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Moral summons across traditions: Shared rhetorical function in Taufiq Ismail's and Abu Nuwas's poetry

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Abstract: *This article compares Taufiq Ismail's "Kita Adalah Pemilik Sah Republik Ini" and Abu Nuwas's "al-Amal al-Kadhūb" from the zuhd section of Dīwān Abī Nuwās. It asks whether the two poems share a rhetorical function even though they rest on different domains, namely the civic-political and the eschatological-religious. This descriptive qualitative study applies the American school of comparative literature, which does not require influence, combining hermeneutic reading and content analysis with the sociology of literature as a contextual framework. The findings identify four points of functional convergence. First, both poems take the form of a moral summons in the directive mood, delivered through direct address to "yā nafs" and "kita". Second, both mobilise a logic of deadline through "ḥattā matā" and the closure of alternatives. Third, both invalidate the legitimacy of the present by invoking a higher law that applies equally to all, namely death as a single ordinance and the equal sovereignty of citizens. Fourth, the critique in both is self-inclusive, so that moral authority derives from the poet's implication. The study concludes that the critical function of poetry can converge rhetorically across referential domains, and that such parallel reading positions Indonesian poetry as an equal interlocutor in world literature.*

Keywords: *comparative literature, zuhdiyyāt, moral summons, Taufiq Ismail, Abu Nuwas*

INTRODUCTION

The theme "Dynamics of Comparative Literature: Indonesian Literature as a Citizen of World Literature" contains a basic question about the terms of membership. On what grounds can Indonesian literature be called a citizen of world literature, and who decides that citizenship? In Indonesia, the reference books commonly used in comparative literature courses have not accommodated recent developments in the discipline, including the deconstruction and reconstruction of world literature, the dialogue between West and East that gave rise to the Chinese school, and studies of intermediality in the digital age (Nugraha, 2021, p. 170). This gap has direct consequences for the way Indonesian scholars position national works in relation to other traditions.

In David Damrosch's framework, a work becomes part of world literature through three characteristics, namely circulation, transformation, and transcendence. Kobis et al. show that Minahasan folktales can be read alongside Turkish and Vietnamese folktales, and conclude that transcendence depends not only on the breadth of circulation but also on a text's capacity to convey universal human experience through reinterpretation, translation, and cultural adaptation(Kobis et. all, 2025, p. 241). This finding matters because the circulation of Indonesian literature abroad remains limited. Rosliana observes that Indonesian literary works translated into Japanese are read mostly by a limited circle of Indonesia specialists in Japan and have

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not yet reached the general reading public. Consequently, the citizenship of Indonesian literature in world literature cannot be measured solely by the number of translations. An equally important measure is the capacity of Indonesian works to be read in equal dialogue with other major traditions (Rosliana, 2024, p. 44).

The relationship between Indonesian and Arabic literature is one arena of such dialogue. Historically, classical Malay-Indonesian literature received the influence of Arabic literature, as seen in the Sufi poetry of Hamzah Fansuri (Yasin et al., 2024, p. 28-31). Today the relationship continues through online media. The platform Sastraarab.com, for example, brings Arabic literary discourse into Indonesia's multiethnic society and at the same time influences Indonesian literature through translation and intellectual development (Arwan & Fatoni, 2025, p. 160). Both accounts frame the Arabic and Indonesian relationship within a paradigm of influence and reception, with Arabic literature as the source and Indonesian literature as the recipient. This paradigm is historically valid, yet if it becomes the only framework, it risks perpetuating the position of Indonesian literature as a perpetual debtor rather than an equal partner.

Several studies have attempted parallel comparisons between Indonesian and foreign works. Abbas compared notions of womanhood in the novels of Willa Cather and Hamka (Abbas et al., 2024, p. 49). Within the Arabic and Indonesian field, Fajri compared the very poem examined here, "Kita Adalah Pemilik Sah Republik Ini", with Nizar Qabbani's "at-Ta'syīrah" through Saussurean semiotics and identified nationalism as their shared theme(Fajri, 2022, p. 271). Nuzula and Tasnimah compared Ahmad Matar's "Waṭan Khāʾin" with Taufiq Ismail's "Malu [Aku] Jadi Orang Indonesia" through a Marxist lens and found an ideology of resistance against authoritarian rulers in both (Nuzula, Firdausi; Tasnimah, 2025, p. 56). Basyayif and Tasnimah compared the meaning of love in the poetry of Nizar Qabbani and Chairil Anwar through Riffaterre's semiotics (Basyayif & Tasnimah, 2025, p. 52-54) .

These studies display two tendencies. First, the Arabic counterparts chosen are generally modern poets who share a historical context with the Indonesian poets, so that thematic similarity can be explained by shared modern political experience. Second, comparison is conducted at the level of theme or ideology, that is, what the poem says, and has not yet reached the level of rhetorical function, that is, what the poem does to its readers. The present study addresses this gap by comparing Taufiq Ismail's 1966 poem with a zuhd poem by Abu Nuwas from the Abbasid period, two texts separated by roughly twelve centuries and grounded in different referential domains. This distance is deliberate. If similarity is still found between two texts that share neither period, language, nor referential domain, it cannot be explained by influence or shared context, and is more accurately explained as functional convergence.

On this basis, the study poses two questions. First, is there a shared rhetorical function between "Kita Adalah Pemilik Sah Republik Ini" ["We Are the Rightful Owners of This Republic"] and "al-Amal al-Kadhūb" ["The Deceitful Hope"], even though the former rests on the civic-political domain and the latter on the eschatological-religious domain? Second, through which linguistic devices is such a similarity formed? The novelty of the study lies in two respects: the shift of the unit of comparison from theme

to rhetorical function, and the positioning of modern Indonesian poetry as an equal interlocutor of the classical Arabic canon rather than as a recipient of its influence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The American School of Comparative Literature and the Parallelism Approach

Comparative literature is commonly divided into the French school, which requires evidence of factual relations between works, and the American school, which permits comparison of works that have no historical relationship. The American school rests on the theory of parallelism, namely the comparison of themes, linguistic devices, and images in authors whose social, historical, traditional, and linguistic backgrounds differ (Abuhammam et al., 2024, p. 356). Within this framework, similarity is not treated as a trace of borrowing but as an indication of human tendencies operating independently in different traditions. Difference, in turn, is not treated as a failure of comparison, because it shows how each tradition works through the same tendency.

The Zuhdiyyāt of Abu Nuwas and the Tradition of Repentance

Abu Nuwas (d. c. 198 AH/814 CE) is known chiefly for his khamriyyāt, yet his dīwān also contains a zuhd section of poems reflecting on sin, death, and repentance. Abbasid poetry was no longer bound to the patterns of praise and tribal pride, and became a vehicle for social criticism, spiritual reflection, and personal expression (Fitriyani et al., 2025, p. 486). Salsabila stress that the works of Abu Nuwas and his contemporaries were not merely aesthetic creations but also vehicles for conveying social critique and spiritual messages. At the conceptual level, the zuhdiyyāt rest on the notion of tawbah.(Salsabila et al., 2025, p. 1630-1631) Khalil explains that in Islam tawbah is the principal mechanism of atonement, meaning a return to God, and that the possibility of atonement remains available until death. This final boundary, as the discussion will show, is the source of the logic of deadline in zuhd poetry. (Khalil, 2023, p. 2)

The Protest Poetry of 1966 and the Pronoun "Kita"

Taufiq Ismail's poems in the collection Tirani emerged from the student demonstrations of 1966. Sayfullah and Bashori show that during the Guided Democracy period, poets from different ideological camps, including Taufiq Ismail, used poetry as a means of social criticism and, at the same time, as historical documents. Linguistically, first-person plural pronouns play a strategic role in public discourse (Sayfullah & Bashori, 2025, p. 1598). Romadlani shows that inclusive "we" is used to build a sense of unity, togetherness in facing challenges, and shared responsibility. Indonesian has a grammatical peculiarity in this respect, because it distinguishes "kita" (inclusive, embracing the addressee) from "kami" (exclusive). The choice of "kita" in Taufiq Ismail's title is therefore a meaningful choice, not an accident (Romadlani, 2024, p. 257-258).

Moral Summons as a Category of Rhetorical Function

This study uses the term moral summons for a poetic utterance that simultaneously fulfils four conditions. The first condition is the presence of a party addressed directly (the addressee). The second is the presence of directive modality,

namely command, prohibition, obligation, or a rhetorical question that demands a change of attitude. The third is the presence of a normative ground used to evaluate a state of affairs. The fourth is the positioning of the speaker in relation to the addressee. These four conditions are formulated as the operational definition of the study and translated into four analytical categories, namely address and mood, temporality, normative ground, and speaker position.

