



## Exploration of Meaning in the Poem Al-I'tiraf by Abu Nawas Based on Riffaterre's Semiotic Analysis

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### Abstract

Abu Nawas is considered to be one of the greatest poets of classical Arabic literature, whose life was previously controversial, but when he repented, the poem Al-I'tiraf was created. And his famous poem is still recited today because it has own power for Muslims. Therefore, the researcher aims to study the hidden meanings in the lyrics of the poem Al-I'tiraf by Abu Nawas, using Riffaterre's semiotic theory analysis. This research uses descriptive qualitative methods. The result of this study is that the matrix in this poem is found to be hope of a servant, then the model is repentance and forgiveness, and its variants are found in the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth stanzas. The potential hypogram in the context of the poem Al-I'tiraf, which reflects the hope of a servant refers to the deep aspirations and desires of a servant of Allah which are reflected in the confession of sin and request for repentance. Actual hypogram in the Qur'an in surah al-Anbiyah' verse 87 and Hadits narrated by Imam Muslim.

**Keywords:** *Poem; Al-I'tiraf; Abu Nawas; Riffaterre Semiotics*

### ملخص البحث

ويعتبر أبو نواس من أعظم شعراء الأدب العربي الكلاسيكي، وقد كانت حياته في السابق مثيرة للجدل، ولكن عندما تاب تم تأليف قصيدة الإعتراف. وقصيدته الشهيرة لا تزال تتلى حتى اليوم لما لها من قوة خاصة لدى المسلمين. لذلك يهدف الباحث إلى دراسة المعاني الخفية في كلمات قصيدة الاتراف لأبي نواس، وذلك باستخدام تحليل نظرية السيميائية عند ريفاتير. يستخدم هذا البحث المنهج الوصفي النوعي. وتوصلت الدراسة إلى أن المصفوفة في هذه القصيدة هي رجاء العبد، ثم النموذج هو التوبة والاستغفار، وتوجد متغيراتها في الأبيات الثاني والثالث والرابع والخامس والسادس. إن الهايبوجرام المحتمل في سياق قصيدة الإعتراف والذي يعكس أمل العبد يشير إلى التطلعات والرغبات العميقة لله والتي تنعكس في الاعتراف بالذنب وطلب التوبة. حقيقة النبي في القرآن الكريم في سورة الأنبياء الآية 87 والأحاديث التي رواها الإمام مسلم.

الكلمات الرئيسية: قصيدة، الإعتراف، أبو نواس، ريفاتير السيميائية

## Introduction

Abu Nawas is considered one of the greatest poets of classical Arabic literature. Abu Nawas's work was part of a movement to renew Arabic poetry, which began during the Umayyad period and mature under the first Abbasid caliphate. He is considered an important artist of this movement, who considered poetry as a free and direct expression and not as a repetition of classical language patterns and language blocks (Ramdani, 2022). Abu Nawas is also famous as a person who give a lot of advice to other people. He is also known as a humorous person, so it is not uncommon for Abu Nawas to be called by the king to ask for opinions or just to chat. However, despite his many good qualities, he has a bad habit in the eyes of others, namely that he likes to drink alcohol (Hinduan, 2020).

The birth of Abu Nawas poems or verses was influenced by many factors, as explained in the diwan that Abu Nawas poems are a depiction of the times he experienced, namely an era full of sin, secularism, and liberalism (Fahrizal & Tasnimah, 2022). Even though Abu Nawas once lived a controversial life, when he repented, he experienced enlightenment from God and his figure later became a great scholar who understood fiqh, hadith, and the Qur'an. In fact, after his repentance, a poem entitle Al-I'tiraf was created and as proof of his repentance, it has been told in many books as well as in the testimony of scholars (Ramdani, 2022).

