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Muhammad Abduh and His Epistemology of Reform: Its Essential Impact on Rashid Rida

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Abstrak

Pengaruh epistemologi pembaharuan Muhammad Abduh dan pengaruhnya terhadap Rashid Rida. Tulisan ini menganalisis pengaruh Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) kepada muridnya, Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935). Rida adalah pendukung yang terhadapan terhadap prinsip rasional Abduh dan idealisme modernnya melalui penulisan dalam *Tafsīr al-Manār* dan *Tārīkh al-Ustadh al-Imam Muhammad 'Abduh*. *Tafsīr al-Manār* adalah tafsir al-Qur'an yang berpijak pada pendekatan rasional yang digariskan oleh Muhammad Abduh dan *Tārīkh* adalah biografi yang komprehensif tentang kehidupan dan karier Abduh yang dicetak dalam tiga jilid yang mendokumentasikan pengaruh dan legasi Abduh yang signifikan dan bertahan dalam ranah pemikiran moden Mesir. Metode penulisan ini bercorak penelitian kepustakaan dengan melacak karya-karya yang merumuskan epistemologi Abduh yang khas, khususnya dari karya-karya dasar Rashid Rida yang mempunyai signifikansi historis-kontekstual dengan kajian serta sumber-sumber sekunder yang lain yang berkaitan dengan topik kajian. Data dianalisis secara deskriptif-analitik dengan menggunakan teknik inferen dan istinbat, bagi memperoleh dan merumuskan penemuan. Kajian membuktikan Rashid Rida adalah penganjur faham revivalis Islam yang tuntas mempertahankan ide pembaharuan moden Abduh melalui *Majallat al-Manār*. Ia secara agresif mengembangkan idealisme reformnya yang berhasil mengklaim pengaruhnya yang meluas dalam dunia Islam semasa.

Kata kunci: Muhammad Abduh, Muhammad Rashid Rida, Idealisme

Abstract

The paper analyzed Muhammad Abduh's epistemology and its influence on his chief disciple, Muhammad Rashid Rida. Rida was the leading advocate of Abduh's rational principle and modern ideal through his writing in *Tafsir al-Manar* (The Manar Commentary) and *Tarikh al-Ustadh al-Imam Muhammad Abduh* (Biography of Muhammad Abduh). *Tafsir al-Manar* is a Qur'anic exegesis based on social and rational approach outlined by Muhammad Abduh and the *Tarikh* is a comprehensive biography of the life and works of Muhammad Abduh printed in three volumes that significantly documented Abduh's lasting influence and legacy in modern Egypt. The research was conducted based on library method. The instruments of research were the various sources of works that provide compelling analysis of Abduh's epistemology, especially Rida's principal works having historical-contextual significance to the study, and other secondary sources that relate to the topic discussed. The data was analyzed using descriptive-analytical approaches, by employing certain technique of inference and deduction, in order to reach conclusive finding and final conclusion. The finding shows that Rida was the principal advocate of revivalist interpretation of Islam that continued to indefatigably champion Abduh's creative ideas of reform through *Majallat al-Manar* (al-Manar Journal) that reverberated his principles and remarkably claimed extensive influence in contemporary Islamic world.

Keywords: Muhammad Abduh, Muhammad Rashid Rida, Idealism

Introduction

The influential work of Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) and its reverberating impact has monumental influence on Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935). Abduh's tremendous impact in modern Islamic world and its significant influence were partly due to the far-reaching and instrumental efforts of Rashid Rida to promulgate and extend his ideas to different corners of Muslim world. Abduh's dynamic aspiration of reform was significantly developed by Rida in his famous periodical al-Manar (1898-1935), and in his phenomenal and encompassing work, the *Tarikh al-Ustadh al-Imam Muhammad Abduh*, a pioneering work that compiled comprehensive and detail biography of 'Abduh in three substantive volumes. This outstanding legacy was profoundly depicted by Malcolm Kerr (Kerr, 1966, p. 153) in his definitive work, *Islamic Reform: The Political and Legal Theories of Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida*:

Rida devoted most of his career to propagating a revivalist interpretation of Islamic faith and institutions...He wrote much more voluminously than

his master. He elaborated a doctrine of Islamic law and politics much more systematic and specific than anything 'Abduh had attempted.

The novelty of this study is to present in a systematic and specific way the influence of Abduh's reformative ideas on Rashid Rida. While previous studies devoted much of their analysis on Abduh's modernism and concentrate on his work and career, his ideological relation with Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, and historical engagement and debate with Christian and Western intellectuals, this study will try to focus on his intellectual impact on his chief disciple Rashid Rida, and how he build on his legacy and carried his tradition.

Abduh's impact on *Tafsir*

Abduh's unfinished commentary, *Tafsir al-Manar* (al-Manar Commentary) was hailed as among the most influential and definitive work of tafsir that manifested his immense influence on Rida. It was compiled by Rida from his dictates and lectures on Qur'an delivered at *Jami' al-Azhar* ((Zimamah, 1997, p. 335) from first Muharram 1317 AH/1899 AD until the mid of Muharram 1323 AH/1905 AD. The lecture later appeared in Egyptian's official newspaper *al-Mu'ayyid* in a series of articles wrote by Rida, entitled "al-Qur'an". Abduh explained the text from *Sura al-Fatihah* (The Opening) until *Sura al-Nisa'* (The Women) verse 125, and this was substantially expanded with notes by Rida. He used to refer the notes on commentary to Abduh and his opinion to compiling it, and after making some checking and revision, it was serialized in *al-Manar*. After the death of Abduh in 1905 Rida continued the initiative of assembling and compiling the tafsir. He commence by commenting from *sura al-Nisa'* verse 126 until *sura Yusuf* verse 101 (*My Lord, You have given me [something] of sovereignty and taught me of the interpretation of dreams*) and referred to it as *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Hakim li al-Ustadh Muhammad 'Abduh*, indicating its origin from the *Imam*. It was commenced in Bombay, India at the beginning of Rabi' al-Akhir 1330 AH until his death in 1345/1935 spanning about 30 or 35 years. Rida's work was continued by Shaykh Muhammad Bahjat al-Baytar after his death in 1935, commenting on *sura Yusuf* from verse 102 until 111 and published separately under the authorship of Rida entitled *Tafsir Sayyid Muhammad Rashid Rida* (Al-Dhahabi, 1976, p. 42). In 1984, Qadi Muhammad ibn Ahmad Kan'an of Lebanon summarized the Tafsir (*al-Mukhtasar*) and published it in Beirut in three volumes ((Zimamah, 1997, p. 340).

Rida's distinguished effort in compiling, summarizing and expanding the work was depicted in his explanation of *sura al-Nisa'* that exponentially described his effort in extending Abduh's explanation:

Here ended the teaching of al-Ustadh al-Imam and we shall continue with attempt to accomplish the explanation if God Will based on the method and instruction we acquired from him, though we were unable to interpret all the verses comprising of juristic instruction and lesson. It was a divine gift abundantly vouchsafed on his perceptive mind enabling him to grasp and interpret the verses of the Scripture steadily except the last chapter of 30 which he interprets briefly. ((Rida, 1999, p. 356)

Rida's commentary closely followed the traditional style of *sharh*, discriminating and distinguishing his saying from the explanation of the *Imam*, by denoting in the tafsir, *qala al-ustadh al-imam* (the teacher-leader said), *qala ma ma'nahu* (he said – concerning its meaning), summarizing Abduh's views, and marks his own work with the statement, *aqul* (I say), and "written by Muhammad Rashid Rida". This was depicted by J. Jomier ((Jomier, 1991, p. 361) in his incisive article on 'al-Manar': [*Tafsir al-Manar*] from the third year onward was the work of Rashid Rida; it included lengthy extracts from the commentary expounded by Muhammad Abduh in the evening lectures at al-Azhar, and the respective contributions of the two men were clearly distinguished.

