

THE MAHMUD ABU RAYYAH'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ULUMUL HADITH

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Abstract

This article explains about Mahmud Abu Rayyah and his contribution to the development of ulumul hadith. The book Adhwa' 'ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah written by Mahmud Abu Rayyah is the primary source in this research. Meanwhile, other writings related to Mahmud Abu Rayyah and his hadith thoughts are secondary sources. The research methods used in this article are qualitative research methods with the type of library research, documentation studies as data collection techniques, and analytical descriptive methods as data analysis methods. The results of the study show that Mahmud Abu Rayyah's contribution to the development of ulumul hadith is: First, cleaning the hadith and ulumul hadith from israiliyyat. Mahmud Abu Rayyah doubted the truth of israiliyyat and rejected its use in the study of hadith and ulumul hadith. Second, promoting a rational approach and a historical approach in the study of hadith and ulumul hadith. The two approaches that Mahmud Abu Rayyah often uses are very important in the development of ulumul hadith. Third, campaigning for the validity test of hadith through two stages, namely sanad criticism and matan criticism. Mahmud Abu Rayyah criticized hadith scholars who only attach importance to the criticism of sanad and ignore the criticism of matan. Matan criticism, in Mahmud Abu Rayyah's view, must also be carried out and be the final determinant of whether or not a hadith is shahih or not.

Keywords: Contribution; Mahmud Abu Rayyah; Ulumul Hadith

Abstrak

Artikel ini memaparkan tentang Mahmud Abu Rayyah dan kontribusinya terhadap pengembangan ulumul hadis. Kitab *Adhwa' 'ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah* yang ditulis Mahmud Abu Rayyah menjadi sumber primer dalam penelitian ini. Sementara tulisan-tulisan lainnya yang terkait dengan Mahmud Abu Rayyah dan pemikiran hadisnya menjadi sumber sekunder. Adapun metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam artikel ini adalah metode penelitian kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian *library research*, studi dokumentasi sebagai teknik pengumpulan data, dan metode deskriptif analitis sebagai metode analisis data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kontribusi Mahmud Abu Rayyah terhadap pengembangan ulumul hadis adalah: *Pertama*, membersihkan hadis dan ulumul hadis dari *israiliyyat*. Mahmud Abu Rayyah menyangsikan kebenaran *israiliyyat* dan menolak penggunaannya dalam kajian hadis dan ulumul hadis. *Kedua*, mempromosikan

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pendekatan rasional dan pendekatan historis dalam kajian hadis dan ulumul hadis. Dua pendekatan yang sering digunakan Mahmud Abu Rayyah tersebut sangat penting dalam usaha pengembangan ulumul hadis. *Ketiga*, mengampanyekan uji validitas hadis melalui dua tahap, yakni kritik *sanad* dan kritik *matan*. Mahmud Abu Rayyah mengkritik ulama hadis yang hanya mementingkan kritik *sanad* dan mengabaikan kritik *matan*. Kritik *matan*, dalam pandangan Mahmud Abu Rayyah, juga harus dilakukan dan menjadi penentu final *shahih* atau tidaknya suatu hadis.

Kata kunci: Kontribusi; Mahmud Abu Rayyah; Ulumul Hadis

INTRODUCTION

Since the opening of the *tajdid* door by Muhammad Abduh and Muhammad Rasyid Ridha, there have been renewed writings that criticize Islamic studies with its various branches. The study of hadith and ulumul hadith did not escape the spotlight of these critical writers. They re-examined the quality of hadith that had been considered authentic by previous scholars. As a result, many hadiths that were previously considered *shahih* have become *dha'if* quality according to the perspective of the new researcher. Not only that, the researchers or writers after Abduh and Rasyid Ridha also questioned and tested the methods and theories of ulumul hadith that had been formulated by previous scholars.

The re-examination of these methods and theories, including the methods and theories of the hadith, is natural when viewed from the perspective of Thomas

Kuhn's philosophy of science. A science, wrote Thomas Kuhn, if it has reached the stage of stability, in the next period it will be faced with contradictions or deviations or also called anomalies. When the anomaly peaks, a crisis will arise and the validity of the old paradigm begins to be questioned. When the crisis becomes more serious, there will be a revolution marked by the birth of a new paradigm that is ready to replace or perfect the old paradigm (Kuhn, 2002). This revolution is also called shifting paradigm (Ritzer, 2002).