METHOD

This is a descriptive qualitative study employing the comparative method of the American school. The parallelism approach was chosen because there is no historical relationship that could demonstrate direct influence between the two texts. Ababneh applied a similar approach to Arabic Andalusian and Spanish poetry on the experience of ageing, treating shared imagery as the common thread without presupposing influence (Ababneh, 2024, p. 846). In the same vein, Abuhammam (Abuhammam & Ibrahim, 2024, p. 356) combined parallelism theory with textual analysis of metaphor, symbol, and structure. The present study follows this combination but concentrates textual analysis on rhetorical devices.

The primary data consist of two texts. The first is Taufiq Ismail's "Kita Adalah Pemilik Sah Republik Ini", dated 1966 and included in the collection Tirani dan Benteng (Ismail, 1993). The second is Abu Nuwas's "al-Amal al-Kadhūb" in the *zuhd* section of *Dīwān Abī Nuwās* (Abu Nuwas, n.d., p. 100). The poem consists of nine lines rhyming in *bāʾ*. A preliminary scansion indicates that its pattern corresponds to baḥr majzūʾ al-kāmil, that is, two feet of mutafāʿilun in each hemistich with the variations iḍmār and tadhyīl at the line ends. This metrical identification is treated as provisional and needs to be checked against the printed edition. The data take the form of words, phrases, clauses, lines, and verses containing address, modality, temporal markers, normative references, and pronouns.

Data were collected through close reading and note-taking. Ohrvik describes close reading as a methodology rooted in the hermeneutic tradition that requires conscious analytical attention to every element of a text. The analysis proceeded in three stages. The first stage was heuristic reading to grasp the lexical and grammatical meaning of each line. The second stage was hermeneutic reading that moved back and forth between the parts and the whole of the text. The third stage was content analysis that grouped the data into the four functional categories formulated in the literature review (Ohrvik, 2024, p. 241). The sociology of literature was used as the framework for reading context, namely the student movement of 1966 for Taufiq Ismail's poem and urban life in Abbasid Baghdad for Abu Nuwas's poem. Trustworthiness was maintained through repeated reading, theoretical triangulation, and peer discussion between the two authors, both specialists in Arabic literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The text of "al-Amal al-Kadhūb" used as data is presented below with the authors' transliteration and translation.

سُبحانَ عَلّامِ الغُيوبِ ۞ عَجَباً لِتَصريفِ الخُطوبِ

(1) *Subḥāna ʿallāmi l-ghuyūbi, ʿajaban li-taṣrīfi l-khuṭūbi*. [Glory be to the Knower of all that is hidden; how astonishing the turning of calamities.]

تَغدو عَلى قَطفِ النُفو ۞ سِ وَتَجتَني ثَمَرَ القُلوبِ

(2) *Taghdū ʿalā qaṭfi n-nufūsi wa-tajtanī thamara l-qulūbi*. [They set out to pluck souls and to harvest the fruit of hearts.]

حَتّى مَتى يا نَفسُ تَغـ ۞ ـتَرّينَ بِالأَمَلِ الكَذوبِ

(3) *Ḥattā matā yā nafsu taghtarrīna bi-l-amali l-kadhūbi*. [How long, O soul, will you be deceived by a lying hope?]

يا نَفسُ توبي قَبلَ أَن ۞ لا تَستَطيعي أَن تَتوبي

(4) *Yā nafsu tūbī qabla an lā tastaṭīʿī an tatūbī*. [O soul, repent before you are no longer able to repent.]

وَاستَغفِري لِذُنوبِكِ الـ ۞ ـرَّحمَنَ غَفّارَ الذُنوبِ

(5) *Wa-staghfirī li-dhunūbiki r-raḥmāna ghaffāra dh-dhunūbi*. [And ask forgiveness for your sins from the Most Merciful, the Forgiver of sins.]

إِنَّ الحَوادِثَ كَالرِيا ۞ حِ عَلَيكِ دائِمَةَ الهُبوبِ

(6) *Inna l-ḥawāditha ka-r-riyāḥi ʿalayki dāʾimata l-hubūbi*. [Indeed, events are like winds blowing upon you without cease.]

