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Reading Palestinian Resistance through Peircean Semiotics: A Semiotic and Qur'anic Analysis of Mahmoud Darwish's *Identity Card*

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the poem *Identity Card* by Mahmoud Darwish as a representation of the identity and resistance of the Palestinian people through Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach which includes icons, indexes, and symbols. The focus of the study is directed at how the meaning of suffering, attachment to the land, and the strengthening of collective identity are articulated in the poem, as well as its relationship to the Qur'anic principles of maintaining identity, defending the homeland, and resisting oppression. The research method used is qualitative-descriptive with Peirce's semiotic approach. Primary data is in the form of the text of the poem *Identity Card*, while secondary data is obtained from scientific literature on the life of Mahmoud Darwish, the context of the Palestinian struggle, as well as the study of interpretation and hadith related to the value of resistance. An analysis of the nine main quotes of the poem was carried out using the Peirce framework, then enriched with a normative-religious perspective to reveal the ethical and spiritual dimensions of the resistance presented. The results of the study show that the icon depicts the concrete reality of the suffering of the Palestinian people due to occupation; the index reflects an existential attachment to the land understood as a divine trust; Meanwhile, symbols contain collective resistance through diction such as "angry", "name", and *Identity Card* that affirm pride and courage in the face of oppression. These three aspects are in harmony with the values of the Qur'an: identity as sunnatullah (QS. Al-Hujurāt: 13), land as a trust (QS. Nūḥ: 19), and resistance to tyranny as a manifestation of faith (HR. Muslim, no. 49). Thus, the poem *Identity Card* is not only an aesthetic work, but also a cultural, ideological, and spiritual discourse that represents the collective struggle of the Palestinian people and offers a universal meaning of justice and humanity.

Keywords: Semiotics; Identity; Resistance; Palestine; Mahmoud Darwish



ملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى تحليل قصيدة "بطاقة الهوية" لمحمود درويش كتمثيل لهوية الشعب الفلسطيني ومقاومته من خلال سيميائية تشارلز ساندرز بيرس (الأيقونات، الفهارس، الرموز). ينصب تركيزه على معنى المعاناة والتعلق بالأرض وتعزيز الهوية الجماعية، ويرتبط بالمبادئ القرآنية في الدفاع عن الهوية والدفاع عن الوطن ومحاربة الاضطهاد. يستخدم منهج البحث هذا النوعية الوصفية مع المنهج السيميائي لتشارلز ساندرز بيرس (الأيقونات والفهارس والرموز). البيانات الأولية في شكل نص قصيدة "بطاقة الهوية"، بينما تأتي البيانات الثانوية من الأدبيات العلمية حول الدرويش والنضال الفلسطيني. تم تحليل الاقتباسات الشعرية التسعة من خلال إطار بيرس، وإثرائه بمقاربة معيارية دينية قائمة على القرآن والحديث، بحيث يمكن قراءة معنى المقاومة ليس فقط سياسيا، ولكن أيضا أخلاقيا وروحيا. تظهر النتائج أن الأيقونة تصور الواقع الملموس لحياة الشعب الفلسطيني، والمؤشر يعكس المعاناة والتعلق بالأرض كأمانة، بينما يؤكد الرمز الهوية الجماعية والمقاومة من خلال كلمات مثل "غاضب" مليئة بالمقاومة. تتماشى هذه النتيجة مع القرآن: الهوية كسنة الله (QS). الحجرات: (١٣)، الأرض كأمانة (QS. نوح: ١٩)، ومقاومة الظلم كجزء من الإيمان (HR. Muslim، رقم ٤٩). قصيدة محمود درويش "بطاقة الهوية" ليست مجرد تعبير جمالي، بل هي تمثيل للمعاناة الجماعية للشعب الفلسطيني التي تتناغم مع القيم القرآنية للهوية والأرض ومقاومة الاضطهاد. وهكذا، تعمل هذه القصيدة كتعبير جمالي بالإضافة إلى خطاب ثقافي وأيديولوجي وروحي يؤكد المقاومة ويعطي معنى عالميا للنضال ضد الظلم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: لسيميائية; الهوية; المقاومة; فلسطين; محمود درويش

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis puisi *Identity Card* karya Mahmoud Darwish sebagai representasi identitas dan perlawanan rakyat Palestina melalui pendekatan semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce yang meliputi ikon, indeks, dan simbol. Fokus kajian diarahkan pada bagaimana makna penderitaan, keterikatan pada tanah, dan penguatan identitas kolektif diartikulasikan dalam puisi tersebut, serta keterkaitannya dengan prinsip-prinsip Al-Qur'an tentang menjaga identitas, membela tanah air, dan melawan penindasan. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif-deskriptif dengan pendekatan semiotika Peirce. Data primer berupa teks puisi *Identity Card*, sedangkan data sekunder diperoleh dari literatur ilmiah mengenai kehidupan Mahmoud Darwish, konteks perjuangan Palestina, serta kajian tafsir dan hadis terkait nilai resistensi. Analisis dilakukan terhadap sembilan kutipan utama puisi menggunakan kerangka Peirce, kemudian diperkaya dengan perspektif normatif-religius untuk menyingkap dimensi etis dan spiritual dari perlawanan yang dihadirkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ikon menggambarkan realitas konkret penderitaan rakyat Palestina akibat penjajahan; indeks merefleksikan keterikatan eksistensial pada tanah yang dipahami sebagai amanah ilahi; sedangkan simbol mengandung perlawanan kolektif melalui diksi seperti "marah", "nama", dan "kartu identitas" yang menegaskan kebanggaan dan keberanian menghadapi penindasan. Ketiga aspek tersebut selaras dengan nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an: identitas sebagai sunnatullah (QS. Al-Hujurāt: 13), tanah sebagai amanah (QS. Nūḥ: 19), dan perlawanan terhadap kezaliman sebagai manifestasi iman (HR. Muslim, no. 49). Dengan demikian, puisi *Identity Card* bukan hanya karya estetis, melainkan juga wacana kultural, ideologis, dan spiritual yang merepresentasikan perjuangan kolektif rakyat Palestina serta menawarkan makna universal tentang keadilan dan kemanusiaan.

Kata Kunci: Semiotika; Identitas; Perlawanan; Palestina; Mahmoud Darwish

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A. Introduction

Literary works are imaginative expressions of human beings rooted in creative experiences, feelings, and reasoning. As an imaginative work, literature gives the author the freedom to process reality through authorship that is not bound by empirical facts, but rather reveals the possibility of deeper meanings (Hasniar; Sitti Wahidah Masnani,

18)¹. Imagination in literature is not a form of escape from reality, but an alternative way of interpreting life and uncovering the essence of humanity. As stated in (Tirsa Aminah; Syamsul Bahri, 31)² that literary works are a mirror of the social life in which they were born, which reveals the values, conflicts, and collective consciousness of their society. One of the literary works in question is poetry. Poetry, as a literary form, not only serves to convey the beauty of language, but also to be a medium of reflection and cultural resistance to injustice (Edward W Said, 2016)³. In the history of world literature, poetry has often been a vehicle for political and spiritual articulation, where poetic language works beyond aesthetics towards ideological and humanitarian functions. In the context of the modern Arab world, Mahmoud Darwish occupies a special position as a poet who makes poetry an arena for the struggle for Palestinian national identity. He was not just a lyrical poet, but a cultural symbol of resistance that voiced the exile, trauma, and collective hope of a nation deprived of its homeland (Shomurzayev Mukhammad, 10)⁴.

One of Darwish's most iconic works is *Identity Card* (Bithāqat Huwīyah, 1964) which marks an important milestone in Palestinian resistance literature. This poem openly challenges colonial power that reduces the existence of the Palestinian people to mere administrative numbers. Through simple but sharp diction, Darwish affirms Arab identity not only as an ethnic category, but as a political existence and a symbol of rejection of the erasure of culture, land, and history (Wulan Suci Novianti, Rohanda Rohanda, Palen Dika, 2024)⁵. The call "Note! I am an Arab" becomes a manifestation of existential resistance against oppression, as well as a declaration of the right to be recognized as a human being who has a name, land, and dignity..

Mahmoud Darwish can be positioned as an organic intellectual in the sense of Edward Said (1935–2003): a writer who writes from the center of his nation's historical

¹ Hasniar; Sitti Wahidah Masnani, Andi Agussalim. "Nilai-nilai Sufistik Dalam Buku 'Fihi Ma Fihi' Karya Jalaluddin Rumi (Pendekatan Semiotika)." *Jurnal Sarjana Ilmu Budaya* 04 (18): 21.

² Tirsa Aminah; Syamsul Bahri, Sitti Wahidah Masnani. "THE PERSONALITY OF THE CHARACTERS IN THE FILM *AL-FIL AL-AZRAQ*: AN APPROACH TO LITERARY PSYCHOLOGY." *Journal of Undergraduate Humanities* 3 (31): 37–52. <https://journal.unhas.ac.id/index.php/jsbsk/article/view/26949/9824>.

³ Edward W Said. *Orientalisme*. II. Pustaka Pelajar, 2016: 15050

⁴ Shomurzayev Mukhammad, Kamoliddinova M.N. "MAHMUD DARWISH AND ARAB NATIONAL LITERATURE." *YANGI O'ZBEKISTON, YANGI TADQIQOTLAR JURNALI* 1, no. 1 (10): 15–18. <https://phoenixpublication.net/index.php/TTVAL/article/view/27/27>.

⁵ Wulan Suci Novianti, Rohanda Rohanda, Palen Dika. "Deklarasi Identitas dan Perlawanan dalam Syiir Sijil Ana 'Arabi Karya Mahmoud Darwish: Analisis Wacana Kritis Fairclough." *KUTUBKHANAH Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 24, no. 2 (2024): 86–103. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24014/kutubkhanah.v24i2.33216>.

wounds, not from the ivory tower. His poetry became a moral voice that articulated collective suffering as a political and spiritual consciousness. In *Identity Card*, words such as "name", "land", "extended family", "hunger", and "angry" not only describe social conditions, but also serve as linguistic signs that construct a system of meaning about identity and resistance. This is where the importance of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach, which allows for an in-depth reading of the ways in which signs (icons, indexes, and symbols) form ideological and spiritual meaning in poetry. Darwish does not write from an ivory tower, but from the center of the conflict of identity and history of his nation. He was a poet who articulated collective pain into a stirring literary voice, and at the same time became a tool of struggle against colonialism. As Said expressed, true intellectuals are those who speak out against injustice and inequality, not because of the impulse of power, but because of a moral calling. The poem *Identity Card* One of his most famous poems, *Identity Card*, is a manifestation of the anger, wounds, and existential assertion of an oppressed individual, but he does not lose the courage to declare: "Note! I am an Arab". This poem became a symbol of courage in facing colonial power and the silencing of identity. The poem *Identity Card* does not simply display personal emotions, but articulates the collective experience of the Palestinian people in a straightforward yet symbolic language. Words such as "name", "land", "extended family", "hungry", and "angry" imply not only social conditions but also a complexity of meaning that requires a deeper reading. This is where the importance of the semiotics approach, which can unravel how meaning is formed and communicated through linguistic signs in poetry. This poem became an iconographic symbol of the struggle for the collective identity of Palestinians who were administratively reduced by the colonial authorities. This work can be said to have been "grounded" because it has been accepted by the Palestinian people even at the international level. The problem that arises is how to understand the "resistance" in this poem not only as an explicit narrative of colonialism, but also as a system of signs that represent socio-political relations and national identity that is being captured.

