



CHAPTER III

BIOGRAPHY FAKHRUDDIN AR RAZI And RASYID RIDHA

A. The Background of FakhruddinArRazi

1. A Biography

Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Umaribn al-Husayn at-Taymi al-Bakri at-TabaristaniFakhr ad-Din ar-Razi,most commonly known as Fakhr ad-Din ar-Razi or FakhruddinRazi was born in Rayy³⁷ near present-day Tehran in ah 543 or 544/ad 1149-50³⁸. Heis theoffspringofAbuBakr as-Siddiqr.a., in theQurayshtribe.³⁹Receivedhis early educationfromhis parentsnamedDhiya'uddinUmar, a scholarandthinkerwhoadmiredRaycommunity. Furthermore, ar-RazilearntoscholarsOthermajor. Philosophylearnedfromtwogreat scholarsnamedMuhammad al-BaghawiandMajdinal-Jilli, the science of kalamlearntfromKamaluddinal-Samawi⁴⁰

Like his predecessor al-Ghazali, he was an adherent of the Shafi'ischool in law and of the theology of Ash'arism. He was attracted at an early age to the study of philosophy, in which he soon became

³⁷ Imam Fakhr al-Din ar-Razi, *Tafsir al- Kabir*, Juz I, Dar al- Fikr, Beirut, 1990, p. 3

³⁸ Muhammad Husain adz-Dzahabi, *Al-Tafsirwa al- Mufasssirun*, Dar al- fikr, Beirut, Juz I, t.th. p. 290

³⁹ Muhammad al-Hilawi, *MerekaBertanyaTentang Islam*, GemaInsani, Jakarta, 1998, p 67.

⁴⁰ Sirajuddin, Ak., dkk., *Ensiklopedi Islam*, PT. IkhtiarBaru Van Howe, Jakarta, 1993, p. 327

proficient. In his late twenties, he visited Khwarazm and Transoxania, where he came in contact with some of the last theologians in the Mu'tazilite tradition. Although he endured hardship and poverty at the beginning of his career, on returning to Rayy from Transoxania he entered into the first of a series of patronage relations with rulers in the east which contributed to his reputedly considerable wealth and authority.

Al-Razi's skill in polemic ensured that controversy followed him in his subsequent sojourns in Khurasan, Bukhara, Samargand and elsewhere (he is said to have visited India). He consequently made several dangerous enemies, including among them the Karramiyyah (an activist ascetic sect, staunch defenders of a literal interpretation of scripture and of anthropomorphism), the Isma'ilis, and the Hanbalites, each of whom apparently threatened his life at various points. Al-Razi settled finally in Herat, where he had a teaching *madrassa* built for him, and where he died in ah 606/ad 1209.⁴¹

ArRazipay great attention to cultures surrounding that deal directly with him, that reflected her personal special, so was formed as a private personal scientific printed with mold science. So ArRazi is a writer, poet, jurist, commentator, expert wisdom, expert the science of kalam, and a medical doctor.⁴²

⁴¹Manna Khalil al-Qaththan, *Studi Ilmu al- Qur'an*, terj. Mudzakir. AS., Litera Antar Nusa, Jakarta, 1992, p. 529.

⁴²Muhammad al-Hilawi, *op. cit*, p. 17.

In Islamic theology, Razi's major work was the *Tafsir-e Kabir* (*The Great Commentary*), his eight-volume Tafsir (exegesis) on the Qur'an, also named as *Mafatih al-Ghayb* (*The Keys to the Unknown*). This work contains much of philosophical interest. One of his "major concerns was the self-sufficiency of the intellect." He believed that proofs based on tradition (*hadith*) "could never lead to certainty (*yaqin*) but only to presumption (*zann*), a key distinction in Islamic thought." However, his "acknowledgement of the primacy of the Qur'an grew with his years." Al-Razi's rationalism undoubtedly "holds an important place in the debate in the Islamic tradition on the harmonization of reason and revelation.