وَالمَوتُ شَرعٌ واحِدٌ ۞ وَالخَلقُ مُختَلِفو الضُروبِ

(7) *Wa-l-mawtu sharʿun wāḥidun wa-l-khalqu mukhtalifu ḍ-ḍurūbi*. [Death is a single ordinance, while creatures are of many different kinds.]

وَالسَعيُ في طَلَبِ التُقى ۞ مِن خَيرِ مَكسَبَةِ الكَسوبِ

(8) *Wa-s-saʿyu fī ṭalabi t-tuqā min khayri maksabati l-kasūbi*. [Striving in pursuit of piety is among the best gains of one who strives.]

وَلَقَلَّما يَنجو الفَتى ۞ بِتُقاهُ مِن لَطَخِ العُيوبِ

(9) *Wa-la-qallamā yanjū l-fatā bi-tuqāhu min laṭakhi l-ʿuyūbi*. [Rarely does a young man escape the stains of faults by his piety alone.]

Structurally, the nine lines form three movements. The first movement (lines 1 and 2) is declarative and theological, consisting of the glorification of God and astonishment at the calamities that seize souls. The second movement (lines 3 to 5) is directive, marked by the vocative "yā nafs", repeated twice, and by two imperative verbs. The third movement (lines 6 to 9) is aphoristic, a series of general statements about events, death, piety, and faults. The commands therefore do not stand alone; they are framed by a theological ground at the beginning and an axiomatic ground at the end, so that the summons to the self is justified from two directions at once.

Taufiq Ismail's poem is composed in free verse bound together by the refrain "Tidak ada pilihan lain" ["There is no other choice"], "Kita harus" ["We must"], and "Berjalan terus" ["Keep on marching"]. The refrain opens and closes the poem and recurs in the middle. Between the refrains, the poem poses rhetorical questions about the possibility of selling one's convictions in "pengabdian tanpa harga" ["service without

worth"] and of sitting at one table with "para pembunuh tahun lalu" ["the killers of last year"], followed by a series of self-identifications of "kita" as "manusia bermata sayu" ["people with weary eyes"] waiting for "oplet dan bus yang penuh" ["crowded minibuses and buses"] and as "berpuluh juta yang bertahun hidup sengsara" ["tens of millions who have lived in misery for years"]. The results of the content analysis of both texts are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Points of functional convergence in "al-Amal al-Kadhūb" and "Kita Adalah Pemilik Sah Republik Ini"

Functional category	"al-Amal al-Kadhūb" (Abu Nuwas)	"Kita Adalah Pemilik Sah Republik Ini" (Taufiq Ismail)	Shared function
Address and mood	Vocative "yā nafs" (l. 3, 4); imperatives "tūbī", "istaghfirī" (l. 4, 5)	Address to "kita"; obligation modality "kita harus berjalan terus"; rhetorical question "akan maukah kita"	Moral summons in the directive mood
Temporality	"ḥattā matā" (l. 3); "qabla an lā tastaṭīʿī an tatūbī" (l. 4); "dāʾimata l-hubūb" (l. 6)	"Tidak ada pilihan lain"; "berhenti atau mundur berarti hancur"; "para pembunuh tahun lalu"	Logic of deadline
Normative ground	"al-mawtu sharʿun wāḥidun" against "al-khalqu mukhtalifu ḍ-ḍurūb" (l. 7)	Claim of "pemilik sah" against "Duli Tuanku", "seribu slogan", "inikah yang namanya merdeka"	Invalidation of the present through a higher and equal law
Speaker position	"nafs" as the poet's own self; l. 9 denies immunity to the pious	Inclusive "kita" embracing poet and reader	Self-inclusive critique

Table 1 shows that all four functional categories are filled in both texts, although the devices that fill them differ. In Abu Nuwas's poem, function is built through the devices of classical Arabic grammar, namely the vocative, the *fiʿl amr*, and the axiomatic *jumlah ismiyyah*. In Taufiq Ismail's poem, function is built through the inclusive pronoun, the modality of obligation, rhetorical questions, and the refrain.

