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Tracing Intertextuality Between “Aisyah Istri Rasulullah” and Umdatul Choirot’s *Al-Madh Li-‘Aisyah Binti Abi Bakr*

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Abstract

This study investigates the intertextual dialogue between the viral song "Aisyah Istri Rasulullah" and Umdatul Choirot's poem, *Al-Madh Li-‘Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*. By applying Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality, the research explores how Choirot's poem serves as a critical response that effectively reconstructs the representation of Sayyidah 'Aisyah in the wake of the controversy sparked by the song's lyrical choices. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative framework, this inquiry navigates the layers of textual space, creative practice, and ideological shifts through a rigorous close reading of both the song's lyrics and the poem's verses. The primary dataset, complemented by relevant scholarly literature, serves as the foundation for this comparative analysis. The findings reveal a stark divide in how the two texts engage with the subject. While the song constructs the image of Sayyidah 'Aisyah primarily through romanticized and physical descriptors—a portrayal that generated significant socio-cultural friction among Muslim audiences—Umdatul Choirot's poem functions as a deliberate textual transformation. The poem acts as a corrective, repositioning Sayyidah 'Aisyah not as an object of affection, but as an intellectual, pious, and morally authoritative figure. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that intertextuality operates as more than mere textual interplay; it is a profound exercise in ideological negotiation, deeply rooted in religious ethics, gender perspectives, and the rich traditions of Islamic literature.

Keywords: *Aisyah Istri Rasulullah, Al-Madh Li-‘Aisyah binti Abi Bakr, Intertextuality, Text transformation, Representation of Sayyidah 'Aisyah.*

Introduction

The biographical documentation of esteemed figures, particularly Sayyidah 'Aisyah, is deeply rooted in the long-standing literary traditions of the Arab-Islamic world (Dhaif, 2011). "The persona of Sayyidah 'Aisyah transcends mere historical discourse; she has become a recurring and multifaceted motif within both Islamic pedagogy and literature. Across diverse texts, writers have sought to capture the complexity of her character—ranging from her profound intellectual contributions and moral stature to the intimate nuances of her life alongside the Prophet Muhammad. As Sulaiman al-Nadawi (1954) who wrote the special qualities of Sayyidah 'Aisyah in his book "Sirah Sayyidah 'Aisyah



Umm al-Mu’minin Radhiyallahu ‘anha" (an-Nadawi, 2016). There's also a novel titled "Aisyah: Wanita yang Hadir dalam Mimpi Rasulullah" by Sibel Eraslan, which chronicles the Prophet's marriage to 'Aisyah (Eraslan, 2015). There's also a qashidah titled "Mubarrarah al-Sama" by Abduh ibn Ali al-Fifi, and "Si Merah Indah Siti Aisyah" a poem by Oki Setiana Dewi.

The song 'Aisyah Istri Rasulullah,' propelled to widespread popularity in Indonesia by Syakir Daulay, became a notable cultural phenomenon. While it served to popularize the romanticized narrative of the Prophet Muhammad’s marriage to Sayyidah 'Aisyah, the song’s lyrical focus on her physical beauty simultaneously ignited a significant public debate, highlighting deep-seated tensions regarding the intersection of popular media and religious representation. (Rijal, 2022). Proponents of the song championed its positive influence, suggesting that it encouraged Muslims to mirror the affection exemplified by the Prophet and Sayyidah 'Aisyah. Conversely, detractors viewed the lyrical content as verging on impropriety, arguing that a more fitting tribute should emphasize her moral fortitude and intellectual legacy rather than her physical attributes. This tension underscores a broader struggle in contemporary Muslim societies, where the rise of religious popular culture has increasingly brought sacred figures into the realm of modern media—ranging from digital platforms to film—thereby redefining how religious icons are perceived and consumed in the public sphere. According to Weintraub (2011), Islamic popular culture in Southeast Asia often becomes a site where religious values, commercial interests, and contemporary social identities intersect.

One of the most significant responses to this controversy came from Umdatul Choirot, an Indonesian Islamic female scholar and gender activist. She criticized it by writing a counter-poem, "al-Madh li-'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr" which consists of 10 verses (Choirot, 2020). She argued that Sayyidah 'Aisyah should be seen as a figure who possessed superior intelligence and intellect (U. Choirot, personal communication, 2024). Because Sayyidah 'Aisyah inherited many hadiths of the Prophet and recorded the life journey of the Prophet Muhammad. She wrote the poem as a response to the song “AIR” which only displayed the romantic side and physical image of Aisyah. In addition, the reason for creating the poem was to show that many sides of Sayyidah 'Aisyah that were more ethical to be presented to the public. The authorship of this madh poem is particularly interesting, as while Arabic poems are typically written by Arab writers, this poem was written by an Indonesian, clearly with an Indonesian context.