This kind of method was consistently followed in the *tafsir*, as illustrated in his commentary of *sura Al-Imran* [3:110]: (You are the best community that has been raised up for mankind),

The essence of what the teacher-leader [Abduh] said is: this description [of the best community] is true about those to whom it was first addressed. They were the Prophet (saw) may Allah bestow blessings and peace upon him, and his Companions upon them be Divine satisfaction. They were once enemies, but God united their hearts so that, by Divine Grace, they became brothers. And they were those who tied each other by the Divine rope [Islam] and were not disunited in religion to become partisans of particular sects, and they were those who were ordering the good and forbidding the evil. ((Rida, 1947, p. 48)

Abduh's continued to portray the exemplary conduct and excellent merit of the Companions and Rida accentuate this point by giving his elaborative comment: I say: this is the summary meaning of what the teacher-leader said, except the phrase "and his Companions who were with him" [which needs an explanation]. This is from his words, but he intended this noble attribute and perfect characteristic for that perfect faith is not for everyone for whom the hadith scholars apply the term of a Companion, such as the Bedouin who just embrace Islam and saw Prophet (saw) only once. ((Rida, 1947, p. 48).

Rida's commentaries focused on the function of the Qur'an as the ultimate guidance for mankind. It works to realize and project new understanding of the text, by emphasizing the Qur'an as the principal source of Islamic theology and critically investigate the source of hadith and denouncing the Isra'iliyyat tradition (the Jewish and Christians narratives), trying to expand new premise of rationality and taking critical position on Islamic religious and intellectual heritage.

In formulating and constructing the method and propound its argument, Rida aspired to form a modern scientific commentary, by explaining the Scripture from a progressive-modernist perspective. It places great emphasis on reason as the key to understanding the meaning of its text (Chande, 2004, p. 79) and developed scientific analysis of the text from modern viewpoint reflecting its relevancy to contemporary world. The work was highly influential and broadly acclaimed as among the greatest work of exegesis in modern time. Its significant approach and principle was alluded by Abdullah Saeed (Saeed, 2008, p. 209) in his concise work on the Qur'an, investigating its history, and key aspects of its influence and development in modern times, *The Qur'an: An Introduction*: One of the best-known modernist writings is Muhammad Abduh's *Tafsir al-Manar*, which was compiled and completed after Abduh's death by Rashid Rida (d. 1935), a student of Abduh.

It was hailed as modern *sunni* interpretation which represent a rational and moderate commentary, strongly advocate Islamic ideology and challenging the secular onslaught and western missionary campaign. This was clearly emphasized by Mahmoud Ayoub (Ayoub, 1984, p. 39) in his influential work *The Qur'an and Its Interpreters*: Abduh interpretation is a modern *sunni* tafsir [which] appeared in the 19th century as a reaction to the challenge of western technology, science and education. It was rational and apologetic; its primary aim was to present Islam to Muslims and defend it against the western secular and missionary onslaughts.

The explanation of the text began with brief discussion on the verse, the meaning of particular words, historical account of the circumstances of its revelation, and the context of the *ayah*, its legal implications and significant lesson drawn from it. The work employed decisive method of *al-adabi al-ijtima'i* (ethical and social interpretation) (Al-Dhahabi, 1976, 2/547) emphasizing the dimension of socio-cultural, and rational understanding of the text. This contextual approach was depicted by Kosugi Yasushi (Kosugi, 2006, p. 17) in his study of this voluminous work: *Tafsir al-Manar* is an attempt to justify the reformulation of Islamic understanding of faith, society, life, and the world in modern days with its readings of the Qur'anic passages.

The commentary was first serialized in *al-Manar's* magazine in 1901 (vol. 4) which had momentous impact on the rationalist tendency developed by the Manarist party. The work principally crafted on critical method of the rational and social school (*al-madrasa al-'aqliya al-ijtima'iyya*) (Rumi, 2002, p. 703), advocating reason and coherent approaches (*ittijah 'aqli tawfiqi*) (Al-Muhtasib, 1982, p. 101) and balanced (*mu'tadil*) commentary (Kosugi, 2006, p. 28). It marshaled scientific arguments in the light of the underlying Qur'anic message as it is revealed in its ethical and social teachings (Chande, 2004). Its comprehensive principle was essentially informed in the introduction:

This is an exceptionally one interpretation that combined transmitted tradition (al-ma'thur) of interpretation which is authentic (sahih) with rational interpretation (al-ma'qul) which is obvious (sarih), explaining the law (shariah) and established order (sunan) of God in man's life, and the fact that the Qur'an is a guidance for people in every place and time, and weighing between its revealed writ and human condition in this time. That they have discarded it, and the state of the salaf (righteous forebears) those who hold tenaciously to its rope, with the ease of expression, dispensing away discourse related to terminology of science and artistic, in a way understood by the laymen, and equally imperative for the adept. Such is the course that was followed while delivering his lecture in Jami' al-Azhar by Hakim al-Islam (The Sage of Islam) al-Ustadh al-Imam al-Shaykh Muhammad Abduh. (Rida, 1947, p. 1)

There were certain disputes on the origin of this work. Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht, attributed its writing to Abduh. Other opinion contended that it was prepared by an assembly of scholars undertake to compose it. M. Quraish

Shihab (1994) in his critical study of *Tafsir al-Manar* claimed that the work was initially constructed by three men, al-Afghani, Abduh and Rida, contending that: this interpretation of the book is basically a work of three prominent and leading exponents of modern Islam, Sayyid Jamaluddin al-Afghani, Syaikh Muhammad Abduh, Sayyid Muhammad Rasyid Ridha. Al-Afghani inspired and articulated the idea of renewal, which is refined and delivered through interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an by M. Abduh. Rasyid Ridha wrote all the ideas articulated by his comrade and teacher in the form of summaries and explanations. But in J. Jomier's opinion (Jomier, 1954, p. 143), Rida's contributions form the basis of the work. His position was reinforced by Charles C. Adams (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 198) suggesting the same proposition in his book on Abduh modernism: and its preparation [*The Manar Commentary*] has been due, to so large an extent, to the labours of the editor of *Al-Manar*. After all it was that Rida who was undisputedly the principle exegetes who had extensively commented, almost eight suras or two third (Iftitah, 1998, p. 31) of the whole tafsir, as pointed out by Jane McAuliffe (1991, p. 79) that: *Tafsir al-Manar* is largely Rida's work.

The work advocated Abduh's rational principle in understanding the text, focusing on its function as religious book intended to guide mankind towards happiness in this world and the hereafter (Rida, 1999, p. 552). This underlying and fundamental aspiration was significantly outlined by Abduh in his introduction: the *tafsir* at which we aim to understand the Book as a path which guides people to that which will give them happiness in this life and the next, for this is its highest aim, and all other endeavors are subordinate to this or a means of attaining it (Iftitah, 1998, p. 37). Rida brought forth critical framework of Qur'anic exegesis advocating rational method of commentary, and deeply expounded Abduh's modern principle in explicating the text, although he differed slightly from the *Imam* in certain aspect of tafsir. This different interpretation was alluded to by Harun Nasution (Nasution, 1968, p. 8) in his analysis of Abduh's rational system: Rida as various authors have rightly observed, does not always follow 'Abduh's views. This position was also suggested by Abdullah Mahmud Shihata (1984) in his study of *al-Manar*: Abduh's contribution was in drawing the general idea of a chapter and the issues with which it deals and the principles and the realities it contains, and that it was carried on by Rida.

