

## ***Human trafficking in the Qur'an: An Analysis of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's Interpretation in Tafsir Marah Labid***

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### **Abstract**

*Human trafficking* is a form of modern slavery, involving the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a person under the threat of violence, for the purpose of exploitation. The phenomenon of *human trafficking*, particularly of women and children, is not a new phenomenon that has emerged recently, but has existed since before the advent of Islam. In the Qur'an, *human trafficking* is not mentioned specifically, but there are several verses that indirectly or conceptually describe the practice of *human trafficking*. The verses of the Qur'an that describe this are QS. An-Nur: 33 and QS. Yusuf: 19-20. To explain these verses and delve deeper into *human trafficking* in the Qur'an, this study uses the book *Tafsir Marah Labid* by Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani. Based on this, the main issues in this paper are: how does Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani interpret QS. an-Nur: 33 and QS. Yusuf: 19-20, which address the issue of *human trafficking*, and how relevant it is? The objective of this study is to discuss *human trafficking* in the *Tafsir Marah Labid* by Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani and how relevant his interpretation is to the issue of *human trafficking* in the present day. This research is a library research using the *Tafsir Maudhu'i conceptual* research method, based on *Tafsir Marah Labid* as the primary data source and other books and journals as secondary data sources. The data collection technique uses descriptive-analytical data analysis. The results of this research indicate that in QS. An-Nur: 33, Sheikh Nawawi strongly condemns the practice of forcing female slaves into prostitution, which is relevant to the contemporary phenomena of sexual exploitation and *human trafficking*. Meanwhile, in QS. Yusuf: 19–20, he highlights the sale of Prophet Yusuf as a concrete form of oppression and the commercialization of humans, which is highly contextual to modern *human trafficking* practices that treat humans as commodities.

**Keywords:** *Quran, Human trafficking, Nawawi Al-Bantani, Tafsir Marah Labid*

### **Abstrak**

*Human trafficking* atau perdagangan manusia merupakan bentuk perbudakan modern, yang melibatkan penerimaan atau penampungan seseorang di bawah ancaman kekerasan, perekrutan, prostitusi, pengiriman dan otoritas seseorang untuk tujuan eksploitasi. Fenomena perdagangan manusia, khususnya perempuan dan anak, bukanlah fenomena baru yang muncul belakangan ini, melainkan sudah ada sejak sebelum datangnya Islam. Dalam Al-Qur'an, *human trafficking* tidak disebutkan secara khusus melainkan ada beberapa ayat yang secara tidak langsung atau secara konseptual menggambarkan praktik *human trafficking*. Adapun ayat Al-Qur'an yang menggambarkan hal tersebut yaitu QS. An-Nur: 33 dan QS. Yusuf : 19-20. Untuk dapat menjelaskan ayat tersebut dan mendalami tentang *trafficking* manusia dalam Al-Qur'an, penelitian ini menggunakan kitab *Tafsir Marah Labid* karya Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani. Berdasarkan hal tersebut, dapat ditemukan pokok permasalahan dalam penulisan; bagaimana penafsiran Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani mengenai QS. an-Nur: 33 dan QS.

Yusuf: 19-20 yang membahas masalah *human trafficking*? dan bagaimana relevansinya? Tujuan dari penelitian ini membahas tentang *trafficking* manusia dalam kitab *Tafsir Marah Labid* karya Syekh Nawawi Aa-Bantani dan bagaimana relevansi dari penafsirannya dengan isu *human trafficking* di zaman sekarang. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan (*Library Research*) dengan menggunakan metode penelitian *Tafsir Maudhu'i* Konseptual yang di dasarkan kepada *Tafsir Marah Labid* sebagai sumber data primer dan buku-buku serta jurnal-jurnal lainnya sebagai sumber data sekunder. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan teknik analisis data yaitu deskriptif-analisis. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa aalam QS. An-Nur: 33, Syekh Nawawi mengancam keras praktik pemaksaan budak perempuan untuk melakukan prostitusi, yang pada masa kini relevan dengan fenomena eksploitasi seksual dan perdagangan manusia. Sementara itu, dalam QS. Yusuf: 19–20, beliau menyoroti penjualan Nabi Yusuf sebagai bentuk nyata kezaliman dan komersialisasi manusia, yang sangat kontekstual dengan praktik *human trafficking* modern yang memperjualbelikan manusia sebagai komoditas.

**Kata Kunci:** *Al-Qur'an, Human trafficking, Nawawi Al-Bantani, Tafsir Marah Labid*

## Introduction

In classical Islamic literature, the term trafficking or *human trafficking* in the view of the scholars may never be mentioned, as trafficking is a new phenomenon of modern slavery. Therefore, the definition of trafficking is not found in classical Islamic philosophical literature. The practice of *human trafficking* is a crime against humanity that is contrary to Islamic teachings. Anti-trafficking fiqh is a religious understanding based on the spirit of humanity as affirmed in the verses of the Qur'an and hadith to foster collective awareness of the dangers and prohibitions of crime and the need for protection of victims.<sup>1</sup>

*Human trafficking* is a criminal behavior that results in the destruction of the order of social life and eliminates the attitude of compassion towards fellow human beings, making humans a trading commodity that should not be done in order to achieve what is desired. The changing times have resulted in the level of Muslim belief in the Qur'an being lost due to the influence of orientalist and resulted in many religious norms being neglected in social life.<sup>2</sup>

Human slavery has been going on for centuries. The practice of *human trafficking* has also existed since pre-Islamic times or what is called the jahiliyah era. At this time, many people did not understand that humans are creations of Allah SWT that are free, independent, and must be respected. The groups most vulnerable to oppression and humiliation were women, children and the poor. Oppression by the rich and powerful is commonplace for the poor and weak and this action is not considered an offense. However, since the Prophet Muhammad SAW has gradually but firmly tried to improve and rehabilitate the position of these servants, including opening various solutions so that they get better treatment. Only then did contemporary scholars firmly state that Islam strongly condemns

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<sup>1</sup> Gilang Rizki Aji Putra, 'Human Trafficking Menurut Perspektif Hukum Islam', *Adalah* 6, no. 6 (2022), 1–10, doi:10.15408/adalah.v6i6.27259.

