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**Book Review: Rawai al Bayan Fi Tafsir Ayat al Ahkam min al Qur'an  
(Haste of Tarjih Muhammad Ali al Shabuni)**

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### ABSTRACT

Muhammad Ali al Shabuni had produced many papers in these two scientific fields, including Rawai al Bayan, a book that combines between jurisprudence and interpretation. Not all results of Al Shabuni's tarjih in the book of Rawai al Bayan can be used as hujjah (evidence and legal handle), because there are still some Tarjih processes that did not correspond to the stages must be passed. The majority of Tarjih results that he had attempted can be used as hujjah because it has fulfilled the stages of Tarjih implementation in question. Regardless of the problem, it is worth acknowledging that the book of Rawai al Bayan by Al Shabuni has enlightened in the interpretation of Ahkam verses, because it is more structured and objective to do Tarjih, when compared to many books of interpretation of Ahkam verses before.

**Keywords:** Rawai al Bayan; Muhammad Ali al Shabuni; book review

### INTRODUCTION

Muhammad Ali al Shabuni is an expert in the field of jurisprudence and interpretation. He had produced many papers in these two scientific fields, including Rawai al Bayan, a book that combines between jurisprudence and interpretation. This book is quite famous because it has many advantages, especially its extensive explanation, concise language, and also easy to understand. Therefore Rawai al Bayan interpretation is widely used, both in Islamic boarding schools and universities in several countries, including Indonesia. Al Shabuni was born in Aleppo-Syria in 1928 AD, and died in Mecca on March 19, 2021 AD. His perseverance and expertise in the field of jurisprudence and interpretation had brought his name into the ranks of world-class scholars, who have bequeathed a series of valuable and monumental papers, including the book of interpretation Rawai al Bayan which is being studied. <sup>(1)</sup>

### REVIEW OF RAWAI AL BAYAN FI TAFSIR AYAT AHKAM MIN AL QUR'AN

Rawai al Bayan Fi Tafsir Ayat Ahkam min al Qur'an is one of the contemporary commentaries that seeks to display the Qur'an in simple language, but uses a comprehensive explanation, and systematic methods. The book is one form of response to various legal problems that arise in the midst of Islam people lives, with various differences of opinion in it. In this case, Al Shabuni simplified these opinions using the Tarjih method, which is to compare these opinions to find the most superior opinion. <sup>(2)</sup>

Al Shabuni conducted Tarjih to some opinions of the scholars, when he explained and interpreted the Ahkam verses. This effort was made to return the branch problems of shari'ah (fiqh) to its main source, namely Al Kitab (Al Qur'an). Thus, the existence Tarjih in the book of Rawai al Bayan, in addition to explain the Ahkam verses, also to provide solutions and legal options to various problems that are still debated by the scholars. On the other hand, Al Shabuni ability to be neutral and not fanatical towards one particular sect that followed, made his Tarjih efforts seem objective and professional. Some of these advantages are certainly supported also by the educational background of Al Shabuni which since the beginning had taken a concentration in the field of jurisprudence. It made his analysis of Islamic law seem observant and sharp, even though it was delivered in light and simple language.

The systematic interpretation used by Al Shabuni in Rawai al Bayan, was described in ten steps of consistently applied and consistent in his interpretation, as follows:

1. Al Tahlil al Lafzi, i.e. to parse the main words in the verses interpreted. This is reinforced by the opinion, both from the scholars of interpretation and also the scholars of Arabic.
  2. Al Ma'na al Ijmali, which is a general and global explanation of the verses being discussed.
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3. Sabab al Nuzul, which is an explanation of the events around the revelations of the Qur'an. The existence of Sabab al Nuzul can only be indicated by the narration stated as Sabab al Nuzul a verse, some verses, or a certain surah. If there is no narration about Sabab al Nuzul, then Al Shabuni did not discuss this section.
4. Al Munasabah, an explanation of the relationship between the verses or surahs that are being discussed with the verses or surahs before or after.
5. Al Qiraat al Mutawatirah, which is an explanation of mutawatir readings from the imams of qira'ahs. This is similar to Sabab al Nuzul which can only be proven by the narration of the imams of qira'ahs or their disciples.
6. