

HOPE AND LOVE IN THE POEM *ILĀ BAIRŪT AL-UNŚĀ MA'A AL-I'TIZĀR* BY NIZĀR QABBĀNĪ: A STUDY OF ROLAND BARTHES' SEMIOTICS

Muhammad Faishol Al Hamimy^{1*}

¹UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: alhamimy.faishal@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Semiotics,
Meaning, Love,
Hope, Poem.

Every literary work reflects the author's hopes and goals, conveyed through a particular point of view intended to influence the reader, resulting in various interpretations. This study aims to explore the meanings of love and hope in the poem *Ilā Bairūt al-Unśā Ma'a al-I'tizār* by Nizār Qabbānī. The focus is what are the denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings in the poem and how are the poet's love and hope represented? This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. Data collection techniques include literature review and internet research. The results show thirty-five denotative words and sentences were identified, each carrying connotative meanings; the mythical meaning emphasizes nationalism, patriotism, unity, and responsibility to prevent national destruction. The representation of love includes: attention, shown through admiration for Lebanon's natural and cultural beauty; responsibility, through awareness of Lebanon's condition and rejection of its destruction; respect, by valuing Lebanon's charm and contributions; and understanding, recognizing Beirut as a unique and irreplaceable city that needs love and care. The poet hopes readers will acknowledge Lebanon's role and foster awareness, responsibility, and unity to improve the nation.

Article History:

Received: 2024-10-31
Revised: 2025-02-12
Accepted: 2025-06-02
Publish: 2025-06-10

الكلمات المفتاحية:
السيمائية، المعنى،
الحب، الرجاء،
القصيدة.

This is an open
access article under
the CC BY-SA license.



المخلص

كل عمل أدبي يعكس آمال وطموحات مؤلفه، ويُعبّر عنها من خلال وجهة نظر تهدف إلى التأثير في القارئ، مما يؤدي إلى تعدد التفسيرات. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن معاني الحب والأمل في قصيدة إلى بيروت الأثني مع الاعتذار لنزار قباني، من خلال منهج وصفي نوعي باستخدام مقاربة السيميولوجيا لرولان بارت. وتركّز على المعاني الدلالية، الإيحائية، والأسطورية في القصيدة، وكيفية تمثيل حب الشاعر وأمله. تم جمع البيانات من خلال مراجعة الأدبيات والبحث عبر الإنترنت. أظهرت النتائج وجود خمس وثلاثين كلمة وجملّة ذات معنى دلالي تحمل دلالات إيحائية، بينما يُظهر المعنى الأسطوري أهمية القومية، والوطنية، والوحدة، والمسؤولية في حماية الوطن من الدمار. أما تمثيل الحب فيظهر في: الاهتمام بجمال لبنان الطبيعي والثقافي، وتحمل المسؤولية تجاه مصيره، واحترام تاريخه وإنجازاته، وفهم خصوصية بيروت كمدينة لا بديل لها. يأمل الشاعر أن يدرك القراء قيمة لبنان، ويعززوا الوعي، والوحدة، والمسؤولية للنهوض بالوطن.

INTRODUCTION

Literary works are a form of linguistic art because they are constructed through the

medium of language (Ratna, 2007). Authors create literature for various purposes, ranging from conveying moral messages to expressing socio-political criticism. In literature, the relationship between sign and meaning, between expression and idea, and between the outer and inner aspects is key (Faruk, 2017). One form of literary work is poetry, which represents the poet's interpretation of life and the surrounding reality (Hikmah and Puspitasari, 2017). Because poetry contains many symbols and hidden meanings, its interpretation requires a semiotic approach as a form of meaningful communication (Teeuw, 1988).

The material object of this research is the poem *Ilā Bairūt al-Unsā ma'a al-I'tizār* by Nizār Qabbānī. Qabbānī himself is widely known both as a poet of love and a critical voice on the Arab political condition (Rahman, 2021). The poem *Ilā Bairūt al-Unsā ma'a al-I'tizār* was written in 1981 (Makawi, 2020) and included in the anthology *al-A'māl as-Siyāsiyyah al-Kāmilah*, as well as in another edition titled *Ilā Bairūt al-Unsā ma'a al-Ḥubb* (Qabbānī, 2008). This poem expresses sorrow and regret over the destruction of Lebanon caused by the civil war (1975–1990), while recalling its peaceful past as a beautiful, serene, and joyful place for the Arab people. This poem was chosen because it tends not to reveal its meaning directly, thereby allowing for an expansion of interpretation. This expansion serves as a medium for emotional expression and breathes life into the poem, playing a role in influencing readers and evoking love and emotion toward Lebanon. Therefore, to uncover and understand the poem's deeper meanings, a systematic and structured research approach and methodology are required.

To assist in discovering the meaning of the poem, the researcher uses Roland Barthes' semiotic discourse. Thus, the formal object of this research is Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. In general, semiotics is derived from the Greek word *sēmeion* ('sign'), referring to the study of meaning behind signs (Zoest, 1993). Barthes expanded on Saussure's ideas of the *signifier* and *signified* into two levels of meaning: denotation (literal meaning) and connotation (cultural meaning). When connotation becomes culturally naturalized and replaces denotation, it forms *myth* or *ideology* (Barthes, 1974). Basically, Roland Barthes' semiotic thinking departs from Saussure's semiotics, it can be said that Barthes is the successor of Saussure's thoughts. Barthes views language as a *sign system*. According to him, every word or image is not a direct representation of reality, but a sign that has a relationship with a particular concept or object. This process is referred to as signification. Barthes revealed that every sign system consists of levels of expression (E) and the content level (C) and the signification process can be described at these two levels into an E-R-C model (Barthes, 1968).