<sup>2</sup> Arini Azka Minati, 'Human Trafficking Dalam Al- Qur'an (Kajian Tafsir Tematik)', 2023.

the practice of human slavery, because slavery is not only against the principles of humanity but also against religious teachings. No religion can justify actions that dehumanize people.<sup>3</sup>

Among the many trafficking cases that have occurred since the beginning of 2023 until now, there are many criminal motives used by the perpetrators in order to carry out their mission, starting from disguising themselves as ODGJ people, beggars, and other motives. And the perpetrators often target children and women. A recent trafficking case in Central Kalimantan was revealed by Central Kalimantan Police Public Relations Commissioner Erlan Munaji that during the year 2023 from January to July, his party revealed as many as eight cases of trafficking with a total of 10 suspects. The motive of the perpetrator is to deceive the victim by promising the victim a job. After the victim complies with the perpetrator, the victim is forced to serve depraved men at varying rates, ranging from Rp300,000 to Rp2.5 million per service. All of these cases lead to prostitution. A case of baby trafficking under the guise of adoption from a million people foundation in Bogor carried out by the perpetrator, Suhendra, where the perpetrator dared to sell children at a price of Rp 15 million per adopted baby. In this case, the perpetrator carried out his modus operandi by seducing or peddling pregnant women and then adopting them illegally.<sup>4</sup>

One of the more recent cases of *human trafficking* involving egg exploitation in Georgia is a terrorizing and cruel crime. Hundreds of women, some from Thailand. Around 100 women were kept as slaves on a 'human farm' for their eggs and sold on the black market. The case was uncovered by three Thai women who managed to escape the mafia's clutches on January 30. They revealed that initially they found a lucrative Facebook job offer. It promised a salary of up to 17,000 euros to work as a surrogate mother for couples who were unable to have children. Their travel expenses and passport applications were covered by the organization. But once they arrived, they were placed in four large houses with about a hundred women. There, the women are injected with hormones to stimulate their ovaries, and then their eggs are collected once a month, said one victim who managed to escape. She said those in the mansion were treated like cattle and did not even receive any compensation for their eggs. It is not known how many women are still being held at the 'human farm'. Thai authorities and Interpol have launched an investigation, while Thai police said there could be other rescues as the case develops.<sup>5</sup>

The result of *human trafficking* is the deprivation of human rights, namely the right to freedom. The perpetrators consider human freedom to be easy to obtain, exploit and abuse. All forms of practices and values that take away human rights and freedoms by force are not in line with Islamic norms and teachings. The practice of *human trafficking* reflects that the

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<sup>3</sup> Putra.

<sup>4</sup> Fadilah and Lazimah, 'Human Trafficking Dalam Al-Qur'an', *JADID: Journal of Quranic Studies and Islamic Communication* 04, no. 01 (2024), 1–20.

<sup>5</sup> Linda Hasibuan, ratusan wanita di eksploitasi jadi pabrik bayi, begini modusnya. Di akses pada 12 Februari 2025 18:20, <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/lifestyle/20250212152820-33-610102/ratusan-wanita-dieksplotasi-jadi-pabrik-bayi-begini-modusnya>

perpetrators look down on their victims by selling them for exploitation, so Allah SWT forbids this practice.

Studies on *human trafficking* have been conducted by many previous researchers. Maryani, Sadiani, and Syarifuddin discuss the efforts that can be made to free the slaves (victims of *human trafficking*) by referring to Q. 24:33 and Q. 12:19-20.<sup>6</sup> Then Khoirul Umami and Muhammad Naufal Hakim explained about *human trafficking* in Q. 24:33. 24:33.<sup>7</sup> Ghufroon Hamzah discusses the Qur'anic view on prostitution and *human trafficking*.<sup>8</sup> In addition, there are also studies on the epistemology of the thoughts of certain scholars on *human trafficking*, such as Zaeni Anwar who explains the study of tafsir ahkam about the verses that discuss *human trafficking*,<sup>9</sup> and Dewi Wardatus Saadah who discusses Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy's thoughts on *human trafficking* in his tafsir (*Tafsir an-Nur*).<sup>10</sup> From several studies that have been conducted, the author has not found a discussion of *human trafficking* in QS. 24 : 33 and QS. 12 : 19-20 by using the study of Marah Labid interpretation by Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani.

