Deconstruction in the Maʿnā -Cum-Maghzā Method and Linguistic Hermeneutics: A Comparative Analysis of Qur'anic Interpretative Approaches

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the aspects of deconstruction in the *Ma'na Cum Maghza* method developed by Sahiron Syamsuddin and the *Linguistic Hermeneutics* introduced by Arkoun. It identifies the extent to which these two methods adopt a deconstructive approach in Qur'anic interpretation, particularly in linguistic aspects, and compares the characteristics of deconstruction within them. This research employs a comparative analysis method using a *library research* approach, where data is collected from various relevant sources. Three main questions form the foundation of this study: (1) How are *Ma'na Cum Maghza* and *Linguistic Hermeneutics* applied in Qur'anic interpretation through a linguistic approach? (2) What makes these two methods deconstructive? (3) How do the concepts of deconstruction in these two methods compare? The findings indicate that both *Ma'na Cum Maghza* and *Linguistic Hermeneutics* contain certain methodological aspects that are deconstructive. However, this study also reveals that neither method can be fully categorized as entirely deconstructionist. Several aspects contradict the principles of deconstruction, such as the tendency of *Ma'na Cum Maghza* towards contextualization and the structuralist approach employed in Arkoun's *Linguistic Hermeneutics*. Thus, Sahiron Syamsuddin and Arkoun are not radical proponents of deconstructive reading in their interpretative methods. The theoretical implication of this research is that it provides a conceptual mapping of the application of deconstruction in contemporary Qur'anic studies and clarifies the boundaries between interpretative methods that are truly deconstructive and those that only adopt certain deconstructive principles.

Contribution: This study contributes to the development of Qur'anic interpretation and hermeneutics by offering a more critical perspective on linguistically-based interpretative methods in Islam.

Keywords: *Deconstruction*, Ma'na Cum Maghza, Linguistic Hermeneutics, *Qur'anic Interpretation, Comparative Analysis.*

Abstrak

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis aspek dekonstruksi dalam metode *Ma'na Cum Maghza* yang dikembangkan oleh Sahiron Syamsuddin serta *Hermeneutika Linguistik* yang diperkenalkan oleh Arkoun. Studi ini mengidentifikasi sejauh mana kedua metode ini mengadopsi pendekatan dekonstruktif dalam penafsiran Al-Qur'an, terutama dalam aspek linguistik, serta membandingkan karakteristik dekonstruksi yang terkandung di dalamnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode analisis komparatif dengan pendekatan *library research* (penelitian

pustaka), di mana data dikumpulkan dari berbagai literatur yang relevan. Tiga pertanyaan utama menjadi landasan penelitian ini: (1) bagaimana *Ma'na Cum Maghza* dan *Hermeneutika Linguistik* diterapkan dalam penafsiran Al-Qur'an dengan pendekatan bahasa? (2) apa yang menjadikan kedua metode ini memiliki unsur dekonstruktif? (3) bagaimana perbandingan konsep dekonstruksi dalam kedua metode tersebut? Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa baik *Ma'na Cum Maghza* maupun *Hermeneutika Linguistik* mengandung beberapa aspek metodologis yang bersifat dekonstruktif. Namun, penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa kedua metode tersebut tidak dapat dikategorikan sebagai metode dekonstruksionis secara mutlak. Terdapat beberapa aspek yang bertentangan dengan prinsip dekonstruksi, seperti kecenderungan *Ma'na Cum Maghza* terhadap kontekstualisasi dan penggunaan pendekatan strukturalisme dalam *Hermeneutika Linguistik* Arkoun. Dengan demikian, Sahiron Syamsuddin dan Arkoun bukanlah tokoh yang secara radikal menerapkan pembacaan dekonstruktif dalam metode penafsiran mereka. Implikasi teoretik dari penelitian ini adalah memberikan pemetaan konseptual mengenai penerapan dekonstruksi dalam studi tafsir kontemporer serta memperjelas batasan antara metode tafsir yang bersifat dekonstruktif dan yang hanya mengadopsi sebagian prinsipnya.

Kontribusi: kajian ini berkontribusi pada perkembangan studi tafsir dan hermeneutika Al-Qur'an dengan menawarkan perspektif yang lebih kritis terhadap metode tafsir berbasis linguistik dalam Islam.

Kata Kunci: *Dekonstruksi, Ma'na Cum Maghza, Hermeneutika Linguistik, Tafsir Al-Qur'an, Analisis Komparatif.*

Introduction

Deconstruction in particular will always be related to linguistic/literary studies. This is because Deconstruction is a way of reading texts introduced in the era of post-modernism/post-structuralism which strongly rejects the absolute truth/meaning of a text.[1] Because it is involved in literary studies, deconstruction becomes relevant and is often applied in the reading of academic texts by contemporary academics, from sociology texts, literature to religious texts such as holy books.[2] Some of these can be found in Muhammad Arkoun's Linguistic Hermeneutics[3] *and* Sahiron Syamsudin's *Ma'na Cum Maghza*.[4] Both are contemporary mufassirs who focus on the meaning of the text. Therefore, it is necessary to

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[1] Nicholas Royle, "What Is Deconstruction?," in *Deconstructions*, ed. by Nicholas Royle (London: Macmillan Education UK, 2000), 1-13, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-06095-2_1; Mark C. Taylor, ed., *Deconstruction in Context: Literature and Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Wilhelm Liebenberg, "Deconstruction, literature and ideology," *Journal of Literary Studies* 1, no. 3 (July 1, 1985): 39–48, https://doi.org/10.1080/02564718508529761.

[2] Eddis Miller, "Deconstruction and Religion," *Religion Compass* 7, no. 1 (2013): 25-35, https://doi.org/10.1111/rec3.12028; J. Aaron Simmons and Stephen Minister, *Reexamining Deconstruction and Determinate Religion: Toward a Religion with Religion* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2012), https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/149/monograph/book/19362; James J. Dicenso, "Deconstruction and the Philosophy of Religion: World Affirmation and Critique," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 31, no. 1 (February 1, 1992): 29-43, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01539179; Daan F. Oostveen, "Multiple Religious Belonging and the 'Deconstruction' of Religion," January 18, 2018, https://doi.org/10.1163/1572543X-12341466.