The representation of female Muslim figures in popular discourse is never ideologically neutral. As Ahmed (1992) argues, Muslim women are frequently positioned within competing discourses between piety, morality, modernity, and gender expectations (Ahmed, 2021). Syi'ir "al-Madh li-'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr" written as a critique and response to the song "AIR" certainly has intertextuality, meaning that a text



cannot stand alone or exist by itself but is connected to other texts. Intertextuality is a phenomenon where a text interweaves and connects with previous texts, forming a complex and dynamic textual space. Intertextuality can be assumed to be a text constantly influenced by other texts, as if a dialogue were taking place between them (Allen, 2011; Kristeva, 2024). According to Kristeva, a text essentially contains a mosaic of quotations derived from previous texts. This complex textual space is what gives rise to textual practices. Textual practice is a process in which an author of a literary work will take components from other texts and then add, reduce, confirm or even refute them with the author's own creativity, either consciously or unconsciously, influenced by the ideology the author believes in (Kristeva, 2024). Therefore, a text must have a relationship or connection with a text that was born before. The adaptation of the author's ideology into his literary work is at least through one of three processes. One form of this process is the transformation of one text into another.

The research that is relevant to this research is Dekonstruksi Figur Sayyidah Aisyah RA dalam Lagu Aisyah Istri Rasulullah: Studi Semiotika Poststrukturalis Roland Barthes (Halim, 2020), which states that the Song AIR is a form of deconstruction of the figure of Sayyidah Aisyah. Instead of showing her glory as Ummul Mukminin, she is depicted as a romantic figure that can be interpreted like a modern teenage love story. The author reminds us of the need for a critical attitude towards popular content so as not to reduce the historical figure of Islam. In line with this research, the author will see how the syi'ir "Al-Madh li-‘Aisyah bint Abi Bakr" responds to the song "AIR" which is considered to have less ethical lyrics through Julia Kristeva's intertextual study with her theory of text space and text transformation. This research will examine how the two texts interact with each other and the syi'ir "Al-Madh li-‘Aisyah bint Abi Bakr" is a practice of text transformation of the song. This poem aims to illustrate how Sayyidah ‘Aisyah should be represented, through her noble qualities and special qualities. This contrasts with the representation of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah in the song "AIR", which only depicts the romantic side of the relationship between Sayyidah ‘Aisyah and the Prophet Muhammad.

This study contributes to the discussion of Islamic popular literature by examining how intertextuality functions as a medium for ideological negotiation and the reconstruction of female Muslim figures within contemporary Islamic discourse. Previous studies have primarily focused on the semiotic controversy and sociological reception surrounding the song “AIR” However, little scholarly attention has been given to the intertextual relationship between the song and Umdatul Choirot’s counter-poem through Julia Kristeva’s framework of textual transformation. Therefore, this research seeks to fill this gap by analyzing how textual space and ideological contestation operate between the two works. In particular, the study addresses three main questions: how the textual space surrounding the controversy of the song “AIR” is constructed; how Umdatul Choirot reconstructs the representation of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah through her poem



Al-Madh li-‘Aisyah binti Abi Bakr; and how Kristeva’s concept of intertextuality explains the ideological transformation embedded within the poem. Through these inquiries, this study aims to demonstrate that intertextuality is not merely a textual relation, but also a cultural and ideological process through which religious representation, ethics, and gender perspectives are continuously negotiated in contemporary Islamic literary production.

Method

This study uses qualitative research design with descriptive-analytical methods to examine the intertextual relationship between the poem "*Al-Madh li ‘Aisyah bint Abi Bakr*" and the song "*AIR*", as well as Aisyah's construction of the poem. The primary data source for this study is the poem "*Al-Madh li ‘Aisyah bint Abi Bakr*". Secondary data used in this study include the song "*AIR*", relevant books, journal articles, and other supporting documents related to the topic of this research. In addition to textual sources, this study also incorporates primary data obtained through a semi-structured interview with Umdatul Choirot, the author of *Al-Madh li-‘Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*. The interview was conducted in 2024 to clarify the socio-cultural background, authorial intentions, and ideological considerations underlying the composition of the poem. The interview data were used as supplementary evidence to support the interpretation of textual transformation and representation discussed in this study.

The data collection process employed a documentation-based approach, focusing on the systematic identification of song lyrics, poetic verses, and relevant scholarly discourse regarding the portrayal of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah. The analytical framework followed a multi-stage process: mapping textual relationships, interrogating ideological transformations, evaluating the significance of textual space, and ultimately synthesizing how these elements reconstruct the representation of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah within the poem.

The theoretical framework of this research is grounded in Julia Kristeva’s theory of intertextuality. Intertextuality refers to the intersection, dialogue, and interaction between texts, through which meaning is produced and reproduced. From Kristeva’s perspective, a text is never autonomous; rather, it is situated within a network of other texts that collectively form what she terms “textual space” (Bazerman, 2003; Kristeva, 2024). Textual space can be understood as a symbolic field in which multiple texts meet, interact, and exchange meanings, thereby generating new interpretations shaped by cultural, historical, and social contexts.

Kristeva emphasises that textual space is not merely a passive container of textual relations but an active site of meaning production. A text both absorbs influences from earlier texts and contributes to the interpretation of subsequent ones (Kristeva, 2024). Within this framework, meaning emerges from the interaction between the author, the text, and the reader. Readers play a crucial role in constructing meaning, as



they bring their own cultural knowledge, experiences, and ideological perspectives to the interpretative process.