In the Qur'an, *human trafficking* is not specifically mentioned but there are several verses that do not directly indicate the practice of *human trafficking*. The verses of the Qur'an that explain about *human trafficking* are QS. An-Nur verse 33 and QS. Yusuf verses 19-20 are verses that relate to elements of *human trafficking*. This research will examine QS. An-Nur verse 33 and QS. Yusuf verses 19-20 with the perspective of tafsir Marah Labid because Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani is a great scholar from Indonesia who is known for his contribution to the Nusantara tafsir literature and the Islamic world, by raising the contribution of local Indonesian scholars in the global tafsir discourse, especially in contemporary issues such as *human trafficking*. Sheikh Nawawi's thinking in tafsir Marah Labid shows a "liberation movement" that contradicts colonial ideology. He teaches a "new classical" approach, which combines the works of medieval scholars with contemporary contexts, in contrast to Muhammad Abduh's tafsir in *Tafsir al-Manar* which tends to follow Mu'tazilah thought.<sup>11</sup>

In this research the author uses a qualitative method with a maudhui interpretation approach and literature study. In this research the author tries to use a conceptual thematic approach that is not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an. This method aims to obtain data

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<sup>6</sup> Maryani, Sadiani, and Syarifuddin, 'Trafficking Manusia Perspektif Al-Qur'an', *Jurnal Transformatif (Islamic Studies)*, 2022, 157–70.

<sup>7</sup> Khoirul Umami and Muhammad Naufal Hakim, 'Penafian Al-Qur'an Atas Human Trafficking : Aplikasi Teori Ma'na-Cum-Maghza Pada Qs. An-Nur [24]: 33', *Mutawatir: Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadith* 11, no. 17 (2021), 399–405.

<sup>8</sup> Gufran Hamzah, 'Prostitusi Dan Trafficking Dalam Perspektif Al-Quran', *Tafsire* 6, no. 2 (2018), 129–44.

<sup>9</sup> Zaeni Anwar, 'Kajian Tafsir Ahkam Mengenai Ayat-Ayat Human Trafficking', *Gunung Djati Conference Series*, 19 (2023), 530–40.

<sup>10</sup> D Y Nahri, 'Human Trafficking Perspektif Al-Qur'an: Tinjauan Hermeneutika Ma'na-Cum-Maghza', *Nun: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Tafsir Di Nusantara*, 2022, doi:10.32495/nun.v8i2.414.

<sup>11</sup> Putri Zulaikha and others, 'Kajian Kitab Tafsir Marah Labid Syekh Nawani Al-Bantani', 2 (2025), 215–40.

about *human trafficking* in the Qur'an. Then the data that has been obtained is analyzed descriptively-analytically, so that the author can conclude in one complete phrase of thought. Primary data comes from the book of *Tafsir Marah Labid*, while secondary data comes from literature that discusses *human trafficking*.

## **Results and Disucussion**

### **Overview of *Human trafficking***

*Human trafficking* is defined as an act committed by threat of force, use of force, abduction, imprisonment, fraud, abuse of power or position of vulnerability, ambush or for the purpose of exploiting or causing to be exploited a person within or between countries, as a result of obtaining a reward or benefit by prior agreement with a person who has control over another person. From the above definition it is clear that *human trafficking* is a crime against humanity that cannot be tolerated. Its emergence destroys the joints of life because human rights are violated, including the right to immediate freedom, the right not to be tortured, the right not to be enslaved, the right to be recognized exclusively in order to coexist.<sup>12</sup>

In the Qur'an, there are several verses that contain the values of *human trafficking*, namely in QS. An-Nur verse 33 and QS. Yusuf verse 19-20. In summary, it can be concluded from Surah Annur verse 33, first, that there is an obligation to protect the weak. This is more addressed to women because at that time (in the context of Arab society) they were a weak group of society. Secondly, there is an obligation to free people who are trapped in slavery. Some mufasirs interpret this obligation as an obligation of the Muslims. Others require the liberation of the master or owner (*al-sayyid*). In ancient slavery, this liberation was done by buying and freeing it, as Abu Bakr did to Bilal bin Rabbah. Third, there is an obligation to release financial / property rights, for example employee salaries must be paid. And fourth, it is forbidden to exploit women's bodies for worldly interests. This verse was deliberately revealed by Allah to stop the "trade in women" which at that time was favored by the Arab community, the main character of the hypocrites, Abdullah bin Ubay bin Salul.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the Qur'an in QS. Yusuf verses 19-20 also explains in more detail about *human trafficking*. All these verses implicitly indicate the existence of *human trafficking* and efforts to eradicate it.<sup>14</sup>

### **Biography of Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani**

Sheikh Nawawi has the full name Abu Abdul Mut'hi Muhammad Nawawi Ibnu Umar al-Tanari al-Bantani al-Jawi. He is one of the most famous and well-known scholars among Indonesian students and scholars as Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani. He was born in West Java

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<sup>12</sup> Rusdaya Basri, 'Human Trafficking Dan Solusinya Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam, *Jurnal Hukum Diktum* 10, no. 1, 10 (2021), 87–98.

<sup>13</sup> Basri.

<sup>14</sup> Elfi Muawanah, 'Trafficking Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an (Sebuah Kajian Sematik Atas Teks-Teks Al-Qur'an)', *AL-IHKAM: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 2, no. 1 (2019), 84–114, doi:10.19105/al-lhkam.v2i1.2616.

and was born in the village of Tanara, Tirtayasa District, Serang Regency, Banten Prefecture in 1813M/1815M.<sup>15</sup> Sheikh Nawawi died when he was 84 years old, on 24 Shawwal 1314H/1897M at his last residence in Shi'ib 'Ali Mecca. There he was buried, namely in the Ma'la cemetery, close to the graves of Ibn Hajar and Asma' bint Abu Bakar. He died while translating the Book of Minhaj al-alibin by Imam Nawawi al-Dimshaqi.<sup>16</sup>

By genealogy, Sheikh Nawawi is the 12th descendant of Maulana Syarif Hidayatullah (Sunan Gunung Jati Cirebon), who is the son of Maulana Hasanuddin (Sultan Banten 1) named Sunyararas (Tajul 'Arsy). His lineage is connected to the Prophet Muhammad SAW through his father KH. Umar and his mother Zubaidah.<sup>17</sup>