As has been explained, Barthes' theory is very similar to Saussure's Signifier and Signified, more precisely Barthes expands the concept, for Barthes the meaning of a sign is divided into two stages. The sign (signifier and signified) in the first stage in the first stage and fused so that it can form a signifier in the second stage, then in the next stage the signifier and signified that have been fused can form a new signifier which is an expansion of meaning (Zaimar, 2008). Thus, the two levels of signification will give rise to the terms denotation and connotation. The reference to the signified signifier is often referred to as the *first order of signification*, namely denotation reference, and the *second order signifying system* is called connotation reference (Ambarini AS, 2010). There are two fundamental concepts in Barthes' semiotic theory: Denotation and Connotation, and Myth.

First, denotation and connotation. Barthes in the book *Mythologies* explains that the connotative concept has a broader meaning than the denotative concept. To better understand the concept of connotative as a development of meaning that goes beyond denotative.

Table 1. Barthes' theory according to Paul Cobley and Litza Jansz, as cited by Sobur (Sobur, 2006).

1. Signifier/Expression (Marker/Expression)	2. Signified/Content (Sign/Concept)
3. Denotative Sign	
4. Connotative Signifier	5. Connotative Signified
6. Connotative Sign	

The table shows that the denotation meaning comes from the signification of *signifier* and *signified*. The resulting concept (denotation) will become a signifier/signifier in the second level of signification process which can then produce connotation meaning. Barthes uses the term *orders of signification* to distinguish denotation and connotation. The first *order of signification* is denotation, which is the direct relationship between signifier and signified. The second *order of signification* is connotation, which is the indirect relationship between signifier and signified (Barthes, 1968). For example, a 'rose' represents a person's form of love. In the essay *The Death of the Author* Barthes (1977) argues that the meaning of a text is not determined by the author but by the reader. He critiques the traditional view that meaning lies in the author's intention, proposing instead that texts are open to multiple interpretations. Barthes coined the term "the death of the author" to emphasize that the author no longer holds authority over a text's meaning. In his view, the author is merely a producer of the text, while the reader, as its consumer, constructs meaning through the act of reading. Denotation refers to the literal or dictionary meaning of a word, whereas connotation involves implied or emotional meanings shaped by cultural and social contexts. Understanding connotation is essential for deeper interpretation and exploring the layers of meaning within a text.

Second, myths. Myths is a process of disguising the basic meaning (denotation), Barthes further explains myth as a communication system which thus myth is an impression, myth is at the second level of signs, namely connotation (Al-Bastomi, 2018). Barthes (1968) defines myth as "a sign system that represents something other than itself." According to Barthes, myth is a system of meaning constructed by society to convey certain meanings. Barthes distinguishes myths from ordinary signs. An ordinary sign is a system of meaning in which the relationship between the signifier and the sign is natural. For example, the word table denotatively means an object used to place other objects. The relationship between the table signifier and its sign is natural, because the table is indeed used to place other objects. Myth, according to Barthes, is a system of meaning where the connection between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary and focuses on the message rather than the object itself. For example, perfume ads often use the image of a beautiful woman to symbolize beauty, even though there is no natural link between the two. Barthes (1968) argues that myths legitimize existing social values and ideologies, often reinforcing dominant beliefs like patriarchy. Myth is not just an idea but a way of giving meaning through storytelling. For instance, a tree in myth is not just a physical object but a symbol loaded with meanings such as sacredness or preservation, depending on the narrative. Myths work by masking reality and creating a seemingly natural understanding of concepts or objects.

Therefore, this study aims to uncover the denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings in the poem *Ilā Bairūt al-Unsā ma'a al-I'tizār* by Nizār Qabbānī, and to analyze how the poet conveys love and hope for Lebanon through the poetic symbols he employs.

Several studies have used Barthes' approach to analyze modern Arabic poetry. One example is the research by Aimi (2023) titled *Al-Maksah fī Qaṣīdah 'Unūf Ḥubbī Isyṭahū li Nizār Qabbānī (Dirāsah Simiyā'iyyah)*. Her findings reveal both denotative and connotative

meanings. It concludes that the depiction of love tragedy reflects an addictive nature, showing that love becomes an obsession for those who cannot experience it (to love and be loved). Another study by Rohmah (2020) titled *The Supposition of the Figure "I" in the Poem Lau Annanā Lam Naftariq by Fāruq Juwaidah (Roland Barthes Semiotics Analysis)* focuses on the denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings. The result shows that the poem contains depth of meaning, aesthetic value, and linguistic beauty. All the signs in the poem refer to the assumed identity of the figure "I" as a representation of a person imagining a world without separation. A third study by Ahmad (2021) titled *Semiotics Representation of Roland Barthes in Ahinnu Ilā Khubz Ummī Poem by Mahmoud Darwish* also examines denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings. The findings show profound meanings expressed by Mahmoud Darwish in interpreting the lines of his poetry.

Based on the literature review above, it is clear that Qabbānī's poem *Ilā Bairūt al-Unsā ma'a al-I'tizār* has never been specifically analyzed using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory or any other similar approach. Therefore, this study seeks to fill that gap. It is both relevant and significant, given Lebanon's ongoing social and political instability since the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990), which continues to leave profound impacts on the lives of its people. Analyzing a literary text like this poem not only opens the space for interpreting the work itself, but also raises our awareness of Lebanon's complex historical dynamics and how suffering, hope, and love for the homeland are articulated through poetic language.