[3] Mohammad Arkoun, *Islam: To Reform or to Subvert?* (Saqi, 2012).

[4] Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Ma'na-Cum- Maghza Aproach to the Qur'an: Interpretation of Q. 5:51" (International Conference on Qur'an and Hadith Studies (ICQHS 2017), Atlantis Press, 2017), 131-36, https://doi.org/10.2991/icqhs-17.2018.21.

review the methods of both of them all things related to Deconstruction, especially the methods used in interpreting the text of the Holy Qur'an.

Deconstruction studies, especially those detected in the method of interpretation of religious texts, have been carried out by many academics today. There are several trends in conducting this study. The reviewer classifies these tendencies into 3 types of tendencies based on the findings of research data that has been conducted over the past 5 years. *First,* Deconstruction is used to read and produce meaning to a text or a verse as a whole thematically. For example, such as the study of the interpretation of Education in Q.S al-Baqarah: 31-32 which is done deconstructively in tafsir al-Misbah by Quraish Shihab.[5] Furthermore, the Deconstruction study of understanding Q.S al-Qashash: 56 against Abu Talib's justification.[6] *Second, the* tendency of deconstruction application in understanding certain religious themes. Examples such as the study of Deconstruction of Interpretation of Gender-Based Verses in the Perspective of ThoughtWestern and Islamic Feminism .[7] Deconstruction study of the will of different religions from the perspective of Islamic law,[8] and Deconstruction study of the meaning of mu'allaf as a recipient of Zakat in Indonesia. [9]

Third, the tendency of research that detects deconstructive reading in a particular method. Such as the study of Derrida's *deconstruction* application to the study of Tafsir al-Qur'an, in the book *al-Qur'an in the Interpretation of Deconstruction and Reconstruction.* [10]From the mapping of research on Deconstruction above, no study has been found that detects Deconstruction in Sahiron's Ma'na Cum

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[5] Syafira Fadilah and Nurul Amin, "Deconstruction of Education in Surat Al-Baqarah Verses 31-32: An Analysis from the Perspective of Tafsir Al-Misbah by Quraish Shihab," *Tahdzib Al-Akhlaq: Journal of Islamic Education* 6, no. 2 (December 17, 2023): 201–13, https://doi.org/10.34005/tahdzib.v6i2.3183.

[6] Agus Anwar Sipahutar et al, "Deconstructing the Understanding of Surah Al-Qashash Verse 56 Toward Justifying Abu Talib's Disbelief," *AL QUDS : Journal of Quranic and Hadith Studies* 5, no. 2 (September 30, 2021): 461–88, https://doi.org/10.29240/alquds.v5i2.2431.

[7] Wely Dozan, Hopizal Wadi, and Jaswadi Jaswadi, "Deconstructing the Interpretation of Gender-Based Verses in the Perspective of Western and Islamic Feminist Thought," *AL-WARDAH: Journal of Women's, Gender and Religious Studies* 15, no. 1 (2021): 31-48.

[8] Asrul Hamid et al, "Deconstructing Legal Speculation: A Study of Religious Wills from the Point of View of Islamic Law:," *BUSTANUL FUQAHA: Journal of Islamic Law* 5, no. 1 (April 12, 2024): 38–49, https://doi.org/10.36701/bustanul.v5i1.1349.

[9] Akmal Bashori, Arif Sugitanata, and Suud Sarim Karimullah, "Deconstructing the Meaning of Mualaf as Zakat Recipients in Indonesia," *DIKTUM: Journal of Sharia and Law* 22, no. 1 (February 29, 2024): 11–23, https://doi.org/10.35905/diktum.v22i1.5027.

[10] Fajar Hamdani Akbar et al., The *Qur'an in the Interpretation of Deconstruction and Reconstruction*, ed. by Eni Zulaeha, M. Taufiq Rahman, and Paelani Setia, vol. 1 (Bandung: Master Program *in* Religious Studies at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, 2020), http://pps.uinsgd.ac.id/iat/.

Maghza method and Arkoun's Hermeneutics comparatively . Therefore, to add to this field of study, in the following sections the researcher will examine and trace the Deconstruction patterns that exist in Sahiron's Ma'na Cum Maghza method and Arkoun's Hermeneutics and compare the two with a comparative study. The selection of these two methods is used to examine the Linguistic epistemology that exists in both the Ma'na Cum Maghza method and Linguistic Hermeneutics, and as is known, Deconstruction always deals with texts and literary studies.

This research will answer three questions about Deconstruction in the methodology of interpreting the Qur'an, especially in the Ma'na Cum Maghza method and Linguistic Hermeneutics. These three questions are classified in 3 forms, ranging from Descriptive, Critical, to transformative questions. . *First*, how is the Ma'na Cum Maghza method and Linguistic Hermeneutics used in the interpretation of the Qur'an with a language style? *Second*, what makes the Ma'na Cum Maghza method and Linguistic Hermeneutics deconstructive? *Third*, how is the comparison of the concept of Deconstruction in the two methods in interpreting the Qur'an? This study will reconstruct the deconstructive paradigm in the methodology of interpreting the Qur'an, especially in the aspect of linguistic studies in the Ma'na Cum Maghza method and Linguistic Hermeneutics comparatively. This study aims to map the similarities and differences between linguistic and deconstructive methods used in modern tafsir studies, and the samples chosen are Sahiron's Ma'na Cum Maghza and Arkoun's Linguistic Hermeneutics, which both specifically accommodate linguistic interpretation in their interpretive epistemology.

