



Semiotic Analysis of 'Kun Fa Yakoon' Song Using Riffaterre's Theory

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Abstract: This article tried to find out the hidden meaning in the song *Kun Fa Yakoon*, written by Mohammad bin Dhahi, one of the most popular songs in the Muslim world during the pandemic Covid-19, not only due to the imitation of one of the current most popular Western songs, Memories by Maroon, but the acapella is also interesting due to the overwhelming symbols within the lyrics. Thus, new meanings need to produce to comprehend the song and its cultural context. This article aimed to deepen the comprehension of the song's message to result in an increased appreciation for art and a better understanding of the circumstances during the difficult times of the pandemic. The type of research conducted is qualitative research. In analysis, researchers used Riffaterre's Semiotics theory by identifying the Semiotic elements of the song, such as the use of metaphors and repetitions, then conducting heuristic reading and interpretation, and producing meaning through hermeneutic reading. The research findings indicate the discovery of meaning shifts in the form of metaphors and the creation of meaning through repetitions. In the heuristic analysis, ungrammatical elements like "من" (who) interrogative in conjunction with "لا" (except) yield a new meaning that signifies a firm statement: "I bear witness." The global situation currently being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic also generates the meaning of earnestness in prayer and the high demand placed upon it. This represents the songwriter's response to the anxiety prevailing in society and signifies an increase in faith.

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Introduction

What do you imagine when you hear the phrase *Kun Fa Yakoon*? It is so familiar to the ears, especially for Muslims who routinely recite Surah Yasin as part of their religious rituals. But during the Covid-19 pandemic, the phrase *Kun Fa Yakoon* has been increasingly popular since it became a title of a song written by Muhammad bin Doha, serving as an expression of hope that the devastating covid-19 epidemic that has taken so

many lives in the world will soon disappear from the earth. The presence of this song amid the right momentum then attracted the attention of so many people. On the YouTube channel where it was popularized, the video clip of this song has become one of the viral shows, drawing people's attention until it has been played 5,733,819 times since it was first released on May 27, 2021.

As part of literary work, the song is the expression of a variety of deep feelings. According to some viewers in the comments column, the song can bring the audience to drift away in feelings of sadness in prayer which appears "to compel God" to immediately reveal His omnipotence to eliminate the Covid-19 outbreak. A deeper message of a lyric poem, however, requires in-depth reading through critical work involving a set of theories. In this regard, it is necessary to explain the forms of the author's indirect expression in *Kun Fa Yakoon* song, i.g. through heuristic and hermeneutic readings by exploring the matrix of models, variants, and hypograms of the song, as offered by Riffaterre in his semiotic theory.

Although several studies view religious songs as cultural phenomena of society,¹ and that some parts of the lyrics are perceived to be able to bring altogether magical effects like a spell, a deeper message that the author wants to represent through a song needs to be explored. A study conducted by Rachel G. A. Thompson *et. al.* shows that songs have the potential as a method for rapidly sharing information (edutainment) about emerging public health crises.²³⁴⁵⁶ Some researchers analyzed different poetries (songs included) with the use of Riffaterre's theory,⁷ and they can serve as models for our research. As far as we concerned, the most recent research on the *Kun Fa Yakoon* song was conducted by Trimo Wati *et al.* Their research is searching for the meaning within

¹ Trimo Wati Trimo Wati and Dina Safira Ikmaliani, "Representasi Makna Denotasi dan Konotasi dalam Lirik Lagu Kun Fayakun (Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes)," *Alibaa': Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 3, no. 1 (2022): 73-102.

² Rachel G.A.Thompson, Jerry John Nuthor and Julene K. Johnson, "Communicating Awareness About Covid-19 Through Songs: An Example from Ghana," *Frontiers in Public Health* 8, (2021): 607830.

³ Mufti Nabil Rafsanjani and Bermawy Munthe, "Puisi Wuqufu Al-Ma'i Yufsiduhu Karya Al-Imam Al-Syafi'iy: Analisis Semiotik Riffaterre." *A Jamiy: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra Arab* 11, no. 1 (2022): 68-82.