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using library research to analyze denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings in Qabbānī's poem *Ilā Bairūt al-Unsā ma'a al-I'tizār*. Primary data consists of the poem's text from the anthology *al-A'māl as-Siyāsiyyah al-Kāmilah or Ilā Bairūt al-Unsā ma'a al-Hubb*, while secondary data includes references to Roland Barthes' semiotic theory (Mythologies, Elements of Semiology), previous studies on Arabic poetry, and literature on Lebanon's historical context. Data was collected through document analysis by closely reading the poem to identify linguistic signs such as words, phrases, and metaphors, and conducting literature searches for supporting references. The analysis follows Barthes' semiotic model, covering denotation (literal meaning), connotation (implied meaning), and myth (underlying ideology). Data validity was ensured through cross-referencing with Barthes' theory, previous research, and academically credible sources. The research process involved collecting data, identifying key signs, classifying levels of meaning, interpreting them within Lebanon's socio-political context, and validating findings through expert discussions or comparison with related literature.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Denotation and Connotation in the Symbolism of Love and Hope

إلى بيروت الأثنى مع الاعتذار

Apologies to the beautiful Beirut

The title text of the poem contains the word */ilā Bairūt/* which directly indicates that the poem is dedicated to the city of Beirut. The word Beirut is a name that signifies the capital of the country of Lebanon. In this poem, Beirut goes beyond its literal meaning. The poet invites readers to look beyond the words and images to see Beirut as a connotative symbol embodying deeper values of life. Amid the political turmoil in Lebanon at the time the poem was written, Beirut carries connotations of change and discord affecting both its people and environment. Readers are prompted to imagine an idealized version of Beirut—often seen as a symbol of beauty and a cherished home for its inhabitants.

The city of Beirut is analogous to the word */al-unṣā/* which shows the characterization of Beirut as a woman. The word *al-unṣā* literally means everything that is opposite to men (Musthafa et al., 1989). However, connotatively, this word carries a much deeper cultural, emotional and symbolic content. In many contexts of classical and modern Arabic literature, *al-unṣā* is not only understood as gender, but is symbolized as a form of beauty, gentleness, and charm. The feminine image attached to it activates cultural associations of subtlety of feeling, peacefulness, and aesthetic power hidden in gentleness. These connotations are born out of social structures and cultural narratives that idealize certain traits as “female” in the collective imagination. Thus, in a semiotic reading, *al-unṣā* becomes a sign that not only designates a biological object, but also contains ideological and aesthetic meanings, which enrich the reader's understanding of the text that uses it. The word *al-unṣā* is used to build a positive image of, researchers understand it as an act to build social consensus that in essence Beirut is a city that is far from negative things. In the title text of this poem there is also the word */al-i'tizār/* which has the literal meaning of apology (Manzur, 2008). The emotional dimension of the poet, shows that this poem contains an expression of apology or regret. The connotation is that there is a condition that tends to be negative in Beirut. This idea is based on the tendency to apologize for the irregularity of something. Apologies tend to reflect the poet's feelings towards the changes or difficult experiences that Beirut has undergone.

كَانَ لُبْنَانٌ لَكُمْ مِرْوَحَةٌ # تَنْشُرُ الْأَلْوَانَ وَالظُّلَّ الظُّلِيلَا

Lebanon is a fan for you that spreads colors and shadows

The researcher selected stanzas that specifically show the beauty of Lebanon. In the first four stanzas of the analyzed poem, the poem strongly depicts the beauty of Lebanon, which is not only reflected in its natural aspects, but also in its culture and emotional experiences. Each stanza serves to introduce Lebanon as a place full of life, freedom, and tranquility, inviting visitors to experience the peace and beauty that can only be found there.

In this stanza there is the concept of a depiction of the condition of Lebanon, Lebanon is described as a fan that always spreads colors and shady shadows. This description purely shows the poet's love for Lebanon. In this stanza */mirwaḥah/* is a noun that has the meaning of a device driven by electricity to blow wind, which is generally in the form of a windmill (Ma'luf, 2009). Or a device that moves the wind during high heat (Ibrahim, 1998). In the context of this poem, fan has a connotation meaning that Lebanon is associated with a fan. In bayan science, this kind of arrangement is included in *tasybīh*, which is likening Lebanon (*musyabbah*) to *mirwaḥah* (*musyabah bih*) in similarity (the face of the *syābah*) spreading colorful colors and shady shadows. the use of the word *mirwaḥah* aims to describe the beauty of Lebanon, rhetoric with this analogy aims to encourage the suggestion of the Lebanese people to deepen the meaning of Lebanon in their lives.

In the first stanza, the word */al-alwān/* (colors), the plural of *laun* (color), appears as something carried or spread by the fan. On a connotative level, it symbolizes joy, natural beauty, and Lebanon's cultural diversity. These colors represent more than visual elements—they convey life, aesthetic charm, and the unity of diverse identities within the nation. The spreading of colors reflects the diffusion of positive values and vitality, rooted in nature or the Lebanese spirit itself. As a former diplomat assigned to Lebanon, the poet had a deep understanding of the country's condition at the time (Nur, 2017). While *al-alwan* has a positive connotation, Lebanon is a country with a wide range of ethnicities, cultures and religions. Lebanese culture tends to attract tourists, which is quite natural given Lebanon's background of being occupied by many nations and empires including the

Romans, Persians, Arabs, Crusaders, Ottoman Turks and the French, which makes Lebanon a country with a high level of heterogeneous society (Swasono, 2010).

Denotation /*az-zill az-zalilā*/ is the second result of the fan blowing, which means a shady shadow or a dark area that is not exposed to direct light from the sun. If you are in Lebanon, you will enjoy the extraordinary beauty of nature, the fact that Lebanon is a country that has a geographical condition where the Lebanese plain is dominated by mountainous areas and has relatively high rainfall (Swasono, 2010). This makes Lebanon a fertile country among Arab countries.

