Interpretive discourse in modernist thought. A critical reading of the term hermeneutics.

الخطاب التأويلي في الفكر الحداثي. قراءة نقدية لمصطلح الهرمنيوطيقا.

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Abstract:

The basis of understanding is the power of looking at the rooting of the meanings of the discourse, the accuracy of the injury in obtaining the purposes of the speaker, the capacity of the tongue in its vocabulary and its structures and its sophistication in the faces of his speech and the custom of its terminology. If the statement is achieved in the minds, and its fruit is likely to be in the objects, its fate will be the perfection of communication between peoples, and the ingenuity of creativity in the establishment of civilizations.

Scientific terms are scientific keys and cognitive tools that either obtain and root science, describe and define it, or transfer and employ it. From this point of view, they are methodological necessities that control the relationship between cognitive concepts, procedural mechanisms that determine the parameters of thinking and expression, and practical units that achieve the purposes of understanding and communication .

The term hermeneutics is the pillar of interpretation in the West. It has been independent of its cognitive mechanisms to understand existence, man and heritage. Arab modernists have

employed hermeneutic theory in interpreting the Qur'anic text, influenced by the methods of Western thought, to reach multiple scientific caveats that are ignored by objective scientific research and are refuted by intuitive knowledge and categorical axioms.

The research focused on the depth of the investigation and tracking to identify the problems of understanding and the obstacles of communication between the modernists and the understanding of the Quranic text to diagnose the areas of error and indicate the results of misunderstanding when disrupting the considered deduction methods

Keywords: discourse, interpretation, hermeneutics, thought, modernity

ملخص باللغة العربية:

أساس الفهم قوّة النّظر في تأصيل معاني الخطاب، ودقّة الإصابة في تحصيل مقاصد المتكلّم، وسعة اللسان في مفرداته و تراكيبه و رقيّه في وجوه خطابه و معهود مصطلحاته، فإذا تحقّق البيان في الأذهان،و رجح ثمره في الأعيان كان مآله كمال التواصل بين الشعوب،و براعة الإبداع في قيام الحضارات.

المصطلحات العلمية مفاتيحُ علميةِ و أدوات معرفية إمّا تحصّل العلوم و تؤصّلها،أو تصفها و تعرّفها،أو تنقلها و توظّفها،ومن هذا المنطلق فإنّها ضرورات منهجية تضبط العلاقة بين المفاهيم المعرفية ،و آليات إجرائية تحدّد معالم التفكير و البيان ،و وحدات عملية تحقّق مقاصد التفاهم و التواصل.

يعدّ مصطلح الهرمنيوطيقا عماد التأويل عند الغرب فقد استقّل بآلياته المعرفية لفهم الوجود و الإنسان و التراث،و لقد وظّف الحداثيون العرب النظرية التأويلية في تفسير النص القرآني متأثرين بمناهج الفكر الغربي ليصلوا إلى محاذير علمية متعدّدة يأباها البحث العلمي الموضوعي و تردّها المعارف البديهية و المسلّمات القطعية.

لقد ركّز البحث على عمق الاستقصاء و التتبّع ليقف على إشكالات الفهم و عوائق التواصل بين الحداثيين و فهم النص القرآني لتشخيص مواطن الزلل و بيان نتائج سوء الفهم عند تعطيل مناهج الاستنباط المعتبرة

الكلمات المفتاحية: الخطاب، التأويل، الهرمنيوطيقا،الفكر، الحداثة

- Introduction:

Hermeneutics is an intellectual approach based on interpretation, a modernist vision of Greek origin, and a research phenomenon based on the basis of probing and analyzing texts to obtain their meanings and extract meanings from them, and a project that has become independent with its cognitive mechanisms in understanding existence, man, and heritage.

Sharia scholars have agreed that Sharia texts can only be interpreted using cognitive principles and scientific rules related to the text in terms of language and environment. Ibn Taymiyyah, may God have mercy on him, said: "Whoever interprets the Qur'an or hadith and interprets it in a way other than the interpretation known from the Companions and Followers is a slanderer against God, an atheist regarding the verses of God, and a distortion of words from their proper places. This opens the door to heresy and atheism, and it is known that invalidity is due to necessity from the religion of Islam." [1]Accordingly, the study method was established to answer the main problem, which is: What is the relationship between the rules of Islamic interpretation and the methods of hermeneutic interpretation in understanding legal texts?

