of scholars' opinions; it prioritizes Surah Al-Baqarah, pays attention to linguistic aspects, and incorporates Arabic poetry. Meanwhile, *Tafsir As-Sya'rawi* begins with an introduction explaining the meaning of the ta'awudz recitation and the order of the Qur'an's revelation; each surah's introduction is preceded by an explanation of the surah's meaning, content, wisdom, and its connection to the previous surah (munasabah), followed by an exegesis or explanation of the verses by connecting them to other verses.

a. The Approach of Muhammad Mutawalli Sya'rawi and Mahmud Alusi in Interpreting the Verses of Qalbun Salim

Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi and Mahmud Al-Alusi, in interpreting Qalbun Salim (a pure heart) in Surah Ash-Shu'ara verse 89 and Surah As-Saffat verse 84, explained its meaning based on the method of al-iqtirān (comparative approach), namely how to interpret the Qur'an by combining two methods, namely tafsir bil-ma'tsūr (based on authentic and strong narrations) and tafsir bir-ra'yi (based on the results of ijtihad with sound reason). In his interpretation, he combined the sources of interpretation from strong narrations with the results of ijtihad based on straight reasoning.⁴⁵ Al-Sya'rawi, in his interpretation of the meaning of Qalbun Salim in the two verses, explained it by referring to other verses in the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet SAW, which added further

⁴² Muḥammad Mutawallī Asy-Sya'rāwī, *Khawāṭir Hawla Al-Qur'an Al-Karīm*, (Qāhīrah: Dār Māyū Al-Waṭāniyyah, 1982), p. 5.

⁴³ Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Ruh al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Jilid 1, 1994), p. 4.

⁴⁴ Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Dhahabī, *Al-Tafsir wa al-Mufasssīr*, (Qāhīrah: Dār al-Ḥadīth, jilid. 1. 1426 H), p. 303.

⁴⁵ M. Ridlwan Nasir, *Metode Tafsir Muqarin Dalam Memahami Al-Qur'an*, (Surabaya: IMTIYAZ, 2011), p. 15.

explanation of the meaning of a clean heart.⁴⁶ Moreover, Al-Alusi interpreted the verse using the same method as Al-Sha'rawi, namely interpreting it based on his own views while still referring to the interpretation from the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW.⁴⁷

In addition, Al-Sya'rawi also used the al-tahlīlī (analytic) method in interpreting these verses, namely by explaining them sequentially and systematically according to the arrangement of verses and surahs in the mushaf.⁴⁸ Al-Sya'rawi, before interpreting the verse about qalbun salīm, first quoted the verse in full, then explained its meaning.⁴⁹ Moreover, Al-Alusi also used this method to interpret these verses.⁵⁰

Al-Sya'rawi uses the at-tafsīr al-iṭnābī method (a detailed and extensive form of exegesis) in explaining qalbun salīm. The method involves interpreting Qur'anic verses in depth through extensive, lengthy explanations, thereby making their meanings more evident, and is preferred by scholars and those of intellect.⁵¹ The description given by Al-Alusi is highly detailed, in which he explains the meanings of words, analyzes grammatical structures (i'rab), cites inherited evidence, though rarely reveals hidden meanings behind words or implied meanings, presents the opinions of scholars, and concludes his exegesis with a summary of the meanings and insights derived.⁵²

The difference between the two interpretations lies in their explanatory methods. Specifically, the method Al-Sya'rawi used in interpreting Qalbun Salīm is the bayani method, which presents information in the form of a description without comparing hadiths or opinions or weighing the merits of the available sources.⁵³ He explains the meaning of the word in the verse, namely that Qalbun Salīm means a heart free from worldly distractions and attachments, and free from shirk, hypocrisy, showing off, and other diseases of the heart.⁵⁴ He also connects this meaning to the verse's context and to a broader sense, such as how wealth and children can be beneficial when a person's heart is in a sound state.⁵⁵ In addition, in his exegesis, he also linked this verse to other verses that support the explanation of the meaning of qalbun salīm, such as Surah An-Nahl verse 78, Al-Kahfi verse 46, and Al-'Imran verse 14.⁵⁶

In Surah As-Saffat, verse 84, Al-Sya'rawi describes the contextual interpretation of the story of Prophet Ibrahim As, specifically regarding Allah's words: “*Idh jā'a rabbahu biqalbin salīm*” (when he came to his Lord with a pure heart). He interprets this to mean that Prophet Ibrahim came to Allah with a pure heart, in accordance with the natural disposition (fitrah) that Allah had created, without waiting for a messenger to invite him or for guidance from outside himself. He also explains the meaning of the phrase “*jā'a rabbahu*,” stating that

⁴⁶ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, (Kairo: Dar Akhbar Al-Youm, jilid 17, 1991), p. 10603–10606. Lihat juga: Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 17, ..., p. 12788–12789.

