

Riffaterre's Semiotic Approach to Aḍḍamīru Al-'Arabī Song: Explores Lyrics as a Tool for Arab Integration

Betty Mauli Rosa Bustam^{1*}, Abdul Wahab Naf'an²

¹ Magister Pendidikan Agama Islam, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Jl. Pramuka no. 42, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

²Arabic Literature, Suez Canal University, Ismailia, Egypt

*Email: betty.rosa@bsa.uad.ac.id (Corresponding author)

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مستخلص

تبحث هذه الدراسة معنى الوحدة العربية كما تتجلى في كلمات أغنية "الضمير العربي" من خلال عدسة المنهج السيميائي لريفاتير. تم اختيار الأغنية بسبب رمزيته القوية في الدعوة إلى التضامن العربي. باستخدام منهج وصفي نوعي، يحلل البحث نص كلمات الأغاني وسياقها للكشف عن المعاني الخفية والأيدولوجيات والرسائل الرمزية. يستغرق التحليل عدة مراحل: تحديد الاستدلال وتصوير فرس الأنساب، وتحليل التعبير غير المباشر، والقراءة بأثر رجعي. تشير النتائج إلى أن الأغنية لا تعمل كعمل فني فحسب، ولكن أيضا كإداة سياسية لتعزيز التضامن في خضم الصراع في الشرق الأوسط. تساهم هذه الدراسة في مجال التحليل السيميائي وتقدم منظورا جديدا حول تقاطع الموسيقى والسياسة في نطاق الدبلوماسية الثقافية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: كلمات غنائية؛ الضمير العربي؛ سيميائية ريفاتير؛ تضامن عربي.

Abstract

This study examines the meaning of Arab unity as reflected in the lyrics of the song "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī" through the lens of Riffaterre's semiotic approach. The song was selected due to its powerful symbolism in advocating Arab solidarity. Employing a descriptive qualitative method, the research analyzes the text and context of the lyrics to reveal hidden meanings, ideologies, and symbolic messages. The analysis follows several stages: heuristic and hippogram identification, indirect expression analysis, and retrospective reading. The findings indicate that the song serves not only as a work of art but also as a political instrument in fostering solidarity amidst the Middle East conflict. This study contributes to the field of semiotic analysis and offers a new perspective on the intersection of music and politics within the scope of cultural diplomacy.

Keywords: Song Lyric; Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī; Riffaterre's Semiotic; Arab Integration

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INTRODUCTION

The Arab world has long grappled with fragmentation, both internally and externally driven, posing serious challenges to regional stability, peace, and prosperity.¹ Countries like Syria, Iraq, and Yemen remain entangled in conflicts that have left their populations in prolonged uncertainty and fear.² The intensifying Israel–Palestine conflict has spilled into Lebanon, triggering responses from Hezbollah and Iran, as highlighted in recent media coverage.³ These ongoing crises underscore the need for stronger unity among Arab nations to face collective threats and safeguard regional identity and resilience.

Arab unity is a concept that has long been the dream of many figures and people in the Arab world. Historically, this concept referred to the idea of uniting all Arab countries into one complete political, economic, and cultural entity. Strong linguistic, religious, and cultural commonalities among Arab countries underpin this idea, serving as a sufficient basis for forming a collective identity.⁴ However, this unity is more than just political integration; it encompasses social solidarity and close cooperation in various fields, including the economy, education, and security.^{5,6} This concept of unity is also often associated with efforts to strengthen the position of Arab states in the face of external

¹Housamedden Darwish, 'From Peaceful Civil Movement to Civil War and Sectarian Polarization: A Critical Review of Kevin Mazur's *Revolution in Syria: Identity, Networks, and Repression*', *International Sociology*, 38.5 (2023), 552–61 <<https://doi.org/10.1177/02685809231194134>>.

²Nader Hashemi and Danny Postel, *Sectarianization Mapping the New Politics of The Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

³'Israel-Hezbollah Escalation' <<https://www.csis.org/analysis/israel-hezbollah-escalation>> [accessed 9 October 2024].

⁴Jocelyn Sage Mitchell, 'Transnational Identity and the Gulf Crisis: Changing Narratives of Belonging in Qatar', *International Affairs*, 97.4 (2021), 929–44 <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iab013>>.

⁵Saima Shadab, 'The New Arab Gulf: Evaluating the Success of Economic Diversification in the UAE', in *Social Change in the Gulf Region*, 2023, pp. 415–30 <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-7796-1_25>.

