# Redefining Khabar Al-Ahad Based on Rashid Rida's Rational Approach in Al-Manar

*Pendefinisian Ulang Khabar Al-Ahad dengan Merujuk pada Pendekatan Rasional Rashid Rida dalam Al-Manar*

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## Abstract

This paper discusses the Rida controversy with hadith scholars. The controversy stems from Rida's a priori to the traditions that are popular and well-known among hadith scholars, especially the category of khabar al-ahad hadith. The root of their problem lies in Rida's rational critique of the categories and implications of khabar al-ahad. He considers dilalah (connotation) of khabar al-ahad to be nothing more than just zanni al-dilalah (presumption and uncertainty). The implication is that hadith in this category cannot be used as a basis for belief because belief is based on qat'i al-dilalah (certainty of proposition). The research method used was descriptive-analytic method. This method was combined with a historical-philosophical approach. Therefore, analyzing and describing Rida's thoughts as a whole is the main work in this article. The next step was to combine the analytical-philosophical approach to the roadmap from the genuine part of Rida's line of thought. This activity is expected to help the author in finding answers on how Rida rationalizes khabar al-ahad and its implications. Finally, this article finds the conclusions, including: a) Rida's efforts in rationalizing khabar al-ahad are based on the views of the mutakallimūn (theologians), manat}iqah (logic experts) and falasifah (philosophers), b) Rida has been trapped in his own over a priori thinking on khabar al-ahad, c) Rashid Rida's rationalization of khabar al-ahad actually leads to ambiguity and uncertainty.

**Keyword**: Khabar ahad; Rashid Rida; Al-Manar, Rational Approach

## Abstrak

Tulisan ini membahas seputar kontroversi Rida dengan para ulama hadis. Kontroversi bermula dari a priori Rida terhadap hadis-hadis yang popular dan dikenal di kalangan para ulama hadis, terutama kategori hadis khabar al-ahad. Akar permasalahan mereka terletak pada kritik rasional Rida mengenai kategori dan implikasi khabar al-ahad. Ia menilai dilalah (konotasi) khabar al-ahad tidak lebih dari sekedar zanni al-dilalah (bersifat praduga dam ketidakpastian). Implikasinya, hadis dalam kategori tersebut tidak dapat digunakan sebagai dasar berakidah, karena berakidah yang didasarkan pada qat'i al-dilalah (kepastian dalil). Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode analisis-dekriptif. Metode ini akan dipadukan dengan pendekatan historis-filosofis. Oleh karena itu, menganalisis dan mendiskripsikan pemikiran Rida secara utuh merupakan kerja utama dalam artikel ini. Langkah selanjutnya adalah memadukan pendekatan analisis-filosofi terhadap peta jalan dari genuine part alur pemikiran Rida. Kegiatan ini diharapkan dapat membantu penulis dalam menemukan jawaban, bagaimana Rida merasionalisasi khabar al-ahad dan implikasinya. Akhirnya, artikel ini menemukan

kesimpulan, diantaranya: a) upaya Rida dalam merasionalisasi khabar al-ahad didasarkan pada pandangan para mutakallimūn (teolog), manatiqah (ahli logika) dan falasifah (ahli filsafat), b) Rida telah terjebak dalam pemikirannya sendiri yang over a priori terhadap khabar al-ahad, c) rasionalisasi Rashid Rida terhadap khabar al-ahad justru berujung pada ambiguitas dan ketidakpastian.

**Kata Kunci**: Khabar ahad; Rashid Rida; Al-Manar, Pendekatan Rasional

## Introduction

Muhammad Rashid Rida bin 'Ali Rida bin Muhammad Shams al-Din bin al-Sayyid Baha' al-Din al-Sayyid al-Baghdadi al-Husayni[1] was a reformist and commentator who lived in 1865-1935 AD Muhammad al-Ghazali referred to Rida as *Turjuman al-Qur'an* (*translator* or interpreter of the Qur'an).[2] Rida summarizes various fields of thought and scholarship within him starting from the field of *tasawwuf*, *kalam*, *mantiq* and salaf thinking .[3] Rida is considered to have a great contribution in the field of Islamic thought, ranging from interpretation, hadith, fiqh, Arabic literature, philosophy, logic and mathematics. Not surprisingly, in him, there is a meeting of two different characters, namely salafi-rationalists. Rida is also known as a prolific loyalist of the thought of Muhammad 'Abduh. The format of his thinking is packaged in the form of scientific discussions on the rise and reform. The mass media is a means for him to express his ideas. Frequently, intense discussions stemmed from the ideas published in the media. The themes of discussion usually revolved around *al-islahiyyah* (religious reform), *al-wahdah* (unity of the people) and *al-ruju' ila al-Qur'an wa al-Sunnah* (authenticity of religious sources). Regarding religious sources, Rida called for Muslims to be critical of matters of faith. He applies the *taqlil* (minimizing hadith) related to the history of *asbab al-nuzul*. According to him, not all verses must be understood through *asbab al-nuzul*. Many people who are caught up in conflict debate the most *sahh* regarding *asbab al-nuzul*. As a result, they will actually lose the context of a verse because they are too focused on pursuing the history that accompanies the revelation of the verse.[4]

Rida does not reject *asbab nuzul* as a whole. Rida's enthusiasm is not on the substance of *asbab nuzul,* but on the dominating narrations, namely *khabar al-ahad* and *isra'iliyyat*. The view of Rida, who was so enthusiastic about criticizing the two types of narrations, gives birth to a new controversy among hadith scholars. Many

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1    Furthermore, it is written with the short name commonly used by scholars to refer to Rashīd Ridā, namely Ridā only.