⁴⁷ Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Rub al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 19, ..., p.224.

⁴⁸ M. Ridlwan Nasir, *Metode Tafsir Muqarin Dalam Memahami Al-Qur'an*, ..., p.17

⁴⁹ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 17, ..., p. 10603. Lihat juga: Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 17, ..., p. 12788.

⁵⁰ Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Rub al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 19, ..., p.224. Dan lihat: Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Rub al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 23, ..., p.80.

⁵¹ M. Ridlwan Nasir, *Metode Tafsir Muqarin Dalam Memahami Al-Qur'an*, ..., p. 14.

⁵² Maisarotil Husna, “*Aplikasi Metode Tafsir Al-Alusi ‘Rubul Ma’ani Fi Tafsir Al-Qur’an Al-Azhim Wa Sab’il Matsani’*”, Rusydiah: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Vol. 1, No. 2, (Desember 2020), p. 129.

⁵³ M. Ridlwan Nasir, *Metode Tafsir Muqarin Dalam Memahami Al-Qur'an*, ..., p. 16.

⁵⁴ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 17, ..., p. 10605-10606.

⁵⁵ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 17, ..., p. 10603-10605.

⁵⁶ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 17, ..., p. 10605-10606.

Prophet Ibrahim sought to draw closer to Allah through contemplation, reflection, and the search for truth about Allah through the signs of His greatness in the universe.⁵⁷

Al-Alusi interprets Surah As-Syu'ara, verse 89, and Surah As-Saffat, verse 84, using the comparative method. He compares the opinions of the exegetes and highlights their differences.⁵⁸ He also compares interpretations of *qalbun salim* from several exegetes, such as Ibn Abbas, Ibn Sirin, Mujahid, and Qatadah, as well as Sufi scholars such as Sufyan and Al-Junaid, to identify the interpretation that best fits the verse's context.⁵⁹ In Surah As-Saffat, verse 84, Al-Alusi compares the interpretations of exegetes, including those of early scholars such as Qatadah and prominent Sufi figures. He selects the interpretation that best fits the context of the interpretation of "*qalbun salim*."⁶⁰

Al-Alusi also employed a linguistic approach in interpreting the verse regarding the *qalbun salim*. He explained several linguistic principles, such as the meaning of the exception (*istitsna'*) in Surah As-Syu'ara, verse 89.⁶¹ In addition, in Surah As-Saffat, verse 84, he also elaborates on the stylistic features of the Qur'an, such as figures of speech, including *isti'arah tashrihiyyah* (explicit metaphor) and *isti'arah tamthiliyyah* (parabolic metaphor). Al-Alusi also explains the benefits of grammatical rules, such as the use of the letter ba' in the functions of *ta'diyah* (making a verb transitive) and *iltibas* (conveying a specific meaning).⁶²

b. The Interpretations of Muhammad Mutawalli al-Sharawi and Mahmud al-Alusi on the Verses of the "Qalbun Salim"

Surah Ash-Shu'ara, verse 89

Al-Sya'rawi interprets *Qalbun Salim* as a heart filled only with what Allah wills to fill it with. Do not fill the heart with things that distract it from worldly affairs, but leave the heart empty of everything except Allah and occupy it with the remembrance of Him. This is what is meant by a sound heart, for from the very beginning of its creation, the heart was created in a state of purity and free from the various distractions of the world. According to him, a sound heart is one filled with love for Allah and occupied with Him, not with worldly affairs, for Allah created the heart in a state of purity and innocence.⁶³