⁶UN-ESCWA, 'Social Protection Reform in Arab Countries', *United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)*, 2019 <www.unescwa.org>.

pressure and to promote regional stability.⁷ Pan-Arab movements, which foster a shared identity among Arab peoples, reflect this unity at the social level.⁸

While efforts toward Arab unity have emerged in political and institutional forms, cultural expression—particularly through music—offers a powerful and often overlooked dimension of solidarity. Songs performed by artists across the Middle East have become tools for evoking shared identity and resistance. Among them, *Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī* stands out as a symbolic anthem of Arab unity, advocating collective struggle and opposition to colonialism.⁹ The song has been performed widely at national and international events, and it continues to stir pan-Arab sentiment through its evocative lyrics. It is also used by governments as a unifying instrument, taught in schools, and deployed to bolster national pride and awareness.¹⁰

Despite the song's cultural and political impact, little scholarly attention has been devoted to analyzing its symbolic meanings. Most existing studies on Arab unity focus on political ideologies, colonial legacies, or geopolitical tension,^{11,12,13} while the cultural domain—particularly music as a form of political communication—remains underexplored. This reveals a clear *gap* in the literature regarding how music functions as an agent of collective identity and unity in the Arab world.

To address this gap, the present study analyzes the song *Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī* using Michael Riffaterre's semiotic theory, a model that uncovers how meaning is constructed through indirect expression, structural patterns, and symbolic language. Riffaterre's framework emphasizes the concept of the *hypogram*, referring to the underlying intertextual core that

⁷Yuri Kostenko, "'Failed" Arab States—A Threat to Regional and International Stability', in *Turning Points of World Transformation* (Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 2022), pp. 47–61 <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1758-5_4>.

⁸Mohamad Hosam Hafez, 'The Arab League: Its Foundation and Role in Arab Regional Security', January, 2019.

⁹Maria M. Rijo Lopes da Cunha, 'Music as Cultural Diplomacy: Analyzing the Role of Musical Flows from the Arab Levant to New Cultural Poles in the Arab Gulf in the Twenty-First Century', in *Music and Cultural Diplomacy in the Middle East* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2024), pp. 221–40 <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-36279-8_10>.

¹⁰ ArabiaPop | حدث قديماً: أوبريت "الضمير العربي" وحقائق سريعة - أرييا بوب' <<https://arabiapop.com/2021/05/26/حدث-قديماً-أوبريت-الضمير-العربي/>> [accessed 24 September 2024].

¹¹Feyzi Baban, 'Nationalism and the Crisis of Community in the Middle East', *Dialectical Anthropology*, 42.4 (2018), 351–57 <<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10624-018-9534-5>>.

¹²Raffaella A. Del Sarto, 'Contentious Borders in the Middle East and North Africa: Context and Concepts', *International Affairs*, 93.4 (2017), 767–87 <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix070>>.

¹³Marina and David Ottaway, 'The Changing Geopolitics of the Middle East', in *A Tale of Four Worlds* (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 51–74 <<https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190061715.003.0004>>.

informs the surface meaning of a literary text.¹⁴ Applying this theory allows the researcher to probe beyond literal interpretation and uncover latent ideological and cultural messages embedded in the lyrics.

Through this approach, the study argues that music – far beyond entertainment – acts as a medium for political messaging, identity construction, and collective emotional engagement. As Dave¹⁵ notes, music possesses a universal resonance that can unify diverse audiences and express profound shared experiences. The song *Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī*, when interpreted through semiotic analysis, reveals a rich constellation of symbols, narratives, and values that support the broader project of Arab unity.

The *novelty* of this research lies in its focus on a widely recognized cultural artifact through the lens of semiotic theory, positioning music as an active participant in political discourse. Rather than viewing the song merely as a reflection of ideological struggle, this study uncovers how it functions as a symbolic blueprint for solidarity. In doing so, it contributes to the fields of semiotics, cultural studies, and Middle Eastern politics by offering a fresh lens through which music and diplomacy intersect in the pursuit of regional cohesion.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach,¹⁶ to analyze symbolic meanings related to Arab unity in the song "*Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī*". The research does not involve variable manipulation or causal inference, but rather focuses on in-depth interpretation through textual analysis.

