

Semantic Differentiation of *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qistās* in the Qur'an: Revisiting Muhammad Syahrur's Anti-Synonymity Theory

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Abstrak

Dalam kajian al-Qur'an, terdapat sejumlah lafaz yang sering dianggap memiliki kesamaan makna, padahal masing-masing memiliki makna khas yang berbeda. Salah satunya adalah lafadz *al-mīzān* dan *al-Qistās* yang kerap dipahami sebagai sinonim dengan arti "timbangan" atau "keadilan." Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan makna khas dari masing-masing lafaz tersebut dengan menggunakan teori anti sinonimitas yang dikembangkan oleh Muhammad Syahrur. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif-kepastakaan dengan sumber data meliputi al-Qur'an, karya-karya Muhammad Syahrur, kitab tafsir klasik dan modern, serta literatur kebahasaan Arab. Analisis dilakukan dengan menelusuri makna dasar, dan perkembangan maknanya secara sinkronik dan diakronik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *al-mīzān* merepresentasikan konsep keadilan dan keseimbangan yang bersifat universal dan normatif, sedangkan *al-Qistās* menggambarkan penerapan nilai keadilan secara konkret dalam konteks sosial, hukum, dan ekonomi. Keduanya memiliki hubungan semantik yang erat, namun berbeda fungsi dan lingkup makna. Temuan ini menegaskan pandangan Syahrur bahwa tidak terdapat sinonimitas dalam al-Qur'an, dan setiap lafadz memiliki makna yang unik serta tidak saling menggantikan tanpa mengubah pesan ilahi. Penelitian ini memperkuat pandangan bahwa bahasa al-Qur'an tidak bersifat sinonim, melainkan setiap lafaz mengandung makna yang khas dan tidak dapat digantikan tanpa mengubah pesan ilahi. Penelitian ini juga berkontribusi dalam kajian tafsir dengan menekankan pentingnya analisis linguistik yang cermat guna menghindari penyederhanaan makna yang berpotensi mereduksi kedalaman pesan al-Qur'an.

Kata kunci: *al-Mīzān*, *al-Qistās*, Muhammad Syahrur, Teori Anti-Sinonimitas

Abstract

In Qur'anic studies, there are a number of lexical items that are often assumed to share similar meanings, whereas each actually possesses a distinct semantic nuance. Among them are the terms *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qistās*, which are frequently understood as synonymous with the meaning of "balance" or "justice." This study aims to elucidate the specific meanings of these two terms by employing the theory of anti-synonymity developed by Muhammad Syahrur. This research adopts a qualitative library-based method, with data sources including the Qur'an, the works of Muhammad Syahrur, classical and modern exegetical texts, as well as Arabic linguistic literature. The analysis is conducted by tracing the basic meanings and their semantic development both synchronically and diachronically. The findings indicate that *al-Mīzān* represents a universal and normative

concept of justice and balance, whereas *al-Qistās* reflects the concrete application of justice within social, legal, and economic contexts. Although the two terms are closely related semantically, they differ in function and scope of meaning. These findings affirm Syahrur's view that there is no synonymy in the Qur'an, and that each lexical item carries a unique meaning that cannot be substituted without altering the divine message. This study reinforces the argument that the language of the Qur'an is non-synonymous in nature, in which every term embodies a distinct meaning that cannot be replaced without affecting the intended message. Furthermore, this research contributes to the field of Qur'anic exegesis by emphasizing the importance of precise linguistic analysis in order to avoid reductive interpretations that may obscure the depth of Qur'anic meanings.

Keywords: *al-Mizān, al-Qistās, Muhammad Syahrur, Anti-Synonymy Theory*

INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an, as a foundational guide for human life, consistently attracts scholarly attention aimed at uncovering its meanings and messages. As a source of guidance, it is believed to remain relevant across time and unaffected by historical change.¹ Alongside the advancement of knowledge, efforts to understand the Qur'an have developed significantly, particularly through linguistic approaches.

One of the debated issues in Qur'anic linguistic studies is *tarāduf* (synonymy), referring to the existence of two or more words considered to share the same meaning.² Classical exegetes differ on this matter: some affirm synonymy, while others reject it. Scholars such as al-Qutubi (d. 206 AH), Hamzah al-Ashfahani (d. 360 AH), and al-Suyuti (d. 911 AH) accept synonymy as part of the richness and rhetorical beauty of the Arabic language. While this view highlights stylistic variation, it may obscure subtle semantic distinctions. Conversely, figures such as Ibn 'Arabi, Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Sa'labi, Ahmad ibn Faris, and al-Daristawayh reject synonymy, arguing that each term possesses a distinct and context-specific meaning, and that lexical variation reflects intentional semantic differentiation. This perspective preserves semantic precision but tends to limit linguistic flexibility.³ Thus, the debate reflects a tension between semantic exactness and expressive variation in the language of revelation.

Among contemporary Muslim thinkers, Muhammad Syahrur firmly rejects synonymy in the Qur'an. Beyond this rejection, he develops an anti-synonymy approach in Qur'anic interpretation, as articulated in his work *al-Kitab wa al-Qur'an*:

¹ Muhammad Syahrur, *Prinsip Dan Dasar Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Kontemporer*, (Yogyakarta: Kalimedia, 2015), 24.

² Iskandar Iskandar, "Kontroversi Kaidah Taraduf Dalam Al-Qur'an", *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu al-Quran dan Tafsir* 1, no. 2 (2021): 131-147. <https://doi.org/10.19109/jsq.v1i2.10164>.

³ Waryani Fakar Riyanto, "Antisynonimitas Tafsir Sufi Kontemporer", *Epistemé: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman* 9, no. 1 (2014), 139-154. <https://doi.org/10.21274/epis.2014.9.1.139-154>.