This research detects deconstruction in the Ma'na Cum Maghza method and Linguistic Hermeneutics, because indeed the method of linguistic interpretation in the modern era after the era of structuralism is mostly influenced by deconstructive reading.[11] The deconstruction introduced by Derrida is a way of reading the text that wants infinite interpretations of meaning. This is relevant to the Ma'na Cum Maghza method introduced by Sahiron Syamsudin to interpret the Qur'an, especially in the "ma'na" section which analyzes the lexical meaning of a text in certain Arabic rules that are significant to the socio-linguistic conditions at that time.[12] In line with that, in Linguistic Hermeneutics Arkoun also

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[11] Zahra Aghabarari, Seyyedmohammad Razavi, and Mahdi Mahdiabbasi, "A Study of the Inner Meanings of Quranic Verses Based on the Quranic Exegesis Taʾwīl Al-Āyāt al-Ẓāhira Using Derrida's Deconstruction Method," *Shiʿa Pajoohi* 10, no. 26 (September 21, 2024): 39-68.

[12] Syamsuddin, "MA'NA-CUM- MAGHZA APROACH TO THE QUR'AN."

offers a process of interpreting a text by paying attention to the significance of signs in the text network. Both methods favor relative interpretation, rejecting the absolutism of meaning that makes the Qur'anic text irrelevant in different times.[13] This pattern is also relevant to Derrida's Deconstruction which wants unlimited interpretation of a text and rejects binary logic in the interpretation process because it will cause an imbalance in the resulting meaning. The basics above will be the estuary in this study to examine the epistemology of literary interpretation and deconstruction in the Ma'na Cum Maghza method and Linguistic Hermeneutics comparatively.

This research uses *library* research, which is a research conducted by collecting data and information with a focus on searching from sources related to the theme, such as books, journals, and other sources of documents.[14] The data referred to in this study are data related to the concept of Deconstruction proposed by Derrida and the Comparative Study of al-Qur'an interpretation methods through a linguistic approach. The data collection is divided into two, namely primary data and secondary data.[15] The primary data will refer to the book *Deconstruction For A Reader* by Martin McQuillan,[16] *Hermeneutics and Development of Ulumul Qur'an* by Sahiron Syamsuddin,[17] and *Contemporary Islamic Thought Studies* book by Mohammed Arkoun.[18] As for secondary data, it will be done by using reading materials that support this research.[19] The data collection technique in this research is using document studies, namely by tracing literature in the form of writings, images, or monumental works of a person. Finally, the approach used is a *comparison* approach. This approach is an attempt to provide information by comparing one particular tafsir data with other tafsir data in this case is Sahiron's Tafsir Ma'na Cum Maghza Method, and Arkoun's Linguistic Heremeneutics.

Ma'na Cum Maghza Method

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[13] Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Differing Responses to Western Hermeneutics: A Comparative Critical Study of M. Quraish Shihab's and Muḥammad 'Imāra's Thoughts," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 59, no. 2 (December 31, 2021): 479–512, https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2021.592.479-512.

[14] Carol Collier Kuhlthau, *Teaching the Library Research Process* (Scarecrow Press, 1994).

[15] Carl Auerbach and Louise B. Silverstein, *Qualitative Data: An Introduction to Coding and Analysis* (NYU Press, 2003).

[16] Martin McQuillan, *Deconstruction: A Reader* (Taylor & Francis, 2001).

[17] Sahiron Syamsuddin, *Hermeneutics and the Development of Ulumul Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Pesantren Nawasea Press, 2017), https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/40731/.

[18] Mohammed Arkoun, *The Unthought in Contemporary Islamic Thought* (Saqi, 2002).

[19] John W. Creswell et al, "Qualitative Research Designs: Selection and Implementation," *The Counseling Psychologist* 35, no. 2 (March 1, 2007): 236–64, https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000006287390.

Before entering into a deeper discussion about the Ma'na Cum Maghza method and its deconstruction, it is important to first emphasize the position of this method as a form of modern interpretation of the Qur'an.[20] In hermeneutical discourse, three main trends are known, namely the subjectivist, objectivist, and subjectivist cum objectivist schools. The objectiveist school focuses on finding the original meaning intended by the author of the text, emphasizing the importance of the historical context, language, and structure of the text when it was revealed.[21] In contrast, the subjectivist school places the reader at the center of the meaning process, so that the meaning of the text no longer depends on the author's intention, but on the meaning produced by the reader in the current context.[22] Meanwhile, the subjectivist cum objectivist school tries to bridge these two approaches by bringing together the historical dimension of the text and its relevance for today's readers. This school emphasizes the importance of exploring the original meaning of the text while contextualizing its meaning so that it remains alive and applicable in modern life. So, in this context, the Ma'na Cum Maghza method has epistemological affinity with the subjectivist cum objectivist approach because it not only seeks to understand the lexical meaning and main message of a verse historically, but also explores the significance of that meaning in the present context.[23]

In addition to the classification based on the hermeneutic approach, there is also a typology of modern Qur'anic interpretation based on the style of interpretation of the text. This typology consists of three trends, namely: Quasi-Objective Traditionalist, Subjective, and Quasi-Objective Progressive. The Traditionalist Quasi-Objective style tends to maintain the literal and historical meanings of the text without much contextualization, while the Subjective style emphasizes more on the creative reading of

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[20] Jul Hendri, "Contemporary Interpretation Methodology: Comparative Study of the Thought of Fazlur Rahman and Sahiron Syamsuddin," *AL QUDS : Journal of Quran and Hadith Studies* 8, no. 3 (December 4, 2024): 533–40, https://doi.org/10.29240/alquds.v8i3.9671.

[21] Stephen Davies, "Authors' Intentions, Literary Interpretation, and Literary Value," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 46, no. 3 (July 1, 2006): 223-47, https://doi.org/10.1093/aesthj/ayl001; Maryam Musharraf, "A Study On The Sufi Interpretation Of Qur'ān And The Theory Of Hermeneutic," April 26, 2013, https://doi.org/10.11136/jqh.1311.01.03.

[22] Anwar Mujahidin, "The Dialectic of Qur'an and Science: Epistemological Analysis of Thematic Qur'an Interpretation Literature in the Field of Social Sciences of Humanities," *ESENSIA: Journal of Ushuluddin Sciences* 19, no. 2 (October 23, 2018): 209–27, https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v19i2.1563.