Closely related to the concept of textual space is Kristeva’s notion of “textual practice”. Textual practice refers to the processes through which texts are produced, circulated, read, and interpreted. According to Kristeva, textual practice is never neutral, as it is always shaped by ideological forces and power relations within a given socio-historical context. Kristeva conceptualises this ideological dimension as “ideologesme,” which represents the intersection of ideology and textual production (Kristeva, 2024). In Kristeva’s framework, an author’s ideology manifests in literary works through three principal processes: opposition, transposition, and transformation. Opposition refers to an irreconcilable tension or conflict between texts or signifying systems. Transposition involves the movement of meaning from one sign system to another. Transformation, which is central to this study, denotes the reconfiguration of a text into a new form, generating new meanings while remaining intertextually connected to the source text (Allen, 2011; Kristeva, 2024).

Kristeva’s theory is particularly relevant to this study because the relationship between the song “Aisyah Istri Rasulullah” and the poem *Al-Madh li-‘Aisyah binti Abi Bakr* extends beyond simple textual borrowing or thematic similarity. The poem emerges within the socio-cultural controversy surrounding the song and responds to its representation of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah through a process of reinterpretation and reconstruction. Kristeva’s concepts of textual space and textual transformation provide a useful framework for examining how meanings are negotiated across texts and how ideological positions influence the production of alternative representations. Rather than treating literary works as isolated entities, this approach enables the analysis of literature as a dynamic arena in which competing interpretations of religious figures interact and contest one another.

Despite its analytical value, Kristeva’s theory also presents certain limitations. The theory primarily focuses on textual relations and the production of meaning within discourse, offering limited attention to audience reception and the broader social impact of texts. Consequently, this study does not attempt to investigate how readers or listeners interpret either work, but instead concentrates on the intertextual processes through which meanings are reconstructed. Furthermore, although Kristeva identifies opposition, transposition, and transformation as modes of textual practice, this research focuses specifically on transformation because the poem does not merely oppose the song but actively reorganizes and rearticulates its meanings within a different ideological framework.

This research primarily focuses on the process of textual transformation. Rather than conducting a comparative analysis aimed at identifying similarities, differences, or chronological precedence between texts, this study examines how the poem *Al-Madh li-‘Aisyah Binti Abi Bakr* functions as a transformative response to the song “AIR.” In line



with Kristeva’s intertextual theory, the analysis does not seek to determine which text serves as a hypogram but instead explores the dynamic interaction between the two texts within a shared socio-cultural and ideological space.

Through this theoretical and methodological framework, the study seeks to reveal how intertextuality operates as a mechanism for negotiating meaning, ideology, and representation in literary discourse. By analysing textual space and textual practice, the research demonstrates how Umdatul Choirat’s poem reconstructs the figure of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah in response to the dominant representation found in the popular song.

Results and Discussions

This section explores the intertextual relationship between the song “AIR” and Umdatul Choirat’s poem *Al-Madh li-‘Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*. It focuses on how the poem reconstructs the representation of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah through a process of textual transformation. To contextualize this relationship, the discussion first examines the socio-historical and ideological dimensions that constitute the textual space of both works before analyzing the intertextual practices through which new meanings are produced.

The Textual Space of the Song "Aisyah Istri Rasulullah" and the Emergence of the Syi'ir *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*

The song "AIR" went viral at the beginning of Ramadan 2020. This song narrates the romantic relationship between Sayyidah 'Aisyah and Prophet Muhammad. The song, originally popularized by Indonesian singer Syakir Daulay, immediately topped the trending charts on the YouTube platform within days. Then, due to its popularity, many singers competed to cover the song "AIR". However, it was later discovered that Syakir was not the one who created and originally sang the song. The song "Aisyah" was first sung by Mr. Bie on his YouTube account in 2017 with the same title. Mr. Bie is a Malaysian YouTuber who changed the lyrics of the song with the original title "Aisyah Satu Dua Tiga Cinta Kamu" sung by the Projector band to "AIR" (Choerunisa, 2021).

The viral popularity of the song "AIR" stems from its romantic lyrics and pleasant rhythm. The song could be found everywhere, as it was a popular favorite at the time. Everyone, from young to old, knew it by heart. However, its popularity sparked a mixed reaction. From a layperson's perspective, many praised the song "AIR" for its portrayal of the romantic relationship between Sayyidah 'Aisyah and the Prophet Muhammad. This is evident in the comments on cover videos of the song, which overwhelmingly praise the lyrics (Syiar Nada, 2020). Some even fantasized about being a romantic couple like the Prophet Muhammad and Sayyidah 'Aisyah. This can be considered a positive aspect, as Muslims are encouraged to emulate the Prophet Muhammad's role model. However, it can also be seen as a negative aspect, as it is considered too vulgar and taboo. Furthermore, many people are inspired and imitate the Prophet's romantic side with Sayyidah 'Aisyah alone, ignoring the many other teachings of the Prophet Muhammad that are worthy and worthy of emulation. Most of these comments come from young people, so it's feared that the lyrics of this song could potentially be



interpreted in the context of contemporary romances or the romances of teenage couples of the same age, leading them to become merely romantic.