Among the Muslim intellectuals and scholars who conducted a critical study of hadith and ulumul hadith was Mahmud Abu Rayyah. This Egyptian writer wrote a book called *Adhwa' 'ala Al-Sunnah Al-Muhammadiyah* which is full of criticism of hadith, ulumul hadith, hadith narrators, and hadith scholars. This article will expose Mahmud Abu Rayyah's thoughts on the ulumul hadith in his book *Adhwa'*.

Unlike previous articles that explored the controversial side of Mahmud Abu Rayyah, this article will actually look at and explain Mahmud Abu Rayyah's positive contribution to the development of the *ulumul hadith*. The author digs from Mahmud Abu Rayyah's critical thinking contained in his book, *Adhwa' 'ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah*.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This article is not the first article about Mahmud Abu Rayyah and his book *Adhwa' 'ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah*. However, based on the author's research, previous writings, especially in the last ten years, only reveal Mahmud Abu Rayyah's thoughts and controversial sides. There has been no writing that explicitly mentions and concludes Mahmud Abu Rayyah's positive contribution to the development of the *ulumul hadith*. This article about Mahmud Abu Rayyah's contribution is here to fill the void.

Among the previous writings about Mahmud Abu Rayyah is an article entitled *Mahmud Abu Rayyah dan Kritisisme Hadis* written by Wahidul Anam. In his article, Wahidul Anam reviews Mahmud Abu Rayyah's critical thoughts that provoke pros and cons

among hadith scholars. Among others, the separation between hadith which is indeed a religious guide and hadith which is actually only an Arabic tradition, the rejection of the concept of '*adalah*' of all *shahabat*, the codification or *tadwin* of the hadith due to political pressure, as well as Mahmud Abu Rayyah's sharp criticism of *israiliyyat* (Anam, 2016).

After Wahidul Anam, Nurkholis Sofwan also wrote about Mahmud Abu Rayyah in his article entitled *Kontroversi Pemikiran Hadits Mahmud Abu Rayyah (Sebuah Kajian Kritis-Komparatif)*. In his article, Nurkholis Sofwan more sharply explored the controversial sides of Mahmud Abu Rayyah. Among other things, Mahmud Abu Rayyah's thinking that distinguishes between the position of hadith and *sunnah*, Mahmud Abu Rayyah's refutation of the theory '*adalah*' of all *shahabat*, and Mahmud Abu Rayyah's rejection of Abu Hurairah's credibility (Sofwan, 2019). Instead of revealing Mahmud Abu Rayyah's positive contribution to the hadith text, Nurkholis Sofwan's article is full of rebuttals to Mahmud Abu Rayyah's thoughts.

The next writer to write about Mahmud Abu Rayyah is Munandar in his article entitled *Kritik Pandangan Mahmud Abu Rayyah Terhadap Tadwin Hadis*. Just

like Nurkholis Sofwan, Munandar, in his article, also sharply highlights Mahmud Abu Rayyah's thoughts as well as refutes them. It's just that Munandar focuses more on Mahmud Abu Rayyah's views regarding the prohibition of writing hadith during the time of the Prophet and the codification of hadith (Munandar, 2019). Munandar's article also does not reveal Mahmud Abu Rayyah's positive contribution to the hadith. In contrast to this author's article which clearly explains Mahmud Abu Rayyah's positive contribution to the development of the ulumul hadith.

In addition, there was also an article that specifically explored Mahmud Abu Rayyah's controversial opinion about Abu Hurairah's credibility, namely an article entitled *Analisis Kritik Mahmud Abu Rayyah terhadap Kredibilitas Abu Hurairah sebagai Perawi Hadis* written by Ruston Nawawi. In his article, Ruston Nawawi concluded that Mahmud Abu Rayyah's accusation that Abu Hurairah was not credible as a narrator of hadith proved to be unfounded. Ruston Nawawi further claimed that his research was to strengthen Abu Hurairah's position as a credible narrator of hadith (Nawawi, 2024). Similar to the articles above, this article by Ruston Nawawi also does not

mention Mahmud Abu Rayyah's positive contribution to the hadith. In contrast to this author's article, which actually mentions firmly point by point Mahmud Abu Rayyah's positive contribution to the development of the ulumul hadith.

