Reading *Maulid al-Dība'i* through the Lens of Genetic Structuralism: Between Text, Context, and Sectarian Polemics

Fina Mazida Husna
Postgraduate Student at UIN Walisongo Semarang
fie_ska@yahoo.co.id

Ibnu Burdah
UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta
ibnuburdah@gmail.com

Muhyar Fanani
UIN Walisongo Semarang
muhyarfa@yahoo.co.id

Nely Irnik Darajah
Sekolah Tinggi Islam Kendal
nellyid03@stik-kendal.ac.id

Ahmad Munadirin
Sekolah Tinggi Islam Kendal
ahmadmunadirin@stik-kendal.ac.id

ENGLISH ABSTRACT

Maulid al-Dība'i is one of the most popular religious literary texts in the Islamic tradition, especially among traditional Sunni Muslims in Indonesia. Recently, controversy has emerged regarding the sectarian affiliation of its author, Al-Dība'i, who is accused of being a Zaidiyah Shiite due to his praise of the Ahlul Bait without mentioning the main companions. This debate has prompted differing responses concerning the sectarian content of the text. This study applies Lucien Goldmann's genetic structuralism approach to analyze Maulid al-Dība'i by examining both its internal textual structure and its socio-historical context. Using qualitative interpretive, historical, and textual methods, the research analyzes a controversial poem to trace the author's ideological position. The findings indicate that the text reflects the inclusive and cosmopolitan character of Zabid society, marked by dynamic Sufi traditions and complex inter-school relations. Consequently, this study offers a more balanced understanding of Maulid al-Dība'i as a product of Islamic culture shaped by historical and spiritual struggles.

Keywords: Maulid al-Dība'i, Genetic Structuralism, Ahlul Bait

INDONESIAN ABSTRACT

Maulid al-Dība'i merupakan salah satu teks sastra keagamaan paling populer dalam tradisi Islam, khususnya di kalangan muslim Sunni tradisional di Indonesia. Namun, belakangan muncul polemik mengenai afiliasi mazhab pengarangnya, Al-Dība'i dinilai sebagai penganut Syiah Zaidiyah akibat isi syair-syair yang memuji Ahlul Bait tanpa menyebutkan para sahabat utama. Tuduhan ini memunculkan berbagai tanggapan dan membuka perdebatan mengenai muatan sektarian dalam teks tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan strukturalisme genetik Lucien Goldmann untuk mengkaji teks Maulid al-Dība'i secara lebih utuh. Pendekatan ini memungkinkan analisis terhadap struktur internal teks sekaligus menghubungkannya dengan struktur sosial-historis tempat teks tersebut diproduksi. Melalui metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan interpretatif, historis, dan tekstual, penelitian ini menganalisis salah satu syair yang dianggap kontroversial dan menelusuri posisi ideologis penulisnya dalam lanskap keilmuan dan mazhab pada zamannya. Temuan awal menunjukkan bahwa teks ini merupakan gambaran struktur batin masyarakat Zabid yang inklusif dan kosmopolitan terhadap dinamika sufisme, serta relasi antar mazhab yang kompleks. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam memberikan pembacaan yang lebih seimbang terhadap Maulid al-Dība'i sebagai produk budaya Islam yang lahir dari pergulatan historis dan spiritual masyarakat muslim.

Kata Kunci*: Maulid al-Dība'i, Strukturalisme Genetik, Ahlul Bait*

Introduction

In recent years, Islamic discourse in Indonesia has been marked by polemics over the identity of the author *of Maulid al-Dība'i.* As one of the most widely read Arabic literary works (As'ad, 2020) in the religious tradition (Seise, 2018), a debate suddenly arose as to whether the author of al-Dība'i was affiliated with Shi'ism, specifically Zaidiyyah Shi'ism. The polemic began with a statement by Kyai Ahmad Bahaudin Nursalim, who is familiarly known as Gus Baha, that al-Dība'i was a Zaidiyah Shiite (Firdausi, 2021a). This statement immediately sparked various responses, one of which came from Kyai Lutfi Bashori Alwi, who firmly denied it. According to Kyai Lutfi, the accusation that al-Dība'i was a Zaidiyah Shiite is baseless and ahistorical. He mentioned that in various classical literary works and biographies of scholars, al-Dība'i is clearly known as a Sunni scholar of the Shafi'i school of thought(Firdausi, 2021b). Gus Baha' himself explains that this assumption arose because one of the poems in *Maulid al-Dība'i* explicitly praises the Ahlul Bait without mentioning the main companions such as Abu Bakar ash-Shiddiq, Umar bin Khatab, and Uthman bin Affan (MKY, 2021). In line with Gus Baha's thinking, Ahmad Muthohar, in his book *Maulid Nabi: Menggapai Keteladanan Rasulullah,* also mentions that these poems contain propaganda because they contain

Shiite teachings (Muthohar, 2011). Although Gus Baha eventually corrected his statement and publicly apologised— as well as emphasising that al-Dība'i was a Sunni Shafi'i (Kris, 2021) —this issue still leaves questions unanswered. Is it true that the poems in *Maulid al-Dība'i* imply Shia teachings? And to what extent is this assumption true?

This controversy arose because the interpretation of one of the poems in *Maulid al-Dība'i* was done purely textually, without considering the context in which the poem was written. In fact, literary works are a reflection of a nation's culture (SHMASNH, 2022). In other words, Al-Dība'i as an author cannot be separated from the cultural environment in which he lived and worked. Therefore, it is important to conduct research using an interdisciplinary approach so that the text can be read more fairly, namely by involving the historical, social, and ideological context in which the work was created.

Literary works in the Islamic world occupy an important position. This is because literary works created by Muslims, in addition to being referred to as cultural products based on Islamic principles, also have the potential to spread the spirit of Islam. One of the popular genres of Islamic literature in the context of Islamic history is the Maulid Nabi text, which tells the story of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Most of these texts are in the form of poetry recited during celebrations of the Prophet's birth (Bouchiba, Farid, 2024). This type of text can also be categorised as *a pseudo-biography* (Temmerman & Demoen, 2017), which a works that present the reality of historical figures but then add various imaginative elements (Al-Thadifi, 2006).