In furthering his interpretative argument, Rida consistently emphasized the primacy of reason and conscious intellect to understand the text, inspiring critical and independent investigation, that broke the ground for opening the door of

ijtihad – a point substantially advocated by Abduh in his lecture: I do not read other books while teaching, but sometimes I refer to exegetical books if there were strange structures and strange sentences (Iftitah, 1998, p. 37). Abduh's principal aim was to derive the lesson from the Qur'an and its ethical significance, as alluded to by J.M.S. Baljon (Baljon, 1968, p. 2) in his *Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation*: in my opinion the most distinguishing feature of Abduh's Koran commentaries is his apparent desire to give moral lessons whenever the text affords an opportunity.

He insisted on the need to simplify the commentary, contending that: modern traditional exegesis offers little more than an elaborate repetition of the various opinions of the classical exegetes, and that these essentially dated interpretations tend to alienate people from the aims of revelation (Rida, 1999). In the subsequent edition of the *Tafsir*, Rida provided greater background to the work, underlying its essentially discursive commentary, and robust discussion on technical issues, concentrating on the compelling foundation of scientific and independent spirit, as significantly emphasized in the introduction:

This is such an exceptional interpretation that brought forth genuine and authentic report with clear and explicit rational thought, distinguishing which is branch and which is fundamental, solving various problems of religion, denying the arguments of the materialist and atheist, advocating the legitimate proof of Islam, describing its ideal in realizing the general welfare (maslahah) of mankind and expounding the wisdom in the application of legal rule and the divine provision encountered in human life. This interpretation also explicates that the Qur'an is the universal guidance or instructions from God to all mankind in every time and place, as the irrefutable proof of God and conclusive evidence of immense charmed and immortal truth. This book also describes the conformability between instructions of the Qur'an and the need of the Muslim, whether they were living at present in a state of collapse and inferior, since most of them have thrown these guidance, or they flourish in the past in a state of thriving and prosperous, since they always adhere to it, and that is the path that leads them to happiness in this world and the hereafter. This interpretation conclusively maintained that its description can be understood easily, and avoiding the use of words heaped with technical terms of science and art. As such the interpretation can be used as guidance by the laymen, and equally indispensable for the adept. Such is the way in which the philosopher, al-Ustadh al-Imam al-Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh followed in his lecture on this commentary. (Rida, 1947, p. 9)

After the death of Abduh the work was substantially expanded by Rida with greater emphasis on traditional doctrine, and crucial focus on *salafis* moderate views. He occasionally referred to many classical, pre-modern and modern commentaries ranging from al-Tabari's *Jami' al-Bayan fi Ta'wil Ay al-Qur'an* to al-Suyuti and al-Mahalli's *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*, to al-Alusi's (1802-1854) *Ruhul Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an wa Sab' al-Mathani*. He outlined critical aspiration for reform and inspired modern outlook and socio-ethical interpretation, maintaining that: after teacher's death, I use different interpretation unlike the methodology used to be employed by teacher – these methods are enlarging explanations with authentic traditions, elucidating the words, sentences, and the problems that have caused disagreement among scholars. By this he tried to elucidate and amplify the evidence and strengthen its arguments through quoting from various passages and *surah*. In this it help to reinforce the arguments that deal with problems which need timely solution in contemporary Muslim context based on guidance provided by their religion, and to strengthen their proof and argument in confronting their enemies, both of pagans and heretics, or solving the problem in a way that can be reassuring and soothing to mind. (Rida, 1947, p. 16) His commentary avoids the detail devoted in classical works to examining meticulous aspect of language, art, and literature, unleashing absolute freedom unbounded from past authorities. According to A. Athaillah (Athaillah, 2006, p. 2) Rida's exegetical work not only furnish interpretation of the verses of Qur'an, but also constitute a vehicle and channel of reform expounded by Abduh: through his commentary, he associate the teaching of the Qur'an with people's life, affirming the universal and eternal character of the religion of Islam, which is always in conformity with the needs of people in all times and places. He aligned the teaching of the Qur'an with the development of science at his time.

The profound work to set forth and spread Abduh's modern ideal, and propounded his doctrine was instrumental in spreading his dynamic and progressive work of commentary, as alluded by Abdullah Mahmud Shahatah (Syahatah, 1984, p. 209): if not for Rida's effort to publish Abduh's ideal of reform, we shall be deprive not able to recognize this brilliant ideas, especially in the field of Qur'anic exegesis.

The *Tarikh*

Kitab *Tarikh al-Ustadh al-Imam Muhammad Abduh* was the foundational work of Rida that documented Abduh's compelling intellectual history and major source on his life and career in Egypt. It was extended from Rida's early brief biography, *Al-Mulakkkhas fi Sirat al-Ustadh al-Imam* that was released in *al-Manar's* magazine (vol. viii, 1905). The important intellectual milieu described in this work was emphatically illustrated by Charles C. Adams (Adams. C.C, 1933): the only biography of considerable length concerning him was that from the pen of Muhammad Rashid Rida which was printed in vol. viii (1905) of *al-Manar*, the monthly journal of the 'Abduh's party.

The *Tarikh* was published in three principle volumes that continue to become the most definitive, undisputed and standard reference concerning Abduh's life, with its more than one thousand pages, as the last and fullest source-book for a biography of Muhammad Abduh (Adams. C.C, 1933). The volume contains a wealth of incident and detail concerning events and persons; throws most interesting and valuable sidelights on modern Egyptian history; reveals inner details of the various intrigues, political or otherwise, in which 'Abduh was involved, sometimes as author but more frequently as victim (Adams. C.C, 1933). The publication of this biography, unmatched in its detail and comprehensive account of Abduh, had surpassed previous works on Abduh by Goldziher, Horten, Hartmann, H.A.R. Gibb, Mustafa 'Abd al-Raziq and M. Bernard Michel, as essentially described by Charles C. Adams (Adams. C.C, 1933, pp. vi-vii): this long awaited volume by the chief disciple of 'Abduh, who has carried on his tradition, must remain the principal source of information regarding the life and work of the great Egyptian reformer. Volume I contained full biography, which appeared in the latter months of 1931 (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. vi) and covered about 1134 pages. The second volume contained Abduh's major articles and briefer works, collected from various sources, and published in 1908. Volume III contained biographical and eulogistic accounts which appeared at the time of his death, letters and telegrams of condolence, published on the fifth anniversary of his death, in 1910. (Michel, 1925) (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. vii)

The *Tarikh* represents monumental contribution of Rida to undertake a groundbreaking work in constructing extensive account of Abduh and republished the bulks of his works and worldviews, and was instrumental to reverberate his classical tradition and rich historical narrative and influence in Egypt, as depicted by Charles C. Adams (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 77): as the leading pupil of Muhammad 'Abduh during the latter's lifetime, and since his death, his biographer, editor of his

works, and the one who has principally carried on his tradition and interpreted his doctrines, his name cannot be mentioned otherwise than frequently in any study of the movement inaugurated by Muhammad Abduh. His initiative to construct a historical account and modern biography of Abduh and extensively published his instrumental works of reform was acclaimed widely, as the man who has been perpetuating Abduh's influence for the quarter of a century since his death. (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 177). Rida's far-reaching contribution to publicize Abduh's modern views, was deeply appreciated by Abduh himself, who arguably defended him and denounced the disparaging controversy that undermined him and condemned those who spread slander and assailed negative views of him:

No one of you were able to take over his duties. Bring others like him to me, and I will leave him. He never told me the way you said. Now I reiterate to you that God has sent him to prolong my life, and extend my age. Many things in my mind that I want to write down and explain to people, but I am not able to do, thanks to various matters that bustle me. Since then, only he can fulfill it precisely as I aspire. If I mentioned a topic to him to write about in al-Manar, he thus wrote it as I want. If I declared something to him in general, he then outlined and explain the way I desired. He who accomplished what I started and enunciated what I indicated and affirmed. In my visit to Tunisia and Europe, I could see the result of his labors and influence of the magazine of al-Manar that he ran. This has never been predicted before. In fact, he also managed to assemble a number of cadres of students, and comrades who became my supporters. (Rida, 1931, p. 1018)

Rida's instrumental role in advocating Abduh's principle was highly crucial, and instructive, that, if it were not for *al-Manar* most of Abduh's thoughts and wisdom would have been lost, and his reform and history unknown (Jundi, 1977, p. 77) (Kosugi, 2006, p. 13). This exceptional and momentous effort to bring forth Abduh's extensive biography and intellectual history in *al-Manar* was certainly unprecedented, as proclaimed by Mustafa Abdurrazizq: say if Abduh was the leader in religion, Rida was his comrade the interpreter of his school and perfecter of his ideal, the editor of *al-Manar's* magazine had exerted all his ability and had undertook various studies and discussion on matters of religion and jurisprudence. His work had brought substantive influence for students of religious science and mainstream Islamic studies across the world (Athallah, 2006, p. 2).

Al-Manar

The history of modern Islamic reform has much connection with Pan Islamic ideal propagated by *al-Manar's* magazine, which was founded in 1898 by Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida. *Al-Manar* was initiated as continuation of al-Afghani and Abduh's renowned journal, *al-Urwa' al-Wuthqa* published in Paris in 1884 that echoed the same aspiration of Pan-Islamic views and anti-British sentiments. According to Kosugi (Kosugi, 2006, p. 8) *al-Urwa al-Wuthqa* was the first journal calling for the revival of Islam, or that of the Islamic *umma* and its civilization...it gave a serious warning of the dangers of Western colonialism, and called for a reform of the *umma* and exercise of *ijtihad* (independent reasoning to find Islamic legal rules) to face the challenges of the time. Among the younger generation who received the message of this pioneering journal, was the young Muhammad Rashid Rida in Syria.

Rida was inspired by this pioneering journal that published instructive articles calling for radical confrontation against the colonial. He discovered the journal from his father's papers which brought tremendous impact on his spiritual consciousness and marked the most defining and momentous event in his life, encouraging him to undertake the struggle in religious cause:

I found a copy of al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa among my father's papers. When I read its articles calling for pan Islamism, the return of glory, power and prestige of Islam, the recovery of what it used to possess, and the liberation of its people from foreign domination, I was so impressed that I entered into a new phase of my life. And I became very fond of the methodology of these articles to making and proving its arguments on topics, with verses of Quran, and of its exegesis (tafsir) which none of mufassirs (exegetes) have written. The most important point in which al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa distinguished itself were: (1) Allah's rule in His creation and the order of human society, and the reasons for the rise and fall of nations as well as their strength and weakness; (2) clarification that Islam is a religion of sovereignty and power, combining the happiness of this world and that of the hereafter, while implying that it is a religion both spiritual and social, civil and military, and that its military power is for the sake of protection of the just law, general guidance and prestige of the community, and not for the sake of imposition of the religion by force; and (3) for Muslims there are no nationalities except their religion, so they are brothers whose bloodline must not separate them, nor their language nor their governments. (Rida, 1972, p. 11) (Hourani, 1967, p. 226)

In 1897, Rida decided to move to Cairo to collaborate with Muhammad Abduh after his initial plan to meet al-Afghani did not materialize since al-Afghani was under the protection of Ottoman Caliph and brought to stay in Istanbul until his death in 1897. He had initially written to al-Afghani in 1893 expressing his hope and anticipation to join his circle in Constantinople. Rida celebrated the heroic spirit al-Afghani and revered him as The Awakener of the East (*Muqiz al-Sharq*) and was remembered as Adorer of al-Afghani by his colleagues. In 1897 he traveled to Cairo with Farah Antun (1874-1922), the founder of the secularist journal *al-Jami'a* and plunge into remarkable career in journalism. Relating this momentous journey, he stated: when he [al-Afghani] passed away, my hope was heightened to get in touch with his viceroy Shaykh Muhammad Abduh to acquire his knowledge and opinions on Islamic reform. I waited until an opportunity appeared in the month of Rajab in 1315 [1897] and that was immediately after I completed my study in Tripoli, acquiring an '*alim* status, permission to teach independently, from my mentors. Then I immigrated to Egypt, and initiated *al-Manar* to call for reform and renewal (Rida, 1972, p. 12).

The printing machines were invented in Egypt throughout this period, which highly impacted the artistic and literary renaissance of the masses. It marked the beginning of critical milestone in the rise of newspapers, press and magazines in modern Egypt. It was timely for *al-Manar* to begin to surface following this development, to propagate and publicize its ideas. Everywhere the increased use of the printing press for publishing religious texts challenged the 'ulama's role as guardians and transmitters of knowledge...the reformers of Islamic law were aware of the opportunities that the print media opened up. They skillfully used periodicals and pamphlets to disseminate their opinions to a wide audience (Opwis, 2004, p. 34)

Al-Manar was first released in 1898, as a monthly magazine that researches the philosophy of religion and the affairs of society and civilization (Rida, 1909). Deriving its title from the tradition of the Prophet (saw), that there were in Islam landmarks and a lighthouse, like a lighthouse of the path. The journal was initially published eight-page weekly, and on monthly based commencing from the second year of issue. 1500 exemplars were printed in the first issue and sent to neighboring province in Egypt and Syria. After the Ottoman authorities banned its circulation in Syria, its copies were reduced to 1000. Nevertheless, few years later, its subscribers escalated to approximately 3000 and by the twelfth year (1909), remaining copies of volume I were selling for four times the original price; a

second printing was therefore made, in the form which had been followed after the first year. (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 180)

Al-Manar enthusiastically advocated modern idealism inspired by Abduh. It had exerted great influence in the Islamic world and has become the mouthpiece for the propagation of Abduh's doctrines and the accomplishment of his reforms. (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 178). It has been the organ through which his [Abduh] views have been given the largest publicity (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 205). *Al-Manar* undertakes crucial role in the reform movement, working to proposed the cures for the illness of the *umma* in a general form, then with details and proofs (Rida, 1909, p. 8) (Kosugi, 2006, p. 10). It aspired to restore the dynamic and progressive role of the *umma* and to reclaim their important and significance position in world civilization. The new consciousness was asserted as remarked by Kosugi (Kosugi, 2006, p. 17): the journal of *al-Manar* was meant to reaffirm the validity of Islam as a religion in the contemporary world, of Islam as a civilization in the modern context. It strived to awaken the umma from their deep crisis, authoritarian rule, underdevelopment and long slumber, as decisively pronounced in the introduction: This is a voice calling in a clear Arabic tongue, and an appeal to the truth reaching the ear of a speaker of the *dad* letter [an Arab] and the ears of all Easterners, calling from a close place [Egypt, located between the West and the East] which both the Easterner and the Westerner can hear, and it spreads out so that the Turks and the Persians also receive it. It says: "Oh, the sleeping Easterner who enjoys sweet dreams, wake up, wake up! Your sleep has exceeded the limit of rest (Rida, 1909, p. 9).