So far, the study of Mahmoud Darwish has discussed many aspects of politics, history, and national identity in his poetry. However, the research gap arises because there have not been many studies that integrate Peirce's semiotic analysis with the normative-religious perspective of the Qur'an. In fact, this perspective is important to uncover the spiritual and ethical dimensions of Darwish's resistance that are rooted not only in political consciousness, but also in the Islamic worldview of identity, land, and justice.

Based on this background, this study seeks to answer the following questions: "How does Peirce's semiotic category reveal the interplay between identity, land, and resistance in Mahmoud Darwish's *Identity Card*, and how does the Qur'anic worldview reframe these meanings spiritually?". Thus, this research not only expands the horizons of the reading of the poem *Identity Card* as an aesthetic and political text, but also presents it as a space for dialogue between semiotics and Islamic spirituality. This

approach is expected to enrich the understanding of Darwish's poetry as a cultural, ideological, and spiritual discourse that articulates a universal struggle against injustice.

One example of a Qur'anic verse affirms that humans were created with different identities as part of the sunnatullah:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ⁶

"O mankind, We created you from a male and a female, and We made you into nations and tribes so that you might know one another. Indeed, the most noble in the sight of Allah is the most pious among you." (QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]: 13)⁶

The resistance in Darwish's poetry works in layers of signs: some are visible (denotative), others are hidden in symbolic and historical associations. For this reason, a semiotic theory is needed that is able to unravel various types of signs and how these signs represent political reality.

B. Literature Review

Semiotics is a branch of science that studies the system of signs and the mechanism of conveying meaning through these signs. From a semiotic perspective, every element of language, whether phonemes, words, sentences, or discourse structures, is understood as a sign that connects the form (signifier) with the meaning (signified). Language is the main medium in conveying ideas, emotions, and cultural values through socially agreed sign mechanisms. Therefore, understanding semiotics helps to see that language is not only a means of communication, but also a means of forming meanings, ideologies, and representations of reality in various social and cultural contexts. As Asagaf in (Hasniar; Sitti Wahidah Masnani, 18)⁷, language is the most complex and conventional sign system, where each word, phrase, and sentence functions as a sign that represents a certain meaning based on social agreement. In a semiotic perspective, signs are not only limited to verbal or visual language, but include any form of representation that can replace something in the context of communication. This study examines the relationship between signs and meaning within the framework of social, cultural, and cognitive processes that influence the way humans understand and interpret signs. In understanding how meaning is formed and communicated, semiotics is an important analytical tool, especially in the study of literature, culture, and communication. Through this approach, it is possible to examine not only what is

⁶ (QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]: 13)

⁷ Hasniar, Masnani, S. W., & Agussalim, A. (2024, Januari). *Nilai-Nilai Sufistik Dalam Buku "Fihi Ma Fihi" Karya Jalaluddin Rumi (Pendekatan Semiotika)*. Jurnal Sarjana Ilmu Budaya, Volume 04 No 01, 21.

said, but how something is said and interpreted by the subject in a particular context. One of the important figures who made a major contribution to the development of semiotic theory was Charles Sanders Peirce. Peirce offers a distinctive framework of thought in looking at signs, meanings, and interpretive processes through the triadic relational model that is the foundation of modern semiotics, especially in revealing the depth of meaning implied in the poem *Identity Card* by Mahmoud Darwish.

Peirce views signs not as static entities, but as dynamic processes that involve a triadic relationship between representations (the form of signs), objects (what the signs refer to), and interpretants (the meaning of signs in the interpreter's mind) (Dadan Rusmana, 2024)⁸. This approach allows for a more flexible and contextual reading of the meanings contained in the text, especially in the context of resistance discourses such as those presented by Darwish. As Daniel Chandler (Daniel Chandler, 2020)⁹ points out: who explains that Peirce distinguishes signs based on the relationship between representations and objects into three main categories: icons, indexes, and symbols. He also emphasized that these three types of signs can overlap in literary and communication texts (Daniel Chandler, 2020)¹⁰. According to Charles Sanders Peirce (Benny H. Hoed, t.t.)¹¹, signs consist of three elements, namely representations, objects, and interpretants that are related in a triadic manner. Based on the relationship between representations and objects, Peirce divides signs into icons, indexes, and symbols. In Peirce's view, the object of signs does not always refer to physical reality, but can be ideas or concepts formed through experience and cognitive meaning. Objects are everything that signs refer to, both concrete and abstract. Furthermore, Pierce with the triadic model and his concept of trichotomy consists of the following: 1) Representation; the form received by the sign or serves as a sign (Ferdinand De Saussure named it a signifier). Representation is sometimes also termed as a sign. 2) Interpreter; more to show meaning. 3) Object; more pointing to something that refers to a sign. Usually in the form of thoughts that exist in the human brain, it can also be something real outside of the sign (Novi Nuraini, Dessy Wardiah, Mei)¹² in Masnani, S.W (18)¹³. In the context of the poem *Identity Card* by Mahmoud Darwish, objects such as "land" or "anger" not only refer to physical things, but also represent the historical experience and collective identity of the Palestinian people. This shows that

⁸ Dadan Rusmana. *Filsafat Semiotika. Paradigma, Teori dan Metode Interpretasi Tanda: dari Semiotika Struktural Hingga Dekonstruksi Praktis*. CV Pustaka Setia, 2024; hal. 105-124

⁹ Daniel Chandler. *Semiotics: The Basics*. 5th ed. Oxford University Press, 2020.

¹⁰ (Daniel Chandler, 2020)

¹¹ Benny H. Hoed. *Semiotik dan Dinamika Sosial Budaya*. t.t.