One of the most popular maulid texts in the Islamic world is *Maulid al-Dība'i*. This maulid text is famous not only in its place of origin but also throughout the Islamic world. *Maulid al-Dība'i* was written by Abdurrahman al-Dība'i, a historian and hadith scholar (Bariah et al., 2018). This study aims to explore the structure of the *Maulid al-Dība'i* text, particularly the parts that have been considered to reflect Shiite teachings. However, the text will not be read in isolation from its context. Instead, this study attempts to balance the analysis of the internal structure of the text with an exploration of its socio-historical context, thereby producing a complete picture of both the content of the text and the background of the author's school of thought, which has been a source of controversy.

Many studies of *Maulid al-Dība'i* have been conducted from various perspectives. From a religious interpretation perspective, several works *of commentary* on this text can be mentioned, such as *Manba' Alfādh al-Dība'i*, *Mukhtashar Sīrah Nabawiyyah bi Maulid al-Dība'i*, and *Ḍiyā' al-Murabbaʿ fī Syarḥ ad-Diba'i*. These interpretations mostly discuss Islamic sources from various poems and prose written by Al-Dība'i.

From a structural aspect, there are studies such as *Beauty and Ugliness in the Poetry Collection Maulid al-Dība'i, by Abdurrahman al-Dība'i, : A Siegelian Aesthetics Perspective*, *Hiponimi dalam Terjemahan Maulid al-Dība'i, Karya Achmad* Sunarto, Kajian *Shalawat Kawākib Syāʿir in Maulid al-Dība'i, by Shaykh Abdurrahman al-Dība'i: A Semiotic Analysis*, *Uslub al-Majāz wa Asrārihī fī Qaṣīdah Maulid al-Dība'i*, most of which highlight the structure of the text without directly relating it to the context in which *Maulid al-Dība'i* was written.

Therefore, there are still a few studies that specifically relate the text *of Maulid al-Dība'i* to the socio-historical context in which it was produced, especially those that use genetic structuralism as their analytical tool. This approach is important for understanding the text as a whole, namely as a cultural product that cannot be separated from the social, political, and religious dynamics that shaped it. Thus, this research is significant because it aims to provide a more complete and balanced reading of the *Maulid al-Dība'i* text, as well as to avoid reductive readings, especially those that tend to assess the text ahistorically based only on certain quotations.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative, interpretive, historical, and textual approach. The primary framework employed is Goldmann's genetic structuralism theory, which connects the text's structure to the social structure in which the Maulid al-Dība'i text originated. The Maulid al-Dība'i text published by Dār al-Imām ar-Rūwas, Beirut, was used as primary data because it was considered to be the closest to the version circulating in Indonesia.

The analysis was conducted in three stages: first, an intrinsic analysis of the meaning of the poetry, style of language, symbols, and theological nuances that were considered to contain sectarian indications. Second, a socio-historical context analysis that reconstructed the religious, intellectual, and Sufi conditions and inter-sectarian

relations during al-Dība'i's time. Third, a structural homology analysis to examine the correspondence between the praise of Ahlul Bait and the culture of Yemeni society, which loves the descendants of the Prophet without leading to Shiite affiliation. The results show that the internal and external structures of al-Diba'i's maulid text do not indicate any sectarian tendencies.

Lucien Goldmann's Genetic Structuralism

Early literary criticism was influenced by formalism and Marxism, which placed the role of the reader as a subject whose interpretation was very limited (Jauss, 2022). Formalism prioritizes the text as an object of study as *an autonomous entity* (Di Leo, 2020). They insist that literary works are not reflections of reality, because literary works are reality itself (autonomous) (Van Rooden, 2015). Marxism, on the other hand, ignores the aesthetic aspects of literary works, as it focuses more on linking literary works to economic structures and ideology (Hamadi, 2017).

Lucien Goldmann, as a Marxist literary critic (Sonolet, 2022) pioneered the emergence of genetic structuralism(Karim, 2024), by combining structuration and a strong social vision (Soltani & Hamdi, 2024). He stated that literary works do have structure, but that structure is dynamic. It is the result of a historical process that continues to evolve, namely through the mechanism of structure formation and dismantling (Towfighy et al, 2023), which initially grew and was interpreted by the community where the literary work emerged (Faruk, 1999). The relationship between literature and social life referred to here is not solely determined by theme, but rather by similarities in the way of thinking or mental structure that underlie both. In other words, the inner structure of society is reflected in the inner structure of literary works. This mental structure does not arise from individuals separately, but is formed through the collective experiences and reflections of a social group (Soltani & Hamdi, 2024).

This collective consciousness forms the basis of Goldmann's genetic structuralism (Jayanti & Ali Mustofa, 2020). Goldmann assumes that literary works are not born out of a cultural vacuum, nor are they merely representations of the author's individual views. Instead, literary works are seen as expressions of the collective consciousness of a particular social group or historical class. Goldmann refers to this consciousness as a trans-individual form (Sonolet, 2022), that is, a consciousness that transcends the

individual and is formed through the social and cultural dynamics and value structures that develop in the society in which the author lives (Shinta, 2021). From this, Goldmann asserts that, in essence, works of art are not created by individuals, but by the collective as a whole (Muarifuddin & Azi, 2017).

Goldmann introduced the concept of a worldview, which he called *vision du monde* or *world vision. World vision* is a term used to refer to something that binds members of a particular social group in the form of inspiration, ideas, or feelings and distinguishes them from members of other social groups (Soltani & Hamdi, 2024). This theory emphasizes a social group approach, which views the structure of literary works as being formed from mental categories that grow and develop within a particular social community (Aisyah & Goldman, 2025).

