MUHAMMAD SHAHRUR'S HERMENEUTICS: INTERPRETING CULTURAL PHENOMENA THROUGH A MODERN ISLAMIC LENS AND CONTEXTUAL LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

In the context of tafsir studies, especially those concerning the language approach has a very significant role. History records that the reading of the Quranic text with a language approach has been done since the time of the Prophet, companions, tabi'in and continues from generation to generation until now. One of the linguistic discourses that became the theme of Muhammad Syahrur's debate was about the synonymity of the Quran. The synonymity of the meaning of a word in any language is a common thing. Likewise, the Quran is inseparable from this element of synonymity, because — even though the Quran as a transcendent revelation of God, has been formed into Arabic text. In understanding the Quran, Muhammad Syahrur tries to study interpretation with theological reconstruction and traditional interpretation. For Muhammad Syahrur, the language of the Quran remains 'tauqifi' even though its content is 'interpretable', and contextualization is in the text itself through linguistic structures. Therefore, Muhammad Syahrur considers that there is no synonymity in language, especially in the Quran.

Abstract

Pendekatan bahasa dalam konteks kajian tafsir memiliki peranan yang sangat signifikan. Sejarah mencatat bahwa pembacaan teks Al Quran dengan pendekatan bahasa telah dilakukan sejak masa Rasulullah, sahabat, tabi'in dan terus berlanjut dari generasi ke generasi hingga sekarang. Salah satu diskursus kebahasaan yang menjadi tema perdebatan Muhammad Syahrur adalah mengenai sinonimitas Al Quran. Sinonimitas makna sebuah kata dalam bahasa manapun merupakan hal yang lazim terjadi. Demikian halnya dengan Al Quran yang tidak terlepas dari unsur sinonimitas ini, sebab - meski Al Quran sebagai wahyu Tuhan yang bersifat transenden, telah terbentuk ke dalam teks berbahasa Arab. Dalam memahami Al Quran Muhammad Syahrur mencoba mengkaji penafsiran dengan rekonstruksi teologi dan penafsiran tradisional. Bagi Muhammad Syahrur bahasa Al Quran tetap 'tauqifi' walau dalam kandungannya 'interpretable', dan kontekstualisasi ada pada teks itu sendiri melalui struktur linguistik. Karena itu, Muhammad Syahrur menilai bahwa tidak ada sinonimitas dalam bahasa, khususnya pada Al Quran.

INTRODUCTION

The development of the times demands the meaning and interpretation of the Quran on the implementation of values. The idea of revising and reinterpreting the primary texts of Islam has become a concern of Muslim scholars. It must be recognized that the development of Quranic studies from time to time is always marked by the emergence of a number of academics who offer new ideas in the methodology of understanding the Quran, as Muhammad Syaḥrur said, "ṣaliḥ li kulli zaman wa makan". Therefore, some of Muhammad Syaḥrur's theories were phenomenal and influential in his time as a hermeneutic study of the Quran. . One of the linguistic discourses that became the theme of Muhammad Syahrur's debate was the synonymity of the Quran. Synonymity of meaning of a word in any language is a common thing. Likewise, the Quran is inseparable

from this element of synonymity, because — although the Quran as a transcendent revelation of God, has been formed into Arabic text.[1]

Various Quranic phrases have the same meaning, such as the word *khfa-yakhfu* with *khasyiya-yakhsya* which both mean fear, which in Indonesian, smart—intelligent, corpse—corpse—corpse, sun—sun and others. As in Quraish Shihab's view that the uniqueness of Arabic is also seen in its richness, not only in the gender of the word, or in its number, namely singular (*mufrad*), dual (*musann*), and plural (*jama'*), but also in the richness of its vocabulary and synonyms.[2]

In the context of tafsir studies, especially those concerning the language approach, it has a very significant role. History records that the reading of the text of the Quran with a language approach has been done since the time of the Prophet, companions, tabi'in and continues from generation to generation until now. Therefore, generally the methods of tafsir research that have been well known are tahlily tafsir, ijmaly tafsir, muqaran tafsir and maudhu'i tafsir, but still require operational techniques, namely the explanation of the meanings of verses. For this reason, the urgency of the language approach is needed, because the object of interpretation of Al—Quran is text. Where, the text will provide a variety of meanings produced by the interpretation that has an impact on its own implications and consequences in its interpretation. For this reason, a substantial understanding and understanding of how to study the Quran scientifically is needed.[3]