Discussion

Moral Summons Through Direct Address and the Directive Mood

The first point of convergence lies in the form of utterance. Neither poem is composed as a description of a state of affairs; both are summons addressed to a particular party. Abu Nuwas opens with glorification of God and astonishment at the turning of calamities, and in the third line turns to address "yā nafs" [O soul]. From that point on, the poem is governed by the fiʿl amr: "tūbī" [repent] in the fourth line and "istaghfirī" [ask forgiveness] in the fifth. This shift from declarative to directive utterance marks a change in the function of the poem, from contemplation to command. Khalilah and Siagian show that in "al-Iʿtirāf", another penitential poem by Abu Nuwas, metaphor is used to make abstract concepts such as sin, regret, and the hope of forgiveness concrete (Khalilah & Siagian, 2025, p. 75-76), "Al-Amal al-Kadhūb" takes a different path. It does not stop at depicting sin but proceeds directly to demand action.

Taufiq Ismail constructs the summons with different devices. Indonesian does not mark the imperative mood morphologically as strongly as Arabic does, and Taufiq

Ismail does not use second-person imperative verbs. His summons is built on the modality of obligation "kita harus" ["we must"], which functions as a hortative, an exhortation that simultaneously binds the speaker. In addition, the rhetorical question "akan maukah kita duduk satu meja dengan para pembunuh tahun lalu" ["would we be willing to sit at one table with the killers of last year"] is not meant to be answered but to compel readers to reject the possibility of compromise. Amaireh finds that in public rhetoric the pronoun "we" is the device most frequently used to build a bond with the audience, and that this bond underpins ethical and emotional appeals (Amaireh, 2023, p. 731-732). Taufiq Ismail's poem operates on a similar logic. An exhortation gains force only when the one who exhorts has first declared himself part of those exhorted.

In its social context, the form of summons in Taufiq Ismail's poem is rooted in the demonstrations of 1966. Sayfullah and Bashori show that poetry during the Guided Democracy period served as a means of resistance and as a public conscience amid political instability (Sayfullah & Bashori, 2025, p. 1593). Abu Nuwas's zuhd poetry arose from an entirely different milieu, the prosperous city of Baghdad, yet its function as an utterance demanding a change of attitude remains parallel. The first similarity, therefore, lies not in the content of the summons but in the poet's decision to make the poem a directive speech act.

The Logic of Deadline

The second point of convergence concerns how the two poems manage time. The opening phrase of Abu Nuwas's third line, "ḥattā matā" [how long], is a rhetorical question about duration. It does not request information; it declares that the duration of the soul's delusion by "al-amal al-kadhūb" has exceeded all reasonable limits. The fourth line then sets the deadline explicitly: repent "qabla an lā tastaṭīʿī an tatūbī", before you are no longer able to repent. This structure accords with the doctrine outlined by Khalil, namely that the possibility of atonement remains open until death and closes thereafter. The poem converts that doctrine into rhetorical pressure. Because the boundary is certain while its timing is unknown, every postponement becomes a gamble (Khalil, 2023, p. 2).

The sixth line intensifies the pressure through the simile "ka-r-riyāḥi ... dā'imata l-hubūb", events like winds blowing without cease. The adjective "dā'imah" [continuous] eliminates any interval. There is no safe moment to postpone repentance, because the threat never pauses. This pattern has counterparts in the broader tradition of Arabic penitential poetry. Shuqair shows that in "Qaḍat al-Nafs", Ibn Ḥamdīs realises that youth cannot be regained, and it is this awareness of the irreversibility of time that turns the speaker towards God in a penitent attitude (Shuqair, 2023, p. 8).

Taufiq Ismail does not refer to individual death, but his poem mobilises an equivalent logic of deadline at the level of collective history. The refrain "Tidak ada pilihan lain" closes off alternatives, and the line "berhenti atau mundur berarti hancur" ["to stop or to retreat means ruin"] turns a political choice into a matter of life or death for the republic. The phrase "para pembunuh tahun lalu" marks time specifically and links recent past violence with present demands. If in Abu Nuwas the deadline is death, which closes the door of repentance, in Taufiq Ismail the deadline is a historical

momentum that, according to the poem, will be lost if the movement stops. Both poems thus use time as an argument. Delay is not treated as a neutral stance but as a fault.