Intrinsic Structure of the *Maulid al-Dība'i* Text

The prose and poetry in *Maulid al-Dība'i* contain stories about the Prophet Muhammad. Due to the large number of prose and poetry in *Maulid al-Dība'i*, this study will focus on poetry that has the potential to cause controversy. The following poem, which was later quoted by Gus Baha as the basis for claiming that al-Dība'i was a Zaydi Shiite, reads as follows:

أَهْلُ بَيْتِ الْمُصْطَفَى الطُّهُرِ ﴿٠﴾ هُمْ أَمَانُ الْأَرْضِ فَاذَّكِرِ

Remember that the Ahlu Bayt of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are not only chosen but also sacred individuals. Their presence instills a sense of security on this earth.

شُبِّهُوْا بِالْأَنْجُمِ الزُّهُرِ ﴿٠﴾ مِثْلَمَا قَدْجَاءَ فِي السُّنَنِ

They are like sparkling stars. This parable comes from the hadith of the Prophet.

وَسَفِيْنٌ لِلنَّجَاةِ إِذَا ﴿٠﴾ خِفْتَ مِنْ طُوْفَانِ كُلِّ أَذَى

And it is as if their presence is like a rescue ship, which will free you when you are hit by fear that manifests like a hurricane in various wounds.

وَلَنَا خَيْرُ الْأَنَامِ أَبُ ﴿٠﴾ وَعَلِيُّ الْمُرْتَضَى حَسَبُ

The father we have is the best human being, whose origins are from a blessed lineage.

وَإِلَى السِّبْطَيْنِ نَنْتَسِبُ ﴿٠﴾ نَسَبًا مَّا فِيْهِ مِنْ دَخَنِ

To his two pure grandchildren, a clean bloodline without any blemishes that clouded it.

كَمْ إِمَامٍ بَعْدَهُ خَلَفُوْا ﴿٠﴾ مِنْهُ سَادَاتٌ بِذَا عُرِفُوْا

How, after that, many imams replaced him, they were known by the title Sayyid

وَبِهَذَا الْوَصْفِ قَدْ وُصِفُوا ﴿۰﴾ مِنْ قَدِيْمِ الدَّهْرِ وَالزَّمَن

With that title, they are often referred to throughout time and years.

مِثْلُ زَيْنِ الْعَابِدِيْنَ عَلِيْ ﴿۰﴾ وَابْنِهِ الْبَاقِرِ خَيرِ وَلِيْ

As Zainal Abidin Ali and his son Baqir are the best guardians.

وَالْإِمَامِ الصَّادِقِ الْحَفِلِ ﴿۰﴾ وَعَلِيّ ذِي الْعُلَا الْيَقِينِ

Also, Imam Ja'far Ash-Sadiq, who is filled with various blessings, and Ali, who has a noble position and firm beliefs

The structural analysis of the poetry excerpt from *Maulid al-Dība'i* uses Farhud's technique or model, which is as follows: *al-ma'na* (idea/theme), *al-'āṭifah* (feelings), *al-khayyāl* (imagination), *luġatu al-shi'r* (style of language), *mūsīqā al-shi'r* (musicality) (Ulfa et al., 2021)

In a poem, there is an artistic idea or concept that serves as a connecting link between its compositions (Kholbekovna, 2021) . The main theme of these verses is praise for the Ahlul Bait of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, who are described as holy figures, saviors of the people who, in Javanese terminology, are "paku bumi", something that radiates spiritual energy that maintains the balance of nature, as in the quote "hum amānu al-arḍi", as well as a firm statement that the Ahlul Bait are a spiritual symbol of Islam. The next themes are the affirmation of the existence of the Prophet's descendants and the majesty of the Prophet's lineage, as well as the mention of the Prophet's descendants who are considered Wali (Zainal Abidin, al-Baqir, Ja'far ash-Shadiq, etc.).

The next element is emotion *(al-'Āṭifah)*. One of the main elements in literary works is emotion. One of the purposes of poetry itself is to evoke feelings (emotions). Poetry can express feelings concisely and compactly compared to prose, which sometimes requires a long story(Johnson-Laird & Oatley, 2022). The emotional nuance that radiates and dominates in the poem above is a deep feeling of love (*mahabbah*) for the Prophet's family. This feeling of *mahabbah* then gives rise to attitudes of reverence and extraordinary admiration, to the extent of mentioning figures descended from the Prophet as a way of communicating with readers of that era.

The next important element is *Al-khayyal* or imagination. Imagination is the cognitive ability of writers (Finn & Wylie, 2021) to reflect on events that have occurred or will occur through visual representations in the form of assumptions or ideas

(Muzakki, 2018). The element of imagination is evident in the use of metaphorical majaz, such as a ship of safety "*Safīnun li al-najāti*" when a hurricane (*taufan*) comes. The storm, referred to as a great tempest, also depicts the chaos of the world, while the author of the poem wants to show the spiritual energy of the Ahlul Bait who can overcome the storm, as an illustration that the Ahlul Bait play a sociological and theological role for humanity. The use of vocabulary such as ark and star, which are common in Arabic poetry, shows that this imagination is a type of *ta'lifi* imagination, where the poet uses a combination of previous discourse and his own imagination (Muzakki, 2018).

Lughotus syi'ir (style of language) in this poem is full of kinayah, which are expressions that contain polysemy and can be either connotative or denotative (Nurbayan, 2016). There are several kinayah in this poem, such as "*Shubbiḥū bihā anjumi al-ẓuḥuri*" (they are like shining stars). The word nujum is often used in metaphors for figures who are revered because they are considered lanterns in the darkness. As in one of the hadiths which mentions *nujumun* to refer to the Prophet Muhammad (Manẓūr, 1955). When Ahlul Bait is said to be *nujum,* this is not merely aesthetic language but means that Ahlul Bait is a guide for the people. Then there is "*Nasaban mā fīhi min dakhani*" (descendants who are clean from impurities). *Dakhan* is *al-uthan* (an ancient word for smoke) as a result of burning fire (Manzur, 1990). Smoke itself is synonymous with density and turbidity. When al-Dība'i mentions that the lineage of the Ahlul Bait is pure, it means pure both physically and spiritually. Then the phrase "*Wa 'Aliyyin dhī al-'ulā al-yaqīni*" indicates a metaphor for the spiritual superiority of Ali's companions.