One thing that we must understand is that the Quran can be studied with various approaches and perspectives, such as theology, psychology, sociology, science and grammar. In the Quran study approach, the memorization (text) of the Quran is studied as an object that emphasizes analysis on the linguistic side to understand the Quran comprehensively in depth. Practically, this approach is carried out by paying attention to the accuracy of the redaction and text frame of the Quranic verses. Related to the language approach in the Quran, it is interesting what Thoshihiko Izutsu said: "*God reveals through language, and not in a mysterious language but in a clear and understandable human language*".[4] That is why humans can study the Quran from various aspects, including its language or linguistics.

Some Muslim intellectuals have tried to apply the linguistic theory developed by Ferdinand de Saussure.[5] But in its application there are different styles from one another. One of them is Muhammad Syahrur, a scientist in the field of engineering of the Syrian nationality with a specialization in defense mechanics and geology, who has recently become more famous as a progressive Muslim thinker.

In understanding the Quran, Muhammad Syahrur tries to study interpretation with theological reconstruction and traditional interpretation. For Muhammad Syahrur, the

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[1] Latifah Anwar, 'Hermeneutika Hadis Muhammad Syahrur', *TAJDID: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin*, 20.1 (2021), 116–43.

[2] Sandi Wahid Rahmat Nugraha and Irwan Abdurrohman, 'Makna Qiraah Dan Tilawah Dalam Alquran Perspektif Teori Anti Sinonimitas Muhammad Syahrur', *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'An Dan Tafsir*, 5.1 (2020), 42–53.

[3] Ardiansyah Ardiansyah, 'Konsep Sunnah Dalam Perspektif Muhammad Syahrur Suatu Pembacaan Baru Dalam Kritik Hadis', *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, 33.1 (2009).

[4] Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism: A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (Univ of California Press, 2016); Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur_n* (McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP, 2002), I.

[5] Barsihannor Barsihannor and M Ilham Kamil, 'AL-QURAN DAN ISU KONTEMPORER (Mengungkap Pemikiran Hermeneutika Muhammad Syahrur)' (Alauddin University Press).

language of the Quran remains 'tauqifi' even though its content is 'interpretable', and contextualization is in the text itself through linguistic structures. Therefore, Muhammad Syahrur considers that there is no synonymity in language, especially in the Quran.

But on the other hand, criticism from traditional Muslim thinkers and mufassirs considers his linguistic theory trapped in ratios and empirics, even though the Quran has transcendent sides that are not all realized in the real world .

DISCUSSION

History of Muhammad Syahrur's Hermeneutic Thought

Muhammad Syahrur ibn Da'ib was born in Damascus, Syria, April 11, 1938. His education began at the ibtida'iyyah i`dadiyyah school, and sanawiyyah in Damascus. Muhammad Syahrur obtained his sanawiyyah diploma from the school of `Abd ar－Rahman al－Kawakib in 1957. From 1957 to 1964 he became interested in Marxist theories and practices, known as dialectical materialism and historical materialism. Apart from Marxism, he was also influenced by the thoughts of Friedrik Hegel and Alfred North Head, as they were considered to be two figures who inspired many Marxian thinkers.[6] After earning his diploma in 1965, he was appointed as a teaching assistant at the faculty of civil engineering at Damascus University. A few months later, he received a scholarship from Damascus University to continue his Master's and Doctoral programs at the National University of Ireland with a specialization in land mechanics and foundations.

Syahrur's attention to the study of Islamic sciences actually began when he was in Dublin Ireland in 1970－1980, when he was taking master's and doctoral programs. The influence and role of his friend, doctor Ja'far Dakh Al－Bab, was very large in Muhammad Syahrur's thinking. Through his meetings with Ja'far in 1958 and 1964, Muhammad Syahrur was able to learn a lot about the sciences of language, and to understand Muhammad Syahrur's thinking, it can be seen in the classification in three phases.[7]

The first phase between (1970－1980), began when Muhammad Syahrur took Masters and Doctoral degrees in civil engineering at the National University of Ireland (Dublin). This phase was a phase of contemplation and laying the foundation of his understanding of the basic terms in the *Quran as 'al-Dzikr'*. This was due to the influence of taqlidic thoughts inherited and existing in the treasures of old and modern Islamic works, in addition to his tendency to Islam as an ideology (aqidah) both in the form of kalam and fiqh madzhab.