2    Muhammad al-Ghazālī, *al-Haqq al-Murr* (Cairo: al-Nahdah, 1996), juz 5, 4-5.

3    'Umar Ridā Kahālah, *Mu'jam al-Mu'allifīn: Tarājum Musannifī al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah* (Beirūt: Mu'assah al-Risālah, 1414/1993), juz 3, 293.

4    Rā›id Jamīl ‹Akkāshah, *Rashīd Ridā: Juhūduh al-Islāhiyyah wa Manhajuh al-'Ilmī* (Jordan: al-Ma'had al-'Ālamī li al-Mufakkir al-Islāmī, 1999), 44-47.

consider his rejection of the history of *ahad* because the hadith has the connotation of *zann,* especially those related to faith. Rida seems to want to combine two opposing thoughts in one container, namely *al-Manar.* The combination of these two thinking options is certainly very interesting to discuss. Likewise, knowing the logical argument of Rida against *khabar al-ahad,* the idea of Rida is related to this, perhaps because of his critical attitude and consistency in rejecting the concept of rationality-relativity in terms of the aqidah of the *mutakallimn* who were brought into the study of hadith through *al-Manar* (both in the form of journals and interpretations). At the beginning of his wanderings, the thought of Rida was dominated by the thought of *kalam al-Ash'ariyyah.* However, in the next phase (especially since his introduction to the thought of Ibn al-Qayyim and Ibn Taymiyyah) his thought of *kalac*hanged drastically from *the kalam al-Ash'ariyyah* to *the Salaf school.*[5] To reject the opinion of *Mutakallimun* regarding rationality, Rida in *al-Manar* cites the discussion of the scholars and the opinion of al-Imam al-Ghazali›: moderate researchers argue: *the madhhab Salaf* is considered as a safest, most scientifically qualified and most suitable. Moreover, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali› said: The science of faith or *kalam* is not part of original religious knowledge. The science of *kalam* is only a momentary necessity needed by the scholars when they have to discuss and deal with the *heretics* (religious innovators) and philosophers. This is needed to counter their views which are very contrary to what is stated in authentic religious texts. It is like just as community guards rather than bandits. Once safe from the bandits, there is no longer a need for guards.

This paper will not present a passionate critical analysis at the beginning, but in the end it falls to the same conclusion as the previous writings. Therefore, this paper only focuses on the thoughts behind Rida's rejection of *khabar al-ahad.* There have been many writings that conclude that Rida is a very competent commentator on hadith and history. In the other conclusion, the majority of scholars misunderstood Rida's *khabar al-ahad.*[6] However, this paper will present a discussion and interactive between various thoughts in response to Rida's thoughts regarding *khabar al-ahad.* The findings of the comprehensive analysis will be compiled in a structured narrative so that a truly objective final conclusion will be obtained.

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5    Tamir Mahammad Mahmud Matuli, *Manhaj al-Syekh Muhammad Rashid Rida fi al-'Aqidah* (Riyad: Dar Majid 'Asiri›, 2004/1425), 175-180.

6    One narrator who is very enthusiastic about "representing" Rashd Ridā's thoughts is Muhammad bin Ramadān Ramadānī, Ārā› Muhammad Rashīd Ridā fī Qadāyā al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah min Khilāl Majallah al-Manār Dirāsah Tahlīliyyah Naqdiyyah, (Riyād: Majallah al-Bayān, 1434).

### *Genuine Part* of Rashd Rida and *al-Manar*

Rida came from Qalamun, a small area located in Sham. Rida followed in the footsteps of al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh to spark the idea of religious reform and revival for the Islamic world. His presence in the field of Islamic thought (tafsir) was welcomed by most Muslim intellectuals as *al-hrakah al-isalahiyyah wa al-tajdid* (reform-renewal) for Muslims. The idea can be seen in *al-Manar*. *Al-Manar* was published regularly in Egypt during the period from 1898 to 1935. This work was considered a new momentum for the interpretation of the Qur'an. Rida, together with Muhammad 'Abduh, was very active in socializing Islamic reform with the slogan *tajdid al-fikr* (renewal of thought). According to Rida, it is very important for Muslims to understand the Qur'an with a more rational approach.[7] He believes that one of the factors in the failure of Muslims is due to irrational interactions with the Qur'an. This is due, among other things, to the fact that Muslims are lulled by the narrations of *khabar al-ahad* and the fictional game of *isra'iliyyat*. So far, the Qur'an has been understood through the fictional game of *al-isra'iliyyat* . They forget that the substance and main purpose of the Qur'an are revealed as a guide (*hudan*).[8]

It is very clear that Rida's criticism was influenced by Muhammad 'Abduh and Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. Although Rida never met al-Afghani in person, he inherited his thoughts very well. There are two ways in which Rida reads al-Afghani's thoughts; first, from *al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa* and the second from his interaction with 'Abduh, which he considered to be the living thought of al-Afghani. Rida's soul and emotions rose as far as the thoughts of the two characters. Al-Afghani's idea of *al-wahdah al-islamiyyah* (unity of Islam) succeeded in attracting Rida's interest to follow in his footsteps although al-Afghani himself failed to make it happen.[9] Therefore, it is not surprising that Rida asserts *al-Manar* as a continuation of *al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa*.[10]

Furthermore, the idea of reform and Islamic unity was continued by 'Abduh. Rida expressed his ideas on modernism, reform and the revival of the ummah through intelligent essays through *al-Manar*. Many scholars appreciated his intelligent ideas on religion, social, literature and even agriculture which he poured into *al-Manar*. However, there were also those who criticized it, including 'Abduh.' Abduh

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7    Fahd bin 'Abd al-Rahmān binSulaymān al-Rūmī, *Ittijahāt al-Tafsīr fī al-Qarn al-Rābi' 'Ashr*, 4th ed. (Riyād: Maktabah al-Rushd, 2002), 703.