¹² Novi Nuraini, Dessy Wardiah, Siti Rukiyah. "Signs And Meanings in Rweinda's Novel *Antares*(Charles Sanders Pierce Theory)." *INTERACTION: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa* 10, no. 1 (Mei): 75–94. <https://e-journal.unimudasorong.ac.id/index.php/interactionjournal/article/view/2416/1296>.

¹³ (Hasniar, Masnani, & Agussalim, 2024)

the meaning of signs is shaped by the relationship between representation and the socio-cultural experience that surrounds it. Peirce defines a sign as "something that represents something else", meaning that a sign (representation) represents an object cognitively, forming a process of meaning between reality and what is understood by humans. This explanation will be more complete if it is continued with the three types of signs in the relationship between representation and objects in Peirce's theory (Benny H. Hoed, t.t.)¹⁴. This type of sign will also be the focus of the theory that the author will use to analyze 'The Representation of the Resistance Symbol of the Palestinian Community in Mahmoud Darwish's Poem *Identity Card*.

Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory departs from the view that meaning is not intrinsically attached to signs, but is born through the triadic relationship between signs, objects, and interpretants. In this framework, a sign is something that represents something else (object) for a person (interpreter). These relationships form a dynamic and layered system of meaning, because interpretation always opens up the possibility of new meanings in different contexts. Peirce asserts that this process is infinite semiosis, in which meaning is constantly produced, interpreted, and renewed through social, cultural, and human experience. The layer of Peirce's triadic relationship (Hoed, *Semiotik dan Dinamika Sosial Budaya*, 2014) can be explained as follows: 1) An icon is a sign that has a resemblance to its object; it imitates or resembles the reality it represents. In poetry, icons are present through concrete imagery or descriptions that visualize emotional and social experiences; 2) Index is a sign that has a causal or existential relationship with its object; it marks the presence of something factually or contextually. In literary works, an index can be a word or phrase that refers directly to a specific social, political, or historical condition; 3) A symbol is a sign whose meaning is determined by a cultural convention or agreement; It has no natural relation to objects, but is understood through a collective system of knowledge. In poetry, symbols are often an ideological and spiritual vehicle for conveying abstract ideas.

In the context of literary works, this theory allows for a reading that does not stop at the linguistic or aesthetic level, but rather moves towards an understanding of the relationship between language, social reality, and human consciousness. Poetry, for Peirce, can be understood as a network of signs that connects the imaginative world with real human experience through a continuous interpretive process.

Thus, Peirce's semiotics provide a flexible and productive analytical framework for interpreting how Mahmoud Darwish's poem *Identity Card* structures the experience of suffering, attachment to land, and resistance of the Palestinian people through an interinteracting system of signs.

For example, the phrase "I am an Arab" (ana 'arabiyyun) in the poem serves not only as a symbol of ethnic identity, but also as an index of resistance to colonialism, as

¹⁴ (Benny H. Hoed, t.t.)

it refers directly to the concrete political experience of the Palestinian people who were deprived of their rights and identities. Furthermore, icons such as "land", "extended family", and "hunger" present a realistic image of the oppressed Palestinian social life, while symbols such as *Identity Card* and "name" contain ideological meanings about the affirmation of existence in the midst of a system of colonial domination.

Through Peirce's triadic framework, a reading of the *Identity Card* can reveal that each mark in poetry operates in a dual way: as an aesthetic representation, a socio-political reflection, and an existential expression. In other words, Peirce's theory opens up space for the understanding that poetry is not only a beautiful language, but also a system of signs that mediates a nation's collective consciousness of suffering, identity, and resistance.

To deepen the meaning of poetry, this study integrates Peirce's triadic theory with Qur'anic hermeneutics. This transition is not eclectic, but rather is based on the epistemological similarities between the two approaches: both place meaning as the result of a multi-layered and dynamic process of interpretation.

In Peirce's semiotics, interpretation is the result of an ever-evolving understanding of the relationship between signs and objects. This process is open, allowing for the birth of infinite semiosis (an endless chain of meanings). Meanwhile, in the tradition of Islamic interpretation, the meaning of the Qur'an is also understood through a multi-level hermeneutic process—starting from tafsir bi al-ma'tsūr (history-based), tafsir bi al-ra'y (intellect and context-based), to ta'wīl (deepening of inner meaning).

The two meet at the same epistemological point: interpretation as a rational and spiritual action. In this framework, Peirce's interpretation can be understood as the methodological equivalent of a mufasssir (interpreter) in Islam—that is, a subject who interprets a sign or text through reason, context, and moral values. Therefore, the process of reading Darwish's poetry is not only analytical (semiotic), but also ethical and spiritual (Qur'anic hermeneutics), especially when poetic signs such as "land", "identity", and "oppression" are associated with Qur'anic principles: Identity as sunnatullah (QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]: 13); Land as a divine trust (QS. Nūh [71]: 19); and Resistance to oppression as part of faith (HR. Muslim, no. 49).

Thus, the integration of Peirce's theory and the hermeneutics of the Qur'an presents a reading that is both symbolic and theological, showing that Darwish's poetry functions not only as a political discourse, but also as an expression of faith and spiritual witness.

Table 1: The Fusion of Peirce's Semiotics and the Hermeneutics of the Qur'an

Aspects	Semiotics Peirce	Hermeneutics Al-Qur'an	Epistemological Encounter Point
Truth meaning	Produced through a triadic relationship (<i>sign-object-interpretant</i>)	Generated through the interaction between text, context, and interpreter	Meaning is dialogical and evolving
The role of the interpreter	<i>Interpretant</i> as the interpreter's awareness of the meaning of the sign	<i>Mufasssir</i> as an agent who interprets the text of revelation	Active interpreters construct meaning, not passive receivers
Dynamics of interpretation	<i>Infinite semiosis</i> : the meaning of the ever-evolving	<i>Tajdīd al-tafsīr</i> : renewal of tafsir according to the context of the times	Meaning is open to historical and ethical contexts
Final goal	Conceptual understanding of signs	Normative and spiritual understanding of the text	Moral and intellectual consciousness as a result of interpretation

From the table, it can be seen that both approaches presuppose meaning as a layered interpretive process, with the awareness that each interpretation is always contextual. Therefore, the combination of Peirce's semiotics and Qur'anic hermeneutics became a strong theoretical foundation for reading the poem *Identity Card* critically as well as spiritually.