Al-Sya'rawi emphasizes that one should not seek wealth and children at the expense of the peace of the heart. For Allah says: "*Wal-bāqiyātus ṣāliḥātu khairun 'inda rabbika ṣawāban wa khairun amala*" (And righteous deeds that endure are better in reward with your Lord and better as a hope),⁶⁴ as well as in another verse "*Zuḥayyina lin-nāsi ḥubbus-syabawāḥ*" (The love of worldly desires has been made attractive to people...) which Allah then concludes with His words: "*Dẓāalika mataa'ul hayaatid-dunyaa wallaahu 'indahu busnul ma-aab*" (That is the enjoyment of worldly life, and with Allah is the best return).⁶⁵

Al-Sya'rawi explains that *Qalbun Salim* is a heart free from *shirk*, *nifāq* (hypocrisy), and *riyā'* (showing off in worship). If a person possesses these traits, then their heart is not sound. One sign of a safe heart is being free from *shirk* and hypocrisy, because hypocrites

⁵⁷ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 18, ..., p. 12788.

⁵⁸ M. Ridlwan Nasir, *Metode Tafsir Muqarin Dalam Memahami Al-Qur'an*, ..., p. 16.

⁵⁹ Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Rub al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 19, ..., p.225-226.

⁶⁰ Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Rub al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 23, ..., p.80-81.

⁶¹ Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Rub al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 19, ..., p.224-225.

⁶² Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Rub al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 23, ..., p.81.

⁶³ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 17, ..., p. 10605.

⁶⁴ Surat Al-Kahfi: 46.

⁶⁵ Surat Ali 'Imran: 14

only profess faith with their tongues, but their hearts do not believe. Their hearts are not in harmony with their words, so they are not people who possess a safe heart. Therefore, hypocrites are more sinful than unbelievers; indeed, Allah has placed them in the lowest level of Hell. Hypocrites face a more severe punishment than unbelievers because unbelievers are at least consistent in their beliefs; they are unbelievers in both heart and speech and express what they believe. Meanwhile, hypocrites deceive and pretend in the presence of people. The same applies to showing off, which contradicts a sound heart. Those who practice *riyā* do good deeds not for Allah, but for people. The bargain of those who practice *riyā* is a losing one, and their trade will yield nothing, because when they do something with the intention of showing off, others may benefit from their deeds, but they themselves gain nothing in the sight of Allah.⁶⁶

Alusi interprets this verse by citing various scholars' opinions to explain the meaning of *qalbun salim*. According to Mahmud al-Alusi, a sound heart is free from shirk and sin, fully submits to Allah's law, loves His friends, opposes His enemies, and understands the truth through reason and observation. A sound heart submits and obeys Allah and is fully devoted to worshiping Him. Al-Alusi interprets the meaning of *qalbun salim* in this verse by referring to the opinions of Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, Qatadah, Ibn Sirin, and others, who hold that a sound heart is free from the diseases of disbelief and hypocrisy. According to Imam Fakhruddin al-Razi, a "qalbun salim" is a heart free from corrupt beliefs, not inclined toward worldly desires, and accompanied by righteous deeds, for the sign of a sound heart is reflected in a person's actions. Sufyan argues that a sound heart possesses nothing other than Allah. Meanwhile, according to al-Junaid, a sound heart is always in awe of Allah, restless, and anxious for fear of being cut off from Him. Al-Alusi also pays attention to linguistic aspects and *balaghah* (rhetoric). He points out that in Arabic, the word *salam* is sometimes used to refer to safety from danger, freedom from injury, or survival from a venomous bite.⁶⁷

Surah Ash-Shaffat, verse 84

Al-Sya'rawi interprets that Prophet Ibrahim's approach to Allah with a pure heart was beneficial to him in this world and will be rewarded by Allah in the Hereafter. He explains that Prophet Ibrahim did not wait for a messenger to guide him; rather, he turned to Allah on his own. He used his intellect to seek and contemplate the kingdom of the heavens and the earth until he finally received guidance toward Allah. In order for Allah to reveal to him the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, Prophet Ibrahim transcended the physical world (*alamul mulk*). He entered the divine realm (*alamul malakut*). This occurred because he had purified himself of all forms of belief except for belief in Allah.

Al-Sya'rawi explains that the purity of the heart is the primary foundation of religion and faith. Because the *fitrah*, which created human nature from the very beginning, is good and pure. If this *fitrah* is corrupted, then it stems from humanity itself.⁶⁸ Therefore, Allah praises Prophet Ibrahim for the purity of his heart because he came to Allah with a *qalbun salim*—a heart that remains preserved in its original, unaltered *fitrah*. He lived with a pure heart and came to his Lord in this world with a sound heart. For this reason, he will attain salvation in the Hereafter, as stated in Allah's words: "On the Day when neither wealth nor children will avail, except for one who comes to Allah with a sound heart." (Ash-Shu'ara: 88–89)⁶⁹ The first salvation that Allah bestowed upon Prophet Ibrahim, he maintained by following Allah's teachings. Therefore, he was saved in this world and met Allah with a sound

⁶⁶ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 17, ..., p. 10605.

⁶⁷ Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Rub al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 19, ..., p. 225-226.

⁶⁸ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 18, ..., p. 12788.

⁶⁹ Surat Asy-Syu'ara: 88-89.

heart in the Hereafter. Thus, Allah described Prophet Ibrahim with the most noble attributes.⁷⁰

The phrase *Iẓ jā'a rabbahū* (When he came to his Lord) indicates that Prophet Abraham did not wait for a messenger to come and guide him, but rather drew near to God himself. He used his reason to seek out and contemplate the kingdom of the heavens and the earth until he finally discovered the truth and received guidance from God. Therefore, Prophet Ibrahim was entitled to be shown the kingdom of the heavens and the earth by Allah, because most people are content with the physical world (*alamul mulk*). In contrast, he had transcended the limits of this world and reached *alamul malakut*. This happened because he had purified himself of all doubt about his belief in Allah alone.⁷¹

Al-Alusi interprets qalbun salim as a heart free of all afflictions, such as corruption of faith, evil intentions, and reprehensible traits like envy, hatred, and so on. According to Qatadah, the meaning of salvation in this verse specifically refers to salvation from polytheism; however, according to Al-Alusi, the broader, more general meaning is preferable. Another meaning of qalbun salim is a heart free from worldly attachments—that is, a heart that does not love the world, does not rely on it, nor on its inhabitants. The word salim can also mean “sad” in Arabic. This meaning is a metaphor derived from “salim,” which refers to someone bitten by a snake or a scorpion. Arabs use “salim” as a form of optimism, hoping for their safety. Over time, this usage became the literal meaning in their language. However, the meaning that best fits the verse's context is the safety of the heart from various heart diseases.⁷²

c. Critical Analysis of the Interpretation of Muhammad Mutawalli Ash-Sya'rawi and Mahmud Al-Alusi on the Verses of Qalbun Salim

The comparison of the interpretations of As-Sya'rawi and Al-Alusi reveals a common understanding: qalbun salim is a heart free of shirk, hypocrisy, and various spiritual ailments. However, the two have different approaches. As-Sya'rawi adopts a tarbawi approach that focuses on nurturing the heart through remembrance of Allah and detachment from worldly affairs, making his interpretation more practical for fostering Islamic character, though less profound in its Sufi aspects. Conversely, Al-Alusi quotes many scholars using a Sufi, theological, and philosophical approach, resulting in a broader and more detailed theoretical understanding; however, it requires further contextualization to be applied in contemporary character education.

The two interpretations complement one another from the perspective of modern character education. As-Sya'rawi emphasizes human nature and Prophet Ibrahim's quest for truth, providing an optimistic foundation for the belief that humans possess an innate potential to become better. Meanwhile, Al-Alusi provides concrete criteria for diseases of the heart, such as shirk, envy, hatred, and excessive love for the world, which are highly relevant to contemporary moral issues, including image-consciousness, materialism, hedonism, and spiritual crisis. Thus, the concept of qalbun salim is not merely theological but also serves as a vital foundation for fostering Islamic character in the modern era through self-discipline, safeguarding the purity of faith, and ensuring coherence among belief, intention, and righteous deeds.

⁷⁰ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 18, ..., p. 12788.

⁷¹ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 18, ..., p. 12789.

⁷² Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Ruh al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 23, ..., p. 80-81.