Mūsīqā al-Shi'r / Musicality of Poetry. The musicality in this poem uses the rules of Arabic literature, showing that the author is skilled in Arabic literature, as seen in the final letters used in the verses. For example, *"Ahlu bayti al-muṣṭafā al-ṭuhri / hum amānu al-arḍi fa-dhakkir(i)",* from the long and short verses of the poem that follow the *bakhr* pattern. The repetition of the sentence pattern *syubbihu- safinun - wa lana-* Methods such as this are al-Dība'i's attempt to influence readers to use their strong musicality to sharpen their memory of the text (Sangidu, 2018) .

When all the elements are brought together, in terms of theme, metaphorical style, and emotion, they also show deep love (*mahabbah*) and a feeling of honoring the

Ahlul Bait through strong symbols and rhythmic patterns, all of which indicate a complete, coherent poem with a high religious meaning. Structurally, this poem is an expression of Muslims' love for the Ahlul Bait.

Structure and Context of the Production of *Maulid Al-Dība'i*

To explore the context of the production of *Maulid al-Dība'i*, the first step is to understand the political, social, economic, and cultural background of the region where this work was born. Abdurrahman al-Dība'i (1461–1537 AD) lived during a time when Yemen was under the rule of the *Ṭāhiriyyah* Dynasty (1454–1517 AD)(Atabik & Mustaqim, 2020). This dynasty was the successor to the *Rasuliyyah* Dynasty, which had previously ruled the region. The Tahiriyah Dynasty was known for actively building various mosques and madrasas, which had a dual role as centres of worship and education, as well as symbols of their power and cultural legitimacy as Sunni rulers in the Yemen region (KEALL & Porter, 1983).

Al-Dība'i's productive period as a historian and writer took place during the Ṭāhiriyyah reign. During this time, he wrote various historical works. However, after the collapse of the Ṭāhiriyyah and the entry of Yemen into the Ottoman Empire, Zabid came under foreign occupation, and he no longer wrote about the last twenty years of his life (Hehmeyer, 2018). This indicates that al-Dība'i's intellectual engagement was more closely tied to the socio-political context of the Ṭāhiriyyah period than to the subsequent era.

The Social and Political Conditions of Zabid

Zabid, the birthplace of the author *of Maulid Al-Dība'i*, is a city located in the middle of the Tihamah plain in northern Yemen, between the Red Sea and the highlands of Yemen. Al-Dība'i describes Zabid as the largest city in Yemen, even larger than Sana'a (Ibn al-Daybaʿ, 1983). Zabīd was founded in 820 by Ibn Ziyad, who had been sent to Yemen from Baghdad by al-Ma'mun, the caliph of the Abbasid dynasty (who ruled from 813-833 AD), to resolve issues there. Ibn Ziyad (ruled 820-859) eventually established a dynasty in his own name (Hehmeyer, 2018). In 205 AH, the city became the capital of the first Islamic state in Yemen. Later, the city entered the arena of political, industrial, and

urban conflict (al-Ḥaḍramī, 2000). Although Zabid was once the capital of Yemen between the 13th and 15th centuries (Khalidi, 2017).

Zabid as the Centre of Islamic Scholarship

Zabid later became a centre of Islamic scholarship, as evidenced by the presence of a world-renowned university in the Islamic world (Leiermann, 2021). Since it emerged as a city in the 3rd century AH / 9th century AD, Zabid has been located on one of the recorded pilgrimage routes from southern Yemen to the Holy Cities in Hijaz. This gave Zabid a special status. Zabid reflected the tangible progress of civilisation and intellectualism during the Islamic period, one of the main indicators being the dissemination of knowledge in Zabid through multifunctional mosques, which served as centres of worship and education. Various disciplines were taught in the mosques, including religious studies, humanities, and even the exact sciences(Alhiagi, 2020).

Social Structure and Local Identity

Zabid was architecturally, culturally, and socially different from the centres of power in Northern Yemen, which were controlled and contested by various confederations of northern Yemeni tribes. Part of this difference stemmed from religious differences. The people of Zabid took pride in the Islamic scholarly tradition that had existed in their city for centuries. During the medieval Islamic period, Zabid was famous for its Shafi'i scholars, while in the highlands, the scholarly madhhab was Zaydi, a sect close to the Shi'a tradition (Exell & Trinidad, 2016).

Anne Meneley notes that the city of Zabid was populist. The tradition of religious learning influenced the social structure in Zabid. The people of Zabid greatly respected religious learning and honoured scholars who were experts in it. In this city, the elite families were not necessarily descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, as in a tribal system. The elite were people who owned vast lands or scholars whose knowledge was respected by the community (Meneley, 2017).

Cultural Tensions and Regional Perceptions

For a long time in Yemen, tribal politics have been very strong, especially in the highlands such as Sana'a. For centuries, Yemeni tribal political power was centred

around highland cities such as Sana'a, rather than coastal cities such as Zabid, because tribal members owed military service to the ruling sheikhs and therefore exercised military power, which the Zabidi tribe did not generally possess. The differences between highland and coastal cultures have led to a number of rivalries and even misunderstandings between the two. To this day, coastal communities refer to highlanders as "jebaleen," or mountain dwellers, implying a lack of education, manners, and civility. Meanwhile, highlanders are not particularly interested in the hot and humid welfare of Zabid, which is poor and lacks a tribe despite being a 'city of science (Exell & Trinidad, 2016)

Sufism in Yemen

At the height of the Rasulid dynasty's power, the rapidly growing and cosmopolitan population of Zabid and other urban centres tolerated various manifestations of Sufism, including those that drew criticism from some conservative scholars. The rulers' support for Sufism allegedly negated members of the religious hierarchy in Yemen. The rulers' protection of Sufi groups, which bore the name of Ibn Arabi on their banners, was partly motivated by their personal interest in his doctrines (Knysh, 1999). Sufism in Yemen developed out of the community's exhaustion with the endless tribal conflicts in Yemen, compounded by Yemen's difficult and complex terrain (al-Faqī, 1994). The advent of the Ayyubid era strengthened the Shafi'i school of thought in Yemen, while also strengthening the climate of Sufism due to the support of the rulers (Knysh, 1999).