In the second phase (1980－1986), he met his old friend, Dr. Ja'far, who studied language at a university in the Soviet Union between 1958－1964. On this occasion, Muhammad Syahrur conveyed his great concern for the study of language, philosophy and understanding of the Quran. Through dialectical discussions with Dr. Ja'far, Muhammad Syahrur learned about linguistics including philology, and became familiar with the views of al－Fara' Абы 'Ali al－Farisi and his students Ibn Jinni and al－Jurhani . [8]

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[6] Qaem Aulassyahied, 'Studi Kritis Konsep Sunnah Muhammad Syahrur', *Kalimah*, 13 (2015), 139–56.

[7] Anwar.

[8] Ibn Jinni was an Arabic and nahwu scholar who was born in Mosul in 322 AH and died in Baghdad in 392 AH. Apart from being a nahwu scholar, Ibn Jinni was also a poet. Ibn Jinni defined language as sounds that are spoken to convey meaning, while al-Jurjani defined it as what is expressed to convey meaning.

Muhammad Syahrur argues that a word has one meaning and Arabic is a language in which there are no synonyms, while nahwu and balaghah cannot be separated.[9] For Muhammad Syahrur there is a misunderstanding in the teaching of Arabic in various Madrasahs and Universities. From this linguistic phenomenology of religious texts, Muhammad Syahrur began to analyze the verses of the Quran with a new model. Precisely, in 1984 he began to write the main points of his thoughts with Dr. Ja'far which began with a deepening of eating from *'al-kitab'*.[10]

In the third phase (1986−1990), he began to take the initiative to organize his thoughts into specific topics. In late 1986 and 1987 he completed the first chapter of 'Al−kitab wa Al Quran'. In his writing, he began by discussing the teachings of Islam and determining a theme. Then collecting verses related to the theme, then he used the method of linguistic approach in understanding the verses inspired by, Dr. Ja'far Dakk al−Bab by taking the rules of language set by Ibn Faris and Abu 'Ali al−Farisi as taught by Ibn Jinni and 'Abd al−Qahir al−Jurjani.[11]

According to Muhammad Syahrur, one of the advantages of Islamic teaching is in two aspects of motion, namely constant motion (istiqamah), and dynamic motion (hanifiyyah). These two things allow Islamic teachings to be more flexible. According to him, the istiqamah aspect of Islamic teaching is 'hududullah' (the limits of God's law) itself, so that the dynamic motion, namely the hanifiyyah aspect (changes in time and place) will remain within the limits of God's law. In a sense, humans continue to move following the development of space and time (aspects of hanifiyyah) but still within the limits of Allah's '*hududllah*'.[12]

In the methodology of understanding the Quran and Sunnah, Muhammad Syahrul offers a theory of understanding the Quran textually and contextually. To analyze a meaning he uses a scientific linguistic approach by comparing the synchronic study of al−Jurjani's methodology and Ibn al−Jinni's diachronic which is called the scientific historical approach. In addition to this approach, Muhammad Syahrur utilizes a semantic approach by using syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationship analysis. While in the level of application using Limit theory, as in the aspect of Istiqamah and hanafiah motion.

Limit Theory (Nazhariyyah Al-Hudud) Muhammad Shharur

Muhammad Syahrur describes this theory as Allah's command expressed in the Al−Quran and Sunnah to provide a minimum limit and maximum limit to the application of law (sharia). More specifically, Muhammad Syahrur provides examples of the application of this Limit theory in several legal cases in the Quran, *First*, the position of the minimum limit, this applies to women who can be married. *Second*, the position of the maximum limit applies to the crime of theft. *Third*, the position of the minimum and maximum limits together, applies to inheritance law. *Fourth*, the position of the minimum and maximum limits together at one point, this applies to the law of adultery with one hundred lashes. *Fifth*, the position of the maximum limit with one point approaching a straight line without touching, applies to the relationship between men and women who

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[9] Mia Fitriah Elkarimah, 'Sintagmatik-Paradigmatik Syahrur Dalam Teks Al-Qur'an', *Jurnal Lingua*, 11.2 (2016).

[10] Muhammad Yusuf, 'Bacaan Kontemporer: Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Muhammad Syahrur', *Jurnal Diskursus Islam*, 2.1 (2014), 52–72.