As-Subuki commented on the existence of Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi by saying, "He is the imam of the mutakallim, kalam scientist, his eyes wide in commenting on various fields of science, in-depth knowledge about the nature of man and things (written arguments) and have always known (understanding), very high affection, with high ability then it was composed strands of Islam that recur in various discussions and the discipline"⁴³

In the religious sciences, al-Ghazali had legitimized the use of logic, while at the same time attacking those key metaphysical doctrines of the philosophers which most offended against orthodox doctrine. This move prepared the ground for the subsequent incorporation of philosophical argumentation into theology. It was through al-Razi that this marriage was most completely effected in the Sunni

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 18

world. His major theological works all begin with a section on metaphysics, and this was to become the pattern for most later writers.

The problem of how far al-Razi should be considered a philosopher (rather than a theologian) is complicated by changes of view during the course of his life, and by his highly disputatious and often intemperate personality, which he himself acknowledged. His style is marked by an extensively ramifying dialectic, often ending in highly artificial subtleties, and is not easy to follow. The relentlessness and sometimes obvious delight with which al-Razi used this method to home in on his victims earned him among philosophers the sobriquet of Iman al-Mushakkikin (Leader of the Doubters). Nevertheless, al-Razi was scrupulous in representing the views he set out to criticize, manifesting his concern to lay out a rigorous dialectic in which theological ideas could be debated before the arbitration of reason. This predictably brought him under subsequent attack from those who believed that upholding orthodox doctrine was the primary task of theology, one of whom remarked that in al-Razi's works 'the heresy is in cash, the refutation on credit'.

One of al-Razi's major concerns was the self-sufficiency of the intellect. His strongest statements show that he believed proofs based on Tradition (*hadith*) could never lead to certainty (*yaqin*) but only to presumption (*zann*), a key distinction in Islamic thought. On the other hand, his acknowledgement of the primacy of the Qur'an grew with his years. A detailed examination of al-Razi's rationalism has never been undertaken, but he undoubtedly holds an important place in the debate in the Islamic tradition on the harmonization of reason and revelation. In his later years he seems to have shown some interest in mysticism, although this never formed a significant part of his thought.

4. List of works

Al-Razi had written over a hundred works on a wide variety of subjects.

1. Field of Tafsir

- *At-Tafsir al-Kabir li al-Qur'an al-Karim (The Great Commentary)*
(also known as *Mafatih al-Ghayb*)
- *Miftah al-Ulama, surat al-Fatihah*

2. Field of Fiqh

- *Al-Mahshal fi al-Fiqhi;*
- *Syarh al-Wajiz Fi al-Fiqhi li al-Ghazali.*

3. Field UshulFiqh

- *Al-Mahshul fi Ushul al-Fiqhi*
- *Al-Ma'alim fi Ushul al-Fiqhi.*

4. Field of Theology

- *Al-Qadha' wa al-Qadar;*
- *Al-Mahshul fi Nihayati 'Uqul fi Ilmi al-Ushul;*
- *Al-Bayan wa al-Burhan Fi ar-Radd 'ala Ahl al-Zaighwaath-Thughyan;*

5. Field of Philosophy

- *Al Mabahits al-Masyraqiyyah;*
- *Al- Mulakhhsh fi-Filsafah*
- *Al-Mathalib al-'Aliyah fil-Hikmah*

6. Field of Medical

- *Masail fi ath-Thibb;*
- *Al-Jami 'ulKabir fi ath-Thibb;*
- *At-TasyrihMinarRa 'siil al-Halqi*

7. Field of Language and Literature

- *Nihyatal- 'Ijaz fi Dirasat al- I' jaz;*
- *Syarh al-Mufhashalliz- Zamakhsyari.*

8. Field of Biography

- *Fadhushshahabahr-Rasyidin;*
- *Manaqib al-Imam asy-Syafi 'i*
- *Dzamm ad-Dunya.*

5. Tafsir al-KabirwaMafatih al-Ghaib

Islamic schoarsclassified this tafsir asbira'yiinterpretationas the interpretationwhichhashadeightthickvolumes.Althoughhe isclassifiedclericalinterpretationsof interpretationas the interpretationra'yibeer, butthisinterpretationmuchuses thatcan be taken, one of the featuresis that manyexpresshisinterpretationand matchwiththe existingconditions ofthe peopleinthisworldlike asportsproblem, and theproblemof natural wondersliteratureproblem of theQur'an, especiallyhisrenownedas an expertin thefield oflinguistic.