Primary data in this study consists of the song lyrics, treated as a cultural text containing symbolic representations of Arab solidarity, resistance, and identity. Secondary data includes supporting literature such as books, journal articles, and previous research discussing Arab unity, Middle Eastern conflicts, and the theoretical framework of Riffaterre's semiotics.

This research process consists of several stages and data collection techniques.¹⁷ The first stage involves collecting primary data through the analysis of the lyrics of the song

¹⁴Paul De Man and Michael Riffaterre, 'Hypogram and Inscription: Michael Riffaterre's Poetics of Reading', *Diacritics*, 11.4 (1981), 17 <<https://doi.org/10.2307/464972>>.

¹⁵N. Dave, 'Music and the Myth of Universality: Sounding Human Rights and Capabilities', *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, 7.1 (2015), 1-17 <<https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huu025>>.

¹⁶Lexy J Meleong, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*, Revisi (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2006).

¹⁷John W. Creswell, , *Research Design Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, Dan Campuran*, cet-3 (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2018).

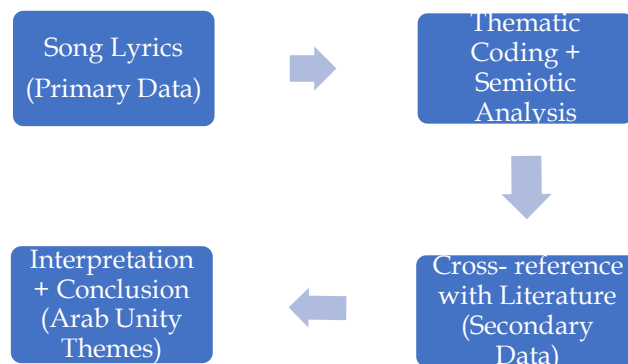
"Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī," focusing on words and phrases that contain symbolic meanings related to unity and conflict. Furthermore, secondary data is collected through literature reviews that include books, journal articles, and other sources relevant to the research topic. This data collection technique is carried out in depth by analyzing the words in the lyrics of songs related to the research subject. The data collected is then organized and categorized according to the main themes that have been determined, namely Arab unity and conflict resolution efforts.

The analysis applies a semiotic model by Riffaterre¹⁸ and follows the data analysis stages of Matthew B. Miles & Huberman:¹⁹

1. Data Reduction – identifying relevant lyrics and symbolic expressions;
2. Data Display – organizing findings thematically through narrative or tables;
3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification – interpreting patterns through triangulation with secondary sources.

The research focuses on uncovering deeper meanings through semiotic procedures such as heuristic and hypogram identification, indirect expression analysis, and retrospective reading. These steps are designed to reveal how the song lyrics articulate political messages and cultural calls for unity.

The figure below illustrates the research process:



RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research reveals that the concept of Arab unity is very strongly reflected in the lyrics of the song "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī" The lyrics of this song contain a call to unite among

¹⁸Michael Riffaterre, *Semiotics of Poetry* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978).

¹⁹Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 2nd edn (California: SAGE Publications, 1994).

Arab countries, prioritizing the importance of solidarity in the face of common threats. Data taken from these lyrics show that the message of unity is associated with the collective identity of the Arab nation, which is based on a common history, language, and culture. Additionally, data from other sources confirms that this call for unity is not only symbolic but also a response to the actual conflict and division in the Middle East.²⁰

The explanation of the data shows that the Arab unity described in the lyrics of the song "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī" is not only an idealism but also an urgent need in the midst of the conflict situation that has hit the Middle East region.²¹ The lyrics of this song reflect the hope of realizing unity that can bring stability and security in the region. Emotional words like "solidarity," "togetherness," and "resistance to a common enemy" demonstrate this call for unity. The data also shows that the song's lyrics try to move the Arab people toward unity by emphasizing the importance of preserving cultural heritage and shared history.

The lyrics of the song "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī" closely match the reality under study. This song is not just a piece of music but also serves as a tool to strengthen the collective identity of the Arab people and motivate them to unite in facing the challenges that exist. Given the long-standing conflict and division in the Middle East region, the song's message of unity becomes even more relevant and urgent. This research shows that the lyrics of the song not only describe an ideal situation but also provide a real cultural solution in an effort to resolve conflicts and promote unity.

The song "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī" itself was the main focus of the study, where data showed that the lyrics were loaded with messages that supported Arab unity.²² The song uses symbolism and metaphor to illustrate the importance of solidarity among Arab countries. For example, his lyrics often mention "dividing walls" and "chains to be broken" as descriptions of divisions that must be overcome. The data also shows that the song has become a symbol of the pan-Arab movement, often sung on various occasions as a form of expression of togetherness.

