



The Mediatization of Sacred Texts: Theological Shifts and Myth-Making in the Islamic Pop Song “Hafidz Qur’an”

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Abstract

The phenomenon of the mediatization of Islam has spurred the adaptation of sacred texts (hadith) into the realm of popular music, which has sparked tension between the effectiveness of da’wah and the constraints of classical fiqh. This study examines the transformation of the hadith “crown of light” into an Islamic pop song titled “Hafidz Qur’an” using a four-dimensional analytical framework: Genette’s hypertextuality, Hutcheon’s theory of adaptation, Barthes’s semiotics, and Hall/Jauss’s reception studies. The results reveal an eschatological simplification; theological rewards are transformed into an emotional appeal (a child’s love for their parents), and the requirements of reading and practicing the Qur’an are narrowed down to merely the status of a Hafiz. This aligns with the tradition of using Da’if Hadith (those deemed weak) specifically for the purposes of Fada’il al-A’mal (the virtues of righteous deeds, not the establishment of Sharia law). The semiotics of the song and various children’s vocal covers were found to construct a cultural myth of the “righteous child,” which successfully defused the controversy surrounding music. Through YouTube comment data, the reception study confirms the strength of dominant coding, meaning the audience receives the message exactly as intended by its creator. These emotional lyrics even supplant the original sacred text in the listeners’ minds. In short, this song serves as a highly effective model of modern da’wah. As a practical implication, these findings can guide the formulation of digital da’wah content policies to design works that resonate emotionally without straying from the essence of religion.

Abstrak

Fenomena mediatisasi Islam mendorong adaptasi teks suci (hadis) ke ranah musik populer, yang memicu ketegangan antara efektivitas dakwah dan batasan fiqh klasik. Penelitian ini mengkaji transformasi hadis “mahkota cahaya” menjadi lagu pop islami berjudul “Hafidz Qur’an” menggunakan kerangka analisis empat dimensi: hipertekstualitas Genette, teori adaptasi Hutcheon, semiotika Barthes, dan studi resepsi Hall/Jauss. Hasilnya menunjukkan penyederhanaan eskatologis; pahala teologis diubah menjadi sentuhan emosional (cinta anak kepada orang tua), dan syarat membaca serta mengamalkan Al-Qur’an dipersempit menjadi sekadar status Hafiz. Hal ini sejalan dengan tradisi penggunaan Hadis Da’if (yang dinilai lemah) khusus untuk kepentingan Fada’il al-A’mal (keutamaan amal saleh, bukan penetapan hukum syariat). Semiotika lagu dan beragam cover vokal anak-anak terbukti membangun mitos budaya anak saleh yang berhasil meredam polemik seputar musik. Melalui data komentar YouTube, studi penerimaan mengonfirmasi kuatnya pengkodean dominan, yaitu audiens menerima pesan persis seperti niat penciptanya. Lirik emosional ini bahkan menggeser teks suci aslinya di benak pendengar. Singkatnya, lagu ini menjadi model dakwah modern yang sangat efektif. Sebagai implikasi praktisnya, temuan ini dapat memandu perumusan kebijakan konten dakwah digital untuk merancang karya yang menyentuh emosi tanpa meninggalkan esensi agama.

1. INTRODUCTION

The intersection of sacred tradition and modern media technology has birthed a global phenomenon often termed the mediatization of religion. This process is not merely a neutral change in the vehicle of transmission—from parchment to pixel, or from pulpit to playlist—but represents a fundamental restructuring of how religious authority is constructed, how theology is consumed, and



how piety is performed in the public sphere (Lynch, 2017; Moll, 2025). In Indonesia, the world's populous Muslim-majority nation, this mediatization has manifested as a vibrant Pop-Islam culture where the boundaries between entertainment and worship are increasingly porous. The rise of New Islamic Media has enabled the proliferation of content that packages austere theological concepts into palatable, emotionally resonant formats designed for a digital-native generation (Lynch, 2022; Rockhill, 1996). Within this broad landscape, the adaptation of Prophetic traditions (*Hadith*) into popular music (*islamic pop song*) stands out as a particularly complex and controversial practice. The *Hadith*, being the second source of Islamic law (*Sharia*) after the Quran, possesses a textual sanctity and legal weight that theoretically resists modification. Yet, the imperatives of modern *da'wah* (Islamic propagation) demand accessibility. To reach a youth demographic saturated by global pop culture, religious educators and artists increasingly turn to music as a pedagogical tool. This creates a unique second-order problematic: the adaptation of a sacred text into a medium – music – that is itself the subject of intense jurisprudential debate (*ikhtilaf*).