The criticism directed at the song "AIR" was no less, or perhaps even more, than the positive comments it received. Because if explored and examined more deeply, it will be found that the lyrics of the song "AIR" are truly inappropriate to represent the noble figure of Sayyidah 'Aisyah. Various criticisms were directed at the singer and songwriter because they were considered to have deconstructed the figure of Sayyidah 'Aisyah, who should be glorified. Some of the reasons for the criticism are, the song "AIR" is entertainment in the form of music and is constantly played repeatedly which is unethical in depicting the figure of Sayyidah Aisyah RA who has a positive and "noble" image so that it is very feared that it will present a wrong interpretation for the audience who do not understand the sirah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and the history of the glory of Sayyidah Aisyah (Halim, 2020).

The vulgar and taboo points in Aisyah's song actually have references in the hadith. Many hadiths discuss the romantic side, femininity, and physical appearance of Sayyidah 'Aisyah. However, the depiction of Aisyah in the song Aisyah that only refers to that side will deconstruct the figure of Sayyidah Aisyah RA as a great and noble figure as long believed and imagined. From a psychological perspective, listeners and song enthusiasts who are essentially ordinary people will also simply accept all the lyrics sung by the singers as a common practice, and do not care about the issue of song lyrics or other hidden meanings behind a text. In many cases, Islamic popular culture simplifies complex religious figures into emotionally accessible symbols that can easily circulate within mass audiences and digital media environments (Alfi et al., 2025).

Whether consciously or not, to fulfill market (society) needs, the issue of deconstructing the figure of Sayyidah Aisyah will also spread to the deconstruction of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and Sayyidina Abu Bakar ash-Shiddiq RA. Instead of bringing to life the historical message and sociological atmosphere, the choice of romantic words, the lyrics of the song "AIR" which are adapted from hadiths about the virtues of Sayyidah Aisyah RA, actually eliminate the messages that have been formed by the hadiths about the virtues of Sayyidah Aisyah RA. In the end, what occurs is an attempt to bring to life a new "historical message" and a new "sociological atmosphere", while simultaneously deconstructing the historical message and sociological atmosphere according to the hadith (Halim, 2020).

This continuous and ongoing understanding makes the connotative meaning of a song change into a new belief for the listeners. The viewers receive a message in the form of a song, with lyrics in the form of sentence fragments or adaptations of a number of hadiths that are not complete texts and certainly no explanation of the context of each hadith, as well as complete references to provide interpretations. Therefore, through the lyrics of the song with its short duration and beautiful melody, it is impossible for the audience to obtain references regarding the profile of the rawi, the



historical context, let alone the interpretation of each word and the complete sentence in the hadith in question, other than just a romantic story that is very possible for viewers to imagine like a love story of a modern-day teenager (according to the viewers' love story references).

While the situation depicted in the lyrics of the song "AIR" is indeed valid or truly real, it does not truly represent the love story between the Prophet Muhammad and Sayyidah Aisyah. This song merely recounts the love story of Sayyidah Aisyah when she was still Humaira, a virgin, a beautiful, fair-skinned child with rosy cheeks, and the period leading up to the Prophet Muhammad's passed away. So much of the historical description of the glory and nobility of their love story over such a long period of time is wasted. This is even more so when the situation depicted in the lyrics is compared to the depiction of Sayyidah Aisyah as described above. Therefore, this song does not truly represent the figure of Sayyidah 'Aisyah.

The song “Aisyah Istri Rasulullah” has attracted criticism from various groups, including academics, religious scholars (ustādz), Islamic scholars (kyai), social media influencers, and gender activists, who question its representation of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah and its broader cultural implications. Among them is Buya Yahya on the YouTube channel "Al-Bahjah," who criticized the writing of the song's lyrics. He said that Sayyidah 'Aisyah should not be depicted solely physically (Al-Bahjah TV, 2020). It is true that Sayyidah 'Aisyah had a beautiful face, however, this specific depiction will make the audience focus only on Sayyidah 'Aisyah's beauty. In fact, there are many aspects of Sayyidah 'Aisyah's personality that are more worthy of being described, such as her gentleness and courage. Buya Yahya also stated that it is impolite to address Aisyah without the title Sayyidah or Radhiyallahu ‘Anha (RA) because it is a form of respect for a Muslim to the ummahat al-mu’minin, namely Sayyidah ‘Aisyah. Therefore, Buya Yahya requested that the lyrics of the song be changed to depict Sayyidah ‘Aisyah’s other special qualities rather than just the physical and romantic relationship between Sayyidah ‘Aisyah and the Prophet Muhammad (Al-Bahjah TV, 2020).

Besides Buya Yahya, Ustadz Abdul Somad also responded to the controversy surrounding the song "AIR" on his own YouTube channel. He actually understands the lyrics of the song which are considered rude by some, because according to him, it is a millennial style of language and is aimed at millennials and follows the current developments. He likened it to Sayyidah 'Aisyah being our mother and one day our niece wants to tell us about her grandmother. So of course we will tell her in a language she understands and when her parents see it, they will definitely criticize us for using words that are considered rude. However, Ustadz Abdul Somad also warned to be more careful in choosing words for song lyrics in the future and he was grateful that Buya Yahya provided alternative lyrics which better describe Sayyidah 'Aisyah with good and polite language. He said that the criticism is not meant to bring down but to save us all. And he advised artists not to stop creating and to introduce other figures besides Sayyidah



'Aisyah so that future generations will always know these role models (Ustadz Abdul Somad Official, 2020).