To help readers understand the theoretical structure applied, here is a diagram of the theoretical structure that is recommended to be included in the article:

Table 2: Diagram of the Theoretical Structure of the Research

Sign Category (Peirce)	Semiotic Relationships	General Characteristics	Manifestations in the Poem Identity Card	Ideological and Spiritual Meaning
Icon	Similarity relationship between the sign and its	Mimicking reality through visual imagery, concrete	Images of poverty, dust, soil, and the body of workers	A representation of collective suffering and

	object (<i>resemblance</i>)	descriptions, or metaphors that resemble real experiences	that depict the lives of the Palestinian people in concrete terms	an existential attachment to the land as a Divine mandate
Index	Causal or existential relationships (<i>factual connection</i>) antara tanda dan realitas	Marking the existence or consequences of social conditions and certain politics	The phrase "I am an Arab" (ana 'arabiyyun) and "I have eight children" shows the social realities of being marginalized under Israeli colonialism	Markers of factual resistance to oppression; affirm the existence of Identity in the context of colonialism
Symbol	Conventional and cultural relations (<i>arbitrary relation</i>) Between signs and meanings	It is understood through social agreements, cultural systems, and religious traditions	Words such as "angry", "name", and <i>Identity</i> <i>Card</i> serve as political and spiritual symbols	Symbolizing identity, resistance, and steadfastness of faith ; articulating struggle as part of sunnatullah (<i>QS. Al- Hujurāt: 13</i>)

This theoretical framework affirms that Peirce's semiotic theory and Qur'anic hermeneutics are not two contradictory traditions, but rather complementary in understanding the meaning of complex texts such as Mahmoud Darwish's poetry. Peirce provides an analytical structure for tracing the workings of signs, while Qur'anic hermeneutics gives depth of value to the process of interpretation—directing analysis not only to what is marked, but also to why and for whom the meaning was created.

With the integration of the two, this study seeks to present a semiotic-theological reading of the poem "ID Card", which reveals that the signs in Darwish's poem are not only expressions of political resistance, but also reflections of faith, identity, and universal humanity.

C. Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative-descriptive approach with Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis method to interpret the poem *Identity Card* by Mahmoud Darwish as a symbolic representation of the identity and resistance of the Palestinian people (Hasniar, Masnani, & Agussalim, 2024)¹⁵. This approach allows for dynamic exploration of the meaning of icons, indexes, and symbols (Novi Nuraini, 2023)¹⁶, so that every element in the poem can be read as an ideological, historical, and spiritual construction.

1. Data Source

Primary data in the form of the original text of the poem *Identity Card* (بطاقة هوية) by Mahmoud Darwish, taken from the official version of Darwish's poetry anthology. Secondary data include books, scientific journal articles, and relevant online academic resources regarding: Peirce's semiotic studies; biography and thought of Mahmoud Darwish; the socio-political context of the Palestinian struggle; as well as interpretations of the Qur'an and Hadith related to the themes of identity, land, and resistance.

2. Analytical Approach

The analysis is carried out by identifying the units of signs in the text of the poem, then classifying them into three main categories of Peirce's semiotics: icons, index, and symbols. Each sign is then interpreted through interpretive concepts, to understand how the meaning of resistance and spirituality is constructed in layers.

This semiotic approach is combined with a normative-religious approach, in which the Qur'an and Hadith are used as ethical and epistemic horizons that guide interpretation. The principles of tauhid and land trust in the Qur'an, as well as the hadith on resistance to tyranny, are used as a hermeneutic basis for interpreting the symbols of resistance in the text.

3. Data Validation Procedure

To ensure the validity and reliability of interpretation, this study uses source triangulation techniques and theories (Drieschova, 2017)¹⁷: Triangulation of sources, by comparing the results of interpretations against various academic works on Darwish and semiotics; Theoretical triangulation, by examining the consistency of the results of

¹⁵ (Hasniar, Masnani, & Agussalim, 2024)

¹⁶ (Novi Nuraini, 2023)

¹⁷ Drieschova, A. (2017). *Peirce's semeiotics: a methodology for bridging the material-ideational divide in IR scholarship*. Cambridge Journals, 33 - 66. doi:https://doi.org/10.1017/S1752971916000233

Peircean analysis of the principles of the hermeneutics of the Qur'an; and Academic peer review, through interpretive discussions with experts in Arabic literature and modern Islamic studies.

All quotations and translations of Qur'an verses follow standard academic norms, with reference to the official translation of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia.

Table 3: Pierce's Mark Analysis on Mahmoud Darwish's Identity Card Poem

No	Mark Quotes	Types of Signs (Peirce)	Interpretant	Contextual Meaning
1	"I'm an Arab"	Index & Symbol	Statement of ethnic and political identity	Affirmation of the existence of colonialism
2	Identity Card	Symbol	Colonial administrative documents	Representations of control and dehumanization
3	"Eight children"	Index	The social reality of the Palestinian extended family	A symbol of resilience and continuity of generation
4	"Are you hungry and angry??"	Icon & Index	The collective emotions of the oppressed people	Resistance to injustice
5	"My name, without title"	Symbol	Loss of status due to colonialism	Administrative identity crisis
6	"My father's land"	Index & Icon	Existential attachment to the land	Spiritual trust in Islam
7	"Wheat and stone"	Icon	A concrete picture of hard life	Symbol of survival struggle
8	"Don't be angry!"	Symbol ironic	Calls for restraint from the colonizers	Resistance through paradoxical language
9	"I'm angry!"	Index & Symbol	Moral reaction to oppression	Manifestations of faith and spiritual courage

Thus, this methodology places Peirce's semiotics as a tool for analyzing the structure of signs, and the hermeneutics of the Qur'an as the horizon of ethical-spiritual meaning. The combination of the two results in a reading that is not only semiotic, but

also transcendental in which resistance in poetry is read as an existential and moral act within the framework of faith.