The lineage of Sheikh Nawawi from his father is Nawawi bin Kiai Umar bin Kiai Arabi bin Kiai Ali bin Kiai Jamad bin Janta bin Kiai Masbugil bin Kiai Tajul 'Arsy Tanara bin Maulana Hasanuddin Banten bin Maulana Syarif Hidayatullah Cirebon bin Maulana Jamaluddin Akbar Husain bin Imam Sayyid Ahmad Syah Jalal bin Abdullah Adzmah Khan bin Amir Abdullah Malik bin Sayyid Ali Khali' Qasim bin Sayyid Alwi bin Imam Ubaidillah bin Imam Ahmad Muhajir Ilallahi bin Imam Isa an-. Naqib bin Imam Muhammad Naqib bin Imam Ali Aridhi bin Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq bin Imam Muhammad al-Baqir bin Imam Ali Zainal Abidin bin Sayyidina Husain bin Sayyidatuna Fatimah Zahra bint Muhammad Rasulullah SAW. As for the genealogy of his mother, Nawawi is the son of Nyai Zubaidah binti Muhammad Singaraja.<sup>18</sup>

Nawawi's education began in childhood. He was known as a diligent and tenacious person in seeking knowledge. Together with his brothers Ahmad and Tamim, he learned Islamic religious knowledge from his own father. The sciences he learned were basic Arabic knowledge such as Nahwu and Shorof, Fiqh, Tawheed, and Tafsir. They also studied with Kiai Sahal, a famous scholar in the Banten area. Then they were sent by their father to the Purwakarta (Karawang) area to continue their studies with K.H. Yusuf, a pious Kiai whose students came from outside West Java.<sup>19</sup>

At the age of 15 he had the opportunity to go to Mecca to perform the Hajj. He took advantage of this opportunity by staying in the Land of the Haram to study Kalam, Arabic Language and Literature, Hadith, Tafsir, and especially Fiqh. With his intelligence, at the age of 18 he had managed to memorize the entire Qur'an. After 30 years of study in Makkah, he returned to his area in 1833 with relatively complete religious knowledge to help his father

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<sup>15</sup> Ahmad Wahyu Hidayat, 'Pemikiran Syekh Nawawi AL-Bantani Dan Relevansinya Di Era Modern', *AQLAM Journal of Islam and Plurality* 4, no. 2 (2019), 197.

<sup>16</sup> Arwansyah Arwansyah and Faisal Shah, 'Peran Syaikh Nawawi Al-Bantani Dalam Penyebaran Islam Di Nusantara', *Kontekstualita: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 30, no. 1 (2015), 69–87.

<sup>17</sup> Deri Yatus Salihin, 'Ide-Ide Pemikiran Pendidikan Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Pendidikan Di Era Modern', *Al-Ikhtibar: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 5, no. 2 (2018), 708–24.

<sup>18</sup> Salihin.

<sup>19</sup> Aan Parhani, 'Metode Penafsiran Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Dalam Tafsir Marah Labid', *Tsaqofah Dan Tarikh*, 1 (2013), 9.

teach the students. His arrival made the Islamic boarding school under his father's guidance overflowing with students who came from various corners.<sup>20</sup>

The big name of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani and the influence of the Islamic college he led (after his father officially inherited his leadership) was one of the factors that caused unrest among the Dutch colonial government. This concern was related to the potential emergence of new resistance cadres among santri, given the traumatic experience of santri resistance in the Diponegoro War (1825-1830). This concern has a strong historical basis, given that Sheikh Nawawi as a descendant of the Banten Sultanate felt deep disappointment at the fall of the Banten Islamic kingdom into the hands of the colonials. He regarded the Dutch government as an illegitimate non-Muslim regime and this prompted him to instill a spirit of resistance and devise a project to revive the glory of Islam in Banten. Nawawi then decided to return to Mecca as one of his strategies to fight through education by educating religious leaders who came to study in Mecca. On the other hand, Nawawi also felt that his knowledge was still lacking so he did not want to let time pass without gaining knowledge, in addition to teaching the knowledge he already had. Here it is clear that Nawawi was a figure who was very thirsty for knowledge.<sup>21</sup>

In a book written by Sudirman Tebba quoted by Bashori, it is stated that Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani for the first time studied at the Grand Mosque of Makkah where he studied with Sayyid Ahmad Nakhrawi, Sheikh Sayyid Ahmad Dimiyati and Sheikh Sayyid Ahmad Zaini Dahlan. Then when in Medina he studied with Sheikh Muhammad Khatib Al-Hambali. His intelligence and persistence made him one of the famous students at the Grand Mosque. When Sheikh Ahmad Khatib Sambas became the Imam of the mosque, he was appointed to replace him. From then on he became the Imam of the Grand Mosque with the nickname Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani Al-Jawi. Apart from being an imam, he also taught and held scientific discussions for his students who came from various parts of the world and between 1860-1870 he had begun to actively write various books.<sup>22</sup>

### **Profile of *Tafsir Marah Labid***

Sheikh Nawawi named his tafsir book *Marah Labid li Kasyfi Ma'ana Qur'anil Majid* or also known as *al-Tafsir al-Munir*. Sheikh Nawawi stated that this tafsir book was written at the request of some of his friends to write a tafsir book when he was in Mecca. The book, written in Arabic, was completed at the end of his life, in 1305 AH/1884 AD and was first published in Mecca after first being submitted to the scholars of Mecca for research and study in 1887 AD. There is no certainty why this tafsir was given two names, Marah Labid and al-Munir. But clearly this tafsir was reprinted in 1887 by al-Halabi publisher, Cairo with a layout that

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<sup>20</sup> Aan Parhani.