As anexpertin avariety ofreligious and secularsciences, sciences thataffectImamFakhrAr-Raziinhis commentary, in his commentarytofillitinmedicine, logical science, philosophyandwisdom,



intake it from the verses of the Qur'an and spirit verses. The verses of the Koran was brought to the things about science and the general terms and alia terms, therefore, there are some scholars say that; available to him in addition to commentary is also common knowledge. In Tafsir al-Kabir, Imam Fakhr Ar-Razi describes many absurd paragraphs with stating the science, thabi'iyah, fulkiyah, philosophy, and discussion of ilahiyat which relied on reason and immediately called the opinions of scholars of Fiqh, it was caused by the people's demands in his day.

Ibn Qahdi Syahibah said that Imam Fakhr Ar-Razi does not enhance his commentary,

Ibn Hajar also commented on this. Ulama after the Sheikh Mohammed Az-Zahabi said; people who could point out the error in Imam Fakhr Ar-Razi's commentary was written up in an Anbiyak letter, then continued Sheikh Al-Khaubi Syihabuddin, but unfortunately did not finish.

Al-Shofwadi in his book al-Wafibial-Wafiyat said:

Ar-Razi in discussing an issue in his book using a method that has never been seen before, since he began writing with the thrusting problem. Then classify the problem and discuss with some of the arguments, then none of the problems were not discussed, then the proposed rules with interesting conclusion of the matter. Indeed Imam

Razi in writing his book is full of wisdom and philosophy of science, peeling one by one until the problem arises admiration who read.⁴⁴

Against hadith, ar-Razi very little uses as a guide in interpreting to discuss issues of fiqh, he only uses the opinions of Islamic jurists. Poetry is widely used to solve the problem of language, *balaghah* and suitability readings. It shows that ar-Razi Arabic is very clever.

As *babal-nuzul* much advanced by ar-Razi in the book his commentary, be it as *babal-nuzul* that bersan adorn, but mostly he uses as *babal-nuzul* that bersan ad to friends or tabi' in.

In explaining the absurd between one verse to over see another and from one letter to another letter very different with other commentators ar-Razi was not enough mention of the suitability, but called some correlation even more.⁴⁵

Ar-Razi in his commentary book discusses many sciences emerging at that time as the exact sciences, physics, Falaq, philosophy and divinity studies the problem according to the method and rational arguments philosophers.⁴⁶

Imam Ibn Athir said: "the book of Imamar-Razi, everything there, except that interpretation itself". But the real Imam Razi much talk about the

⁴⁴ Imam Fakhrar-Razi, *op. cit.*, p. 8-9.

⁴⁵ Muhammad Husain adz-Dzahabi, *op. cit.*, p. 294

⁴⁶ Manna Khalil Qaththan, *op. cit.*, p. 301

problems of the science of kalam and review of universe,
he has been a pioneer in the Qur'anic commentaries⁴⁷

B. The Background of Rasyid Ridha

1. A Biography

Rashid Rida, whose full name was Muhammad Rashid b. 'Ali Rida b. Muhammad Shams al-Din b. Muhammad Baha' al-Din b. Munla 'Ali Khalifa,⁴⁸ was one of the most prominent religious figures of the Muslim world during the first half of the 20th century. His fame was due to the popular reformist attitudes embodied in many of his works. He is considered as an important personification of pure Islamic intellect in the modern age. As evidenced in the large corpus of his writings, he never hesitated to set in motion the stagnant state of the Muslim world during his time, and to defend Islam when necessary.⁴⁹