[23] M. Djidin and Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Indonesian Interpretation of the Qur'an on Khilāfah: The Case of Quraish Shihab and Yudian Wahyudi on Qur'an, 2: 30-38," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 57, no. 1 (June 29, 2019): 143–66, https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2019.571.143-166. Umi Wasilatul Firdausiyah, "The Urgency of Ma'na-Cum-Maghza in the Contemporary Era: A Study of Sahiron Syamsuddin's Interpretation of Q 5: 51," *Contemporary Quran* 1, no. 1 (June 30, 2021): 29–39, https://doi.org/10.14421/cq.2021.0101-04.

the text in the context of contemporary religious experience.[24] In the middle of the two, the Progressive Quasi-Objective style comes as an approach that tries to maintain a balance between loyalty to the original meaning of the text and an emphasis on the main message of the text that is relevant to modern society.[25] This approach is seen as more in line with the needs of the times, as it is able to maintain the integrity of meaning while remaining adaptive to the challenges of the times. Thus, the Ma'na Cum Maghza method as a form of modern interpretation is progressively oriented, while still maintaining its text-historical roots.[26]

The Ma'na Cum Maghza method is divided into two main stages, namely the reconstruction of meaning and historical significance (al-ma'na wa al-maghza al-tarikhi) and the development of dynamic phenomenal significance in the present (al-maghza al-mu'āṣir). Since the focus of this discussion is the study of language epistemology in the Ma'na Cum Maghza method, attention is directed to the first stage, which is the process of reconstructing the meaning and main message historically. At this stage, an interpreter is expected to be able to perform a series of philological, linguistic, and historical analysis steps, in order to find the original meaning of the interpreted text. Reconstruction of historical meaning is important in order to avoid misunderstanding of the message intended by the text, as well as an initial step to find the relevance of the message in the current context.[27]

The first step in historical reconstruction is to analyze the lexical meaning of the Qur'anic text. In this context, the interpreter is required to have a deep understanding of the classical Arabic language used at the time of revelation, namely in the 7th century AD. The Arabic language at that time had pragmatic characteristics that were different from contemporary Arabic, both in terms of vocabulary,

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[24] Syamsuddin, "MA'NA-CUM- MAGHZA APROACH TO THE QUR'AN."

[25] Nur Laili Nabilah Nazahah Najiyah and Dadi Nurhaedi, "Between Prohibition and Permissibility of Islamic Art: An Application of Ma'na-Cum-Maghza Approach on Hadiths of Music, Painting and Dance," *Journal of Qur'anic and Hadith Studies* 23, no. 2 (July 30, 2022): 237–60, https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v23i2.3641.

[26] Muhammad Dzilfikri Al Baihaqi, "Unveiling the Implicit Message: A Comprehensive Exploration of Qur'anic Democracy Using Ma'na-Cum-Maghza Approach," *Journal of Qur'anic and Hadith Studies* 23, no. 2 (July 30, 2022): 391–416, https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v23i2.4616.

[27] Sahiron Syamsuddin, "The Qur'an on the Exclusivist Religious Truth Claim: A Ma'na Cum Maghza Approach and Its Application to Q 2: 111-113" (Switzerland: The Lutheran World Federation, 2017), 99-109, https://s.docworkspace.com/d/AB2aNjngs_E64urPjJWnFA; Siti Fahimah and M. Mukhibat, "Gender And Social Resilient: The Role of Women In The Public Ma'na Cum Maghza Approach," *Muwazah*, June 30, 2023, 115-29, https://doi.org/10.28918/muwazah.v15i1.7256.

sentence structure, and semantic nuances.[28] For example, the word *ikhlāṣ*, which literally means "to purify", has evolved in meaning over the course of history. In the pre-Islamic context, this word was used in a general sense to describe something pure from mixture, both in social and material contexts. Meanwhile, in the Qur'an, this word is used not only in a secular context, but also in a religious context, namely purifying belief in the One God. This shows the expansion and deepening of meaning in accordance with the context of revelation, which must be considered by today's interpreters.[29]

The second step is to take an intratextual approach, which compares the use of a particular word or term with its use in other verses in the Qur'an. The purpose of this step is to sharpen the understanding of the word within the internal framework of the Qur'anic text itself.[30] For example, to understand the meaning of the word *ikhlāṣ* and its derivatives, the interpreter can trace all the verses containing the word and pay attention to the context of the sentence. Thus, it will appear that the word *mukhliṣ lahū al-dīn* in Surah al-Zumar verse 2, which literally means "one who purifies religion only for Allah", gets reinforcement of meaning from the following verses in the same surah. This context shows the close relationship between the word *ikhlāṣ* and the concept of monotheism, which is at the core of Islamic teachings. This approach enriches the understanding of the meaning of the text through the internal coherence of the Qur'an.[31]

The third step is intertextuality, which is an attempt to understand the meaning of a Qur'anic text by comparing it with other texts that lived at the same time as the revelation of the Qur'an. These texts can be the Prophet's hadith, pre-Islamic Arabic poetry, or texts from other religious traditions such as Judaism and Christianity. In this approach, the interpreter tries to see the extent to which the meaning of a term in the Qur'an has a correspondence or difference with the use of the same term outside the Qur'an. This effort not only enriches the understanding of the meaning of the text, but also helps in

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[28] Rima Rayhana Hana et al., "Contextual Reading of QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222 with the Ma'na Cum Maghza Approach," *QOF* 7, no. 2 (December 30, 2023): 281–300, https://doi.org/10.30762/qof.v7i2.1725.

[29] Tsalits Nahdliyyatie, Muhammad Alwi Hs, and Nurul Hasanah, "Become an Ummatan Wasathan in Indonesia: Ma'na Cum Maghza Approach to Qs. Al-Baqarah: 143," *Al-Wasatiyah: Journal of Religious Moderation* 2, no. 2 (2023): 116–36, https://doi.org/10.30631/jrm.v2i2.56.