<sup>21</sup> Aan Parhani.

<sup>22</sup> M. Afiquil Adib, 'Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani: Kajian Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam Dan Relevansinya Di Abad-21', *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 16, no. 2 (2022), 444, doi:10.35931/aq.v16i2.885.

in the margins accompanied by tafsir Kitab *al-Wajiz fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Aziz*, by al-Wahidi (w. 468/1076). This tafsir is better known as *Tafsir al-Wahidi*. The structure of the tafsir is very concise and simple.<sup>23</sup>

Regarding the purpose of naming this tafsir as *Marah Labid*, it is not found explicitly from the author. However, from a linguistic point of view, *Marah* comes from the word *raha - yaruhu - rawah* which means coming and going in the afternoon to pack and prepare to leave again. *Marah* indicating a place (*ism al-Makan*) from the word means *al-maudhi` yaruhu li Qaum minhu aw ilaih* (a place -resting- for a group of people from which they go and to which they return). *Labid* is the same root as the word *labida-yalbadu* which means to gather around something. In terms of animal science (zoology), labid is the same as *al-Libadi* which means a type of bird that likes to be on land and only flies if flown.<sup>24</sup>

*Tafsir Marah Labid* is written like the Quran, sequentially, systematically, starting from surah al-Fatihah to surah an-Nas. Before explaining at length, Nawawi al-Bantani gives *Muqaddimah* which is then continued with other discussions. In the *Muqaddimah*, he also begins with basmalah, hamdalah, and shalawat as other tafsir books. In the *Muqaddimah*, he also mentions the background or basis for writing the tafsir as has been conveyed in the previous section, although with full humility he mentions various sources or references to the books of tafsir that are used as references. From the references used, it appears that *Tafsir Marah Labid* is very well varied both in method and language style so that it becomes an important marker for a work of interpretation. As mentioned in the *Muqaddimah*, the mention of references to *Tafsir Mafatih al Ghayb* by Fakhruddin al Razi can certainly use madzhab ra'yi, which is rich with various styles in it that characterize it, and other references used by Nawawi al Bantani.<sup>25</sup>

*Tafsir Marah Labid* can also be classified as one of the interpretations with the *ijmaly* (global) method. It is said to be *ijmaly* because in interpreting each verse, Syaikh Nawawi explains each verse in a concise and concise manner, making it easy to understand. The writing systematics also follow the order of the verses in the Mushaf. This tafsir looks very detailed and in-depth in interpreting each verse word by word.<sup>26</sup>

Regarding the style used by Sheikh Nawawi, according to the reference, this tafsir is categorized as *riwayah/mat'sur* style of tafsir and Sufi style of tafsir. This tafsir is more inclined towards Sufi tafsir because it sees that the author of the book is a Sufi and the leader of a large congregation in the archipelago, one of his thoughts about Sufism in the context of tariqah is as follows: "As for the person who follows the *tariqah*, if his words and actions are in accordance with the laws of the Prophet Muhammad, he is like a member of the true

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<sup>23</sup> Anas Mujahiddin and Muhammad Asror, 'Telaah Tafsir Marah Labid Karya Nawawi Al-Bantani', *Ulumul Qur'an: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 1, no. 1 (2021), 81–87, doi:10.58404/uq.v1i1.14.

<sup>24</sup> Parhani.

<sup>25</sup> Ansor Bahary, 'Tafsir Nusantara: Studi Kritis Terhadap Marah Labid Nawawi Al-Bantani', *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 16, no. 2 (2015), 176, doi:10.18860/ua.v16i2.3179.

<sup>26</sup> Niswatul Malihah and Tapa'ul Habdin, 'Metodologi Tafsir Marah Labid Karya Syaikh Nawawi Al-Bantani', *At-Tahfidz: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 4, no. 2 (2023), 74–90, doi:10.53649/at-tahfidz.v4i2.260.



tariqah, so the tariqah he follows is *maqbul*'. This means that the presentation of the concept of Sufism is consistent with its basis in the spiritual experience of the Salaf scholars. The themes used are not far from the formulations of classical Sufism scholars. It is this model of tasawwuf presentation that makes Nawawi distinguishable from other Indonesian Sufi figures. He can be distinguished from the typological characteristics of Indonesian Sufism, such as Hamzah Fansuri, Nuruddin al-Raniri, Abdurrauf Sinkel and so on. Unlike other Indonesian Sufis who focused more on adapting Ibn Arabi's genostic theories, Nawawi presented a moderate Sufism between fitrah and sharia. In the formulation of his tasawwuf view, there is an effort to combine fiqh and tasawwuf.<sup>27</sup>

### The Interpretation of Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani in QS. An-Nur: 33 and QS. Yusuf: 19-20

#### 1. QS. An-Nur: 33

وَلَيْسَتَغْفِرِ الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ نِكَاحًا حَتَّى يُعْزِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ يَبْتَغُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِمَا مَلَكَتْ  
إِيمَانُكُمْ فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا وَآتُوهُمْ مِّنْ مَّالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا فَتَيَاتِكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ  
إِنْ أَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا لِّتَبْتَغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَن يُكْرِهِنَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِن بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

