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**Religious and Political Reform in the Thought of Mohammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935)****الإصلاح الديني والسياسي في فكر محمد رشيد رضا (1865-1935)**

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to elucidate the role of Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935AD) in religious and political reform, as one of the most significant paradigms that researchers have focused on due to its historical importance in the Arab world during the 20th century, both in theoretical and practical aspects. He attempted to adopt the principle of independent reasoning (Ijtihad) as a foundation for religious reform, and consultation (Shura) as a principle for political reform. Not to be overlooked is the principle of decentralization in governance as an ideal model for reforming the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 19th century. Additionally, the adoption of the Caliphate system to establish a connection between Arabs and Turks at the beginning of the 20th century aimed to confront the European colonial onslaught on Arab countries.

Keywords. Mohammad Rashid Rida, religious reform, political reform, the first Arab conference, the Great Arab Revolt

الملخص:

تهدف الدراسة إلى توضيح دور محمد رشيد رضا في الإصلاح الديني والسياسي كأحد أهم نماذج التي ركز عليها الباحثون لما لها من أهمية تاريخية في العالم العربي خلال القرن العشرين سواء في الجانب الفكري أو العملي، فلقد حاول اعتماد مبدأ الاجتهاد كأساس للإصلاح الديني، والشورى كمبدأ للإصلاح السياسي، دون أن ننسى مبدأ اللامركزية في الحكم كنموذج مثالي لإصلاح الدولة العثمانية مع نهاية القرن التاسع عشر، أو اعتماد نظام الخلافة لربط العلاقة بين العرب والأتراك مع بداية القرن العشرين، بهدف مواجهة الهجمة الاستعمارية الأوروبية على البلاد العربية.

الكلمات الدالة : محمد رشيد رضا، الإصلاح الديني، الإصلاح السياسي، المؤتمر العربي الأول، الثورة العربية الكبرى

Introduction:

Arab countries witnessed a reform movement led by numerous reformist thinkers at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. This movement encompassed religious, political, and social aspects, driven by the circumstances faced by the Ottoman Empire and Arab states, which were undergoing deterioration in various fields. Additionally, the encroachment of European colonial powers on the Arab world played a role.

Arab thinkers aimed to improve social patterns within their countries. They also sought to reestablish the relationship between Arabs and the Ottoman Empire, whether through unity or separation, and the creation of independent political entities or under a single banner, such as the "caliphate" system. These endeavors, however, appeared to be diligent attempts that ultimately resulted in failure.

Among these reformers was Mohammad Rashid Rida, who endeavored to build bridges between various Islamic regions. Religious, social, and political reforms were intertwined in his vision, as they could not be separated. This study seeks to elucidate the reformist intellectual aspects of Mohammad Rashid Rida, the foundational principles that underpinned his ideas, and his stances on pivotal issues of his era, such as the First Arab Congress of 1913 in Paris and the Great Arab Revolt of 1916.

1-Mohammed Rashid Rida "Birth and Scholarly Upbringing" (1865-1935)

Sheikh Mohammad Rashid Rida was born in the month of September 1865 in the village of Al-Qalamoun, one of the villages of Mount Lebanon, located on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea ¹, He grew up in his village, where he learned the Quran, religious sciences, beliefs, principles, and rituals. He also studied Arabic language sciences, including grammar, morphology, and geographic principles, as well as mathematics, alongside the Arabic language. He excelled in the Turkish and French languages as well².

Rashid Rida received his initial education in the village of Al-Qalamoun. Like other children, he memorized the Quran and acquainted himself with the fundamentals of the Arabic language and the biography of the Prophet Mohammad ﷺ peace be upon him. As he grew older, his family sent him to the Rashidiya School in Tripoli, and later he moved to the National School. There, he studied Arabic language, logic, mathematics, and natural philosophy.

He excelled in various sciences and arts, gaining humility, etiquette, and good manners from his mentors. His extensive reading, particularly of the book "Revival of Religious Sciences" by Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058-1111 AD), had a significant impact on his thinking. He remarked, "I ascended to my solitude chamber and completed reading what I had of the 'Revival'. It contains a profound discourse that

greatly influences matters of spiritual realization and monotheism. As I finished it, I felt like I was in another realm of spiritual delight, as if I had shed all weight, resembling a soul without a body"³.