[30] Putri Yuliati, Muhammad Yusuf Qardlawi, and Maharani Wulandari, "The Ma'na Cum Maghza Approach to Non-Muslim Leaders (Analysis of Al-Maidah:51)," *Hamalatul Qur'an : Journal of Alqur'an Science* 3, no. 2 (2022): 1–10, https://doi.org/10.37985/hq.v3i2.118.

[31] Achmad Ramadhan, "The Concept And Terminology Of Ikhlas In Al-Qur'an And Its Application," *VISION* 17, no. 1 (July 21, 2021), https://doi.org/10.30829/vis.v17i1.1040; Muhammed Haron, "The Concept of God as Captured in Chapter Al-Ikhlas: A Comparative Study of Translations," *BOLESWA: Journal of Theology, Religion and Philosophy* 1, no. 2 (2006): 133-55.

reconstructing the cultural and social context at the time of revelation. This approach requires critical sensitivity and philological skills to assess the correspondence or differences in meaning between the Qur'an and surrounding texts.[32]

The fourth step in the reconstruction process is to pay attention to the historical context of the revelation of the Qur'an, both macro and micro. The macro context includes the social, political, cultural and religious situation of the Arab society at that time in general. While the micro context refers to the concrete events behind the revelation of certain verses, or what is commonly known as sabab al-nuzūl.[33] By paying attention to these two contexts simultaneously, the interpreter can gain a more complete understanding of the purpose and message of the verse. In this context, the Qur'anic text is not understood ahistorically, but within the framework of the social dynamics that surround it. Understanding this context allows for a more accurate and relevant interpretation.[34]

The fifth step is the exploration of the main message or deepest meaning of a verse, which in this method is referred to as *maghza al-ayah*. Sometimes, this message is mentioned explicitly in the text, but often it is hidden behind the structure and narrative of the verse. When the message is not explicitly mentioned, the interpreter must be able to interpret it with the help of the historical and linguistic context that has been reconstructed previously. The discovery of this main message becomes an important point in the process of interpretation, because this is where the contextualization process can begin. The interpreter not only parses the literal meaning, but also tries to understand the direction and moral, social, and spiritual goals that the text wants to convey.[35]

The final step in the Ma'na Cum Maghza method is the transformation of historical significance into dynamic phenomenal significance in the present context. This process is the culmination of a methodological series, in which the interpreter brings the reconstructed historical meaning into the

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[32] Achmad Soib, "Contextualization of Surah al-Kafiru Contextualization of Surah al-Kafirun in the midst of pluralism: (ma'na cum maghza approach)," *Tanzil: Journal of Al-Quran Studies* 4, no. 2 (April 28, 2022): 107–18, https://doi.org/10.20871/tjsq.v4i2.203.

[33] Ma'isyatusy Syarifah and Hudzaifah Achmad Qotadah, "CHILDFREE IN THE QUR'AN: Reinterpretation of Al-Naá¸¥l Verse 72 with Ma'nÄ Cum MaghzÄ Approach," *Al-Tahrir: Journal of Islamic Thought* 22, no. 2 (December 16, 2022): 325–42, https://doi.org/10.21154/altahrir.v22i2.5052.

[34] M. Dani Habibi, "The Interpretation of the Evidence of Radicalism and Terrorism in Indonesia (Ma'na-Cum-Maghza Interpretation of the Word Fitnah in Al-Qur'an Surat Al-Baqarah: 190-193)," *Al-Dzikra: Journal of al-Qur'an and al-Hadith Studies* 13, no. 1 (June 26, 2019): 95–112, https://doi.org/10.24042/al-dzikra.v13i1.3944.

[35] Mahfidhatul Khasanah and Alfi Ifadatul Umami, "Sex Education for Children: A Ma'na Cum Maghza Hermeneutical Approach to QS. Al-Nūr: 58-59," *Journal of Moderation* 1, no. 2 (December 13, 2021): 104-28.

current social situation, while maintaining the integrity of its meaning. The goal is that the message of the Qur'an does not stop as a document of the past, but becomes a source of inspiration and guidance in answering contemporary problems. With this approach, the interpretation of the Qur'an becomes more responsive and relevant without losing its historical roots and authenticity. This is the hallmark of the Ma'na Cum Maghza method, which combines the power of history and the vitality of meaning in the lives of human beings today.

Muhammad Arkoun's Linguistic Hermeneutics

Before discussing further the deconstructive approach within the hermeneutical framework developed by Arkoun, it is important to first understand the intellectual influences that form the foundation of his thinking. One of the main influences comes from Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory which became a milestone in the birth of structuralism in the Western world.[36] Within this framework, Arkoun views that the Qur'an, to the extent that it can be touched and understood by humans, is actually the *langue* side of divine revelation. Meanwhile, God's *parole*, due to its unique, infinite and transcendent nature, cannot be fully accessed by human reason. Just like individual language whose meaning is not fully known by the *other*, revelation as *parole* is beyond the reach of full human interpretation.[37]

With this understanding, Arkoun proposes a classification of levels of interpretation of revelation to explain the position of the Qur'an in a historical and linguistic context. First, revelation is understood as God's *parole* - the divine word that is transcendent and unlimited. Second, revelation in history, namely the reality of revelation as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in Arabic for more than two decades. Third, revelation in the form of an official and closed *corpus* codified in the mushaf, complete with letters and punctuation as we know it today.[38]

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[36] Arthur Asa Berger, "Semiotics and Society," *Society* 51, no. 1 (February 1, 2014): 22-26, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-013-9731-4; Ghsoon Reda, "Ferdinand de Saussure in the Era of Cognitive Linguistics," *Language and Semiotic Studies* 2, no. 2 (June 1, 2016): 89–100, https://doi.org/10.1515/lass-2016-020203.

[37] Makmun Syar'i, "Mohammed Arkoun's Thought on Sharia Deconstruction: A Historical and Anthropological Approach," *Mazahib* 21, no. 2 (December 27, 2022): 291–314, https://doi.org/10.21093/mj.v21i2.5131.

[38] Arkoun, *The Unthought in Contemporary Islamic Thought*.