8    Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Tafsīr al-Manār* (Cairo: Dār al-Manār, 1947/1366), cet II, juz 1, 7-8.

9    Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, *al-'A'māl al-Kāmilah, Dirārah wa Tahqīq*: Muhammad 'Imārah, al-Kitābāt al-Siyāsiyah (Beirūt: al-Mu'assasah al-'Arabiyyah li al-Dirāsāt wa al-Nashr, 1981), first edition, 265.

10   *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqā* was the predecessor mass media of Manār. The media was nurtured by two important figures who initiated Islamic reform and modernism, namely Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Muhammad 'Abduh (Rashīd Ridā's teacher).

really admired Rida's thinking in managing *al-Manar*, but objectively he saw its shortcomings. There were three things criticized from Rida regarding *al-Manar*. First, Rida was too vulgar and harsh in conveying the truth so that it was not friends who would increase, but instead it would increase enemies. Second, it is necessary to use the language that is easily understood by all. 'Abduh considered Rida as too "scientific" so that only certain circles were able to understand it. Third, he should keep *al-Manar away* from the world of politics and the power of 'Uthmaniyyah because he must concentrate on religious and social reform.[11] The recommendation was responded well by Rida. The next edition of *al-Manar was* packaged according to the teacher's input. Rida called for the revival of Islam with simple language and logic accompanied by the social facts of Muslims at that time. From the magazine *al-Manar*, Rida packaged it as a work of commentary on *al-Manar*.

## Starting from the Idea of Rationalizing *Tafsir al-Qur'an*

The fundamental controversy between Rida and hadith scholars stemmed from the implication of categorizing hadith into *mutawatir* and *ahad*. The controversy raised strong differences because Rida was considered to have shifted the function of the logical implications of the categorization of the two hadiths into *qat'i* (certainty) and *zanni* (uncertainty). Most of the hadith scholars considered that Rida openly rejected the consequences *of khabar al-ahad* in terms of faith and *aqidah*.[12] They considered that Rida had ignored these traditions and considered them irrelevant for the determination of the aqidah of Muslims. His view of the category of *khabar al-ahad* was considered to have confirmed its very identical relationship with the views of rationalist groups, such as al-Mu'tazilah.[13] Comparing the opinion of Rida regarding *khabar al-ahad* in *al-Manar*[14] with the opinion of al-Qadi> 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Mu'tazili> in *Sharh al-Usul al-Khamsah* became very identical. Both of them were of the opinion that aqidah must be determined through *qat'i> wa thabat* (certainty and authentic) arguments. Meanwhile, *khabar al-ahad* is speculative, so it cannot be

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11  Ibrāhī m Ahmad al-'Adawī, *Rashīd Ridā al-Imām al-Mujāhid* (Mesir: al-Mu'assasah al-Misriyyah al-'Ammāh, tth), 139

12  For example, related to the typhoon that hit the people of the Prophet Nūh. According to him, there is not a single story sourced from the Qur'an that explains the events related to the Typhoon flood during the time of Prophet Noah. All sources related to the event are āhād. According to him, Muslims are not obliged to believe in the creed that comes from āhād stories. Al-Manār magazine, Thursday edition, 1 Rabī ' al-Awwal, juz 12, vol. 3, the year of 1318, 310..

13  'Abd al-Rahmān bin Muhammad Sa'īd Dimashqiyyah, *Mausū'ah Ahl al-Sunnah fī Naqd Usūl Firqah al-Ahbāsh wa man Wāfaqahum fī Usūlihim* (Riyād: Dār al-Muslim, 1997/1418), first edition, 517.

14  Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Majallah al-Manār* (Mesir: edition 1 Ramada>n 1318/ 22 December 1900), juz 29, edition 03, 677.

used to prove any belief.[15]

Rida's very firm attitude towards *khabar ahad* made the scholars considered him to have abandoned hadith for rationality. It seemed that Rida was really serious on his opinion, so anything that came from *khabar al-ahad* other than faith and aqidah was abandoned even though the hadiths were contained in the works of *Sahh al-Bukhari* and *Sahh Muslim*).

According to Rida, this attitude is not related to the two hadith figures. Rida has its own reasons; why it is very rigid in *khabar al-ahad* which is associated with aqidah. He considered aqidah is a very urgent problem in Islam. This does not mean that Rida puts aside the affairs of *'ibadah* and *mu'amalah*. The aqidah that is meant to be important here is related to proving the existence of Allah. Rida writes his opinion in one very interesting sentence. A Muslim does not need the method of *kalam* (the way of thinking of the *Mutakallimun*) to prove the existence of Allah. The best way for that is to use the Qur'anic method.[16] Therefore, the issue of *aqidah* cannot be built on the information of *khabar al-ahad* which has the power of *zanni* (presumption). *Aqidah* must be built on the basis of the Qur'an and hadith that have the power of *qat'i*. Seeing this argument, it seems that Rida carries out theological and rational perspectives in the thought of the science of hadith. This is the starting point that often causes heated discussions between him and other scholars. It seems very clear that, in fact, the reality of the conflict is more theological in nature than the discussion of the hadith problem itself.