D. Results And Discussion

1. Integration of Semiotics and Hermeneutics of the Qur'an

Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach in this study interacts productively with the tiered process of Islamic hermeneutics. Within the framework of tafsīr bi al-ma'tsūr, interpretation begins with the introduction of the literal meaning of the text and its historical references¹⁸ (Luthfi, 2022) in line with the representation stage in Peirce's triadic model, which is when the sign is first presented in the form of words or linguistic symbols. This stage appears when phrases such as "*Anā 'Arabiyyun*" or "*Salabta kurūma ajdādī*" are read as they are: as statements of identity and factual experience of loss.

Furthermore, at the level of tafsīr bi al-ra'y (Algifari, 2024), the reading progresses towards rational and contextual analysis that considers the socio-political aspects of poetry. This corresponds to the stage of the object in Peirce's tricotomy where signs are seen not only as words, but as representations of the social reality to which they refer. For example, the phrase "*I am an Arab*" became an index of resistance to colonial domination, while "*my ancestral garden*" became an index of loss due to colonialism. At this stage, the interpretation links linguistic signs with the historical experience of Palestine, showing the concrete function of resistance.

The final stage, ta'wīl, places interpretation on the inner and spiritual dimensions (Haq, 2021). It corresponds to the concept of interpretation in Peirce's theory that is, the process of forming new meanings that is continuous. Through ta'wīl, the signs in Darwish's poem are understood not only as a reflection of human suffering, but also as a vehicle for theological awareness. For example, the phrase "*I am angry*" (Aghdabu) is not just an emotional expression, but a manifestation of faith, as affirmed by the hadith of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that anger at tyranny is a form of moral resistance¹⁹. Within this framework, Peirce's semiotics and Islamic hermeneutics meet (Abdelkader, 2025): both affirm that meaning is not static, but rather constantly transforming towards a higher ethical and spiritual consciousness. Here are the key findings from the study:

2. Divine Identity and Name

The phrase "*Anā 'Arabiyyun*" (I am an Arab) in the poem *Identity Card* by Mahmoud Darwish is a sign full of layers of meaning. From the perspective of Charles

¹⁸ Luthfi, M. (2022). Tafsir Bi al-Ma'tsur: Konsep dan Metodologi. Knowlegde E. doi:10.18502/kss.v7i15.12140

¹⁹ Narrated by: Sahih Muslim (Number 2578)

Sanders Peirce's semiotics, this phrase serves as an existential icon and index of resistance, while from the point of view of Islamic hermeneutics, it moves through three horizons of meaning: tafsīr bi al-ma'tsūr, tafsīr bi al-ra'y, and ta'wīl.

At the level of ma'tsūr, this expression reflects the literal meaning of "Arab" an ethnic, geographical, and cultural identification based on the historical context of the Arab nation as a community with its own language, land, and traditions. In this frame, Darwish presents identity not just as a social category, but as an ontological statement of existence that is written and acknowledged in the *Identity Card*. Just as the tradition of tafsir bi al-ma'tsūr interprets texts based on the history and meaning of origin, this first layer emphasizes the factual and textual dimensions of Arab identity a name that marks a reality that has been inherited and lived.

However, at the ra'y level, the phrase undergoes semantic expansion. "Anā 'Arabiyyun" is no longer just an ethnic declaration, but a statement of rational and contextual resistance to the structure of colonialism that seeks to erase the existence of the Palestinian nation. Here the meaning of the sign transforms into an index of resistance, pointing to oppressive socio-political conditions and at the same time presenting a collective consciousness to resist conquest. This reading of bi al-ra'y is in harmony with the spirit of rational interpretation that considers the social and moral context, where reason and historical experience become a means to uncover the ethical dimension of the text. Thus, the statement "I am an Arab" serves as a form of ijtihād maknawi an intellectual attempt to reinterpret identity in the midst of the domination of foreign powers.

Furthermore, at the level of ta'wīl, the meaning of "Arab" transcends political and ethnic boundaries, towards the inner and spiritual dimensions. In this horizon, identity is no longer understood as belonging to a race or nation, but as a tajallī (manifestation) of the asmā' Allāh al-ḥusnā Divine names that reflect the glory of human nature. Principles of the Qur'an “inna akramakum ‘inda Allāhi atqākum” (QS. al-Ḥujurāt [49]: 13) affirms that true glory is not determined by race or nationality, but by piety and moral integrity. Thus, the statement "Anā 'Arabiyyun" in the layer of ta'wīl has a theological meaning: it is a symbol of man's awareness of his divine origin, an acknowledgment that each identity is in essence a reflection of the Divine Presence in its various forms.

In Peirce's semiotic framework, the transformation of meaning from literal icons to socio-political indices and finally to theological symbols reflects a process of chain semiosis that is the journey of the marker towards the interpretant that is increasingly extensive and deep. Meanwhile, in terms of Islamic hermeneutics, the journey from ma'tsūr to ra'y and finally ta'wīl shows a hermeneutic level that moves from textual to rational and finally spiritual understanding. It is at this point that, Peirce's semiotics and Islamic hermeneutics meet: both affirm that meaning is not static, but is constantly transforming towards a higher ethical and spiritual consciousness.

