

The Credibility of Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani in Ḥadīth Studies: A Study of his Sanad and Ḥadīth Books

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Abstract. Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani is a great Ulama (Muslim scholar) from the archipelago who managed to go worldwide because of his knowledge. As an Ulama, he dedicated his life to the odyssey of learning and taught it to others. Almost all fields of religious knowledge were mastered by him, including the science of ḥadīth. Although he is well-known as a *mufassir*, his expertise in the field of ḥadīth is very visible when viewed in detail in his works, especially in the books of *Tanqih al-Qawl* and *Nashaib al-'Ibad*. In this study, the writer tries to describe and analyse his credibility in the field of ḥadīth through those two books and his other works. Through qualitative steps accompanied by a historical approach involving documents written by Sheikh Nawawi and other archives, this research has managed to see the special attention given by the Ulama who took part in the Middle East in the field of ḥadīth. The first evidence is the number of ḥadīth narrations that he included in the books he wrote. Second, he studied a lot of dirāyah ḥadīth books, as can be seen in the book *al-'Iqd al-Farid min Jawābir al-Asānid* by Sheikh Yāsīn al-Fādānī. Third, he had books containing the narration of ḥadīth, namely *Tanqih al-Qawl* and *Nashaib al-'Ibad*.

Keywords: *Nawawi al-Bantani; ḥadīth expert; Tanqih al-Qawl; Nashaib al-'Ibad.*

Introduction

Realizing its lag behind the Western world, Islam began its revival in the early 16th century AD. Islamic studies, which had stopped, or what is commonly known as late thinking, were fostered by world Islamic figures such as Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab, Syah Waliyullah, Jamluddin al-Afghani, Syed Amar Ali, Syaikh Jawhari Tanthawi, Mohammed Arkoun, Hasan Hanafi, Fazlur Rahman, Muhammad' Abduh, Rasyid Ridha, and other Islamic reformers. This was also followed by Indonesian ulama, who increasingly intensively studied and conveyed religious knowledge. Among these scholars are Sheikh Nuruddin ar-Raniri, Sheikh Yusuf al-Maqassari, Sheikh' Abdurrauf as-Singkili, Sheikh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani, and Sheikh Sholih Darat.

Their role, the native Indonesian ulama, is urgent in disseminating religious knowledge. It doesn't stop there; apart from teaching, they also choose writing to convey knowledge. For example, Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani, a scholar from Banten, has many written works in various fields of religious knowledge. *Tafsir al-Munir* or *Marah Labid*, *Nihayah aẓ-Zayn*, *Nashaib al-'Ibad*, *Fath al-Majid*, *at-Tausyih*, *Bahjah al-Wasail*, and dozens of other books he wrote carefully as a dedication to the knowledge he had.

Indeed, many Muslim figures and scholars have appreciated him after studying his works. However, most of them tend to research and highlight the works and knowledge of Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani in Tafsir, Fiqh, and Sufism. Very few of them look at his expertise in the field of ḥadīth. Even though the Indonesian ulama are famous for their titles *Ulama' Hijaẓ*, He is very knowledgeable

about *ḥādīth* and its sciences. His works illustrate this, as they do not leave *ḥādīth* as explanatory reference material in explaining a theme or topic.

The most significant possibility that resulted in the lack of attention to his credibility in the field of *ḥādīth* is that there are still very few scholars of *ḥādīth* in the archipelago compared to studies of other sciences, such as tafsir and fiqh. Besides that, Muslim scholars may know him better as an expert on tafsir (*mufasssir*). As is well known, he authored a monumental work in the field of tafsir that has gained international recognition, namely the Tafsir Marāḥ Labīd. Another possible reason why few scholars have discussed the credibility of Shaykh Nawawī al-Bantani in the field of *ḥādīth* is that his works on *ḥādīth* do not specifically focus on *muṣṭalah al-ḥādīth* (the science of *ḥādīth* terminology). Take, for example, the books *Tanqīḥ al-Qawl and Naṣā'ih al-'Ibād*. Both are *ḥādīth*-based works that serve as commentaries (*sharḥ*) on pre-existing texts. Nevertheless, his expertise in both *dirāyah* and *riwāyah* cannot be doubted. Through these two works, he demonstrates his deep understanding of the origins of *ḥādīth*, their chains of transmission (*sanad*), as well as his skill in explaining the *ḥādīth* by the principles established by the leading scholars of *ḥādīth* methodology. Therefore, in this article, the author wants to reveal the depth of Shaykh Nawawī al-Bantani's knowledge in the field of *ḥādīth* by using a historical approach that uses primary sources from the books he wrote, especially the books *Tanqīḥ al-Qawl and Naṣā'ih al-'Ibād*. It is hoped that by choosing the type of research library research and writing it descriptively and qualitatively, this article will be able to present and describe Sheikh Nawawī al-Bantani's expertise in the *ḥādīth* studies.