⁴ Mukhotob Hamzah. "Perbandingan Konsep Linguistik Ferdinand de Saussure dan Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani: Kajian Konseptual," *Jurnal Baahasa dan Sastra* 9, no. 2 (2021): 139.

⁵ Fatimatuz Zahro. "Semiotika Michael Riffaterre dalam Puisi Fi 'Ainika Unwani Karya Faruq Juwaidah," *Tsaqofiya: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Arab* 4, no. 1 (2022): 75-93.

⁶ Mohammad Fawaid Al Fikry, Sunarti Mustamar and Christanto Pudjarahardjo, "Mantra Petapa Alas Purwo: Kajian Semiotika Riffaterre," *Semiotika: Jurnal Ilmu Sastra dan Linguistik* 20, no. 2 (2019): 108-119.

the song by exploring the connotative meanings in the lyrics of the song. Nevertheless, this research has only found meaning in the form of belief in disaster from Allah and a request for strength to deal with it. It is seen that this meaning has not reached the level of meaning production which is the implication of the language structures and words in the lyrics of *Kun Fa Yakoon* song. Here the use of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, in our opinion, is inadequate, as conducted by the previous researchers.

This study began with the assumption that *Kun Fa Yakoon* as a song lyric, together with other poems, consists of structures of signs in which some words may come with different meanings from their literal ones. Even the title *Kun Fa Yakoon* itself may carry a different meaning from its literal meaning which is originally God's expression in creating all beings. So, this article therefore aimed to analyze the song lyrics by using Riffaterre's semiotic theory which promises the ability to produce new meanings. It is in this respect we expect to contribute to the novelty in this field of study

Methods

This study qualitatively described the meaning contained in the lyrics of *Kun Fa Yakoon* song by using Michael Riffaterre's semiotic theory. The primary source was the song *Kun Fa Yakoon* within the YouTube channel which can be accessed at the address <https://youtu.be/VQSUCfRoZPM>. The song is one of the most viral Arabic songs following the widespread Covid-19 pandemic. The song represents the feelings of a huge group of Muslims throughout the world regarding the pandemic. The uniqueness of this song is due to the rhythm which duplicates the song entitled *Memories* sung by Maroon, one of the most popular Western singers, but without a musical instrument (acapella). The indirectness of meaning which is represented in the language structure and the wordings of *Kun Fa Yakoon* has triggered this research. Since the content as a whole is a prayer or invocation, conducting a study may mean a study on invocations in the form of a song in a broader context.

Secondary sources consisted of references that support the research, including studies with a similar theme, with the same object or using a similar theory and/or approach. Many studies with the same theme or object were used to figure out to what extent the research that has been carried out, to determine academic gaps in related

⁷ Desthia Amalia, "A Semiotic Analysis of Shakespeare's "O Mistress Mine" Using Riffaterre's Semiotic Theory," *Journal of Language and Literature* 8, no. 1 (2020): 15-29.

fields. Meanwhile, researchers that use the same theory on different objects served as models in conducting our research. Through reading techniques with a semiotic approach, this research is expected to provide a broader perspective, especially those related to the object of the research. In addition, note-taking techniques are also used through paraphrasing, synoptic, coding, and precision to record systematically which facilitate observation of the course of the research.

The data analysis technique used in this study was the Miles and Huberman's theory.⁸⁹ A model which could be summarized in the following four steps: data collection, data reduction, data exposure, and verification or conclusion. Data was collected by listening to the song and taking notes, as well as eliminating irrelevant data according to the theory. After verifying the data, it was to be exposed together with the analysis until we conclude. In analyzing a literary work, there are at least five kinds of semiotic theories:¹⁰ Charles Morris's theory of three semiotic aspects (pragmatics, semantics, and syntax), the theory of three semiotic levels (events, actions, and utterances) of Roland Barthes, the theory of three levels of Tzvetan Todorov (*inpraesantia*, *in absentia*, and verbal), Lotman's model theory and semiosphere and Michael Riffaterre's theory of meaning production.