Qira'ah Mu'ashirah.⁴ He argues that each Qur'anic term has an autonomous function and meaning, and that language is inherently linked to social reality, allowing meanings to evolve over time.⁵ His interpretive method employs a linguistic-historical approach that emphasizes both synchronic and diachronic contexts in understanding semantic development.⁶ This framework underpins his analysis of terms often considered synonymous, such as *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qistās*, commonly translated as “balance” or “scale.”⁷

In several academic works, the author identifies a number of previous studies that have examined the terms *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qistās*, as well as discussions on the theory of anti-synonymity proposed by Muhammad Syahrur. Ona Devita Reni Andari employs Toshihiko Izutsu's semantic approach to analyze the meaning of the word *wazn*, a derivative of *al-Mīzān*. In this study, *wazn* is understood through the conceptual framework of *weltanschauung* as an expression of just and honest conduct.⁸ This study clarifies the relationship between *al-Qist* (justice) and *al-Qistās* (balance/scale) as two complementary entities in the realization of justice. Another relevant study referenced in this research is the work of Sandi Wahid Nugraha and Irwan Abdurrahman, which examines the intellectual background of Muhammad Syahrur's anti-synonymity theory and analyzes the meanings of *qirā'ah* and *tilāwah* using this theoretical framework.⁹

The significant distinction of the present study lies in its object of analysis. To date, no research has been found that specifically examines the meanings of *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qistās* through the lens of Muhammad Syahrur's anti-synonymity theory. This raises the critical question of whether these two terms possess identical meanings or, conversely, reflect substantial and contextual differences. This issue constitutes the central point of departure for the study. Misinterpretation of synonymity may lead to inaccuracies in understanding Qur'anic messages and obscure the depth of their meanings. Therefore, a more rigorous and systematic analysis of the terms *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qistās* within Syahrur's theoretical framework is necessary.

⁴ Eko Zulfikar, “The Contemporary Thought On The Qur'an: The Discourse of Muhammad Syahrur's *Al-Kitāb Wa al-Qur'ān*”, *Islamuna: Jurnal Studi Islam* 7, no. 1 (2020), 56-74. <https://doi.org/10.19105/islamuna.v7i1.2542>.

⁵ Muhammad Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa al-Qur'an Qira'ah Mu'asirah*, (Damaskus: Dar al-Ahali li al-Tiba'ah wa al-Nasyr wa al-Tawzi', 1990), 44.

⁶ Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur'an Qira'ah Mu'asirah*, 21-22.

⁷ Muhammad Raghīb al-Ashfahani, *Al-Mufradat fi Gharibil Qur'an*, terj. Ahmad Zainal Dahlan (Depok: Pustaka Khazanah, 2017), 181.

⁸ Ona Devita Reni Andari, *Makna Kata Wazn Dalam Al-Qur'an (Kajian Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu)* (Universitas Islam Negeri Salatiga, 2023), 65.

⁹ Sandi Wahid Rahmat Nugraha, Irwan Abdurrahman, “Makna Qiraah Dan Tilawah Dalam Al-Qur'an perspektif Teori Anti Sinonimitas Muhammad Syahrur,” *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 5, no. 1 (2020): 43-53.

This study aims to deconstruct the meanings of these two terms by employing Syahrur's anti-synonymity theory as its primary analytical tool. By identifying the distinctive meanings of each term and examining their usage within the Qur'anic context, this research seeks to reveal their specific semantic differences. Furthermore, the study aims to reinforce the fundamental assumption that synonymity does not exist in the Qur'an, such that each term carries a *tawqīfī* (divinely determined) meaning that cannot be substituted without altering the intended divine message. Through the application of Muhammad Syahrur's linguistic approach, this research is expected to contribute to contemporary Qur'anic exegesis, particularly in enriching scholarly discourse on the structure and dynamics of meaning within the Qur'anic text.

RESEARCH METHOD

Method can be defined as a systematic approach employed to achieve a particular objective. This study adopts a qualitative approach by applying Muhammad Syahrur's anti-synonymity theory as the analytical framework to examine the meanings of the terms *al-mīzān* and *al-qistās* in the Qur'an. Through this approach, the study seeks to identify the semantic distinctions between these two terms, which are often regarded as synonymous. This research is a library-based study, drawing data from the Qur'an, the works of Muhammad Syahrur—particularly *al-Kitāb wa al-Qur'ān: Qirā'ah Mu'āṣirah*—as well as classical and modern tafsir literature. Linguistic references such as *Lisān al-'Arab*, *Mu'jam al-Wasīṭ*, and *Qāmūs al-Fārisīyah* are also utilized to trace lexical and derivative meanings. Data analysis is conducted through the following stages: *first*, collecting all relevant verses and chapters related to the topic using *Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfāz al-Qur'an* and identifying various interpretations of the selected verses; *second*, examining their primary and derivative meanings; *third*, analyzing their usage within synchronic and diachronic contexts; and *fourth*, evaluating the semantic differences and their relevance to Muhammad Syahrur's anti-synonymity theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Meaning of *Mīzān* and *al-Qistās* According to the *Mufassirs*

The understanding of the terms *al-mīzān* and *al-qistās* cannot be separated from the interpretations of both classical and contemporary exegetes. This section, therefore, outlines how various mufassirūn interpret these two terms within their respective Qur'anic contexts. In *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, particularly in the discussion of *al-mīzān* and *al-qistās* in QS. al-Shūrā: 17, al-Isrā': 35, and al-Shu'arā': 182, the term *al-mīzān* in QS. al-Shūrā: 17 is interpreted as a "balance" or "scale" (*bi al-ḥaqq wa al-*

mīzān), referring to justice established among people.¹⁰ Meanwhile, the meaning of *al-qistās* in QS. al-Isrā': 35 and al-Shu'arā': 182 is subject to differing opinions: some interpret it as a weighing scale, others as a Roman-type scale, and others more generally as any form of measurement, whether large or small.¹¹

In *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, *al-mīzān* in QS. al-Shūrā: 17 is understood as a "scale" or justice (*al-'adl bayna al-nās*), serving as a divine standard revealed alongside scripture to guide human life. Truth is free from falsehood, while the scale functions as a معيار of justice in legal and ethical judgment. Its purpose is to enable humans to uphold justice and warn against فساد based on divine guidance.¹² As for *al-qistās* in QS. al-Isrā': 35, al-Marāghī interprets it simply as a scale, with both pronunciations (*al-qistās* and *al-qustās*) referring to the same meaning.¹³

In *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf*, *al-mīzān* is likewise interpreted as a scale or symbol of justice, revealed through divine scripture. It is also understood as an instrument for weighing with truth, closely associated with wisdom and the divine rulings of lawful and unlawful.¹⁴ The term *al-qistās* (also read *al-qustās*) is explained as a scale, whether small or large, including instruments used for weighing items such as dirhams.¹⁵ Other views identify *al-qurṣṭun* as another form of *al-qistās*, suggesting that the term may have Roman linguistic origins and carry the meaning of justice. This indicates that the Qur'an incorporates certain loanwords that have undergone Arabization, provided they do not conflict with the intended meaning of revelation.¹⁶

In his tafsir, Ibn 'Āshūr explains that *al-mīzān* in QS. al-Isrā': 35, al-Shu'arā': 182, and al-Shūrā: 17 fundamentally refers to a physical instrument used for weighing, typically described as having two balanced pans suspended from a central محور. However, in the verse "*wa anzalnā ma'ahum al-kitāb wa al-mīzān*" (QS. al-Ḥadīd: 25), the term is used metaphorically to signify justice and divine guidance rather than a literal scale. This interpretation is reinforced by the use of *anzalnā* ("We sent down"), indicating that what is revealed is not a physical object but a moral and legal framework for justice.