Discussion

Biography of Shaykh Nawawī al-Bantani

Born in Tanara Serang Banten in 1230 H/ 1813 AD, Syaikh Nawawī whose full name is Abū 'Abdullah al-Mu'tī Muḥammad Nawawī bin 'Umar bin 'Arabī al-Bantani al-Jāwī is the son of the couple KH. 'Umar bin 'Arabī and Nyai Zubaidah.¹² In terms of lineage, Shaykh Nawawī is a Sayyid (descendant of the Prophet Muhammad) from his father's line. It is mentioned in detail by Imam Nawawī from 'Umar – 'Arabī - Jamad - Janta - Mas bugel – Masqun – Masnun – Maswi – Kyai Tājul Arusy Tanara – Maulana Hasanuddin Banten – Syarif Hidāyatullah Sunan Gunung Jati – Raja Umdatuddin Syarif 'Abdullah – 'Alī Nūr al-'Alam – Jamāl ad-Dīn Akbar al-Ḥusaynī - Imām Sayyid Aḥmad Syah Jalāl – 'Abdullah Azmatkhan - Amīr 'Abdullah Mālik - Sayyid Alwi Amīl Faqīh – Sayyid Muḥammad Ṣāhib Mīrbaṭ – Sayyid 'Alī Khali' Qasam – Sayyid 'Alī – Sayyid Muḥammad – Imām 'Ubaidillah – Imām Aḥmad al-Muhājir – Imām 'Isā al-Baṣrī – Imām Muḥammad Nāqib – Imām 'Alī 'Uraid – Imām Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq – Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir – Imām 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn – Sayyidinā Ḥusayn – Sayyidinā 'Alī+Sayyidah Fāṭimah – Rasūlullāh.³ Meanwhile, Shaykh Nawawī's mother was from the nobility, namely the descendant of Muhammad Singaraja.⁴

¹ Rithon Iqisani, Kajian Tafsir Mufasssir Indonesia, *Jurnal Potret: Jurnal Penelitian and Pemikiran Islam* 22, No. 1 (2018): 14, <http://dx.doi.org/10.30984/pp.v22i1.757>. Compare to Toni Pransiska, Pendidikan Islam Transformatif Syekh Nawawī al-Bantani: Upaya Mewujudkan Generasi Religius-Saintifik, *Jurnal Ilmiah Didaktika* 18, No. 2 (2018): 178, <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/jid.v18i2.3241>.

²Toni Pransiska, 'Pendidikan Islam Transformatif Syekh Nawawī Al-Bantani: Upaya Mewujudkan Generasi Religius-Saintifik', *Jurnal Ilmiah Didaktika*, 18.2 (2018), h. 172, doi:10.22373/jid.v18i2.3241.

³ Fuad Abdul Jabar, *Mutiara Nusantara: Biografi Syekh Nawawī Al-Bantani* (Mutiara Mukjizat, 2020).

⁴Muhammad Iqbal Fasa. Ahmad Wahyu Hidayat, "'Syekh Nawawī Al-Bantani Dan Pemikirannya Dalam Pengembangan Pendidikan Islam.'" *Khazanah: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Humaniora*, *Khazanah: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Humaniora*, 17, 2 (2019), h. 300 <<https://doi.org/10.18592/khazanah.v17i2.3209>> .

There is no doubt about his fame in the field of religious knowledge; he is the one who took a long journey of studying for approximately 30 years and is known in the land of Hijaz as Sayyid Ulama Hijaz. Before returning to Java, Imam Nawawī received a mandate to teach in Mecca and Medina. He mastered various religious knowledge, such as the Koran and its Tafsir, ḥādīth, Tauhid, Fiqh, Literature, and Arabic, even history. The depth of his knowledge makes him likened to a spring that is the center of knowledge, which then transmits the diversity of knowledge to many students nationally and internationally.

He married Nyai Nasimah, a girl originally from Tanara and Nyai Hamandah. From these two marriages, he was blessed with a son named Abdul Mu'thi and daughters, namely Rokayah, Nafisah Maryam, and Zahrah.⁵ The end of his long life journey was in Makkah al-Mukarramah during the process of writing the sharḥ Minhaj at-Ṭalibīn book by Imam Abū Zakariyya Yaḥya Muḥyi ad-Dīn bin Sharaf an-Nawawī ad-Dimshaqī. He died at the age of 84 and was buried in the Ma'la cemetery close to the grave of Sayyidah Khadījah. Not far from his grave, there is a tomb of Syaikh Ibnu Hajar al-Asqalānī (ḥādīth expert) and Sayyidah Asmā' binti Abū Bakar aṣ-Ṣiddīq.⁶ As a form of respect for Shaykh Nawawī al-Bantani, Javanese people, especially Banten residents, hold his ḥawl every last Friday of the month of Shawwal.⁷

Intellectual Journey

Shaykh Nawawī started his education within his family, especially from his parents. His father, Shaykh' Umar bin' Arabī, was a great ulama in Tanara who also served as a headman and taught him various basic religious knowledge, such as Tauhid, Nahwu, Shorof, Fiqh, and Tafsir.⁸ From here, it is clear that Shaykh' Umar wanted to make his son a scholar. The first of seven children⁹ He is a persistent, diligent, polite, humble, honest, devout, and firm figure.

His perseverance is shown by continuing to study and learn. Apart from his parents, he also studied with Kyai Sahal from Banten and Kyai Yusuf from Purwakarta. At the age of 15, he and his two brothers (Tamim and Ahmad) went to Mecca to implement the fifth pillar of Islam and lived there for 3 years studying. Many of the great scholars of the Grand Mosque who were his teachers include: Syaikh Aḥmad Naḥrawī, Syaikh Aḥmad Zainī Daḥlān, and Syaikh Aḥmad Dimyaṭī. Meanwhile, in Medina, Abū Mu'tī (one of Shaykh Nawawī's nicknames) studied with Syaikh Muḥammad Khaṭīb al-Ḥanbali.¹⁰

After that, he returned to his homeland. However, because conditions in Indonesia were not conducive due to Dutch colonialism, he only lasted three years. After that, he returned to Haramayn to study. There, al-Bantani also studied with leading ulama from his homeland, such as Syaikh Khaṭīb Sambas and Syaikh Abdul Ghani.¹¹ He lives in the Sy'ib' Alī neighborhood, inhabited by many

⁵ Aan Parhani, 'Metode Penafsiran Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Dalam Tafsir Marah Labid', *Tsaqofah Dan Tarikh*, 1 (2013), h. 9.