The Implications of Qalbun Salīm in the Development of Islamic Character

In Tafsir Sya'rawi, the soundness of the heart is the foundation of religion and faith, because the divine nature with which humans were created from the beginning is built upon goodness and soundness. If there is a deviation from this divine nature, it originates from the human beings themselves. In the formation of character, correct creed is essential. Personality means integrating a person's tendencies in thinking and judging into a harmonious whole, grounded in a solid foundation. Therefore, personality formation establishes a sound foundation for a person's thoughts and inclinations.⁷³

The aqidah a person holds, if it aligns with fitrah, is a true aqidah, and thus serves as a strong foundation for thought and inclination—or, in other words, as the basis for the formation of one's personality. Conversely, if a creed contradicts human nature, then it is a false creed and becomes a flawed foundation. The meaning of a aqidah alignment with human nature is that it establishes humanity's need for the Creator. In other words, such an aqidah aligns with the religious nature. The Islamic creed is the only rational aqidah that establishes what is inherent in human nature—namely, the need for religion—. In contrast, other aqidah align with the religious nature only through feelings and intuition, not through reason, and thus cannot be categorized as rational aqidah.⁷⁴

True Islamic faith serves as a solid foundation for human thought and disposition. In the formation of character, Islamic faith must be the sole foundation for a person to become an Islamic, dignified, and honorable individual. Therefore, the formation of an Islamic character is, in essence, the shaping of a person's thoughts and disposition based on Islamic faith.⁷⁵ True Tawhid is the primary foundation of religion and the pillar upon which all deeds and acts of worship are based. Tawhid rooted in the heart reflects faith, while its application in words and deeds is the tangible manifestation of that faith. As the basis for the formation of personal values, Tawhid is viewed as a philosophy of life that not only provides spiritual peace and protects one from misguidance and polytheism, but also significantly shapes attitudes and behavior. Thus, Tawhid is not merely a belief, but the primary foundation for building a holistic life.⁷⁶

In Tafsir As-Sya'rawi and Tafsir Ruh Al-Ma'ani, it is explained that qalbun salīm is a heart that is not preoccupied with worldly affairs, free from worldly distractions, filled only with love for Allah, and accompanied by good deeds.⁷⁷ One sign of a healthy heart is its influence on the body. In the formation of an Islamic personality, one must practice servitude and obedience to Allah.⁷⁸ A noble personality or character in Islam is the result of applying the Sharia, both in worship and in social dealings, based on a firm creed. A person with true faith will reflect that faith in their attitude and behavior by applying all the laws of Islamic Sharia. This is what is called good character. A Muslim who performs prayer in accordance with Sharia will experience peace of mind, a tranquil heart, upright behavior, and avoid immoral acts and what Allah has forbidden.⁷⁹

Worship of Allah is the path to achieving moral goals, in which moral character is realized by aligning the human soul with the standards of Allah's worship. An Islamic personality will not be reflected in behavior except by following the laws established by

⁷³ Taqiyuddin An-Nabhani, *Asy-Syakhsbiyyah Al-Islamiyyah*, (Beirut: Dar Al-Ummah, 2003), p. 21.

⁷⁴ Taqiyuddin An-Nabhani, *Asy-Syakhsbiyyah Al-Islamiyyah*, ..., p. 22.

⁷⁵ Taqiyuddin An-Nabhani, *Asy-Syakhsbiyyah Al-Islamiyyah*, ..., p. 22-23

⁷⁶ Siti Pupu Fauziah dan Martin Roestamy, *Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Taubid*, (Depok: Rajawali Pers, 2020), p. 80–81.

⁷⁷ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Sya'rawi*, jilid 17, ..., p. 10605.

⁷⁸ Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Ruh al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 19, ..., p. 225.

⁷⁹ Marzuki, *Pendidikan Karakter Islam*, (Jakarta: AMZAH, 2015), p. 22–23.

Allah.⁸⁰ Al-Raghib Al-Asfahani emphasizes the close relationship between religious activities and moral character, and argues that worship is the primary means of achieving noble character. The primary purpose of human creation is to worship Allah, which is realized in the form of submission by obeying His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. Essentially, humans are required to realize the nobility of humanity to the fullest extent, provided it is in accordance with the Sharia, through sincere, unreserved worship and obedience to draw closer to Allah.⁸¹