The controversy over music in Islam is deep-rooted, stretching back to the earliest centuries of Islamic thought. While the Quran does not explicitly forbid music, various *Hadiths* have been interpreted by scholars to either prohibit, discourage, or permit it, often contingent on context and instrumentation (Morrissey, 2022). Classical jurists like Al-Ghazali argued for the spiritual benefits of *sama'* (listening to spiritual music) under strict conditions, while others, such as Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, classified music under *lahw* (vain amusement) or *ma'azif* (forbidden instruments), viewing it as a distraction from the remembrance of God (Morrissey, 2024). In contemporary Indonesia, this debate remains active, with Salafi-oriented groups maintaining a strict prohibition and traditionalist/modernist organizations (like Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah) generally adopting a more permissive stance provided the content is moral (Heryanto, 2014).

Against this backdrop, the *islamic pop song* Hafidz Qur'an by Tri Yulianto emerges as a critical cultural artifact. Based on the specific crown of light *Hadiths* narrated by Mu'adh al-Juhani and Buraidah – which promise that the parents of a Quran memorizer will wear a crown brighter than the sun on Judgment Day – the song has become a ubiquitous anthem in Indonesian Islamic schools (*pesantren*) and homes. It has been popularized by child stars like Aishwa Nahla, garnering millions of views and effectively becoming the soundtrack of the contemporary *Tahfidz* (memorization) movement (Griffin et al., 2019; Hall, 1980). However, the ubiquity of this song raises profound questions that have yet to be adequately addressed in academic literature. Existing studies on Islamic media often focus on the sociology of consumption (Fauzi et al., 2022), the political dimensions of Islamist pop culture (Lynch, 2017), or the general theological debates on music (R & Thamayanthi, 2022). There is a significant gap in scholarship that rigorously traces the *textual and semiotic lifecycle* of a specific *Hadith* as it undergoes adaptation. How exactly does a legalistic, eschatological text from the 7th century transform into a sentimental pop song in the 21st century? What is lost, added, or distorted in this intersemiotic translation? Furthermore, how does the use of a *Da'if* (weak) *Hadith* – a status assigned to the source text by many scholars – complicate its use as a mass-media pedagogical tool?

This study aims to fill this gap by conducting an exhaustive, multi-layered analysis of the Hafidz Qur'an adaptation. It posits that the song is not merely a musical version of the *Hadith*, but a fundamentally new text – a *hypertext* – that rewrites the theological logic of the original *hypotext*. By synthesizing Western critical theories with Islamic sciences, this research seeks to answer four primary questions. *First*, how is the sacred *hypotext* (*Hadith*) linguistically and thematically reconfigured into the *hypertext* (song lyric) according to Genette's categories? *Second*, why is the text adapted in this specific way, and what institutional or pedagogical motives (Hutcheon) drive the shift from theological exactitude to emotional resonance? *Third*, how do the non-textual elements – melody, instrumentation, and visual imagery – construct a Barthesian Myth that neutralizes the jurisprudential controversy

surrounding music? *Fourth*, how do Indonesian audiences decode this mediatized text (Hall/Jauss)? Does the emotional power of the adaptation displace the authority of the original source text?

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to the fields of Adaptation Studies, Media Studies, and Islamic Studies. It proposes a robust theoretical model for analyzing Pop-Da'wah, demonstrating how modern religious authority is increasingly derived from *affect* and *aesthetic experience* rather than textual authenticity. By deconstructing the mechanisms of this specific adaptation, we gain broader insight into how the sacred is being renegotiated in the digital age

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The first basic concept is grounded in the principles of *Mustalah al-Hadith* (the scientific terminology of hadith). Ontologically, a hadith is a revelation that is not recited (*wahyu ghairu matlu*), so great care must be taken in transmitting it. A *da'if* (weak) hadith is a narration that does not meet the criteria for acceptance (such as a broken chain of transmission or the narrator's poor memory). However, the majority of moderate scholars, such as Imam An-Nawawi and Al-Hafizh Ibn Hajar, permit its use in the realm of *fada'il al-a'mal*—that is, regarding the virtues of acts of worship, narratives (*qashash*), warnings (*tarhib*), and encouragement (*targhib*). The legitimacy of this practice is limited by methodological barriers precisely defined by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani. As explained by his student, Al-Sakhawi, there are three absolute restrictions. *First*, it must not be *Dha'if Jiddan*. Its weakness must not be fatal. Hadiths narrated by a liar (*kadzdzab*), one accused of lying (*muttahaam bil kاذib*), or a narrator who frequently commits fatal errors (*fahisy al-ghalath*) must not be used at all. *Second*, compliance with the principles. The content of the narration must be grounded in or fall under the valid general legal principles of Sharia. *Third*, the absence of epistemological certainty. Practitioners must not be one hundred percent certain that the action originates directly from the Messenger of Allah. Practice is carried out on the basis of hope and the precautionary principle (*ihtiyat*), to prevent falsehood in the name of the Prophet (As-Sakhawi, 1963). This last concept is crucial, because its transformation into pop song lyrics tends to erase the nuance of academic doubt and impose dogmatic certainty.