In the beginning part of his book *Semiotics of Poetry*, Riffaterre argued that there are four aspects to consider in producing the meaning of a poem. They are indirect expression, heuristic and hermeneutic reading, matrix (including model and variant), and hypogram. Displacing, distorting, and creating meaning are indirect forms of poetic expression. Heuristic reading is done by reading the language structure of poetry normatively, morphologically, syntactically, and semantically at the first level.

At the second level, hermeneutic reading was carried out by reading the text back and forth until the meaning was founded of the entire literary text as a sign system. The matrix is hypothetical and only seen as the actualization of words in the structure of the text. The matrix could be abstracted in the form of one word, a combination of words, a part of a sentence or a simple sentence. The matrix becomes the motor or generator of a

⁸ Weny Weny, Ngajudin Nugroho, Dewi Anggraini, Sofian Sofian and Erwin Erwin, "Analisis Pelaksanaan Pelatihan dan Pendidikan pada PT. Bimasakti Mahawira Medan," *Seminar Nasional Teknologi Komputer & Sains (SAINTEKS)* 1, no. 1 (2019).

⁹ Nur Latifah and Asep Supena, "Analisis Attention Siswa Sekolah Dasar dalam Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh di Masa Pandemi Covid-19," *Jurnal Basicedu* 5, no. 3 (2021): 1175–1182.

¹⁰ Okke Kusuma Sumantri Zaimar, *Semiotika dalam Analisis Karya Sastra* (Depok: PT. Komodo Books, 2014).

text. Meanwhile, the model is in the form of words that often appear in a poetic text. The variant is a sentence that is formed from the model. Thus matrix becomes the theme; the model is the keyword; and the variant is the development of the keyword. A hypogram is an activity of searching for data and tracing traditions from previous works.¹¹¹²

Results and Discussion

Here are the tabel of indirectness of expression in the lyrics of the song *Kun Fa Yakoon*:

Table 1. Types of Indirect Expression in the Song 'Kun Fa Yakoon'

Types of Indirect Expression	Examples
<i>Displacing of Meaning</i>	The metaphorical use of البلاء (calamity) to represent being hit by a disaster and distress; The metaphorical use of رجاء (hope) to represent dependence on God and His ability to fulfil desires; The metaphorical use of لا تحرمي (do not deprive me) implies the fear of being excluded from God's love.
<i>Distorting of Meaning</i>	-
<i>Creating the Meaning</i>	Repetition of anaphora: The repetition of من لي غيرك ربي (I don't have anyone but You, my Lord) in multiple lines; Epizeuxis repetition: The repetition of لا (do not) in a row and the repetition of a complete sentence multiple times in line 9.

Table 1 showed that indirect expression may occur due to the shifting of meaning (displacing), destruction of meaning (distorting), and creation of meaning. Some forms of shifting meaning in the song *Kun Fa Yakoon* can be seen from the use of figurative language, either in the form of metaphor or metonymy. The use of this metaphor serves to figure out a clearer picture, evoke a certain impression and atmosphere, and intensify meaning through less diction.¹³ The shift in meaning in the form of a metaphor is clear in the 1st line of the lyrics: حينما حلَّ البلاء # جئتُ إليك ذليلاً أناجي (When the calamity

¹¹ Aning Ayu Kusumawati, "Analisis Semiotik Puisi Engkau Karya Muhammad Zuhri," *Widyaparwa* 49, no. 2 (2021): 442–453.

¹² Fitria Febrianti, Suntoko Suntoko and Wienike Dinar Pratiwi, "Ekranisasi Novel Assalamualaikum Calon Imam Karya Madani Ke Film Assalamualaikum Calon Imam Karya Findo Purnowo Hw," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* 5, no. 3 (2021): 9591–9599.

¹³ Arry Luh Ketut Prasthaningrum, Ni Putu Luhur Wedayanti, and Ni Luh Kade Yuliani Giri, "Metafora dalam Album Evergreen Motohiro Hata," *Jurnal Humanis, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Unud* 17, no. 8 (2016): 7-14.

stroke # I came to You humiliated, I pray). Through language conventions, it can be seen that the metaphor of the underlined word is personification, which is in Arabic rhetorical terms known as *isti'arah makniyah*, other refers to it as *isti'arah takhyiliyah*. The word البلاء in the sentence structure functions as the subject (actor) of the verb حلّ. The sentence means: "When the test has taken its place." The test is likened to a person or living being occupying a place. This sentence contains the meaning: "I was hit by a disaster, hit by sadness and distress." The purpose of using this personification is to give the impression that disaster has an active nature that can befall anyone.