An explanation of the data on the song "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī" shows that the song played an important role in spreading the message of unity among Arab society. The use of poetic and symbolic language in the lyrics of this song provides depth to the message it wants to convey, making it easier for listeners to receive and absorb. The lyrics of this song not only invite us to unite politically but also emotionally by emphasizing the same

²⁰Nir Tuvia Boms and Hussein Aboubakr, 'Pan Arabism 2.0? The Struggle for a New Paradigm in the Middle East', *Religions*, 13.1 (2021), 28 <<https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13010028>>.

²¹ ٢٠٠٦ أوبريت بالقوة، «الضمير العربي» <https://al-akhbar.com/Culture_People/209882>.

²² YouTube - الضمير العربي كاملة وبدون حذف الاغنية التي يحجبها يوتيوب #فلسطين #غزة <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezshAo9ufdk>> [accessed 24 September 2024].

cultural and historical ties. This song has succeeded in becoming an effective communication tool to strengthen the spirit of unity among the Arab nations.

The relationship between the description and explanation of the data from the song "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī" and the reality that is the subject of the research is also very significant. The song not only serves as entertainment but also as a powerful political and social instrument to promote Arab unity. In the context of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, this song provides an alternative narrative that prioritizes collective solutions and togetherness rather than division. The data collected shows that the song has managed to solidify its position as a symbol of Arab unity in the midst of a situation full of divisions.

The analysis of the lyrics of the song "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī" using Riffaterre's semiotic theory involves several main steps. Riffaterre's semiotic theory focuses on understanding the meaning of a text by paying attention to the signs present in it and the process of its reading.²³ To analyze the lyrics of a song, follow these general steps:

1. **Heuristic Identification:** Ungrammaticalities are segments of text that appear atypical, confusing, or challenging to comprehend immediately. This encompasses the utilization of metaphors, irony, contradictions, or other linguistic approaches necessitating profound interpretation. Examine the lyrics for terms or expressions that may not be readily comprehensible or that employ figurative language.
2. **Hypogram Identification:** Matrix, Model, and Variance. The matrix signifies the essential meaning that underpins the text. The model concretely represents this meaning as presented in the text. Variance is an alteration of the model that indicates shifts in meaning across different contexts within the text.
3. In the song "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī," ascertain the principal topic or moral lesson intended by the artist. Subsequently, examine how the songwriter employs or modifies this topic throughout different sections of the lyrics by utilizing particular words or phrases.
4. **Indirect Expression Analysis.** Riffaterre underscored the significance of comprehending meaning through indirect expression, namely how meaning emerges through symbolic reading and interpretation. Examine the lyrics of the song for terms that lack explicit definitions yet suggest a more profound significance. Contemplate symbols or emblems representing struggle, humanity, or justice.
5. **Retrospective Reading.** Riffaterre semiotics entails the iterative reading of a text, wherein comprehension of meaning evolves through successive readings. Upon each

²³Riffaterre.

subsequent reading of the lyrics, one may uncover a previously unrecognized significance.

6. Semiotic Reading Configuration. Upon comprehending the aforementioned elements, consolidate all meanings and symbols into a unified structure. This analysis examines the interaction of parts to construct the song's overall meaning.

The following text presents an analysis of select sections of the lyrics from the song "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī" utilizing Riffaterre's semiotic theory, as not all lyrics can be examined due to spatial constraints.

يا صاحبي يا إنسان هنا او في اي مكان
بيبعث رسالتي ليك نطوي بها الاحزان
نبني مع الملايين بالعدل والايمان
يلا انا وانت نبني العالم امان
ماتت قلوب الناس ماتت بنا النخوة يمكن نسينا في يوم

1. Heuristic Identification:

Ungrammaticalities: Phrases like "يا صاحبي يا إنسان" (O my friend, O man) and "ماتت قلوب الناس" (The hearts of people have died) starkly contrast the aspiration for human togetherness with the grim realities of existence. This contradiction engenders a tension of meaning that necessitates profound understanding.