In a socio-religious context, people tended to choose and follow Sufi figures who were known for their karamah (spiritual miracles)(Aziz, 2009). Sufi life in Yemen is also marked by the existence of various orders, such as Shadhiliyah, Naqshbandiyah, Rifaiyah, and Maghribiyah, which enrich the spirituality of coastal communities(al-Faqī, 1994). Sufis in Yemen were influenced by the philosophy of Ibn Arabi, which spread throughout Yemen(al-Faqī, 1994). His works, which spread throughout Zabid, show Zabid as a centre of Sufism (Knysh, 1999).

As with the conflict between the fuqaha (jurists) and the Sufis that generally occurred in various parts of the Islamic world (ANJUM, 2006)The same thing happened in Yemen. The fuqahāʾ (jurists) in this region opposed the practices of the Sufis, which

they considered to be a form of bid'ah (innovation in religion) that deviated from the teachings of the Prophet. This conflict not only occurs in religious practice but also emerges intensely in the intellectual discourse (al-Faqī, 1994).

Author's Context

Al-Dība'i's full name was Wajihuddin Abdurrahman bin Muhammad bin Umar bin Yusuf bin Ahmad bin Umar al-Dība'i, but he became better known as Abdurrahman al-Dība'i (Husna et al., 2025). Al-Dība'i lived under the rule of the Ṭāhirid Dynasty for 57 years (866–923 H/1462–1517 AD), an important period in the formation of his intellectualism and the writing of his works, including *Maulid al-Dība'i*. Al-Dība'i was raised by his maternal grandfather, who adhered to the Shafi'i school of thought. In *Bughyatul Mustafid,* he wrote that he was raised by his mother and grandfather, because his father went to India and then died (Ibn al-Dayba', n.d.). He memorised the Qur'an before the age of ten, and then studied Islamic sciences such as fiqh, hadith, and Arabic in the city of Zabid (Maliki, 2019).

Although al-Dība'i is widely known for his literary work, the Maulid, his reputation is actually more prominent as a hadith scholar. He is recorded to have taught Sahih al-Bukhari more than a hundred times and memorised more than 100,000 hadiths complete with their sanad (Maliki, 2019). His writing ability was acquired through extensive reading and deep study of the works of great scholars. In *Bugyatul Mustafid,* al-Dība'i, mentions that he studied various important books such as *Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasa'i, al-Muwatta'*, *al-Ashgha'* by Qadhi 'Iyadh, *Syamā'il an-Nabi* by at-Tirmidzi, *Risālah al-Qusyairiyyah*, and other works (Ibn al-Dayba', n.d.). Some of the teachers who guided him included al-Imam al-Hafiz as-Sakhawi, al-Imam Ibn Ziyad, and al-Imam Jamaluddin Muhammad bin Ismail (Said Bin Ahmad, 2024).

Ibn al-Dayba' compiled the history of Zabīd, which he dedicated to his main patron, the fourth (and last) sultan of the Tahiriyah dynasty, al-Zafir 'Amir 11 (reigned 1489-1517)(Hehmeyer, 2018). He recounts in his Bugyah that when Shalahuddin al-Malik al-Ṭāhir 'Āmir bin 'Abd al-Wahhāb bin Dāwūd read his work, the sultan was greatly impressed by his scholarship and invited him to the grand council(Ibn al-Dayba', n.d.). As for the final version of Bugyah, he presented it to Sultan Al-Miqranah (Venetia

Ann, 1992). Out of respect, Sultan Amir Bin Abd Wahab also appointed him as a teacher (Ibn al-Daybaʿ, n.d.)

Based on historical studies, it can be concluded that Ibn al-Dība' was a Sunni scholar of the Shafi'i school of thought. This is evident from his family background, which was known to be followers of the Shafi'i school of thought, as well as his religious education, which he underwent in an environment strongly rooted in Sunni tradition. In addition, his closeness to the royal court indicates that his religious affiliation was in line with the official authority, which at that time adhered to the Sunni school of thought. He couldn't be affiliated with a school of thought outside of Sunni Islam, because the Zabid region—especially the coastal area—had long been known as the main base of Sunni Shafi'i Islam, even before the Ṭāhiriyyah Dynasty came to power.

**Collective Worldview (*Vision du Monde)*

Lucien Goldmann states that great literary works always express *the world* vision of a particular social group (Routh, n.d.). This world vision originates from collective subjects who communicate with each other in facing the problems faced by society(Sakinah & Kusumayanti, 2023). In the *Maulid al-Dība'i* poem, it is apparent that the worldview expressed is the glorification of the Prophet's family (ahlul bait). This vision reflects the collective consciousness of the Sunni Shafi'i community in the coastal region of Zabid, as well as the Sunni Shafi'i community in general, which is known for its respect for the Ahlul Bait. Despite their Sufi orientation, they also show tolerance towards the Zaydi community, which is the dominant Shiite group in the mountainous regions of Yemen.

This inclusive attitude is reflected in their daily social and cultural practices. The Sunni and Zaydi communities in Zabid coexist relatively peacefully, as the differences between the two communities in Yemen are less related to religious aspects and more to cultural, social, and political aspects (Burrowes, 2016). Although Zaydis are a branch of Shia in terms of theology, their practices are closer to traditional Sunni than traditional Shia. They are also often involved in religious activities with Sunnis, so they have adopted many Sunni practices (Rebok, 2024).