The culture of Mohammad Rashid Rida, thanks to the teachings of the great reformer Mohammad Abduh (1849-1905), was deeply imbued. Its essence and goal were reform and rectification of misconceptions and false notions in people's minds regarding their religion. Here, Mohammad Rashid Rida prepared himself for his work, starting with writing articles and magazines, then progressing to establishing institutes with the aim of advocating and guiding the revival of the nation through its religious teachings. He became renowned for his writings in newspapers such as "Tarrabulus Newspaper" and Egyptian newspapers. He wrote meticulously and attentively on various subjects, establishing a school of advocacy and reform in Egypt with the intention of nurturing a generation that serves the Islamic nation and directs it towards the path of goodness and correctness⁴.

His education and scholarly status paved the way for him to stand alongside Islamic scholars. The Holy Quran and the Prophetic Sunnah are the intellectual sources for Sheikh Mohammad Rashid Rida, in addition to his thorough reading of issues of the "Al-'Urwa Al-Wuthqa" magazine, all of which contributed to changing the nature of his thinking.

2- Religious Reform according to Mohammad Rashid Rida:

The 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century are considered a period of the spread of Sufi orders in the Arab lands. Although Sufism emerged during earlier periods, what contributed to its widespread adoption was the state of the Ottoman Empire during the 18th century. The weakness of the empire and the spread of corruption and social decay in the Arab lands played a role in this. Despite Mohammad Rashid Rida's initial affiliation with Sufism, he abandoned all worldly pleasures and even attempted to reform Sufi practices. He challenged the excessive invocations performed by Sufis in various places and sought to maintain a connection with the Quran and the Prophetic traditions. True reform, in his view, involves a person's conviction that they should engage in actions they believe to be right, virtuous, and beneficial, driven by their higher purpose and knowledge. This essential aspect is integral to Islam and is the only way for humanity to advance⁵.

The issue of independent reasoning (Ijtihad) in the thought of Mohammad Rashid Rida is of utmost importance for the reformation of the Muslim community. He advocates for freeing the intellect from various constraints and blind adherence. Sheikh Mohammad Abduh stated, "After a period of time, I couldn't bear continuing with what they were accustomed and I felt compelled to seek something they were not familiar with. I stumbled upon something they hadn't discovered, and I called with the best I found. My voice rose in the call for two great matters: liberating thought from the restraint of blind conformity, which I considered an obstacle to renewal and Ijtihad, and understanding religion in the manner of the early generations of the

Muslim community. I returned to the original sources of knowledge, considering it among the scales of human intellect established by God"⁶.

Among the scales of human intellect established by God, the act of blind conformity according to Mohammad Rashid Rida has distorted the original meaning of the Holy Quran. He believes that the Quran praises knowledge, extols its virtues, advocates for independent thought and intellect, and combats stagnation and blind adherence. Furthermore, God addresses people of intellect in many instances, emphasizing that pondering over the Quran and its verses revealed to His Messenger, contemplating their meanings in oneself and within the broader context of creation, leads to the advancement of individuals in both religious and worldly knowledge⁷.

It is understood here that opening the door of Ijtihad is a necessity for Islam, as he says: "Is it obligatory to stagnate and stop at the sayings of the people, They themselves did not stand at the sayings of those who preceded them"⁸.

Mohammad Rashid Rida's approach to Ijtihad relies on a complete understanding of legal rulings, knowing how to derive them, having a clear vision, and grasping the eloquence of expression⁹.

Religious renewal does not solely involve social reform. The reformation of the state of the Muslim community requires a comprehensive movement that encompasses educational, religious, and social aspects¹⁰.

3- Political reform according to Mohammad Rashid Rida:

Mohammad Rashid Rida was influenced by both Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897) and Mohammad Abduh to reach political reform and establish Islamic rule or rebuild an Islamic state or an Pan-islamisme, freedom and justice through the participation of the people in political activities, so the Ottoman Shura Association was founded in 1908 AD, as a hint to make the Ottoman government a government Depends on Shura for political reform under the Ottoman Empire¹¹.

The aim of the Consultative Assembly "Alshura" was to establish a political system, and its provisions included the following: The Assembly aims to follow a constitutional system based on the principle of Shura (consultation). It also works towards achieving its goals through legitimate means and encompasses all components of the Ottoman and Arab societies¹². In Mohammad Rashid Rida's perspective, Shura represents a rejection of despotism and authoritarian rule.