The following questions branch out from the main problem:

- Explaining the intellectual foundations of the hermeneutic interpretive approach in general.
- What is the benefit of employing the hermeneutic interpretation approach in understanding legal texts?

Is the basic principle in interpreting texts to look at the speaker's intentions, or is the lesson to focus on the recipient?

It is done through the following scientific tools:

A - Tracking by analysis according to the descriptive approach, with full commitment to honesty when transferring and documenting.

B - Discussion and criticism according to the objective approach while adhering to the rules of scientific research.

C - Reasoning and deduction according to the inductive approach, while adhering to scientific argument and rational evidence.

Research, as it looks to the depth of investigation, seeks the accuracy of rooting and deduction to achieve the following results:

- Identifying the necessity of interpretation in understanding the purposes of speakers and understanding those addressed.
- Explaining the importance of interpretation in the process of civilizational communication between humanity.
- Identifying the different approaches to interpretation of multiple human civilizations.

This scientific study came to highlight the following facts:
- The concept of interpretive theory in its historical context, cultural framework, and social environment.
- The foundations that make up interpretive theory through the stages of its emergence within the framework of modern Western thought.
- Warnings of applying interpretive theory to legal texts by Arab modernist thinkers.

The term interpretation in the Islamic heritage, its facts and controls:
Definition of Interpretation:
A- Al-Ghazali said: "A possibility supported by evidence, which becomes more likely than the meaning that indicates the apparent " [2]
B- Al-Amidi said: "It is to carry the word on its apparent meaning with its tolerance with evidence that supports it " [3]
Rules of correct interpretation.
The scholars have agreed on the following requirements for the validity of interpretation:
First: The interpretation must be in its correct context and must not enter into definitive texts.[4]
Second: The term being interpreted must be able to take on the meaning directed toward it, divergent from its apparent meaning in that specific interpretation; otherwise, it would be considered distortion and a lie against the language, as a term may not linguistically accommodate that meaning. It may linguistically accommodate it but not within that specific context. Ibn al-Qayyim pointed out the invalidity of this type of interpretation in more than forty ways, [5] and he exemplified this with the view of the Mu'tazila regarding Allah's saying: "The Most Merciful rose over the Throne" (Ta-Ha 5), claiming that the intended meaning of 'rising over' is to dominate, conquer, and be omnipotent.[6] They did not realize that the term 'rising' in this sense cannot be applied to Allah; because it must have an opposing counterpart to compete with it. Hence, Ibn al-A'rabi, the grammarian, said: "Arabs do not say so-and-so has dominated the throne until there is an adversary in it; and whichever overcomes, it is said to have dominated it; and Allah, the Almighty, has no adversary, so He is on His Throne as He has informed."[7]
Thirdly: To establish the evidence that diverts the word from its truth and appearance. Ibn Taymiyyah says: "The one who interprets has two duties: to demonstrate the possibility of the word for the meaning it claims, and to demonstrate the evidence that necessitates diverting it from the apparent meaning."[8] Only those who are proficient in the tools of independent reasoning, such as the sciences of language, the sciences of the Qur'an, the sciences of Hadith, and the principles of jurisprudence, can accomplish this designation.[9]

Fourthly: The interpretation should not invalidate the original text of the legal ruling.

Fifthly: The meaning diverted from its apparentness must be one that can be attributed to the legislator, as the interpreter conveys the intent of the legislator. So, interpretation diverts the verse to a meaning consistent with what precedes and follows it,[10] and many scholars have exemplified this by the necessity of interpreting "the two hands" mentioned in His saying: "O Iblis, what prevented you from prostrating to what I have created with My two hands" (Surah Sad 75) to refer to the attribute. Al-Bayhaqi stated: "It is not permissible to interpret it as a limb... nor as strength, dominion, grace, and connection; because then sharing occurs between his ally Adam and his enemy Iblis, which nullifies what has been mentioned about his preference over him due to the invalidation of the meaning of specification. Hence, it remains to interpret it as two attributes related to the creation of Adam, honoring him over the creation of Iblis, related to the power over the decree."[11]

The historical and epistemological framework of hermeneutics.