Collective Mental Structure and Social Structure

Goldmann asserts that the mental structure that shapes literary works does not originate from individuals alone, but is a collective reflection of society on its historical experiences(Brady, 1974). In the context of poems praising the Ahlul Bait, these expressions can be understood as a response to the social situation of Muslims who were experiencing spiritual crises, political tensions, and sectarian divisions. In Yemen, as previously explained, Sufism was once strongly rejected by the fiqh scholars. In this context, the creation of religious poetry during the Rasuliyah Dynasty was a strategy to quell the growing anti-Sufism movement, as well as an attempt to unite the Sunni and Shia sects through poetry that was acceptable to both Shia and Sunni circles.

The symbolic structure in these poems—which describe the Ahlul Bait as stars, ships, guardians, and imams—shows the collective construction of religious values that have been formed in Islamic history and tradition. Al-Dība'i's mention of figures such as Ali al-Murtada, Zain al-'Abidin, al-Baqir, and Ja'far al-Sadiq, although often associated with Shi'ism, reflects an acceptance of a trans-sectarian genealogical structure of scholarship and spiritual authority as well as the more open and inclusive character of Zabid society. They did not respect religious figures solely because of their lineage or sectarian affiliation, but because of their scientific capacity and authority (Meneley, 2017). Thus, al-Dība'i's poem represents the collective consciousness of the Zabid community, which is pluralistic, open to sectarian differences, and rejects exclusivism in religion. This is what can be called the "inner structure" of Zabid society—that is, the fundamental character that reflects acceptance of diversity within the framework of Islamic spirituality.

Coherence and Social Function of Literary Works

Goldmann states that the aesthetic value in literary works lies in their coherence with the social mental structure that gave birth to them(Leenhardt & Diane Wood, 1976). In this poem, coherence is evident in the repetition of metaphorical and referential structures to the figures of Ahlul Bait from generation to generation. *Al-Dība'i's* effort to capture the inner structure of society and write it in the form of poetry, which in turn gave birth to the horizon in his work, is what is referred to as aesthetics in literary works. This is what Goldmann refers to as coherence, namely, the creation of a

literary structure that is commensurate with the inner structure of the society that gave birth to the work. Therefore, the social function of the poem is not only to display the spiritual identity of the people as lovers of the Ahlul Bait, but also as a symbolic response to the social unrest of the Zabid community.

Transindividual Subject (Not a Single Individual)

Goldmann states that great literary works are the result of collective agency, not just individuals (Mayrl, 2014). In this context, it means that the author is an intermediary of the collective consciousness of Muslims in a particular social time and space. This poem represents the collective voice of a religious community that loved the Ahlul Bait in the Middle Ages, specifically in Zabid, Yemen.

Goldmann's concept of the transindividual subject emphasizes that literary creation emerges from a shared social consciousness rather than from an isolated personal experience. Within this framework, the poem can be understood as a cultural articulation shaped by the historical, religious, and emotional experiences of the Muslim community in Zabid, Yemen. The poet functions as a mediator who gives symbolic form to the collective values, beliefs, and affective ties of a community that revered the Ahlul Bait, reflecting not merely personal devotion but a broader communal identity embedded in a specific socio-historical context.

Homology Between Text and Social Structure

The structure of the Maulid al-Dība'i text reflects the Sunni-Sufi values that prevailed in Zabid society, particularly its emphasis on spiritual devotion, ethical universalism, love for the Prophet Muhammad, and reverence for his family (Ahlul Bait) as an integral part of Sunni piety. Zabid, as a major center of Islamic learning in medieval Yemen, was characterized by a scholarly culture that was open, cosmopolitan, and relatively non-sectarian, where jurisprudence, theology, and Sufism interacted dynamically. The collective consciousness of this scientific and religious community— deeply rooted in Sunni tradition yet enriched by Sufi spirituality—shaped al-Dība'i's creative horizon in composing the Maulid. As a result, the text prioritizes devotional expression, moral exhortation, and spiritual reflection rather than polemical or doctrinal sectarian claims. Therefore, the accusation that the author of Maulid al-Dība'i was a

Shi'ite can be refuted not only structurally, through the thematic and stylistic features of the text, but also contextually, by situating it within the Sunni-Sufi intellectual climate of Zabid, and conceptually, by examining its underlying religious worldview. The Maulid al-Dība'i should thus be understood as a religious and cultural expression of the cosmopolitan Sunni-Sufi Yemeni society of Zabid, representing a shared devotional ethos rather than a sectarian document favoring a particular school of thought.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be confirmed that al-Dība'i was not a Shiite but rather affiliated with Sunni-Shafi'i. This is evident from his biography, his works, and his closeness to rulers who were known to be strong supporters of the Shafi'i school of thought. Therefore, the praise of the Ahlul Bait in Maulid al-Dība'i does not reflect allegiance to a particular school of thought, but rather an expression of the Muslim community's love for the family of the Prophet Muhammad.

The mention of Ahlul Bait figures in his poetry is part of a symbolic construction that reflects the inclusive, cosmopolitan, and open social inner structure of Zabid society towards the diversity of Islamic traditions, including Sufism. With a society that is predominantly Sunni-Shafi'i and tolerant of sectarian differences, al-Dība'i uses these symbols to capture the collective consciousness of his community, which values plurality in religious tradition.

This research constitutes a preliminary study that opens avenues for further investigation. To achieve a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding, future research is recommended to examine the entire content of al-Dība'i's Maulid text. Such a holistic analysis is expected to reveal more fully the ideological, aesthetic, and spiritual structures embedded within the text, as well as to clarify how these elements construct its religious and cultural meanings within their social and historical contexts. A broader analytical scope may also contribute to the development of interdisciplinary perspectives, particularly in the fields of Islamic literary studies, philology, and cultural studies.