To adequately analyze the complex transmutation of a 7th-century Arabic prophetic tradition into a 21st-century Indonesian pop song, a single theoretical lens is insufficient. This study therefore constructs a composite theoretical framework, harmonizing four distinct yet complementary approaches: Gérard Genette's hypertextuality, Linda Hutcheon's adaptation theory, Roland Barthes' semiotics, and the reception theories of Stuart Hall and Hans Robert Jauss.

2.1 Gérard Genette's hypertextuality

The analysis of the textual relationship between the Hadith and the song lyrics is grounded in Gérard Genette's theory of Transtextuality, specifically his concept of Hypertextuality. In his seminal work *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, Genette defines transtextuality as the textual transcendence of the work, or all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts (Hassanzadeh & Motlagh, 2022; Mirenayat & Soofastaei, 2015). He categorizes this relationship into five types: (1) Intertextuality: The explicit presence of one text within another (e.g., quotation, plagiarism). (2) Paratextuality: The relationship between the text and its surrounding elements (titles, prefaces). (3) Metatextuality: The relationship of commentary or critique. (4) Architextuality: The relationship of the text to its genre. (5) Hypertextuality: The relationship uniting a text B (the *hypertext*) to an earlier text A (the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary (Niknasab, 2024).

This study argues that the *islamic pop song* Hafidz Qur'an is a quintessential *hypertext*. The Hadith of Mu'adh al-Juhani serves as the *hypotext*—the authoritative source. The song does not merely quote the Hadith (intertextuality) or comment upon it (metatextuality); it *transforms* it. Genette identifies two fundamental modes of hypertextuality: Transformation and Imitation. Within transformation, he

further distinguishes between operations such as excision (cutting), concision (abridgment), extension (addition), and substitution (Genette, 2001; Mirenayat & Soofastaei, 2015).

Applying this to the Hadith-Song dyad allows for a granular analysis of theological drift. For instance, if the Hadith stipulates acting upon the Quran as a condition for the reward, and the song lyric removes this condition in favor of loving the Quran, Genette's framework allows us to classify this as a substitution operation. (Mirenayat & Soofastaei, 2015) emphasize that hypertextuality often involves a palimpsestuous reading, where the traces of the old text are visible beneath the new. In the context of sacred texts, this is particularly fraught, as the hypotext is considered divinely inspired. Therefore, Genette's tools help us measure the *degree of deviation* allowed in the adaptation process before the text ceases to be a version of the Hadith and becomes an entirely new invention.

2.2 Linda Hutcheon's adaptation theory

While Genette provides the taxonomy for *what* has changed, Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* provides the explanatory power for *why* and *how* these changes occur. Hutcheon shifts the focus from fidelity critique – which views adaptation as inevitably inferior to the source – to a process-oriented analysis. She defines adaptation as repetition without replication, a creative act of transcoding that ensures the survival of a story or meme across different cultures and media (Hutcheon, 2006).

Hutcheon's framework is pivotal for three reasons in this study. *First*, Medium Specificity. Hutcheon argues that moving a text from telling (narrative/literary) to showing (performance/visual) or interacting (digital) necessitates structural changes. The Hadith is a telling medium – a prose statement of fact and condition. The *islamic pop song* is a showing medium – a musical performance that requires rhythm, rhyme, melody, and emotional hooks. The *islamic pop song* form demands a chorus (*refrain*), something the Hadith genre does not possess. Thus, the *addition* of the I love Ummi/Abi chorus is not a theological error, but a formal necessity of the target medium, explained by Hutcheon's emphasis on the constraints of the new form. *Second*, Indigenization. Hutcheon describes how adaptations indigenize texts, rooting them in the specific cultural soil of the audience. The Arabic Hadith is universal; the song Hafidz Qur'an is distinctly Indonesian. It adopts the local cultural lexicon of filial piety (*birrul walidain*) which is central to Indonesian social structure. The shift from an abstract crown to a sentimental gift for mom and dad is an act of cultural translation, making the 7th-century text legible to 21st-century Indonesian children. *Third*, Motives. Hutcheon asks, why adapt? She identifies motives ranging from the economic lure to cultural capital and pedagogy (Hutcheon, 2006). In this case, the motive is explicitly pedagogical (to teach children) and missiological (*da'wah*). However, the commercial success of the song also points to the economic lure of the Islamic edutainment market, a tension Hutcheon's theory is well-equipped to explore.