⁶ Ansor Bahary, 'TAFSIR NUSANTARA: Studi Kritis Terhadap Marah Labid Nawawi Al-Bantani', *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam*, 16.2 (2015), h. 176, doi:10.18860/ua.v16i2.3179.

⁷ Masnida, 'Karakteristik Dan Manhaj Tafsir Marah Labid Karya Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Masnida Institut Agama Islam Darussalam (IAIDA) Blokagung', *Jurnal Darussalam: Jurnal Pendidikan, Komunikasi Dan Pemikiran Hukum Islam*, VIII.1 (2016), pp. 1978–4767.

⁸ Mamat S Burhanuddin, Muh. Syamsuddin, and Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy, 'Kajian Kontemporer Terhadap Karya Nawawi Al-Bantani', *DINIKA: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies*, 4.1 (2020), pp. 83–102, doi:10.22515/dinika.v4i1.2061.

⁹ Diantara saudara-saudara Syekh Nawawi adalah Ahmad Syihabuddin, Tamim, Sa'id, Sariyah Abdullah, Tsaqillah, *Sejarah Pujangga Islam Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani* (CV Utama, 1997).

¹⁰ Azyumardi Azra, *Ensiklopedi Islam* (Ichtiar Baru, 2005). h. 198

¹¹ Fuad Abdul Jabar, *Mutiara Nusantara: Biografi Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani.....*h.16.

Indonesian ulama, about 500 meters from the al-Ḥaram Mosque.¹² With great perseverance, he studied there for 30 years, and finally, he was trusted as one of the teachers in Mecca and Medina and was awarded the title of Imam al-Ḥaramayn. Unsurprisingly, many Islamic students and scholars from academic circles give the title of The Great Scholar (true master) to al-Bantanī.¹³ As a teacher, al-Bantanī was very famous for the depth of his knowledge, the breadth of his explanations, his communication skills, and even his sympathy for other people. Every day, he gave three lectures between 07.30 and 12.00 for his students. It is also recorded that he met several times with Shaykh Muḥammad' Abduh when he was invited to give a lecture at al-Azhar University in Cairo.¹⁴

It is recorded that several great Indonesian scholars were his students, including Shaykh Kholīl Bangkalan Madura, Hadratussyaikh Hāsīm Asy'ari Tebuireng Jombang, KH. Asy'ari Bawean, East Java, is also his son-in-law by marrying his daughter Maryam, KH. Najihun Gunung Mauk Tangerang was married to al-Bantanī's granddaughter, Salmah bin Ruqayyah, KH. Asnawi Caringin Banten, KH. Ilyas Kragilan Banten, KH. Abdul Gaffar Tirtayasa Banten, KH. Tubagus Ahmad Bakri Sempur Purwakarta and KH. Dawud Perak from Malaysia¹⁵, KH. Raden Asnawi and KH. Arsyad Thawil Banten.¹⁶

Even though as a faqīh and mufti in the Hijaz, al-Bantani not only mastered one field of knowledge (fiqh) but also various fields of religious knowledge. Such as Tauhid, Tafsir, ḥādīth, Fiqh, Language Literature, Sufism and even History. His scientific productivity and dedication are very high. Some researchers say there are 99 works, and some say there are 115 works that he wrote in Arabic.¹⁷ Among his works are:

In the Field of *Tawhid*:

- a. *Fath al-Majid*
- b. *Nūr az-Zalām*
- c. *Qāmi' at-Tughyān*
- d. *Tijān ad-Dari*
- e. *Mirqāt as-Su'ndi Taṣḍiq*
- f. *Al'Aqd aṣ-Ṣamīn*
- g. *Al-Futūḥāt al-Maandīyyah*
- h. *Qaṭr al-Ghayṣ*
- i. *An-Nahj al-Jayyidah*
- j. *Ḥiyāt aṣ-Ṣibyān*
- k. *Miṣbāḥ az-Zulm*
- l. *Dhariyyah al-Yaqīn*

¹² Pransiska, 'Pendidikan Islam Transformatif Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani: Upaya Mewujudkan Generasi Religius-Saintifik'. h 179

¹³ Khaeroni, 'Pemikiran Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Tentang Pendidikan Dalam Kitab Tafsir Marah Labid', *Geneologi Pai Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 8.1 (2021), pp. 232–45 <<http://jurnal.uinbanten.ac.id/index.php/geneologi/>>. h.233.

¹⁴ Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in The Latter Part of the 19th Century* (Bill, 1931). h.269.

¹⁵ Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren* (LP3ES, 2011).h.46.

¹⁶ Deri Yatus Salihin, 'Ide-Ide Pemikiran Pendidikan Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Pendidikan Di Era Modern', *Al-Iktibar: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 5.2 (2018), pp. 708–24.h.712.

¹⁷ Compare to Deri Yatus Salihin, Ide-ide Pemikiran Pendidikan Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani and Relevansinya terhadap Pendidikan di Era Modern, ... h. 712, Toni Pransiska, Pendidikan Islam Transformatif Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani: Upaya Mewujudkan Generasi Religius-Saintifik, ... h. 180, Fuad Abdul Jabar, *Mutiara Nusantara: Biografi Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani*, ... h. 77-78, Hafidhuddin and Saifuddin Zuhri al-Qudsy, Nawawi al-Bantani, Ashhab al-Jawiiyyin di Biandg Hadis, Rihlah, Geneologi Intelektual and Tradisi Sanad Hadis, *al-Izzah: Jurnal Hasil-basil Penelitian* 16, No. 1 (2021): 18.