Basically, Rida does not formulate the hadith as a whole. Rida only changes the view of *khabar al-ahad* in the matters of faith. For example, al-Imam al-Shafi'i> and the previous scholars determined matters of faith based on *khabar al-ahad*. In their opinion, aqidah is not only determined based on the Qur'an and hadith that are *mutawatir* only, but also based on *khabar al-ahad*. Al-Imam al-Shafi'i> even quoted one of the narrations conveyed by Ubay bin Ka'b regarding the friendship between Prophet Musa and Khidr. This hadith is clearly included in the hadith category of *al-ahad*. Al-Imam al-Shafi'i> openly does not distinguish the functionality of the hadith *al-ahad*, both in matters of faith and in matters other than faith.[17] Perhaps, a rational mindset has been the basis for why Rida looks very different from the previous hadith experts or, in general, especially apart from the al-Mu'tazilah group. In this context, the author calls it a new perspective in understanding the history of

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15   'Abd al-Jabba>r bin Ahmad, *Sharh al-Usu>l al-Khamsah,* Ta'li>q: Ahmad bin Husein bin Abi> Ha>shim, Tahqi>q: 'Abd al-Kari>m 'Uthma>n (Kairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 1996/1416), 269.

16   Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Majallah al-Manār* (Mesir: edition 29 Dhul Hijjah 1326/ 22 January 1909), juz 12, edition 11, 942.

17   Muhammad bin Idri>s al-Sha>fi'i>, *al-Risa>lah* (Mesir: Matba'ah Mustafa> al-Ba>bi> al-

*ahad* and the implications of its function in matters of faith. Rida believes that this is one of the consequences of the poor interaction of Muslims with the Qur'an. The aqidah that should be built on solid beliefs, namely the Qur'an, and *mutawatir* is actually built on *ahad narrations* with *zann qualifications*.

## Controversy of *Khabar al-Ahad*

Hadith quantitatively (number of narrators) can be classified into two categories, *mutawatir* and *ahad*. *Mutawatir hadiths* are the *hadiths* spoken by many people through the systematic transmission of *tatabbu'* (in an order and sequentially) so that organized lies are not possible.[18] According to al-Ghazali (d. 505 H), a narration is said to be *mutawatir* if it is narrated by a large number of narrators evenly at the beginning until the end of the *chain*.[19] According to him, there is no stipulation on the number of narrators who institute *tawatur*. However, there are some opinions that define it. Some argue that there are at least three narrators; some say four, while others say twenty. Imam al-Shafi'i refuses to specify the exact number of narrators in certain *tabaqah al-isnad* (level) so that the *hadiths* can be declared as *mutawatir*. Seeing the very complicated and rigid mechanism, the *mutawatir* hadiths are considered to have legal force of *daruri* (authenticity and reliability).[20]

While *hadith al-ahad*,[21] is a hadith narrated by one or two or more people. *Hadith al-ahad* is often interpreted as a hadith narrated by the narrators who are not as numerous as *mutawatir*.[22] This can be interpreted as a hadith attributed to *a single authority*.[23] Mustafa al-Siba'i explains that the term *khabar al-ahad* can also be interpreted as a hadith narrated by one or two narrators who are less than *mutawatir*.[24]

According to al-Nawawi, al-Shafi'i was the first scholar to explain in detail

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Halabi>, 1938/1357), 401-440.

18  Ahmad 'Alī bin Muhammad bin Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *Nuzhah al-Nazar fī Tawjīh Nukhbah al-Fikr fī Mustalah Ahl al-Āthar* (Madī nah: Jāmi'ah Tī bah, 2008/1429), 39-40. See also Tāhir al-Jazā'irī al-Dimashqī, *Tawjīh al-Nazar Ilā Usūl al-Āthār* (Halab: Maktabah al-Matbū'ah al-Islāmiyyah: tth), juz 1, 108.

19  *Sanad* is a chain of narrators that connects to the editorial of hadith or known as *al-matn*. Abū Hāmid Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Ghazālī, *al-Mustasfā min 'Ilm al-Usūl, tahqī q*: Hamzah Zuheir (Madī nah: al-Jāmi'ah al-Islāmiyyah, 1413), juz 2, 131-136.

20  'Alī bin Muhammad al-Āmidī, al-Ihkām fi Usūl al-Ahkām (Beirūt: al-Maktab al-Islāmī , 1402), juz 2, 13-20.

21  *Hadīth al-āhād* is also known with the term *khabar al-*āhād, *khabar al-wāhid*, *khabar al-infirād* or *khabar al-khāssah*.

22  'Alī bin Muhammad al-Sayyid al-Sharī f al-Jurjāni, *Mu'jam al-Ta'rifāt* (Cairo: Dār al-Fadī lah, 2004), 85.

23  'Umar Sulaimān al-Ashqar, *Usūl al-I'tiqād* (Kuwait: Al-Dār al-Salafiyah, 1985/1405), 17-18.