2. Histogram Identification:

- a. Matrix: The primary themes of these lyrics are humanity, justice, and unification. He aims to emphasize the significance of reinstating human values and transcending grief through justice and religion.
- b. Model: The lyrics extend an invitation to create a safe environment characterized by justice and faith, while condemning the loss of humanity and empathy among people.
- c. Variances: Numerous expressions in these lyrics, such as "نبني العالم امان" (Let us construct a safe world) and "يمكن نسينا في يوم" (Perhaps we forgot one day) Alter the main theme by illustrating the interconnection between hope and disappointment.

3. Indirect Expression Analysis

The term "ماتت" (death) serves as an indirect statement, encapsulating both the literal loss of life and the emotional and moral demise of an individual. This illustrates the desperation in confronting a world that is progressively diminishing in human values.

4. Retrospective Reading

When rereading these phrases, the significance of the exhortation to construct a superior world becomes increasingly significant, particularly in light of the emotional desolation referenced in the previous lyrics.

5. Semiotic Reading Configuration

The lyrics convey a message that encourages the reader or listener to contemplate the present condition of the world, where humanity is progressively diminished, and urges a return to fundamental principles like justice and faith as the basis for reconstructing a better society.

قلنا شعاع النور في حلمنا الأول
يوصل سما وبحور لا للأسف
اطول طول لان الليل خلى الضمير أبكم
لو باقي فينا يوم لا بد أن نحلم

1. Heuristic Identification:

Ungrammaticalities: Terms like "شعاع النور" (light of hope) and "ليل" (night) serve as powerful symbols. "شعاع النور" signifies elevated hope, whereas "ليل" represents gloom or obstacles that impede those hopes. The notion of "الضمير أبكم" (silent conscience) illustrates how human ethical values are restricted by circumstances.

2. Histogram Identification:

- a. Matrix: This lyric captures the struggle between hope, symbolized by light, and the harshness of reality, symbolized by night. This topic encapsulates the human dilemma, which is trapped between goals and the problems that impede them.
- b. Model: This lyric illustrates the clash between humanity's aspiration for virtue (light) and the harsh realities of the world, which render the conscience silent and dysfunctional.

- c. Variance: Expressions such as "لو باقي فينا يوم لابد أن نحلم" (if we still have a day, we must dream) alter the model by imparting a sense of optimism, suggesting that hope persists amid challenging circumstances.

3. Indirect Expression Analysis

Indirect expressions manifest through symbols like "ليل" (night) and "أبكم" (mute), which depict both the external state and the internal condition of those experiencing a decline in morals and empathy.

4. Retrospective Reading

Upon rereading these phrases, the conveyed message becomes increasingly evident: despite the pervasive evil in the world, there exists hope in aspirations and endeavors to restore the values of humanity and unity.

5. Semiotic Reading Configuration

These lyrics convey a nuanced meaning in which hope, despite frequent obstacles posed by worldly circumstances, persists as an aspiration. The aspiration for unity among Arabs and humanity at large is a primary theme conveyed through profound symbolism and metaphor.

أصل البشر إنسان
كل الرسل اخوان
موسى وعيسى ومحمد
يبرفضوا العدوان

1. Heuristic Identification:

Ungrammaticalities: Expressions like "أصل البشر إنسان" (the origin of mankind is human) and "كل الرسل اخوان" (all the messengers of God are brothers) underscore the fundamental similarities among humanity and eliminate the barriers that separate them. These terms highlight the fundamental unity inherent in all humanity and worldwide faiths.

2. Histogram Identification: Matrix, Model, and Variance

- a. The Matrix: The primary theme is the equality and unity of individuals bound by human and religious principles. This lyric conveys the notion that all humanity is unified, irrespective of religious distinctions.

- b. Model: Prophets like Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus), and Muhammad emphasized the rejection of violence and oppression while honouring humanity.
- c. Variance: This lyric redefines unity by asserting that God embodies love and peace, thereby linking religious values with universal human principles.

3. Indirect Expression Analysis

An indirect expression appears in the assertion that God embodies love and peace indirectly conveys that religion should guide individuals toward harmony and compassion, rather than violence or oppression.

4. Retrospective Reading

The rereading reveals that the essence of human unity and religious doctrines is deepened, illustrating that the core of these teachings is humanity and peace, transcending divisive distinctions.

5. Semiotic Reading Configuration

These lyrics give a framework of meaning in which religion is regarded as a source of unification and peace. Symbols like the prophets and God communicate the notion that humanity, love, and peace are fundamental to human life.