*"Those who are unable to marry, let them keep themselves chaste until Allah enables them by His grace. (If) the slaves whom you own desire a covenant (of freedom), make a covenant with them if you know good in them. Give them some of the wealth of Allah which He has given you. Do not force your female slaves into prostitution, if they themselves desire chastity, for the sake of worldly gain. Whoever forces them, then surely Allah is most Forgiving, most Merciful (to them) after they have been forced."*<sup>28</sup>

The reason for the revelation of Surah An-Nur verse 33 according to As Suyuthi from Abdullah Shubaih from his father who said that there was a slave from Huwaithib bin 'Abdullah' Aziz who wanted his freedom with a certain agreement, but his offer was not accepted so that the verse was revealed which ordered to approve the agreement of the slave who wanted freedom. Because of the revelation of the verse, Huwaithib who then freed his slave by paying how many dirhams or dinars, and there is another opinion that tells that Abdullah bin Ubay here had a slave girl who Abdullah often ordered the slave girl to fornicate, and after coming to see the Prophet Muhammad and complain about the problem after that the slave girl.<sup>29</sup>

In *Tafsir al-Misbah*, this verse explains about *iffah* or guarding oneself from lust for someone who is not yet able to carry out a marriage contract, namely by doing positive things by fasting so that Allah makes it easier for him to get married. Similarly, if a slave wants to

<sup>27</sup> Niswatul Malihah and Tapa'ul Habdin.

<sup>28</sup> Qur'an, Terjemah Kemenag 2019.

<sup>29</sup> Fadilah and Lazimah.

be free, then his master should allow him as long as he is able to live his life without begging, stealing, or even selling himself as a prostitute.<sup>30</sup>

In *Tafsir Marah Labid* explains that in QS. An-Nur: 33, namely:

وَلْيَسْتَغْفِرِ الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ نِكَاحًا

(*And those who are unable to marry should preserve their chastity*), that is, they should strive to protect themselves from lust, especially those who are unable to marry.

حَتَّى يُعْطِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۖ

(*So Allah gave them the ability through His grace*) meaning that whoever does not have wealth should maintain their purity from forbidden things and be patient until Allah provides them with enough to get married.<sup>31</sup>

وَالَّذِينَ يَبْتَغُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

(*And the slaves you own who desire a contract*) that is, the slaves you own, both male and female, who desire a contract of manumission to free themselves.

فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ

(*You should make a contract with them*) that is, make them free people after they sign the contract. The noun is in the genitive case because it is governed by the verb whose existence is inferred and interpreted by the phrase.

إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا

(*If you know there is good in them*) that is, they are able to pay the installments of the *kitabah* and behave well and do not disturb others after they become independent. This is a recommendation in conducting *kitabah* transactions, not a condition for the validity of the *kitabah* transaction.

وَأْتُواهُمْ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ ۖ

(*And give them a portion of the wealth that Allah has bestowed upon you*) meaning, O masters, give them a portion of the installments that are the responsibility of the *mukatab* slave. Or, give them a portion of what has been taken from them. This is a Sunnah according to Imam Malik and Imam Abu Hanifah, while according to Imam Shafi'i, it is obligatory.

Another opinion states that this is a command to give the lawful portion of zakat, so this command indicates an obligatory ruling. According to another opinion, it is also mentioned that this command is an exhortation to Muslims to help *mukatab* slaves by giving charity to them. It is narrated that a slave belonging to Huwaitib bin Abdul 'Uzza named Sabih asked Huwaitib to make him *mukatab*, but Huwaitib refused, so this verse was revealed.

<sup>30</sup> Ihyā' Ulumudin, 'Perbudakan Dalam Perspektif M. Quraish Shihab; Telaah Atas Term Perbudakan Dalam 'Tafsir Al-Mishbah', *Moderasi: Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2022), 79–98, doi:10.54471/moderasi.v2i1.25.

<sup>31</sup> Al-'Allamah Asy-Syekh Muhammad Nawawi Al-Jawi (Banten), *Tafsir Al-Munir Marah Labid*, Jilid 4, 371.

Eventually, Huwaitib entered into a *kitabab* transaction with him by paying one hundred dinars, and he gave him twenty dinars from that amount.

وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا فَتَاتِكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ

(*And do not force your female slaves into prostitution*) that is, do not force your female slaves into prostitution.

إِنْ أَرَدْنَ نَحْصًا

(*While they desire purity*) for themselves from adultery.<sup>32</sup>

The existence of this conditional bond is to avoid prohibited coercion, because in essence it would not occur unless the female slaves desired chastity. It is different if they themselves tend to engage in prostitution, because then it occurs by their own choice and in such circumstances it is impossible to imagine the existence of coercion. The benefit of this condition is as a strict prohibition against coercion. In essence, if they desire their chastity, then their masters are more entitled to desire it. Additionally, there is an indication that masters are permitted to force them to marry, and female slaves are not allowed to refuse their masters if their masters wish to marry them.

لَتَبْتَغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

(*Because you seek worldly gain*) that is, by coercion you will obtain material gain from their prostitution and from the children they bear.

وَمَنْ يُكْرِهْهُمْ

(*Whoever forces them*) the female slaves to engage in prostitution.

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِمْ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

(*Then indeed, Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful toward them after they have been forced*) because, in truth, they are sinful, for the act of adultery remains adultery even when committed under coercion.

It is narrated that Abdullah bin Ubay bin Salul had six female slaves, and he was the leader of the hypocrites. The names of the female slaves were Mu'azah, Masikah, Umaimah, Amrah, Arwa, and Qatilah. He forced them into prostitution and collected taxes from the proceeds of their sales. Then the two female slaves complained about their plight to the Prophet, so this verse was revealed.

