

# PROGRESSIVE HERMENEUTICS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FAZLUR RAHMAN AND KHALED M. ABOU EL FADL'S METHODOLOGY IN INTERPRETING THE QUR'AN

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## ABSTRACT

*This study examines the progressive Islamic hermeneutics of Fazlur Rahman and Khaled M. Abou El Fadl, focusing on their methodologies in interpreting the Qur'an. The background highlights the necessity for contemporary Islamic thought to address modern challenges while remaining rooted in authentic tradition. The research objectives are to compare and contrast Rahman's and Abou El Fadl's interpretative frameworks, identifying key similarities and differences in their approaches. Using a comparative analysis methodology, this research delves into their respective hermeneutical principles, the socio-historical context of their interpretations, and the application of their processes to specific Qur'anic texts. The results showed that both scholars emphasize contextual understanding and ethical considerations; Rahman advocates a double movement theory and historical contextualization, whereas Abou El Fadl focuses on the moral trajectory of the text and interpretive pluralism. The conclusion suggests that integrating the insights from both methodologies can offer a more nuanced and adaptable approach to contemporary Qur'anic interpretation, contributing significantly to progressive Islamic thought.*

**Keywords:** *Fazlur Rahman, Khaled M. Abou El Fadl, Progressive Hermeneutics*

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## INTRODUCTION

As time passes, the methodology for interpreting the Qur'an is increasingly developing, especially in dealing with contemporary issues. While facing these contemporary issues, various hermeneutic methodologies and originators have emerged that attempt to bridge understanding in interpreting the text of the Qur'an with modern realities in dealing with contemporary issues. The word hermeneutics can be viewed etymologically as it comes from the Greek hermeneutic, which means interpretation (Octaviani et al., 2022). The theory of hermeneutics, which comes from the word hermeneutic, has a meaning that does not only imply interpreting but also its meaning can refer to sense, namely saying, explaining, and translating (Luqman Abdul Jabbar, 2023). Therefore, in developing hermeneutics, this science began to attract interest from Muslim intellectuals in applying methods of interpreting a sacred text, namely the Qur'an. Apart from that, in the discourse of understanding offered by hermeneutic theory, interpreters must regularly be critical in interpreting a text so that there is no misunderstanding in interpreting the Qur'an.

The development of hermeneutics as a method of interpretation continues to grow today, although its use has given rise to pros and cons. Furthermore, the pros and cons have led to a debate that using hermeneutics can damage the original text of the Qur'an. This debate has divided modern hermeneutic methodology into three categories, namely objectivist, subjectivist, and progressive objectivist (Huda, 2023). The pros and cons of hermeneutics are not simple; these three schools have various ideas and applications. Thus, many Islamic intellectuals do not immediately receive a set of hermeneutics (Husna et al., 2024). According to Sahiron Syamsuddin, a leading academic from Indonesia, these quasi-hermeneutics have their tendencies. The first school is the conservative quasi-objectivist school, this school tends to a view that the text of the Qur'an must be understood and interpreted as the Qur'an was first revealed to Muhammad and delivered to early generations of Muslims. Then, the second stream is the quasi-subjectivist stream which has a different view from the conservative quasi-objectivist. The subjectivist stream emphasizes that every interpretation is relative and does not reveal the original of the Qur'an, as Muhammad Syahrur, as this quasi assumes that the interpretation of the Prophet Muhammad is only an interpretation of the early Muslim generation. The current interpretation is what he uses. Finally, there is the progressive quasi-objectivist stream, which has a tendency, such as conservative objectivists, to reveal the history of interpretation from the early days to the present (Subekti, 2023).