24  Mustafā al-Sibā'ī, *al-Sunnah wa Makānatuhā fī al-Tashrī ' al-Islāmī* (Cairo: Dār al-Warrāq,

about *khabar al-wahid* in writing. There are two chapters of his work *al-Risalah*[25] and two thirds of his work *Jima 'al-'Ilm*[26] and in the preamble of his work *Ikhtilaf al-Hadith* only to explain the theme of *khabar al-wahid*.[27] Al-Shafi'i includes the people who are very enthusiastic on defending *khabar al-wahid*. At the end of al-Shafi'i's life, the dominance of al-Mu'tazilah thought among Muslims increased. Al-Shawkani explains al-Shafi'i's concern for al-Mu'tazilah. This is because al-Mu'tazilah expressly refuses to use *khabar al-ahad*, both as *takhss* (specialists) for the Qur'an and as the basis of faith.[28] Al-Shayrazi mentions that al-Mu'tazilah actually uses rational arguments rather than *khabar al-ahad*.[29] In contrast to al-Shafi'i, he views *khabar al-wahid* as an important part of how the *sunnah* defend themselves from the use of reason. According to him, the power of *khabar al-wahid* does not need to find supporting evidence in order to be accepted. *Khabar al-ahad* is part of the *Rasulullah's* hadith which is *sahh*. This hadith strengthens itself, not for the reasons fabricated through a number of arguments or other actions after that.[30] For al-Shafi'i and al-Ghazali, *khabar al-wahid* is an important instrument in an effort to achieve understanding and religious truth which is not limited to legal issues related to *halal* and *haram* , but also related to *aqidah*.

Basically, Rida agrees with the hadith scholars that the *sunnah* is not limited to the words of the Prophet, but also what the Prophet had exemplified such as prayer and worship practices in general. Nevertheless, he argues that the core source of Islamic aqidah and *shari'ah* is only the Al-Quran and the *mutawatir sunnah* of the Prophet. There are many religious foundations that come from both of them in the form of the practice of the companions which is carried out from generation to generation. In fact, the practice has become a tradition since the time of the

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1949), 190.

25  Muhammad bin Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī , *al-Risālah* (Mesir: al-Halabī , 1938/1457), 369-471.

26  Muhammad bin Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī , *Jimā' al-'Ilm* (Mesir: Dār al-Kutub, 1359/1940). Al-Shāfi'ī in the second chapter of his Jimā 'al-Ilm tries to explain his views on khabar al-khāssah, especially for those who oppose him in this regard.

27  According to J. Schacht's analysis in *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* as quoted by Abdul Karim Ali, al-Syafi'i used the same method to present evidences why khabar al-wāhid should be accepted. It could be that he lived at a time when khabar al-wāhid was no longer accepted. *A Controversy About The Outhority of Khabar al-Wāhid With A Special Reference to al-Shafi'I's Views* (public_view.php.pdf), 81.

28  Muhammad bin 'Alī al-Shawkānī, *Irshād al-Fuhūl ilā Tahqīq al-Haqq min 'Ilm al-Usūl* (Riyād: Dār al-Fadī lah, 2000/1421), juz 1, 675.

29  Abū Ishāq Ibrāhī m bin 'Alī bin Yūsuf al-Fairūz Abādī al-Shairāzī , *al-Tabsirah fi Usūl al-Fiqh* (Damashq: Dār al-Fitr, 1983/1403), 301-309.

30  Ahmad bin Sulaimān Ayyūb, *Muntahā al-Amānī bi Fawā'id Mustalah al-Hadī th li al-Muhaddith al-Albānī* (Cairo: al-Fārūq al-Hadī thiyyah, 2003/1423), 81. See also Muhammad bin Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī, *al-Risālah,* number 1166, 424.

Prophet, both *qawliyyah* (oral transmitted in succession) and *fi'liyyah* (in the form of the practice of the Companions and subsequent generations). Apart from these two things, Rida calls it *khabar al-ahad* which is the space for *ijtihad*.[31] Concerning Rida's view, it is very clear that he only limits the *aqidah* sources of al-Qur'an and *mutawatir hadith*. That means, apart from these two sources, there is only *ijtihad*. Therefore, the results of *ijtihad* cannot be used as a foundation for belief.

The illustration above shows that, in fact, in this study the author conducted an analysis as well as criticism of the rationality discourse that underlies Rida arguing with hadith scholars in general. Some of the existing writings as described above mostly describe Rida's views on hadith, not only in *ahad* but also in the whole hadith. Several other writings such as those written by Tamir Muhammad Mahmud (*Manhaj al-Shaikh Rashi>d Rida fi> al-Aqi>dah*) more generally review the views and scientific arguments built by Rida. In other hand, the focus of this study was to make a note of the historicity of the results of the study and criticism of the underlying idea to decide differently from the hadith experts in general.

## *Yaqin* and *Zann* (Certainty and Uncertainty)

Reading the thoughts of Rida will find many ideas of the revival of the Ummah that are in line with the majority of other Muslim intellectuals. The striking uniqueness of Rida's thinking is the collaboration of the *salafi*-rationalist approach. He is known to be very enthusiastic in leading arguments using textual arguments from the *salafi* group, but he is also known as a rationalist group thinking. His rejection of *khabar al-ahad* and *al-al-isra'iliyyat* proves the subculture of rationalist thought. His distinctive philosophical style with rational thinking and textual background requires him to do a textualist-rationalist blend. Through this approach, he sees that there is no relationship between the story in *al-al-isra'iliyyat* and what is the purpose of the revelation of the Qur'an. According to Muhammad 'Abduh, *khabar al-ahad* and the history of *al-isra'iliyyat* are widely used by commentators and even fulfill their works, and then they relate them to the Qur'an.[32] The history is used to read new meanings from the Qur'an, when in fact the Qur'an does not need it.

Specifically, related to *khabar al-ahhad*'s textual-rational approach, it is more

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31  Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Majallah al-Manār* (Mesir: edition Dhulqa'dah 1325/3 January 1908), juz 11, edition 10, 852.