Regarding *al-qistās*, Ibn 'Āshūr interprets it as both a weighing instrument and a symbol of justice. He also acknowledges the view that the term originates from a non-Arabic (Roman) source and was later incorporated into Arabic usage. In this

¹⁰ Imām Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Al-Ṭabarī, *Jamī' Al-Bayan Fi Ta'wil Al-Qur'an*, (Kairo: Dar Hajr, 2001).

¹¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jamī' Al-Bayan Fi Ta'wil Al-Qur'an*, Jilid 16, 673.

¹² Ahmad Mustafa al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr Al-Marāghī*, (Kairo: Matba'ah al-Babi al-Halabi, 1946).

¹³ Al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr Al-Marāghī*, Jilid 15, 31.

¹⁴ Muḥammad Ibn Umar al-Zamakhsari, *Tafsīr Al-Kasysyaf*, (Beirut: Dar Al-Marefah, 2009), 976.

¹⁵ Al-Zamakhsari, *Tafsīr Al-Kasysyaf*, 597.

¹⁶ Muḥammad Thahir Ibnu Asyur, *al-Tahrir Wa Al-Tanwir Juz 25*, (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 2021), 67.

sense, *al-qisṭās* carries both a literal and an ethical meaning, reflecting its function as a tool of measurement and a representation of justice.¹⁷

Muhammad Syahrur's Anti-Synonymity Theory

Muhammad Syahrur Ibn Daib is one of the prominent contemporary Muslim thinkers, born in Damascus, Syria, on April 11, 1938.¹⁸ His father was Deyb bin Deyb Syahrur, and his mother was Shaddiqah bint Shalih Filyun.¹⁹ Syahrur is widely recognized as a modern intellectual who introduced innovative ideas in Islamic thought, particularly through deconstructive and reconstructive approaches to Qur'anic interpretation. A distinctive feature of his thought lies in his ability to integrate the exact sciences with Qur'anic exegesis, a capability closely related to his academic background in engineering and science.

His academic career began with primary and secondary education in Damascus, specifically at the 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Kawākibī institution, which he completed in 1957 at the age of 19. In 1958, he continued his studies in Moscow, Russia, after receiving a scholarship from the Syrian government to study civil engineering. After obtaining his undergraduate degree in 1964, Syahrur returned to Syria and, in 1965, began teaching at the Faculty of Civil Engineering, University of Damascus. Shortly thereafter, he was sent to pursue postgraduate studies in Ireland at the National University of Ireland, specializing in Soil Mechanics and Foundations (*Mikānikā Turbāt wa Asāsāt*).

He completed his master's degree in 1969 and earned his doctoral degree in 1972. In the same year, he began his academic career as a professor at the University of Damascus, teaching courses in soil mechanics and geology.²⁰ Although his formal education was rooted in science and engineering, this did not limit his engagement with Islamic studies, particularly philosophy and Qur'anic exegesis. On the contrary, his scientific background significantly shaped and enriched his intellectual contributions to Islamic thought.²¹

His intellectual interests further developed through interactions with colleagues and fellow academics in Syria and at the University of Damascus. These encounters played an important role in shaping his الفكر, which later culminated in his monumental work *al-Kitāb wa al-Qur'ān: Qirā'ah Mu'āṣirah*. Within contemporary Qur'anic discourse, Syahrur introduced a novel interpretive method that challenged

¹⁷ Ibnu Asyur, *al-Tahrir Wa Al-Tanwir* Juz 15, 98.

¹⁸ Syahrur, *Al-Kitāb Wa Al-Qur'an Qira'ah Mu'asirah*, 823.

¹⁹ Abdul Mustaqim, *Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer*, (Yogyakarta: Lkis, 2010).

²⁰ Muhammad Syahrur, *Metodologi Fiqih Islam Kontemporer*, terj. Sahiron Syamsuddin dan Burhanuddin, (Yogyakarta: elSaq Press, 2004).

²¹ Abdul Rasyid Ridho, *Teori Asinonimitas Muhammad Syahrur (Kajian Antara Lafaz) Kitabah Dengan Faridah, Dan Inzal Dengan Tanzil Dalam Al-Qur'an*, (Tesis, Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, 2016).

conventional perspectives, often provoking controversy due to its unconventional nature. He called upon Muslims to understand the Qur'anic text "as if the Prophet Muhammad had only just passed away,"²² emphasizing the timeless applicability of the Qur'an.

As briefly noted by Ja'far Dikk al-Bāb in the introduction to *al-Kitāb*, Syahrur argues that each word in the Qur'an possesses a distinct and multifaceted meaning. Language, in his view, is inherently connected to social reality, and words may evolve, disappear, or acquire new meanings over time. This perspective reflects the miraculous and enduring nature of the Qur'an, which remains relevant across different contexts and historical periods.²³ Within his linguistic framework, Syahrur identifies two dimensions of Qur'anic inimitability: the rhetorical (*balāghī*) and the scientific (*'ilmī*). These dimensions serve as key foundations for understanding the depth of Qur'anic meaning. The rhetorical dimension is approached through a descriptive-functional method (*al-manhaj al-waṣfī al-wazīfī*), integrating rhetorical (*balāghah*) and grammatical (*naḥw*) analyses. Meanwhile, the scientific dimension is examined through a historical-scientific approach (*al-manhaj al-tārīkhī al-'ilmī*), which emphasizes the rejection of synonymity and encourages in-depth analysis of terms traditionally considered synonymous, acknowledging the dynamic evolution of language over time.²⁴

The historical-scientific method employed by Syahrur is not entirely original but is influenced by his teacher Ja'far Dikk al-Bāb, who drew upon the linguistic tradition of Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī, itself a synthesis of the ideas of Ibn Jinnī and al-Jurjānī.²⁵ Ibn Jinnī, in his work *al-Khaṣā'is*, focused on word structure and the relationship between phonemes and meaning, arguing that language develops gradually while maintaining its grammatical rules. This approach views language as evolving in response to human usage.²⁶ Meanwhile, al-Jurjānī, in *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*, emphasized that meaning is fully realized through a word's function within a sentence, viewing language as a system shaped both conventionally and creatively, and best analyzed synchronically.²⁷

Although Syahrur does not explicitly formulate detailed analytical steps in his theory as found in other linguistic methods, his framework – grounded in the linguistic tradition of Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī, which synthesizes the theories of Ibn Jinnī and al-Jurjānī – allows for the reconstruction of several general procedures in understanding Qur'anic terms through the anti-synonymity approach. These steps

²² Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur'an Qira'ah Mu'asirah*, 41.

²³ Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur'an Qira'ah Mu'asirah*, 44.

²⁴ Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur'an Qira'ah Mu'asirah*, 22.

²⁵ Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur'an Qira'ah Mu'asirah*, 20.

²⁶ Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur'an Qira'ah Mu'asirah*, 20-21.

²⁷ Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur'an Qira'ah Mu'asirah*, 22.

include: (1) tracing the primary and derivative meanings of a term across various Qur'anic contexts; (2) conducting a synchronic analysis by examining the use of the term within verse structures and thematic contexts; (3) undertaking a diachronic analysis by exploring the historical development of the term and its usage in classical Arabic; and (4) identifying the distinctive semantic features of each term based on prior analyses and relating them to the principle of anti-synonymity.

Thus, these steps represent an analytical formulation derived from Muhammad Syahrur's linguistic principles, serving as a methodological framework for the theory of anti-synonymity in Qur'anic studies. Despite ongoing debates within linguistics regarding the existence of synonymity, Syahrur consistently and rigorously rejects it, developing arguments that remain relevant to contemporary discourse. He maintains that in scientific inquiry, no two terms are entirely identical in meaning, as precision is fundamental to knowledge. Therefore, it would be inconsistent to uphold precision in human-constructed sciences while assuming that divine revelation employs overlapping or redundant terminology. For Syahrur, it is inconceivable that human language could surpass divine expression in semantic precision.

Basic Meaning and Derivation of the Terms *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qistās*

The concept of basic meaning (*al-ma'nā al-aṣlī*) refers to the inherent and stable meaning attached to a word, which remains constant regardless of contextual variation. This meaning is typically identified through authoritative Arabic lexicons, serving as the primary reference in linguistic analysis.²⁸ Based on this approach, the basic meanings and derivations of *al-mīzān* and *al-qistās* can be outlined as follows:

1. *Al-Mīzān*: Basic Meaning and Derivation

The term *al-mīzān* is derived from the root *w-z-n* (و ز ن), which fundamentally denotes the act of weighing – distinguishing between heaviness and lightness (*rawz al-thiqāl wa al-khiffah*).²⁹ In classical lexicons such as *al-Munawwir*, *al-mīzān* is also interpreted as *al-'adl* (justice), indicating a semantic extension from physical measurement to moral equilibrium.³⁰ As a derivative of *wazn*, *al-mīzān* also carries the meaning of *al-miqdār* (measure, proportion, or standard). This reflects a broader conceptual shift from a concrete instrument of weighing to an abstract principle of balance and justice.³¹

²⁸ Dadang Darmawan, Irma Riyani, Yusep Mahmud Husaini, "Desain Analisis Semantik Al-Qur'an Ensiklopedik: Kritik Atas Model Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu," *Al-Quds: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 4, no. 2 (2020), 181-206. <https://doi.org/10.29240/alquds.v4i2.1701>.

²⁹ Abu Fadl Jamaluddin Muhammad bin Mukrim Ibnu Mandzur, *Lisan al-Arab* (Beirut: Dar Shadar, 1985), Jilid 13, 446.

³⁰ Ahmad Warson Munawwir, *Kamus Al-Munawwir* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Pustaka Progressif, 1997), 556.

³¹ Ibnu Mandzur, *Lisan al-Arab*, jilid 13, 447.

In the Qur'an, derivatives of the root *w-z-n* appear in multiple morphological forms and contexts, totaling eight variations across seventeen verses. These include forms such as *al-mīzān*, *waznū*, *wazanūhum*, *al-wazn*, *waznanā*, *mawāzīn*, and *al-mawāzīn*. The distribution of these forms across verses – such as in Sūrat al-An'ām (6:152), al-A'rāf (7:85), Hūd (11:84–85), al-Shūrā (42:17), al-Raḥmān (55:7–9), and al-Ḥadīd (57:25) – demonstrates the semantic richness of the term, encompassing both literal and metaphorical dimensions, including justice, balance, and moral accountability.³²

2. *Al-Qistās*: Basic Meaning and Derivation

The term *al-qistās*, as found in *Lisān al-'Arab*, is defined as an excellent or precise scale, often associated with fairness in measurement. It is also understood as a just balance, particularly in commercial contexts such as weighing dirhams and other goods.³³ In Qur'anic lexicons, *al-qistās* is commonly translated as “balance” or “scale” (*mīzān*), while also carrying the connotation of justice.³⁴ Interestingly, it is sometimes contrasted with *al-qasṭ* (in the sense of deviation or crookedness), thereby reinforcing its association with rectitude and fairness.³⁵ This semantic field indicates that *al-qistās* functions not merely as a physical instrument but also as a symbolic representation of justice.³⁶

Unlike *al-mīzān*, which appears in various derived forms, *al-qistās* occurs in the Qur'an only in a single, جامد (*jāmid*, non-derived) nominal form, specifically as an *ism al-ālah* (instrument noun). It is mentioned only twice, namely in Sūrat al-Isrā' (17:35) and Sūrat al-Shu'arā' (26:182). This limited occurrence, coupled with its fixed morphological form, suggests a more specific and possibly technical semantic function compared to the broader and more flexible usage of *al-mīzān*.³⁷

From the perspective of Muhammad Syahrur's anti-synonymity theory, the differences in root structure, derivational patterns, frequency, and contextual usage between *al-mīzān* and *al-qistās* indicate that the two terms cannot be treated as exact synonyms. While both are often translated as “scale” or “balance,” *al-mīzān* tends to function as a broader conceptual framework encompassing justice, proportion, and cosmic balance, whereas *al-qistās* points to a more specific, technical, and practical instrument of just measurement. This distinction reinforces Syahrur's central claim

³² Muhammad Fuad Abdul Baqi, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras Li Alfadi al-Qur'an al-Karim* (Kairo: Darul Kitab Al-Misriyyah, 1364), 750.

³³ Ibnu Mandzur, *Lisan al-Arab*, jilid 11, 159.

³⁴ Al-Asfahani, *Al-Mufradat Fi Gharibil Qur'an*, 181.

³⁵ Abd al-Na'im Muhammad Hasanain, *Qamus Al-Farisiyah* (Mesir dan Libanon: Dar al-Kitab al-Misri dan Dar al-Kitab al Lubnani, 1982), 516.

³⁶ Munawwir, *Kamus Al-Munawwir*, 1118.

³⁷ Baqi, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfadz al-Qur'an al-Karim*, 545.

that every Qur'anic term carries a unique semantic identity, and that careful linguistic analysis is necessary to uncover the precision of Qur'anic expression.

Synchronic Analysis of *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qiṣṭās*

Synchronic analysis is a method used to determine the meaning of a word within a specific temporal context by examining the relationship between its basic form and its functional role in conveying meaning, thereby enabling words to be understood within sentence structures.³⁸ Based on the previously presented data, the term *al-mīzān* occurs 17 times in eight morphological forms, while *al-qiṣṭās* appears only twice in the Qur'an. This discussion, however, focuses on five principal verses for deeper analysis: Sūrat al-Muṭaffifin [83]: 3 and Sūrat al-Raḥmān [55]: 7–9, which contain the term *al-mīzān* to trace its semantic development from a physical scale to a principle of balance and justice, as well as Sūrat al-Isrā' [17]: 35, where *al-mīzān* and *al-qiṣṭās* appear together in the context of measurement.

1. The term *al-Mīzān*

The term *mīzān*, derived from the root *wa-za-na*, conveys two primary meanings: balance and rectitude. This foundational meaning reflects the concept of measuring and adjusting something to achieve an appropriate and balanced state. From this root are derived forms such as *wazn* (measure), *muwāzanah* (balancing), and *mīzān* (an instrument or system of balance). In the Qur'anic context, *al-mīzān* undergoes a semantic expansion from a physical domain to a moral one, functioning as a symbol of justice and universal equilibrium.³⁹ Accordingly, *al-mīzān* represents both material and ethical balance, as reflected in Sūrat al-Muṭaffifin [83]: 3:

وَإِذَا كَالُواهُمْ أَوْ وَزَّنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ^{٣٨}

“(Conversely,) if they measure or weigh for someone else, they subtract.”

In verse 3, the term *al-mīzān* appears in its derivative form *wazinū*, meaning “to weigh.” The context of this verse begins with a strong warning in the first verse, “*Wayl li al-muṭaffifin*” (woe to those who give less [than due]). This warning is further clarified in the second verse, “*alladhīna idhā ktālū ‘alā al-nāsi yastawfūn*” (those who, when they take measure from others, demand full measure), which describes individuals who insist on receiving their full rights when in the position of recipients. However, they fail to uphold the same standard of justice when they themselves measure or weigh for others.

This is followed by verse 4, which links such fraudulent practices to belief in the Day of Resurrection: “*alā yazunnu ulā’ika annahum mab’ūthūn*” (do they not think

³⁸ Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur’an Qira’ah Mu’asirah*, 26.

³⁹ Abi Husain Ahmad Ibn Faris Ibnu Zakariya, *Mu’jam Maqāyīs Al-Lughah*, (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1979), Jilid 6, 107.

that they will be resurrected?). This verse indicates that dishonest behavior in measuring and weighing stems from a ضعف in awareness of resurrection and accountability before God. When belief in reckoning diminishes, adherence to justice in measurement is easily violated. Thus, the synchronic analysis of *al-mīzān* in this passage demonstrates that injustice in weighing reflects moral فساد and a crisis of spiritual consciousness, which will ultimately be accounted for in the Hereafter. Allah says in QS. Ar-Raḥmān: 7-9:

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ. أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ. وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ.

"He has raised the heavens and He has created scales (justice and balance), so that you do not exceed the limit in those scales, uphold the scales fairly and do not reduce the scales."

In verse 7, the term *al-mīzān* (balance) is understood as justice and equilibrium. This verse appears within a sequence describing the signs of God's power in the universe. It is preceded by the phrase "*wa al-samā'a rafa' ahā*" (He raised the heaven), which indicates the cosmic order established by God. In earlier verses, such as Sūrat al-Raḥmān (55:5), celestial bodies are mentioned as operating within a divinely determined balance, each moving according to a fixed measure.

After portraying this cosmic equilibrium and juxtaposing the heaven with *al-mīzān* to emphasize the significance and exalted nature of justice, verse 8 continues by extending the concept of balance to all aspects of life. The term *tathghaw* derives from *ṭaghā* (to transgress), referring to تجاوز both physical and moral limits, including disobedience to divine commands.⁴⁰ In the socio-historical context of early Arab society, the term often described unjust behavior in trade and social relations. Here, *al-mīzān* signifies moral and social balance, particularly the prohibition of fraud in weights, measures, and other forms of exchange.

In verse 9, the command "*aqīmū al-wazn*" (establish the measure) implies the continuous and proper fulfillment of an obligation in accordance with its conditions. This is followed by *al-qist* (justice that satisfies all parties), indicating that the divinely ordained balance must be implemented in human life. The prohibition "*wa lā tukh'sirū al-mīzān*" (do not diminish the balance) conveys a broad meaning, encompassing not only fraud in measurement but also the reduction of justice in all forms of social and legal relations.

From a synchronic perspective, these verses illustrate a development of meaning: in the Makkan phase, *al-mīzān* functions as a moral critique of individual dishonesty rooted in weak faith, whereas in Sūrat al-Raḥmān [55]: 7-9, it represents a universal principle of justice governing cosmic and human order. Thus, in the early period of revelation, *al-mīzān* emerges as a universal principle underlying natural

⁴⁰ Ibnu Zakariyya, *Mu'jam Maqāyīs Al-Lughah* Jilid 13, 124.

order, ethical conduct in transactions, and human morality; violating this principle equates to disrupting the divinely established order.

2. The term *al-Qistās*

The term *al-qistās* is derived from the root *qāf-sīn-ṭā'*, which conveys two primary and opposing meanings: *al-qist* (justice) and *al-qasṭ* (injustice or deviation). From this root emerge several semantic derivatives, including *al-qist* (justice), *al-qasṭ* (injustice or ظلم), *al-qusūṭ* (deviation from truth), and *al-qistās* (a measuring scale), the latter primarily used in the context of physical measurement.⁴¹ As reflected in *Sūrat al-Isrā'* [17]: 35:

وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ إِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

“Perfect the measure when you measure and weigh with the correct scales. That is the best and the best result.”

In this verse, *al-qistās* is preceded by *wazinū* (weigh), an imperative commanding accurate measurement, as well as *awfū al-kayl* (give full measure), which emphasizes honesty in transactions. The phrase *al-qistās al-mustaqīm* (the straight or just balance) reinforces the demand for fairness and precision. In the socio-economic context of the Prophet's time, where trade played a central role, the scale (*al-qistās*) functioned as a crucial instrument, and fraudulent practices in weighing were common. Thus, the command to use a just balance serves both as a moral and social directive to uphold honesty and equilibrium. The closing phrase *khayrun wa aḥsanu ta'wīlan* (better and best in outcome) indicates that the implementation of justice through *al-qistās* yields beneficial consequences in both worldly and eschatological terms.

QS. *al-Isrā'* [17]: 35 is situated within a broader passage addressing social and moral ethics, particularly honesty, responsibility, and justice in communal life. The preceding verse (17:34), *“Do not approach the property of the orphan except in the best manner,”* emphasizes the protection of rights and ethical conduct. Following this moral instruction, verse 35 provides a practical manifestation of justice through honest and balanced measurement, especially in economic dealings. The subsequent verse (17:36) extends the concept of justice from outward actions to inward integrity, highlighting responsibility in thought, knowledge, and judgment: *“Indeed, hearing, sight, and the heart – each of these will be held accountable.”*

From a synchronic perspective, *al-qistās* encompasses three layers of meaning within the Qur'anic context: first, a literal meaning as a just measuring instrument in economic activities; second, a moral-social dimension as a symbol of honesty and fairness in transactions and social relations; and third, a universal ethical dimension

⁴¹ Ibnu Zakariyya, *Mu'jam Maqāyīs Al-Lughah* Jilid 5, 85.

representing justice and integrity as foundational principles of human life. While *al-mīzān* emphasizes universal and cosmic balance, *al-qistās* highlights the concrete implementation of justice in everyday practice.

Diachronic Analysis of *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qistās*

Diachronic analysis is a method that examines the meaning of a word by emphasizing its development across time, enabling the identification of semantic change and continuity.⁴² This approach generally considers three phases: (a) the pre-Qur'anic period, (b) the Qur'anic period, and (c) the post-Qur'anic period.

1. Diachronic Analysis of *al-Mīzān*

In the pre-Qur'anic period, *al-mīzān* was primarily understood as a tool for weighing. Lexical evidence, such as that found in *Lisān al-'Arab*:

واحدھا ميزان وهي المئاقيل واحدها مئقال ويقال للاله التي يوزن بها الأشياء ميزان أيضاً

Mīzān is a tool used to weigh something.⁴³ This poem states that the word scale is translated as "scale." During the Qur'anic period, revelation occurred in two phases: Makkan and Madinan. Verses containing *al-mīzān* predominantly appear in the Makkan period and are often associated with critiques of polytheistic society. In this context, *al-mīzān* retains its meaning as a scale but is extended to emphasize fairness and balance in commercial practices, particularly among Meccan traders.⁴⁴

In contrast, during the Madinan period, where the majority of the community had embraced Islam, *al-mīzān* is no longer linked to critiques of shirk but is emphasized as a principle of balance in life. It functions as a normative guideline encouraging just and balanced conduct to achieve well-being in both worldly and eschatological dimensions.⁴⁵ Overall, the Qur'anic usage of *al-mīzān* remains closely aligned with its earlier meaning as a measuring instrument while reinforcing its ethical implications.⁴⁶

In the post-Qur'anic period, extending from the classical to the contemporary era, *al-mīzān* continues to develop conceptually. In classical exegesis, such as that of al-Ṭabarī, it is interpreted as a scale symbolizing justice among human beings.⁴⁷ In modern interpretations, including al-Marāghī's tafsīr, *al-mīzān* is understood as a

⁴² Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur'an Qira'ah Mu'asirah*, 24.

⁴³ Ibnu Mandzur, *Lisan al-Arab*, 446.

⁴⁴ Kemenag RI, *Makkiy & Madaniy: Periodisasi Pewahyuan Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentahlilan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2017), 4-5.

⁴⁵ Ona Devita Reni Andari, *Makna Kata Wazn Dalam Al-Qur'an (Kajian Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu)*, (Universitas Islam Negeri Salatiga, 2023), 57.

⁴⁶ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan Dan Manusia*, terj. Agus Fahri Husein, (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2003), 42.

⁴⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jami' Al-Bayan Fi Ta'wil Al-Qur'an Jilid 25*, 715.

metaphor for justice accompanying divine revelation, serving as a guiding principle for human life and social order.⁴⁸

Overall, the term *al-mīzān* does not undergo significant semantic transformation across these periods. From the pre-Qur'anic to the post-Qur'anic era, it consistently denotes a measuring instrument associated with justice and balance. While its meaning expands conceptually in later periods across disciplines such as theology, philosophy, and social thought, its core semantic essence as a symbol of justice and equilibrium remains unchanged.

2. Diachronic Analysis of the Term *al-Qistās*

In the pre-Qur'anic period, the term *al-qistās* was primarily used within the context of trade and commercial transactions. Lexical analysis, as reflected in poetic citations found in *Lisān al-'Arab*, indicates that *al-qistās* referred to a weighing instrument employed in market practices:

في حديد القسطاس يرقبني الحارس والمرء كلَّ شيءٍ يُلاقي

“In the iron balance (*al-Qistās*), the guard watches over me, and every human being will face everything (which he has done)”.