- The concept of hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics is a Greek word 'hermeneutique' that encompasses the following meanings: interpretation and explanation,[12] and it refers to the meaning of exploring and analyzing a text to understand its implications and extract its meanings.[13] Its concept has coincided with its historical context with theological religious thought that established the rules of interpretation and the criteria of understanding for the reader of religious texts[14]. David Jasper states: "Hermeneutics is concerned with interpretation... especially in relation to the interpretation of sacred texts which believers regard as divine revelation or the word of God..."[15]

Stages of the emergence of hermeneutic theory.

The hermeneutic theory has undergone the following intellectual stages in its inception:

1 - Hermeneutics is a Greek method for acquiring religious thought. Some researchers attribute the term hermeneutics among the Greeks to the interpretative relationship of religious texts between the deity Hermes and humans,[16] as it played a leading role in disseminating Greek scientific culture in public and private life.[17] The interpretative process then encompassed human literary texts, making interpretation its general methodology in every reading of a religious text, intellectual heritage, or cognitive endeavor, to independently understand the universe and humanity, foresee life, interpret events, and read occurrences.[18] Thus, it became for its proponents 'an activity with the efficacy of the effort of the self in achieving truth... it sustains its efficacy from its analysis of existence that precedes meaning and associates understanding with it; from this, we are able to

comprehend the world through the recovery of the relationship between thought and existence to a dwelling that the self can establish to observe and monitor the movement of meaning within it. This dwelling is language.' [19]
Based on intellectual clues and Greek doctrinal fundamentals, the content of the term hermeneutics can be summarized in the following themes.[20]
A - A procedural approach that establishes the function of literary texts in ancient Greek society.
B - A description of philosophical efforts and an introduction to the issues of understanding and interests in interpretation.
C - A deep examination of the meanings of expressions and a revelation of the meanings of signs and symbols.
D - A philosophical reflection to acquire knowledge about existence, humans, and life.
E - An Aristotelian methodology with a research-oriented approach in the semantic field of logic.
2 - Hermeneutics in Jewish religious
thought. Reading and interpreting the Torah is not merely an easy demonstration process through which meanings are perceived, but it is an attempt to understand the symbols of meanings of obscure texts; thus, the interpretation of the Torah has become an urgent necessity for the intellectual needs of the reader to attain understanding, which led to the emergence of Jewish hermeneutical thought.[21] The Jewish schools employed various interpretive methodologies to understand Torah texts, summarized in the following points:[22]
A - The rabbinical monopoly on legislation under the pretext of the religious interpretation of the texts of the Torah.
B - Jewish hermeneutics as a forced response to spiritual demands and cultural claims.
C - An attempt to interpret sacred texts by moving from the closed apparent meaning to the precise inner meaning through the art of spiritual symbolism.
D - Applying sacred texts to modern meanings according to the deconstructive method.
3 - Hermeneutics in Christian religious thought.
The reality of hermeneutics in Christian religious thought is based on the interpretation of religious texts in an imaginary way by employing the art of symbolism, with which the appearance of the text falls to carry the hidden esoteric meanings to expand to include the concept of the hermeneutic method that tries to understand the closed unknown and realize its connotations through the known and the tangible,[23] and the problem of "reconciliation between science and faith, or reason and transmission in Christian thought" is the beginning of the entry of Greek philosophy into the field of European thought within the limits of the fourth century AD, which

took over. It has the task of defending the doctrines of the Church Fathers, so much so that this era has been called the Age of the Church Fathers,[24] and Christian religious thought has been influenced in the interpretation of religious texts in two directions that tend to Jewish hermeneutics.[25]

A - A direction that employs symbolic and referential interpretation.

B - A direction that employs literal interpretation.

4 - Hermeneutics from religious study to foundational interpretive research.

The German theological thinker 'Schleiermacher: 1768/1834' is considered the leader of modern hermeneutics and the first to transition interpretation from a study of theology to a stage of codification and foundation according to two approaches:

A - The linguistic approach: considered the strong faculty and the main entry point for understanding speech.