According to Imam Al-Ghazali, *ma'rifatullah* (knowing God) is one measure of human perfection. A person who walks toward God with complete sincerity will not be disturbed by misfortune or loss, nor will they think of anything other than drawing closer to God. Every action of a true *salik* (spiritual seeker) is guided by religious commands and the laws of Sharia. Religious and moral obligations are the first steps to remaining on the path of Allah until reaching *al-maqam al-ilahi* (the high divine rank). As long as a person is still bound to the world, they remain a slave to their desires, so they must constantly resist the temptations of Satan by fulfilling all their obligations perfectly.⁸²

A devout and virtuous servant is a God-fearing person. He is the best of people, capable of maintaining balance in life, managing worldly affairs, and striving for the hereafter. He views the world merely as a means to the hereafter, seeing worldly life as temporary and fleeting, so he does not make it his primary goal but only a means to his primary goal in the hereafter. Therefore, a God-fearing person will attain happiness in this world and in the hereafter.⁸³

In Al-Alusi's *Tafsir Rub Al-Ma'ani*, the explanation of the concept of *qalbun salim* implicitly contains elements of Sufism. This is evident in that, although not explicitly stated, some ideas align with the principles of Sufism, including sincerity, the purification of the heart from inner ailments such as envy, jealousy, and ill intent, and detachment from worldly attachments.⁸⁴

The first step in shaping an Islamic personality is to purify the soul and body from various sinful traits and deeds, and then to fill the soul, heart, and mind with faith and knowledge.⁸⁵ The purification of the heart is part of *tazkiyatun nafs*, which is a process of self-improvement that originates from within the soul itself. The soul can be shaped based on what enters the body and positively influences character formation. The aspects of *halal* and *haram* in consumption play a major role in shaping the soul. Furthermore, the stomach is considered a source of the soul's desires that is difficult to control except with firmness and wisdom. Worldly pleasures and all their delights are a primary source that greatly influences the human soul, as is a lifestyle resembling that of animals, which poses a major challenge in controlling the soul.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Marzuki, *Pendidikan Karakter Islam*, ..., p. 26.

⁸¹ Marzuki, *Pendidikan Karakter Islam*, ..., p. 47-48.

⁸² Majid Fakhry dan Zakiyuddin Baidhawi, *Etika Dalam Islam*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1996), p.

140.

⁸³ Siti Pupu Fauziah dan Martin Roestamy, *Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Tauhid*, (Depok: Rajawali Pers, 2020), p. 165-166.

⁸⁴ Abu al-Fadl Syihab al-Din al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Rub al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim wa al-Sab' al-Matsani*, jilid 23, ..., p. 80-81.

⁸⁵ Al Rasyidin, *Falsafah Pendidikan Islami: Membangun Kerangka Ontologi, Epistemologi, Dan Aksiologi Praktik Pendidikan*, (Bandung: Citapustaka Media Perintis, 2008), p. 87-88.

⁸⁶ Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Ringkasan Ihya 'Ulumuddin*, (Jakarta: Pustaka Amani, 2007), p. 237.

Al-Ghazali states that the purpose of tazkiyatun nafs is to shape a person with pure faith, a pure soul, and extensive knowledge, so that all of their life's activities become acts of worship. Additionally, another objective is to cultivate individuals with a pure soul and noble character—in their relationship with Allah, themselves, and others—as well as an awareness of their rights, duties, and responsibilities. Tazkiyatun nafs also aims to cultivate individuals with a pure soul, free from reprehensible behavior that harms themselves.⁸⁷

According to the interpretations of As-Sya'rawi and Al-Alusi, qalbun salīm is understood not only as an ideal spiritual state, but also as the foundation for the formation of Islamic character. This concept can be implemented through the process of tazkiyatun nafs, which takes place gradually and continuously. In Sufism, this process is known through the stages of takhalli, tahalli, and tajalli.