According to al-Zajjāj, some scholars argue that *al-qistās* refers to *al-farastūn*, a term for a weighing instrument in Greek, while others interpret it as *al-qabbān*, a large or suspended scale. The term *al-qistās*, which may also be read as *al-qustās*, appears in the Qur'anic expression as stated in the verse:

وَرٰزِنٰۤا بِالْقِسْطٰسِ الْمُسْتَقِيْمِ

“And weigh with a just balance.”

Furthermore, *al-qistās* is also described as a scale that embodies justice and is used for weighing dirhams and similar items.⁴⁹

In the Qur'anic period, as previously outlined, revelation is divided into two phases: before and after the Prophet's migration (Hijrah). The term *al-qistās* appears only twice in the Qur'an, in the form of a fixed instrument noun (*ism al-ālah jāmid*), specifically in *Sūrat al-Isrā'* (17:35) and *Sūrat al-Shu'arā'* (26:182). Both verses belong to the Makkan period. In this phase, Qur'anic discourse primarily emphasizes the دعوت of monotheism, the establishment of social ethics, and opposition to injustice within Quraysh society.⁵⁰

The meaning of *al-qistās* during the Qur'anic period can also be further understood through Prophetic hadith, as the Prophet, being the recipient of

⁴⁸ Al-Maraghi, *Tafsir Al-Maraghi jilid 8*, 194.

⁴⁹ Ibnu Mandzur, *Lisan Al-Arab*, 159.

⁵⁰ Lukita Fahriana Fahriana, “Pemaknaan Qalb Salīm Dengan Metode Analisis Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu”, *Refleksi: Jurnal Kajian Agama dan Filsafat* 18, no. 2 (2019), 93.

revelation, holds primary authority in shaping the conceptual understanding of Qur'anic terms.⁵¹ Ibn Abi Hatim narrated from Sa'id bin Jubair explaining the meaning of *al-Qistās* as:

{وزنوا بالقسطاس المستقيم} يعني الميزان. وبلغه الروم الميزان القسطاس

“*And weigh with fair scales, meaning scales. And in Roman, scales are fair scales*”.

In another history Abd bin Hamid and Ibn Abi Hatim narrated from Qatadah that:

وأخرج الفريابي وابن أبي شيبة وعبد بن حميد وابن جرير وابن المنذر وابن أبي حاتم عن مجاهد رضي الله عنه قال: {القسطاس} العدل بالرومية. وأخرج عبد بن حميد وابن أبي حاتم عن قتادة {وزنوا بالقسطاس} قال: العدل. وأخرج ابن المنذر، عن الضحاك رضي الله عنه {وزنوا بالقسطاس} قال: القبان. وأخرج ابن أبي حاتم عن الحسن رضي الله عنه {وزنوا بالقسطاس} قال: بالحديد والله أعلم.

“*And Al-Faryabi, Ibn Abi Shaybah, Abd bin Hamid, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Al-Mundhir, and Ibn Abi Hatim narrated from Mujahid, may Allah be pleased with him, that (al-Qistās) is justice according to Roman law. And Abd bin Hamid and Ibn Abi Hatim narrated from Qatadah that (wazn al-Qistās) means justice. And Ibn al-Mundhir narrated from al-Dhahhak, may Allah have mercy on him, regarding (waznu al-Qistās), he said: scales. And Ibn Abi Hatim narrated from al-Hasan, may Allah have mercy on him, regarding (waznu al-Qistās), he said: with iron, and Allah knows best.*”⁵²

Based on the above explanation, *al-Qistās* in the Qur'anic period, as reflected in the Prophet's hadith, can be understood in two principal dimensions: *first*, as a physical scale used in commercial transactions; and *second*, as justice, which in Roman usage is likewise associated with a just measure.

In the post-Qur'anic period, which is divided into classical and contemporary phases, the meaning of *al-Qistās* develops further.⁵³ In the classical phase, as presented in the tafsir of al-Ṭabarī, scholars of interpretation differed in their views: some understood it as a steelyard balance, while others interpreted it as a Roman-type scale. The term also exhibits two canonical readings, namely *al-Qistās* (with *kasrah*) and *al-Qustās* (with *ḍammah*). The Kufan reciters predominantly adopted the former, whereas the Medinan and Basran reciters preferred the latter; both readings are معتبر (valid), as they are widely recognized among the authorities of *qirā'āt*.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Eko Zulfikar, “Makna Ūlū Al-Albāb dalam Al-Qur'an: Analisis Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu,” *Jurnal Theologia* 29, no. 1 (2018), 131. <https://doi.org/10.21580/teo.2018.29.1.2273>.

⁵² Jalaluddin al-Suyuthi, *Ad-Dur Al-Mantsur* (Beirut: Darul Fikri, 1983), Jilid 6, 272.

⁵³ Muhammad Ilham Fadli, *Analisis Semantik Makna Kata Bath Dan Huzn Dalam Al-Qur'an*, (UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2024), 92.

⁵⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jami' Al-Bayan Fi Ta'wil Al-Qur'an*.

In the contemporary phase, according to al-Marāghī, *al-Qistās* – whether read with *kasrah* or *ḍammah* – denotes a scale and is further understood as a just measure, referring to an instrument or system of weighing that operates with honesty, precision, and without fraud, serving as a standard of justice in economic transactions.⁵⁵

Thus, in the post-Qur’anic period, the meaning of *al-Qistās* expands from a physical measuring instrument to a symbol of social ethics and a principle of justice governing human relations across spiritual, economic, and legal dimensions. Overall, the term demonstrates a significant semantic development: from a concrete scale in the pre-Qur’anic period, to a symbol of justice during the Qur’anic revelation, and ultimately to a comprehensive moral and systemic concept of justice in the post-Qur’anic era, reflecting the semantic flexibility of the Qur’an in responding to changing contexts.