32  Ridā judges that many commentators have filled their works with isrā'īliyyāt history. Therefore, he rejects the narrations when interpreting Surah al-Baqarah: 58. The reason is that these narrations are included in the al-isra'īliyyāt category with the main sources are the narrators from the Jews (Banī Isrā'īl). According to him, Muslims should not give room for such narrations in their interpretation because it will not provide any benefit. Muhammad Rashd Ridā, Tafsr al-Qur'an al-Hakīm or called Tafsr al-Manār, juz, 1, 15.

of a refutation of the concepts of *qat'i* and *zanni*. His seriousness towards the two categories of hadith seems to reject the label of *sahh* by al-Bukhari and Muslim.[33] Rida's criticism of the two works is based on the presence of the narrations of *al-ahad* and *al-isra'iliyyat* in them. Rida doubts the credibility of the history of *al-isra'iliyyat* involving Ka`b al-Ahbar and Wahb bin Munabbih in both works. Both are believed to have committed organized lies against Islam. As a result, many bad and misguided influences have entered Islam, especially in the interpretation of the Qur'an. Rida also considered that the two narrators could not possibly be able to escape from the influence of the Jews and their Scriptures because both of them often adopted the stories originating from the Children of Israel, and then they were associated with Islam.[34]

The debate between Rida and *al-Muhadditn* (hadith experts) was basically triggered by the difference between the two in understanding the implications of *khabar al-ahad*. Hadith scholars believe that *khabar al-ahad* has *al-yaqin* implications if the hadith is narrated by a credible narrator and does meet the requirements of the *sahh* hadith. Meanwhile, Rida has a different opinion from the majority of hadith experts. According to him, *khabar al-ahad* has no implications except *al-zanni*. In addition, Rida also has a different perception of *al-zanni*. According to the majority of hadith scholars, although *khabar al-ahad* is *al-zanni* with secondary implications -not primary-, *khabar al-ahad* can still be used as an argument in terms of *aqidah*. Furthermore, *al-zann* among hadith experts does not only apply to the rules of *ijtihad* and reinforcement for logical arguments. Meanwhile, Rida understands it as a hadith which cannot be used as an argument for establishing *aqidah*.

This perspective further strengthens the existence of a very dynamic and strong discussion between the thoughts of Rida and the thoughts of the groups of *al-Mutakallimun* (theologians), *al-Falasifah* (philosophers), and *Manatiqah* (logic experts). At the beginning of his thinking, Rida could very well be counted as very *Sunni>,* but after his introduction to the Salafi> (Ibn al-Qayyim, Ibn Taymiyyah, 'Abd al-Wahhab), Rida transformed into a *Salafi>*. His rejection of Greek philosophy further confirms that Rida has really become a character identical to *the Salafi* school. Although the dynamics and dialogues in his three thoughts appear to be *Salafi>*, his arguments can be said to be rational. This has created a fortress of separation and dichotomy between the *al-zann* in Rida perspective and the *al-zann* in the perspective of hadith scholars. Rida interprets *al-zanni* as something that contains *shakk* (doubt)

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33  For example, the interpretation of: *udkhulū al-bāb sujjada waqūlū hittat naghfir lakum,* Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Hakīm* or commonly called *Tafsīr al-Manār,* juz 9, 373.

34  Yūsuf Muhammad al-›Āmirī, *Ka'b al-Ahbār Marwiyātuh wa Aqwāluh fī al-Tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr: Jam'an wa Dirāsatan* (Makkah: Jāmi'ah Umm al-Qurā, 1412/1992), juz 1, 92.

or *taraddud* (consideration). To determine which one is the most correct, it takes analysis and discussion.[35] Rida also offers a new perspective on *al-yaqin.* According to him, there are two forms of belief. First, the belief that something is like this. Second, something is impossible unless it is like this. According to him, *al-yaqn* is *al-i'tiqad al-jazim fi ghair al-hissiyyat wa al-daruriyyat* (a solid belief that does not require evidence or proof to believe it, both physical and logical evidence). In this context, Rida says that faith can be built on *al-yaqin al-lughawi.* This opinion is different from the opinion of Muhammad 'Abduh. He requires that faith is not enough only with *al-yaqin al-lughawi,* but what he calls *al-yaqin al-mantiqi.* Even though he realized that there were differences of opinion with his teacher, Rida still conveyed his ideas on the basis of faith. Rida said that faith can be built on the foundation of *al-yaqin al-lughawi*  which means strong belief; there is no *shakk* (doubt), no *taraddud* (hesitation) and does not need analysis to choose and no other argument to believe.[36] However, Rida seems less sure of his own opinion. He repeatedly said; although faith may be built on *al-yaqin al-lughawi,* it is not on the things that are *usl al-* and *qawa'id al-tashri'* (religious foundations and shari'ah rules) because they must be built on *qat'i.*[37]

Rida's view on the argument for the determination of faith is clearly inconsistent, even tends to zigzag. On the one hand, he defends his own opinion, but at the same time emphasizes the opinion of his teacher. Although faith can be determined by *al-yaqin al-lughawi,* 'Abduh's opinion is a perfect opinion. He said, however, that faith built on *al-yaqin al-lughawi* is not enough, but must be built on *al-yaqin al-akmal* or *al-mantiqi.*[38] Surprisingly, after his statement, he made another statement as if to confirm his original statement. He said; the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic, so it should be understood as how Arabic is understood. Therefore, the Qur'an should not be understood through Greek logic or philosophy.