Overall, this stanza shows the poet's love for Lebanon that Lebanon has given many things to the Arab people including beauty, natural wealth, and culture. When compared to other Middle Eastern countries, Lebanon is the only country that has a diversity of nature ranging from mountains, dense forests, beaches, Lebanon is home to a variety of cultures and religions. Thus, Lebanon is the number one tourist destination in the Middle East.

كَمْ هَزَيْتُمْ مِنْ صَحَارَاكُمْ إِلَيْهِ # تَطْلُبُونَ الْمَاءَ وَالْوَجْهَ الْجَمِيلَا

*How many times have you shaken the sand towards Lebanon in search
of water and a pretty face?*

In this stanza the poet uses a rhetorical question, of course a rhetorical question does not require an answer, the purpose of using it is to achieve a deeper effect and reasonable emphasis and does not require an answer at all (Arisza & Kasnadi, 2021). This stanza contains the phrase /*hazaitum*/ which means to move or shake with a certain force. In the context of this poem, which gives rise to the connotation that many people from the desert are walking or traveling to Lebanon, the poet uses the diction of shaking or shaking instead of the action of traveling. This connotation is obtained with the assumption that when a person travels to an area he will walk, while the Middle East region is closely related to the desert, it is certain that a traveler will automatically shake the sand on his feet, the sand here shows the identity of the Middle East region.

This is evidenced by the use of the word /*ṣaḥrā ilaih*/, which refers to a wide, barren expanse with no vegetation—commonly known as a desert. (Ma'luf, 2009). The writing is used to show the Middle East region, which tends to be dry and arid. The word /*al-mā'*/ in this stanza is a noun that has the original meaning of a colorless, odorless, and tasteless liquid (Ma'luf, 2000). In this poem, *al-mā'* (water) symbolizes life, abundance, and wealth. It transcends its physical form to represent fertility, survival, purity, and coolness, often serving as a metaphor for grace and spirituality in Arabic literature. Rooted in the desert culture, water carries vital significance, implying prosperity and fertile land. The poet's use of water highlights Lebanon's richness not just materially, but morally—inviting readers to see deeper values beyond the physical.

The final section closes with the word /*al-wajh al-jamīl*/ which means a face that has features that are in accordance with the standards of beauty prevailing in a particular society. In the context of this poem, *al-wajh al-jamīl* connotes a symbol of alluring attractiveness, eye-catching elegance, and a striking, recognizable identity. Here, the face is no longer just a part of the human body, but becomes a metaphor referring to Lebanon itself—a homeland that is captivating, mesmerizing, and admired for its natural beauty, culture, and aesthetic values.

Overall, this stanza shows the prima donna beauty of Lebanon as a tourist attraction. Despite not having the oil wealth of the Arab countries in the Persian Gulf, Lebanon is endowed with tremendous natural potential and regional beauty. Dubbed as the "Heaven on Earth" of the Middle East, Lebanon attracts many tourists from the Middle East, Europe,

and America. This makes the tourism sector a major source of foreign exchange for the country. More than that, Lebanon is regarded as the Switzerland of the Middle East (*Dunia*, n.d.). Even the capital city of Beirut is often nicknamed the Paris of the East because of its beautiful scenery (Sahidin, 2014).

وَأَغْتَسَلْتُمْ بِندَى غَابَاتِهِ # وَاخْتَبَأْتُمْ تَحْتَ جَفْنَيْهِ طَوِيلًا

You bathe in its forest dew and hide under its eyelids for a long time.

This stanza is a description of the poet's love for Lebanon, which shows the beautiful and lush natural conditions with dense forests so that many people rest behind their eyelids. The image is then formed rhetorically by the poet. This stanza contains the phrase */igtasaltum/*. Denotatively, *igtasaltum* means "you take a bath" - a physical activity aimed at cleansing the body. However, in the context of this poem, the word has a deeper dimension. Connotatively, *igtasaltum* describes the process of refreshing the body and soul, which focuses not only on physical cleanliness, but also on inner cleansing through the experience of being one with nature. In this sense, bathing is not just about a routine activity, but about the feeling of being refreshed by the beauty and serenity of Lebanon's nature, an experience that frees the soul from the noise and fatigue of everyday life.

The word */bi nadā/*, which means "with dew", also functions as a sign that has a deep connotative meaning. Dew here is not only interpreted as the moisture that clings to leaves or other surfaces, but symbolizes the freshness, purity, and beauty of nature. In this poem, the dew seems to refresh and cleanse the souls of the visitors or readers, inviting them to soak in the shade and naturalness of the Lebanese environment. The dew becomes a symbol of natural purity, providing a sense of tranquility and peace, and presenting an image of how nature can provide complete tranquility, not only to the body, but also to the soul.

Denotatively, */ikhtabā/* means "to take refuge" or "to seek shelter". In this poem, the word does not only refer to physical refuge in the literal sense, but rather symbolizes a place of escape from the "heat of the desert". The desert, known for its hot and barren climate, becomes a representation of challenging living conditions and emotional dryness. Hence, Lebanon, represented by the word *ikhtabā'*, becomes a place of escape or refuge, which provides a sense of calm and peace for those seeking relief from the harshness of life.

Meanwhile, the word */jifnaih/* which means "eyelids" is used as a metaphor for Lebanon. The eyelid, as a part of the body that protects and guards the eyes, symbolizes protection and warmth. In this context, Lebanon is portrayed as a loving place, providing tranquility, peace, and warmth to visitors or people seeking refuge. The eyelids, which protect and soothe the eyes, contain a deep meaning that Lebanon, as a symbol of nature, is a place that provides inner protection and all-round tranquility.