The lyrics underscore the significance of equality, unity, and love as universal principles advocated by all religions, employing symbols of religion to strengthen this message. Riffaterre's semiotic analysis indicates that the lyrics encourage listeners to transcend religious differences and focus on the principles that unify humanity.

وبيرفضوا ذلنا بيمجدوا الانسان
الله هو المحبة لانه هو السلام

1. Heuristic Identification:

Ungrammaticalities: The expressions "بيرفضوا ذلنا" (they reject our humiliation) and "بيمجدوا الانسان" (they celebrate human beings) signify the employment of language that symbolically communicates a moral imperative against injustice and advocates for human dignity.

2. Histogram Identification:

- a. The Matrix: The primary theme is human dignity and peace as a universal principle. God is regarded as the origin of love and peace, serving as the basis for all ethical doctrines.

- b. Model: The lyrics explain the necessity of treating humans with respect and refraining from insults, while also emphasizing that God imparts love and peace as fundamental principles of existence.
- c. Variance: This version illustrates the connection between humanity's glory and religious doctrines like love and peace, offering profound insights into human values.

3. Indirect Expression Analysis

Expressions such as "الله هو المحبة" (God is love) and "لأنه هو السلام" (because He is peace) signify that the core of divine teachings is love and peace, instead of aggression or tyranny.

4. Retrospective Reading

Rereading these songs highlights the notion that fundamental human values, including honour, love, and peace, are inherent to religious doctrines, which have to be acknowledged and implemented by everyone.

5. Semiotic Reading Configuration

The lyrics provide a framework in which God is perceived as an embodiment of love and peace, and humans are encouraged to honor their neighbors in accordance with these principles. The conveyed meaning encourages the listener to denounce oppression and exalt human dignity, in alignment with divine principles.

This analysis reveals that the song's lyrics impart a significant moral message emphasizing the glorification of humanity and the adherence to the virtues of love and peace as taught by God.

غزة بغداد بيروت
الحزن في كل مكان
عزيمتنا لا ماتموت
راح تقوى بالايمان

1. Heuristic Identification:

Ungrammaticalities: The invocation of city names like "غزة بغداد بيروت" (Gaza, Baghdad, Beirut) accompanied by "الحزن في كل مكان" (sadness everywhere) embodies profound meaning. These cities represent not merely geographical sites but also symbols of hardship, resistance, and conflict within the Arab world. This sentence possesses

profound emotional significance and necessitates an interpretation that beyond its literal meaning.

2. Histogram Identification:

- a. Matrix: The core of these songs embodies resilience and determination in the face of adversity. Despite the pervasive presence of sadness, hope and faith endure.
- b. Model: This lyric illustrates pervasive sorrow in specific regions, however affirms that resolve and optimism will be strengthened by faith.
- c. Variance: The lyrics exhibit variations in their depiction of resilience through faith, indicating that despite existing sorrow, strength will persist and potentially increase.

3. Indirect Expression Analysis

The indirect expression in this lyric lies in the symbolism of the cities mentioned. Gaza, Baghdad, and Beirut symbolize places that have experienced conflict and suffering, but remain symbols of resilience and resistance. "عزيمتنا لا ماتموت" (our determination not to die) reinforces this message, that behind the sadness, there is a strength that will endure.

4. Retrospective Reading

Rereading these lyrics highlights that while sorrow pervades multiple areas, a shared resilience emerges from the experience, propelled by faith.

5. Semiotic Reading Configuration

These words convey a meaning in which suffering is perceived as an unavoidable aspect, while simultaneously as a stimulus for strength and resilience. Faith serves as the primary foundation for the cultivation of resilience, instilling hope that suffering does not signify the conclusion of all things.

The lyrics express a theme of resilience and faith through hardship and conflict, employing symbols of cities that have emerged as monuments of resistance in the Arab world. Riffaterre's semiotic analysis reveals that the profound significance of these songs resides in the collective power derived from faith, in spite of pervasive sorrow.

الشمس مش هتغيب
مهما يموتوا الاطفال
الجرح مصيره يطيب
لبنان ولا داري كان

1. Heuristic Identification:

Ungrammaticalities: Expressions like "الشمس مش هتغيب" (the sun will not set) and "الجرح" "مصيره يطيب" (wounds will heal) exemplify an effective use of metaphors. The sun frequently represents hope and continuity, whereas healed wounds signify the recuperation process following suffering. This indicates that despite mortality and sorrow, hope and restoration will persist.