The metaphor with the next idiomatic phrase is the word رجايا in the 4th line: من

رجايا معقود إليه رجايا # لي غيرك ربي (I don't have anyone but You, my Lord # to Him hang my hope). There is a similarity in the meaning of the phrase related to hope with the dependence of objects on other objects that are higher and stronger. The adrift of hope has a meaning that shifts from its original meaning. The linked connotation of hope means the realization of all desires which are the will of Him who is referred to as God, the Ruler of all things. The metaphor here serves to intensify meaning through scanty diction.

The next metaphor is found in لا تحرميني in the 7th line: لا تحرميني ربي # من

لا تحرميني ربي # من لطفك العميم (Don't, do not deprive me, Lord # of Your great kindness). The word لا

لا تحرميني (do not deprive me) has another meaning: to revoke. This stanza implies that he

begs his Lord not to prohibit, prevent, and revoke His kindness. The diction لا تحرميني

here implies gives the listeners a stronger impression of the author's extraordinary fear of his condition at that time as if God had excluded him from His love. Creating meaning can be found in the form of repetition. As al-Atrouz argues, repetition or *tikrar* (in Arabic rhetoric/Balagah) is a choice made by the author intentionally. Another opinion said¹⁴ that the use of repetition is to strengthen the meaning and ideas conveyed by the author

¹⁴ Umi Kulsum, "Repetisi Sebagai Penguat Ide dalam Produksi Bahasa R.A. Kartini, "Jurnal *Metalingua* 15, no.1 (2017): 103-115.

and to create beauty. Some types of repetition in the song Kun Fa Yakoon include anaphora repetition and epizeuxis repetition.

Anaphora repetition or repetition in the form of phrases is found in the 2nd line which is repeated in the 11th and 13th lines: *من لي غيرك ربي # يسمع مَنِّي شكواي* (I don't have anyone but You, my Lord # Who hears my complain). Another repetition is the word *من* which is combined altogether with different words, as found at the beginning of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th lines, also the word *لا* in the 5th and 7th lines. The same goes to the word *يا* in the 10th and 12th lines.

Next is epizeuxis or repetition of a word or a phrase several times in a row.¹⁵ This type of repetition is found at the beginning of the 7th line which repeats the word *لا* twice in a row. *Epizeuxis* repetition is also found in the following line 9 which is repeated 4 times. According to al-Humaidawi, repetition of sentences is not merely intended for phonetic or morphological purposes, but also for creating creative ideas. It seems that the author tried to come up with a new idea by repeating the complete sentence up to four times. The author wanted to emphasize the meaning of asking Allah to fulfill his wish to be healed of the disease caused by the Coronavirus that is currently sweeping the world after all healing efforts have been made. In so doing, the author asked as if he demanded the Lord to produce His miracle, as He has stated that the proof of His power in creating and changing everything is simply by saying: "Be!" (*kun*), then it will come true (*fa yakun*), as like magic. In this situation, the author asked Allah to say, "be"! to have mercy on him in regard to the fears of pandemic impacts.

Heuristic and Hermeneutic Reading are intended to catch discrepancies between words in the form of grammatical deviations.¹⁶¹⁷¹⁸ Heuristic reading of the *Kun Fa*

¹⁵ Bella Rizki Aprilia Aprilia, "Repetisi dalam Cuitan Twitter Ernest Prakasa Kajian: Analisis Wacana," *Wacana: Jurnal Bahasa, Seni, dan Pengajaran* 7, no. 1 (2023): 19–31.

¹⁶ Ni Kadek Dwipayanti, Ayu Kris Utari Dewi Alit Mandala and Putu Tiara Karunia Dewi, "Analisis Semiotika Riffaterre dalam Lagu Sakura Karya Naotaro Moriyama," *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Jepang Undiksha* 7, no. 2 (2021) 139–145.