Thus, identity in Darwish's poem is not just a social fact that can be exchanged by worldly power, but a divine name (*ism ilāhī*) A symbol of human existential dignity. By saying "I am an Arab", the poet is not only declaring nationality, but affirming his existence as a human being who bears the dignity of God's creation. Identity, thus, is a meeting space between signs, history, and spiritual consciousness a form of resistance born of the belief in the oneness of human values before the Divine.

3. Land as an Existential Trust

The phrases "Salabta kurūma ajdādī" (You have taken away my ancestral garden) and "Baytī kūkhu nātūr..." (My house is a gardener's hut) in the poem *Identity Card* contains a complex network of meanings, bringing together material loss and spiritual awareness. Within the framework of Peirce's semiotics, these two phrases move from an icon of suffering, to an index of existential attachment, to reaching a symbol of divine trust. Meanwhile, through tiered Islamic hermeneutics, the meaning of the text develops from literal reading (*bi al-ma'tsūr*), to contextual reasoning (*bi al-ra'y*), to inner revelation (*ta'wīl*).

At the level of *ma'tsūr*, the expression presents the concrete reality of the Palestinian people who were expelled from their ancestral land. The "ancestral garden" (*kurūm ajdādī*) became an icon of material loss a visual representation of the tragedy of land and house confiscation by colonial powers. Within this horizon, land is empirically interpreted: as a source of life, a place to live, and a family inheritance. This kind of literal reading is in harmony with the method of *tafsīr bi al-ma'tsūr* which is based on historical meaning and factual history. Thus, Darwish affirmed the real experience of oppression through the concrete image of the loss of property and a foothold.

Moving to the level of *ra'y*, the meaning of the phrase develops from individual suffering to collective consciousness. Land in this sense is not just a lost physical object, but an index of identity and dignity attachment. By saying "You have taken away my ancestral garden", the poet marks the symbolic connection between the land and human existence as a subject of history. Land became the locus of resistance to colonialism, where man asserted his presence in the world. Within the framework of *tafsīr bi al-ra'y*, this reading shows the utilization of ratios and social context in understanding the text that the loss of land is not only economic, but also ethical and political. Land is a sign of existential attachment which, if confiscated, means breaking the roots of humanity itself.

Meanwhile, at the *ta'wīl* level, Darwish brings the meaning of "land" to the spiritual and theological realms. He revealed that land is not just the property of humans, but a divine mandate. This inner interpretation is in line with the words of Allah in QS. Nūḥ [71]: 19, "Wa Allāhu ja'ala lakumu al-arḍa bisāṭan" — "And Allah made the earth a bed for you." This verse affirms that the earth is a manifestation of God's love and a medium for man to uphold his existential responsibilities. In the horizon of *ta'wīl*, the earth is understood as a cosmic sign (*āyah kawniyyah*) that

contains an ethical message: to protect the earth means to maintain the balance of Allah's creation. Therefore, defending the land is not just a political act, but an existential worship the embodiment of the mandate as a caliph on earth.

In Peirce's semiotic framework, the journey of meaning from the lost icon to the index of attachment and finally the symbol of trust describes spiritual semiosis, which is a continuous process in which earthly signs point to Divine reality. In Islamic hermeneutics, the journey from ma'tsūr to ra'y and ta'wīl is a spiral motion towards maqām ma'rifah the level of awareness that everything material contains a sacred dimension.

Thus, for Darwish, land is an existential trust: a space in which humans are tested to maintain a balance between property rights and spiritual responsibilities. When the poet declares the loss of his land, he is actually asserting a cosmic rift a violation of the balance of God's creation. Safeguarding the land, thus, is not just about defending geographical territory, but preserving divine values in the world. In this view, resistance to colonialism became an expression of faith; while the maintenance of the land is a form of dzikir a reminder that human existence is always bound to God's mandate that is spread out in the earth.

4. Hunger and Anger as Ethics of Faith

The phrase "Ākulu laḥma mughtaṣībī" (I ate the flesh of my plunder) in the poem *Identity Card* features one of the most extreme imagery in the treasure trove of modern Arab resistance poetry. Semiotically, this expression condenses the icons of suffering, the index of anger, and the symbols of moral resistance that are layered with meaning. Meanwhile, within the framework of Islamic hermeneutics, the meaning can be interpreted through three stages of understanding: from the literality of bi al-ma'tsūr, to the contextual rationality of bi al-ra'y, to the spiritual depth of ta'wīl.

At the level of ma'tsūr, the expression "eating the flesh of a usurper" reflects the intensity of concrete suffering caused by colonial oppression. This hyperbolic sentence represents an icon of the hunger and despair of the Palestinian people who are faced with the loss of a source of life. It departs from the historical reality of deprivation and structural violence that causes hunger, so this phrase has a strong basis in reality. In this horizon, Darwish uses extreme metaphors not for aesthetic effect alone, but to arouse the reader's moral awareness of real human tragedies.

Moving to the level of ra'y, this expression moves from a physiological expression to an ethical and political dimension. "Eating the flesh of the usurper" becomes an index of collective anger a moral attitude toward tyranny that refuses to submit to oppression. In this framework, ghadab (anger) is not just a destructive emotion, but an ethical energy directed at upholding justice. Darwish uses the rhetoric of verbal violence not to encourage hatred, but to expose a moral paradox: that true humanity is born out of anger at injustice. This reading is in line with tafsīr bi al-ra'y, where ratios and social context become instruments for understanding the text as a living ethical statement.

