

LEADERSHIP STYLES IN SADDAM HUSSEIN'S ZABIBAH WAL-MALIK (2000) AND TEATER OASE'S EL-JALLAD (2023): AN INTERTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

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This study investigates the contrasting leadership styles represented in Saddam Hussein's novel *Zabibah wal-Malik* (2000) and the drama script *El-Jallad* (2023) produced by Teater OASE, Universitas Sebelas Maret, which serves as an adaption of the novel. The king character in this novel is depicted as a wise leader oriented toward a formal-legal system, whereas the Hussein character in the drama script exhibits an absolute charismatic authority. This study employs a descriptive-analytical method with a qualitative approach. Data consist of dialogues representing leadership styles, collected from both primary sources. Analysis draws on Max Weber's (1947) leadership theory and Julia Kristeva's (1980) intertextuality theory, specifically the concept of transposition encompassing enunciative transposition, mosaic quotations, and ambivalence of meaning. Findings reveal two main conclusions: First, the King represent rational-legal leadership characterized by adherence to formal law, rejection of absolute power, and public serve orientation; second, the Hussein character represents charismatic authority marked by personal legitimacy claims, rejection of formal procedures, and the assertion that he himself constitutes the law. The intertextual relationship operates through sign-system transposition, demonstrating that the adaption process is not merely aesthetic but ideologically reconstructs the representation of leadership and power.

المخلص

يدرس هذا البحث عن تمثيل أسلوب القيادة بين شخصية الملك في رواية زبيبة والملك (2000) لصدام حسين، وشخصية حسين في مسرحية الجلال (2023) لفرقة مسرح واحدة (Teater OASE)، باعتبار المسرحية اقتباساً وسيطياً من الرواية ذاتها. تُجسّد شخصية الملك في الرواية قائداً حكيماً يلتزم بالنظام القانوني الرسمي، في حين تُجسّد شخصية حسين في المسرحية قائداً يركّز على السلطة الكاريزمية الشخصية. يهدف البحث إلى تحليل بناء الصراع في كلا العملين، وتحليل العلاقة التناسية بينهما، معتمداً المنهج الوصفي التحليلي بمقاربة نوعية. تُجمعت البيانات عبر التوثيق من العملين الأساسيين، وتحلّلت باستخدام نظرية ماكس فيبر في أساليب القيادة، ونظرية التناسية لجوليا كريستيفا ولا سيما مفهوم التحويل (Transposition) بمستوياته الثلاثة: التحويل التلفظي، ومسرّد الاقتباسات، وتعدد المعن. وحذا الباحث نتيجتين رئيسيتين: أولاً، تُمثّل شخصية الملك في الرواية أسلوب القيادة العقلاني القانوني المتسم بالالتزام بالنظام الرسمي ورفض السلطة المطلقة وخدمة الشعب، في حين تُمثّل شخصية حسين في المسرحية أسلوب القيادة الكاريزمية المتسم بادّعاء الشرعية الشخصية ورفض النقد والإجراءات الرسمية والإعلان بأنّه هو القانون بذاته. ثانياً، تعمل العلاقة التناسية عبر تحويل نظام العلامات؛ إذ يُحوّل التحويل التلفظي موضع الذات من قائد خاضع للقانون إلى قائد يُشرّع نفسه مصدراً للقانون، ويكشف مسرّد الاقتباسات امتصاص المسرحية للإطار الحوارية للرواية مع ملته بنظام علامات مغاير، فيما ينتج تعدد المعنى لشخصية قائد يحضر حامياً ومُدرّراً في آنٍ واحد، والسلطة مسؤوليّة وحققاً مطلقاً معاً.

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INTRODUCTION

Literary works function as dynamic media that reflect social transformation and intellectual currents. Among the most significant phenomena in modern literary studies is intertextuality, wherein new texts emerge from the absorption and transformation of prior

texts. This phenomenon becomes particularly apparent in the process of adaption or media transfer (alih wahana), in which a work is not merely relocated from one medium to another, but is actively reinterpreted and ideologically reconstructed.

The novel *Zabibah wal-Malik* (2000), widely attributed to former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, presents a distinctive portrayal of leadership and power. The King character is depicted as a wise leader, bound by a formal legal system and wholly devoted to his people. The drama script *El-Jallad* (2023), produced by Teater OASE, an Arabic language theater group from the Arabic Literature Department of Universitas Sebelas Maret, constitutes an adaption of this novel. However, the drama script transforms the leader character into an absolute, charismatic dictator, diametrically opposed to novel's representation.

This divergence in the representation of leadership between the two works raises significant questions about how intertextual processes operate in the context of media transfer. Previous research has examined the novel *Zabibah wal-Malik* from feminist and power perspectives (Salsabilla, 2025), and has studied comparative literature involving Teater OASE productions (Nagara, 2024). However, no study has specifically examined the intertextuality between *Zabibah wal-Malik* and *El-Jallad* through the lens of leadership style theory. This research addresses the gap.