Invalidating the Present Through a Higher and Equal Law

The third point of convergence is the core of the argument in both poems. Both judge the present as illegitimate by invoking a higher law that applies equally to all. In Abu Nuwas, that law is formulated in the seventh line: "wa-l-mawtu sharʿun wāḥidun wa-l-khalqu mukhtalifu ḍ-ḍurūb". The word "sharʿ" carries the connotation of a binding ordinance, while "wāḥid" asserts its singularity. The line is built from two contrasting nominal sentences [*jumlah ismiyyah*], the unity of the ordinance of death set against the diversity of creatures. The contrast annuls every difference of worldly rank, since wealth, power, and fame do not alter that single ordinance. "Al-amal al-kadhūb" is a lie precisely because it presumes exemption from a law that admits no exemption.

This egalitarian function is consistent with recent scholarship on ascetic poetry. Juraev and Rajavaliev show that in the Sufi poetry of Ahmad Yasawi, praise of virtues such as repentance goes hand in hand with condemnation of greed and ignorance, so that religious poetry also functions as moral critique of social conduct (Juraev & Rajavaliev, 2026, p. 11). Salsabila make a similar point about Abu Nuwas and his Abbasid contemporaries, whose works convey social critique and spiritual messages at once (Salsabila et al., 2025, p. 1631). Within this framework, the seventh line of "al-Amal al-Kadhūb" can be read as a critique of a social order built on differences of status, delivered by borrowing the authority of divine ordinance.

Taufiq Ismail takes the same structural step on a different normative ground. The title of his poem is a legal claim: "kita" are the "pemilik sah" [rightful owners]. The word "sah" refers to a legitimacy higher than the power currently in place, namely the popular sovereignty on which the republic is founded. Against that ground, the poem presents signs of an illegitimate present. The phrase "Duli Tuanku", the honorific language of the feudal court, implies that the republic has reverted to a relationship of servant and master. "Seribu slogan" ["a thousand slogans"] and "seribu pengeras suara yang hampa suara" ["a thousand loudspeakers empty of voice"] mark the hollow discourse of power. The question "inikah yang namanya merdeka" ["is this what is called independence"] tests the present against the ideals of independence. Fajar shows that Taufiq Ismail's poems in Tirani dan Benteng transform personal memory into shared cultural memory (Fajar, 2024, p. 18). In the poem examined here, it is the shared memory of the promise of independence that serves as the touchstone.

The two poems thus employ the same argumentative structure. The first premise establishes a higher and equal law, whether death as a single ordinance or the equal sovereignty of citizens. The second premise exposes a present that presumes exemption from that law, whether a lying hope of long life or a power that treats the people as servants. The conclusion drawn is that the present is illegitimate. The difference in referential domain, one eschatological and the other constitutional, does not change the form of this argument. It is at this point that American-school comparison proves its value, as it allows the researcher to see the same argumentative form behind different content.

Self-Inclusive Critique as the Source of Moral Authority

The fourth point of convergence concerns the position of the speaker. Neither poem criticises an external party from a safe position; both include the poet among those criticised. In Abu Nuwas, the "nafs" addressed is the poet's own self. Such self-address belongs to the tradition of muḥāsabat al-nafs, the practice of taking account of oneself, and turns the poem into an inner dialogue made audible to the public. The ninth line extends this inclusiveness: "rarely does a young man escape the stains of faults by his piety alone". The line denies moral immunity even to the pious, so that the poet cannot place himself above those he admonishes. For Abu Nuwas, whose reputation is bound up with the khamriyyāt, this admission carries a biographical weight of its own.

In Taufiq Ismail, self-inclusiveness is embedded in Indonesian grammar through the pronoun "kita". Had the poet chosen "kami", he would speak on behalf of a group standing opposite the reader. Had he chosen "kalian" [you, plural], he would place himself outside those summoned. The choice of "kita" removes both distances. The sequence of identifications "kita adalah manusia bermata sayu" ["we are people with weary eyes"] and "berpuluh juta yang bertahun hidup sengsara" places the poet among ordinary people rather than above them. Romadlani shows that inclusive plural pronouns are used to affirm togetherness and shared responsibility in facing challenges (Romadlani, 2024, p. 253). In the poem, that function is reinforced by the fact that the obligation "harus berjalan terus" applies to the speaker as well.