In the Field of *Tafsir*:

Tafsir Munir or *Marāb Labid*.¹⁸

In the Field of *Fiqh*:

- a. *Kashfah as-Sajā*
- b. *At-Tausyib*
- c. *Sulām al-Munājab*
- d. *Nihāyah az-Zain*
- e. *Fath al-Mujib*
- f. *aṣ-Ṣimar al-Yani'ab*

In the field of *Sufism* and *Morals*:

- a. *Uqūd al-Lajjāyn*
- b. *Murāq al-'Ubūdiyyah*
- c. *Bahjah al-Wasāil*
- d. *Dharīyyah al-Yaqīn*

In the Field of *History*:

- a. *Targhib al-Mustaqim*
- b. *Madārij as-Su'ūd*
- c. *Fath ash-Ṣamad*
- d. *Ad-Durar al-Bahīyyah*

In the Field of *Language Literature*:

- a. *Fath al-Ghāfir*
- b. *Kashf al-Marūṭīyyah*
- c. *Lubāb al-Bayān*
- d. *Al-Fuṣūṣ al-Yaqūṭīyyah*

In the Field of *ḥādīth*:

Shaikh Nawawī al-Bantanī is one of the Indonesian scholars who is highly productive in producing written works. Apart from his monumental work, *Tafsir al-Munir*, he also has many works in various religious disciplines, including in the field of *ḥādīth*. The recorded books *Tanqīh al-Qawl* and *Naṣāih al-'Ibād* are proof of his credibility in understanding and conveying the *ḥādīth* of the Prophet Muhammad.

Tanqīh al-Qawl

The book with the full name *Tanqīh al-Qawl al-Ḥaṣīṣ* is a *sharḥ* or explanation of the book *Lubāb al-Ḥadīth* compiled by Shaikh Jalāl ad-Din bin Abī Bakr as-Suyūṭī. In this book, Imam as-Suyūṭī wrote 40 chapters, and in each chapter, he included 10 *ḥādīth*s of the Prophet, so the total number of *ḥādīth*s in the book *Lubāb al-Ḥadīth* is 400 *ḥādīth*s. This book, which is included in the category of *arba'in ḥādīth* books, fully explains *faḍāil al-a'māl*. However, Imam as-Suyūṭī only wrote the matn without including the *ḥādīth sanad* that he presented. Muslim students widely study this book. Still, quite a few of them complain because of the unclear quality of the *ḥādīth* included by

¹⁸ This interpretation is often paralleled with *Tafsir al-Jalālayn*, even some groups consider it better. See M. Th. Moutsma, Aj. Wensich, *First Encyclopedia of Islam 1913-1936* (E.J Brill, 1987).h.667.

Imam as-Suyūfī, so that they, especially students from Java, ask Shaikh al-Bantanī to explain the book and him. He agreed by writing a book, *Tanqīh al-Qawl al-Ḥašīš*.

The characteristics of *Tanqīh al-Qawl al-Ḥašīš* book are:

- a. Muqaddimah from Shaykh al-Bantanī.
- b. Explains the *Lubāb al-Ḥadīth* book in an orderly manner from the beginning to the end of the chapter.
- c. Write the chapter title for each discussion.
- d. Provide a brief explanation of the chapter title using verses from al-Qur'an, *ḥadīths* of the Prophet, sayings of ulama, or linguistic explanations.
- e. Write down the *ḥadīths* one by one in the book *Lubāb al-Ḥadīth*.
- f. Explain the *ḥadīth* with:
 - 1) Lughawī's explanation.
 - 2) Mention the name of the first narrator (friends) who narrated the *ḥadīth*.
 - 3) Mentioning *mukbarrij ḥadīth*.
 - 4) Mentions the quality of *ḥadīth*.
 - 5) Mention *ḥadīth* references.
 - 6) Mention history or other *ḥadīth* editorials related to the *ḥadīth*.
 - 7) Sometimes there is an explanation in the form of poetry.
 - 8) Sometimes there is an explanation of the name of *ṣaḥābah* or *tābi'in* in the *ḥadīth*.

Naṣāiḥ al-'Ibād

A book by Shaykh Nawawī al-Bantanī in the field of *ḥadīth*. He compiled the book to explain the advice contained in the book *al-Munabbihāt 'alā al-Isti'dād li Yawm al-Mi'ād* karya Syaikh al-'Allāmah al-Ḥāfiẓ Syihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad bin 'Alī bin Muḥammad bin Aḥmad asy-Syāfi'ī (Ibnu Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī). The book by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī contains 214 *maqālah*, consisting of 45 *ḥabārah* (*sayings of the Prophet*) and the rest are *athar* (*sayings of the ṣaḥābah* and *tābi'in*).¹⁹ The book is composed of several chapters based on the number of points in the *maw'izah* or *maqālah*, such as the first chapter with the chapter title *aṣ-Ṣanā'iy*, which means that the Prophet's advice is included in the chapter, *ṣaḥābah* or *tābi'in*, which contains two essential things. And so on *ath-thulāṣi*, *ar-rubā'i*, *al-ḥumāsī*, *as-sudāsī*, *as-sibā'i*, *ath-thamānī*, *at-tisā'i* and *al-'asyāri*.

The characteristics of the book *Naṣāiḥ al-'Ibād* are:

- a. Muqaddimah from Syaikh al-Bantanī.
- b. Write down the title of the chapter and explain the amount of advice contained in it.
- c. Number each piece of advice by mentioning it "*al-maqālah al-ūlā*, *al-maqālah ath-thāniyah* and etc.
- d. Write down every *maqālah* in the book *Munabbihāt 'alā al-Isti'dād li Yawm al-Mi'ād* in order.
- e. Explain each *maqālah* by:
 - 1) Lughawī's explanation.
 - 2) Mention other histories or editorials of *ḥadīths* related to the *maqālah*.
 - 3) Sometimes there is an explanation in the form of poetry.