Al-Manar continued to publish uninterruptedly for three decades until 1935, and its reputation was broadly developed and eventually gained a wide circulation from Morocco to Java (Gibb, 1964, p. 178). It brought instrumental light and inspiration for the *umma*, as alluded by C.C. Berg (Berg, 1973, p. 268): *Al-Manar* did not shine...for Egyptians alone. It illuminated the Arabs at home and abroad, the Moslems of the Malay Archipelago who studied at al-Azhar University or in Mecca, and the solitary Indonesian who had kept his old relations with the heart of the Moslem world after having returned to his border country of the Dar al-Islam...and all these people now saw Islam in a new light...those who had caught up and preserved the light of the *Manar* in Egypt, became lesser "*manars*" for their environments, once back in Indonesia.

The monumental effort of *al-Manar* to proclaim Abduh's rationalism and reviving his salafis doctrine, was acclaimed by former rector of al-Azhar and

disciple of Abduh, al-Ustadh al-Shaykh Mustafa al-Maraghi (1881-1945) in his speech on the occasion of commemorating his funeral: al-Sayyid Rashid triumphed and his supporters and disciples became many, while there were once few supporters and disciples, and within academic circles there were found those who carry his principles and follow his path, and among the public those whose eyes were opened to light, and clouds of ignorance and falsehood were wiped out of their hearts. He didn't have any new principle in Islam, that could be justified as a school of his own, but his principle was the principle of the entire ulama of the salaf, that is, to return in judgment to God and His messenger (saw) by executing [the following Qur'anic order in the verse of] "and if you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to Allah and the messenger [Qur'an 4:59], and his principle was also that of the ulama of the salaf in choosing rules appropriate for the time and beneficial for nations in issues of *ijtihad* [where independent judgment should be exercised], and his principle was that of the ulama of the salaf in everything related to Divine attributes and the issues related to the last day, so he was a salafi sunni man who disliked *taqlid* (uncritical emulation) and propagated *ijtihad*, seeing it [ijtihad] an obligation upon himself and upon everyone capable. (Kosugi, 2006, p. 11)

Method

The research was conducted based on library method. The instruments of research were the various sources of works that provide compelling analysis of Abduh's epistemology, especially Rida's principal works having historical-contextual significance to the study, and other secondary sources that relate to the topic discussed. The data was analyzed using descriptive-analytical approaches, by employing certain technique of inference and deduction, in order to reach conclusive finding and final conclusion.

Discussion

Abduh largely concentrated his reformist work on educational reform, and his far-reaching achievement had significantly impacted Rida's advocacy of educational reform extensively in *al-Manar*. A serious undertaking in the form unprecedented in its intellectual tradition, as alluded by Kosugi (Kosugi, 2006, p. 11): in doing so (maintaining the publication of *al-Manar*), Rida depended upon al-Afghani and 'Abduh to a great extent, especially at the beginning. This is partly

because he had faith in their thought and believed that their cause was not only correct but also beneficial to all members of the Islamic world. Their authority and credibility were assets to him.

Abduh had exerted significant change and putting great effort to improve and transform educational structure and landscape in Egypt, focusing his endeavor to uplift school curriculum and bring intellectual and religious consciousness for meaningful institutional reform. This monumental feat was observed by Osman Amin (O. Amin, 1995, p. 167): the educative and ethical aspects of Abduh's modernism explain the pervasive influence this Egyptian reformer had had in some parts of the Muslim world.

Al-Manar echoed such idea of reform by advancing scientific worldview espoused by Abduh that fundamentally inspired ethical and spiritual change, intellectual improvement and moral consciousness, and promote social transformation, and it was deeply influential in the introduction and development of modern education in the Muslim world, and the proliferation of progressive Islam, by adopting the science and technology of the West (Hunt, 2005, p. 145). According to Kosugi (Kosugi, 2006, p. 7) *Al-Manar* is a treasure of historical sources for Islamic areas of its days.

The ideal of reform had inspired progressive and scientific achievement and the penetration of modern worldview. Abduh's essential effort was projected to improve the condition and intellectual malaise of the umma, and the pursuit of educational reform. This critical effort was exponentially articulated by Ahmad Bazli Shafie (Shafie, 2004, p. vii) in his work analyzing Abduh's principle and philosophical framework of education: education was the most vital means and the key to 'Abduh's efforts to halt the decline of the Muslim world.

He sought to reassert the dynamic civilization and encourage the excellent pursuit of knowledge, arguing that: Islam urged Muslims to seek knowledge and to spread it because the Prophet of Islam (saw) had asked Muslims to seek knowledge even in China. Islam emphasized the importance of knowledge and within two centuries from the emergence of Islam "the Muslims were already excelling in all the branches of human knowledge (O. Amin, 1995, p. 172) (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 128). This fundamental aspiration to inspired cultural and scientific endeavor, was critically expounded in *al-Manar*, that marked Rida's enduring contributions to rigorously articulate and conceptualize Abduh's fundamental aspiration and idealism on educational reform, emphasizing the primacy of reason, as he categorically argued: Islam persistently encourages man to use reason and to

study created beings through the laws and natures that govern them in order to know their creator God (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 128).

The principle of *ijtihad* (independent judgment) was the foremost ideal rigorously espoused by Abduh in his religious struggle. He strongly critic the passive and uncritical adherent to past authorities (*taqlid*) and encouraged the application of *ijtihad*, arguing that: Islam attributed folly and levity to those who accept blindly the words of their predecessors. And it call attention to the fact, that precedence in point of time is not one of the signs of knowledge, nor a mark of superiority of intellect or intelligence; but that the preceding generations and the later are on an equality so far as critical acumen and natural abilities are concerned (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 132) (Ibrahim, 1992, p. 58). He encourages the critical use of reason and defended it emphatically, claiming that: Islam is pre-eminently a religion of reason (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 128) and that, Islam and reason were totally compatible if Islam was properly understood. Abduh insisted on the important of science and the power of intellect: in the search for truth, Islam prescribes reason, condemns blind imitation, and blames those who attach themselves without discernment to the habits and opinions of their forefathers (U. Amin., 1953, p. 172). He maintained that the later generations had more explicit ground and crucial reason to exercise *ijtihad*: the later generations of Muslims have better knowledge than the earlier generations because the latter have the capacity to acquire knowledge of past circumstances, to reflect upon them and to use them for their benefit in the world in the light of present knowledge and circumstances. (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 132) In realizing the greater reform and its essential spirit and tradition, he encouraged the pursuit of science and rational judgment, and denounced the passivity and decadence views of the conservatives, as pointed out by Sayyid Qutb (Qutb, 1980, p. 19): 'Abduh grew up in a strict society where rational inquiry was discouraged, among scholars who regularly neglected the role of reason in understanding God's doctrines.