This comparison yields a finding that is not visible when each poem is read in isolation. Arabic has no grammatical distinction between inclusive "we" and exclusive "we", both being expressed by "naḥnu". Abu Nuwas achieves self-inclusiveness through a lexical and rhetorical route, by addressing the "nafs". Taufiq Ismail achieves it through the grammatical route that Indonesian provides. These two different routes lead to the same function: the moral authority of the poem derives from the poet's implication, not from distance between the poet and the party criticised. Ahmadi (2025) notes that social-critical poetry in Indonesia during the New Order functioned as collective therapy for the lower classes because poets defended and voiced them. The present findings add a rhetorical condition for such effectiveness, namely that the poet must first place himself inside the collective he voices.

Differences That Remain and Their Implications for the Citizenship of Indonesian Literature

Functional convergence does not mean that the two poems are identical. At least four differences must be maintained in the analysis. First, Abu Nuwas's addressee is singular and interior, whereas Taufiq Ismail's addressee is plural and public. Second, the remedies differ. Abu Nuwas offers repentance and the seeking of forgiveness, a vertical act towards God, while Taufiq Ismail offers the continuation of the movement, a horizontal act within history. Third, their temporal horizons differ, namely individual death in Abu Nuwas and the future of the republic in Taufiq Ismail. Fourth, their forms differ. Abu Nuwas works within the discipline of the metred, monorhymed qaṣīdah, while Taufiq Ismail works in free verse bound by a refrain. Fitriyani show that Abbasid poets shifted the themes of Arabic poetry from Umayyad patterns towards personal expression and spiritual reflection, yet this thematic shift still took place within the

framework of classical prosody (Fitriyani & Alzahra, 2025, p. 485). These formal differences show that the same rhetorical function can be housed in very different formal disciplines.

These findings have implications for understanding the citizenship of Indonesian literature in world literature. The comparison in this study neither positions Taufiq Ismail as a recipient of Abu Nuwas's influence nor makes Abu Nuwas the measure of Taufiq Ismail's value. The two texts are treated as two independent answers to the same rhetorical problem, namely how to admonish without losing moral authority. This equal standing within comparison can be called a form of citizenship. A work becomes a citizen of world literature not only because it is translated and circulated, but also because it can be brought into equal conversation with the canon of another tradition and contribute something to that conversation. In this study, the distinctive contribution of the Indonesian poem arises from the grammar of its own language. The distinction between "kita" and "kami" makes self-inclusiveness more explicit than Arabic grammar allows.

This reading also carries risks that should be acknowledged. Functional comparison may slide into a universalism that disregards contextual specificity, as though a call to repentance and a political call were interchangeable. To control this risk, the study treats differences as findings equal in weight to similarities and reads each poem in its social context before comparing them. Another risk is philological. The text of Abu Nuwas circulates in various editions, and the attribution of some *zuhdiyyāt* in the manuscript tradition is not always uniform. The conclusions of this study therefore apply to the text as it appears in the edition used and should be retested against other critical editions.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that Taufiq Ismail's "Kita Adalah Pemilik Sah Republik Ini" and Abu Nuwas's "al-Amal al-Kadhūb" share the same rhetorical function despite resting on different referential domains. The similarity is formed at four points: a moral summons in the directive mood, a logic of deadline, the invalidation of the present through a higher and equal law, and a self-inclusive critique. The devices that build this similarity differ in each tradition. Abu Nuwas uses the vocative, the *fiʿl amr*, and the axiomatic *jumlah ismiyyah* within the discipline of the qaṣīdah, while Taufiq Ismail uses the inclusive pronoun, the modality of obligation, rhetorical questions, and the refrain in free verse.

Theoretically, the findings show that the unit of comparison in cross-traditional comparative literature can be shifted from theme to rhetorical function. With regard to the theme of Indonesian literature as a citizen of world literature, the study shows that citizenship can be realised through equal comparison, that is, when Indonesian poetry is read as an interlocutor that makes a distinctive contribution, in this case the self-inclusiveness embedded in the pronominal grammar of Indonesian.

Practically, the four-category model of functional analysis formulated in this study can be used in teaching comparative literature in Arabic and Indonesian language and literature programmes, particularly to train students to read poetry from distant traditions without being confined to the search for thematic similarity. The study is limited in that it involves only two poems and a single edition of the *dīwān*. Further

research is recommended to extend the corpus to the *zuhdiyyāt* of other Abbasid poets and to Indonesian protest poetry from different periods, and to collate Abu Nuwas's text with more than one critical edition so that the robustness of these functional findings can be tested.

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