Sometimes there is an explanation of the name of *ṣaḥābah* or *tābi'in* in the *maqālah*.

¹⁹ Muḥammad bin 'Umar an-Nawawī al-Bantani, *Naṣāiḥ Al-'Ibād* (Jakarta: Tuross Pustaka, 2020). h.2

The Credibility of Shaykh Nawawī al-Bantani in the Field of ḥādīth

Shaykh Nawawī al-Bantani was a great cleric from Tanara, Serang Banten, who was successful in the land of Ḥijāz. He was a mu'allim who had many works in various fields of religious knowledge. His fame in the field of exegesis and jurisprudence is beyond doubt. His work entitled Tafsir al-Munir, also commonly called Tafsir Marāḥ Labīd, has received a lot of praise from academic circles both in the archipelago itself and in the Middle East region. Meanwhile, in the field of jurisprudence, his expertise can be seen from the many books he wrote, such as *Kāshif al-Sajā*, *At-Taushīh*, *Sulām al-Munājah*, *Nihāyah az-Zayn*, and *Fath al-Mujīb*, as well as his appointment as a *mufti*.

However, his expertise in other fields, including ḥādīth, cannot be denied. Some evidence shows that he is a scholar with capabilities in the field of ḥādīth. First, he was recognized as a *mufassir* with his work *Tafsir al-Munir*. One of the requirements to become a *mufassir* is to know the Prophet's ḥādīth.²⁰ So it is impossible if a *mufassir* does not know ḥādīth and its sciences. More specifically, in his interpretation, he uses sources *bi al-ra'y* to explain the meaning of the verse and also uses sources *al-ma'thūr*.²¹

Like his description when explaining the meaning of *ash-shajarah* in Surah al-Baqarah verse 35:

(وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ) وَيَ أَنْ أَبَابُكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقِ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ سَأَلَ رَسُولَ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنِ الشَّجَرَةِ فَقَالَ هِيَ الشَّجَرَةُ الْمُبَارَكَةُ السُّنْبُلَةُ وَعَنْ مُجَاهِدٍ وَقَتَادَةَ وَهِيَ التِّينُ وَعَنْ يَزِيدَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللهِ هِيَ الْأُنْجُ.²²

(and do not approach this tree) It is narrated that Abu Bakr as-Ṣiddiq asked Rasulullah about the meaning of *ash-shajarah*. Then the Prophet answered that the *ash-shajarah* was a blessed tree with a stem. Meanwhile, Mujābid and Qatādah say that it is a *Tin* tree, and according to Yazīd bin' Abdullah, it is a kind of orange tree.

Second, he has a work that discusses explicitly the ḥādīth of the Prophet, namely the book *Naṣāih al-Ibād* and *Tanqīh al-Qawl*. At first glance, both are just books of *sharḥ* or explanations of the ulama' salaf's books (*Naṣāih al-Ibād* book is *syarḥ* of *al-Munabbihāt 'alā al-Istī'dād li Yawm al-Mī'ād* book by Syaikh al-'Allāmah al-Ḥāfiẓ Syihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad bin 'Alī bin Muḥammad bin Aḥmad ash-Shāfi'ī (Ibnu Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī) and *Tanqīh al-Qawl* book is *sharḥ* or explanation of the book *Lubāb al-Ḥadīth* by Syekh Jalāl ad-Din bin Abī Bakr as-Suyūṭī) which only contains ḥādīth narrations. However, there is no need to rush to say that Shaykh Nawawī al-Bantani only mastered ḥādīth in the science of *riwāyah* without knowing the science of *dirāyah*.

In the two ḥādīth books (*Naṣāih al-Ibād* and *Tanqīh al-Qawl*), the breadth of his knowledge of ḥādīth *dirāyah* can be seen. As in the *Muqaddimah* of the book *Naṣāih al-Ibād*, he was able to distinguish between *maqālah* in the form of ḥādīth or *khabar* with *athār*. He said there are 214 *maqālah* in the book, 45 of which are *khabar* and the rest are *athār*. Al-Bantani explained that *khabar* is the sayings of the Prophet, while *athār* are the words of the *ṣaḥābah* and *tabi'in*. In each chapter (there are nine chapters in the book *Naṣāih al-Ibād*), Shaikh Nawawī always specified the amount of *khabar* and *athār*.

²⁰ Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabaḥiṣ Fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'ān* (Mansyūrāt al-'Aṣr al-Ḥadīṣ, 1990).h.332

²¹ It is an interpretation that uses the sources of narration as a source of interpretation such as interpretation of verses with verses, Prophetic traditions, the words of companions and great *tabi'in*.

²² Muḥammad Nawawī al-Jāwī, *Marāḥ Labīd*, (t.tp: al-Ḥaramayn, 2001). juz 1, h.10.

Shaikh Nawawī paid attention to the connection of the sanad he received from his teacher. Shaykh Nawawī knows the condition of the *sanad* of the above *ḥadīth* in terms of connection and how the *ḥadīth* is transmitted. It is not uncommon for him to mention the identities of the *ḥadīth* transmitters or *athbār*, especially the first narrators *ṭabaqah* (*ṣaḥābah*) when presenting *maqālah*.