The illustration above shows that Rida's view is even less clear. However, if one looks closely, Rida seems to divide the notion *of yaqn* into two connotations. First, *al-yaqin al-lughawi* which he means as *al-i'tiqad al-jazim fi ghair al-hissiyyat wa al-daruriyyat* (solid belief that is not produced from something that is *daruriyyat* or *hissiyyat,* but from the results of analysis and evidence). This belief is built on *al-amarat*

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35  Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Hakīm* or commonly called *Tafsīr al-Manār,* juz 11, 86.

36  Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Hakīm* or commonly called *Tafsīr al-Manār,* juz 1, 134.

37  Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Hakīm* or commonly called *Tafsīr al-Manār,* juz 8, 177.

38  Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Hakīm* or commonly called *Tafsīr al-Manār,* juz 1, 129-130.

*wa al-istinbat wa al-istishab* (signs, analysis and accompanying evidence). Second, *al-yaqin al-mantiqi* is interpreted as *al-i'tiqad al-jazim al-mabni 'ala al-darurah aw al-hiss aw ma yu'addi ilaihima bi haithu la yahtamil al-naqid* (a very strong belief that results from something logical and sensory perception or something that leads to both without any refutation). Based on this division of *al-yaqn* , Rashd Rida explains; if it is only to survive the fire of hell, *al-yaqin al-lughawi* is sufficient. However, if it is to establish the basis of religion and *shari'ah* rules, *al-yaqin al-mantiqi* is needed.

Thus, practical Islamic law (*amali*) can be determined based on something that is *zanni*, while *mazanun* (in which there is doubt) cannot be used as a basis for establishing faith. For that reason, the *sanad khabar al-ahad* is *zanni*, while the *matn* (content of the hadith) is *maznun*. Rida asserts that *maznn* can only be used in *ijtihad*, not in establishing faith. That is the reason why faith cannot be determined based on *khabar al-ahad* because *sanad* is *zanni*, while the *matn* is *maznun*. Faith must be determined based on the provisions of the argument of *qat qat'i al-dilalah*, both in terms of *sanad* and *matn*.[39] Rashid Rida closes his explanation by saying: whoever believes that faith can be built on *khabar al-ahad*, then he should run and commit. However, he should not generalize that belief because khabar *al-ahad* is only *zanni al-thubut*. In other hand, faith must be built on the proposition of *qat'i al-thubut*.

Rida's definition of the implication of *zann* in *dilalah khabar al-ahad* is clearly ambiguous. The definition of *zann* that he offers has caused a stir among hadith experts even though the intended meaning is *lughaw*. That means; even though it is *zann*, the context still means *yaqn* and has implications for sharia law, including in matters of faith. *Zann* among the majority of Muslim scholars is understood as something that does not provide certainty consequences. However, the meaning of Rida is the opposite because it rests on the foundation of rationality and strict axioms which are the common consensus among Muslim theologians. Thus, the definition of *zann* -as explained by Rida- is not really new. Rida only offers an interpretation model that shifts the definition from one textual to another.

Rida does not want to limit the definition of *zann* only to the understanding of certain scientific groups. Rida provides a paradox of ideas on the different categories of perspectives of knowledge which have been considered to enter a special area for hadith intellectuals. Even though in the end they have the same final understanding, the majority of hadith experts still regret Rashid Rida's criticism of *khabar al-ahad*. If the literal understanding is really applied, it is certain that a lot of *al-ahkhabar* in the works of *Sahh al-Bukhari* and *Sahh Muslims* are wasted. This paradox has disqualified Rida out of knowledge outside his scientific genealogy. *Al-Manar* which appears as

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39  Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Hakīm* or called *Tafsīr al-Manār,* juz 11, 364-365.

a product of interpretation as a result of the combination of text rationality with social reality is unable to criticize the genealogy of hadith thought which is mostly sourced from the works of al-Bukhari and Muslim. What Rida has done is the refusal to adopt the idea of anti-criticism and universality in the whole of science that is built on consensus. For him, the idea of the Qur'an on *aqidah* can only be translated through the sources containing absolute values, not the relativity of values contained in *hadiths* or narrations as in *khabar ahad*.

### *Back to Authentic Interpretation*

Rida certainly has a reason, so he refuses to use too much history in his interpretation. Rida wants to invite Muslims to be rational in interacting with the Qur'an. For him, *Khabar al-ahad* does not need to be associated with belief and faith, particularly the narration *of al-isra'iliyyat*. Therefore, the use of *hadith* in the work of *tafsir* is only in *ijtihadi* cases. Before Rida, Muhammad 'Abduh and Mustafa al-Maraghi had also conveyed the same opinion. All three agreed to firmly reject everything that comes from the stories of the *Ahl Kitab* or *al-isra'iliyyat* in digging into the depths of meaning and purpose of the Qur'an.[40] The matters related to faith will only be explained through something that is *al-qat'i* (certainty) found in the Qur'an and *mutawatir hadith*, not *zanni* (uncertainty) found in the *news of al- ahad* and *al-isra'iliyyat*. Rida does not only reject these two types of hadith in a particular work, but also in the whole *khabar ahad*, including those found in the most *sahi h*. The reason is that he wants to invite Muslims to abandon their beliefs built on the foundation of a source that he considers to be a fragile proposition (*zanni*), and then place it on a *qat'i* proposition. According to him, if Muslims do not want to shift, these people are considered unable to interact with the Qur'an properly.