Overall, this poem shows how people have found peace, tranquility, and serenity in Lebanon. Lebanon's beautiful conditions have resulted in many people traveling to Lebanon. The country, which has an area of about 10,452 square kilometers, is dominated by mountains and dense forests (Khalil, 1989). Although Lebanon is located in the Middle East region, the fact is that Lebanon does not have a desert. Khater (2012) in *Terrestrial Biodiversity in Lebanon* explains that Lebanon's forests cover about 137,000 hectares (13% of the land), with "Other Wooded Land" (OWL) covering around 106,000 hectares (10%). Broadleaf trees (mainly oak) make up 57% of the forest, while conifers (mainly pine) account for 31%. More than half of the forests are privately owned, including by religious communities, rather than by the state. Lebanon's forests include pine, oak, and cypress species, with the Lebanese fir (*Cedrus libani*) as the national tree and a key symbol. This tall tree with a straight trunk grows in the high mountain regions. Lebanon's forests are vital

for the environment and economy, providing habitats for wildlife, preventing soil erosion and floods, and supporting local livelihoods.

وَتَسَلَّقْتُمْ عَلَى أَشْجَارِهِ # وَسَرَحْتُمْ فِي بَرَاريهِ وَغُولًا

You climb its trees and wander through its valleys like wild sheep.

This stanza describes the poet's love for Lebanon by writing about the freedom and happiness of the people in Lebanon. Lebanon is a place rich in natural beauty, with dense forests and wide valleys, people can enjoy the freedom to climb trees and roam the valleys. The denotation /*tasallaqtum*/ is the act of using hands and feet to move from the ground to the top of the tree. In the context of this stanza, it is abstracted as people's efforts to find freedom in adventuring in Lebanon, the poet describes people climbing trees as a form of freedom to explore the nature of Lebanon. This creates an image of people who are happy to explore the nature of Lebanon.

Denotation /*sarahrtum*/ means the act of moving around without a definite destination. In the context of this poem, wandering is defined as the act of seeking peace and freedom. This is evidenced by the word valley, valley is a symbol of tranquility, peace, freedom, and spaciousness. This refers to the nature of the valley which is quiet, secluded, beautiful, and far from the hustle and bustle of city life. The vast condition of the valley surrounded by hills can give the impression of unlimited space and freedom of expression, meaning that everyone who comes to Lebanon is free to enjoy the natural beauty it presents. These people are likened to wild sheep that are free to roam in the wild.

In this stanza, the poet conveys for the umpteenth time the charm of Lebanon. It is known that one of the beauties of Lebanon compared to other Middle Eastern countries in general is that the slopes of Lebanon's mountains are mostly covered by heavy rains while at their peak they are covered with snow from December to June (Habib Geo, 2013).

وَشَرِبْتُمْ مِنْ خَوَائِبِهِ نَبِيذًا # وَسَمِعْتُمْ مِنْ شَوَائِبِهِ هَدِيلاً

You drink wine from the jug and hear the sound of the singer's voice

The denotation in the nature of stanza 5 is "*You drink wine from the jug and hear the roar of the singer*". This stanza depicts the fertility and prosperity of Lebanon compared to the rest of the Middle East and describes the culture of Lebanon. Denotation /*syaribtum nabīẓan*/ is an activity that is often associated with enjoyment, parties, and celebrations. In this stanza, drinking wine symbolizes togetherness and joy, reflecting the warm and welcoming atmosphere of Lebanon. The use of wine also highlights Lebanon's status as a notable wine producer. Thanks to its fertile soil, Lebanon exports various fruits such as oranges, apples, lemons, and grapes, with grapes being one of its main export commodities (Sahidin, 2014). Lebanese wine has a long history and strong reputation, recognized both locally and internationally for its quality and rich flavors. Renowned wineries like Château Musar, Château Ksara, IXSIR, and Château Heritage consistently gain global acclaim. Through this, the poet highlights Lebanon's status as one of the world's top wine producers.

وَاقْتَنَيْتُمْ شَمْسَهُ لُؤْلُؤَةً # وَرَكَبْتُمْ أَنْجُمَ اللَّيْلِ خَيُْولًا

You get the sun as a Pearl, you ride the Stars of the night as horses

This stanza illustrates that Lebanon is a place that is expected to provide beauty and splendor for the people who are in it. Denotation /*syams*/ means a celestial body that is the source of light and heat for the earth. The sun is often associated with compassion because the sun never chooses who to shine on. In the context of this poem, the sun is interpreted as giving love without favoritism, meaning that Lebanon will give all its charms to everyone in it. Lebanon's charm can offer a diverse and memorable experience to its visitors, which is considered something rare and precious, a preciousness associated with the word *pearl*.

Denotation /*rakiba*/, in this stanza is the verb to ride which means the act of sitting on something to control it, while the object is /*anjum al-lail*/ or stars, stars mean has a Long History and reputation. Lebanese wine has not only become a well-known product in the local market, but has also gained a place in the international market as a high-quality wine with rich flavors and a deep history. There are many renowned wineries that have gone abroad, some of the leading wineries such as Château Musar, Château Ksara, IXSIR Winery, and Château Heritage. And among them are consistently gaining international recognition. In this case, the poet wants to show that Lebanon is among the best wine producers in the world.

This passage highlights the freedom and openness experienced in Lebanon, symbolized by the sun and stars that shine on everyone equally. Although the poet is not Lebanese but Syrian, he praises Lebanon's charm above his own country, showing its special place in his eyes. Visitors to Beirut, Lebanon's capital, encounter a unique vibrant city known for its lively nightlife, diverse culture, and social scenes—unlike many other Middle Eastern cities. Popular areas like Hamra Street and Gemmayzeh are hubs of entertainment with cafes, restaurants, and nightclubs. However, the Lebanese Civil War starting in 1975 drastically changed this atmosphere, damaging infrastructure and causing many venues to close or be destroyed.