Criticism has also come from gender activists, such as a column on Mojok.co written by Abdul Gani entitled "Analisis Serius Soal Makna Lagu Aisyah Istri Rasulullah" which actually encourages the public to think critically so as not to be trapped by the lyrics that lead to impossible fantasies. And asked again to the public and netizens who want to be like the Prophet or 'Aisyah because they like listening to the song; have we imitated the Prophet's morals or only want to imitate the romance in the husband-wife relationship (Gani, 2020). Furthermore, criticism also came from a gender activist, Kalis Mardiasih. She argued that the song "AIR" causes many women to want to be Aisyah by their future partners, thus leading many women to the level of fantasy. Also, the song could go viral because many of the people who covered the song were beautiful women with melodious voices, so that people who saw and listened to it were lulled by their beauty and melodious voices without having to care about the lyrics which were considered vulgar and unethical (Mardiasih, 2020).

In addition to the two opinions above, one person who responded to and criticized the song "AIR" was Umdatul Choirot. She is not only a female scholar but also a gender activist. Umdatul Choirot responded to and criticized the lyrics of the song "AIR" through a different path, namely by creating a counter-literary work. This literary work was not created in Indonesian like the song "AIR" but in the form of Arabic poetry with a classic poetry model that has wazan (foundational metrical pattern or rhythmic scale that dictates the specific sequence of long and short syllables in a line of poetry) and qafiyah (the uniform, concluding sound or rhyme scheme that defines the end of each verse) under the title syi'ir Al-Madh li'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr. Her background as a caretaker of an Islamic boarding school that is full of religious and moral teachings makes the poetry she created identical to Islamic values and akhlaqul karimah (noble, praiseworthy behaviors and moral virtues that originate from Islamic values and reflect a pure soul). Umdatul Choirot believes that the Prophet Muhammad and Sayyidah Aisyah also had a romantic side between them. However, when it is made into a literary work, it is feared that it will actually become a bad encouragement for listeners and song lovers who are generally ordinary people who previously did not know and have not studied how the Prophet Muhammad and Sayyidah 'Aisyah behaved. In addition, it is also feared that it will lead them to the level of wishful thinking (tamanna) which will never become a reality because in reality ordinary people will never be the same as the Prophet Muhammad and his wives, especially Sayyidah 'Aisyah. Therefore, Umdatul Choirot created this poem to break through and provide a complex understanding to ordinary people how Sayyidah 'Aisyah should be depicted (U. Choirot, personal communication, 2024). The representation of Sayyidah 'Aisyah is so powerful and authoritative in the poetry written by her because once again she does not agree with



the physical depiction that seems vulgar and disrespectful of Sayyidah 'Aisyah in the song "AIR".

The pros and cons above create a very complex textual space in the song "AIR" which contains the socio-historical conflict surrounding the text. Starting from the support coming from the millennial generation and criticisms that came from scholars who are older groups. This textual space creates a multitude of textual practices for literary works that were created later. The same is true for the poem *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr* by Umdatul Choirot. The creation of the poem *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr* is a natural response from the author when seeing something that does not align with her ideology. The author's ideology, which comes from a background as a scholar and gender activist, made her compose the poem *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr* as a natural response to defend the ideology that Umdatul Choirot believes in, namely depicting Sayyidah 'Aisyah as a noble, religious, pious, honorable figure, etc. which is contrary to the lyrics in the song "AIR". Directly or indirectly, the lyrics in the song "AIR" influenced the creation of the lyrics in the poem *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr* as Umdatul Choirot's effort to defend the ideology she believes in. This is what will be discussed further in the textual practice of the poem *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*.

Intertextual Transformation in *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*

In creating the poem *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*, Umdatul Choirot uses Arabic as the language of instruction. The author's ideology determines how the literary work is created. According to Kristeva, the author's ideology can be seen through one of three processes, namely opposition, transposition, and transformation. Opposition is the conflict between two things that cannot be determined, transposition is the movement from one or more sign systems to another, while transformation is the change in form from one text to another (Kristeva, 2024).

In writing the poem *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*, the ideology and traditions adhered to by Umdatul Choirot certainly played a role. Apart from the general ethics that great Islamic figures should be respected by presenting their figures through positive and non-taboo things, the ideology and traditions of the Islamic boarding school she adhered to also influenced the writing of her poem. Islamic boarding schools tend to be very ethical, polite, and avoid things that are very taboo, so the lyrics and depiction of Aisyah in her poem are also very ethical. Moreover, she was the caretaker of an Islamic boarding school who always upheld the dignity of women. She held the principle that women's duties are not limited to household affairs and that women have a vital role in shaping the character of the nation's generation. Furthermore, she was also known as a female fighter who certainly had a very Islamic character, which also strengthened how she represented Sayyidah 'Aisyah. So the ideology, values, and traditions she adheres to make her "transform" the lyrics of the song 'AIR' in the poem *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*.