Rida said that Muslim intellectuals today must be able to create a modern civil society. Utilization of all existing potentials must be done as long as it does not contradict the true Islamic faith. Allah sent down the Qur'an as a miracle and a guide for mankind so that they can govern this world under the light of the Qur'an.[41] The Qur'an carries great social, humanitarian and moral messages. Muslims should not fall from their position by filling their *tafsirs* with stories sourced from the Bani Isra'il priests and the narrations of *ahad*. Both sources do not support absolute or authentic truth at all. The second premise is based on the history of Muslims who to this day are still a second class (backward) society. Their failure to interact with the

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40  Tāhir Mahmūd Muhammad Yaʿqūb, *Asbāb al-Khata 'fī al-Tafsīr Dirāsah Ta'sīliyyah* (Saudi: Dār Ibn al-Jauzī: 1425), juz 1, 171.

41  Muhammad Rashīd Ridā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Hakīm* or commonly called *Tafsīr al-Manār* (Cairo: Dār al-Manār, 1947/1366), cet II, juz 1, 16.

Qur'an is the main cause.

This statement is of course just a metaphor thrown by Rida to explain the wide open opportunities for new interpretation for Muslims of the Qur'an. However, of course, that does not mean that the previous commentators did not have any contribution in the history of Islamic civilization. It is true that the birth of a new interpretation is also a new birth for the world of interpretation. In fact, Rida does represent a new variant of interpretation that is capable of creating a diversity of works in the field of interpretation. The new variant carries the idea of social reform based on the spirit of *back to authentic interpretation* (return to the authentic interpretation of the prophetic age). Of course in it there are many differences in the interpretation of scientific disciplines, perspectives, and frameworks of thinking. Each cannot be separated from its advantages and disadvantages, particularly *al-Manar* by Rashid Rida. Although this work is considered an effective recipe for social reform and the rise of Islam, the concept of rationality that he implemented cannot be separated from the debate on some sides. What is offered in this work is a method for Muslims on how they should create their own resurrection.

With regard to the advantages and disadvantages of the product of tafsir thinking, of course, there must be an analysis related to the rules and methods of thinking used. Rida's critique of *khabar al-ahad* began with his belief in the rationality and historicity of the text which was based on the facts of the existing *tafsir* literature. In fact, in the work of *tafsir* that exists until then, no one has been able to arouse the views of the people to the guidance of the Qur'an. The Qur'an as a source of inspiration and guidance for Muslims, according to him, is not explored perfectly by commentators in their works. He actually found the pages of *tafsir* filled with narrations, stories sourced from *Bani Isra'il*, and many hadiths of *ahad* that do not have the consequences of absolutism in matters of belief (*aqidah*).

Rida constructed his attitude in looking at *khabar ahad* on two main tendencies. First, rationality is a framework of appreciation, as well as a tool, for how Muslims should operate the Qur'an as a guide.[42] Second, the Qur'an emphasizes the equality of rights, freedoms, individual sovereignty, and the people. Both of these tendencies have the same position to explain the verses of the Qur'an. The views of Muslims' life on value, truth, trust, freedom, morality, and humanity are determined by the Qur'an, not by rationality. According to him, the Qur'an is something that is truly absolute and does not contain doubt at all. Qur'an does not recognize relativism at all. Similarly, in it, there is no principle of all being true according to each. Likewise, no

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42  Muhammad Ibrāhīm al-Sharīf, *Ittijahāt al-Tajdīd fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Cairo: Dār al-Salām, 2008), first edition, 148.

one can assume all are equal, and all ideologies are true.[43] Based on this perspective, presenting belief (*aqidah*) in the context of *tafsir* with *khabar ahad* is considered invalid because it contains the value of *zanni* (uncertainty).[44] Briefly, *zanni* in science is very possible, but not by faith.

Knowledge of the faith must be produced and built on the foundation of correct reason, namely the Qur'an and *mutawatir hadith*. Both of these elements support the building of belief (*aqidah*) that is meant in Islam. Rida suggests; the various signs that exist in nature, the verses of the Qur'an, and the hadith of the Prophet must be constructed into a whole series. Thus, they produce a building of faith that has the value of certainty (*qat'i* or definitive). *Zanni* which means not having certainty, as *khabar ahad*, is not acceptable in matters of faith. However, *zanni* can mean anything, or it does not mean anything due to the breakdown of the principle of difference of perception. Then, if all the differences in perception and expression of faith are appreciated, we will tolerate all forms of contradiction of faith and give room for violations of faith.

## Conclusion

With regard to hadith criticism, Rida was a rather unique figure. He cannot be fully grouped into rationalists and cannot be fully grouped into revivalists either. Rida strongly believes in the authority of the Prophet, even following the principles and rules of science in hadith. Muslims have the obligation to follow the principles of *sharia* that have been established in the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet. However, Rida also invites these people to be rational in utilizing hadith. Not all hadiths have the implication of *sahih*, and not all are rejected. Many scholars ignore the implementative aspects of the critique of *sanad* and *matn* (narrator and hadith material). The results of research and criticism of hadith should be used to improve the situation and re -formulate sharia law for the success of Muslims themselves.

## Supplementary Materials

The data presented in this study are available in [insert article or supplementary material here] (Usually the datasets were analyzed from library research can be found in the whole data references ).

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## Authors' contributions

All listed authors contributed to this article. A.M. wrote the original draft, reviewed and edited it, Y.B. wrote the formal analysis, compiled the resources, conceptualised the study, and managed the project administration. K. was responsible for the methodology and validation and supervised the project

## Data availability statement

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

## Conflicts of Interest

None of the authors of this study has a financial or personal relationship with other people that could inappropriately influence or bias the content of the study.

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