إِنَّهُ عَلَّمَكُمْ أَنْ تَعُشَّقُوا # لَمْ يَكُنْ لُبْنَانُ فِي الْعِشْقِ بَخِيلًا

Indeed Lebanon has taught you to love, Lebanon is not stingy in Love

After writing about the images of Lebanon, the poet writes about Lebanon's services to the people around him, in this stanza the poet wants to convey that Lebanon is a teacher who teaches the true meaning of love. Denotation /*ta'syaqū*/ means feeling affection for someone. In the context of this poem, love can be interpreted as patriotism and love for the country. The meaning is that Lebanon always gives affection to people who are in it, Lebanon has given everything to people who visit it without expecting anything in return. In this stanza the poet wants to express that Lebanon is a generous and loving country, Lebanon will not disappoint anyone even though at the time the poem was written many ignorant people were damaging Lebanon, this is reinforced by the sentence *Lebanon is not stingy in love, therefore* Lebanon hopes that its love will be reciprocated with sincere love and manifested in the form of patriotism and love for the country.

أَهْ يَا عُشَّاقَ بَيْرُوتِ الْقَدَامَى # هَلْ وَجَدْتُمْ بَعْدَ بَيْرُوتِ الْبَدِيلَا؟

Oh, old Beirut lovers, did you find a replacement for Beirut afterwards?

This stanza reflects the poet's deep love for Lebanon, particularly for Beirut, suggesting that nothing can replace it. The word /*al-quḍāmā*/ denotes a past time or former state. In this poem, it carries a connotative meaning of nostalgic longing from those who once loved Beirut and remember its former glory. This is emphasized by the following line,

“Did you find a substitute for Beirut afterwards?”—a rhetorical question posed to Beirut’s past admirers, asking whether any other city has filled its place. The word */al-badil/* (substitute) denotes something that replaces another, but here it conveys emotional depth: Beirut’s loss is irreplaceable, and no other city holds the same place in the hearts of those who cherish it.

Overall, this poem expresses the poet’s longing for the Beirut of old. The formation of a question whether you can find a replacement for Beirut shows the difficulty of finding a city like Beirut, before the war, Beirut was the financial and cultural center of the Middle East, the architecture of Beirut is famous for its high historical value, has ethnic and religious diversity, and has a lively nightlife. However, when the civil war broke out, it destroyed the urban structure, both buildings and nature. Mortar shells and long gunfire pulverized the corners of the buildings and punctured the walls, causing the buildings to lose their original prestige (Humphreys, 2015).

This stanza can be understood as a form of longing for the past that is considered more beautiful, this stanza also reflects the feeling of loss or change in the city of Beirut. In addition, history records that Beirut has long been known as the “Door” of East and West. This is because the city is located at the crossroads between two continents, Asia and Europe. Beirut is also an important center of trade and culture in the Middle East region. In the late 19th century, Beirut underwent a significant transformation. The traditional markets centered on the old city were abandoned, replaced by new European-inspired markets. These new markets offered imported manufactured and luxury goods, as well as modern amenities such as hotels. Overall, the development of new markets and modern hotels in Beirut reflected the social and economic changes taking place in the city at the end of the 19th century. These changes showed that Beirut was increasingly becoming a modern and cosmopolitan city (Traboulsi, 2012).

إِنْ يَمُتْ لُبْنَانُ مِثْمَ مَعَهُ # كُلُّ مَنْ يَقْتُلُهُ إِنَّ الْقَتِيلَا

If Lebanon dies, you will die with him Everyone who kills him is killed.

In this stanza the poet wants to convey that Lebanon’s death is your death too, and anyone who tries to destroy Lebanon is destroying himself, this shows the greatness of Lebanon as a country. The denotation */yamut/* means the end of life, where a living being no longer shows signs of life. In the context of this stanza, *death* has the connotation of total destruction such as the loss of sovereignty, the loss of Lebanon’s cultural identity. Or it can simply be a setback such as the weakening of the country’s power, influence and stability. At the same time, it can be interpreted as a change in a negative direction such as the loss of a sense of identity, the loss of a sense of nationhood or security associated with the state. Denotation */yaqtulu/* means the act of taking the life of a living being. In this context, *killing* has the connotation of any action that has the potential to destroy Lebanon, meaning that anyone who destroys Lebanon is destroying himself, indicating that whoever kills must be responsible for his actions.

Overall, this stanza is an expression of the poet’s hope and love for Lebanon by writing about the importance of peace, loyalty, and unity towards Lebanon. Given that this poem was written during a time of civil war, the poet realizes that the connection between Lebanon and its people is important. If Lebanon suffers setbacks or destruction, then its people will feel it too. Everyone who contributes to the destruction

Lebanon is the same as them destroying their home. The denotation (*everyone who wants to kill Lebanon will die*) gives rise to connotation meaning as a warning of the responsibility of guarding and protecting the country, patriotism, courage and a sense of

love and passion for protecting the homeland in defense of Lebanon is very important even at the risk of one's own life.

كُلُّ قُبْحٍ فِيهِ قُبْحٌ فِيكُمْ # فَأَعْبُدُوهُ كَمَا كَانَ جَمِيلًا

Every ugliness in Lebanon is your ugliness too, so restore Lebanon to its former beauty.

In this stanza, the poet wants to convey that the state of a country depends on the condition of the people in it. The denotation of /qubḥ/ refers to a bad or ugly situation; this word indicates a condition that does not align with values considered good by society. In the context of this poem, /qubḥ/ carries strong negative connotations, such as chaos in the form of suffering, civil war, or political instability. When examining the ugliness, a country endures, the interpretations can vary, including the presence of injustice, disorder, poverty, and everything considered undesirable according to social norms.