2.3 Roland Barthes' semiotics

The adaptation of the Hadith is not limited to the lyrics; it is deeply embedded in the music and visual imagery. To analyze these non-linguistic elements, this study utilizes the semiotic theory of Roland Barthes, particularly his concepts of Denotation, Connotation, and Myth as outlined in *Mythologies* (Morrissey, 2022; R & Thamayanthi, 2022). Barthes distinguishes between the first order of signification (Denotation), which is the literal meaning of a sign, and the second order (Connotation), which is the socio-cultural association of the sign (Rais & Fadillah, 2025). In the context of Hafidz Qur'an, Denotation is the lyrics literally describe a desire to memorize the Quran, while Connotation is the *music* (soft piano, slow tempo, major key) carries connotations of innocence, purity, softness, and domesticity. These are culturally coded auditory signs that stand in opposition to the aggressive or sexualized connotations of rock or western pop music.

Barthes argues that when these connotations become pervasive and unquestioned, they form a Myth—a type of speech that transforms history into nature (R & Thamayanthi, 2022). The song, through its aesthetic choices, constructs the Myth of the Pious Child. This myth suggests that the child's piety is a natural, beautiful state that guarantees family cohesion. Crucially, this Myth serves a political function: it inoculates the medium against religious criticism. By wrapping the controversial form of music in the natural piety of a crying child and a loving mother, the song disables the critical jurisprudential faculty that might otherwise classify the music as *haram*. Barthes' theory allows us to see the music video not just as a companion to the text, but as a semiotic engine that validates the theological shift.

2.4 Hall/Jauss model of reception studies

Finally, the study examines how this complex adaptation is actually received by the target demographic. This requires a synthesis of Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding model and Hans Robert Jauss's Horizon of Expectations. Hans Robert Jauss, a founder of the Constance School of Reception Theory, argues that a literary work is not an autonomous object but is constituted by the reader's reception history (Asna & Amin, 2022; Mambrol, 2018). Audiences approach a text with a Horizon of Expectations—a mental set of prejudices, genre conventions, and cultural knowledge (Jauss et al., 2010). In Indonesia, the audience's horizon is shaped by the Tahfidz Boom, a social phenomenon reinforced by reality TV shows like *Hafiz Indonesia*, where Quranic memorization is framed as a spectacle of emotion and achievement (Mirenayat & Soofastaei, 2015; Ulummudin, 2020). The song Hafidz Qur'an enters a horizon that *expects* religious content to be emotional and family-centric.

Stuart Hall's model complements this by providing a mechanism for classification. Hall posits that media producers encode a preferred meaning, but audiences decode it based on their own social frameworks (Hall, 1980; Mirenayat & Soofastaei, 2015). He identifies three decoding positions: (1) Dominant/Hegemonic: The audience accepts the preferred meaning encoded by the producer; (2) Negotiated: The audience accepts the general legitimacy of the message but adapts it to their local condition; (3) Oppositional: The audience understands the preferred meaning but rejects it based on an alternative ideological framework.

In the context of Pop-Islam, previous studies by (Fauzi et al., 2022) and (Lynch, 2017) have shown that religious media often creates interpretive communities that reinforce shared values. However, the use of *Da'if* Hadith and music creates a potential fracture point for Oppositional readings (e.g., from Salafi purists). By applying Hall's categories to YouTube comments, this study can empirically measure the success of the adaptation: does the Myth hold, or does the audience critique the theological liberties taken?

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study posits that the adaptation of sacred texts into popular culture is a multi-stage process of Intersemiotic Translation. This process involves: (1) Textual Reduction (Genette): Stripping away complex theological conditions (e.g., *Amal*); (2) Emotional Amplification (Hutcheon): Enhancing the sentimental and personal aspects to fit the medium of pop music; (3) Mythic Validation (Barthes): Using aesthetic signifiers (music, visuals) to shield the adaptation from theological critique; (4) Reception Hegemony (Hall/Jauss): The resulting text creates a feedback loop with the audience's horizon of expectations, often displacing the original sacred text in the popular imagination.

This research positions itself within the post-Islamist discourse, arguing that religious authority in the digital age is shifting from textual literacy (knowing the *dalil*) to affective literacy (feeling the *iman*).

The Hafidz Qur'an song is a primary artifact of this shift, demonstrating how *da'wah* is increasingly dependent on the logic of the entertainment industry.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Types and Approaches of Research

This research adopts a qualitative paradigm employing a multi-modal discourse analysis approach (Hart, 2020; Jones, 2021; Pirini, 2017). This methodology is necessitated by the nature of the object of study, which is a composite media artifact consisting of linguistic text (lyrics), auditory structures (music), and visual representations (video). A monodisciplinary approach – such as pure philology or pure musicology – would fail to capture the dynamic interplay between these elements. The approach is interdisciplinary, integrating the rigor of *Ulumul Hadith* (for the source text analysis) with Cultural Studies and Media Theory (for the adaptation and reception analysis).

3.2 Data source

The data corpus is divided into three hierarchical categories.