Rida was born on 27 Jumada II 1282 A.H. (23 September 1865) in al-Qalamun, a village three miles away from Tripoli-Syria on the Mediterranean coast, and died on Thursday 23 Jumada I 1353 A.H. (22 August 1935), on his way from Suez to Cairo.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Manna Basunni, *Tafsir-Tafsir al-Qur'an*, t.tp., Bandung, 1997, p. 80

⁴⁸ Zirikli, Khayr al-Din al-, *Al-A'lam*, Dar al-'Ilmlil-Malayin, Beirut, n.d., vol. 6, p. 126; cf. W. Ende, "Rashid Rida", in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1995, p. 448

⁴⁹ Abdel-Khalik, Umar Ryad, *Islam and Mission: A Research Paper on a Fatwa by Rashid Rida on Missionary Activities*, Unpublished paper submitted to the Seminar "Islam and the West: Their Mutual Relation as Reflected in Fatwa Literature, Leiden, 2000, p. 3

⁵⁰ Abdel-Khalik, op.cit., p.3; cf. Arslan, Shakib, *Al-Sayyid Muhammad Rashid Rida wa Ikha' Arba'ina Sanah*, 1st ed., Matba'at Ibn Zaydun, Damascus, 1937, p. 277, n. 1

He is said to be a descendant of a very pious family of outstanding Muslim intellectuals. His family was renowned as well-versed in Islamic knowledge; thus, most of his family were called *al-Mashaykh* (the sheikhs).⁵¹ Rida started his education at a *Kuttab* (Qur'anic School) in his village where he learned the Qur'an, Arabic writing, and elements of arithmetic.⁵² He then joined the *Rushdiyya* National Primary School in Tripoli at which he studied Arabic grammar, math, the basics of geography, *'aqida* (Islamic Belief), Islamic rituals, and Turkish language. But he soon left this school after one year of study, since most of its subjects were conducted in Turkish, something he did not like; later on, he joined *al-Madrasa al-Wataniyya al-Islamiyya* (National Islamic School), founded by Sheikh Muhammad al-Jisr of Tripoli (1845-1909).

As Rida comments, this school was considered superior to the former one because most of its subjects were conducted in Arabic, except two, French and Turkish. In this school he inclined towards religious and Arabic subjects, logic, mathematics, and philosophy. He was attracted by al-Afghani and 'Abduh as soon as he came to know their ideas. He thought for a time of going to join al-Afghani in Constantinople, but this plan came to nothing, and the influence of al-Afghani upon him was soon overshadowed by that of 'Abduh. When Muhammad 'Abduh visited Tripoli in 1894, Rida was among the great number of scholars who

⁵¹ Abdel-Khaliq, op.cit., p.3; cf. Arslan, op.cit., pp. 23-24.

⁵² Ibidem; cf. Hasib al-Samirra'i, Rashid Rida al-Mufasssir, Dar al-Risalalil-Tiba'a, Baghdad, 1397/1977, p. 283

received him. He accompanied ‘Abduh during this visit from early morning until bedtime. In Rajab 1315 A.H. (winter 1887-1888), Rida migrated to Cairo in order to avail himself of more direct contact with this modernist reform leader, and immediately became his close disciple.

In Cairo, his first meeting with ‘Abduh took place the day after his arrival. In this meeting, Rida expounded to ‘Abduh his aim of publishing a journal dealing with Islamic reform, *Al-Manar* (“The Lighthouse”). The first issue of this journal appeared on 22 Shawwal 1315 (mid March 1898). Discussion concerning the development and reform of Al-Azhar, which was in a state of educational stagnancy at that time, was also high on their agenda. Rida himself states, “When I first came to Egypt, I was well-prepared for reform; I was extremely preoccupied with the remissness of Muslim scholars, and how they were greatly in need of reformation.”

After ‘Abduh’s death in 1905, Rida established himself as a leading heir to this modernist movement by publishing a voluminous biography of the former. He also started to complete the commentary of the Qur’an which ‘Abduh had begun. His career in Cairo was almost entirely devoted to the publication of his journal *Al-Manar*, which continued to appear for a few years after his death.