[11] Arzam Arzam, 'Pemahaman Muhammad Syahrur Tentang Al-Qur'an', *Al-Qisthu: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu-Ilmu Hukum*, 12 (2014), 37–49.

[12] Mia Fitriah Elkarimah, 'Pendekatan Bahasa Syahrur Dalam Kajian Teks Al-Qur'an;(Al Kitab Wal Al Qur'an; Qira'ah Muashirah)', *Deiksis*, 7.02 (2015), 133–48.

are close to adultery. *Sixth*, the position of the "positive" maximum limit cannot be crossed and the negative lower limit can be crossed, this applies to the distribution of wealth, here a person is given two options in distributing wealth, namely, usury and zakat.[13]

Limit Theory

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ* وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ (النساء: ١٣ - ١٤)

(These laws) are the ordinances of Allah. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, Allah will admit him into a paradise in which rivers flow, and therein they will abide forever; and that is a great victory. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses His decrees, Allah will cast him into Hellfire, and therein he will abide; and for him will be a humiliating punishment.

Muhammad Shaḥrur emphasized that in the Quranic sentence, "*tilka ḥududullah*" is the party who has the authority to set limits is the Prophet and Messenger. Muhammad's authority is not full but as the main mujtahid in Islamic Legal Ijtihad. Therefore, the laws that are determined are temporal—conditional according to understanding, times, and civilization, so that legal provisions are not binding until the end of time. For this reason, there is room to look at the Quran and do ijtihad with the situation and conditions motivated by science at the present time.

Through the physics argument, Muhammad Shaḥrur concluded that there is no object whose movement is in the form of a straight line. All objects, from the smallest electron to the largest galaxy, move in a non—straight line. Therefore, when humans can carry this nature, they will be able to live in harmony with the universe. Similarly, the ḥanifīah content in Islamic law tends to always follow the needs of some members of society through adjustments to the traditions of the community.

To control this change, it is necessary to have a straight line of istiqamah to maintain the rules of law. This is the context in which the formulation of boundary theory was born. The straight line is not a property of nature, but rather a gift of God to exist together with the ḥanifīah to govern society. This mathematical illustration, depicts the relationship between ḥanifiah and istiqamah with a curve and a straight line moving on a matrix;
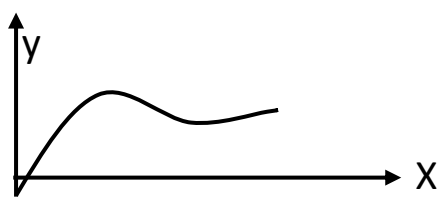
The X-axis represents the epoch or time context of history, while the Y-axis represents the laws established by Allah Swt. This curve illustrates the dynamics of human ijtihad moving in line with the X-axis which is limited by the laws determined by Allah on the Y-axis.

Based on his study of the legal verses above, Muhammad Syahrur organized six mathematical formulations of this theory with the following details:[14]

First, '*Halah Hadd Al-A'la*' (position of the maximum limit), namely, the range of the result (range) of the function equation $Y = F(x)$ in the form of a downward—facing curved line (closed curve), which has only one maximum turning point, coinciding with

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[13] Aulassyahied.

[14] Abdul Mustaqim, 'Epitemologi Tafsir Kontemporer (Studi Komparatif Antara Fazlur Rahman Dan Muhammad Syahrur)' (Pasca Sarjana, 2007).

a straight line and parallel to the X axis. For this case, see Surah Al－Maidah:38. The punishment for a male or female thief is to cut off the hand. Cutting off the hand here is the maximum punishment. Hence, the punishment for a thief cannot exceed cutting off the hand but can be lower than the punishment for cutting off the hand.

Second, 'Halah Hadd Al-A'la' (minimum limit position). The result area is an open curve that has one minimum limit point, and is placed close to the line parallel to the X－axis. This case can be seen in Surah An－Nisa:22－23, about women who are forbidden to marry. According to Muhammad Syahrur, the women mentioned in the verse are the minimum limit of women who are forbidden to marry. Therefore, women who are forbidden to marry are more than just those mentioned in the verse. For example, the verse does not mention cousins as women who are forbidden to marry. However, cousins can be included in the women who are forbidden to marry, when it is found that research shows that marriage with such close relatives can result in mentally handicapped or physically handicapped offspring.

Third, 'Halah Hadd Al 'Ala wa Al-Adna Ma'an (the position of the maximum and minimum limits exist simultaneously). The result area is a closed and open curve that has maximum and minimum turning points respectively. The two turning points coincide on a straight line parallel to the X－axis. This case can be seen in Surah An－Nisa' 3, concerning polygamy. According to Muhammad Syahrur, people who want to commit polygamy must first fulfill two conditions, first, the quantity requirement. This requirement concerns the limit on the number of women who may be polygamous. According to Syahrur, the minimum limit of polygamy is two and the maximum limit is four. *Second, the* quality requirement. According to Syahrur, the person who wants to commit polygamy must have a concern in himself that he cannot do justice to orphans. But he must still try to be fair. In addition, the woman who wants to be polygamous must be a widow and have orphans.

Fourth, 'Halah Al-Mustaqim' (straight position). The result area is a straight line parallel to the X axis. This position places the maximum turning point at the minimum turning point. There is only one case of this kind in the Qur'an, namely Q.S An－Nur:2, concerning adultery. According to Shahrur, in the case of adultery there is no other option for us but to apply flogging as mentioned in the verse above.

Fifth, 'Halah Al-Hadd Al-A'la duna Al-Mamas bi Al-Hadd Al-Adna abadan'. (the position of the maximum limit without touching the minimum limit line at all). The result area is an open curve formed from a base point that almost coincides with the X－axis and a final point that almost coincides with the Y－axis. This straight line has no minimum or maximum limit and is only marked by one straight line point. This straight line is defined by Allah as sexual intercourse between a man and a woman outside of marriage, which is called zina.

Sixth, 'Halah Hadd Al-A'la muujab mughlaq la yajuz tajawuzuhu wa Al-Hadd Al-Aadna Salib yajuz Tajawzuhu (position of positive maximum limit and negative minimum limit). The result area in this position is a wave curve with the maximum turning point in the positive region and the minimum turning point in the negative region. Both coincide with a straight line parallel to the X－axis. This sixth limit theory is used to analyze

financial transactions. The highest limit on borrowing money is called interest tax and the lowest limit on giving is called zakat.[15]

Muhammad Syahrur's Quranic Hermeneutics

In Muhammad Syahrur's hermeneutic methodology, the Quran is a '*subject of interpretation'*. Where, in carrying out 'exegetic' activities[16] Muslims today need to restore the sides that are no longer relevant. Muhammad Syahrur recommends treating the Quran as if it had just been revealed. This assumption is an embodiment of the jargon or ideal concept of the Quran '*salih likulli zaman wa makan*'.

In reasoning the Quran, Muhammad Syahrur takes a linguistic approach which he calls 'al−manhaj al−tarikhi'.[17] In this method, Muhammad Syahrur combines the linguistic stages of Abu Ali al−Farisi, Ibn Jinni, and Abdul Qadir al−Jurjani by concluding that synonymity does not exist in Arabic. So that the linguistic approach as a method of understanding the Quran as literary and scientific. In literary understanding, the meaning of the Quranic texts through a descriptive significant approach known as 'balaghah' and grammatical 'nahwu'. [18]As for the scientific understanding, the meaning of the texts in the Quran uses a scientific historical approach with an 'anti−synonymity' approach.[19]

For Muhammad Syahrur there are three linguistic principles in hermeneutics beyond the concept of 'anti−synonymity' in language; *First*; Language is a system of agreement. So that there is a connection between speech, thought, and the function of language as a means of conveying ideas.*Second*; Language is a social phenomenon and its construction is related to the context in which it is conveyed. In this case, language, like thought, does not grow at once perfectly (synchronic). Initially, thought is only sensory and personification (*idrak makhsus wa musyakhkhas*), then it becomes abstract. As for language, initially it was only to reveal the sensed things then abstracted in grammar. *Thirdly*, there is a connection between language and thought, thus ruling out 'synonymity'.[20]

In the basics of linguistic methodology, Muhammad Syahrur makes restrictions on methods, namely:

1. In language there are no synonyms, even in one word may have many meanings. What has been believed to be a synonym is nothing more than a false 'khud'ah (trick).
2. Words are expressions of meaning, therefore the most important thing about language is meaning.

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[15]Mazaahib. Journal of Comparative Law. Fak. Sharia and Islamic Law UIN Suanan Kalijaga. Volume 5, Number 2, December 2017. RENEWAL OF ISLAMIC LEGAL THOUGHT: A Theory of Muhammad Syahrur's Hudud Studies. Fuad Mustafid. pp: 312-318.