Rida explicitly espoused Abduh's position in condemning *taqlid* (uncritical imitation) and denounce the blind emulation and obedience to past authorities, as succinctly illustrated by Kosugi (Kosugi, 2006, p. 11): his [Rida] major contribution was that he disseminated these ideas [*ijtihad*, anti-*taqlid*] widely in the Islamic world through the most enduring and consistent medium in the modern era, the journal of *al-Manar*.

In Rida's opinion, *taqlid* had damaging consequences for the *umma* that corrupted its spirit and subsequently led to factionalism: what is harmful is

fragmentation of Muslims into sects and parties, while each of them requires its members to follow a scholar whom they call an imam, and they follow him in every word and opinion, and assemble themselves against the followers of another scholar, leading finally to the negligence of the Book [Qur'an] and the Sunna [Prophetic [saw] tradition] (Rida, 1901, p. 209) (Kosugi, 2006, p. 15). In explicating the fundamental influence of Abduh and the essential impact of his teaching in proclaiming *ijtihad*, Rida reflected the intellectual premise of Abduh and its profound impact that inspired him to carry on his tradition in his advocacy of *ijtihad*: I have similarities with the teacher in the use of freedom of thought and argument, both in religious and scientific problem. It was already an imperative for me since the first day I became his disciple. I have learned a lot of science, philosophy and many subjects from the teacher, but I never blindly emulating him. In many ways, I concurred and agreed with the teacher, but in some ways I disagree, in fact I rejected his argument with my own proof. We have similarities in principle, goal, motivation, and intention (Rida, 1931, p. 1019).

Rida idealized the rational spirit and independent judgment advocated by Abduh through his *fatwa* (juristic opinion) in *al-Manar*, that resonated Abduh's unprecedented ruling and significant juristic tradition in the twentieth century, as observed by Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi (Qaradawi, 1992, p. 17), illustrating the profound influence of *al-Manar's* magazine in the Islamic world: after that [the periods of traditional *fatwas*], *fatwas* of *al-'allamah al-mujaddid* [great renewer scholar] al-Sayyid Muhammad Rashid Rida had become famous, which were published in his noble Islamic journal, *al-Manar*, a journal which continued for thirty five years. Each issue always had one or more *fatwas*, answering questions from the readers of the journal in the Islamic world. For this reason, the questions and answers did not represent any particular locality, but addressed problems the entire Islamic umma and Muslims in all corners of the earth were facing...these *fatwas* had many features. First, they treat modern issues and actual problems which peoples face and suffer and need to know the answers of Islamic law, or at least, contemporary Islamic *ijtihad* (judgment, reasoning) on them. Second, they are written with a spirit of intellectual independence, with freedom from bonds of sectarianism, imitation, and narrow-minded insistence on a particular view. He did not refer except to the Book [Qur'an], Sunna, and the foundations of the Islamic law...third, they carry the spirit of reform and the invitation to the balanced comprehensive Islam.

Rida also discussed the principle and essential foundation of *ijtihad* in his groundwork *Muhawarat al-Muslih wa'l-Muqallid* (The Dialogue between the Reformer and the Imitator/Traditionalist) published in *al-Manar* from vol. 3, no. 28 (Dec. 1900) to vol. 4, no. 22 (Feb. 1902), where he painstakingly emphasize the crucial and indispensable need for *ijtihad* which ought to be exercised for the interest of people at large: the basic fundamentals of Islam are proper creed, ethics, control of one's own soul, and worshipping Allah in an appropriate manner, and general principles for social relations such as protection of life, honor and property. All these principles were established in the time of the Prophet (saw)...as for the details of social relations, after the foundations are laid such as justice of rulings, equality of rights, prohibition of transgression, deception, and treason, and *hadd* punishments for some crimes, and after the principle of *shura* (mutual consensus) is established, the details are entrusted to those with authority among the scholars and rulers, who ought to be possessors of knowledge and justice, deciding what is best for the *umma* according to [conditions of] the time. (Rida, 1901, pp. 209–210) (Kosugi, 2006, p. 15)

The intensity of da'wah (Islamic proliferation) and its advocacy was also addressed by *al-Manar*, inspired from the worldview of Abduh, that espoused the higher ideal of religion based on underlying principle of the Qur'an and prophetic tradition. In proclaiming the ideal and crucial aspiration of da'wah, Abduh and Rida had founded *Jam'iyyah al-Irshad* (The Benevolent Society) and *Madrasah al-Da'wah wa'l-Irshad* [School of Propagation and Guidance] an elite school that was established in Egypt in 1912 (Kurzman, 2002, p. 89) which undertake to gear and recruit young cadre and initiate the call for Islam and espoused its message, and strive to improve the condition of the *umma*.

The crucial role of *al-Manar* in the proliferation of da'wah and projecting the forceful aspiration for reform was strengthen by the formation of *al-Manar* party or moderate party of Islamic reform (*hizb al-islah al-islami al-mu'tadil*) that rigorously espoused *al-Manar's* defining work. The movement has developed an unprecedented influence that penetrate into broader Islamic world. The advocacy of Islamic da'wah and its work was carried by younger Egyptian modernist and preachers, such as Tantawi Jawhari, Muhammad Farid Wajdi, Qasim Amin; and scholars in Tunis dan Maghrib such as 'Abd al-Aziz al-Thaalibi, Muhammad ibn Nahil, Tahir ibn Ashur, and Ben Badis and their counterpart in the Malay Archipelago, such as Syed Shaykh al-Hadi, Syeikh Muhammad Tahir Jalaluddin al-Falaki al-Azhari, Shaykh Abdul Karim Amrullah (Haji Rasul) and Shaykh Abdul

Malik bin Abdul Karim Amrullah (Hamka) that contribute to extend the influence and continue the struggle of *al-Manar*. They espoused dynamic aspiration of reform and articulated the modern ideas of Abduh and Rida, and defending their principle and struggles. This ideal was articulated by Hunt Janin (Hunt, 2005, p. 142) documenting this influential modern salafis movement: his [Abduh] teaching inspired the Salafiya (a reformist movement designed to purify Islam through a blend of traditional, modernist, and nationalistic thought) in Egypt, the Arab Middle East, and North Africa.

That the broad influence of the underlying aspiration of modern Islam, and the understanding of Rashid [Rida] *Efendi* and *Shaykh* Muhammad Abduh of the religion of Islam helps progress and benefits the state (Kurzman, 2002, p. 83). In the Malay-Indonesian world, the spread of Islamic modernism was instrumental in the active proliferation of da'wah and the development of *al-Manar's* influence, as illustrated by H.A.R. Gibb: persons who accepted the principle of al-Manar in Egypt, upon returning to their own countries, formed small group of al-Manar supporters (*al-Manarat*) (O. Amin, 1995, p. 227). Substantial part of *Tafsir al-Manar* was translated by Syed Shaykh al-Hadi in 1908 and published in the periodical *al-Imam*, beginning from sura *al-Fatihah* (no. 3, vol. 3, 29 August 1908) and widely read in Malaya, Singapore, and Indonesia. Al-Hadi also published the translation of *Tafsir Juz 'Amma* in *al-Ikhwān's* journal in Penang and translated Abduh's *Tafsir al-Fatihah* in 1928, that constituted about 127 pages (Mustaffa, 2012, p. 762).