Overall, this stanza explains the poet's hope for the realization of solidarity unity, because every ugliness in Lebanon both physically and morally will affect everyone, so everyone must work together to restore, repair and restore the beauty that has been damaged. If there is ugliness or damage in a place or situation, then the poet invites to turn it back into something beautiful and good as it was in the beginning. This can be interpreted as a call to attempt to repair the damage or ugliness and restore the situation to a better state than before. Fundamentally, the Lebanese Civil War had very complex causes, involving not only internal communities but also external actors. The issues surrounding this war were highly intricate, with many parties involved. However, it can be concluded that there were three main factors that triggered the civil war: the issue of power-sharing, socio-economic inequality between groups, and the influx of Palestinian refugees as a result of the Arab-Israeli war (Dipoyodo, 1977).

كُلُّ مَا يَطْلُبُهُ لِبْنَانُ مِنْكُمْ # أَنْ تُحِبُّوهُ ... تُحِبُّوهُ قَلِيلًا

All Lebanon asks of you is to love her, to love her simply

The poet in this stanza conveys a message from Lebanon itself, to give love and care to Lebanon, how important Love is to Lebanon, Lebanon does not need a lot of Love what it needs is just to love it sincerely. Denotation /tuḥibbū/ means a deep and sincere feeling of affection, this word refers to a strong feeling towards someone or something that makes one care and want to protect it. /Tuḥibbū/ or love in its connotation has various forms such as, affection whose writing aims to foster feelings of affection and care for Lebanon. Secondly, support, giving love also means giving physical and moral support to Lebanon. Third, care or concern and sympathy for Lebanon.

Overall, this stanza contains a simple yet profound message. Lebanon, through this stanza, asks people to love her wholeheartedly, even if it may only be with a little love. This can be interpreted as a call to give attention and affection to Lebanon, despite the challenges or difficulties it may face. This stanza reflects the need for support and solidarity in maintaining and building the country.

Myth and Ideology in the Poetics

Analyzing myth in a poem involves sensitivity to the language and imagination of the poet, as well as an understanding of its cultural and historical context. Barthes identified the concept of "naturalization," where language can be used to make something seem natural

or inevitable. Language is used to construct myths that support a particular ideology or social norm. The result of the second level of signification produces a sign, the sign produced by the connotation is usually interpreted by Barthes as a myth (the *type of language sound in which the message exists*) in summary, sign one is the linguistic stage and sign 2 is the mythological stage (Farisi, 2023). Thus, the myth is in the second level of meaning system, looking at the meaning analysis that has been carried out by researchers including denotation and connotation, the myth in the poem *Ilā Bairūt al-Unṣa ma'a al- l'tizār* is that the importance of nationalism, patriotism, the spirit of unity and unity and a sense of responsibility so that a country does not fall into decline. In this poem, the poet wants to send a message to have deep and sincere feelings towards Lebanon, after all, Lebanon has given many positive things to its inhabitants and the Arabs. Lebanon is a beautiful and culturally rich country, but it is also struggling. With the love and care of its people, Lebanon can rise again and become better. This poem is an important piece of advice for everyone, especially for the Lebanese people. We should all love and care for our country, because our country is our home and where we live.

No matter what the conditions of a conflicted country are, there is nothing but destruction and suffering, everything that is seen as beautiful will disappear in an instant. In this Lebanese civil war, for 15 years Lebanon has gained nothing but moral and material losses. Every nation in the world wants its country to remain stable and peaceful. The civil war that has occurred only leaves lessons for all nations in the world, the destruction of a nation begins with the absence of unity and unity. A great nation is a nation that can draw from its past history and the history of other nations.

CONCLUSION

This research discusses the three main points of Roland Barthes' semiotics, which include the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth in the poem *Ilā Bairūt al- Unṣa ma'a al-l'tizār* by Nizār Qabbānī. From the results of the discussion, a form of representation of love and hope emerges. In the denotation meaning, the poet presents a description of the condition of Lebanon, in this poem the poet uses many rhetorical questions to create in the reader an image of Lebanon, besides that the author also describes Lebanon with something that exists or is inherent in the Lebanese state, such as forests, wine, valleys, and the services that Lebanon has provided. In general, the connotation meaning found is that such a depiction of Lebanon is a form of love and hope for Lebanon. the mythical meaning found is the importance of nationalism, nationalism, patriotism, the spirit of unity and integrity and a sense of responsibility so that a country does not fall into decline. In this poem, the poet wants to send a message to have deep and sincere feelings towards Lebanon.

Overall, the poem shows the poet's love and hope for Lebanon. The poet wants to show his love for Lebanon and hopes that the country can rise again and achieve a better future. Lebanon is a country with various charms in it that attracts people from the Arab Region to visit it, Lebanon has given everything it has but at the time this poem was written many irresponsible people caused damage and chaos in Lebanon. in outline, this poem illustrates how much the poet loves Lebanon, the poet wants to make people realize the importance of loving Lebanon with the poem.

In this study, there are several limitations that can affect the research results, both directly and indirectly. First, researchers who are still beginners cannot be one hundred percent objective about research data. Nevertheless, the researcher tried his best to avoid subjectivity in analyzing the existing data. Second, each person has a different understanding in interpreting a poem, according to their respective interpretations. Therefore, the interpretation of the poems in this study may differ from other people's interpretations, which may affect the understanding of the poems. As a suggestion for future

research, a combination of semiotic and sociological literary analysis can be done to more deeply understand the social, cultural, and political context behind the literary work.