¹⁷ Riskayanti Riskayanti, Juanda Juanda and Mahmudah Mahmudah, "Heuristik Dan Hermeneutik Puisi Joko Pinurbo," *Jurnal Ilmiah Fonema Edukasi Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia* 6, no. 1 (2023): 74–87.

Yakoon song resulted as follows: The First Part: (1) When disaster comes (hits me) (in the form of a disease caused by the coronavirus) # I, the weak and despicable, come to You (my Lord), to invoke (begging You); (2) (I testify that) there is no (more) but You, my Lord # who always hears my groaning (my complaints); (3) (I testify that) no one (again) will (be able to) grant (my) prayer # Except (He is Allah) who calls us to ask Him; (4) (I testify that) there is no (more) besides You, my Lord # (who) clings to Him all hope. The second part: (5) (I beg you) Don't punish me for (my) sins # (I pray to You) O Essence (the Most) Gracious, Most Glorious.

(6) Really I'm just (your) weak servant # (whose) Fate is not always lucky; (7) (I beg You) Don't, don't forbid (block) me, O my Lord # from (abundance of) Your extraordinary (overflowing) goodness; (8) My illness has exhausted me # (I pray to You) O my most merciful Lord; (9) (I beg You) Say to it (this illness we are suffering from: "*Kun Fa Yakoon*" 4x (get well). The third part: (10) (I pray to You) O (God) Who (has) abundant grace # I have no power to overcome it (this disease); (11) (I testify that) There is no (more) my Lord besides You # Who (will) always hear my moaning (my groaning); (12) (I pray to You) O medicine for (sad) hearts # You have created the antidote for all diseases; (13) (I testify that) There is no (more) my Lord besides You # Who will cure me (from my illness) O my Helper.

The question words *من* in lines 2, 3, 4, 11, and 13 are ungrammatical, due to discrepancy with the original purpose of asking. *من* which originally meant 'who?' changed its meaning to 'nothing', by the emergence of the word *إلا* (except). In the perspective of Arabic syntax, this structure is known as *istisna' manfi* (negative exception), in which the presence of *إلا* changes the function of the question word *من* (*istifhamiyah*) to *nafiah* (negation). The function of this style, according to Arabic Rhetoric is to provide restrictions (*hasr*). The beauty of this pattern [language style, red]

¹⁸ Luh De Liska, I. Nyoman Sadwika and I. Nyoman Astawan, "Analisis Makna Heuristik Dan Hermeneutik Teks Puisi Lumpur Panas Mengebiri Tanahku Karya I Gusti Putu Bawa Samar Gantang Sebagai Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila," *Pedalitra: Prosiding Pedagogi, Linguistik, dan Sastra* 2, no. 1 (2022): 78–84.

lies in the surprising effect it has on the restriction that accompanies the word **إِلا** after everything else has been removed.

In his book entitled *Dalil al-Balagah al-Quraniyah*, Al-Dabal stated that the style of language using the interrogative word **من** which is accompanied with **إِلا** contains the intention to explain (*bayan*) and to emphasize (*taqrir*). The word **من** in the verse above, therefore, does not come with the literal meaning: who? But changes to "no one (again) can intercede from Allah unless He allows it". This means: "Only He can intercede." It is very clear here and very firm that intercession is only given by Him and in His power. So here comes the meaning: "I testify that there is no more..."

Likewise, the use of prohibition sentences in the 5th and 7th lines semantically means prayer and supplication: **لا تعاملني بذنبي # يا جواد يا كريم** - (Don't punish me with my sin # O most Gracious and Noble), **لا لا تحرمي ربّي # من لطفك العميم** - (Do not, do not deprive me, my Lord # of Your great kindness). Al-Dabal revealed that the prohibited sentences in the verse: do not punish us, do not burden us, etc., contain the meaning of *tadarru'* (pleading), *iltimas* (supplication), and *du'a* (prayer). Therefore, the meaning becomes: "O Our Lord, we beg You, do not punish us if we forget or we are wrong. O our God, we beg You, do not burden us with a heavy burden as you burdened those before us. O Our Lord, we beg You, do not bear upon us what we cannot bear."