In order to interpret the verses of the Qur'an, Arkoun emphasizes the importance of looking for hidden meanings that go beyond literal reading. Therefore, to arrive at the process of reconstructing the context, it is necessary to first deconstruct the text. This is where Arkoun's deconstructive approach to scripture comes into play. He views that the text does not stand in isolation, but is part of a complex relational network with various linguistic, historical, and sociocultural elements around it. By forming relationships between these elements, the process of interpreting the Qur'anic text becomes dynamic, but remains grounded in the uniqueness of Arabic as a medium of revelation.[39]

This kind of analysis enables the uncovering of how physiological, acoustic, psychological, sociological, and historical dimensions work in shaping the meaning of a text. To illustrate, words such as *māl* (wealth), *kitāb* (book), and *jāhil* (ignorant or uninformed), if only understood literally, will result in fragmented understandings that are less relevant in the current context. For example, if *māl* is only interpreted as material, women, slaves, or offspring, there will be a mistake in understanding the concept of economics or social systems in Islam.[40] Therefore, Arkoun emphasizes the importance of building a network of relational meanings in the process of language transfer and text interpretation so that the resulting meaning remains contextual and not reductive.

However, this approach to interpretation does not escape criticism. One of the main criticisms comes from a perspective that questions the implications of the dominance of a semiotic framework in interpreting sacred texts. If revelation is fully understood as a product of a linguistic sign system, then its sanctity can be reduced to a profane text that can be interpreted freely and openly with various approaches. As a result, revelation is no longer positioned as divine inspiration, but rather as an ordinary form of linguistic communication, which in the extreme can be understood as a message formulated by the Prophet Muhammad in Arabic based on the meaning conveyed by the angel Gabriel.[41]

Arkoun recognizes the existence of this criticism, but he underlines that even in the classical tradition there has never been an absolute agreement on the inclusive or exclusive nature of a verse.

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[39] Umar Kustiadi, "Reconstruction Of Contemporary Interpretation Theory An Examination Of Muhammad Arkoun's Thought," *International Journal of Research* 1, no. 2 (December 26, 2023): 171–90, https://doi.org/10.55062//IJR.2023.v1i2/343/4.

[40] Ismail Suardi Wekke, "Scripture, Arabic and the Reading of Texts: A Review of Mohammed Arkoun's Philosophy," *Ulumuna* 18, no. 2 (December 31, 2014): 243–68, https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v18i2.853.

[41] Ishak Hariyanto, "Muhammed Arkoun's Qur'anic Hermeneutics," *El-Umdah* 1, no. 2 (December 1, 2018): 130–44, https://doi.org/10.20414/elumdah.v1i2.549.

Scholars in the history of tafsir also often show favoritism to certain sects or groups in interpreting verses, which in turn shows that interpretation is always trapped in the subjectivity of the interpreter and the social context that surrounds him. This shows that the process of exegesis of sacred texts is never sterile from the influence of ideology, tradition, and socio-cultural dynamics.[42]

It is within this framework that Arkoun's hermeneutics occupies a unique position. He tries to maintain the objectivity of interpretation through a strict linguistic approach, while still considering Arabic syntax and grammar. According to him, the interpreter of the Qur'an should ideally understand the structure of Arabic language comprehensively, in order to be able to analyze the choice of speech or discourse used by divine speakers in the text of revelation. In this process, the analysis of *discourse* modulators-such *as* articles, adjectives, pronouns, verbal and nominal systems, and other syntactic structures-becomes the key in revealing the meaning implied in the text. Through this approach, Arkoun attempts to show that sacred texts not only hold spiritual messages, but also contain complex linguistic dynamics that need to be explored scientifically.[43]

An example of Arkoun's application of syntactic structure can be seen in his linguistic interpretation of Surat al-Fatihah. Arkoun notes certain relationships and syntactic functions that are produced through the observation of discourse modulators. Ultimately we can categorize and ascertain the reasons for the systematic selection of an utterance/text. In Surat al-Fatihah for example, according to Arkoun we can sort out 4 lexis (basic reading units) which are also core utterances, and 7 predicative lexis which are extended utterances, here are the details;

Speech-core (Lexical Unit)	Expansion Speech (Predicative Lexis)
bismillāhi	araḥmānir-raḥīm
al-ḥamdu lillāhi	*rabbil-ʾālamīn* *ar-raḥmānir-raḥīm* *māliki yaumid-dīn*
iyyāka naʿbudu wa iyyāka nastaʿīn	
ihdinaṣ-ṣirāṭal-mustaqīm	*ṣirāṭallażīna anʿamta ʿalaihim* *gairil-magḍubi ʿalaihim* *wa laḍ-ḍāllīn*

The classification based on the syntactic distinction between core utterances and extended utterances, as formulated by Arkoun, serves to show the central role of the subject in the syntactic structure of the pronunciation of the word "Allah". This distinction not only emphasizes the strategic position of the subject, but also opens up space for the expansion of meaning that surrounds it. In this framework, the first expansion utterance can be pronounced at the beginning of each speech in the form of the lafaz "Allah" or "Ilah", while the subsequent expansion utterances serve as the conclusion of the series of speech. Arkoun mentions that the four types of utterances discussed contain an *actential model*, which is a linguistic form that is an implication of the central structure and produces a *semantic model* that develops through various forms of extended utterances.[44]

The production of linguistic meaning in this approach is built through careful consideration of what Arkoun calls the *modalizers of discourse*. He asserts that the more rigorously the discourse modalizers are analyzed, the closer the interpreter comes to understanding the speaker's intent. In analyzing the syntactic structure of Surah al-Fatihah, Arkoun identifies five main modalizers, namely: determination, pronomina, verb, nominalization (noun), and prosody. Each of these elements is key in uncovering the syntactic and semantic structure of the revelation text.[45]

At this stage, Arkoun requires interpreters to have a deep understanding of language signs, especially Arabic, because the Qur'an was revealed in that language. Therefore, the linguistic analysis of Surah al-Fatihah involves elements such as determinants (e.g. *isim ma'rifah*), personal pronouns (pronomina/dhamir), verb system (*fi'il*), noun system (*isim*), to prosody elements (rhythm and rhyme). Through this analysis, Arkoun found that all *isim ma'rifah* in Surah al-Fatihah refer to the word "Allah", which indicates the semantic importance of the word in the discourse structure.[46]

However, according to Arkoun, the word "Allah" in Surah al-Fatihah is still ambiguous. Who exactly is being referred to by this word in the context of early revelation? This question may no longer be relevant for today's Muslims who have internalized the concept of divinity theologically. But for the Arabs of the seventh century, who lived in diverse religious traditions, the question is very natural to

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[44] Arkoun, *The Unthought in Contemporary Islamic Thought*.