According to the Author, the three quasi mentioned above have their respective strengths and weaknesses. However, the progressive quasi-objectivist school is relevant in dealing with contemporary issues in interpreting the Qur'an. Apart from the various methodologies offered by the originators of hermeneutics, it is a method of interpretation that triggers the pros and cons of interpreting the Qur'an. Muslim

scholars began to emerge who brought their hermeneutical methodologies, these scholars were Fazlur Rahman and Khaled M. Abou El Fadl from the progressive quasi-objectivist group. As it has been known that the Qur'an is *shalih li kulli masa wal*, Fazlur Rahman offers Double Movement as a hermeneutic method that can deal with contemporary issues (Juliansyah, 2019). Muslim intellectual Khaled M. Abou El Fadl, the originator of hermeneutics with a progressive quasi-objectivist tendency, emphasizes the importance of justice and inclusiveness in interpreting the Qur'an. Even though they come from the same group, these two figures have similarities and different ideas in applying the hermeneutical method. Therefore, through this comparative research study, the Author explores the basic principles of the methodology offered by Fazlur Rahman and Khaled M. Abou El Fadl in interpreting the Qur'an as a progressive quasi-objectivist. By understanding these two approaches, readers are expected to critically understand the hermeneutical and reflective implications for understanding the Qur'an in facing contemporary development.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This paper is a qualitative approach a basic systematic pattern in a study forming various processes that must be carried out. Qualitative research is data analysis to find and compile all available data from multiple sources to facilitate understanding of a study (Manilet & Kindi, 2024). Data collection included primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include the Qur'an and Hadith, analyzed using thematic analysis. Secondary sources include contemporary works by Muslim intellectuals such as Fazlur Rahman and Khaled M. Abou El Fadl from literature data in books, articles, journals, and previous research discussing related topics. There are at least three research questions to answer this study's objectives: First, how is the methodology for applying Fazlur Rahman and Khaled M. Abou El Fadl's hermeneutics as quasi-progressive in interpreting the Qur'an?; Second, what are the differences and similarities between Fazlur Rahman and Khaled M. Abou El Fadl's hermeneutics?; and Third, how is the application of hermeneutics in dealing with contemporary issues? Thus, this study aims to understand the Qur'an in depth through a progressive hermeneutic approach to integrate textual analysis of the Qur'an with critical discourse analysis of classical and modern interpretations and to answer contemporary issues using the perspective of Muslim intellectuals, namely Fazlur Rahman and Khaled M. Abou El Fadl so that it can reflect the understanding of the Qur'an in dealing with the development of the times.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### RESULTS

#### Intellectual Biography of Fazlur Rahman

In studying one's thoughts, the first step that should be considered is to understand the life history and social conditions that influence the background of the

thoughts of the figure being studied. Fazlur Rahman was born on September 21, 1919, in the Hazara region, which is located in northwest Pakistan. Rahman was born in an environment known for great thinkers such as Shah Waliyullah al-Dahlawi, Sayyid Khan, Amir Alidan, and M. Iqbal. As a critical freethinker and neo-modernist, Rahman continued the social conditions of debate between modernist, traditionalist, and fundamentalist groups, who each claimed the truth (Utari & Rumiarta, 2024). Thus, Fazlur Rahman's socio-historical conditions greatly influenced his psychology and methodology in interpreting the Qur'an. Moreover, his father believed Islam must have a modern perspective as a challenge and opportunity (Ahmad Ahda & Saputra, 2024). However, his father did not consider that modern education could damage faith and morals. This belief was held by Fazlur Rahman so as not to get trapped in narrow traditionalist thinking. It was amid these social conditions that Fazlur Rahman later put forward his neo-modernist ideas.

From early on, Rahman's basic understanding was rooted in the classical tradition of Islam, so in the early days of Fazlur Rahman's education in 1933, he received his education at one of the modern schools. This created a unique blend of Rahman's understanding of Islam between traditional and contemporary knowledge (Khatami & Dina, 2024). In 1940, Rahman completed his first degree in Arabic at the University of the Punjab and received a BA degree. In 1942, he successfully obtained an M.A. degree. He felt dissatisfied with his education. In 1946, he continued his education at Oxford University; Rahman interacted extensively with Western academic thought, enriching his broader scientific and critical methodology. This also influenced him in studying Islamic texts with the historical-critical method which is the hallmark of his approach. Having learning experiences, Rahman actively studied languages such as English, Greek, Latin, German, and French to expand his scientific knowledge, especially in Islamic studies of literature written by orientalist in their languages. So, Rahman could analyze classical texts with a strict academic approach. In 1950, Rahman succeeded in getting a Ph.D. in philosophy; his dissertation focused on (Avicenna) the work of Ibn Sina (Ali Ridwan Anshory, 2024). Rahman's personal experience provided a strong foundation for his methodological approach. Fazlur Rahman developed a unique approach and reformed Islamic thought in a modern context by combining traditional and contemporary education and his international experience.