According to another opinion, it is mentioned that Abdullah bin Ubay was a man, and this man seduced Abdullah's female slave, while Abdullah's female slave was a Muslim woman, so she refused the captive's advances due to her faith. Then, Abdullah bin Ubay forced his female slave to comply with the captive's desires, with the aim of having her conceive the captive's child, so that Abdullah could demand a ransom for the child. Then this verse was revealed.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Nawawi Al-Jawi (Banten), *Tafsir Al-Munir Marah Labid*, Jilid 4, 372.

<sup>33</sup> Nawawi Al-Jawi (Banten), *Tafsir Al-Munir Marah Labid*, Jilid 4, 373.

The conclusion from the above verse is, first: the obligation to protect the weak. This is particularly directed toward women, as in the past, women were the weaker group in society. Second: the obligation to free those trapped in slavery. Third: the obligation to release financial rights or property. Fourth: it is forbidden to exploit a woman's body for worldly gain.

## 2. QS. Yusuf: 19

وَجَاءَتْ سَيَّارَةٌ فَأَرْسَلُوا وَارِدَهُمْ فَأَدْلَى دَلْوَهُ قَالَ يُبْشِرُ هَذَا غُلْمٌ وَأَسْرُوهُ بِضَاعَةً وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ

*"A group of travelers arrived. They sent for a water carrier, who lowered his bucket. He said, 'Oh, how wonderful! There is a young boy here.' Then they hid him as merchandise. Allah knows what they were doing."*

وَجَاءَتْ سَيَّارَةٌ

(*A group of travelers arrived*), namely a group of travelers who were traveling from the direction of the land of Madyan with the destination of Egypt, but they took a wrong turn and ended up getting lost, not knowing their destination, until they arrived in an area where there was a well, namely in the village of Dausan, which is located between Madyan and Egypt, and there they rested.

فَأَرْسَلُوا وَارِدَهُمْ

(*Then they sent for a water carrier*), meaning they ordered the water carrier to fetch water for them. The term "Warid" refers to the person who prepares the bucket and the rope, then proceeds ahead of the caravan to the water source. He is known as Malik ibn Za'r al-Khuza'i, the son of Shu'aib, an Arab man from the tribe of Madyan.

فَأَدْلَى دَلْوَهُ ۖ

(*Then he lowered his bucket*) meaning he lowered the rope of his bucket into the well where Yusuf was, so Yusuf was hanging from the bucket, and the water carrier could not lift the bucket out of the well. Then he looked into the well and saw a young man hanging from the bucket, so he called his companions.

قَالَ يُبْشِرُ

(*He said, "Oh, how happy I am!"*) that is, my friends. Al-A'masy said that he called a woman named Busyra. As-Suddi also said that he called his friend named *Busyra*. As Hamzah, 'Asim, and Al-Kisai read without using *Ya' mutakallim* after *Alif maqsurah*. Abu Ali Al-Farisi said that it is more appropriate to make *Busyrā* the noun of *Al-Bisyārah* or good news. He uttered this word as good news for himself, as if he were saying, "O good news! Now is the time for you; if you can be spoken to, you have been commanded to come now." This is supported by the readings of other scholars who read *Busyrāya* using the *Ya' mutakallim* with a *fathah* after the *Ya'* because it is *mudaf*. Then they asked, "What is it, Malik?" and Malik replied;

هَذَا غُلَامٌ ۝

(*There was a young man*) who was extremely handsome. He was Yusuf, with a handsome face, curly hair, sharp eyes, a medium build, fair skin, strong arms, hands, and calves, a flat stomach, and a small navel. When Yusuf smiled, it was as though his smile emitted light, and when he spoke, it was as though light emanated from his teeth. No one could describe it. Then they went to Malik and pulled Yusuf out of the well after he had been inside it for three days.<sup>34</sup>

وَأَسْرُوهُ بَضَاعَةً ۝

(*Then they hid him as merchandise*), meaning they hid Yusuf's true status by treating him as a slave to be bought and sold. Malik, the water carrier, and his friends hid Yusuf's true identity from their other friends. They said, "If we tell the caravan that Yusuf is the boy we found, they will surely ask us to cooperate in obtaining him." And if we tell them that we bought him, they will certainly ask us to give him to them as well. The best thing we can do is to tell the other friends that Yusuf is a gift from the owner of the well, who entrusted him to us to sell to them in Egypt.

وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ

(*Allah knows what they do*), namely all the attitudes and actions of Yusuf's brothers towards him, which were to give him a very difficult trial. This is what prompted Yusuf to come to Egypt and experience various transitions from one event to another until Yusuf became king of Egypt, and what he saw in his dream became a reality. Through Yusuf, Allah showed mercy to His servants and the people of the land in question.<sup>35</sup>

### 3. QS. Yusuf: 20

وَشَرُّوهُ بِثَمَنٍ بَخْسٍ دَرَاهِمَ مَعْدُودَةٍ وَكَانُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الزَّاهِدِينَ ۝

"They sold him (Yusuf) for a low price, (that is) only a few dirhams, because they were not interested in him."

وَشَرُّوهُ

(*And they sold him*) Yusuf was sold by the people who pulled him out of the well.

بِثَمَنٍ

(*for a low price*) that is, it cannot be said that way because at that time they did not value anything that cost less than forty dinars.

بَخْسٍ دَرَاهِمَ مَعْدُودَةٍ ۝

(*only a few dirhams*) it was said that way because at that time they did not value anything that cost less than forty dinars.

<sup>34</sup> Nawawi Al-Jawi (Banten), *Tafsir Al-Munir Marah Labid*, Jilid 3, 204-205.