In general, Umdatul Choirot transforms the lyrics of Aisyah's songs into poetry and creates new meanings to represent Sayyidah Aisyah's noble qualities, which were previously only represented physically with vulgar and inappropriate words. This new meaning needs to be understood by the general public so they can recognize a great figure like Sayyidah Aisyah and emulate her noble qualities and behavior, and not be lulled by romantic lyrics that lead listeners to fantasies.

Before examining the process of textual transformation, it is important to note the poetic characteristics of *Al-Madh li-‘Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*. The poem is composed in a traditional Arabic poetic style that employs rhyme (qāfiyah) and rhythmic patterns reminiscent of classical Islamic didactic poetry. These formal features contribute to the poem’s authoritative and devotional tone, distinguishing it from the popular and conversational style of the song “AIR” The English translations provided in this study are intended to convey the semantic meaning of the verses rather than their poetic form, rhyme, or metrical structure. Consequently, certain expressions have been translated contextually to preserve their intended meaning and cultural significance rather than through strict word-for-word equivalence.

AISYAH ISTRI RASULULLAH

Mulia indah cantik berseri
Kulit putih bersih merah dipipimu
Dia Aisyah putri Abu Bakar
Istri Rasulullah

Sungguh sweet Nabi mencintamu
Hingga Nabi minum di bekas bibirmu
Bila marah, Nabi kan bermanja
Mencubit hidungnya

Aisyah...
Romantisnya cintamu dengan Nabi
Dengan baginda kau pernah main lari-lari
Selalu bersama hingga ujung nyawa
Kau disamping Rasulullah...
Aisyah...

Sungguh manis oh sirah kasih cintamu
Bukan persis novel mula benci jadi rindu
Kau istri tercinta Ya Aisyah Humairah...



Rasul sayang, kasih, Rasul cintamu

Mulia indah cantik berseri
Kulit putih bersih merah dipipimu
Dia Aisyah putri Abu Bakar
Istri Rasulullah

Sungguh sweet Nabi mencintamu
Bila lelah Nabi baring di jilbabmu
Seketika kau pula bermanja
Mengikat rambutnya

Aisyah...
Romantisnya cintamu dengan Nabi
Dengan baginda kau pernah main lari-lari
Selalu bersama hingga ujung nyawa
Kau disamping Rasulullah...
Aisyah...

Sungguh manis oh sirah kasih cintamu
Bukan persis novel mula benci jadi rindu
Kau istri tercinta Ya aisyah Humairah...
Rasul sayang, kasih, Rasul cintamu

المدح لعائشة بنت أبي بكر

عَائِشَةُ بِنْتُ الصِّدِّيقِ صَحَابِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

وُلِدَتْ بِمَكَّةَ بِتِسْعِ قَبْلِ الْهِجْرَةِ

‘Āisyah bint Abū Bakr Al-Siddiq, friend of Rasulullah,
Born in Mecca, nine years before the hijrah.

أَسْلَمَتْ صَغِيرَةً جَمِيلَةً مُطِيعَةً

ذَكِيَّةً فَصَاحَةً كَرِيمَةً سَيِّدَةً

She has been a believer since childhood, beautiful in appearance and very devout,
Intelligent, eloquent, noble, and a great woman.



فَجَاءَتْ مَلَائِكَةٌ بِضَوْءٍ صُورَتِهَا

إِلَى نَبِيِّ مُحَمَّدٍ بِأَمْرِ مِنْ رَبِّهَا

Angels appeared to the Prophet Muhammad bearing a radiant vision of her image.
By the command of her Lord.

وَبِقُدْرَةِ اللَّهِ تَكُونُ زَوْجَةً

لِنَبِيِّ الْمُصْطَفَى دُنْيَا وَآخِرَةً

By the power of Allah, she became a wife,
For Prophet Muhammad *al-Muṣṭafā*, in this world and the afterlife.

فَكَانَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ تَرَجَّى بِمَا يُرِيدُ

يُقَوِّى الرِّوَابِطَةَ وَيَرْضَى بِمَا يَرْضَى

Abu Bakr welcomed the marriage with gratitude,
believing it would strengthen the bond between his family and the Prophet
Muhammad

هِيَ أَكْثَرُ عِلْمًا بِعِلْمِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

تَكُونُ مُدَرِّسَةً لِأَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

She is the most knowledgeable (inherited) the knowledge of the Prophet,
Become a teacher for the Prophet's friends.

يُحِبُّهَا اللَّهُ تَزَوَّجَهَا اللَّهُ

يُكْرِمُهَا اللَّهُ وَيُفَارِقُهَا اللَّهُ

She was loved, married, honored,
and ultimately separated through death—all in devotion to Allah.

وَكَانَ يُحِبُّهَا وَكَذَا لِأَبْنَيْهَا

وَلِجَمِيعِ أَهْلِهَا وَلِأَقْرَبَائِهَا

The Prophet loved her, as well as her beloved father,
And all her family and relatives.

وَيَا مَنْ تَمَيَّزَتْ بِرِجَاحَةِ الْعَقْلِ



وَيَا مَنْ أُتِّهِمَتْ فَبَرَّاهَا اللَّهُ

O you who are decorated with superior intelligence,
O you who were accused, then Allah freed (from the accusation).