The significant premise of modern ideas and religious teaching of Abduh was profoundly developed by Rida in his leading periodic *al-Manar*, proclaiming his dynamic aspiration for reform, and brought forth the progressive pan-Islamic ideal and rational theology he espoused: The *Ustadh-Imam* (teacher-leader) [Abduh], may God bestow mercy upon him, reached the leadership position in this *umma* and the level of those in authority in the religious and temporal affairs, and he came quite close to the leadership of the entire *umma*. But this potential was not realized, because the *umma* was not formulated in such a manner to make it possible to move on the line which he planned (Rida, 1923, pp. 59–60) (Kosugi, 2006, p. 12). Rida significantly proclaimed the revivalist ideal and advocating Islamic renewal through *al-Manar* that established wide influence in major Arab countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia. He was strongly influenced by the reformist ideas of al-Afghani and especially of Abduh. Indeed, *Al-Manar*, the highly regarded reformist monthly magazine that Rashid Rida

published for 37 years (from 1898 to 1935), was essentially a call for change according to the doctrines of Abduh (Hunt, 2005, p. 144).

Al-Manar's extensive effort to formulate the essence of Abduh's modernism was exceptionally instrumental in realizing his principle, and modern aspiration, as articulated by A. Athaillah (Athaillah, 2006, p. 1) of his ideological influence: in the history of modern Islam Abduh was hailed as the most successful reformist, however, this success can't be realized by his efforts alone, but also thanks to the result of gracious works and contributions of his closest students Sayyid Muhammad Rashid Rida, who unfailingly and tirelessly publicize and disseminate his thoughts throughout the Islamic world in his periodical *al-Manar*, *Tafsir al-Manar*, and his other works.

The reform struggle was fundamentally aim to restore the dynamic and critical role of the ummah in the modern world. Rida strongly espoused the need to reclaim this strategic and influential role of the umma that largely inspired the rise of Islamic modernism in the twentieth century. This convincing argument for reform was depicted by Malcolm Kerr (1966) in his work that rediscover Rida's legal theories and premises in advocating reform and his defining ideas of the principle of freedom and rationality: Rashid Rida and others of his school, whatever their intentions may have been, have facilitated the accomplishment of a great undertaking of secular reform in Islamic countries.

The struggle principally focused on the goal of reviving the umma from intellectual crisis and decades of backwardness and malaise and long slumber. Articulating this radical thought Hunt (Hunt, 2005, p. 144) remarked: intellectually, Rashid Rida began precisely where al-Afghani and Abduh had begun. He first raised a fundamental question – “Why are Muslim countries so backward?” – and then answered it by tying religious belief directly to secular power and prosperity.

Rida formulated dynamic argument for reform and its imperative, articulating its underlying premise that essentially call for systematic and profound change in moral precepts and religious outlook. This was brought forth by Shakib Arslan (1869-1946), describing his intellectual and religious premise, and articulating the essentially significant and indispensable need for creative technical breakthrough: the teachings and moral precepts of Islam are such that if they are properly understood and fully obeyed, they will lead to success in this world as well as the next – and to success in all the forms in which the world understands it, [namely] strength, respect, civilization, happiness. If they are not

understood and obeyed, weakness, decay, barbarism are the results...it is irrelevant to say that modern civilization rests on technical advance, and that Islamic civilization cannot be revived so long as the Muslims are technically backward; technical skill is potentially universal, and its acquisition depends on certain moral habits and intellectual principles. If Muslims had these, they would easily obtain technical skill; and such habits and principles are in fact contained in Islam (Hunt, 2005, p. 145).

Rida's political activism, and his prolific writing on the theory and principle of Islamic governance explicitly reflected the influential thought of Abduh, projected to espouse and accentuate his political ideal, that fundamentally aim: to adjust Islam to the demands of modern times (Hunt, 2005, p. 143). Rida only discussed political issues in *al-Manar* after the death of Abduh in 1905, as Abduh discourages him from discussing politics in this critical period of political clash and conflicting interest of the Ottoman and Egyptian rule. Rida's political writings were compiled in six volumes by Yusuf Ibrish and Yusuf Quzma al-Khuri in *Maqalat al-Shaykh Rashid Rida al-Siyasiyya* (Beirut: Dar Ibn 'Arabi, 1994) that reflected the great turbulent and heated political climate in the Muslim world. Rida unwaveringly advocated the political aspiration of Abduh, which espoused the compatibility of religion and politics as set forth in his writings *al-Islam wa'l-Nasraniyyah ma'a al-'Ilm wa'l-Madaniyyah* (Islam and Christianity in Relation to Science and Civilization): Muhammad Abduh, with all his emphasis upon the spiritual character of religious exercises, defended the union of the civil and religious authority in Islam, and favoured retention of the essentials of the system of canon law, although with far-reaching reforms. (Adams. C.C, 1933, pp. 267–268) Abduh's advocacy for democratic principle, accountable conduct of Islamic state, constitutional reform and formation of full fledged modern state was emphasized in *al-Manar*, as alluded by Hunt (Hunt, 2005, p. 144): he (Rida) was one of the first Muslim intellectuals to call for the establishment of a modernized but fully Islamic state and for a reformed sharia, the body of Islamic sacred law.

Rida deeply espoused Abduh's political construct and philosophical thought on the idea of Islamic society, and his unprecedented formulation and attempt to revive the institution of caliphate that undisputedly debunked Sa'ad Zaghlul's nationalist thesis. He strategically outlined the theoretical ground for the establishment of modern Islamic state, echoing the thesis of al-Kawakibi, and to restore Islamic authority and the spirit of pan-Islamism with structural change of contemporary Muslim state: [The proposal is]...to leave the issue of the *khilafa*

(Caliphate) to all Islamic peoples, and independent and semi-independent governments among them, and constitute a mixed independent committee or assembly with its headquarters in Istanbul, which will study all reports and proposals from the men of knowledge and judgment on the issue, and this will prepare an Islamic conference. (Kosugi, 2006, p. 23).

Al-Manar's essential statement of Islamic government explicitly espoused Abduh's crucial views on the Muslim conduct of state that stresses the indispensable union of religion and politics. This aspiration was derived from his works, *Islam and Christianity in Relation to Science and Civilization*. The essential part of Rida's book *al-Khilafa aw al-Imama al-Uzma* and his political theory "Khilafa of the mujtahid" or governance by the jurists in 1920s, was explicitly inspired from the principles of Abduh, that espoused the fundamental ideal of the underlying structure of Islamic governance. In this, *al-Manar* had states explicitly and unequivocally the imperative of Islamic caliphate and refuted 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq's thesis as set forth in *Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm* (Islam and the Fundamentals of Authority) that assault the institution of Islamic caliphate, arguing that: the assertion that the government and the state should be separated from religion, is one that necessitates the blotting of Islamic authority out of existence, and abrogating entirely the Islamic Shari'ah (Adams. C.C, 1933, p. 267).

The institution of governance, according to Rida, must be founded on the crucial principal of freedom, and democratic principle of fairness and accountable rule, and this constitutional ideal was critical to realize the underlying aspiration of political Islam and its ethical foundation, based on classical example of religious orthodoxy and theory of caliphate, as suggested by Malcolm Kerr (Kerr, 1966, p. 220) in his work on Rida political theory and legal postulate: [H] is revival of the classical theory of the Caliphate serves to remind us that the classical theory itself had not been a program for action but a hyperbolical, almost allegorical, rationalization...Rida's constitutional theory, despite his intentions, does not represent a serious program but a statement of ideals.