<sup>35</sup> Nawawi Al-Jawi (Banten), *Tafsir Al-Munir Marah Labid*, Jilid 3, 206.

وَكَانُوا

(and those) who sold Yusuf.

فِيهِ

(towards Yusuf) namely those who were concerned with Yusuf.

مِنَ الرَّهْدِيِّينَ

(Not interested in him) Namely, those who did not want him. Because they were worried that someone who had the right to own him would appear and take Yusuf away from them, they immediately sold Yusuf as soon as the buyer made the first offer, even though the price was very cheap.<sup>36</sup>

The conclusion from the above verse is, first, that it tells how Yusuf, who was still a child, was treated as a commodity by travelers, who sold him without regard for his human rights or identity. Second, this reflects the practice of child exploitation in the past, which in a modern context can be compared to *human trafficking*, especially child trafficking. Third, humans are not commodities, and exploitation for profit is a reprehensible act. Fourth, this verse implies that Allah has a greater plan behind the suffering experienced by Yusuf.

### **The Relevance of Sheikh Nawawi's Interpretation of QS. An-Nur: 33 and QS. Yusuf: 19-20 to the Issue of *Human trafficking***

The phenomenon of *human trafficking* in modern times is a complex and multidimensional form of human rights abuse. This practice often involves sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and forced labor that violate human rights. From an Islamic perspective, such actions clearly contradict the principles of justice, dignity, and human freedom. The classical interpretations of Nusantara scholars such as Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani are highly relevant in affirming these values, particularly in *Marah Labid's* interpretation of QS. An-Nur: 33 and QS. Yusuf: 19–20.

In QS. An-Nur verse 33, he emphasizes that such actions constitute oppression and a violation of human rights. The relevant points from this verse are, first: the obligation to protect the weak. This is particularly directed toward women, as in ancient times women were the weaker group in society. Second: the obligation to free those trapped in slavery. Third: the obligation to release financial rights or property. Fourth: it is forbidden to exploit women's bodies for worldly interests. This interpretation aligns with the concept of *Daruriyyat al-Khamsah* (The Five Necessities), which is part of the theory of *Maqashid al-Syari'ah*.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, in QS. Yusuf verses 19-20, according to Sheikh Nawawi, this event is an explicit example of illegal and unjust *human trafficking*. He interprets that Yusuf was sold

<sup>36</sup> Nawawi Al-Jawi (Banten), *Tafsir Al-Munir Marah Labid*, Jilid 3, 206.

<sup>37</sup> Fikru Jayyid Husain, 'Dimensi Maqasid Dalam Tafsir Marah Labid (Kajian Terhadap Aspek Maqasid Dalam Kitab Tafsir Marah Labid Karya Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani) [Skripsi]' (UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2021).

as a commodity without rights and at a low price because the perpetrators were afraid of being exposed. This interpretation also shows that *human trafficking* is not merely an economic issue but involves violations of human dignity. In the Maqashidi Exegesis theory, there is an aspect worth noting: revealing the values of the Quran in the story of Prophet Yusuf, which is particularly relevant to the context of *human trafficking* issues, namely the value of *al-adalah* (justice), especially regarding upholding truth. As the story of Prophet Yusuf teaches many aspects of justice relevant to the context of *human trafficking*, including when Prophet Yusuf experienced injustice when sold as a slave, yet eventually rose to become the ruler of Egypt. This underscores the importance of restoring the rights and dignity of *human trafficking* victims, ensuring that justice does not merely stop at punishing the perpetrators but also provides victims with the opportunity to resume a life of dignity.<sup>38</sup> Such conditions are commonly found in modern-day *human trafficking* cases, where victims are sold secretly in unconscious states for the perpetrators' gain.

## Conclusion

From the above description, it can be concluded that *human trafficking* is mentioned in several verses of the Qur'an, specifically: Surah An-Nur verse 33 and Surah Yusuf verses 19-20. Literally and contextually, *human trafficking* is viewed from various angles of interest, including recruitment, sale, and exploitation. In reality, exploitation today is more susceptible to sexual exploitation or prostitution, and the prohibition of exploitation is explained in Surat An-Nur verse 33 in any form, especially sexual. Conversely, verses 19-20 about Yusuf speak of someone being sold, namely Yusuf, and becoming a slave, implying a form of exploitation. The interpretation or opinion of Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani in *Tafsir Marah Labid* states that: *First*, QS. An-Nur verse 33 explains the practice of *human trafficking*, namely the prohibition of forcing female slaves to commit adultery and the prohibition of exploiting women, whether they are slaves or free women. *Second*, QS. 12:19 and 20 explain the practice of *human trafficking* based on the events experienced by Prophet Yusuf, who was thrown into a well by his brothers and later found by travelers who sold him for a low price.

Furthermore, the relevance of Sheikh Nawawi's interpretation of *human trafficking* issues in Surah An-Nur: 33 and Yusuf: 19-20 confirms that Islam rejects all forms of human exploitation, whether in the form of sexual coercion or *human trafficking*. This interpretation is highly relevant in addressing the issue of *human trafficking* in the modern era, as it embodies the values of protecting human dignity, freedom, and justice. His intellectual legacy demonstrates that classical Islamic interpretations can serve as a normative foundation for advocating for and protecting victims of *human trafficking*.

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<sup>38</sup> Masfi Sya'fiatul Ummah, 'Isu Human Trafficking Dalam Narasi Kisah Yusuf (Analisis Tafsir Maqashidi)', *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 11, no. 1 (2019), 1–14.

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