After completing his education, he worked as a lecturer in Durham at a University in England, teaching Persian and Islamic philosophy. In 1958, for the first time, Rahman published his work; he also published Islamic books, almost all of which covered the normative topic of Islamic history. Rahman also tends to political science, religion, and intellectual studies in the Islamic world, so his work also provides an understanding of

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the influence of Islamic philosophy on Western thought and the broad interaction of philosophy and religion in Islamic civilization (Masyhadi, 2021).

Rahman contributed to international magazines. The works of Fazlur Rahman are as follows: 1) *Islam*, 1966: This book focuses on the history and teachings of Islam. 2) *Islamic Methodology in History*, 1965: A study of the methodology of Islamic history. 3) *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*, 1982: An analysis focusing on transforming the Islamic intellectual tradition and the modern context. 4) *Major Themes of the Quran*, 1980: A book that highlights the major themes in the Quran. 5) *Prophecy in Islam: Philosophy and Orthodoxy*, 1958: Prophecy in Islam. 6) *Health and Medicine in the Islamic Tradition*, 1987: An exploration of the traditions of health and medicine in Islam. 7) *Revival and Reform in Islam*, 2000: A collection of essays on Islamic reform and renewal. 8) *Avicenna's De Anima*, 1959: This book focuses on the psychology of Ibn Sina's great work (Adiyono, 2024).

### **Background of Khaled M. Abou El Fadl's**

As a Muslim intellectual whose full name is Khaled Medhat Abou El Fadl, originally from Kuwait, born on October 23, 1963, the child of Medhat Khaled and Afaf El Nirm, as a child, Khaled was guided to study Islamic sciences such as the Qur'an and hadith, tafsir, language, tasawwuf in contrast to Fazlur Rahman, who completed memorizing the Qur'an at the age of 10, while Khaled completed his memorization at the age of 12. Apart from actively studying the Qur'an, Khaled also devoured books in the library of his father, a legal advisor. Throughout his youthful journey in studying Islamic knowledge Khaled was once a loyal follower of Wahhabism (Hakim, 2020). After receiving his education in his hometown, Khaled continued his scientific journey in 1985 in the United States and received a B.A degree from Yale University. In 1989, at the University of Pennsylvania, he earned a doctorate in law (J.D). Then, he took a doctorate at Princeton University with a concentration in Islamic studies. At the same time, at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), he also pursued a doctorate in legal studies (Pattinaja & Budoyono, 2024). After completing his education, Khaled taught law at the University of Texas, Princeton University, and Yale Law School. In 2007, he received a Human Rights Award from the University of Oslo for supporting human rights actions. He has also served on the Board of Directors of Human Rights Watch and the Advisory Board of Middle East Watch. President George W. Bush appointed him as US commissioner for international religious freedom and an expert witness in various cases such as national security and international law (Z. Anwar, 2023).

As a leading intellectual in dealing with various contemporary issues, Khaled is also a prolific writer who offers a variety of scientific approaches to Islam and moral perspectives. Following are the works that have been published, such as *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Woman*; *Rebellion and Violence in Islamic*

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Law; And God Knows the Soldiers; The Authoritative and Authoritarian in Islamic Discourse; Islam and Challenges of Democracy; The place of Tolerance in Islam; Conference of the Books; The Search for Beauty in Islam, and others (Abou & Fadl, 2013). His work and thoughts earned Khaled the nickname "an Enlightened Paragon of liberal Islam." However, behind all of Khaled's achievements, he harbors anxiety about actions that have plagued modern Muslims. This has been observed by Khaled since 1975, this emerged due to the authoritarian interpretation of the text of the Qur'an. Moreover, Khaled discovered the practice issued by CRLO (Council for Scientific Research and Legal Opinions, Institute for Scientific Studies and Fatwas). Based on Khaled's perspective, this fatwa was influenced by Wahhabi Puritanism from the Middle East (Fikri Ramadhan et al., 2024). Then, this understanding was applied to Muslims in the United States; even though initially Khaled was a Wahhabi, Khaled was highly opposed. Since the actions of the CRLO fatwa are considered authoritarian and degrading to women, the social conditions at that time greatly influenced Khaled's thinking in upholding justice. In short, this condition began Khaled's thinking in dealing with contemporary conflicts.