Mohammad Rashid Rida's concept of political reform included the relationship between the Arabs and the Ottoman state. He emphasized the necessity of establishing an Ottoman-Islamic university that would bring together all the different ethnic and sectarian groups that are under the control of the Ottoman state, and only the Ottoman association would bring them together, provided that all these groups enjoy rights and duties and give them a national identity. The Ottoman Empire, as well as the opinion in favor of the Ottoman Empire being a Caliphate State on the grounds that it is most

appropriate to bring together and unite the princes of the Arabian Peninsula in agreement and understanding, as the caliphate as a principle helps to build and defend the country¹³.

The relationship between the Arabs and the Turks during the early 20th century was strained, ultimately leading to the failure of Mohammad Rashid Rida's efforts. Despite his intent to address misunderstandings by establishing Islamic educational institutes across different Islamic regions to bridge the gap between the two sides, his endeavor faltered.

He advocated for decentralization as a solution, where the internal administration of each province or region would be handed over to its local inhabitants. These entities would be linked to a central government, aiming to create a more balanced and harmonious governance structure.

However, the historical context and complex dynamics during that period contributed to challenges in realizing his vision for improved Arab-Turkish relations and his proposals for reform¹⁴. The reason for its emergence is the deteriorating situation experienced by the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and its aim was to reduce the problem of tyranny. Administrative decentralization is of two types: regional administrative decentralization, in the sense that each region of the state specializes in managing its interests, in the sense that the state grants a public utility an independent moral personality in order to manage affairs by itself, independent of the central authority¹⁵.

The Decentralization Party calls for a kind of democratic federalism by subjugating the central Ottoman government authorities over foreign affairs, defense affairs and transportation, and the party worked to confirm the idea that the central national assembly¹⁶.

One of the principles of the party was to preserve the unity of the Ottoman state, and it did not seek in any way to try to weaken it or develop the situation of the parties for the better by asking the state to change the form of its administration to achieve a situation much better than the situation in which it is¹⁷.

Mohammad Rashid Rida had a role in the decentralization party since its founding in 1912 in Cairo. It aims to convince the state of the necessity of decentralization rule, as well as to unify Arab public opinion to demand that, as he partially stood face to face in front of the unionists, and it came in the third article of his system: The party is not hidden and does not contain any secrets, as it pursues its purpose based on the demand for broad decentralization openly and openly without fear of anyone because it believes that the state does not remain in political science unless its government is revealed on the basis of administrative decentralization¹⁸.

Also, Mohammad Rashid Rida believes that the Pan-Islamisme faced several obstacles in its path, since this movement was forced in most cases to carry out its activities abroad, and thus the Algerian contribution to the Eastern Pan-Islamisme

merged in its general form, in addition to that they were forced to use the indirect expression .. Especially in resorting to Arabic poetry, and in comparison, the movement of the Pan-Islamisme in the East has found freedom of expression and its means such as the press and the support of various intellectual circles, and even official support at times. Support and propaganda from any European nation¹⁹.

3-Mohammad Rashid Rida's position on some issues:

3-1 Mohammad Rashid Rida's and the first Arab conference in 1913:

The Arab youth in Paris became convinced of the absolute necessity to strive for reform and work towards its achievement. Faced with the unwavering centralization and Turkification policies, and amidst the increasing weakness of the Ottoman Empire and the expansion of colonial ambitions, the idea emerged to unite all factions opposing the centralization and the Unionists, regardless of their affiliations.

The First Arab Congress was convened in Paris from June 17 to June 23, 1913, initiated by the Young Arab Society (Jam'iyyat al-Arab al-Fatat) in coordination with the Reform Society of Beirut. The conference was held under the supervision of the Party of Administrative Decentralization (Hizb al-Lamarkaziyya al-Idariyya) and enjoyed support from students and Arab intellectuals residing in Paris. Its main objective was to determine the Arab stance towards the policies of the Unionists (Ittihadists).

The congress was presided over by Abdulhamid al-Zahrawi (1855-1916). Its significance lay in its role as a platform for Arab students and intellectuals to gather and discuss their collective stance in response to the policies of centralization promoted by the Unionists within the Ottoman Empire. The conference held four official sessions at the Geographic Society Hall in Paris, and it was attended by representatives from various Arab regions.