REFERENCES

- Aart, V. Z. (1993). *Semiotika: Tentang Tanda, Cara Kerjanya, dan Apa yang Kita Lakukan Dengannya*. Yayasan Sumber Agung.
- Abu, A. K. (1989). *Lebanon country study* (T. Collelo (ed.); 3rd ed.). United States Government as represented by the Secretary of the Army.
- Ade, H., and Puspitasari, N. A. (2017). *Kajian Puisi*. FKIP UHAMKA.
- Aimi, R. (2023). *Al-Maksah Fi Qashidah 'Anufu Hubbi 'Isytuhu Li Nizar Qabbani (Dirāsah Simiyaiyah)* [UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh]. <https://repository.ar-raniry.ac.id/id/eprint/25553>
- Alex Sobur. (2006). *Semiotika Komunikasi, Analisis Teks Media Suatu Pengantar Untuk Analisa Wacana, dan Analisis Framing*. PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Ambarini, N. M. U. (2010). *Semiotika Teori dan Aplikasi Pada Karya Sastra*. UPGRIS PRESS.
- Arisza, Y. N. & Kasnadi, H. H. (2021). Gaya Bahasa Retoris Dalam Kumpulan Cerpen Metafora Padma Karya Bernard Batubara. *Jurnal LEKSIS*, 01, 78.
- Barthes, R. (1968). *Elements of semiology*. Hill and Wang.
- Barthes, R. (1974). *S/Z*. Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Carla, K. R. E.-H. (2012). *Terrestrial Biodiversity In Lebanon*. National Centre for Remote Sensing, National Council for Scientific Research.
- Dipoyodo, K. (1977). *Timur Tengah Dalam Pergolakan*. Yayasan Proklamasi Centre for Strategic and Internasional Studies.
- Ensiklopedia Dunia: Lebanon*. (n.d.). Universitas STEKOM. <https://p2k.stekom.ac.id/ensiklopedia/Lebanon>
- Farisi, R. A. and M. Z. Al. (2023). Konsep Makna Mau'izah dalam Al-Qur'an: Implementasi Teori Semiotika Roland Barthes Terhadap Qs. An-Nahl Ayat 125. *Rayah Al-Islam*, 7(2), 690.
- Faruk. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Sastra Sebuah Penjelajahan Awal*. Pustaka Pelajar.
- Habib, G. (2013). *Geografi Regional Lebanon*. <https://habib-geo.blogspot.com/2013/03/geografi-regional-libanon.html?m=1>
- Hafidz, M. A. (2018). *Pemikiran Roland Barthes Tentang Mitos Studi Kasus Sumpah Pati di Desa Kedondong Kec. Tulangan Kab. Sidoarjo*. Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel.
- Humphreys, D. (2015). The Reconstruction of the Beirut Central District. *Spaces and Flows: an International Journal of Urban and Extraurban Studies*, 6(4), 2.
- Ibrahim, A. I. (1998). *al-Qamus al-jami' lil Muthalahat al-Fiqhiyah*. Dar ar-Rasul al-Akram.
- Ma'luf, L. (2000). *al-Munjid fil Lughah al-Arabiyah al-Mu'āshirah*. Dar al-Mashreq.
- Makawi, D. (2020). *Nansi 'Ajram Taṭrihu Aghniyah Ila beirut al-Untsa ma'a al-I'tidzār li Nizar Qabbani*. Al-Yaum "s-Sābi." <https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/10/8/-نانسي-عجرم-تطرح-أغنية-إلى-بيروت-الأثنى-مع-الاعتذار-لنزار/٥٠١٧٠٤>
- Manzur, I. (2008). *Lisan al-Arab*. Dar al-Fikr.
- Maulana, I. A. (2021). Representasi Semiotika Roland Barthes Dalam Syair "Ahinnu Ila Khubzi Ummi" Karya Mahmoud Darwish. *An-Nahdah Al-'Arabiyah*, 1(2), 70-84. <https://doi.org/10.22373/nahdah.v1i2.1232>
- Musthafa, I., Najar, M. A., & Ziyat, A. H. (1989). *al-Mu'jam al-Wasith*. Dar al-Da'wah.

- Musyifiqur, R. (2021). *Tanah Yang Terjajah (Puisi-Puisi Politik Nizar Qabbani)*. Diva Press.
- Nur, F. (2017). *Sajak Cinta dan Perjuangan dari Tanah Suriah*. Medium. <https://medium.com/@mfaisalni/sajak-cinta-dan-perjuangan-dari-tanah-suriah-294e9e06a95e>
- Nyoman, K. R. (2007). *Sastra dan Kultural Studies* (2nd ed.). Pustaka Pelajar.
- Okke, Z. (2008). *Semiotika Dan Penerapannya dalam Karya Sastra*. Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional.
- Rohmah, L. (2020). Pengandaian Tokoh “Aku” dalam Puisi Lau Annanaa Lam Naftariq Karya Faruq Juwaidah (Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes) / Supposition of “I” Figures in the Poetry “Lau Annanaa Lam Naftariq” by Faruq Juwaidah (Semiotic Analysis of Roland Barthes). *Diwan: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab*, 6(2), 182. <https://doi.org/10.24252/diwan.v6i2.14440>
- Qabbani, N. (2008). *Ilā Bairūt al-Unsa ma’a al-Hubb*. Mansyurat Nizar Qabbani.
- Sahidin, R. (2014). *Peran Hizbullah Dalam Pemerintahan Di Lebanon (1992-1997)*. Universitas Syarif Hidayatullah.
- Swasono, R. B. (2010). *Pengaruh Konflik Internal Tahun 1975-1990 Terhadap Sistem konfensionalisme Dalam pemerintahan lebanon*. Universitas Indonesia.
- Teeuw, A. (1988). *Sastra dan Ilmu Sastra: Pengantar Teori Sastra*. Pustaka Jaya.
- Traboulsi, F. (2012). *A History of Modern Lebanon* (2 (Ed.)). Pluto Press.