RESEARCH METHOD

This article uses a qualitative research method with the type of library research. The primary source in this study is the book *Adhwa' 'ala Al-Sunnah Al-Muhammadiyah* which incidentally is the work of Mahmud Abu Rayyah in the field of hadith and ulumul hadith. To complete the data from these primary sources, other writings related to the intellectual biography of Mahmud Abu Rayyah and his hadith thoughts are secondary sources in this study. As a data collection technique, the author uses documentation studies. As for the data analysis method, the author uses an analytical descriptive method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Intellectual Biography of Mahmud Abu Rayyah

Mahmud Abu Rayyah is one of the controversial Muslim intellectuals of Egyptian nationality whose thoughts are often categorized by some researchers as the thought of the Modern *Inkar al-*

Sunnah (Mursidin, 2022). The Modern *Inkar al-Sunnah* refers to the understanding of *Inkar al-Sunnah* that has reappeared in the modern century which contains three categories of understanding, namely: rejecting the hadith as a whole, rejecting hadith except for the mutawatir, and rejecting hadith that is not in line with logic and science (Martono, 2024). Some researchers note that the understanding of the Modern *Inkar al-Sunnah* was revived by orientalist (Martono, 2024) who collaborated with colonialism that gripped the Islamic world in the early 19th century AD (Makhfud, 2017).

Mahmud Abu Rayyah was born in 1889 AD, and died in 1970, precisely he was 81 years old (Nawawi, 2024). At a young age, Mahmud Abu Rayyah attended Madrasah Ad-Da'wah wal Irsyad, a da'wah institution founded by Muhammad Rasyid Ridha. Abu Rayyah also attended a local Theology course (Sofwan, 2019). Mahmud Abu Rayyah is indeed recorded as a great admirer of two reformist figures of Islamic thought in Egypt, namely Muhammad Abduh and his student, Muhammad Rasyid Ridha. Mahmud Abu Rayyah was fascinated by the ideas of the two reformers, especially the idea of rejection of *taklid* (Anam, 2016).

Abu Rayyah's scientific adventure towards the *sunnah* began when he came across the hadiths of the Prophet narrated by Abu Hurairah. According to him, many hadiths are irrelevant when the content of the hadith (*matan*) is studied even though the hadith is authentic in its narration. Among the hadiths reads: First: "When Satan hears the call to pray, then he runs away farting". Second: "Whoever says: 'There is no God but Allah, will go to heaven. As for the question of the *shahabat* about whether the gates of Paradise will be opened to the one who says it but he commits adultery and steals, the Prophet said yes." Even though it is *shahih* according to its *sanad*, ethically the hadith is difficult to recognize; did the Prophet really use disrespectful words. Abu Rayyah does not deny the high value of a *shahih* hadith. If only the words of the Prophet, without distortion or alteration, could be obtained in a reliable edition (Juynboll, 1999).

Starting from his findings in the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah, Abu Rayyah began to criticize scholars who conducted hadith literature studies only dwelling on the problem of the Four Schools of Fiqh. According to Abu Rayyah, scholars are more submissive to the rules of fiqh from a hadith than to

the hadith itself, making *taqlid* in studying fiqh mandatory and blindly following *Ijma'* (Anam, 2016). In addition, Abu Rayyah also lamented that scholars still use *isnad* criticism as the only critical application to the hadith as it was commonly used in the Middle Ages. This proves that hadith scholars do not pay much attention to textual criticism or *matan* criticism (Sofwan, 2019).

In 1945, Mahmud Abu Rayyah wrote an article entitled *Hadith Muhammad* which contained his views on hadith that contradicted the opinions of Al-Azhar scholars. Therefore, there was a polemic with them, including with Abu Shabah who rejected him and suggested that he correct his writing. However, with his firm stance, Mahmud Abu Rayyah did not heed it, even rejecting it with a second article that maintained his stance (Khon, 2011).

The climax was that in 1958 Abu Rayyah published the book *Adhwa' 'ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah*. The book contains a study of hadith which in several chapters discusses some of the hadith books that are alleged or according to Abu Rayyah do not convey the words and deeds of the Prophet, but are an invention carried out by contemporaries of the Prophet and subsequent generations to create

hadith. Furthermore, according to him, the hadith *Ahad* should not be applied to the Muslim community throughout the ages, if the hadith is not practiced by the previous Islamic generation (Sofwan, 2019). Mahmud Abu Rayyah's views on the hadith *Ahad* are what then made some hadith scholars group Mahmud Abu Rayyah into the Modern *Inkar al-Sunnah* (Martono, 2024).