His credibility in the science of *riwāyah*, there's no need to doubt it anymore. He was a diligent seeker of knowledge and studied many books by Salaf scholars, including the collections of the Prophet's *ḥadīth*, from his teachers. In the *al-'Iqd al-Farīd min Jawāhir al-Asānīd* book by Syaikh Yāsīn al-Fādānī, there are around 209 *sanads* of the book, 106 of which are related or connected to Syaikh Nawawī al-Bantanī. More specifically, in the book, there are 58 sanad books consisting of the sanad books of the *ḥadīth* collection, *sīrah*, *maghāzī*, *shamāil*, 'ilm al-*ḥadīth*, *ṭabaqah*, and *tārikh*. In the field of *ḥadīth* narration, he has the legal authority to narrate the Prophet's *ḥadīth* in the book *al-Jāmi' aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ li al-Imām al-Bukhārī*, *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ li al-Imām Muslim*, *Jāmi' as-Sunan li al-Ḥāfiẓ at-Tirmidzī*, *as-Sunan aṣ-Ṣugra li an-Nasāī*, *Muwatta' al-Imām Mālik*, *Musnad ash-Shāfi'ī*, *Musnad Aḥmad*, *Musnad ad-Dārimī*, *Mukhtaṣar Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī li Ibn Abī Jamrah*, *al-Jāmi' aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jalāl as-Suyūṭī*, *Sbarḥ al-Jāmi' aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ li al-Munāwī*, *Sbarḥ al-Arba'in an-Nawawīyyah li Ibn Hajar al-Makki*, *Sbarḥ Riyāḍ aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn wa al-Adhkār li Ibn 'Alān*, *Nayl al-Antār li aṣ-Ṣan'anī*, *ash-Shifā li al-Qāḍī 'Iyād*, *ash-Shamāil li at-Tirmidhī*, *Sīrah Ibn Ishāq*.

Beside studying scientific books *riwāyah al-ḥadīṣ* He also studied books related to *dirāyah al-ḥadīṣ* science. This is proven by the many sanad in *muṣṭalah al-ḥadīṣ* book he has. These *sanads* are *sanad* of *at-Taqrīb wa at-Taysīr li al-Imām an-Nawawī*, *al-Alfiyyah al-Ḥadīthiyyah wa Sharḥuhā li aṣ-Zayn al-'Irāqī*, *Nukhbah al-Fikr wa Sharḥuhā li al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Hajar*, *al-Alfiyyah al-Ḥadīthiyyah li al-Jalāl as-Suyūṭī*, *Tārikh Makkah li al-Azraq*, *ad-Dibāj fi Ṭabaqāt al-Mālikīyyah li Ibn Farḥūn*, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah li Ibn al-Farra'* and *Ṭabaqāt aṣ-Ṣūfiyyah li ash-Sba'rānī* book.²³

Evidence of *Shaykh Nawawī's* expertise in narrating *ḥadīth* is also implied from his presentations in various other religious sciences, such as an explanation of the obligation to read *Surah al-Fātiḥah* when carrying out prayers.

(الرَّابِعُ قِرَاءَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ) أَي حَفْظًا أَوْ تَلْقِينًا أَوْ نَظْرًا فِي الْمُصْحَفِ أَوْ نَحْوِ ذَلِكَ وَلَوْ بِوَسِطَةِ سِرَاجٍ لِمَنْ فِي ظُلْمَةٍ وَتَجِبُ فِي كُلِّ رَكْعَةٍ سِوَاءِ الصَّلَاةِ السَّرِيَّةِ أَوْ الْجَهْرِيَّةِ وَسِوَاءِ الْإِمَامِ وَالْمَنْفَرْدِ لِحَبْرِ الصَّحِيحِينَ لَا صَلَاةَ لِمَنْ لَا يَقْرَأُ بِفَاتِحَةِ الْكِتَابِ قَالَ الْبَغَوِيُّ فِي الْمَصَابِيحِ وَعَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ قَالَ مَنْ صَلَّى صَلَاةً لَمْ يَقْرَأْ فِيهَا بِأَمِّ الْقُرْآنِ فَهِيَ خِدَاجٌ ثَلَاثًا.²⁴

(The fourth pillar is reading Surah al-Fātiḥah) which means memorizing, talaqqi, looking at the muṣḥaf, or the like, and even using the help of a lamp for people in dark conditions. The obligation to read surah al-Fātiḥah is carried out in every rak'ah, both sirriyyah prayers (Zubur and 'Aṣar) and jabriyyah prayers (magrib, 'Isyā' and Ṣubuh), whether when you are an imam or praying alone because there are two ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīths: it is not valid to pray for people who do not read surah al-Fātiḥah, said al-Bagawī in the book al-Maṣābiḥ and from Abi Hurayrah from the Prophet said three times: people who perform prayers without reading surah al-Fātiḥah will be rejected.

²³ Muḥammad Yāsīn bin Muḥammad 'Īsā al-Fādānī al-Makkī, *Al-'Iqd Al-Farīd Min Jawāhir Al-Asānīd*, (Surabaya: Dār as-Saqāf, T.t). juz 2.h.148.

²⁴ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Bantanī, *Kāshifab As-Sajā* (Indonesia: Ḥaramayn, T.t).h.53-54.

Continuing with his explanation in the book *Qūt al-Ḥabīb al-Gharīb* about basmalah, which is part of Surah *al-Fātiḥah*.

(وبسم الله الرحمن الرحيم آيةٌ منها كاملةٌ) خِلافاً لِمَنْ قالَ أَنها لَيْسَتْ بِعِضِ آيةِ لِمَا رُوِيَ بِإِبنِ خِزْمَةَ عَن أُم سلمةَ : أَن النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَدَّ بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ آيةً.²⁵

(and the sentence Bismillāh ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm is part of the complete verse of Surah al-Fātiḥah) This is a difference for people who say that Bismillāh ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm is not part of Bismillāh ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm. Narrated Ibn Khuzaymah from Umm Salamah: That the Prophet counted Bismillāh ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm to be part of surah al-Fātiḥah.

He also took similar steps in explaining the position of the hands when standing during prayer.