B - The psychological approach: regarded as the tool capable of reading human psyches.

Schleiermacher prioritized the linguistic approach in the process of interpretive reading by focusing on the details, establishing the concept of openness of meaning, and allowing the process of interpretation to remain without end.[26]

Gadamer criticized Schleiermacher, saying: "He was never able to succeed in his difficult task of reconciling theoretical historical awareness with the ambition to reach truth in science. Hermeneutics remained, with Schleiermacher and Dilthey, trapped in theological dogmatism, which resurfaced in its entirety as the problematic of early Protestant hermeneutics."[27]

5 - Hermeneutics is an intellectual experience between the author and the recipient.

The German thinker "Dilthey: 1833/1911" "Schleiermacher" acknowledged his method of interpretation to add a third dimension to the interpretive reading, which is the human experience in life, considering it a comprehensive approach between the author of the text and the reader, so that the features of the individual's experience reflect through the interpretive reading of the author's text, transforming the process of reading into a change in the concept of understanding itself, from being a cognitive identification process to being a confrontation that understands life itself.[28]

6 - Hermeneutics is the interrogation of the text outside of the speaker's intent.

The German thinker "Martin Heidegger 1889/1976" claimed that humans do not utilize language but that it embodies itself through reality, based on the principle of independence between existence and the human being.[29] The purpose of this hermeneutic theorizing is to establish a phenomenological theory of knowledge that champions building

understanding on an existential standard, stripping language of its subjective nature and turning it into an existential lens for humans, the universe, and life. The text serves as a vessel for existential manifestations in its philosophical meaning, and the essence of the interpreter's role is to interrogate the obscure hidden elements in the text through the clear and evident to the reader.[30]

7 - Hermeneutics prioritizes psychological experience over the scientific method.

The German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer is considered one of the prominent figures in modern interpretive theory. He linked the understanding of text to the interconnectedness of perceiving the laws of interaction between accumulated experiences and the underlying truths within the linguistic text. For him, hermeneutics is a technical art, a functional mechanism that employs linguistic, logical, pictorial, and symbolic methods on religious and literary texts.[31] Gadamer's premise is that subjective human stances and personal components are the foundational elements of the receiver's identity and their independent understanding of the past and present, creating an emotional entry point and a psychological approach that interacts with the text, generating meanings and connotations, and deepening the values of creativity in interpretative reading. He likened this process to a game that begins with the author.

The player ends up with the spectator through a neutral medium, which is the form that allows interaction and makes reception possible, connecting across the relaxation of ages and times. This necessitates that the text does not contain a fixed truth, as it changes from one era to another depending on the horizon of reception, oscillating between the limited and the infinite, the varying pathways of the reading experience for the recipient, and the different perceptions of recipients at all times and places.[32]

8 - The hermeneutics of the independence of the recipient in relation to the text.

The French philosopher "Paul Ricoeur" built a hermeneutical interpretation theory through two dimensions.

A - The meaning of the symbolic dimension through the mediating relationship between the symbol and the mechanical significance; the author may intend a specific meaning from the discourse while having other intentions concurrently. He employed this approach in critiquing religious myth in the Old Testament.[33]

B - The meaning of the symbolic dimension without mediation to interrogate the unknown and reveal the concealed. Thus, this symbolism becomes a suggestive tool outside the text, with multiple interpretations without end, allowing the interpretations to live on and condemning the text and its author to death and oblivion.[34]

9- Hermeneutics claims to establish a difference between the terms meaning and significance.

The contemporary American thinker "Hirsch" argued that the essence of the interpretive theory is based on the notion that the reception of a text and its understanding differ from reader to reader and from context to context, and even varies for the author himself according to different stages of life. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish between meaning and significance. From this perspective, meaning is a fixed indication that refers to the text and is realized through the mechanism of hermeneutic analysis, while significance is a renewed indication according to changes in time, place, and modes of reception. [35] Nasr Hamid applies this literally: "In the pre-Islamic era, women were given nothing, then Islam came and granted them half of a male's share, which is what is understood from the apparent verses. This is the meaning; however, the significance is a teaching for us and a hint that we should give them in the future the same share as that of males."[36]

- The foundations of hermeneutic theory in Arab modernist thought.