The political ideal espoused by Rida was much influenced from the writings of classical Muslim jurists such as al-Mawardi (975-1058), Abu Ya'la al-Farra' (990-1065) and Shihab al-Din Ahmad al-Qalqashandi in their works of political authority and the institution of caliphate. This provide essential framework of the traditional system of government and its fundamental form and structure that significantly impacted his theoretical premise on classical religious authority. This was portrayed in his substantive exposition on the constitutional theory of

caliphate in his *al-Khilafa aw al-Imama al-'Uzma fi al-Islam* (Caliphate, or the Supreme Leadership in Islam) which was: presented to the courageous Turkish people and the reform party in Arab and Indian countries and the rest of Islamic People (Rida, 1923). The arguments presented give some impression that: Rida thinks the traditional system of government still the best, as argued by Emile Tyan, commenting on Henri Laoust's modern translation of Rida's *Khalifa al-'Uzma*, entitled *Le califat dans la doctrine de Rasid Rida*: all the personal efforts of this author, animated by a very intense religious and apologetic spirit led him to propose certain adaptations in order to make possible the restoration of the Caliphate in modern Muslim states. (Rida, 1931, p. 130) (Badawi, 1978, p. 66)

Rida's rationalistic outlook, was greatly influenced from Abduh's rational framework, essentially articulated in his groundwork, *Risalat al-Tawhid* (The Theology of Unity). The work was published in 1897 that illustrated the foundation of his rational philosophy and scientific premises, thanks to the influences of the medieval rationalists, the Mutazilites. This speculative theology and its influential system in classical thought by way philosophical argument was critically observed by Stewart (Stewart, 1995, p. 194): by using the expression the Divine Unity (*tawhid*) in the title of his book, 'Abduh was deliberately recalling the Mu'tazilites, for that was the term that they used to sum up their doctrine. It is clear that he was in fact a latter-day Mu'tazilites for in the first edition of his Epistle he stated that the Koran is created and not eternal. He was obliged to remove this statement from the later editions, but there seems to be no doubt that his view did not change. He also shared the Mu'tazilite view on such matters as free will and the role of reason in religion. (Iftitah, 1998, p. 26) Abduh's principal ideas and position that reverberated Mu'tazilite doctrine was definitely emphasized by Sulayman Dunya, an Azharite scholar, in his comprehensive edition of Abduh's *Hashiyah* (commentary) of the *Sharh al-Dawwani li al-'Aqa'id al-'Adudiyah* (1876), analyzing Abduh's intrinsic doctrine, which: ranks him as more radical than the Mu'tazilah in giving greater prominence to reason than to revelation (Nasution, 1968, p. 4).

Risalat al-Tawhid was a statement on Islamic theology based on his lecture in 1885 in Madrasah al-Sultaniyya, Beirut where he taught in his exile for three years. It was translated into French by B. Michel and Mustapha 'Abd al-Raziq and later in English by Ishak Musa'ad and Kenneth Cragg. This principal work formed the foundation of rational Islam that outlined substantive framework of rational theology and highlight the highly influential and supreme position of reason and its role in early Islamic theology and religious orthodoxy, as critically explained by

Elma Harder: 'Abduh's ideas were met with great enthusiasm, but also by tenacious opposition. They are still a subject of contention today...as questions of modernism and tradition re-emerge in conflict in the Muslim world. Although he did not achieve his goals, Muhammad Abduh remains a continuing influence, and his works, *Risalat al-Tauhid* (The Unity of Theology) is the most important statement of his thought (Hunt, 2005, p. 142). It stresses the need to purge Islam of its superstition, to correct Muslim conceptions of the articles of faith, and eliminate errors that crept into Islam on account of textual misinterpretations (Caesar, 1994, p. 231) (Iftitah, 1998, p. 25) Abduh's rational argument had substantial influence in the intellectual views of Rida in his advocacy of Islamic rationalism and modernism, as significantly portrayed by Ryuichi Funatsu (Funatsu, 2006) in his historical study of the intellectual history and modern influence of al-Kawakibi and Rida: rather for him, as for Afghani and 'Abduh, a return to the roots, to the first principles, of Islam represented an affirmation of the values of rationalism and freedom inherent in the faith and imperative for its renewal.

In this, Rida categorically argued that, when holy texts are ambiguous or appear to contradict each other, men should use reason to decide what course of action is most in accord with the spirit of Islam and will further the interests of the Muslim community as a whole (Hunt, 2005, p. 145). Rida's argument was essentially grounded on rational ideas and teaching of Abduh and his underlying philosophical tradition which reinforced the principal argument of the Mu'tazilite and their theological reasoning. This was pointed out by Abdullah Saeed (Saeed, 2008, p. 209) in his essential study of the Qur'an: modernist scholars also argued that accepting the concept of revelation did not clash with the use of reason. Thus, they tried to revive Islam's rationalist philosophical tradition, and some previously discounted ideas of the rationalist Mu'tazilis came into vogue again among some modern scholars.

This philosophical tradition and its underlying premise was espoused by the modernist in different context that advocate rational argument and modern doctrine of Islam, as significantly illustrated by P.J. Stewart (Stewart, 1995, p. 194) in his incisive analysis of the Mu'tazilite and the influence of their philosophical tradition in the intellectual history of Islam: like the Mu'tazila [the Mu'tazilis], the majority of the modernists emphasize the high place of reason in their scale of values and try to show the perfect compatibility of true Islam with the findings of a mind free from the scourge of ignorance, prejudice and superstitions. Like the Mu'tazila, the modernists think that Islam upholds the principles of free will

(*ikhtiyar*), as opposed to that predestination (*jabr*), since it has been obvious to both groups that Muslims first conceive of their capacity to determine their destiny. (Enayat, 1982, p. 8) Abduh's philosophical tradition and scientific argument was also magnified by Rida in *Tafsir al-Manar*, which according to Goldziher (Goldziher, 1952, p. 325): contain the substance of the theology as propagated by al-Afghani and 'Abduh (Nasution, 1968, p. 15). In his *tafsir*, Rida tried to explicate Abduh's rational interpretation in traditional way, alluding to its intrinsic relation with Islamic orthodoxy, as pointed out by Caspar, that: Rida is trying to interpret 'Abduh's ideas in a more traditional sense (Nasution, 1968, p. 15). Nevertheless, Rida's advocacy of Abduh's rational commentary and his attempt to idealized his philosophical tradition in defending reason does stop him from taking more liberal position and depart from Abduh's rational doctrines, which had great ramification in his methods as set forth in *Tafsir al-Manar*, as contended by Osman Amin (U. Amin., 1953, p. 168): while Rida in the beginning of the *Tafsir al-Manar*, follows Abduh closely, he later begins to express his own views in a more and more liberal way and begins to deviate from 'Abduh's method.

This was depicted in his comment on the questions of anthropomorphism, which manifested his more traditional and liberal position, that: while Abduh adopts the Mu'tazili position of interpretation (a metaphorical, figurative views), Rida follows the 'Ash'ariyah in their idea of God having limbs without howness (Rida, 1999, p. 201) (Nasution, 1968, p. 16).

Conclusion

The paper had briefly demonstrated the major influences of Abduh's principles on Rashid Rida. Abduh had exercised lasting and far-reaching influences on Rida in the field of tafsir, tradition, jurisprudence, theology and journalism. Rida's principal works such as *Tarikh al-Ustadh al-Imam al-Shaykh Muhammad Abduh* and *Tafsir al-Manar*, had rigorously and liberally expounded his ideas and reinforced his arguments and continued his inspiring influence and struggle for reform and renewal. The modern aspiration was rigorously resonated by his effort that became a critical and important milestone for renewed aspiration for Muslim umma to continue espoused his philosophical tradition of reform in modern context.

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