مَوَدَّةُ الرَّسُولِ لِعُمُقِ تَفَكُّيرِهَا

وَحُسْنُ دَأْبَتِهَا وَحِرْصِهَا عَلَى الْعِلْمِ

The love of the Prophet Muhammad was due to the depth of her mind,
and (because of) her perseverance, and her enthusiasm in seeking knowledge.

The following will show the process and facts of the transformation of the lyrics of the song "AIR" in the syi'ir *Al-Madh li 'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*.

First, Umdatul Choirot altered the physical description of Sayyidah Aisyah in the lyrics "*Mulia indah cantik berseri. Kulit putih bersih merah dipipimu*" to be more appropriate to the lyrics.

جَمِيلَةٌ مُطِيعَةٌ ذَكِيَّةٌ فَصَاحَةٌ كَرِيمَةٌ سَيِّدَةٌ

(Beautiful in appearance and very devout, intelligent, eloquent, noble, and a great woman.)

Because overly specific physical descriptions of a noble figure like Sayyidah Aisyah are not permitted by scholars. This is feared to lead the general public to fantasize about Sayyidah Aisyah only in terms of her physical beauty. It can be seen in the lyrics of the poem that Umdatul Choirot only describes Sayyidah Aisyah with the word *جَمِيلَةٌ* without giving specific characteristics that describe Sayyidah Aisyah's physical appearance. Apart from that, Umdatul Choirot added other noble qualities to support these qualities. Like the nature of *جَمِيلَةٌ مُطِيعَةٌ ذَكِيَّةٌ فَصَاحَةٌ كَرِيمَةٌ سَيِّدَةٌ* because besides her beautiful face, Sayyidah Aisyah was also a woman who was obedient to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, also had intelligence so that many hadiths were narrated through her path, and Sayyidah Aisyah was a woman who was eloquent (able to read and write and fluent in reading the Qur'an), and what is certain is that she was a noble figure and worthy of being glorified.

Second, the depiction of Rasulullah's love for Sayyidah Aisyah when Rasulullah drank from Sayyidah Aisyah's lips (glass) is found in the lyrics "*Sungguh sweet Nabi mencintamu. Hingga Nabi minum di bekas bibirmu*" is an inappropriate and unethical



depiction. Indeed, the lyrics are based on a hadith narrated by Imam Muslim which explains that the Prophet Muhammad placed his lips exactly where Aisha drank (Muslim, 1998). However, this cannot be used as a benchmark that the depiction of the Prophet's romantic love is limited to drinking from Aisha's glass. Thus, Umdatul Choirot describes the Prophet's love for Sayyidah Aisyah not only as a physical love, but also because of the noble qualities that Sayyidah Aisyah possessed, as in the lyrics

مَوَدَّةُ الرَّسُولِ لِعُمُقِ تَفَكُّيرِهَا وَحُسْنِ ذَائِبَتِهَا وَحِرْصِهَا عَلَى الْعِلْمِ

(The Prophet's love was due to the depth of her mind, and (because of) her perseverance, and her passion for seeking knowledge)

The lyrics explain that the Prophet's love for Sayyidah Aisyah was not solely due to her appearance, but also due to the depth of her mind, her perseverance, and her curiosity for knowledge, which led the Prophet to consider Sayyidah Aisha worthy of being his wife, as the guardian and inheritor of his knowledge.

Third, the depiction of the romance of the Prophet Muhammad and Sayyidah Aisyah, which is given the impression of two young men in love who are chasing each other, is seen in the lyrics "*Romantisnya cintamu dengan Nabi. Dengan baginda kau pernah main lari-lari*". Although the lyrics are based on a hadith narrated by Abu Dawud (Al-Sijistani, 2015), the lyrics are considered unethical because they give the impression that Sayyidah Aisyah during her life accompanying the Prophet Muhammad was only having fun without contributing anything to the spread of Islam. In fact, Sayyidah Aisyah has a very large contribution to the spread of Islam, namely as a narrator of the Prophet's hadiths and as a teacher for the companions of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Therefore, in the poem "*Al-Madh li'Aisyah binti Abi Bakr*", Umdatul Choirot depicts Sayyidah Aisyah as a figure who inherited the Prophet's knowledge and became a teacher (teaching these knowledge) to the Prophet's companions, as depicted in the following lyrics. In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

هِيَ أَكْثَرُ عِلْمًا يَعْلَمُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ تَكُونُ مُدْرَسَةً لِأَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

(She is the most knowledgeable (inherited) the knowledge of the Prophet Muhammad, She was the teacher of the Prophet's companions)

This is a form of honoring a noble figure like Sayyidah Aisyah by mentioning her good qualities as a form of education for the general public regarding these qualities. It is this kind of Sayyidah Aisyah who deserves to be introduced and emulated. Meanwhile, Sayyidah Aisyah's characterization of having fun (running) with the Prophet Muhammad



is a good example set by the Prophet Muhammad to honor his wife by inviting her to joke and have fun. When this is incorporated into the lyrics without further interpretation, it can lead to misperceptions among the general public.