He wrote voluminously, discussing an enormous range of subjects of mostly religious significance in *Al-Manar*, and elaborated a systematic doctrine of Islamic law and politics. Being focused on religious and social

reformation of the Muslim community, *Al-Manar* represented the mouthpiece of the *salafi* heritage of both al-Afghani and ‘Abduh, extolling a return to the main sources of Islam, i.e. the Qur’an and the *Sunna*, with an emphasis on purer *tawhid* (the worship of one Allah). This journal is a useful reference, and a mine of information of major events of the Muslim World as reflected from Cairo over a period of nearly forty years, not only for Muslim scholars but also for Orientalists. It also contains the account of Rida’s personal and scholarly evolution as well.

Rida’s ideas were treated as an extension of ‘Abduh’s thought and in line with the framework which the latter designed for reforming and reinvigorating Islam and demonstrating its compatibility with modernity. This framework included the abandoning of *taqlid* (imitative reasoning), the resort to rational criteria for interpretation of Islamic doctrines, the reform of religious institutions and educational systems, and the adoption of modern skills and technological achievements. The links between the two reformers are of course strong, but this does not imply a de-emphasizing of Rida’s own intellectual contributions.

Rida led an active political and intellectual life, filled with dramatic events that led to the transformation of the Arab and Islamic world. Western influence and dominance were tangible everywhere; the advocates of wholesale adoption of Western models were ascendant, supported by the powers of the time, and assisted by the attraction of easy solutions. Furthermore, after the First World War, the Islamic world was

fragmented into separate states under the control of western powers, and the Caliphate was abolished in 1924. Rida almost alone in Egypt, represented the Muslim thinker and activist endeavoring to reform and rescue his nation while at the same time preserving its identity and culture.

2. List of Works

This is a list of some of Rida's published works:

- *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Hakim* known as *Tafsir al-Manar* (The commentary on the Qur'an which 'Abduh began but did not complete beyond *surat al-Nisa'* IV, verse 125. Rida continued up to *surat Yusuf* XII, verse 100).
- *Al-Tafsir al-Mukhtasar al-Mufid* (This was intended as a summary of the former work, which was begun by Rida and published by Muhammad Ahmad Kan'an and Zuhayr al-Shawish as *Mukhtasar Tafsir al-Manar*, 3 vols, Beirut-Damascus, 1984)
- *Al-Manar Journal* (The first volume was published in 1315 A.H. (1898), the second section of the last volume (volume 35) was published and distributed after his death on 29th Rabi' II, 1354/1935)
- *Tarikh al-Ustaz al-Imam al-Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh* (A biography of his teacher published in three volumes)
- *Nida' lilJins al-Latif* or *Huquq al-Mar'ah fi al-Islam* ("A Call to the Fair Sex" or "Women's Rights in Islam"). This was translated into many languages

- *Al-Wahy al-Muhammadi* (This provides rational and historical proofs indicating that the Qur'an is a Divine Revelation).
- *Tarjamat al-Qur'an wa ma fiha min MafasidwaMunafat al-Islam*, Matba'at al-Manar, cairo, 1344/1926.
- *Dhikra al-Mawlid al-Nabawi* (This includes a summary of the Prophet's biography and the foundations of Islam)
- *Al-Wahda al-Islamiyya* (Islamic Unity). The major part of this work was first published under the title *Muhawarat al-Muslihwa al-Muqallid* ("Debates between the Reformer and the Imitator")
- *Yusr al-Islam waUsul al-Tashri' al-'umm* ("The Accommodating Spirit of Islam and the Sources of General Jurisprudence") published in 1928.
- *Al-Khilafawa al-Imama al-'Uzma* ("The Caliphate and the Greater Imamate")
- *Al-SunnawaalShari'a* (The Prophetic Tradition and Islamic Law)
- *Al-Muslimunwa al-Qibt* ("Muslims and the Copts")
- *Al-Wahhabiyyunwa al-Hijaz* ("The Wahhabites and the Hijaz")
- *Al-Manarwa al-Azhar* ("Al-Manar and al-Azhar")