The Relevance of Muhammad Syahrur’s Anti-Synonymy Theory to the Term *Mīzān* and *al-Qistās* in the Qur’an

The theory of anti-synonymy proposed by Muhammad Syahrur is based on the assumption that the Qur’an does not contain two expressions with completely identical meanings. According to him, each term in the Qur’an possesses a unique semantic field and a distinct functional role, even when situated within the same thematic domain.⁵⁶ For Syahrur, the language of the Qur’an is precise and systematic, in which every expression contributes conceptually to the construction of an integrated meaning. Thus, this theory rejects the notion of absolute synonymy (*tarāduf*) and asserts that differences in wording necessarily indicate differences in meaning, whether in context, function, or usage.

When this framework is applied to the terms *al-mīzān* and *al-Qistās*, the semantic analysis demonstrates that although both are closely related in meaning – particularly in relation to justice and balance – they differ significantly in scope and orientation. The term *al-mīzān* in the Qur’an does not merely denote a physical measuring instrument, but also encompasses broader philosophical and moral dimensions, representing a universal principle of balance that underlies the order of the cosmos and human life. As illustrated in QS. Ar-Raḥmān [55]: 7-9:

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ. وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ

“And the heaven He raised and established the balance, so that you do not transgress within the balance. And establish weight with justice and do not make deficient the balance”.

⁵⁵ Al-Maraghi, *Tafsir Al-Maraghi*, 45.

⁵⁶ Syahrur, *Al-Kitab Wa Al-Qur’an Qira’ah Mu’asirah*, 24.

This verse affirms that the One who raised the heavens also established *al-mīzān* (the balance) as a symbol of justice and equilibrium. According to Ṭāhir Ibn ‘Āshūr, *mīzān* is not merely a measuring instrument but also represents justice derived from divine command, which must be implemented in human life. It further reflects cosmic balance, wherein the universe operates in accordance with divine order. Therefore, human beings are instructed to uphold justice without transgression in order to preserve the balance established by God, both in this world and the hereafter.⁵⁷ The three verses in QS. al-Raḥmān emphasize the diversity of divine blessings bestowed upon creation, particularly humans and jinn. The repetition of the term *al-mīzān* also demonstrates the Qur’anic rhetorical elegance in conveying that all divine gifts, in this life and the next, embody mercy and justice.⁵⁸

In contrast, the term *al-Qiṣṭās* emphasizes the applicative dimension of justice, namely the manifestation and implementation of balance within social, legal, and economic contexts. In other words, *al-Qiṣṭās* represents the concrete expression of the conceptual principle established by *al-mīzān*, thereby forming a hierarchical relationship between the normative foundation of justice and its practical realization in human life. As stated in QS. al-Isrā’ [17]: 35:

وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ إِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزَنُوا بِالْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

“And give full measure when you measure, and weigh with a just balance. That is better and more favorable in outcome.”

In *Tafsīr al-Miṣbāḥ*, the term *al-Qiṣṭās* in this verse is understood as a balance as well as justice. According to Ibn Kathīr, in Roman usage the term likewise denotes justice.⁵⁹ It is considered one of the foreign terms adopted into Arabic and utilized in the Qur’an. Both meanings converge in the understanding that achieving justice requires a clear standard, such as a scale, while the proper use of such a measure ensures justice.⁶⁰

The relevance of this theory to the findings indicates that *mīzān* and *al-Qiṣṭās* are conceptually related within the semantic field of justice (*ḥaql al-‘adl wa al-tawāzun*), yet they operate at different levels. *Mīzān* establishes the universal principle of balance as the foundation of justice, whereas *al-Qiṣṭās* focuses on its practical application in human relations. Thus, Syahrur’s theory of anti-synonymity not only highlights the distinctiveness of each term but also reveals how the Qur’an

⁵⁷ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsīr al-Miṣbāḥ: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur’an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati 2002), Jilid 13, 499.

⁵⁸ Dwi Nur Adella, Muhammad Arwani Rofi’i, “Kemukjizatan Pengulangan Ayat Dalam Surah Al-Rahman: Analisis Penafsiran M. Quraish Shihab Dalam Tafsir Al-Miṣbāḥ”, *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu al-Quran dan Tafsir* 5, no. 1 (2025): 191–218. <https://doi.org/10.19109/jsq.v5i1.26629>.

⁵⁹ Abu al-Fida’ Ibnu Katsir, *Tafsīr Ibnu Katsir Jilid 5*, terj. M. Abdil Ghoffar, Abdurrahim Mu’ti, (Bogor: Pustaka Imam Syafi’i, t.th), 164.

⁶⁰ Shihab, *Tafsīr al-Miṣbāḥ: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur’an*, Jilid 7, 462.

structures the concept of justice in a systematic and hierarchical manner, from cosmic values to social implementation.

The application of this theory further demonstrates that the Qur'an employs lexical variation not for redundancy, but to express complementary semantic functions that collectively construct a comprehensive system of meaning. Accordingly, Syahrur's framework is relevant not only for uncovering the depth of *al-mīzān* and *al-Qistās*, but also for enriching the understanding of the Qur'an's linguistic and epistemological structure, which is grounded in balance (*tawāzun*) and justice (*'adl*).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of the terms *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qistās* in the Qur'an through the perspective of Muhammad Syahrur's anti-synonymity theory, it can be concluded that both terms possess distinct yet complementary meanings and functions. *Al-Mīzān*, derived from the root (w-z-n), represents the concept of universal balance and the principle of divine justice that governs the cosmic order, moral structure, and the relationship between humans, God, and others. In contrast, *al-Qistās*, which is considered a borrowing from Roman language, emphasizes the concrete and operational dimension of justice, namely the application of balance in social, economic, and transactional contexts. Thus, *al-Mīzān* functions as a symbolic and conceptual representation of the system of justice, while *al-Qistās* serves as the instrument or mechanism for its practical implementation.

The application of Syahrur's anti-synonymity theory in this study confirms that each term in the Qur'an carries a specific and contextual meaning and cannot be replaced by another term without altering the intended message of revelation. This reflects the linguistic precision and semantic inimitability of the Qur'an, where every lexical choice embodies a deliberate and meaningful divine intent. Therefore, the distinction between *al-Mīzān* and *al-Qistās* is not merely a matter of linguistic variation, but rather an affirmation of two interrelated dimensions of justice: justice as a divine principle governing the balance of all creation, and justice as a value that must be actualized in human actions. Accordingly, this study reinforces the view that the Qur'an presents a highly precise, dynamic, and contextually relevant system of meaning applicable to various aspects of human life.

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