This study aims to: (1) describe the leadership styles of the King character in *Zabibah wal-Malik* and the Hussein character in *El-Jallad*; and (2) analyze the intertextual relationship between the two works. The theoretical framework integrates Max Weber's (1947) typology of authority rational-legal, charismatic, and traditional with Julia Kristeva's (1980) theory of intertextuality, specifically the concepts of transposition, which encompasses enunciative transposition, mosaic of quotations, and ambivalence of meaning. This integration allows for a systematic analysis of both the representational differences in leadership and the mechanism through which the drama script transforms the sign system of the novel.

The study employs a descriptive-analytical method with a qualitative approach. Data consist of words, phrases, sentences, and dialogues representing leadership styles, collected through documentation from two primary sources: the Novel *Zabibah wal-Malik* (2000) and the drama script *El-Jallad* (2023). The analysis proceeds through close reading and systematic identification of data that reflect leadership characteristics, followed by intertextual analysis using Kristeva's transposition framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Leadership Styles of The King Character in *Zabibah wal-Malik*

Analysis from novel reveals that the King character consistently embodies rational-legal authority as conceptualized by Weber (1947). The King does not claim personal legitimacy but derives his authority from the formal legal system. Two representative data items are presented below.

Data 1

أقول، ليس مستحيلاً أن يشكل جمع منظم حتى في ظل السلطة.. ويمكن أن تكون له بعض سمات الجمع

بصفات وتطلعه الأصليين، وليس كلها، وبماغير جانب منحياة الناس نحو الأفضل وليس كلها...

(حسين, 2000:22)

This dialogue occurs when the King explains his vision of governance to Zabibah. The King places a well-organized social system, not personal prerogative, as the foundation of collective life. His statement that just living is possible only "under a well-organized system"

demonstrates that legitimacy of power resides in the formal order, not in the ruler's personal will. This aligns with Weber (1947, p. 330) definition of rational-legal authority as resting on "the belief in the validity of legal statutes which is justified by rational-rules" and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands. Crucially, the King's explicit acknowledgement of the system's imperfection (though never quite perfectly) is itself a marker of rational-legal leadership legitimacy is not grounded in the infallibility of the ruler but in the ongoing integrity of the formal structure.

Data 2

لكننا الآن واقعيا بلا جمع نظمو يا زبيبة, وأنا ومن يعاونني نقود السلطة.. وهذا يعني أن السلطة لم يخلقها

جمع منظم, بل إن الحكم سبق فكرة وجود جمع منظم, مع أنني اقر بأننا بحاجة إلى عصابة مومنة بعقيدة

تسمونها جمعا منظما, وطالما تفضلون هذه التسمية فليكن.... (حسين, 2000:22)

Data 2 reinforces the finding of Data 1. The King openly acknowledges that his government currently lacks a fully organized system, a frank admission that would be unthinkable under charismatic legitimacy, which depends on the leader's projected infallibility. Rather than deflecting or asserting personal authority, the King identifies the absence of formal structure as a problem requiring resolution. This reflect Weber's (1947, p. 330) principle that rational-legal authority operates through "a continuous organization of official function bound by rules", wherein the leader's identity is subordinate to the institutional system he administers. The King's recognition that he needs "a committed body bound by a principle" further evidences the separation of the ruler's person from the formal system of governance the defining characteristic of rational-legal authority.

Leadership Styles of The Hussein Character in El-Jallad

Analyses from the drama script reveals that the Hussein character embodies charismatic authority in its most absolute form Hussein's dialogues systematically construct a self-image grounded in supernatural personal qualities rather than formal legal structures. Two representative data items are presented below.

Data 3

أنا! أنا أقوى الملك الأقوى! المفرد الأولى! المستحق بما لا أحد يستحق هذه القدرة! أنا الأمير الأولى في

العراق بل الرب سيقبل كل ما يكون رجائي... (الجلاد 2023:17)

This dialogue occurs when Zabibah questions Hussein about the nature of power. Hussein responds with an absolute claim of personal supremacy, explicitly equating his will with divine will and positioning himself as uniquely unrivaled. The declaration "God will accept everything that is my wish" illustrates that Hussein's legitimacy derives not from any legal system but from a claimed supernatural endowment. This exemplifies Weber's (1947, pp. 358--359) definition of charisma as "a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities". Unlike the King in the novel, Hussein offers no procedural accountability and acknowledges no institutional constraint, his authority stands solely on the recognition of his personal extraordinariness.

Data 4

حوار؟ ههههه لا حوار ولا مناقشة في هذا الأمر اليوم, اخرجي واذهي الآن! هناك أمور كثيرة لا بد

أما أموالك فلن أرجعها إليك، هههههه، سيملكها الحكومة قطعاً هههههه.... (الجلاد، 2023: 6)

This data emerges when Zabibah attempt to negotiate the return of her family's confiscated property. Hussein's response dismissive laughter followed by a flat refusal demonstrates that he does not recognize formal legal mechanisms as valid channels for resolving disputes. Particularly significant is Hussein's conflation of himself with the state. By declaring that the property "will belong to the government", he erases the boundary between public office and personal will, a boundary that rational-legal authority is explicitly designed to maintain. This behavior corresponds precisely to Weber's (1947, p. 361) characterization of charismatic authority as "specifically irrational in the sense of being foreign to all rules" and "specifically foreign to economic considerations" (p. 362). The laughter accompanying the denial of Zabibah's rights signals that power is understood as an absolute personal prerogative rather than a duty-bound function.