Fourth, the depiction of Sayyidah Aisyah as the beloved wife of the Prophet Muhammad is not something that is considered wrong, however, it is felt to be inappropriate if the lyrics only include " *Kau istri tercinta Ya Aisyah Humairah...*" which gives the impression that the Prophet Muhammad's love for Sayyidah Aisyah is like the love of an ordinary human being for his partner. In fact, the Prophet Muhammad's love for Sayyidah Aisyah was purely for Allah SWT. It is narrated in a hadith that the Prophet Muhammad met Sayyidah Aisyah in his dream for three nights. In his dream, an angel brought the figure of Aisyah wrapped in silk and the angel said to the Prophet Muhammad that this (Sayyidah Aisyah) is your wife, then when the Prophet Muhammad saw her, he saw Sayyidah Aisyah in her (Al-Bukhari, 2002). Marrying Sayyidah Aisyah was a destiny that had been determined by Allah SWT with the aim of the Prophet Muhammad having someone by his side as an heir to knowledge and helping him in spreading Islam. Umdatul Choirot in his syi'ir gives this description in his syi'ir bayt which reads:

فَجَاءَتْ مَلَائِكَةٌ بِضَوْءٍ صُورَتِهَا إِلَى نَبِيِّ مُحَمَّدٍ بِأَمْرِ مِنْ رَبِّهَا
وَبِقُدْرَةِ اللَّهِ تَكُونُ زَوْجَةً لِلنَّبِيِّ الْمُصْطَفَى دُنْيَا وَآخِرَةً

(The angels came to the Prophet Muhammad with her light, by the command of her Lord.)

(By the power of Allah, she became the wife of the Prophet Muhammad al-Muṣṭafa, in this world and the afterlife.)

It is explained in the two verses of the poem above that Sayyidah Aisha was not only the Prophet's partner in this world but also her companion in the afterlife. Thanks to her service as a teacher and as *ummahat al-mu'minin* for all Muslims throughout the world, from the past until the end of time.

Fifth, the depiction of the Prophet Muhammad's love for Sayyidah Aisyah seems worldly and like a lifelong love between two partners. This is certainly considered unethical because a noble figure like the Prophet Muhammad certainly still has the characteristics of an ordinary human being, but the love of the Prophet Muhammad cannot be equated with the love of an ordinary human being. As in the lyrics " *Rasul sayang, kasih, Rasul cintamu*" and " *Selalu bersama hingga ujung nyawa. Kau disamping Rasulullah...Aisyah...*" which illustrates that the Prophet Muhammad loved Sayyidah Aisyah with the love of a human being for his partner. In fact, everything the Prophet Muhammad did was always based on Allah's command and everything was



for the sake of Allah Swt. This is what led Umdatul Choirot to transform the lyrics into the following verse:

يُحِبُّهَا اللَّهُ تَزَوَّجَهَا اللَّهُ يُكْرِمُهَا اللَّهُ وَيُفَارِقُهَا اللَّهُ

(She was loved for the sake of Allah, married for the sake of Allah, honored for the sake of Allah, and separated (by death) was also for the sake of Allah).

This verse clearly explains that the Prophet Muhammad loved, married, honored, and separated (by death) from Sayyidah Aisyah all for the sake of Allah SWT, not for worldly desires like other humans.

These examples demonstrate how Umdatul Choirot transforms the representation of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah from a predominantly romantic and physical portrayal into one centered on piety, intellectual authority, and moral excellence. Such transformation reflects not only the author’s personal ideology but also the influence of Islamic boarding school traditions and religious values that shape her understanding of how revered Islamic figures should be represented. In Kristeva’s terms, this process illustrates how intertextuality functions as a site of ideological negotiation, where existing meanings are reinterpreted and reconstructed to produce alternative representations within contemporary Islamic discourse.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the relationship between the song AIR and Umdatul Choirot’s poem *Al-Madh li-‘Aisyah binti Abi Bakr* can be understood through Julia Kristeva’s concepts of textual space and textual transformation. The socio-cultural controversy surrounding the song created a complex textual space in which various interpretations, criticisms, and ideological responses emerged. Within this context, Umdatul Choirot’s poem functions as a transformative response that reconstructs the representation of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah from a predominantly romantic and physical portrayal into one that emphasizes her piety, intellectual authority, moral integrity, and religious significance.

The study further reveals that textual transformation is not merely a literary process but also an ideological one. Influenced by Islamic boarding school traditions, religious values, and gender-conscious perspectives, Umdatul Choirot reinterprets the representation of Sayyidah ‘Aisyah to offer an alternative understanding of an important female figure in Islamic history. This finding highlights how intertextuality operates as a site of ideological negotiation where competing representations of religious figures are contested and reconstructed within contemporary Islamic discourse.

This research contributes to intertextual studies by demonstrating the relevance of Kristeva’s framework for analyzing literary responses within Islamic popular culture.



It also contributes to discussions on the representation of Muslim women by showing how literary texts can challenge dominant cultural narratives and produce alternative meanings. However, this study is limited to textual analysis and does not examine how audiences interpret either the song or the poem. Future research may explore audience reception, digital circulation, and the broader role of Islamic popular culture in shaping contemporary understandings of religious figures and gender identities.

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