The use of interjections (*harf al-nida'*) in the 5th, 8th, 10th, and 12th lines by using the word **يا** ("o") in the song above is out of its original meaning: calling. Instead, it serves another function as an exclamation that expresses requests and prayers, known in Balagah as *al-istigasah*. Thus the 5th line comes with the meaning: "I pray and ask You, O Most Gracious, Most Noble One;" the 8th line has the meaning: "I pray and ask You, O my All-Merciful God;" the 10th line has the meaning: "I pray and ask You, O God who has abundant grace;" and the 12th line means: "I pray and ask You, O Healer of my heart."

Lexically, the title sentence *Kun Fa Yakoon* means "Be! Then (it) be." This sentence refers to verses of the Koran which here are positioned as hypotensive

hypogram. They are Surahs al-Baqarah (2) verse 117th, Ali Imran (3) verse 47th, al-An'am (6) verse 73rd, al-Nahl (16) verse 40th, Maryam (19) verse 35th, Yasin (36) verse 82nd, and Ġâfir (40) verse 68th. To mention some, The Almighty says in Surah al-Baqarah (2) verse 117th: بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ (the Originator of the heavens and the earth; and when He decides on a matter, He just says to it, 'Be!' and it is). The phrase *Kun Fa Yakoon* in the verses above implies the reason beyond the naming of the song with a similar title. The word *fa* in *fa yakoon* is a conjunction (عطف), which carries the meaning of *ta'qib*: if Allah wills something, it will happen without time lag. According to Al-Tabrasi *Kun Fa Yakoon* is a parable (*tamsil*), meaning an illustration that God is very easy in determining or creating something and the impossibility of something happening without His will. In essence, the commandment *kun* contains the meaning of magnification (*tafkhim*) and glorification (*ta'zim*) of Allah in creating.

Almost all of the song's sentences lead to this religious theme, including جئتُ من لي غيرك ربي ("There is no one but You my Lord") / إليك ذليلاً أناجي ("I who in this humiliation come to You") / يا جواد يا كريم ("O Substance, Most Gracious, Most Merciful Noble") / يا ربي الرحيم ("O my most merciful God") / ربي ("my God"). The first line of the first four-line section of the song presupposes a person being afflicted by a test. The test here uses the word *bala'* (البلاء) which means sorrow. Allah places the word *bala'* in the Qur'an six times which implies a test of one's faith,¹⁹ as clearly implied by Surah al-Baqarah (2) verse 155.

Hermeneutic Reading of the song *Kun Fa Yakoon*, namely in the first line of the song is a prologue of what the songwriter wants to convey. The author begins by complaining about his condition to Allah: his helplessness in facing the test that has been given by His Lord, while asking for help as the result of the presupposition at the end of

¹⁹ Abdul Hakim, "Makna Bencana Menurut Al-Qur'an; Kajian Fenomena Terhadap Bencana di Indonesia," *Jurnal Hermeneutik* 7, no. 2 (2013): 280–281.

the line “I, who is weak and despicable, come to You with grace.” The form of *bala'* (the test) is explained in another line which mentions the word *saqâm* (سقام) in the sentence:

“This disease of mine wears me out”. *Saqam* (سقام) literally means disease or sickness.

Another line also confirms that *bala'* is in the form of a disease, namely the statement: “O medicine of my heart, you have created an antidote for all diseases” through the use of the word medicine (شفاء), disease (داء), and cure (دواء).

The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th lines presuppose the testimony and determination that God is the only one who hears complaints, grants requests, and is a place to hang on to hopes. By referring to Allah as the All-Hearing Complaint (*al-Sami'*), the Most Granting Request (*al-Mujib*), and the Dependent (*al-Samad*) which are the beautiful names of Allah, the author had testified and shown his resolve in the opening of his prayer and invocation. The third part of Kun Fa Yakoon's song still contained requests and testimonies. He asked for the abundance of gifts from his Lord accompanied by a testimony that He is the Most Powerful, as a result of the presupposition of his statement of powerlessness in overcoming the illness he was suffering from. His testimony of Him, the only God Who All-Hears all of his complaints, is repeated at the end of this section.