In addition, Mahmud Abu Rayyah's other controversial side was when he expressed sharp criticism of Abu Hurairah. The criticism was then considered by a number of scholars as a reproach against the person of his friend, Abu Hurairah. As a result, no less than 9 books and articles were published as rebuttals and even condemnations directed at Mahmud Abu Rayyah. Among them were: Muhammad Abu Syuhbah in *Majallat al-Azhar*, Muhammad as-Samahi in *Abu Hurairah fi al-Mizan*, Mustafa al-Siba'i and his friends in the collection of essays *Difa' 'an al-Hadith al-Nabawi wa-Tafnid Syubhat Khusumih*, Abd al-Razzaq in *Zhulumat Abi Rayyah Imam Adhwa' al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah*, and Muhammad Ajjaj al-Khathib in *Abu Hurairah Rawiyat al-Islam and al-Sunnah Qabla al-Tadwin* (Juynboll, 1999).

Mahmud Abu Rayyah's Contribution to Uloomul Hadith in the Book of *Adhwa' 'ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah*

Although it often invites debate among hadith scholars, Mahmud Abu Rayyah's controversial thoughts also contain a positive contribution to the development of the ulumul hadith. Whether you realize it or not, the contribution contributed by Mahmud Abu Rayyah also influenced the thinking of the hadith in the future. In addition, Mahmud Abu Rayyah's thoughts also provide a breath of fresh air that revives *ijtihad* or the renewal of thought in the ulumul hadith after a long time tends to be stagnant and rigid.

Mahmud Abu Rayyah's contribution to the development of the hadith as implied in his thoughts in his book *Adhwa' 'ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah*, includes the following:

1. Cleansing hadith and ulumul hadith from *Israiliyyat*

Israiliyyat is one of the terminology known in the study of tafsir and hadith. The term means stories or events that were recorded from the people before the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad saw. which were sourced from their books (Yasin, 2020). *Israiliyyat* generally contains the stories of the prophets and

the previous people presented in detail, such as the names of people, places, and other specific things (Frianda, 2022).

Mahmud Abu Rayyah did not like *israiliyyat* and did not allow it to be used. His rejection of this *israiliyyat* began with the basic concept that Islamic shari'a descended to *nasakh* the shari'at that existed before. As for what remains and does not change, it is the main issue of the creed (aqidah). In this aqidah, there is no contradiction between the treatises of the Prophet Muhammad saw. and the previous prophets (Rayyah, n.d.).

Then Mahmud Abu Rayyah also mentioned that the Qur'an explains the character of the *ahli kitab* (Jews and Christians) who like to change the content of the book that has been revealed to them and then "sell" it at a low price (Rayyah, n.d.).

Based on this concept, Mahmud Abu Rayyah wrote, the Prophet forbade Muslims to take narration from *ahli kitab*. To strengthen his opinion, Mahmud Abu Rayyah also quoted a narration that contains the Prophet's anger at Umar ibn al-Khatthab when Umar brought a book that he got from *ahli kitab* and read it in front of the Prophet. In addition, Mahmud Abu

Rayyah also quoted the narration of Al-Bukhari from Abu Hurairah, which reads: "Do not be quick to justify the *ahli kitab* and do not be quick to deny it, and say: we believe in Allah and in what Allah has revealed to us and in what Allah has revealed to you. Our God and your god are one, and we surrender to him" (Rayyah, n.d.).

Then Mahmud Abu Rayyah, in his book *Adhwa' 'ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah*, also quoted Ibn Jarir from Abdullah ibn Mas'ud: "Do not ask anything of *ahli kitab*. Indeed, they will not give you any guidance and indeed they have gone astray. Sometimes they deny the truth, and sometimes they justify falsehoods" (Rayyah, n.d.)

After quoting these narrations, Mahmud Abu Rayyah emphasized that these *shahih* narrations are in accordance with religion and reason in terms of prohibiting taking narration from *ahli kitab* (using *israiliyyat*) (Rayyah, n.d.).

After presenting his stance on *israiliyyat*, Mahmud Abu Rayyah mentioned a number of *shahabat* who received narration from *ahli kitab*, such as Abu Hurairah, Mu'awiyah, and Anas who received narration from Ka'ab Al-Ahbar and other *ahli kitab*. He also mentioned that Abu Hurairah was the *shahabat* who took the most narration from the

ahli kitab (Rayyah, n.d.). This then became one of Mahmud Abu Rayyah's entrances to criticize Abu Hurairah.