### **Fazlur Rahman and The Methodology of Qur'an Interpretation**

Before further discussing the discourse of a hermeneutic theory, Rahman assumed that the pattern of relationship or pattern of revelation between the Qur'an (Holy text), Allah (as the Author), and Muhammad (as the recipient) confirms that Muhammad psychologically participated as a whole both mentally and intellectually in receiving the revelation. Therefore, hermeneutics is a theory responsible for responding to and displaying the existing meaning. The hermeneutic methodology offered by Rahman is an understanding that aims to collaborate with the tradition of Islamic science, whose objects are close to the humanities then. Rahman makes hermeneutic methodology as an analytical means to understand the message of the Qur'an from the first time it was revealed until now so that the text's message can provide an understanding function for contemporary Muslims (Simarmata et al., 2024).

In this case, Fazlur Rahman, created a theory called Double Movement with his systematic interpretation. It is in the interpretation of the holy text of the Qur'an as a result of Rahman's critical thinking on various social and intellectual historical factors. The interpretation methodology initiated by Fazlur Rahman is rational, necessary, comprehensive, systematic, and contextualist. Thus, there is no textualist interpretation based on a literalist point of view for the basic problem of interpretation. Furthermore, Muslims do not discuss deeply toward the methods and ways of interpretation appropriately. This is also Rahman's criticism of classical interpretation which is trapped in conservative understanding so that they are trapped in literal-textual interpretation. Rahman's perspective considers that interpretation is inappropriate to

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be implemented in answering problems relevant to the times. Additionally, the double movement theory is about two movements that are correlated. According to the editor of Rahman's writings, Ebrahim Moosa said that Rahman coined the double movement hermeneutic methodology to discover the norms and values of revelation relevant to Muslims without going against the times (K. Anwar & Tasliyah, 2024).

The methodology of double movement interpretation proposed by Rahman consists of moral, religious, and social statements in facing the concrete situation of the Qur'an. The answers to questions in the Qur'an are commonly explained explicitly, semi-explicitly even the Qur'an provides simple answers. Therefore, in this discourse, Rahman must examine the background of the Qur'an. The Qur'an cannot be understood atomistically, it needs to be definite and clear. This is also a criticism of Rahman since it is not explained in the classical interpretation, so it is trapped in a literal-textual interpretation. There are two double movements, namely in the first movement, there is a movement to analyze the text of the Qur'an from a historical concept. The second movement is to interpret the laws of the Qur'an as a participle of universal answers, related to comprehensive verses. To understand the implications of Fazlur Rahman's interpretation methodology in depth, as mentioned above, it consists of two steps, namely:

In the first step, one should understand the meaning of a statement, then seek answers from the Qur'an by studying the historical situation, including the limitations of society, religion, and customs, and understanding the Qur'an as a whole so that it becomes a response to a specific situation. Consequently, one should take the first movement as the beginning of the solution to the concrete problems of the Qur'an by taking into account the relevant social conditions at that time to the general principles of the central teachings of the Qur'an. The second step implies that the entire understanding of the Qur'an also functions as a corrector of the findings of the first step. If the experience fails to understand the current situation, it has failed to understand the Qur'an. The goal is that every law established forms an integrated unity with the others. Then, a movement appears back to more specific legislation, considering the current social conditions. Therefore, general teachings must be established in the relevant socio-historical conditions of the present (Sormin, 2023). This requires in-depth analysis to change the conditions of the times according to needs and to implement the values of the Qur'an in new ways.