Before closing, he once again asked his God, the Most Healer, by affirming his belief that Allah had created a cure for every disease. This sentence refers to the hadith of the Prophet narrated by Muslim from Jabir bin Abdullah that the Prophet said: لِكُلِّ دَاءٍ

دَوَاءٌ (Every disease has a cure). Here, the meaning can be found through the presupposition of the sentence that the author is asking for guidance to find a way of healing with the permission of his God. The sentence in the last stanza confirms this through his testimony that there is no other God who can heal and help him. He is the Great Helper.

The model of the song is found in the structure of the words قُلْ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ((I beg you) Tell him (this disease I'm suffering from) (:) kun Fa Yakoon 4x (get well, then this disease will heal soon)). The variant is in the form of prayers spread throughout all the song sentences. After it is confirmed that the song is a prayer asking for healing from

an illness, then the variants are: (1) فسقامي أتعبتني # يا ربّي الرحيم (*This disease has tired me*), (*I pray to You*) O my Most Merciful Lord), (2) لا حول لي كي أحال إليه (*I have no power to overcome it*), (3) من لي غيرك ربي # يشفيني يا مولاي (*(I testify that) No (one else) my God except You # Who will heal me (from my disease) O my Helper*)).

The hypogram of the sentence حلّ البلاء is Allah's saying in Surah Tâha verse 81st : كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَلَا تَطْغَوْا فِيهِ فَيَحِلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبِيَّ وَمَنْ يَحِلَّ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبِيَّ فَقَدْ هَوَى (*Eat of the good Things We have provided For your sustenance, but Commit no excess therein, Lest My Wrath should justly Descend on you: and those On whom descends My Wrath Do perish indeed !*)

The author borrowed the sentence فَيَحِلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبِيَّ to be transformed into the sentence حلّ البلاء to bring a different, deeper impression to the listeners of this song that how hard it feels when God has inflicted disaster or tribulation. The next hypogram is the use of the sentence من لي which was used by Ibn 'Arabi in his collection of poetry (*diwan*):

فإني وحيد العصر شهيم مقيد

غاية الفضل بشرع وتحقيق وذا

سألتُ اتجماعاً بين عيني وشاهدي

ومن لي بهذا الجمع من لي به من لي

Truly I am alone in this era, a gentleman bound
For the sake of legitimacy and actualization and this is a noble goal
I look for the meeting of my eyes and my vision
Then, who is mine through this combination, who is mine, therefore, who is mine.

It is not surprising that the series of *من لي* words that were once composed by Ibn 'Arabi became one of the centers of the lyrics of Kun Fa Yakoon's song. Ibn 'Arabi was a Sufistic poet who brought teachings about the existence of God's manifestation in nature. Here, the author wants to convey back to the present generation the teachings of eco-Sufism that were introduced by Ibn 'Arabi corresponds to the presence of Covid-19. The emergence of this pandemic, from this point of view, is due to human negligence in caring for the universe.

To some extent, the findings of this research as seen above, confirm the inquiries of Thompson *et al.*, that prayers which are expressed in songs serve as a method to stop the virus. According to their findings, more than half of the songs in Ghana expressed the idea that divine intervention is needed to curb the spread of the virus and to heal and protect people.²⁰ In parallel, this article confirmed Situmorang's finding that music can serve as an alternative healing medicine in the Covid-19 pandemic, through the research on the reception of the song "A Prayer for Nation".²¹ In particular, the findings also confirm that of Trimo Wati *et.al.*,²² who contributed to finding the connotative meaning contained in *Kun Fa Yakoon* song. Nevertheless, the new meaning revealed is limited to the wordings, not covering the comprehensive structure of the signs as this current tried to uncover. In addition, they failed to reveal the borrowed expression, which is regarded by Riffaterre as a source of inspiration for the author, since it is not their major intention according to the theory they used.