Not only rejecting *israiliyyat*, Mahmud Abu Rayyah also launched attacks on the person of the *ahli kitab*, such as Ka'ab Al-Ahbar. Mahmud Abu Rayyah, for example, mentioned the hadiths that led him to conclude that the Ka'ab was trying to incorporate Jewish elements into Islam in order to undermine Islam. Mahmud Abu Rayyah, for example, quoted the Ka'ab narration: "It is mentioned in the Torah that the Lord said to the stone in Jerusalem: You are My nearest throne" (Rayyah, n.d.) Another Ka'ab narration that Mahmud Abu Rayyah criticized was when the Ka'ab said: "I do not know anyone who has never read the Torah, but knows its contents better, except Abu Hurairah" (Al-Dzahabi, 1998). These narrations further convinced Mahmud Abu Rayyah that Ka'ab Al-Ahbar, as well as Abu Hurairah, was not credible.

2. Promoting rational and historical approaches in the study of hadith and ulumul hadith

Regardless of whether or not Mahmud Abu Rayyah's assessment of Abu Hurairah's credibility is approved, Mahmud Abu Rayyah's assessment

contains a methodology that can develop and enrich the *ulumul hadith*, namely a methodology of criticism with a rational and historical approach. A rational approach is important to obtain valid, objective, and logical test results of hadith and everything related to it. While the historical approach is also important and relevant in the study of hadith and *ulumul hadith*, considering that hadith is a historical document that crosses various specific periods (Wasman, Mesraini, 2023). These two approaches increasingly find their urgency, considering that there are many problems with hadith after the death of the Prophet, such as the rise of the narration of hadith *bil ma'na* and the emergence of false hadiths (Amelia Damayanti, 2023). Therefore, a rational and historical approach is important to maintain the authenticity of the hadith. This rational approach and historical approach can be seen in the argument built by Mahmud Abu Rayyah when criticizing Abu Hurairah's credibility. The historical approach, for example, can be seen when Mahmud Abu Rayyah began his criticism of Abu Hurairah by questioning the different names of Abu Hurairah. His name, Mahmud Abu Rayyah wrote, was unknown in the pre-Islamic period and in the Islamic period.

Al-Nawawi said, as quoted by Mahmud Abu Rayyah, that the name Abdurrahman bin Sakhr for Abu Hurairah is one of the opinions of thirty opinions. Al-Hafizh al-Maghrib ibn Abdil Bar, as quoted by Mahmud Abu Rayyah, said that there are many differences regarding the name of Abu Hurairah, so that it is no longer known which name is authentic and can be held. This then makes it seem as if Abu Hurairah does not have a real name and can only be called by his *kunyah*, namely Abu Hurairah. In addition to the difference in name, Abu Hurairah is also not clearly known about his origin and history before converting to Islam (Rayyah, n.d.).

After explaining the name Abu Hurairah, Mahmud Abu Rayyah said that Abu Hurairah converted to Islam when he joined the Prophet who at that time was campaigning against Khaibar in 7 AH (Rayyah, n.d.).

As for the rational approach, for example, it can be seen when Mahmud Abu Rayyah criticized Abu Hurairah because he talked about many hadiths, while Abu Hurairah's time with the Prophet was relatively short. Mahmud Abu Rayyah asked a question and at the same time showed his doubts about Abu Hurairah, how could Abu Hurairah hear

so many words from and about the Prophet Muhammad in such a short time (Rayyah, n.d.), namely about 3 years, between the 9th – 11th Hijri (Rahman. A, 2023). For comparison, Abu Hurairah narrated 5.374 hadiths, Abdullah bin Umar narrated 2.630 hadiths, Anas bin Malik narrated 2.286 hadiths, and 'Aisha, who was the wife of the Prophet, only narrated 2.210 hadiths (Khan. M, 2021). Mahmud Abu Rayyah also quoted Ibn Hazm as saying that *Musnad Baqi' ibn Makhlad* contains 5.374 hadiths narrated by Abu Hurairah, and al-Bukhari has included 446 of them in his *Shahih* (Rayyah, n.d.). This means that many of the hadiths narrated by Abu Hurairah did not pass the selection of the *shahih* version of al-Bukhari's hadith.

To strengthen his argument and corner Abu Hurairah, Mahmud Abu Rayyah quoted Ibn Asakir from the hadith of Saib ibn Yazid, that Umar once threatened Abu Hurairah by saying: "Do not narrate from the Messenger of Allah, otherwise I will return you to the Land of Daws" (Rayyah, n.d.)