The Al-I'tiraf poem by Abu Nawas has a special position for Muslim. This poem is still often sung or read at certain times, such as when waiting for congregational prayers at the mosque or before studying the Qur'an at Islamic boarding school, and this poem is even one of the materials in the *mahfudzot* subject in several Islamic boarding school (Vauziah et al., 2023). Apart from Al-I'tiraf, there were many other poems by him that appeared at that time, but is Al-I'tiraf that is still famous today. This poem contains Abu Nawas expressions that the showed to his God, how he confessed his sins which increased every day and expressions of repentance (Hunaini & Akastangga, 2020). It is also said that in this poem entitled Al-I'tiraf, Abu Nawas succeeded in creating a poem of lamentation or elegy which until now has been able to represent the voice of many people's hearts (Ananda, 2023). The poetry of Al-I'tiraf is one of the poetry that was born during the Abbasid era which applies Islamic elements and this poem is well known almost throughout the world (Hinduan, 2020).

In poetry, there is a dimension of meaning that is full of aesthetic symbolic language and often makes readers of the poem themselves have different interpretations of the poem they read. The dimensions of meaning also depend on the reader's position or point of view in analyzing the meaning of a poem. Poetry will be very monotonous or can be said to be boring for readers who are not used to enjoying poetry. Therefore, so that the presence of poetry can provide color in the midst of society, there needs to be a study of poetry itself in order to provide an in-depth explanation to the public (TM., 2019). The hidden elements of poetry are called layers of meaning, namely elements that can only be understood if the reader has critical reading skills or sensitivity in reading. One of the approaches used in analyzing literary works in semiotics, which studies the signs and meanings contained therein (Irfan & Riza, 2023). Because the excavation of the meaning and message of literary works based on words which are signs is closely related to semiotics which focuses on the study of sign systems (Alfalah et al., 2023).

In analyzing meaning, Riffaterre's theory offer a theory of the complexity of the structure of signs, which allows for a deep understanding of the layers of meaning hidden within literary works according to the desired focus of the study. Michael Riffaterre is a semiotics expert and critic in the field of language and literature (Hamzah & Barrunnawa, 2021). In his view, poetry is considered something different from others in the use of language. Poetry always states concepts indirectly, has a different and hidden meaning (Zahro, 2022). From there he created four rules or concepts to give meaning to literary works, especially poetry as a sign system (Hamzah & Barrunnawa, 2021).

His semiotic approach emphasizes the concepts of "texte" and "paratexte". In Riffaterre's semiotic analysis, "texte" refers to the text itself, which involves understanding the structures, symbols, metaphors, and other semiotic elements contained within it. Riffaterre emphasizes the importance of considering the formal and linguistic aspects of a text in analyzing meaning. In addition, Riffaterre also pays attention to the concept of "paratexte", which includes the external context of the text such as the author's background, literary history, and culture that influence our understanding of the text. Riffaterre acknowledged that understanding a text cannot be separated from the social and cultural context in which the text appears (Irfan & Riza, 2023). Because semantic studies are an interdisciplinary approach that studies the

meaning or sign system hidden behind the targeted cultural phenomenon (Eriyani, 2020). It can be said that semantics is a combination of sign systems with culture.

The researcher found a study that was relevant to this study in the form of a thesis article written by Setiawan (2019), entitled “Recitation of Al-I’tiraf Poems After the Adhan at the Darul Arafah Raya Islamic Boarding School, Lau Bakeri Village, Kutalimbaru District, Deli Serdang: Analysis of Text Meaning and Melody Structure”. Next, the research was written by Jessica Julia Ramadani (2022) which discussed the Psychoanalytic Study of the Connotative Meaning of the Poem Al-I’tiraf by Abu Nawas. Also found was research written by Vauziah et al. (2023) which examined the study of the structure of the of the Al-I’tiraf Poem by Abu Nawas (Case Study: Al-Mahrusiyyah Islamic Boarding School). Apart from that, a study written by Siti Dea Ananda (2023) discusses the poem Al-I’tiraf by Abu Nawas from the perspective of the philosophy of language.

Previous research with this research has similarities from the research object, namely both studying the Al-I’tiraf poem by Abu Nawas. However, there are also differences from previous research, this research wants to study and explore the hidden meaning in the Al-I’tiraf poem using Riffaterre’s semiotic theory, as explained in the introduction above. The novelty of this research is that it reveals the meaning behind the Al-I’tiraf poem from both internal and external aspects in Riffaterre’s semiotic theory. This research is considered important as a contribution and complement to previous research.

The poem Al-I’tiraf holds a significant position not only in the context of Islamic religious practices but also in its ability to resonate deeply with the feelings of repentance and spiritual awakening. Given its rich symbolic language and the layers of meaning embedded within, it becomes crucial to study this poem with a method that can uncover its hidden dimensions. Riffaterre’s semiotic theory, which focuses on the signs, meanings, and symbolic structures in literary texts, offers an effective approach to understanding the deeper layers of Al-I’tiraf. By employing this theory, this research aims to contribute new insights into the internal and external meanings of the poem, allowing for a more profound understanding of Abu Nawas’ transformation and repentance as expressed through his poetry. This analysis is essential not only for the development of Arabic language and literature studies but also for enriching the appreciation of classical Islamic texts in modern contexts.

## Research Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method. Qualitative research is research based on the interpretation and description of data (Ahmadi, 2019). As for descriptive research, it is research with a method to describe research results (Ramdhan, 2021). Research deals with static, fixed information. This means that whenever it comes and goes, the data will never change because it is already “dead” data stored in written records (Zed, 2008). This study uses library research techniques (Nasution & Lubis, 2023). Library technique is research conducted using reading techniques, studying, and recording various types of literature and reading materials that are relevant to the topic and then poured into a theoretical framework of thought. The primary source or main data in this study is the poem Al-I'tiraf by Abu Nawas, which was taken from the book “Evergreen 1000 Qashidah”.

Then the data will be analyzed with the theoretical approach used, namely Michael Riffaterre’s Semiotics, namely, the first stage of heuristic reading, the second stage of hermeneutic reading to look back and make comparisons related to what has been read in the first stage of reading process. As well as looking for matrix, model and variant, continuing to look for hypograms.

## Finding and Discussion

This poem will be analyzed using Michael Riffaterre’s semiotic theory, which is four. The four basic concepts include indirect expression, heuristic, and hermeneutic reading, model, variant, and matrix and hypograms (Hamzah & Barrunnawa, 2021). The text of the poem Al-I'tiraf by Abu Nawas quoted from the book Evergreen 1000 Qasidah, page 99, (Zaini & Asnawi, 2005) is as follows:

وَلَا أَقْوَى عَلَى النَّارِ الْجَعِيمِ	#	إِلَهِي لَسْتُ لِلْفِرْدَوْسِ أَهْلًا
فَإِنَّكَ غَافِرُ الذَّنْبِ الْعَظِيمِ	#	فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً وَاعْفِرْ ذُنُوبِي
فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ	#	ذُنُوبِي مِثْلُ أَعْدَادِ الرِّمَالِ
وَذَنْبِ زَيْدٍ كَيْفَ احْتِمَالِ	#	وَعُمْرِي نَاقِصٌ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ
مُقِرًّا بِالذُّنُوبِ وَقَدْ دَعَاكَ	#	إِلَهِي عَبْدُكَ الْعَاصِي أَتَاكَ
فَإِنْ تَطَرَّدَ فَمَنْ نَرْجُو سِوَاكَ	#	وَإِنْ تَعْفِرْ فَأَنْتَ لِدُنَا أَهْلٌ

### 1. Heuristic reading

The first reading process, namely heuristic. Latif in Haikal article, explains that heuristic reading is a form of reading in which the reader combines linguistic signs (Haikal, 2021).

إِلَهِي لَسْتُ لِلْفِرْدَوْسِ أَهْلًا # وَلَا أَقْوَى عَلَى النَّارِ الْجَحِيمِ

إِلَهِي (My Lord) is an expression of the I (*dlamir ya*) singular person, can be male or female. This expression is said by the I who is addressed to his God (*Ilah*). لَسْتُ (I am not). لِلْفِرْدَوْسِ (upon the paradise of Firdaus or for the paradise of Firdause). أَهْلًا has many meanings, it can mean family, residents, citizens, appropriate, and worthy. In this sentence it is more appropriately interpreted as residents. وَ (and) is a conjunction. I still to express something to God. لَا (not). أَقْوَى (I am strong, capable, powerful and able). عَلَى (above). نَارِ الْجَحِيمِ (Hell of Jahim) is the lowest degree of hell.

فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً وَأَغْفِرْ ذُنُوبِي # فَإِنَّكَ غَافِرُ الذَّنْبِ الْعَظِيمِ

ف (then, it could also be then, or later). This is a conjunction to provide an answer to a condition. The condition in question is the expression in the first verse. هَب (give) is a form of command or request, in this case because it is directed at a higher being, it is called a prayer. لِي (for me). تَوْبَةً (repentance), this is the answer to the above condition. وَ (and) conjunction. اغْفِرْ (forgive) the second expression or request after هَب . ذُنُوبِي (my sins) the request form of the word اغْفِرْ.

ف (then) is the second conjunction to provide an answer to the first condition (first stanza). إِنَّكَ (Truly You) is the Lord of forgiveness. غَافِرُ (the giver of forgiveness) is a singular word indicating that He is the only One. This غَافِرُ is connected with the word الذَّنْبِ (sin) so that it becomes a single word which in Arabic language rules is called *idlafah*. الذَّنْبِ as *mudlaf*nd غَافِرُ becomes *mudlaf ilaih*. الْعَظِيمِ (the great) is a description or attribute of الذَّنْبِ.

ذُنُوبِي مِثْلُ أَعْدَادِ الرِّمَالِ # فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً يَازَا الْجَلالِ

ذُنُوبِي (my sin). I will explain about the sin, either the amount or the form. مثل (like, for example, or as if). I will liken his sins to something, namely like الرمال (number) which means a collection of more than one to an infinite number. الرمال means sand. I describe his sins as the number of sands indicating that his sins are so many that they are innumerable. ف (then) is the answer to the condition in this third stanza. هب (give) a word of command or request. لي (to me) is meant to me. توبة (repentance) singular and general (*nakirah*). يا (hi or o) in Arabic (*nahwu*) is called *nida*. ذا (owner) is the one who controls smething, owns something, something that is in His essence. That something is الجلال (greatness).

وَعُمْرِي نَاقِصٌ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ # وَذَنْبٍ زَيْدٌ كَيْفَ احْتِمَالِ

و (and), here refers to himself. عمري (my age) refers to the age of me. ناقص (less, not enough, or incomplete). في (inside). كل يوم (every day) و (while) still refers to something about himself. ذنبي (my sin) refers to my sin. زائد (increase). كيف (how) is a question form. this is done because I feel confused about him. احتمال (bear, shoulder, carry, or hold).

إِلَهِي عَبْدُكَ الْعَاصِي أَتَاكَ # مُقِرًّا بِالذُّنُوبِ وَقَدْ دَعَاكَ

إلهي (My Lord) is meant to open a new expression after the first expression (ilahi in the first verse). عَبْدُكَ (servant, someone who is helpless, has no rights whatsoever, can only surrender and wait for orders from his master). الْعَاصِي (who has committed sins, mistakes) means I have abandoned the commands of his Hod. أَتَاكَ (come to You). مُقِرًّا (while admitting). بِالذُّنُوبِ (with sins) plural form of the word *dzambun*, , this explains me who comes to his Lord, either in soul or body, admitting himself as he is who has committed many sins. وَ (and), I want to add something to the previous word.

قَدْ (really) is a reinforcement or in nahwu terms it is called *taukid* if it enters the verb *madli*, which means sincerity, the truth that occurs, or certainty of something. دَعَاكَ (asking You).

وَإِنْ تَغْفِرُ فَأَنْتَ لِدَكَ أَهْلٌ # فَإِنْ تَطْرُدُ فَمَنْ نَرْجُو سِوَاكَ

وَ (and). إِنْ (if) is a condition. I assume what will happen in the end. تَغْفِرُ (You forgive) is the first form of supposition. فَأَنْتَ (then You are) is the answer to this condition. لِدَكَ (for that). The meaning of that is forgiveness. أَهْلٌ (family, population, citizen, deserving, and worthy). وَ (and). إِنْ (if) Again, the I expresses the assumption of what will happen later تَطْرُدُ (You reject) is the second conditional form. فَمَنْ (then to whom) is the answer to the second condition. نَرْجُو (we hope) what is meant is my hope alone. سِوَاكَ (besides You).

So the poem Al-I'tiraf can be translated as follows:

إِلَهِي لَسْتُ لِلْفِرْدَوْسِ أَهْلًا # وَلَا أَقْوَى عَلَى النَّارِ الْجَحِيمِ

O my God, I am not an expert in Paradise, and I cannot stand the torment of hell

فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً وَاعْفِرْ ذُنُوبِي # فَإِنَّكَ غَافِرُ الذَّنْبِ الْعَظِيمِ

So accept my repentance and forgive all my sins, Indeed, You are Forgiving of great sins

ذُنُوبِي مِثْلُ أَعْدَادِ الرَّمَالِ # فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ

My sins are like the number of sands, So accept my repentance, O Almighty God

وَعُمْرِي نَاقِصٌ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ # وَذَنْبِي زَيْدٌ كَيْفَ احْتِمَالِ

And my age decreases every day, while my sins increase, how can I bear them

إِلَهِي عَبْدُكَ الْعَاصِي أَتَاكَ # مُقِرًّا بِالذُّنُوبِ وَقَدْ دَعَاكَ

O my Lord, your servant has sinned and has come to You, confess all his sins and have begged you

وَإِنْ تَغْفِرُ فَأَنْتَ لِدَكَ أَهْلٌ # فَإِنْ تَطْرُدُ فَمَنْ نَرْجُو سِوَاكَ

If you forgive, You are the owner of forgiveness, So if You turn to whom else can I hope but You

## Indirectness of Meaning in Poetic Expression

According to Riffaterre, the indirectness of meaning in poetic expression is caused by 3 things: displacement of meaning, distortion of meaning and creation of meaning.

### a) Displacing of Meaning

In this substitution of meaning, 5 types of figurative language are found which are used in the Al-I'tiraf poem, namely:

#### a. Litotes

Litotes is a style of language that contains statements that are reduced or minimized from their actual meaning, or the opposite of hyperbole (Ananda, 2023). Litotes is often used to convey humility or gentleness. The use of litotes in Al-I'tiraf poetry can be seen in the first stanza, where the poet uses humble language to convey his unworthiness and inability. *وَلَا أَقْوَى عَلَى النَّارِ الْجَحِيمِ # إِلَهِي لَسْتُ لِلْفِرْدَوْسِ أَهْلًا* "O my God, I am not an expert in Paradise, and I cannot stand the torment of hell"

#### b. Apostrophe

Apostrophe style of language is a style of language that involves addressing or speaking directly to something that is not actually present/visible but is perceived or believed as if the entity were in front of the poet (Ananda, 2023). This style of language is often used to give a deep or emotional impression in literary works. In this style of language, the word *إِلَهِي* "O my God" is found at the beginning of the first and fifth stanzas.

#### c. Mubalaghah (Hyperbole)

*Mubalaghah*/Hyperbole language style is usually used to exaggerate something (Ananda, 2023). In this Al-I'tiraf poem, Abu Nawas wrote the third stanza. *دُنُوبِي مِثْلُ أَعْدَادِ الرِّمَالِ* "My sins are like the number of sands". It is called hyperbole because it describes a very large number of sins which are likened to the amount of sand which cannot be counted, this is to emphasize how severe the sins felt by the poet are.