References

al-Faqī, ʿIṣām al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raʾūf. (1994). *al-Yaman fī Ẓill al-Islām: Munḏu Fajrih Ḥattá Qiyām Dawlat Banī Rasūl*. Dār al-Fikr al-ʿArabī,.

al-Ḥaḍramī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAbd Allāh. (2000). *Zabīd wa Masājiduhā wa Madārisuhā fī al-Tārīkh*. Maʿhad al-Faransī li al-Dirāsāt al-ʿArabiyyah.

Al-Thadifi, M. I. Y. (2006). *Qalaid Al-Jawahir, Hayat, keramat, dan wasiat-wasiat Syeikh Abdur Qadir Jilani*. Kalimasada Press.

Alhiagi, Y. (2020). The effect of Urban Primacy on the Historical Cities in Yemen: An applied study on the Historical City of Zabid. *Journal of Association of Arab Universities for Tourism and Hospitality*, *18*(1), 122–143. https://doi.org/10.21608/jaauth.2020.23576.1004

ANJUM, T. (2006). Sufism in History and Its Relationship with Power. *Islamic Studies*, *45*(2), 221–268.

As'ad, M. (2020). *THE DYNAMICS OF THE INDONESIAN HADRAMIS ON THE MAULID CELEBRATION*. *8*(2), 389–430.

Atabik, A., & Mustaqim, M. (2020). Political, Religious, and Social Unrest in Yemen in the 18th and 19th Centuries during the Late Ottoman Dynasty. *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization (JITC)*, *10*(2).

Aziz, M. (2009). A Short Survey of Yemeni Sufism from Its Inception up to the Thirteenth Century. *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, *26*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.35632/ajiss.v26i1.372

Bariah, F. A., R., B., Abd al-Gelil, M. F., & Al-Shafi'i, M. M. O. (2018). The Scrutiny of Ibn Al-Dayba' Al-Zabidi's Writings. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, *8*(7), 1018–1027. https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v8-i7/4529

Bouchiba, Farid, and M. L. (2024). The Celebration of the Birth of the Prophet (al-mawlid al-nabawī). *Revue Des Mondes Musulmans et de La Méditerranée (REMMM)*, *155*(1). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4000/11z1c

Brady, P. (1974). Socio-Criticism as Genetic Structuralism: Value and Limitations of the Goldmann Method. *L'Esprit Créateur 14*, *3*, 207–218. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26280080

Burrowes, R. D. (2016). *The Yemen Arab Republic: The Politics of Development, 1962–1986*. Routledge.

Di Leo, J. . (2020). The New New Criticism: Antitheory, Autonomy, and the Literary Text from Object-Oriented Ontology to Postcritique. *The Comparatist*, *44*. https://doi.org/doi.org/10.1353/com.2020.0008.

Exell, K., & Trinidad, R. (Eds.). (2016). *Cultural Heritage in The Arabian Peninsula. Debates, Discourses, and Practices*. Routledge.

Faruk. (1999). *Pengantar Sosiologi Sastra: dari Strukturalisme Genetik sampai Post-Modernisme*. Pustaka Pelajar.

Finn, E., & Wylie, R. (2021). Collaborative imagination : A methodological approach. *Futures*, *132*(May), 102788. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2021.102788

Firdausi, A. C. (2021a). Gus Baha Sebut Diba'i dan Barzanji Berasal dari Syiah, ini Alasannya! *Jatim Times.com*. https://jatimtimes.com/baca/235499/20210214/121200/gus-baha-sebut-dibai-dan-barzanji-berasal-dari-syiah-ini-alasannya

Firdausi, A. C. (2021b). NU Garis Lurus Bantah Gus Baha soal Diba'i dan Barzanji Berasal dari Syiah. *Jatim Times.Com*.

Hamadi, L. (2017). The Concept of Ideology in Marxist Literary Criticism. *European Scientific Journal, ESJ*, *13*(20), 154. https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2017.v13n20p154

Hehmeyer, I. (2018). *A History of Water Engineering and Management in Yemen: Material Remains and Textual Foundations. Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section One, The Near and Middle East, vol. 129* (M. Fierro, M. Ş. Hanioğlu, R. Holod, & F. Schwarz (Eds.)). Brill.

Ibn al-Daybaʿ, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAlī. (n.d.). *. Bughyat al-Mustafīd fī Akhbār Madīnat Zabīd. Manuscript. ca. 11th century AH / 17th century CE. Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Codex 3749 M.K.*

Ibn al-Daybaʿ, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAlī. (1983). *Al-Faḍl al-Mazīd ʿalā Bughyat al-Mustafīd fī Akhbār Madīnat Zabīd* (E. by Y. Shalḥad (Ed.)). Markaz al-Dirāsāt wa-l-Buḥūth al-Yamanī.

Jauss, H. R. (2022). Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory*. *New Directions in Literary History*, *2*(1), 11–41. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003247937-2

Jayanti, L. N., & Ali Mustofa. (2020). Worldview in Maya Angelou's Poems: Lucien Goldmann's Genetic Structuralism Approach. *LITERA KULTURA: Journal of Literary and Cultural Studies*, *8*(3), 23–31.

Johnson-Laird, P. N., & Oatley, K. (2022). How poetry evokes emotions. *Acta Psychologica*, *224*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2022.103506

Karim, A. (2024). The Integration of Understanding and Interpretation in the Structural-Formative Direction: Towards a Methodological Integration in Literary Sociology according to Lucien Goldman. *Arabic Journal for Translation Studies*, *7*, 239–254. https://doi.org/10.63939/AJTS.39kp4s61

KEALL, E. J., & Porter, V. (1983). A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE ARCHITECTURE OF ZABĪD. *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, *KEALL, E.*(14), 51–65. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/41623633

Khalidi, L. (2017). The Destruction of Yemen and Its Cultural Heritage. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *49*(4), 735–738.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743817000691

Kholbekovna, F. O. (2021). THE ISSUE OF ARTISTIC IDEA IN POETRY. *European Scholar Journal (ESJ*, *2*(4), 233–236.