First, The Hypotext (Source Text): (1) Primary Hadith: The narration of Mu'adh al-Juhani recorded in *Sunan Abi Dawud* (No. 1453) regarding the crown of light (Abu Dawud, 2005). The Arabic text is retrieved from standard critical editions.

عَنْ مُعَاذِ الْجُهَنِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ : مَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَمِلَ بِمَا فِيهِ، أُلِيسَ وَالِدَاهُ تَاجًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ. ضَوْؤُهُ أَحْسَنُ مِنْ ضَوْءِ الشَّمْسِ فِي بُيُوتِ الدُّنْيَا، لَوْ كَانَتْ فِيكُمْ فَمَا ظَنُّكُمْ بِالَّذِي عَمِلَ بِهِذَا. رواه أبو داود

(2) Corroborating Hadith: The narration of Buraidah al-Aslami recorded by Al-Hakim in *Al-Mustadrak* (No. 2086), often used to strengthen the grading of the primary Hadith (Imam Al Hakim, 2010).

مَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ وَتَعَلَّمَ وَعَمِلَ بِهِ أُلِيسَ وَالِدَاهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ تَاجًا مِنْ نُورٍ ضَوْؤُهُ مِثْلُ الشَّمْسِ وَيُكْسَى وَالِدَاهُ حُلَّتَيْنِ لَا يَفُومُ لِهَمَّا الدُّنْيَا فَيَقُولَانِ بِمِ كُسِينَا هَذَا فَيُقَالُ بِأَخَذِ وَلَدِكُمَا الْقُرْآنَ

Second, The Hypertext (Adapted Text): (1) Original Composition: The lyrics and melody of Hafidz Qur'an composed by Ustadz Tri Yulianto and Dika Anung Rahmanto, originating from the educational context of SMPIT Ihsanul Fikri Mungkid, Magelang (Yulianto, 2019). (2) Official Release: The studio version produced by the Hafidz Qur'an Foundation (Yulianto, 2020).

Third, The Paratexts and Mediators (Reception Artifacts): (1) Viral Cover Version: The music video by child singer Aishwa Nahla Karnadi, which has garnered over 86 million views (as of Dec. 19, 2025) and represents the primary vehicle of mass consumption (Aishwa Nahla Official, 2020a, 2020b). (2) Institutional Version: The cover by Santri BM Kudus, representing the song's use within the *pesantren* pedagogical environment (Santri BM Kudus, 2022). (3) Audience Discourse: A dataset of 200 audience comments harvested from the YouTube uploads of the above videos.

3.3 Research Instruments

The researcher acts as the primary instrument (Pezalla et al., 2012; Wa-Mbaleka, 2020), utilizing a set of theoretical matrices to code and analyze the data: (1) Genette's Transformation Matrix: A comparative table mapping the Hadith text against the song lyrics to identify operations of *substitution*, *deletion*, *addition*, and *transposition*; (2) Barthesian Semiotic Protocol: A visual/auditory coding sheet to identify *signifiers* (e.g., lighting, costume, tempo) and their *signified* connotations; (3) Hall/Jauss Reception Grid: A coding framework for classifying audience comments into *Dominant*, *Negotiated*, and *Oppositional* readings, with sub-codes for themes like emotion, motivation, theology, and critique.

3.4 Data collection technique

Data collection was executed in three phases. *First*, Philological Retrieval. The *matn* (text) and *sanad* (chain) of the relevant Hadiths were accessed via the *Kutub al-Sittah* digital repositories and verified against commentaries by Al-Albani and classical *muhaddithin* to establish the baseline authentic meaning and status. This philological conclusion is contrasted with Ibn Hajar's criteria for *fada'il al-a'mal*, then triangulated with authoritative contemporary fiqh documents such as the Muhammadiyah Tarjih Rulings Compilation and the Nahdlatul Ulama Bahtsul Masail documents regarding the legal status of music. *Second*, Digital Archiving. The complete lyrics of the song were transcribed and translated. For visual analysis, Aishwa Nahla's music video was dissected using the key-frame sampling technique. A total of 15 essential frames were extracted at moments of emotional transition (every 15–20 seconds), with the analysis focusing on microexpressions, lighting, clothing choices (hijab), and the dynamics of parent-child interactions. *Third*, Digital Ethnography. A purposive sampling technique was used to collect YouTube comments. To ensure methodological transparency, data was systematically scraped between December 1 and December 15, 2025. The sample of 200 comments was strictly categorized: 100 Top Voted comments (representing the hegemonic view) and 100 newest comments (to check for temporal shifts in reception). Inclusion criteria required comments to be in Indonesian and contain textual opinions; spam, purely emoji-based comments, and bot-generated texts were explicitly excluded.