(وَوَضَعَهُمَا) أَي الكَفَّيْنِ (تَحْتَ صَدْرِهِ أَخْذاً بِيَمِينِهِ يَسَارَةً) أَي قَابِضاً كَوْعَ يَسَارِهِدِ بِكَفِّهِ الْيُمْنَى , وَيَجْعَلُهُمَا تَحْتَ صَدْرِهِ وَفَوْقَ سِرْتِهِ مَائِلَتَيْنِ إِلَى جِهَةِ يَسَارِهِ قَلِيلاً , لَخَبَرِ مُسْلِمٍ عَن وَائِلٍ : أَنَّهُ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَفَعَ يَدَيْهِ حِينَ دَخَلَ فِي الصَّلَاةِ ثُمَّ وَضَعَ يَدَهُ الْيُمْنَى عَلَى الْيُسْرَى.²⁶

(and puts both hands) means both palms (under his chest, namely the right hand holding his left hand), the right palm keeping the left wrist. And put them both under his chest and above his navel and tilt slightly to the left, because there is a Muslim ḥādīth from Wā'il: that the Prophet raised both his hands when starting to pray, and then he placed his right hand on top of his left hand.

Still in the field of *fiqh*, he also uses ḥādīth as a strengthening basis to explain the *kayfiyah* of worship in the *Sullam al-Munājah* book:

(السَّبْعُ الْإِعْتِدَالُ) وَلَوْ فِي نَفْلِ (بِأَنَّ يَنْتَصِبَ قَائِماً) أَوْ قَاعِداً كَمَا كَانَ قَبْلَ رُكُوعِهِ لِقَوْلِهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَإِذَا رَفَعْتَ رَأْسَكَ مِنَ الرُّكُوعِ فَأَقِّمِ صَلْبَكَ حَتَّى تَرْجِعَ الْعِظَامَ مِنْ مَفْصَلِهَا.²⁷

(The seventh pillar is I'tidal) even in sunnah prayers (i.e., standing up straight) or sitting as before bowing. Because of the words of the Prophet: and when you lift your head from bowing, straighten your ribs until your bones return to their original place.

In *Nūr az-Zalām* book, He did not leave any ḥādīth as a reference to explain the beliefs intended for the lay people. For example, when he explained about the Prophet Muhammad as the Prophet and bearer of the final law for mankind:

أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ هُوَ خَاتَمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ فَلَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدَهُ أَبَداً وَشَرِيعَتُهُ بَاقِيَةٌ إِلَى قِيَامِ السَّاعَةِ. نَاسِحَةٌ لِشَرِيعَةٍ غَيْرِهِ وَلَا يَنْسَخُهَا شَرِيعَةٌ غَيْرِهِ لِقَوْلِهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَنْ تَزَالَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةُ قَائِمَةٌ عَلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ أَي الدِّينِ الْحَقِّ لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَالَفَهُمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ أَي السَّاعَةِ.²⁸

²⁵ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Bantānī, *Qūt Al-Ḥabīb Al-Gharīb* (Indonesia: Haramayn, 2005).h.56

²⁶ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Bantānī, *Nihāyah Aṣ-Ṣayn* (Jakarta: Dār al-Kutub al-Islamiyah, 2008).h.70

²⁷ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Bantānī, *Sullam Al-Munājah* (Semarang: Toha Putera).h.17

²⁸ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Bantānī, *Nūr Az-Zalām* (Semarang: Maktabah al-'Alawiyah).h.17

The Prophet Muhammad is the seal of the Prophets and Messengers. So that there will be no prophet after the Prophet Muhammad forever. His Shari'a will last forever until the Day of Judgment and will replace other Shari'ahs, and other Shari'ahs cannot replace the Prophet Muhammad's Shari'a. The Prophet said: This Ummah will not disappear until Allah's decree comes, meaning this is the true religion which will not harm people after the Shari'ah until Allah's decree or the Day of Judgment arrives.

He also included the Prophet's narrations in explaining morals and taṣawwuf. As in his explanation of the nature of generosity in the *Bahjah al-Wasāil* book:

(والسخاء) قَالَ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ السَّخِيُّ قَرِيبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَبَعِيدٌ مِنْ عَذَابِهِ وَقَرِيبٌ مِنِّي وَالسَّخِيُّ لَا يَدْخُلُ النَّارَ.²⁹

(And the nature of generosity) The Prophet said: A generous person is close to Allah, far from his torment, and close to me (the Prophet). Generous people do not go to hell.

The Prophet's ḥadīth also colored his comments on the *Matan Bidāyah al-Hidāyah* book by *Hujjah al-Islām Abī Ḥamid al-Ghazālī*. One of Imam al-Ghazālī's advices in the book is that the first thing we should do in our hearts and verbally is to remember Allah, to which the Prophet's ḥadīth was later added as an explanation by *Syaikh al-Bantani*.

(وَلْيَكُنْ أَوَّلُ مَا يَجْرِي عَلَى قَلْبِكَ وَلِسَانِكَ ذِكْرُ اللَّهِ) لِحَبْرِ الْبَخَارِيِّ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- قَالَ: «يَعْقُدُ الشَّيْطَانُ عَلَى قَافِيَةِ رَأْسِ أَحَدِكُمْ إِذَا نَامَ ثَلَاثَ عُقَدٍ، كُلُّ عُقْدَةٍ يَضْرِبُ مَكَانَهَا عَلَيْكَ لَيْلٌ طَوِيلٌ فَارْقُدْ، فَإِذَا اسْتَيْقَظَ ذَكَرَا اللَّهَ تَعَالَى انْحَلَّتْ عُقْدَةٌ، فَإِنْ تَوَضَّأَ انْحَلَّتْ عُقْدَةٌ، فَإِنْ صَلَّى انْحَلَّتْ عُقْدَةٌ كُلُّهَا.»³⁰