Intertextual Relationship between Zabibah wal-Malik and El-Jallad

The intertextual relationship between the two works operates through the three dimensions of transposition as theorized by Kristeva (1980). Analysis demonstrates that the drama script does not merely adapt the novel but fundamentally reconstructs its sign system.

Enunciative Transposition

Enunciative transposition refers to the shift in the subject position of enunciation, the position from which the leader speaks about power. Data 1 and 3, presented above, make this shift visible in the novel, the King speaks as a subject embedded within the formal legal system, positioning power as something that contains and obligates him, in the drama script, Hussein speaks as the very source of legal system, positioning power as something that originates from him. Kristeva (1980, p. 15) defines this as "a new articulation of the enunciative and denotative position". The shift from a leader who submits to law to a leader who legitimizes himself as the origin of law constitutes the core of enunciative transposition in this study. The drama script does not introduce a new subject in a vacuum, it occupies the same narrative position as the novel's King but reorients its enunciative stance entirely.

Mosaic of Quotations

The drama script absorbs the dialogic framework of the novel, particularly dialogues about the concept of power and interaction between the leader and Zabibah, and fills them with a different sign system. In the novel, the King discusses power as a system that must serve the people and explicitly rejects absolute authority (Hussein, 2000, p. 22). In the drama script, the same topic of power is addressed by Hussein, who fills it with a claim of absolute dominion. "What else but power" (Teater OASE, 2023, p. 18). Kristeva (1980, p. 66) describes this process as "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations, any text is the absorption and transformation of another". The drama script retains the structural skeleton of the novel's dialogic framework, a leader speaking to Zabibah about power, but transforms its semantic content entirely, from a critique of absolute power into an assertion of it.

Ambivalence of Meaning

Ambivalence of meaning emerges from the simultaneous presence of two contradictory sign systems in the intertextual space. In this study, power simultaneously functions as a burden of responsibility and an absolute right, the King positions power as an administrative obligation (Hussein, 2000, p. 22), while Hussein claims absolute authority (Teater OASE, 2023, p. 17). As Kristeva (1980, p. 66) theorizes, ambivalence implies "the insertion of history (society) into a text and of this text into history".

Discussion (Sentence case, cambria 11pt)

The findings of this study demonstrate that the adaption process from novel to drama script constitutes an ideological reconstruction of leadership representation, not merely an aesthetic transfer. The integration of Weber's (1947) leadership typology and Kristeva's (1980) intertextuality theory reveals how a single narrative framework, the story of a leader and Zabibah can generate diametrically opposed representations of authority, depending on the sign system that fills it.

This finding contributes to the field of comparative Arabic-Indonesian literary studies by demonstrating that intertextuality operates at the level of sign-system transposition rather than surface-level borrowing. The reconstruction of the leader character from rational-legal to charismatic reflects a deliberate ideological repositioning in which the source text's framework is preserved while its ideological content is inverted. This aligns with Kristeva's (1984, p. 111) assertion that transposition involves "an altering of the thematic position, the destruction of the old position and the formation of a new one." More broadly, this study shows that the alih wahana process in the context of Arabic-Indonesian literature is not a simple act of aesthetic translation but a space in which ideologies of leadership are contested and reconstructed.

CONCLUSION

This study establishes two main conclusions. First, the King character in novel *Zabibah wal-Malik* represents rational-legal leadership, characterized by adherence to formal legal system, rejection of absolute power, and a governance orientation wholly in service of the people. The Hussein character in *El-Jallad* represents charismatic leadership, characterized by personal legitimacy claim, rejection of formal procedures as a critique, and the assertion that he himself constitutes the law. Second, the intertextual relationship between the two works operates through sign-system transposition: enunciatve transposition shifts the subject position from a leader submits to law to one who legitimizes himself as the source of law; mosaic of quotations demonstrates the absorption and recontextualization of the novel's dialogic framework; and the ambivalence of meaning produces a leader figure who simultaneously exists as power as both burden and absolute right and Zabibah as both validated and disregarded voice. These findings indicate that the adaption process is not merely aesthetic but constitutes an ideological reconstruction of leadership representation through literary intertextuality.

Future research may extend this analysis by examining the remaining dimensions of Kristeva's intertextual framework; opposition and transformation as well as the intertextual functions of supporting characters in both works. Incorporating additional theoretical perspectives, such as discourse analysis or postcolonial theory, would further illuminate the ideological underpinnings of these literary works and enrich the growing field of comparative Arabic-Indonesian literary scholarship.

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