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

The analysis proceeds sequentially: Stage 1 (Textual): A micro-analysis of the lyrics *vis-à-vis* the Hadith using Genette's categories to map the theological drift. Stage 2 (Contextual): An analysis of the institutional context (SMPIT Ihsanul Fikri) and the Tahfidz Boom using Hutcheon's adaptation motives. Stage 3 (Semiotic): A macro-analysis of the Aishwa Nahla video using Barthes' orders of signification to identify the Myth. Stage 4 (Reception): A content analysis of the YouTube comments using Hall's decoding model to quantify the acceptance of the adaptation.

3.6 Trustworthiness

Validity is ensured through triangulation (Ahmed, 2024; Carter et al., 2014; Guion et al., 2011). *Data Triangulation* involves analysing multiple versions of the song (original vs. covers). *Theoretical Triangulation* involves applying four distinct theories to the same object (Griffin et al., 2022). *Investigator Triangulation* involves cross-referencing the Hadith analysis with established Islamic legal opinions (*fatwa*) regarding music and *Da'if* Hadith to ensure the researcher's theological interpretation aligns with scholarly consensus.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the perspective of the methodology of *Ulumul Hadith*, the chains of transmission (*sanad*) for both of these narrations are highly problematic. Regarding the first hadith (Abu Dawud 1453), the highly respected modern *muhaqqiq* (verifier), Shu'aib Al-Arna'ut, ruled it to be *Da'if jiddan* (extremely weak) (al-Kandahlawi, 2004). This structural weakness stems from the presence of a narrator named Zabban bin Fa'id. In the discipline of hadith narrator criticism (Rijal al-Hadith), Zabban has been judged by many experts to be a narrator with poor memorization skills and who has *manakir* (narrates many rejected hadiths that contradict those of trustworthy narrators). This view is independently supported by Shaykh Al-Albani, who also classified it as "da'if" in his work *Da'if Jami' as-Saghir* (al-Albani, 1999). Regarding the second hadith, Imam Al-Hakim did indeed classify it as *sahih*. However, Al-Hakim's claims are widely regarded by *muhaddithin* (hadith scholars) as often being *mutasahil* (too lenient). Sharp criticism has been directed at this narration because it relies on a narrator named Bishr bin Muhajir.

Many hadith critics classify Bishr as a “munkar al-hadith” (a narrator whose transmissions are unusual and problematic), so Al-Hakim’s classification of the hadith as sahih is considered a methodological error. This finding has profound implications when considered in light of the principles of fiqh practice, as it fulfills only one of the three conditions set forth by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani. Although the exhortations to read the Qur’an and honor one’s parents are two central tenets supported by hundreds of other verses and authentic hadiths, de jure this hadith should not be disseminated on a massive scale without a warning regarding its “Da’if jiddan” status. Another violation of al-Asqalani’s criteria is that this da’if hadith is mistakenly believed to be an authentic saying of the Prophet because the text has been modified, set to a melody, and sung by millions of Indonesian children. The music industry forces the audience to accept this narrative as an absolute doctrinal dogma. From the perspective of Ulumul Hadith, this popular adaptation is descriptively flawed and violates fundamental principles of practice because it converts a probabilistic text into populist certainty without including footnotes regarding its transmission history.

4.1 Transformation of Hypotext to Hypertext

The application of Gérard Genette’s hypertextuality reveals that the transition from the Hadith of Mu’adh al-Juhani to the islamic pop song Hafidz Qur’an is not a translation, but a radical rewrite. The adaptation process employs specific hypertextual operations—deletion, substitution, and simplification—that fundamentally alter the theological trajectory of the text.

Table 1. Hypertextual Transformation of Hypotext (Hadith) to Hypertext (Lyric)

Hypotext (Sunan Abi Dawud 1453)	Core Concept (Textual)	Hypertext (Lyric: Hafidz Qur’an)	Transformation Process (Genette)
<i>His parents will be given to wear a crown</i> (Passive voice: <i>ulbisa</i>)	A passive reward given to parents (by God). God is the agent.	<i>Kuimpikan sepasang mahkota / Kuberikan di akhirat kelak</i> (I dream of a pair of crowns / I will give them in the hereafter)	Substitution (Voice): The passive voice (<i>majhul</i>) is transformed into the active voice. The child (Ku-) usurps the agency of God. The reward becomes a gift from the child, not a bestowal from the Divine.
<i>Whose light is better than the light of the sun in the dwellings of this world</i>	A complex, hyperbolic description of the crown’s divine nature and eschatological glory.	(omitted)	Deletion/Omission: The vivid eschatological imagery is removed. The sublime is sacrificed for lyrical concision.
<i>Because of your son’s learning of the Quran... and acts according to its content (wa ‘amila bi ma fihi)</i>	The theological condition for the reward: Knowledge + Action.	<i>Sebagai pertanda bahwa kau sangat mencintai</i> (As a sign that I love you so much)	Substitution (Motive): The theological motive (adherence to scripture) is substituted with a personal, emotional motive (filial love).
(Not present in hypotext)	(New emotional framework)	<i>Ku cinta Ummi / Ku cinta Abi</i> (I love Mom / I love Dad)	Addition (Amplification): A new, dominant emotional framework is added as the chorus. This hook