The breadth of *al-Bantani*'s knowledge of ḥadīth is also deeply tested in the *Qāmi' at-Tughyān 'alā Manzūmah Shu'b al-Imān* book. In this book, almost all the 77 branches of faith include explanations from the Prophet through his ḥadīth. To provide sharḥ, a branch of faith written by *Shaykh Zayn ad-Dīn bin' Alī bin Ahmad ash-Shāfi'i*, he sometimes presents not only one ḥadīth. For example, when he explained that studying is part of faith:

(طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ ثُمَّ لَقْنِ الْوَرَى # عَظْمُ كَلَامِ الرَّبِّ وَاطْهَرُ نَعْصِمِ)

ذَكَرَ النَّاطِمُ فِي هَذَا الْبَيْتِ أَرْبَعَ شُعَبٍ يُقَالُ عَلَى نَسْقِ مَامِرٍ وَالشَّعْبَةُ السَّابِعَةُ عَشَرَ طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ بِأَبَا مِنْ الْعِلْمِ يَنْتَفِعُ بِهِ أَخْرَجَتْهُ وَدُنْيَاهُ كَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ مِنْ عُمْرِ الدُّنْيَا سَبْعَةَ أَلْفِ سَنَةٍ صِيَامَ نَهَارِهَا وَقِيَامَ لَيْلِهَا مَقْبُولًا غَيْرَ مَرْدُودٍ وَعَنْ مَعَاذِ بْنِ جَبَلٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَعَلَّمُوا الْعِلْمَ فَإِنَّ تَلْمَذَهُ لِلَّهِ حَسَنَةٌ وَدِرَاسَتُهُ تَسْبِيحٌ وَالْبَحْثُ عَنْهُ جِهَادٌ

²⁹ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Bantani, *Bahjah Al-Wasāil*, (Semarang: Maktabah al-Barakah).h.32

³⁰ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Bantani, *Muraqī Al-Ubūdiyyah* (Indonesia: al-Ḥaramayn, T.t).h.10

وطلبه عبادةً وتعليمه صدقةً وبذله لأهله قرينةً والفكر في العلم يعدل الصيام ومذاكرته تعدل القيام . و
 قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اطْلُبُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنَ الْمَهْدِ إِلَى اللَّحْدِ.³¹

These explanations indicate that Shaikh Nawawī al-Bantani, apart from having a title *mufassir*, *faqīh*, or *mufti*, he also deserves the title *muhaddith*.

Once again, the religious expertise of Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani has been widely recognized by scholars across the Nusantara and even acknowledged internationally. He was a prominent scholar of Javanese descent who became one of the teachers at the Masjid al-Haram. He made significant contributions to the field of hadith, both directly and indirectly. Shaykh Nawawi was among the scholars who served as a vital link between Middle Eastern scholarship, especially from Mecca and Medina, and the Muslim communities of the Nusantara. Many of his students from the Nusantara later spread his teachings in their respective regions, such as Shaykh Kholil of Bangkalan Madura, Shaykh Hasyim Asy'ari, KH. Asy'ari Bawean of East Java, KH. Najihun of Gunung Mauk, Tangerang, KH. Asnawi of Caringin, Banten, and others. In addition to disseminating knowledge through direct teaching, Shaykh Nawawi spread his scholarship through his written works, many of which are still studied today. Among his notable works are *Marāḥ Labīd*, *Murāqī al-‘Ubūdiyyah*, *Nihāyah az-Zayn*, *‘Uqud al-Lujjāyn*, *Naṣā’ih al-‘Ibād*, *Tanqīḥ al-Qawl*, *Kāsyifah as-Sajā*, *Mirqāh as-Su‘ūd*, *Qaṭr al-Ghayth*, and others.

Conclusion

Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani was a scholar with expertise in various branches of Islamic knowledge. He is widely known to the public as a commentator of the Qur’an (*mufassir*) and a *mufti*, but he was also an expert in Sufism and hadith. His expertise in hadith can be demonstrated through several points. *First*, he was a renowned exegete, as shown by his work *Tafsir Marah Labid*. It is well known that one of the essential qualifications for being a *mufassir* is mastery of the Prophet’s hadiths and the sciences related to them. *Second*, he authored works in the field of hadith, such as *Tanqih al-Qawl* and *Nasa’ih al-‘Ibad*. Although these are commentaries (*sharḥ*) on texts by earlier scholars, they reflect his expertise in hadith, particularly in how he explains the Prophetic traditions and incorporates his knowledge of *dirayah al-hadith* (critical analysis of hadith) to enrich those explanations. *Third*, he frequently used the Prophet’s hadiths as references and supporting evidence across various fields of Islamic knowledge, especially in his Qur’anic exegesis and legal (*fiqh*) writings. *Fourth*, he possessed numerous chains of hadith transmission (*isnad*), as documented in *al-‘Uqd al-Farid min Jawahir al-Asanid* by Shaykh Yasin al-Fadani. His role in hadith transmission is evident. Despite spending much of his life teaching in Mecca, where he remained until his death, his contributions to the dissemination of hadith and Islamic sciences in the Nusantara cannot be denied. This is supported by the fact that many of his students came from the Nusantara and returned to their homelands carrying the knowledge they acquired from him. His contributions are still felt to this day, with his works continuing to be studied in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) and universities. Studies of this kind must continue to be developed to uncover the roles of Nusantara scholars in the transmission of hadith and its sciences, as well as to understand the scholarly networks (*sanad*) of Nusantara ulama.

³¹ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Bantani, *Qāmi’ At-Ṭughyan* (Surabaya: Dār al-‘Ilm).h.7

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