[16] Abdul Mustaqim, 'Teori HudÃ» d Muhammad Syahrur Dan Kontribusinya Dalam Penafsiran Al-Qurâ€™ An', *AL QUDS: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Hadis*, 1.1 (2017), 1–26.

[17] Mustaqim, 'Epitemologi Tafsir Kontemporer (Studi Komparatif Antara Fazlur Rahman Dan Muhammad Syahrur)'.

[18]Significance by Roland Barthes is identified with the term semiosis, which is a process that combines the signifier and signified to produce a sign. Kris Budian, Vocabulary of Semiotics (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1999), pp. 21.Ibid. p.62

[19] Alfitri Alfitri, 'Studi Quran Kontemporer: Telaah Atas Hermeneuitik Quran Nashr Hamid Abu Zayd', *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, 2002, 50–66.

[20] Anwar.

3. Any language cannot be understood unless it is found to be compatible with reason and objective reality.

In his work 'Al－Kitab wa Al Quran', Muhammad Syahrur uses the method of term classification which is the starting material for his interpretation theory;

1. Not a single word has a synonym. Thus, a word's meaning can be reduced by the process of historical evolution or more than that, it can also carry additional meanings from other words that are similar, but not the same.

2. Every expression in Arabic has an independent meaning. There is no contextualization of either the text, its reception or its composition. In other words, the Quran is a text without any context. The Quran is a text that stands on its own without any connection to history or the society to which it was revealed. For him, the most important context in understanding the Quran is the political and intellectual context in which people live.

3. Hermeneutics does not seek the hidden meaning behind the text, but directs its attention to the objective meaning of the text itself, regardless of the subjective intentions of the author or others. Therefore, an interpretation of a text does not establish an intersubjective relationship between the subjectivity of the author and the subjectivity of the reader, but rather a relationship between the two discourses of the text and the discourse of interpretation. Interpretation is considered to have successfully achieved its goal if the world of the text and the world of the interpreter have merged into one.

4. The term al－Kitab is different from the Quran. Al－Kitab is a set of themes revealed to the Prophet Muhammad consisting of verses in the Mushaf. Whereas the Quran is mutasyabihat verses which are often called 'as－sab' al－masani'.

5. The term 'Quran' is part of al－Kitab. The Quran is a special term that only includes one part of the Bible which consists of mutasyabihat verses that have the dimension of al－nubuwwah. While Umm al－ Kitab is one part of the Bible which consists of muhkamat verses which have the dimension of al－risalah.[21]

Muhammad Syahrur's Hadith Hermeneutics

In Muhammad Syahrur's view, hadith and sunnah are the life of the Prophet Muhammad as a prophet (messenger) produced by his interaction with certain events in certain situations while he was alive. In addition, hadith or sunnah as a result of historical products that occurred in the life of the Prophet without the content of legal legitimacy.[22] Therefore, to understand the hadith, 'takwil is needed as a hermeneutic interpretation, as he defines ta'wil as hermeneutic.

Etymologically Muhammad Shahrur defines sunnah from the word sanna which means something that is easy or flows smoothly. This understanding refers to the custom of the Arabs when saying *maa' masnun* which is interpreted as water that flows smoothly with ease. This etymological understanding can be understood that what is meant by sunnah is an easy and smooth action. As for the terminology, Syahrur divides it into three criteria, sunnah as the result of the Prophet's ijtihad in determining the law without violating Allah's provisions in the Quran which are temporal. Therefore, the sunnah is

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[21] Mohammad Lutfianto and Fitrotun Nafsiyah, 'Hermeneutika Muhammad Syahrur', *Al-Thiqah: Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman*, 5.1 (2022), 17–30; Anwar.