#### d. Apophasis

Apophasis is a style of language where the writer confirms and emphasizes something but seems to deny it (Ananda, 2023). In the poem Al-I'tiraf, an expression of Apophasis style of language is found in the first stanza. *وَلَا أَقْوَى عَلَى # إِلَهِي لَسْتُ لِلْفِرْدَوْسِ أَهْلًا*

النَّارِ الْجَحِيمِ "O my God, I am not an expert in Paradise, and I cannot stand the torment of hell ". The poet admits that he is not worthy of entering Paradise, this shows the poet's deep self-awareness of the weaknesses and sins he has committed. But the poet also added that the poet admits his inability to bear the torment of hell.

e. *Tasybih* (Simile)

*Tasybih* is a style of language used to express one thing by mentioning another thing that shows similarities (Mushfiroh, 2023). Words used in *tasybih*/simile such as, the same, as, like and so on. The *tasybih* in the poem Al-I'tiraf is found in the third stanza. *دُنُوبِي مِثْلُ أَعْدَادِ الرِّمَالِ* "My sins are like the number of sands". It can be seen from the data found above that the *tasybih* expression in the third stanza uses the expression *مِثْلُ* "like" which is one of the characteristics of the *tasybih* language style.

**b) Distorting of Meaning**

The deviation in meaning in this poem is the phrase *النَّارِ* which means fire, which was then changed to mean torture. The word *تَطْرُدُ* means to expel, throw away, drive away, disperse, which was later changed to turn away.

**2. Hermeneutic Reading Analysis**

Poetry, after being read heuristically, is then continued with hermeneutic reading. In this case, the poem is read repeatedly from beginning to end with interpretation. The poem is no longer described and then given meaning according to standard language conventions, but rather based on literary conventions (Hamzah & Barrunnawa, 2021)

إِلَهِي لَسْتُ لِلفِرْدَوْسِ أَهْلًا # وَلَا أَقْوَى عَلَى النَّارِ الْجَحِيمِ

In the first stanza, Abu Nawas expresses his awareness and acknowledgement of himself as a sinful human being. He stated that he was not worthy to enter heaven, the highness place filled with eternal happiness and pleasure. On the other hand, he also realized his weakness in enduring the very painful tortures of hell. Abu Nawas uses the word *Firdaus* to describe a special heaven instead of the word *Jannah*. Through this expression, Abu Nawas shows he feels trapped in a difficult situation, between his unworthiness to get heaven and his inability to withstand the torture of hell. Abu Nawas honestly admitted his shortcomings and helplessness before God, which is the first step in the process of sincere repentance and regret.

فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً وَاعْفِرْ ذُنُوبِي # فَإِنَّكَ غَافِرُ الذَّنْبِ الْعَظِيمِ

In the second stanza, Abu Nawas asks Allah to be given the opportunity to repent and receive forgiveness for his sins. The command word in the line above is not merely ordering God to forgive the poet's sins. But the word is intended as request. He asked Allah to give him guidance and an opportunity to repent sincerely. In addition, Abu Nawas emphasized his belief that Allah is All-Forgiving, who is able to forgive not only small sins but also major sins. This stanza describes Abu Nawas hope and belief in Allah's mercy and forgiveness, as well as his humility in admitting his sins and asking for forgiveness.

ذُنُوبِي مِثْلُ أَعْدَادِ الرَّمَالِ # فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ

In the third stanza, this describes Abu Nawas expression of repentance and spirituality towards Allah. Even though his sins were as many as grains of sand, Abu Nawas still asked Allah to grant him repentance. This metaphor of the number of sands gives a dramatic dimension to the confession of sin, also creating an image of sins as overwhelming and countless, indicating a sense of consciousness and limitation before God. In this context, Abu Nawas request for repentance is not just a request to be forgiven, but also a request to be given the strength and opportunity to repent truly, cleansing himself of his many sins. He still hopes and believes that Almighty Allah will give His mercy and forgiveness.