**Table 1.** Double Movement on Contemporary Issues

Contemporary Issues	The First Step of Contextual Understanding	The Second Step of Modern Implementation
Human Rights	<p>Understanding the verses that focus on human dignity in terms of the social and historical context at the time the revelation was revealed, as explained in Qs. Al-Isra verse 70:</p> <p>وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْوَجْرِ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَقَضَلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا</p> <p><i>"And indeed We have glorified the children of Adam, We carried them on land and in the sea, We gave them good fortune and We gave them perfect advantages over most of the creatures that We have created."</i></p>	<p>Applying the principles of dignity and human rights in contemporary just policy law</p>
Gender Justice	<p>Analyzing the social and cultural context at the time of revelation, especially related to the verses about women, because in the social context when revelation was revealed, the role of women was limited and dominated by the patriarchal culture of society Qs. An-Nisa verse 1</p> <p>يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا</p> <p><i>"O people! Fear your Lord who created you from one person (Adam) and from whom Allah created a partner (eve); and from both of them Allah produced many men and women. Fear Allah, in whose name you ask each other, and maintain friendly relations. Indeed, Allah always watches over you and watches over you."</i></p>	<p>Applying the principles of equal justice to interpret and support women's rights in modern society, such as education, employment, and political participation.</p>

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Contemporary Issues	The First Step of Contextual Understanding	The Second Step of Modern Implementation
Democracy	<p>Examining how social practices in political participation in the early Islamic era, such as Qs. Asy-Shura verse 38:</p> <p>وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ</p> <p><i>“And those who respond to the call of their Lord and establish prayer, and whose affairs are decided by consultation among themselves, and they spend out of what We have provided for them.”</i></p>	<p>Developing an inclusive and democratic political system based on the principles of deliberation to create justice.</p>
Social Justice	<p>Examining the practice of wealth distribution and economic policies in the early days of Islam, as explained in Qs. Al-Hasr verse 7:</p> <p>مَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنكُمْ ؕ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ؕ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ</p> <p><i>“Whatever booty Allah gave to His Messenger from the inhabitants of the cities was for Allah, for the Messenger, relatives, orphans, the poor and people who were on a journey, so that Wealth should not only circulate among rich people. What the Messenger gives you, then accept it. And what he forbids you, leave it. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is severe in punishment.”</i></p>	<p>Implementing the equitable distribution of Wealth and economic policies that support social welfare.</p>

Source: (Setiawan & Subaidi, 2023)

Fazlur Rahman's double-motion methodology interprets the source of law in the Qur'an as interrelated, namely divine revelation and other human nature. By applying this methodology, revelation can align with the development of the times; the first step

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is to understand the historical importance of revelation, especially law. The second step uses systematic principles and values to understand contemporary problems.

### Concept of Methodology for Interpreting the Qur'an Khaled M. Abou El Fadl

The discourse of understanding Negotiative-Authoritative hermeneutics emerged as a method of interpreting the Qur'an, brought by Muslim intellectuals, namely Khaled M. Abou El Fadl. A hermeneutical approach that is inter and multidisciplinary and tends to include various methods such as linguistics, interpretative social sciences, and literary criticism also includes *musthalah al-hadith*, *rijal al-hadith*, *fiqh*, *useful fiqh*, *tafsir*, and *kalam*. This approach is combined with contemporary issues such as gender equality (Sutopo & Basri, 2023). This methodology emerged because of the problematic gap between the Reader and the Author, and the diversity of religious texts provides the opportunity for multiple interpretations and differences of opinion. This could cause an interpreter to be trapped in authoritarianism. This authority occurs when someone cannot free themselves from an authoritarian attitude; in the world of interpretation, an interpreter may have one of the autocratic or authoritative attitudes. These attitudes are seen in actions such as feeling the most correct and rejecting other ideas. On the other hand, an authoritative attitude is manifested through actions based on the best choice based on the ratio (Nihayati, 2023).