The findings of this research affirmed that any literary works can not be comprehended in the literal sense of the words within them, since it carries out a deeper meaning²³ as can be seen from the study. In the case of *Kun Fa Yakoon* song, the title itself does not imply God's words describing His omnipotence in creating everything at His will. Rather, it implies the author's demanding invocation for rescuing the world

²⁰ Rachel G.A. Thompson, Jerry John Nutor, and Julene K. Johnson, "Communicating Awareness About Covid-19 Through Songs: An Example from Ghana," *Frontiers in Public Health* 8, (2021): 607830.

²¹ Dominikus David Biondi Situmorang, "Music as a Healing Medicine in Covid-19 Pandemic," *Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling* 75, no. 3 (2021): 224–226.

²² Trimo Wati Trimo Wati and Dina Safira Ikmaliani, "Representasi Makna Denotasi dan Konotasi dalam Lirik Lagu Kun Fayakun (Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes)," *Alibbaa' Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 3, no.01 (2022): 607830.

from the pandemic as soon as Allah began to create all beings just by saying: “*Kun!*” [be!] *Fa Yakoon* [then it be].²⁴²⁵ Such produced meaning can be carried out by using Riffaterre's semiotic theory.²⁶²⁷ The implication of producing meanings from the song *Kun Fa Yakoon* with the use of Riffaterre's semiotics theory is that it can enhance our understanding and appreciation of the song as a literary work, in addition to the contribution to the broader study of semiotics and its application to the analysis of artistic works.

Conclusion

By the use of Michael Riffaterre's theory and after conducting a heuristic and hermeneutic reading, it is found that *Kun Fa Yakoon* song not only serves as an alternative healing medicine but also comprises a demanding invocation to stop immediately the pandemic, with the model word that appears in the title of *Kun Fa Yakoon*'s song. The variants are scattered in every line of the song's sentences, especially in the words: tired, helpless, heal me, which implies self-powerlessness and a immediately granted request. The hypogram is found in the words *حلّ، من لي*, and *كن فيكون*. It clearly appears that the author has a fairly strong Sufistic orientation. The existence of an intertextual relationship between this song and Ibn 'Arabi's poetry gives a hint about the author's Sufistic school. The finiteness of this research due to time limits and sources of data. For further studies, comparative research between the author's Sufistic orientation and Ibn 'Arabi's teaching through an intertextual approach may present a better understanding of the author's point of view about believers' invocation in regard to God's will. In so doing, the more intact works (poetry) of both the author and Ibn 'Arabi, together with their thoughts, need to be compared to draw comprehensive

²³ Sukirman Sukirman, "Karya Sastra Media Pendidikan Karakter Bagi Peserta Didik," *Jurnal Konsepsi* 10, no. 1 (2021): 17–27.

²⁴ Makhfud Syawaludin M. Anang Sholikhudin, "Bangunan Tasawwuf Falsafi Ibnu Arabi Terhadap Konsep Multikulturalisme," *Journal Multicultural of Islamic Education* 2, no. 1 (2018).

²⁵ Muhammad Syarif Hidayatullah, "Dakwah Melalui Novel *Kun Fayakun* Karya Andi Bombang (Analisis Semiotika Ferdinand De Saussure)," PhD Diss., UIN FAS Bengkulu, 2021.

²⁶ Ranti Maretina Huri, Yenni Hayati and Muhammad Ismail Nst, "Analisis Semiotika Riffaterre dalam Puisi Dongeng Marsinah Karya Sapardi Djoko Damono," *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra* 5, no. 1 (2017): 52–66.

²⁷ Ni Kadek Dwipayanti, Ayu Kris Utari Dewi Alit Mandala and Putu Tiara Karunia Dewi, "Analisis Semiotika Riffaterre dalam Lagu *Sakura* Karya Naotaro Moriyama," *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Jepang Undiksha* 7, no. 2 (2021) 139–145.

view. In a broader context, this in turn could reveal how the teachings of Ibn 'Arabi spread out worldwide in this era through a popular acapella song.

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Author Contributions Statement

MC contributed to collecting data and analyzing the data of this research, while LT played a very important role in language alignment and AA contributed to the development of the manuscript.

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