At the level of ta'wīl, the phrase transforms from political protest to a symbol of active faith. In this layer of inner meaning, hunger is not just a biological condition, but an existential test, and anger at tyranny becomes a manifestation of the ethics of faith. This commentary echoes the hadith of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم:

"Whoever among you sees evil, then change it with his hands; if he is not able, then verbally; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart, and that is the weakest of faith." (HR. Muslim, no. 49).

This hadith affirms that rejecting tyranny is an integral part of faith. In the context of Darwish, the expression of anger at oppression is not a form of destructive hatred, but an ethical dhikr a reminder of man's spiritual responsibility to uphold justice. Here, ghadab becomes a symbol of faith in motion, transforming suffering into moral consciousness and protest into worship.

Within Peirce's semiotic framework, the sign "Ākulu laḥma mughtaṣībī" serves as an icon of suffering that indicates the concrete reality of colonialism, an index of moral resistance to the oppressor, and ultimately a symbol of active faith that transcends political boundaries. This process describes the dynamics of spiritual semiosis the marked journey from materiality to transcendence. That is, the signs born from a hungry body actually reveal the spiritual hunger of the world that has lost justice.

Thus, for Darwish, hunger and anger are not two poles that negate each other, but two faces of the ethics of faith. Hunger is suffering that tests patience, while anger is a spiritual energy that upholds dignity. In this dialectic, faith is not present in passive surrender, but in the ethical courage to reject tyranny as a form of moral worship.

Anger, in the horizon of ta'wīl, is no longer interpreted as hatred, but as the light of Divine consciousness the realization that upholding justice is part of servitude to God. Therefore, in Darwish's poem, every cry of hunger is a prayer that demands justice, and every anger is a dhikr that reminds man of his nature: as the guardian of the dignity and balance of God's creation..

5. Semiotic Structure of Collective Struggle

Nine key quotation marks to see the collective struggles analyzed in Darwish's poetry are summarized in the following framework:

No	Mark Quotes	Types of Signs (Peirce)	Interpretant	Hermeneutic Layers	Contextual Meaning
1	"I'm an Arab"	Index & Symbol	Identity statement	Ta'wīl	The Divine Dignity of Man

2	Identity Card	Symbol	Colonial documents	<i>Ra'y</i>	A symbol of administrative dehumanization
3	"Eight children"	Index	Social reality	<i>Ma'tsūr</i>	The resilience of the Palestinian generation
4	"Are you hungry and angry?"	Icon & Index	Collective emotions	<i>Ta'wīl</i>	The Ethics of Spiritual Anger
5	"My name without a title"	Symbol	Loss of status	<i>Ra'y</i>	Identity crisis due to colonialism
6	"My father's land"	Index & Icon	Existential attachment	<i>Ta'wīl</i>	Spiritual trust and love for the homeland
7	"Wheat and stone"	Icon	Concrete image of suffering	<i>Ma'tsūr</i>	Symbol of the struggle of life
8	"Jangan marah!"	Ironic symbols	Colonizer call	<i>Ra'y</i>	Paradoxical language resistance
9	"I'm angry!"	Index & Symbol	Moral reaction	<i>Ta'wīl</i>	Manifestations of faith and spiritual courage

Thus, the entire system of signs in the poem *Identity Card* can be understood as a semiotic hermeneutic circle: It starts from the empirical meaning (*ma'tsūr*), moves through rational interpretation (*ra'y*), and leads to inner meaning (*ta'wīl*). This process creates an epistemological bridge between Peirce's theory of signs and Islamic interpretation methodology, so that Darwish's poems appear not just as political texts, but as spiritual manuscripts about existence, faith, and justice.

E. Conclusion

The poem *Identity Card* by Mahmoud Darwish is a literary work that is full of symbolic content, affirming the position of personal and collective identity within the framework of resistance to oppression. Through Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach, it can be understood that each element of language in this poem serves not only as an aesthetic expression, but also as a system of signs that form the socio-political reality for the Palestinian people. *Representament* In this poem it appears in

the form of straightforward but emotionally charged diction; *The object* is the experience of living as a colonized citizen; and *the interpretant* is the reader's awareness of the meaning of resistance and the dignity inherent in identity.

The icon in this poem is present through a concrete depiction of daily life experienced by the poet as a representation of real suffering. The index is shown through the causal relationship between the repressive actions of the colonizers and the emotional reaction of the lyricist, which is evidence of the direct connection between the sign and political reality. Meanwhile, symbols are present in the form of words such as *Identity Card* which not only indicate administrative objects, but also manifest as a symbol of existence, self-esteem, and claim to the homeland.

Through the exploration of these signs, Darwish not only conveys feelings of colonization, but also builds a discourse of resistance that has universal value. He succeeded in articulating that identity is not something that is simply inherited, but fought for. Thus, this poem stands as a political statement as well as a philosophical reflection on the meaning of being human in a colonial situation. Thus, *Identity Card* not only became a protest poem, but also became a cultural artifact that recorded and resisted the systematic attempts at deprivation of identity.

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Example in footnotes:

¹Mircea Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 8 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), h. 18.

²Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West* (Oxford: One World Publications, 1991), h. 190.

³Syeikh Ja’far Subhānī, *Mafāhim Al-Qur’ān* (Beirut: Mu’assasah Al-Tarīkh Al-’Arabī, 2010), Juz 5, h. 231.

⁴Syeikh Ja'far Subhānī, *Mafāhim Al-Qur'ān*, h. 8-9.

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Subhānī, Syeikh Ja'far. *Mafāhim Al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Mu'assasah Al-Tarīkh Al-'Arabī, 2010.

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Detail informations of the footnotes:

1. Holy book

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6. Article in book

¹Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Metode Intratekstualitas Muhammad Shahrur dalam Penafsiran al-Qur'an" dalam Abdul Mustaqim dan Sahiron Syamsuddin (eds.), *Studi al-Qur'an Kontemporer: Wacana Baru Berbagai Metodologi Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2002), h. 139.

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