The conference consisted of four sessions, and in the final session, Ahmed Muhtar Bey delivered a speech in French, summarizing the statements of the speakers and translating the conference resolutions. The resolutions were as follows:

1. Genuine and necessary reforms are obligatory for the Ottoman Empire, and they must be implemented promptly.
2. It is imperative for Arabs to enjoy their political rights, and this should be achieved by active participation in the central administration of the empire.
3. The Beirut Province had presented its demands in a specific memorandum, which was approved on January 31, 1913, through a consensus of opinions. These demands are based on two fundamental principles: expanding the authority of public councils and appointing foreign advisors. The conference calls for the implementation and enforcement of these two demands.

4. It is essential for each Arab province to establish a decentralized administration to address its needs and customs²⁰.
- 5- The Arabic language must be considered in the Ottoman parliament, and the parliament must decide that the Arabic language is an official language in the Arab states.
- 6- The conference wishes the Ottoman Sunni government to guarantee the Bank of Lebanon its financial means.
- 7- Military service shall be local in the Arab provinces, except in circumstances and times that call for maximum exceptions.
- 8- The conference endorses and shows its inclination to the demands of the Ottomans based on decentralization, and sends them its greetings through their representative, and salutes Iraq.
- 9- These decisions shall be communicated to the Ottoman government.
- 10- Notification of these decisions also to European governments. The conference thanks the French government very much for welcoming its guest²¹.

The statement addressed by the conference organizers to the representatives of the national groups stated, "The main task of the conference lies in discussing the measures that should be taken in order to protect our land from the greed of foreigners, save it from tyranny, and conduct our internal affairs on the basis of decentralization and the prevention it contained." Several items were added, including: :

- 1- National life and the struggle against the occupation.
- 2 Arab rights from the Ottoman Empire.

This conference received support from the people of Palestine, and this is due to the increasing Zionist immigration to it, as dozens of messages were sent to the participants in the conference supporting this conference and denouncing the Zionist threat that threatens Palestine²².

Mohammad Rashid Rida demonstrated his approval of the First Arab Congress by defending its outcomes. He considered these outcomes as an inevitable result of the Unionists' procrastination in implementing reforms in the Arab provinces. He criticized the Unionists for consistently obstructing the idea of decentralization and attempting to undermine the unity of the Ottoman state by sowing discord among different nationalities. He also accused the Unionists of expanding the scope of despotism practiced by provincial governors over the state's subjects. Rashid Rida portrayed the reform advocates as a group that represented only itself, accusing them of seeking to destroy the unity of the state²³.

Mohammad Rashid Reda believes that choosing the location of the first Arab conference, which was in Paris, is nothing but a desire to convey the voice of the

Arabs and the desire for Europe to hear this unified Arab voice that completely rejects severe centralization, adhering to its rights, in addition to the fact that Paris was a center for the gathering of Arab immigrants.

While the matter that was living the hope of some Arabs and the subject of consideration was the agreement concluded by the Association for Union and Progress with the President of the Arab Conference and gave him the covenant and the charter in its entirety, which was composed of twelve articles. This prompted the president of the two conferences to stay for several months, waiting for its implementation, and Astana was attracting him to him and the decentralization party was pulling him away from it, and he reviewed the government men in implementing the promised reform order, and they said that we are on our promise and we have started from implementation by establishing two Sultanian schools in the Arabic language, one in Damascus and the other in Beirut. And working to make the Arabic language an official language in the courts and bureaus of the Arab states. This was a summary of the answers that the government issued to Al-Zahrawi after many revisions²⁴.

Mohammad Rashid Rida wanted to show that the Arabs wanted to prove to the Ottoman government and the world through the first Arab conference that they wanted reform, and that the conference did not aim at the independence of the Arabs from the Ottoman Empire and their separation from it. Rather, their goal is to confront and resist the foreign occupation of the entire Arab world while guaranteeing the rights of the Arabs in the Ottoman Empire. Mohammad Rashid Rida showed that the convening of the conference demonstrated that the advocates of reform appear as owners of the right, not owners of falsehood, and not as students of positions, but rather their goal was to achieve benefits²⁵.