According to Khaled, the authoritarianism issued by CRLO (Council for Scientific Research and Legal Opinions, Institute for Scientific Research and Fatwa), which positions itself as God's representative, is wrong since its actions lock God's will in the realm of Islamic law. For example, the prohibition for women to drive their cars, the prohibition of raising their voices, etc. According to Khaled, the text is the Qur'an and Sunnah, which are relevant works, so Khaled rejects if the text of the Qur'an and Sunnah is interpreted arbitrarily by the Reader. The following is an example of an authoritarian fatwa issued by CRLO, which is considered to demean women: Hadith about the wife's obedience in prostrating herself to her husband and licking boils. The hadith of Abu Hurairah narrates that the Prophet said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: «لَوْ كُنْتُ أَمْرًا أَحَدًا أَنْ يَسْجُدَ لِأَحَدٍ لَأَمَرْتُ النِّسَاءَ أَنْ  
وَعَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: «لَا يَجُوزُ لِأَحَدٍ أَنْ يَسْجُدَ» «يَسْجُدَنَّ لِأَزْوَاجِهِنَّ  
لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ، وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَمْرًا أَحَدًا أَنْ يَسْجُدَ لِأَحَدٍ لَأَمَرْتُ النِّسَاءَ أَنْ يَسْجُدَنَّ لِأَزْوَاجِهِنَّ،  
«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوْ كَانَتْ امْرَأَةٌ بَحْرٌ قَدَمَيْهَا عَلَى صَدْرِ زَوْجِهَا لَكَانَتْ قَصْرَتٌ

*"If I have to order someone to prostrate to another person, then I will order a wife to prostrate to her husband." Even Annas bin Malik narrated that the Prophet once said: no human being can prostrate to another; I will order his wife to prostrate to her husband;*

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*by Allah, if a wife licks the boils that grow all over her husband's body, from toe to toe, then that is considered sufficient as her duty to her husband."*

Although physical acts such as prostration are not permitted in practice, the moral essence of this hadith emphasizes the importance of submission and respect for one's husband. Meanwhile, despite the claim that Islam values women, this hadith seems to reinforce male dominance and lower the moral status of women. Such hadith should be analyzed in depth and must meet strict standards of evidence before being referred to as a source of law since it has broad theological, moral, and social implications. In addition, this hadith is also not relevant to the explanation of the verses of the Qur'an toward the concept of household. In Surah Ar-Rum 21:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ  
بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

*"And among the signs of His power is that He created for you wives from among yourselves, so that you would be inclined and feel at ease towards them, and He made between you feelings of love and affection. Indeed, in this there are indeed signs for a people who think."*

Therefore, in this hermeneutic methodology, Khaled explains the conceptual framework to produce critical discourse from an authoritarian nature into an authoritative nature. The discussion is divided into three main points: Authenticity, Competence, determination of meaning, and representation. Structurally, these three main points refer to the structure of interpreting texts, authors and readers related to each other.

Considering the three main concepts in Khaled's hermeneutical methodology, he does not discuss authenticity. Rather, Khaled sees the reality in the study of the Sunnah by developing a survey of the criticism of the text in the socio-historical concept and the basis of contextualization in contemporary times. Thus, it is not an issue if most of the Prophet's Sunnah cannot be accepted as authentic. Khaled tends to focus on the context and what caused the Prophet to say a certain sunnah, not on its editorial content. This concept of authenticity testing is a basic component of this investigation. However, what is more crucial is testing the entire creation of a text and investigating all historical contexts to assess the role of the Prophet in a particular sunnah (Z. Anwar, 2023). In determining meaning and interpretation, the principal's involvement brings various meanings from the consequences of the meaning produced. So, sense determination results from an interconnected interaction between the Author, text, and

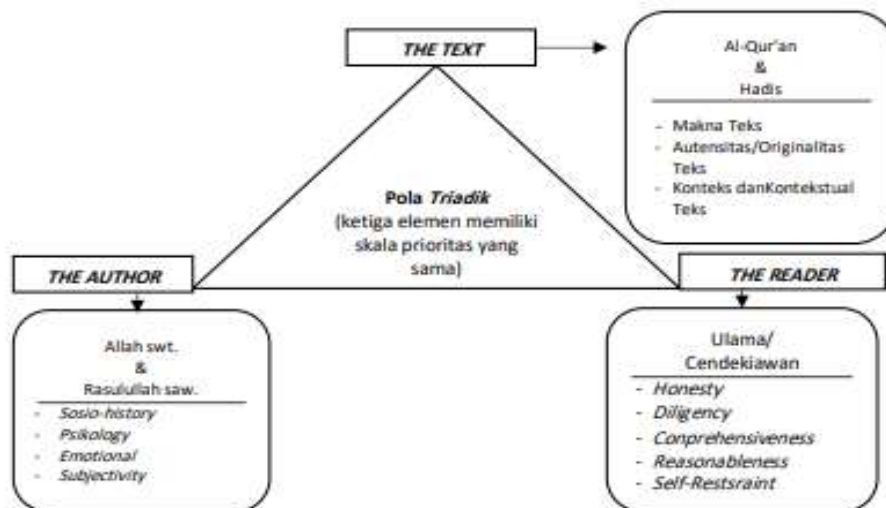
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interpreter (Reader). A detailed explanation of the roles of text, Author, and Reader is immortalized in Khaled's work entitled *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority, and Woman*, as follows:

Al-Qur'an dan Sunnah is a collection of texts written using Arabic as its official language. However, interpreters show various dialects used in the Qur'an according to the revelation's context. Therefore, the discipline of Qiraat plays a role in discussing the different Arabic dialects in it. So that, interpreters commonly begin talking about the verses of the Qur'an by studying their meaning first; Khaled stated; the Qur'an and Sunnah are texts consisting of symbols that are meaningful for their readers to know what is commanded by God and consider the usefulness of the text so that there is no "rape" of the text which could prevent it from developing in a certain era. The Author Allah dan Rasulullah is an author who cannot be separated from the process of interpreting the text.

Therefore, testing the text's authenticity is significant before understanding it. According to Khaled, to test the truth of the text, whether it is truly from Allah, it is crucial to examine the social psychological condition of the Prophet, whether conveying the text he was in a subjective or objective state. It is not only the Prophet who can influence the text but also the narrator who has an important role in determining the text. The point is, in understanding the Author's words, it is necessary to be careful in selecting the meaning of the Author's interpretation. Thus, the Reader does not arbitrarily make decisions and claims to be "God's representative." The Reader is also crucial in determining God's interpretation through the Qur'an and Hadith text. According to Khaled, the Reader can explain the text rationally; if not, it can damage the text and the Author himself.



**Figure 1.** Triadic Pattern Application of Negotiation Hermeneutics

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According to Khaled, an interpreter (Reader) has authority over persuasive religious texts or has a special representative (Islamic legal expert) and is not an authoritarian figure. If this is conducted appropriately, it will create interpretations, legal products, and the creation of authoritative, authentic, and contextual Sunnah. Therefore, the phenomenon of authoritarian interpretation makes Khaled eager to eradicate this interpretation by designing an authoritative hermeneutic theory using negotiation as a balancer of the dynamic roles between the Author, text, and Reader. Furthermore, to avoid the misuse of an authoritarian text, Khaled also provides a new offer for his hermeneutic methodology, namely that there are at least five mandatory criteria as a text reader, namely honesty, sincerity, comprehensiveness, rationality, and integrity (Nuruddin et al., 2024). Regarding these five requirements, a representative (hadith expert) must not exceed the role of God and the Prophet. According to Khaled, the importance of the mechanism for formulating and making decisions about Islamic law, avoiding authoritarian attitudes, and not forcing interpretations for political and other interests.

## DISCUSSION

Fazlur Rahman and Khaled M. Abou El Fadl are leading Muslim intellectuals who have developed hermeneutical approaches to interpreting the Qur'an. Rahman originated the "double movement," while Abou El Fadl is known for his authoritative hermeneutical approach. Fazlur Rahman put forward the double movement method, where the interpretation of the Qur'anic text must begin with understanding the historical context in which the text was revealed. The first step is to move from the past to the present by understanding the original context and meaning. The second step is to apply meaning to the modern context. This method allows for dynamic interpretation and is relevant to contemporary challenges.

On the other hand, Khaled Ia developed the concept of "negotiation hermeneutics," where the Reader, text, and context interact dynamically. Thus, Khaled's methodology focuses on the role of authority in interpretation that adheres to three things: Competence (Authenticity), determination of meaning (Itsbat al-Ma'na), and representatives who are called special representatives and representatives who influence the authority of interpretation. Consequently, the five special conditions are categorized as special representatives who uphold honesty, sincerity, wholeness, relationality, and self-control so that readers are responsible for ensuring that their interpretations do not misuse the text for power or oppression.