Knysh, A. D. (1999). *Ibn 'Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam*. State University of New York Press.

Kris, D. (2021). Gus Baha Minta Maaf atas Kesalahannya Sebut Diba Berasal dari Syiah. *Malang.Times.Com*. https://www.malangtimes.com/baca/64936/20210311/084700/gus-baha-minta-maaf-atas-kesalahannya-sebut-diba-berasal-dari-syiah

Leenhardt, J., & Diane Wood. (1976). Towards a Sociological Aesthetic: An Attempt at Constructing the Aesthetic of Lucien Goldmann. *SubStance 5*, *15*, 94–104. https://doi.org/10.2307/3684062

Leiermann, T. (2021). Rehabilitation of historic Shibam and Zabid, Yemen as an impulse for community and economy. *Built Heritage*, *5*(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1186/s43238-021-00044-8

Maliki, A. (2019). *Mukhtashar Fi Sirah Nabawiyyah Al-Ma'ruf Bi Maulid Al-Diba'i*. Darul Khawai.

Manzur, I. (1990). *Lisan al-'Arab*. Dar Sader.

Manẓūr, I. (1955). *Lisān al-'Arab*. Dār Ṣādir.

Meneley, A. (2017). *The Zabidi House, In Architectural Heritage of Yemen: Buildings That Fill My Eye, 195–203. Gingko, 2017. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt201mpg0.23.* (T. H.J. Marchand (Ed.)). Gingko. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt201mpg0.23.

MKY. (2021). Benarkah Diba' dan Barzanji Karya Ulama Syi'ah? Ini Beda Pendapat Gus Baha dan Gus Luthfi. *Duta.Co*. https://duta.co/benarkah-diba-dan-barzanji-karya-ulama-syiah-ini-beda-pendapat-gus-baha-dan-gus-luthfi

Muarifuddin, & Azi, R. (2017). *Breaking Boundary Between Genetic Structuralism and Postmodernism*. *7*(12), 631–647.

Muthohar, A. (2011). *Maulid Nabi Menggapai Keteladanan Rasulullullah Saw*. Pustaka Pesantren.

Muzakki, A. (2018). *Pengantar Teori Sastra Arab*. UIN Maliki Press.

Nurbayan, Y. (2016). *Keindahan Gaya Bahasa Kinayah dalam Al-Qura'an*. Royyan Press.

Rebok, V. (2024). *Sectarianisation of Yemen : Effects and Implications*. *1*(2), 1–35.

Routh, J. (n.d.). A Reputation Made: Lucien Goldmann. *The Sociological Review*, *25*, 150–162. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.1977.tb03236.x

Said Bin Ahmad, M. (2024). *Dhiyaul Murabba' Syarah Maulid Dhiba'*. Darut Tahqiq.

Sakinah, N. B. A., & Kusumayanti, D. D. (2023). A Genetic Structuralism Analysis of Materialism in Frances Hodgson Burnett's A Little Princess. *Poetika*, *11*(1), 48. https://doi.org/10.22146/poetika.v11i1.77973

Sangidu. (2018). *STRUKTURALISME DALAM SASTRA ARAB: Teori dan Aplikasinya*. Gadjah Mada University Press.

Seise, C. (2018). Women Remembering the Prophet's Birthday : Maulid Celebrations and Religious Emotions Among the Alawiyin Community in Palembang, Indonesia. *ASEAS-Austrian Jounal of South-East Asian Studies*, *11(2)*, 217–230.

Shinta, M. K. (2021). Analisis Struktural Genetik Pada Novel Orang-Orang Biasa Karya Andrea Hirata. *Syntax Literate: Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia*, *6*(8), 3915–3924.

SHMASNH, K. M. F. (2022). THE INFLUENCE OF THE TRANSLATOR'S CULTURAL BACKGROUND ON TRANSLATING ARABIC LITERARY TEXTS INTO ENGLISH-COMPARING THE TRANSLATION OF I SAW RAMALLAH, AND I WAS BORN THERE ; I WAS BORN HERE AS A CASE STUDY. *IJHER : International Journal of Humanities and Educational Research*, *4*(3), 235–243.

Soltani, F., & Hamdi, B. Y. (2024). Genetic Structuration According to Lucien Goldman: Concepts and Procedural Mechanisms in the Context of Systematic Critique. *IMAGO: Interculturalite et Didactique*, *23*, 380–392. www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/PresentationRevue/543

Sonolet, D. E. (2022). The concept of sociality in the literary criticism of Georg Lukács, Lucien Goldmann, and Theodor W. Adorno. In H. F. Halley, J. A.; Dahms (Ed.), *The centrality of sociality: Responses to Michael E. Brown's The concept of the social in uniting the social sciences and the humanities*. Emerald Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1108/S0278-1204202339

Temmerman, K. De, & Demoen, K. (2017). ANCIENT BIOGRAPHY AND FICTIONALISATION. *Histos*, *11*(December).

Towfighy, M., Moqaddam Mottaqi, A., and Nazeri, H. (2023). The Study of Mohammed Taghi Bahar's Poetry Based on Lucien Goldmann's Genetic Structuralism Theory. *Societies in Persian Literature*, *2*(4), 59–70.

Ulfa, H., Alfitra, R. M., & Ibadurrohman. (2021). *SHORT STORY AL-BARMAN IN THE ANTHOLOGY OF KHAMMARATUL QITTIL ASWAD BY NAJIB MAHFUZ : STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS FARHUD'S MODELS*. *7*(2).

Van Rooden, A. (2015). Reconsidering Literary Autonomy: From an Individual towards a Relational Paradigm. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, *76*(2), 167–190.

Venetia Ann, P. (1992). *Durham E-Theses The History and Monuments of the Tahirid dynasty of the Yemen 858-923 / 1454-1517*. Durham University.