[22] Anwar.

not an absolute that is not required to be practiced in all times. Thus, the sunnah as the Prophet's ijtihad in establishing God's sharia which was applied in his day.[23]

Muhammad Syahrur distinguishes between the terms sunnah and hadith. In his definition, the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad is the Prophet's method of interaction with the Bible in accordance with the objective conditions behind his life. In the prophetic context, the Prophet Muhammad is a role model for Muslims, including how he exemplifies the various limits of God's law (hudud), morals, and everything that falls into the area of connected obedience (wa ati'u Allah wa al−Rasul). Thus, the Prophet's sunnah as a method of moving between the boundaries of God's law (hudud), or creating local−temporal boundaries in issues that are not mentioned in the Qur'an.[24] For Muhammad Shahrur, the Prophetic tradition is defined as the result of the Prophet's interaction with a particular objective reality.[25]

In the hermeneutics of hadith, Muhammad Syahrur classifies the sunnah into 'Sunnah *Al Nubuwwah*' and Sunnah Al−Risalah. According to him, *Sunnah Al Nubuwwah* deals with the reports of the 'unseen' as contained in the israiliyyat stories, including the sunnah that contains the glory of the Prophet and the prophetic message.[26]

In this regard, the '*Sunnah Al-Nubuwwah*' falls into two categories: *First*, the traditions about the unseen and must be consistent with reality and reason. In case of contradiction they can be ignored. *Secondly*, the traditions of the Prophet's interpretation or explanation of the Book of Allah, such as the revelation of Surah '*Lailatul Al-Qadr*, which must be consistent with the Quran itself.[27] Otherwise, they are ignored The '*Sunnah Al-Risalah*' are the laws of sharia, worship, muamalah, and morals. In its interpretation, this sunnah must be obeyed, especially those related to law. Muhammad Syahrur divides the '*Sunnah Al-Risalah*' into sunnah related to morals and worship, and does not contain new laws. However, this sunnah has legal force to be obeyed when the Prophet was alive and after his death. In addition, '*Sunnah Al-Risalah*' which was only obeyed when the Prophet was alive. This Sunnah relates to the daily activities of the Prophet in dressing, drinking, eating, and fighting. So that it can be understood based on the current context and obeyed contextually not textually.[28]

CONCLUSION

Muhammad Syahrur developed a new method of understanding the Quran called Qira'ah Mu'ashirah (reading development). With this method, Syahrur developed a theory that is different and more in line with the current context. Muhammad Syahrur argues that the standard method of understanding religious texts is not determined by ideological and genealogical backgrounds, but rather by the relevance and contemporaneity of the method to the character of the text in general. For Muhammad Syahrur, it is advisable to treat the Qur'an as if it had just been revealed. He argues that

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[23] Ali Akbar, 'Philosophical Hermeneutics and Contemporary Muslim Scholars' Approaches to Interpreting Scripture', *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 47.5 (2021), 587–614; Barsihannor and Kamil.

[24] Ardiansyah; Aulassyahied.

[25] Nurul Hakim and Tantin Puspita Rini, 'Sunnah Perspektif Muhammad Syahrur', *Al-Adabiya: Jurnal Kebudayaan Dan Keagamaan*, 15.01 (2020), 1–24; Fuad Mustafid, 'Pembaruan Pemikiran Hukum Islam: Studi Tentang Teori Hudud Muhammad Syahrur', *Al-Mazaahib: Jurnal Perbandingan Hukum*, 5.2 (2017).

[26] Alam Tarlam, 'Analisis Dan Kritik Metode Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Muḥammad Shaḥrūr', *Empirisma*, 24.1 (2015), 94–103.

[27] Yusuf.

[28] Akbar.

the Qur'n is a 'subject of interpretation', and Muslims need to restore those parts of it that are no longer relevant.

Muhammad Syahrur has built a methodology of interpretation based on linguistic and philosophical principles. On the linguistic aspect, he uses a historical scientific approach, '*linguistic historicity*', where the linguistic process becomes a hermeneutical approach built on the following principles; *First*, it is possible for the reader to know the author's intention by reading the text alone, without having to refer to the author of the text. *Secondly*, no one has the right to claim absolute understanding of what he reads. Third, the absence of a Prophet after the Prophet Muhammad, necessitates that understanding of religious texts will always be relative. Fourth, the flexibility of meaning can be applied according to changing social conditions. Fifth, the Quran and other religious texts do not experience absolute redundancy, semantics and synonymity (similarity in the meaning of a word).

From the explanation above, several points of conclusion can be drawn from Muhammad Shaḥrur's hermeneutical thinking; First, it is based on the 'triadic' concept[29], including when discussing the Quran. The implication is that the Quran will always be in a dynamic process, and is relative, because it will always follow the times. Second, in basing his linguistic study on the Quran, he rejects the concept of synonymity in language, including in the Quran itself. From here he rejects the difference in meaning and definition between terms.

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[29]Triadic is a communication process in which there are three participants. One person acts as a communicator and the other two as communicants.

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