2. Histogram Identification:

- a. Matrix: The primary theme is resilience and optimism despite sorrow. Notwithstanding the pain, including the demise of children, the optimism represented by the sun and restoration persists.
- b. Model: The expressions convey that although the occurrence of tragedy, the world will persist, and the processes of healing and hope will endure.
- c. Variance: The fluctuation in the phrase indicates that, regardless of Lebanon's awareness or ignorance, the healing process will persist.

3. Indirect Expression Analysis

Indirect expression: In this song, the sun serves as a potent metaphor of optimism and continuity, suggesting that despite the darkness wrought by tragedy, hope persists and will continue to enlighten.

4. Retrospective Reading

Retrospective Reading: Upon rereading these phrases, the message on the power of hope intensifies, particularly in the context of awful facts like the loss of children.

5. Semiotic Reading Configuration

Semiotic Reading Configuration: These lyric contrasts tragedy and hope, with hope symbolized by the sun and healing shown as an unavoidable aspect despite pain.

The lyrics integrate themes of sorrow and hope, emphasizing that despite tragedies like the death of children, hope, represented by the sun, and healing will persist. Riffaterre's semiotic analysis reveals how these songs convey a sense of persistence and optimism under adversity.

رفع جبينك فوق خلي الكلام
ذوق يا ضميرنا
يا عربي مو حال موتك مو حال

1. Heuristic Identification: Ungrammaticalities

Ungrammaticalities: Expressions like "رفع جبينك فوق" (lift your forehead high) and "خلي الكلام ذوق" (let the words have a taste) emphasize dignity and honor, along with the significance of upholding ideals in discourse. This signifies a motivation to uphold self-esteem and pride as an Arab.

2. Histogram Identification:

- a. Matrix: The primary themes are dignity, self-worth, and national pride. This lyric highlights the need of upholding honour during hardship or difficult times.
- b. Model: The lyrics express an invitation to be steadfast and dignified, upholding honour through words and actions.
- c. Variance: This alteration of meaning is evident in the phrase "مو حال موتك مو حال" (this is not the moment of your death), emphasizing that resignation is not an acceptable option.

3. Indirect Expression Analysis

Indirect expression: "رفع جبينك فوق" symbolically transmits a message to maintain an upright and proud attitude, while "خلي الكلام ذوق" suggests that dignity should also be seen in one's words and actions.

4. Retrospective Reading

Retrospective Reading: Through rereading, the significance of the imperative to uphold self-esteem and dignity is elucidated, particularly in the context of resisting adverse circumstances.

5. Semiotic Reading Configuration

Semiotic Reading Configuration: This lyric offers a message in which self-esteem, honour, and resilience are the fundamental principles that must be upheld. The primary theme communicated through symbolism and allusion in these songs is the call to uphold dignity, even in the most challenging circumstances.

The findings of this study affirm that "Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī" is more than just a piece of music – it functions as a potent cultural symbol that encapsulates collective Arab identity and longing for unity. Through Riffaterre's semiotic lens, the song's lyrics reveal dual layers of meaning: an overt expression of solidarity, and a deeper symbolic structure that encodes resistance, dignity, and shared historical struggle. The presence of ungrammaticalities, metaphors, and intertextual cues allows listeners to engage with the song not only emotionally, but also ideologically.

Unlike conventional political or descriptive studies on Arab cultural expressions, this research applies Riffaterre's semiotic model to uncover latent messages rooted in poetic structure and cultural symbols. The lyrics are not simply read – they are decoded. This interpretive strategy distinguishes this study from previous literature, offering new depth to the understanding of how art can mediate political and social meaning.

When positioned against previous research, the advantages of this method become even more apparent. For instance, Al-Momani explored revolutionary songs using content analysis but primarily identified overt themes like resistance and reform, without examining structural symbolism. Similarly, Kraidy²⁴ focused on media and identity politics in the Arab world but largely neglected the internal mechanics of cultural texts. Even Taher and Halawachy,²⁵ though semiotic in nature, employed Peircean theory and concentrated on visual protest art rather than music²⁶, acknowledged the symbolic function of "*Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī*", but did not conduct rigorous textual analysis to unpack its layered meanings.

This study expands upon those works by offering a structural-symbolic reading of the lyrics, illuminating how *hypograms* and semantic disruptions operate to build a collective narrative of resistance and unity. The song becomes a "cultural mirror",²⁷ reflecting political aspirations and social anxiety while simultaneously shaping public consciousness.