[45] Mohammed Arkoun and Robert D. Lee, *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers* (Routledge, 2019).

[46] Mohammed Arkoun, "Rethinking Islam Today," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 588, no. 1 (July 1, 2003): 18–39, https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716203588001003.

arise. Therefore, Arkoun proposes that the understanding of the word "Allah" in Surah al-Fatihah be referred to the earlier revealed suras, which provide a clearer conceptual framework of its theological meaning.[47]

Arkoun then emphasized that the interpretation of sacred texts through this linguistic approach should not stop at methodological procedures alone. He calls for efforts to establish a *critical relationship*, which is a reflective and in-depth activity towards the relationship between text and meaning. This critical relationship demands *critical repetition - an* intellectual work that demands the involvement of the immanent subjectivity of the interpreter. Thus, Arkoun himself does not claim that every proposition proposed in this framework can stand without adequate textual basis. Any interpretation must always be grounded in the text, but at the same time open to the expansion of meaning through rigorous and robust reflective work.[48]

Deconstruction in Ma'na Cum Maghza and Linguistic Hermeneutics (Comparative Analysis)

Deconstruction is an approach to reading texts that forms the basis for a critique of the Western tradition of structuralist thinking. In the tradition of structuralism, there is a theory of *binary logic*, which is a system of hierarchical distinction of meaning. This pattern places one pole of meaning as the dominant center, while the other pole becomes subordinate or marginalized. For example, "white" is considered better than "black", "male" is superior to "female", and "rich" is more valuable than "poor". This binary opposition pattern is rigid and absolute, closing off the possibility of alternative meanings or more relative readings.

The deconstruction approach is here to dismantle this binary way of thinking. It challenges the hierarchical structure of the text and opens up space for a plurality of meanings hidden behind the dominance of certain meanings. This approach marks the birth of the era of *post-structuralism*, where texts

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[47] Mohammed Arkoun, "Logocentrisme et vérité religieuse dans la pensée islamique: d'après al-I'lām bi-manāqib al-Islām d'al-'Âmirî," *Studia Islamica*, no. 35 (1972): 5-51, https://doi.org/10.2307/1595474; Mohammed Arkoun, "The Notion of Revelation: From Ahl al-Kitāb to the Societies of the Book," *Die Welt des Islams* 28, no. 1/4 (1988): 62–89, https://doi.org/10.2307/1571165.
[48] Mohammed Arkoun, "The Concept of Authority in Islamic Thought: Lā hukma illā li-llāh," in *Islam: State And Society* (Routledge, 2005);

are no longer understood as stable structures with a single meaning, but as open and dynamic fields of interpretation.

In the context of contemporary Qur'anic interpretation studies, the deconstructive approach is reflected in two methods of interpretation, namely *Ma'na Cum Maghza* and *Linguistic Hermeneutics*. The deconstructive style in *Ma'na Cum Maghza* can be seen in the reconstruction of lexical meaning, intratextuality, and intertextuality, which shifts the meaning from a single certainty to the possibility of a more contextual and reflective meaning. Meanwhile, in *Linguistic Hermeneutics*, the deconstructive approach is seen in the reconstruction of *discourse modulators*, which are elements of language used to approach the intentions of speakers in the text. This approach makes comprehensive use of linguistic theory to reread the syntactic and semantic structures of sacred texts, so that meaning is not treated as something final, but rather as an open field of interpretation.

Thus, the deconstructive approach finds its relevance in the interpretive epistemology of *Ma'na Cum Maghza* and *Linguistic Hermeneutics*. The following is a breakdown of the deconstructive reading findings that appear in both approaches comparatively:

Form of Deconstruction	Linguistic Hermeneutics	Ma'na Cum Maghza
Unlimited exploration of meaning	Reconstruction of other meanings hidden behind a verse/text in the Qur'an	Reconstruction of historical meaning (*ma'na al-tarikhi*)
Relational influence of history on the circles/networks around meaning	The text has wholeness as a relational relationship that exists around it, rather than departing from separate facts	The interpreter must have knowledge related to the Arabic language in the text of the Qur'an lexically, namely the Arabic language used in the 7th century AD.
Against binary logic and the authority of meaning/absolutism of meaning	Arkoun claims that classical scholars will always be caught in the framework of the subjectivity of individual mufassirs by favoring the group / sect that he follows and always excessive in arguing about a matter that is particular	In stating that Ma'na Cum Maghza's position has a Progressive Quasi-Objectivist pattern, Sahiron emphasizes that this pattern represents a "hermeneutic balance".
Nothing outside the text	-	-

The four principles or criteria of deconstruction contained in the previous table are the result of reading and reformulating deconstruction thinking that was never formulated explicitly and systematically by Derrida himself. These principles are a form of simplification to help understand how deconstruction works in the practice of reading texts, including in the realm of interpretation.[49] Based on the table, we can identify a number of deconstruction features that are present in the epistemology of *Ma'na Cum Maghza* and *Linguistic Hermeneutics*. Both adopt the language approach as the main entry point in interpreting the text, and both also reject a single, final meaning. However, when examined more deeply, there are fundamental differences in the way each method positions language and tradition.[50]

The *Ma'na Cum Maghza* method displays the distinctive nuances of the pesantren tradition, but wrapped in the spirit of progressivity. The specificity of the pesantren is reflected in the reconstruction of *ma'na al-tārīkhī* which relies on the treasures of tafsir and classical dictionaries, such as *Lisān al-'Arab*, as a linguistic foundation. However, this method does not stop at tracking lexical meanings, but continues with the exploration of *maghzā al-tārīkhī*, which is the search for the main message of the verse that is contextual and historically-sociologically relevant. This is where the progressivity lies, as the interpretation does not only rely on the authority of the past, but is also open to the interpretation of the present.