			becomes the central message of the song.
<i>Recites the Quran and acts according to its content</i>	The dual condition of recitation and behavioral implementation.	<i>Aku ingin jadi hafidz Quran</i> (I want to be a Hafiz Quran)	Simplification (Metonymy): The complex requirements of <i>ilm</i> and <i>amal</i> are reduced to the identity label Hafiz, functioning as a metonym for the entire religious process.

Source: author

The most significant theological rupture is the shift in agency. In the Hadith, the crown is a divine vindication of the parents' upbringing; God acts upon the parents. In the song, the child sings I will give (*Kuberikan*). This transforms the crown from a symbol of *Divine Mercy* into a symbol of *Filial Achievement*. The child becomes the savior figure, the active agent who secures the parents' happiness in the afterlife. This empowers the child singer (and listener) but subtly displaces the centrality of God's grace. The Hadith explicitly links the reward to acting upon ('*amila*') the Quran. This is a rigorous ethical demand implying a lifetime of adherence to Sharia. The song, however, frames the crown as a sign of love (*tanda cinta*). While *birrul walidain* (kindness to parents) is a core Islamic value, the song structurally replaces the *vertical* relationship (Human-Quran-God) with a *horizontal* one (Child-Parent). The motivation for memorizing the Quran becomes the emotional satisfaction of the parents rather than the intrinsic obedience to God. The song simplifies the process to becoming a Hafiz. In the contemporary Indonesian context, as noted by (Ulummudin, 2020), the term Hafiz has become a commodified identity marker, often focused on the *quantity* of memorization rather than the *quality* of understanding. By deleting the clause acts according to its content, the song risks promoting a ritualistic formalism where the *status* of Hafiz is the end goal, detached from the behavioral transformation the Hadith actually mandates. These Genettean operations reveal a pragmatic theology: the text is stripped of its terrifying or demanding elements (judgment, strict action) and amplified in its rewarding and emotional elements (love, crowns, parents) to maximize its appeal.

Furthermore, the adaptation glosses over the epistemological status of the source text. *Muhaddithin* generally classify the Mu'adh al-Juhani hadith as *Da'if* (weak) due to the presence of Zabban bin Fa'id in its transmission chain (Mohd Senin & Ahmad Shah, 2018). Classical scholars established strict prerequisites for utilizing *Da'if* hadiths in *Fada'il al-A'mal* (virtues of deeds): the weakness must not be severe, the content must fall under a general established basis of Sharia, and the practitioner must not firmly believe it is the Prophet's exact words when acting upon it. The song's popularization, however, bypasses these academic caveats. By transforming the conditional, weak theological promise into a definitive emotional guarantee through music, the hypertext effectively elevates the *Da'if* tradition to the level of absolute certainty in the public consciousness.

4.2 Myth Construction and Adaptation Factors

Why is the text transformed in this specific way? Linda Hutcheon's Adaptation Theory points to the **context** of creation. The song was born in an educational institution (SMPIT Ihsanul Fikri).⁴ Its primary function is pedagogical motivation (*targhib*). In a boarding school setting, where students face the grueling, monotonous task of rote memorization, abstract theological rewards (pleasure of God) may be less immediate than concrete emotional rewards (making Mom smile). The adaptation indigenizes the motivation, translating it into the language of the Indonesian family, where the emotional bond with the mother (*Ummi*) is culturally paramount. From Hutcheon's perspective, Economic Lures can also be identified. The explosion of the Hafiz Indonesia brand creates a market for

content that celebrates the Hafiz Child. The song fits perfectly into this commercial ecosystem, serving as an emotional anthem that can be performed at graduations, competitions, and on YouTube.

The text alone does not explain the song's power. The music and visuals perform a crucial semiotic function. Using Barthes' framework, we can deconstruct the video of Aishwa Nahla: (1) Visual Signifiers (Denotation): A young girl in a white hijab. She holds a Quran. She looks at her parents. Her parents wipe tears from their eyes; (2) Musical Signifiers: A slow, major-key piano melody. Synthesized strings (violins). A soft, high-pitched child's voice; (3) Connotations: *White Hijab/Child*: Purity, innocence (*fitrah*), sinlessness. *Tears*: Sincerity (*ikhlas*), deep emotion, the ultimate validity of the religious experience. *Piano/Strings*: Classy, Modern, Soft. Crucially, these sounds code the music as high culture or spiritual, distancing it from the low culture of *dangdut* or the western decadence of *rock*. The Myth: These signifiers coalesce into the Myth of the Pious Child. This Myth asserts: *The innocent child, through the act of memorization, heals the family and guarantees salvation*.