The study's findings highlight that songs like "*Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī*" play a strategic role in cultural diplomacy, identity formation, and peacebuilding initiatives. The song's embedded messages resonate with the broader political context of the Middle East, making it a mechanism for fostering collective emotional awareness and cohesion in fragmented societies.

This interpretative depth, combined with rigorous semiotic mapping, strengthens the conclusion that culture – especially music – has the potential to influence attitudes and strengthen unity. In contrast to prior studies such as Kislenco,²⁸ Ukhrawiyah &

²⁴Marwan M. Kraidy, *Reality Television and Arab Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press., 2009).

²⁵Shamal Taher and Huda Halawachy, 'With Spray, Paint "The She!": A Semiotic Panel to Graffiti on Iraqi Women in Tahrir Square, Baghdad (October 25th, 2019)', *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 3.8 (2024) <<https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i8.5278>>.

²⁶Rijo Lopes da Cunha.

²⁷Dave.

²⁸Ivan Kislenco, 'Debates on Global Sociology: "Unity and Diversity" of Interpretations', *The American Sociologist*, 52.3 (2021), 579–90 <<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12108-021-09478-0>>.

Kurniawati,²⁹ or Choironi et al.,³⁰ which did not fully probe the symbolic construction of meaning, this research offers a more nuanced analysis of the intersection between cultural form and ideological function.

The implications are both scholarly and practical. Educational institutions and policymakers may leverage findings from this study to integrate cultural works into curricula and national initiatives that promote unity and shared identity. Additionally, future interdisciplinary research could expand this model to investigate the symbolic role of music in other regions affected by conflict.

In short, the study demonstrates that "*Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī*" is not merely a song—it is a semiotic and emotional artifact that narrates the dreams, struggles, and collective consciousness of the Arab world.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that "*Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī*" is not merely a musical composition, but a profound cultural symbol that articulates political and social messages of unity, dignity, and resistance. Through Riffaterre's semiotic analysis, the research uncovered multiple layers of meaning—both explicit and implicit—that position the song as a unifying voice amidst fragmentation in the Arab world. The lyrics, though seemingly straightforward, encode complex ideological messages that appeal to the collective consciousness of the Arab people and mobilize emotional solidarity in the face of regional adversity.

Theoretically, the study contributes to the field of semiotics by demonstrating the applicability of Riffaterre's interpretive framework within the Arabic cultural context. It expands the scope of semiotic analysis from traditional literary texts to musical forms, offering a model for uncovering subliminal meanings in cultural artifacts. Practically, the study underscores the strategic role of music in cultural diplomacy, especially in conflict-prone societies. The findings suggest that songs like "*Aḍḍamīru al-'Arabī*" can serve as effective instruments to promote unity, resilience, and political awareness.

Furthermore, the study offers actionable insights for educators, cultural leaders, and policymakers. It recommends the integration of symbolic cultural materials into educational curricula and regional cultural initiatives to foster values of unity and shared identity from an early age. Music, when strategically employed, holds the potential to

²⁹Faizetul Ukhrawiyah and Fauziyah Kurniawati, 'ANALISIS SEMIOTIK RIFFATERRE PADA SYAIR LAGU MAN ANĀ KARYA AL-IMAM AL-HABIB UMAR MUHDHOR BIN ABDURRAHMAN ASSEGAF', *Haluan Sastra Budaya*, 5.2 (2021), 140 <<https://doi.org/10.20961/hsb.v5i2.47238>>.

³⁰Merry Choironi, Lalu Turjiman Ahmad, and Ahmad Autiyah Saber, 'Semiotic Analysis of "Kun Fa Yakoon" Song Using Riffaterre's Theory', *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 15.2 (2023), 339 <<https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v15i2.16372>>.

support peacebuilding, influence public perception, and shape narratives of solidarity within and beyond the Arab world.

Despite its contributions, the study acknowledges its primary limitation – its focus on a single musical artifact. Future research is encouraged to explore a broader range of songs, genres, or other forms of cultural expression to deepen understanding of how art influences collective identity and political behavior. Expanding this framework across different regions may also reveal music’s global potential in advancing reconciliation, cohesion, and transnational solidarity.

In essence, this study reaffirms that art – particularly music – is a compelling vehicle for both ideological expression and cultural unification in complex sociopolitical landscapes.

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