وَعُمْرِي نَاقِصٌ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ # وَذَنْبِي زَيْدٌ كَيْفَ احْتِمَالِ

In the fourth stanza, Abu Nawas conveys two important things. First, he uses the word *naqis* to describe *عُمْرِي* (reduced age). This statement reflects an awareness of the transience of life and how time continues to move on without stopping. Awareness of the decreasing lifespan every day shows a deep reflection on the shortness and transitoriness of life. Second, he used the word *زَيْدٌ* to describe the word *ذَنْبٍ* (increasing sin), Abu Nawas showed how heavy the burden of sin he felt. This is a rhetorical question that emphasizes man's inability to bear his own sins without the help and forgiveness of Allah. Confirming that age and sins always decrease and increase continuously or continually. Through this stanza, Abu Nawas expresses his anxiety and fear of the sins that continue to accumulate as time goes by. He felt burdened and unable to bear the burden of sin alone. This stanza also reflects humility and complete

surrender to God, as well as an awareness of the importance of repentance before time runs out.

إِلَهِي عَبْدُكَ الْعَاصِي أَتَاكَ # مُقِرًّا بِالذُّنُوبِ وَقَدْ دَعَاكَ

In the fifth stanza, Abu Nawas shows his confession as a sinful servant. In the first sentence, the poet explicitly calls himself "عَبْدُكَ الْعَاصِي" (Your sinful servant), emphasizing his awareness of the transgressions he has committed. The word أَتَاكَ gives the impression that the poet is truly only and truly heading towards one thing so that there is nothing else to aim for, namely that he truly comes to Allah. Next, he stated that he came to Allah "مُقِرًّا بِالذُّنُوبِ" (confessing his sins). This shows that he was not only aware of his sins, but also openly confessed them before Allah. This stanza shows Abu Nawas spiritual journey which is full of self-awareness, confession of sins, and requests for forgiveness from Allah. By coming to Allah in a state of repentance and confession, he hopes to forgiveness and guidance to become a better servant.

وَإِنْ تَغْفِرُ فَأَنْتَ لَدَيْكَ أَهْلٌ # فَإِنْ تَطَرَّدَ فَمَنْ نَرْجُو سِوَاكَ

In this sixth stanza, Abu Nawas expresses two important thoughts about forgiveness and hope. First, Abu Nawas stated that Allah is the only one who is worthy and deserving of giving forgiveness. By stating that Allah is the only one worthy of granting forgiveness, Abu Nawas emphasized his belief in Allah's ability to erase his sins, no matter how great they were. Second, Abu Nawas acknowledged that if Allah refuses to forgive, then there is no other place for humans to hope. This shows the absolute dependence of humans on Allah for forgiveness and mercy. The poet emphasizes that there is no other source of forgiveness and hope than Allah, so if Allah refuses humans will lose all hope. This is the culmination of a sincere confession of sins and a sincere request for forgiveness, in which he completely surrenders himself to Allah, hoping and believing that only Allah can grant the forgiveness he seeks.

### **Matrix, Model and Variant**

The matrix is the source of all meanings contained in the words and sentences in poetry. The matrix is what unites the optional pairs that exist in the entire diagram of the poem, which is the "spirit" of the various equivalence relationships that exist. Before identifying the matrix, the step taken is to identify the model first. The model is the first actualization of the matrix, this actualization can be in the form of words or sentences

contained in a poem. The characteristic of the model, which makes the model different from other words or sentences in poetry, is its poetic nature or its existence as a poetic sign (Hidayat et al., 2021). Matrix transformation is realized in a model that is described in variants so as to form the entire text of the poem. While variants are descriptions that usually explain the model (Noviana & Saifudin, 2020).