In addition, Mahmud Abu Rayyah also said that Abu Hurairah committed *tadlis*. Abu Hurairah, in some hadiths, did not hear it directly from the Prophet. However, Abu Hurairah claimed to have received from the Prophet. In addition,

Abu Hurairah heard a lot from the Ka'ab and from the Prophet, but he did not distinguish between the narration taken from the Ka'ab and the narration taken from the Prophet (Rayyah, n.d.).

Still related to Abu Hurairah, Mahmud Abu Rayyah quoted a narration from Abu Hurairah who said: "I have memorized two *wi'a'an* (meaning: two kinds of hadiths) from the Prophet, the contents of one of which I have explained. If I have to expose the contents of the others, then people will cut my throat." Mahmud Abu Rayyah argued that how could the Prophet give special knowledge to Abu Hurairah, considering that Abu Hurairah was a friend who was no more important than others, for example from *al-sabiqun al-awwalun* (Rayyah, n.d.). In this argument, once again Mahmud Abu Rayyah uses a rational approach.

The methodology of criticism with a rational approach was also used by Mahmud Abu Rayyah when he shook the establishment of the theory of '*adalah*' of all *shahabat*. The theory of the '*adalah*' of all *shahabat* says that all the *shahabat* are '*adil*' and *dhabith* people, so that the consequence is that they are obliged to accept all the information or news conveyed by the *shahabat* (Al-'Asqalani, 1985).

In rejecting this theory, Mahmud Abu Rayyah argued that if all the *shahabat* were '*adil*', it would be as if there should be no criticism of any of them, even if it is accompanied by evidence and scientifically expressed. It is as if they have lost their humanity such as forgetfulness, mistakes, and shortcomings. This is illogical and irrational in Mahmud Abu Rayyah's view (Rayyah, n.d.). In addition, Mahmud Abu Rayyah also said that the theory of '*adalah*' of all *shahabat* is a slander or reproach of the enemies of Islam as well as describing the short-mindedness of thinking (Al-Dzahabi, 1985).

Then when questioning the status of the hadith *ahad*, Mahmud Abu Rayyah also used a rational approach. According to Mahmud Abu Rayyah, the hadith *ahad* is rejected on the grounds of the opinion of the majority, that it does not give knowledge with certainty, even though it is issued by al-Bukhari and Muslims, and even if it is accepted by the *ummah* based on the presumption of truth (*zhan*), it is not absolutely true (Rayyah, n.d.).

3. Campaigning for the importance of testing the validity of hadith through two stages; criticism of *sanad* and criticism of *matan*

In his book *Adhwa'*, Mahmud Abu Rayyah also criticized hadith scholars who only attach importance to the criticism of *sanad* and lack or even forget to criticize *matan*. Mahmud Abu Rayyah said that hadith experts do not pay attention to the mistakes of *matan*. They are of the opinion that if it is *shahih sanad*, then *shahih* is also his *matan*. This kind of conclusion was rejected by Mahmud Abu Rayyah. According to him, the *shahih* of *sanad* does not necessarily guarantee the *shahih* of the *matan*. It may be that a hadith is declared not *shahih*, because there is an error or irregularity in its *matan*, even if the *sanad* is *shahih* (Rayyah, n.d.). Mahmud Abu Rayyah's thinking further strengthens the theory of *ulumul hadith*, especially the theory of hadith criticism.

CONCLUSION

Mahmud Abu Rayyah with his book *Adhwa' 'ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah* is a controversial hadith researcher. Most of the opinions of Mahmud Abu Rayyah contained in his book are contrary to the opinions of the majority of hadith scholars. For example, his rejection of the theory of '*adalah*' of all *shahabat*, his sharp criticisms of Abu Hurairah's credibility as a *shahabat* and

narrator of hadith, and his rejection of the hadith *ahad* because it only benefits the *zhan*. Presumably, his opinions that came out of the majority opinion are what caused some scholars to classify him as a group of Modern *Inkar al-Sunnah*. However, apart from the pros and cons of the hadith scholars against Mahmud Abu Rayyah's thoughts, his thoughts contained in the book *Adhwa' ala al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah* are stored or implied by Mahmud Abu Rayyah's positive contribution to the development of the ulumul hadith. These contributions include: cleaning hadith and ulumul hadith from *israiliyyat*, promoting a rational approach and a historical approach in the study of hadith and ulumul hadith, and campaigning for the test of the authenticity or validity of hadith through two stages, namely *sanad* criticism and *matan* criticism.

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