The methodology of modernist thought in studying Islamic heritage is based on the foundation of Western philosophical thought, which considers interpretive theory as one of its most important research tools according to the following foundations:

A- Priority of the recipient over the speaker.

The deconstructive approach has leaned toward interpretive reading to liberate the text from the authority of its author, presenting the recipient as the one in understanding and conveying meaning, so that the interpretations of the reader become the essence of discourse and its intent, while the speaker's intent becomes a weak illusion, indicating a reality where the author dies and interpretation is born. Ultimately,[37] the fate of the author turns into a forced imposition of the reader's intent upon him, attributing to him interpretations that may contradict themselves, conflict with reason, and clash in reality.[38]

B- Neglecting the purpose of the text and failing to implement it leads to the following consequences.

- First: The failure of the author’s intention because the priority in realizing meanings belongs to the receiving reader, who is the creator of meanings and connotations and the judge of the speaker's intentions.[39]
- Second: The futility of searching for the speaker's intentions, as the significance lies with the recipient; he is the one who should derive his interpretations, while the speaker's role is rendered void. Thus, the search for the purpose of the text and the author’s intention becomes an illusion.[40]
- Third: The multiplicity and conflict of interpretations, which is a necessary consequence of the previous two premises: the absence of the speaker's intention and the priority of others in understanding his words, resulting in

numerous interpretations and interpretations then their conflict - due to the failure to grasp the intention of the speech - seeking continuity.[41]

C - The clash of infinite interpretative readings.

The rejection of the speaker's priority regarding the intent of their speech, and the prioritization of the listener's understanding, condemns the author of the text to death and oblivion. Consequently, interpretations multiply and diversify, and may conflict in grasping the intended meaning of the speech, leading to collisions and divisions, because their references in interpretation are relative in perception, subjective in research, and suggestive in explanation, causing interpretations to enter the realm of intellectual conflict and literary violence, transforming human life into a hell of contradictions and clashes.[42]

D- Textual Intertextuality.

Its essence is the openness of the text to interpretation and the lack of definiteness in its meanings, leading to the emergence of a symbolic sign that is open to the reader. According to the deconstructive literary approach, intertextuality becomes an entry point to multiple interpretations without end, and their collisions without a justified benefit. Roland Barthes states: 'The text is made of multiple writings, it is a result of various cultures that all enter into dialogue, parody, and contradiction with one another, but there is a place where this multiplicity converges, and this place is not the writer as has been claimed until now, but rather the reader.'[43]

E- Semantic gaps.

The interpretive theory has concluded that the subjection of the text to the judgment of criticism necessitates a lack of completeness in its meaning and the instability of its truths. Thus, it is susceptible to semantic gaps and silences that the recipient must fill in this hermeneutical circle based on mature creative reading and interactive reception. Accordingly, if the language of the text becomes empty signs, vague indications, and closed symbols, then the authority of language to denote meanings by its rules has fallen, and the hermeneutic interpretive approach has become the main method of understanding.[44] Thus, the claim of symbols has become a broad entrance and a free path for corrupting linguistic communication through the distortion of the meanings of texts and discourses.

Conclusion.

After this modest scientific movement examining the applications of contemporary modernist thought and its procedural methods, the following objective results can be summarized:

- The modern project is a natural outcome of the negative replication of the contradiction that Western thought faced between civilizational advancement and the corruptions of distorted religion.

- The modernist thought in its interpretative projects relies on the outputs of Western thought, starting from sources of reception and understanding to the methodologies of human sciences in interpretation and explanation, and the modern application of interpretative procedures is merely an attempt to support the achievements of Western thought through distorting the texts of Islamic heritage.
- The goal of the modernist project is to create a civilizational rupture between Islamic heritage and the civilizational performance of the followers of the Quranic revelation.
- The interpretive approach seeks that the absolute authority of understanding belongs to the reader, and the art is varied, diverse, and conflicting, transcending the text on the pretext of its connection as a cultural product to temporal and spatial circumstances.
- The modern readings of the Quranic text declare that their Western methodologies aim to regard the certainties of revelation as cultures produced by historical conditions and temporal contexts.

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