In Sufism, the process of purifying the soul to attain a sound heart (qalbun salīm) involves three stages. First, takhalli, which is the effort to purify the heart from blameworthy traits such as *riya'*, *hasad*, *takabbur*, *ujub*, and excessive love of the world through *mujahadah* (struggling against one's desires), *muraqabah* (awareness of Allah's supervision), and *muhasabah* (self-reflection). Second, tahalli, which involves adorning oneself with noble qualities such as patience, gratitude, *tawakal*, *zuhud*, and love for Allah after the heart has been emptied of blameworthy traits, so that the character of the Prophet becomes the manifestation of the success of this process. Third, tajalli, which is the pinnacle of spiritual transformation where the light of divinity is revealed in the heart, so that the servant feels the presence of Allah intensely and comprehensively, no longer controlled by desires, the world, and the ego, but rather fully submissive to the Divine will.⁸⁸

The process of tahalli enables a person to avoid traits such as showing off, envy, arrogance, and self-admiration, and to strive to draw closer to Allah constantly. Through this process, a person not only improves their relationship with Allah but also builds a good character that benefits their social environment. In the context of character education, tahalli serves as a crucial foundation for shaping an exemplary Muslim character, as it is not merely about adorning oneself with good qualities but rather a process of cultivating a holistic spiritual character. Through tahalli, one improves one's relationship with Allah and fellow human beings, thereby fostering a harmonious life filled with peace and blessings, and consistently acting with justice, honesty, and compassion. The process of tajalli is carried out through spiritual practices such as *dhikr*, meditation, and deep worship to purify the heart of all obstacles and open oneself to receive the radiance of Divine light.⁸⁹

The characteristics of qalbun salīm align with the concept of character strength in positive psychology, leading to the achievement of virtues and positive traits reflected in thoughts and behavior, resulting in positive feelings such as gratitude, self-control, humility, forgiveness, love, and hope. The concept of self-regulation also shares similarities with qalbun salīm, namely the ability to regulate oneself through thoughts, feelings, and actions to provide appropriate responses to oneself and the environment, thereby achieving life goals. As explained by Asy-Sya'rawi and Al-Alusi, qalbun salīm can control the urges of lust and lust, avoiding polytheism, *riya'*, *hasad*, and worldly tendencies that are not in accordance with divine values. In addition, the process of tazkiyatun nafs, such as *dhikr*, *muraqabah*, and *muhasabah*, shares similarities with the concept of mindfulness, which emphasizes awareness

⁸⁷ Solihin, *Tasawuf Tematik*, (Bandung: CV Pustaka Setia, 2003), p. 145.

⁸⁸ Muspian, "Transformasi Spiritual: (Dari Takhalli, Tahalli ke Tajalli)", *JUTEQ: Jurnal Teologi dan Tafsir*, Vol. 2, No.28, September 2025, p. 1350-1351.

⁸⁹ Reza Dico Pradana, Nikila Shofiyatuz Zahra, "Takhalli, Tahalli, Tajalli dalam Perspektif Kehidupan Masyarakat Sosial", *Tashdiq: Jurnal Kajian Agama dan Dakwah*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 2025, p. 3-8.

by accepting or paying attention to thoughts, emotions, motives, objects, or perceptions with greater focus.

CONCLUSION

As-Sya'rawi and Al-Alusi hold that the qalbun salīm (righteous heart) is a heart purified of shirk (polytheism), hypocrisy, and worldly desires, and is the key to salvation in the afterlife. However, their emphases differ. As-Sya'rawi, using the bayani method, emphasizes human nature, faith education, and social relevance, making it easily applicable in contemporary character education. Meanwhile, Al-Alusi, using the muqaran method, emphasizes linguistic, theological, and spiritual approaches, thus providing a conceptual foundation for the study of tazkiyatun nafs (self-control) and Islamic psychology. These two interpretations are complementary: As-Sya'rawi provides practical guidance for the formation of Islamic character, while Al-Alusi provides a spiritual and conceptual foundation for purifying the soul.

The implications of qalbun salīm for the formation of an Islamic personality lie in the fact that the salvation of the heart is the foundation of religion and faith. An Islamic personality requires sound faith as the foundation of one's mindset and tendencies. A safe heart is one free from worldly concerns, focused solely on Allah, and occupied with righteous deeds that influence the body's organs to behave well. Worship and obedience to Allah are the primary requirements for achieving noble morals. Self-purification (tazkiyatun nafs) through the stages of takhalli, tahalli, and tajalli is the primary means of achieving a righteous heart.

The concept of a righteous heart can be used as a model for Islamic character education. In the context of formal education and Islamic boarding schools, this concept can be implemented through the inculcation of the values of sincerity, self-control, and moral responsibility, as well as through spiritual development programs aimed at purifying the heart and strengthening the relationship with Allah SWT.

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