Meanwhile, Arkoun's *Linguistic Hermeneutics* reflects a more modern and subjective approach. He places language as the main field of meaning formation, but with a strong emphasis on the complexity of linguistic structures and the dynamics of speakers. Arkoun develops a reading of religious texts through the concept of *discourse modulators*, which are linguistic elements that shape the intentions of the text. Although his approach is very contemporary and influenced by modern philosophical thought, Arkoun still critically interacts with classical sources from the Islamic intellectual treasury, especially when he analyzes the syntactic structure of sacred texts.[51]

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[49] R MARCOTTE, "An attempt at deconstruction of Islamic thought. Ian Netton and his semiotic project," *An attempt at deconstruction of Islamic thought. Ian Netton and his semiotic project* 43, no. 2 (1999): 89-99.

[50] Syamsuddin, "THE QUR'AN ON THE EXCLUSIVIST RELIGIOUS TRUTH CLAIM - A Ma'na Cum Maghza Approach and Its Application to Q 2."

[51] Arkoun, "The Concept of Authority in Islamic Thought."

Thus, in a deconstructive space, *Ma'na Cum Maghza* and *Linguistic Hermeneutics* both attempt to dismantle the certainty of meaning and open up opportunities for a plurality of interpretations. However, their epistemological characters are different. One departs from local traditions that are updated with reflective-contextual methods, while the other departs from a radical linguistic-philosophical approach but remains rooted in classical Islamic discourse. This difference enriches the treasures of contemporary tafsir and shows that deconstruction can come in various styles, depending on the epistemic basis and ideological orientation of the interpreter.[52]

Ma'na Cum Maghza	Linguistic Hermeneutics	Dimension of Distinctiveness/Character
Ma'na al-Tarikhi	*Langue and Parole*	Ma'na al-tarikhi prioritizes classical literature to understand lexical meaning, while Arkoun approaches it with a modern linguistic approach called Langue and Parole.
Maghza al-Tarikhi and its dynamic historical significance	Discourse modularization	This is a progressive form of Ma'na Cum Maghza, and Arkoun himself is more radical in his hermeneutics, reconstruction efforts not only with modern grammatical approaches, but also classical Arabic grammar which is grouped into discourse modalizers.

Behind the findings that show a deconstructive style in the two methods of interpretation analyzed, there are also epistemological peculiarities that actually show distance or even contradiction with the principles of deconstruction itself. One of the strongest indications of the difference is the tendency of both figures to reconstruct meaning conclusively. In the deconstructive approach, the final conclusion is actually something contradictory, because deconstruction rejects the closure of meaning and emphasizes the endless openness of interpretation.

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[52] Arkoun, "Rethinking Islam Today."

Deconstruction presupposes infinity in the process of meaning, even allowing the emergence of meanings that were previously absent, hidden, or never explicitly raised by the text - a condition Derrida calls *absence*. In this context, any attempt to assign one dominant meaning or draw a final conclusion from the text would be considered a denial of the essence of deconstruction that rejects hierarchy and binary opposition. However, this notion of *absence* is not explained in detail in this study because it has no direct relevance to the workings of the two methods of interpretation being analyzed. This is because neither *Ma'na Cum Maghza* nor *Linguistic Hermeneutics* reaches the stage of negating the presence of meaning in the text; they both still work within the framework of reconstructing and articulating meaning that can be formulated.

Furthermore, the non-deconstructive tendencies in both methods are also evident in their methodological choices. Arkoun, for example, although known for his radical critique of orthodox traditions, in some aspects still adopts a structuralist framework. This can be seen in his application of the concepts of *langue* and *parole*, where he understands God's revelation as *parole* manifested in *langue*, the structure of the Arabic language. This separation, indirectly, affirms the dichotomy between structure and utterance that deconstruction dismantles. In the framework of deconstruction, nothing is outside the *text-il n'y a pas de* hors-texte-which means that everything is considered part of the sign system (langue), and there is no absolute position outside the structure that can guarantee a fixed meaning (parole).

Similarly, the *Ma'na Cum Maghza* method, while emphasizing the importance of the meaning and contextual message of a verse, still rests on the dichotomy between text and context. This approach, which considers context as an external element that can explain the text, is fundamentally at odds with the spirit of deconstruction which rejects such binary oppositions. In deconstruction, the separation between text and context becomes the target of criticism, as it creates an interpretive hierarchy that leads to the stabilization of meaning. Thus, it can be concluded that although these two methods of interpretation contain elements that are in line with the spirit of deconstruction-such as the dismantling of single meanings, openness of interpretation, and criticism of the authority of traditional meanings-but epistemologically, they cannot be fully categorized as deconstructive approaches. Both still maintain certain methodological frameworks that contradict the basic principles of deconstruction, namely the rejection of totality of meaning and hierarchy of oppositions.

Conclusion

This study concludes that there are several methodological aspects in Ma'na Cum Maghza and linguistic hermeneutics that are deconstructive. Among these are the unlimited exploration of meaning, the influence of history on the circles/networks that exist around meaning relationally, and opposing the authority of meaning/absolutism of meaning. However, there are differences in the characteristics of the two interpretive methodologies. Sahiron's Ma'na Cum Maghza is classical, if you look at the sources used by some from the pesantren tradition, and progressive in terms of its dynamic historical significance. Meanwhile, Arkoun is so modernist and subjective with modern sources as well. Finally, both methods cannot be said to be deconstructionist methods in general, because there are several occasions that contradict the deconstruction reading. starting from the conclusion of a meaning / interpretation, the structuralism approach used by Arkoun, and Contextualization used by Sahiron. These findings make both of them not figures who radically apply deconstructive reading to their interpretive methods.

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