In terms of the advantages and disadvantages of Fazlur Rahman's methodology, it lies in its ability to connect the texts of the Qur'an with contemporary issues. Through historical understanding, to maintain the relevance of the Qur'an. Furthermore, the general public may consider his approach too academic and difficult to apply. Likewise,

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regarding the advantages of Khaled's methodology, it focuses on power dynamics in interpreting the text, thus preventing abuse of authority. His method is relevant in a context where religious texts are commonly used to justify authoritarian actions. However, the challenge in this approach is the greater subjectivity in determining legitimate authority and how to balance between the Reader and the text.

Although systematic, Fazlur Rahman's methodology may contain difficulties since access to historical information is limited. In addition, this approach requires in-depth knowledge of Islamic history, which all readers do not regularly possess. Meanwhile, Khaled M. Abou El Fadl's methodology faces the problem of ensuring that the negotiation between the Reader and the text does not lead to excessive relativism. Thus, every interpretation is considered equally valid. There is a need for a clearer mechanism for determining interpretive authority. Rahman's approach has major implications for the reform of Islamic thought, especially in the context of Islamic law, which often requires adjustment to modern realities.

In contrast, Abou El Fadl's approach emphasizes democratizing the interpretation of religious texts, inviting more participation in religious discourse, and avoiding authoritarian domination. In a modern context, these two methodologies can complement each other. Rahman's method can be used to understand the text's historical context and original meaning. In contrast, Abou El Fadl's method can ensure that this interpretation is not misused for political or individual interests.

However, according to the Author, these two methodologies have contrasting potentials. Especially when determining how interpretive authority is established. Thus, an analytical approach requires us to focus on the practical application of both methods. For example, how do these methodologies influence legal, educational, and cultural policies in contemporary Islamic societies? Rahman's approach may be more suitable for academics and policymakers, while Abou El Fadl's may be more influential at the community level and social advocacy. Fazlur Rahman and Khaled M. Abou El Fadl's contributions to Qur'anic hermeneutics are theoretical and practical. They offer a framework for understanding the religious text in a way that can address modern challenges such as pluralism, human rights, and Islamic legal reform. In conclusion, Fazlur Rahman and Khaled M. Abou El Fadl offer valuable contributions to Qur'anic hermeneutics and contemporary Islamic thought. While their approaches have strengths and weaknesses, both provide important tools for navigating the complexities of the sacred text in a changing world.

## CONCLUSION

Fazlur Rahman is known for his methodology known as the "Double Movement," which aims to connect the message of the Qur'an with the contemporary context. Rahman begins by understanding the historical context when the Qur'an was revealed

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and then applies it to modern issues. On the other hand, the core of Khaled's hermeneutic thinking cannot be separated from three things: authenticity, determination of meaning, and representation between the general and the specific. Emphasizing the importance of justice and inclusivity in interpretation, prioritizing a hermeneutics more responsive to human rights and pluralism issues. Abou El Fadl's methodology focuses on how the Qur'an can be applied in a modern social and political context, highlighting how interpretation must adapt to changing social dynamics.

The methodological similarities between these two figures are that both seek to make the Qur'an relevant to contemporary times and critically address modern issues. The difference between these two methodologies lies in Rahman's approach, which focuses more on history and the context of origin. At the same time, Abou El Fadl emphasizes practical applications in the current socio-political context. The practical implications of this study are significant for the study of progressive Islamic hermeneutics. Using Rahman's and Abou El Fadl's methodologies; this study provides a framework for understanding the Qur'an that can be applied to modern challenges such as pluralism, human rights, and Islamic legal reform. This allows policymakers, academics, and Muslim communities to develop more inclusive and equitable policies and practices. The key findings of this study emphasized that both approaches offer valuable contributions to Qur'anic hermeneutics and contemporary Islamic thought. Despite their strengths and weaknesses, both methodologies provide navigation of the complexities of the sacred text in a changing world. This study also emphasized the importance of a critical and reflective approach to understanding the Qur'an, which can assist in dealing with developments in the times and contemporary issues more effectively.

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