This Myth performs a vital political task: Inoculation. As (Morrissey, 2024) and others have noted, the status of music is controversial. Salafi scholars argue that musical instruments are *haram*. However, the Hafidz Qur'an song is so saturated with the semiotics of piety (the crying parents, the innocent child, the Quran prop) that it becomes difficult to critique. The Myth implies: *How can this be haram if it makes us love the Quran so much?* The aesthetic experience of softness and emotion is used to validate the medium, effectively neutralizing the legalistic arguments against music. The song uses what (Lang et al., 2016) call sacred cues to prime the audience for a moral experience, even while using a medium (music) that some consider immoral.

4.3 Audience Acceptance and Authority Shift

The reception analysis confirms the power of this Myth. Analyzing 200 comments from the YouTube videos reveals a reception landscape dominated by the Dominant (Hegemonic) Code.

Table 2. Distribution of Audience Decoding Positions

Decoding Position (Hall)	Theme of Comment	Example Quote (Translated)	Frequency
Dominant	Emotional Validation	Masya Allah, I get goosebumps listening to this. I'm crying.	Very often
Dominant	Motivational/ Aspirational	Pray for my son to become a Hafiz like this. Bismillah.	Quite often
Negotiated	Technical/ Conditional	The voice is beautiful, but the tajweed on 'Qur'an' needs work.	Very rarely
Oppositional	Theological/Legal	Music is haram. / This hadith is da'if.	Occasionally

Source: author

The Indonesian audience approaches this song with a horizon shaped by the Hafiz Indonesia reality show. They expect to be moved. They expect to see crying parents. The song fulfills this horizon perfectly, resulting in a fusion of horizons where the text is accepted uncritically. Remarkably, despite the prominent debates on music in Islamic law 6, there is virtually no Oppositional Reading visible in the top comments. The *Da'if* (weak) status of the source Hadith is almost never mentioned. This indicates a Displacement of Authority. For the audience, the truth of the song is not derived from its chain of transmission (isnad) or its legal status, but from its emotional truth. The tears it elicits are the proof of its validity. This suggests that in the era of mediatization, the Hypertext (the song) has effectively replaced the Hypotext (the Hadith). The audience is quoting the lyrics (*Ku cinta Ummi*), not

the Prophet's words. The song has become a hyper-sacred object—it is treated with the reverence due to scripture, even though it is a pop culture product. The Interpretive Community formed around this song is one bound by shared sentiment, not shared scholarship.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study concludes that the Islamic pop song “Hafidz Qur'an” represents a sophisticated and highly successful instance of Intersemiotic Adaptation in the service of modern da'wah. Through the lens of Genette, we observe a text that has been simplified and substituted—trading complex eschatological conditions for accessible sentimentality. Through Hutcheon and Barthes, we understand this transformation as a necessary indigenization driven by pedagogical motives and validated by the Myth of the Pious Child, which strategically utilizes the aesthetics of innocence to circumvent the jurisprudential controversy surrounding music. Finally, through Hall and Jauss, the analysis reveals that this adaptation has achieved a hegemonic reception, where the emotional resonance of the hypertext effectively silences the audience's critical engagement with the hypotext's epistemological status.

Crucially, while this song does not alter the normative validity of Da'if Hadiths within Islamic jurisprudence, its reception demonstrates a profound sociological shift. The audience practically validates and accepts the use of weak traditions for *Fada'il al-A'mal* (virtues of deeds) not based on scholarly consensus, but because the medium successfully transforms a private religious act into a compelling, performative display of family love. Consequently, this study argues that the Hafidz Qur'an song functions as a paradigmatic artifact of post-Islamist culture in Indonesia. The operationalization of this post-Islamist shift is evident directly in the study's findings—namely, the deliberate replacement of textual rigor with affective appeal, and the commodification of the Hafiz identity into an emotional spectacle. In this digital era, religious authority is increasingly relocated from the mastery of texts to the evocation of feelings, effectively packaging the Sacred within the logic of popular entertainment.

5.2 Research Limitations

This study is limited by its reliance on digital reception data, which may reflect a self-selecting bias (the spiral of silence where dissenters do not comment). It also focuses on a single case study, limiting generalizability.

5.3 Recommendations

Future research should expand this framework to a comparative analysis of other *islamic pop song* adaptations to see if this pattern of sentimental substitution is universal. Additionally, ethnographic fieldwork in *pesantren* is needed to understand the pedagogical impact: does singing about being a Hafiz actually help students memorize, or does it substitute the *fantasy* of the crown for the *reality* of the work? Finally, a political-economy analysis of the Hafiz Industry is necessary to trace the financial flows that underpin this commodification of the Quran.

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