Before the matrix, it is necessary to select a model. In the lyrics of the song Al-I'tiraf, the model obtained is repentance and forgiveness, both of which are transformed into variants spread across the stanzas. Among the identified variants are the following:

فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً وَاغْفِرْ ذُنُوبِي	#	فَإِنَّكَ غَافِرُ الذَّنْبِ الْعَظِيمِ
ذُنُوبِي مِثْلُ أَعْدَادِ الرِّمَالِ	#	فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ
وَعُمْرِي نَاقِصٌ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ	#	وَذَنْبِي زَيْدٌ كَيْفَ احْتِمَالِ
إِلَهِي عَبْدُكَ الْعَاصِي أَتَاكَ	#	مُقِرًّا بِالذُّنُوبِ وَقَدْ دَعَاكَ
وَإِنْ تَغْفِرْ فَأَنْتَ لِمَنْ لَدُنْكَ أَهْلٌ	#	فَإِنْ تَطْرُدْ فَمَنْ نَرْجُو سِوَاكَ

The matrix of the poem that can then be obtained is “the hope of a servant”. The idea of a servant’s hope is the core that inspires the entire sound of the poem. The hope of a servant, namely Abu Nawas, who wants his repentance to be accepted, and hopes that his sins will be forgiven. This can be seen because of the connection between one stanza and another stanza.

### Hypogram

The potential hypogram contained in the lyrics of the song Al-I'tiraf is an elaboration of the matrix that was successfully presented previously, namely the hopes of a servant. The potential hypogram in the context of the poem Al-I'tiraf, which reflects the hope of a servant refers to the deep aspirations and desires of a servant of Allah that are reflected in confessions of sins and requests for repentance. The poet, through this poem, conveys a message of humility and regret for the sins he has committed. Because Abu Nawas poem was born as a depiction of the times and circumstances he experienced, namely an era full of sin, secularism and liberalism. The potential hypogram in the poem reflects a servant’s strong hope of receiving Allah’s forgiveness, guidance and love. This hope involves the belief that even if the sins are as numerous as sand, the All-Forgiving Allah can grant repentance and accept confessions of sin with

great mercy. Thus, this potential hypogram strengthens the spiritual dimension of the poem, highlighting the process of repentance, humility, and hope of a servant who wants to draw closer to God by asking for His forgiveness.

The actual hypogram that underlies the formation of this matrix is in accordance with the incident of the Prophet Yunus when he was devoured by a whale, which is told in the Qur'an in the letter al-Anbiya' verse 87 (Qur'an.com, 1995):

"وَذَالْتُنِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ

الظَّالِمِينَ "

*"And remember when the Man of the whale stormed off from his city in a rage, thinking We would not restrain him. Then in the veils of darkness he cried out, "There is no god worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You I have certainly done wrong".*

The hadith is stated as follows:

"مَنْ أَدْنَبَ ثُمَّ تَابَ تَابَ تَابَ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ "

*"Whoever sins, then feels regret, then he repents, then Allah will accept his repentance (HR. Imam Muslim)*

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study using Riffaterre's semiotic theory as an analysis of the poem Al-I'tiraf by Abu Nawas are namely a heuristic reading whose meaning is still not understood, which is then perfected in a hermeneutic reading with meaning based on literary conventions. The matrix in this poem is the hope of a servant, then the model is repentance and forgiveness, and its variants are found in the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth stanzas.

The potential hypogram in the Al-I'tiraf poem is an elaboration of the matrix that was successfully presented previously, namely the hopes of a servant. The potential hypogram in the context of the poem Al-I'tiraf, which reflects the hope of a servant refers to the deep aspirations and desires of a servant of Allah that are reflected in the confession of sins and requests for repentance. The poet, conveys a message about humility and regret for the sins that have been committed and the poet likens his sins to the number of sands. The actual hypogram that underlies the formation of this matrix is in accordance with the incident of Prophet Yunus when he was devoured by a whale as told in the Qur'an IN Surah al-Anbiya' verse 87 and the hadith narrated by Imam

Muslim. For subsequent researchers, they can analyze and explore the poem Al-I'tiraf by Abu Nawas using semiotic theories other than Riffaterre.

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