Rashid Rida confirmed that the motive behind the two unions' prevarication in their implementation of the Arabs' demands and their resorting to procrastination as an attempt by them to embody the dissent policy planted by foreign countries and work to make both sides ignorant of the other's circumstances and work to inflame relations. A year that will be followed by a revolution that only God knows how it will be."²⁶, While some showed the motive of preserving the unity of the Arab state and their cohesion in distorting the image of the Arabs and threw the responsibility for weakening the Ottoman state on their shoulders that the Arab conference is not treachery and that its various actions do not serve foreign countries, and here came Mohammad Rashid Rida's response to this view and considered that the conference Al-Arabi did not call for separation or independence from the Ottoman Empire, but rather it was in order to call for the protection of the rights of Arabs in the state and to emphasize the necessity of reform in accordance with administrative decentralization. However, due to the intensification of European competition, which aimed to transform the Arab region into an Arab region, into an area of influence for French-British colonialism, after the Ottomans became unable to confront any external aggression or expansion on its lands²⁷. We find that Mohammad Rashid Rida reviewed the history of the Turanians, who considered them nothing but instruments of

destruction and spears for this world, so he says, "...the Turanian element was not famous for anything of the power of creativity, and its history is only a history of destruction..."²⁸.

Finally, the Ottoman government decided to dispatch a secretary from the Union and Progress Society to Paris in order to negotiate with the Arab Congress. A delegation of three individuals, led by Abdul Karim Al-Khalil (1884-1916), was formed to engage in discussions with the Ottoman government in Istanbul (Constantinople) with the aim of reaching an agreement that would address the aspirations of the Arabs and fulfill their demands.

The Arab delegation, along with the Turkish envoy, reached an agreement composed of several key points, including:

1. Primary and preparatory education in all Arab lands would be conducted in the Arabic language, and higher education would also be in the language of the majority. However, learning the Ottoman language would be mandatory only in preparatory schools.
2. Generally, governors should be proficient in the Arabic language. Other officials would be appointed by the provinces. However, the rulers and officials in Adalia (Antalya), who govern with Sunni consent, would be appointed centrally. Governors would be exempted from the aforementioned conditions.
3. Real estate and charitable endowments (waqf) subject to local charitable use would be entrusted to local community councils, provided that their specific conditions were upheld.
4. Matters of benefit would be left to local administration.
5. Military personnel would serve their military duties during times of peace within the Arab lands, within the regions of the army they belonged to. However, soldiers who were to be sent to Hejaz, Asir, and Yemen would be distributed throughout all Ottoman provinces within a specific ratio.
6. Resolutions taken by the general directorates within their legal authority would be binding in all cases. Inspectors specialized in the required domains and departments would be appointed in each province from foreign experts. Their powers and duties would be determined by a special system, ensuring the attainment of the desired disciplinary and reformative benefits²⁹.

However, the Unionists did not adhere to the terms of this agreement, and they continued with a policy of oppression. The Ottoman government was not prepared to fulfill the demands of the Arab delegates, especially with the onset of World War I (1914-1919).

3-2 Mohammad Rashid Rida's and the Great Arab Revolt of 1916:

There were many reasons behind announcing this revolution, including Sharif Hussein's belief that the unions extracted all confidence from him and that they were trying to eliminate him whenever they had the opportunity to do so, and that he maintained good dealings with them until "Wahib Pasha" was replaced to be reassured and relieved of their intrigues³⁰.

The local reason is that the region of Hijaz, being an arid and barren land, relies on external support for sustenance. Its inhabitants have traditionally depended on the income generated during the pilgrimage season. However, due to the outbreak of World War I (1914-1919), their source of livelihood was disrupted, as the war was declared approximately three months before the pilgrimage season. Sharif Hussein (1853-1931) sought assistance from the Ottoman Empire, but his request was denied. This led him to consider forming an alliance with Britain. As a result of this alliance, the naval blockade was lifted, and ships were allowed to visit the Hijaz for pilgrimage once again³¹.

While engaging in politics, Rashid Rida revealed a unique ability to understand the conditions that surrounded the Ottoman Empire and the Arab countries, and preceded his senior contemporaries in realizing the reality of the danger that threatened the Ottoman and Arab sides alike. Trying to urge the Ottomans to cooperate with the Arabs, but to no avail, and the European colonial countries looked at the Ottoman and Arab teams according to one scheme. Agreements were concluded between them to devour their property and goods, and soon the events supported Rashid Rida and proved that he was sincere when he called on the Ottomans to try to strengthen ties with the Arabs, and that in this the achievement of salvation for both parties was interdependent³².

The contact between British authorities in Egypt and Rashid Rida was a result of his broad policy aimed at gaining Arab public opinion and assisting Britain against the Ottoman state in the event of its alliance with Germany during the war. If the Ottoman state showed any indication of joining Germany, Rashid Rida suggested that the entire Islamic and Arab worlds would stand by its side.

England followed these steps by preparing a declaration that carried the same meanings that Rashid Rida had addressed. However, he categorically rejected this declaration, considering its phrases ambiguous and its content merely empty words. He proposed to the British officials to issue a clear statement "that cannot be interpreted in any way, committing them to the independence of these countries and not taking anything from the Arab lands under the pretext of conquest, ownership, protection, or occupation..." Despite Britain's response to Rashid Rida's demands, he remained cautious in his dealings with them, especially as British newspapers revealed some ill intentions. He wrote to the British officials to protest against the negative language used against the Arabs in their newspapers³³.

The article titled "The Arab Question," written by Mohammad Rashid Rida, he explained the hidden currents and influences. However, the British authorities exercised almost constant supervision, and they did not allow the publication of this article until they had removed from it anything they deemed harmful to their country. They deleted any content that contained warnings to the Arabs about the surrounding intrigues. Rashid Rida explained what had happened, stating that the British surveillance "forced us to change what they disliked. By British surveillance, I don't mean the monitoring of printed material at the Ministry of Interior in Egypt, headed by a British official who strictly controlled Al-Manar newspaper more than any other publications. This was because they believed it had a stronger influence on Muslims due to its religious impact. I refer to the surveillance of British authorities, to whom the monitoring of printed materials at the Ministry of Interior was directed, especially on certain matters, the most important of which was the Arab question."³⁴.

Mohammad Rashid Rida assumed the role of an observer of British actions and behaviors in the Arab countries. He was diligent in deciphering their sweet words and consistently highlighted his countrymen's interests. He increased his interactions with senior British authorities in Egypt, believing in the perspective he had formed about the British state and their deception towards the Arabs. He engaged in discussions with prominent British figures, including Mr. Mark Sykes, who visited Egypt in 1915, regarding Arab matters. He managed to comprehend the underlying English sentiment of animosity towards the Arabs. Rashid Rida commented on this, saying, "His efforts failed except for what he aimed for through official promises and commitments, such as the 'promise of Arab independence.' We did not disregard the vague messages that occasionally emerged from telegrams and statements of some English newspapers, promising the grand British commitment to the Arabs and what awaited the happiness of the Arab countries once freed from Ottoman rule and restored to the glory of Harun al-Rashid and al-Ma'mun."

Among Mohammad Rashid Rida's contemporaries and friends was Prince Shakib Arslan (1869-1946), who recounted his stance on the English and praised him, saying, "We would occasionally receive news about Egypt and the actions of the English there. On one occasion, it was reported that Mr. Rashid was under the displeasure of the English because they wanted him to spread British propaganda in the Arab lands, but he couldn't fully comply and showed some agreement to their intentions... So, he reluctantly agreed to that, but later they confiscated writings from him that warned against the English themselves... They arrested him and considered deporting him to Malta... However, they reconsidered, thinking that deporting someone like Sheikh Rashid Rida might bring him closer to the Turks and further harm their policy. They left him in Egypt but under strict observation because he was not an easy tool for the English to manipulate and move as they pleased."³⁵

Conclusion

Indeed, reform, whether religious, political, or even social, must follow a consistent and interconnected path; otherwise, it is destined to fail. Religious reform establishes virtuous individuals who benefit the Muslim community. Religious reform encompasses two key points: independent scholarly interpretation (Ijtihad) and the liberation of thought within certain boundaries. Mohammad Rashid Rida was one of the scholars who adhered to this approach.

As for political reform during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, several solutions were proposed to reform the Ottoman Empire. Rashid Rida emphasized the significance of the consultative system (shura) and aimed to bridge the gap between Arabs and Turks through ideas like the concept of an Islamic university or the establishment of a new governance system—the Caliphate system—that unites Arabs and Turks under a single umbrella to serve the Muslim nation.

Undoubtedly, the political, economic, and social circumstances of the Ottoman Empire, coupled with the colonial onslaught on Arab lands, presented challenges that hindered Mohammad Rashid Rida's pursuit of his goals. However, he provided us with one of the most important examples of a dedicated figure who laid the foundations for both religious and political reinterpretation and reform.

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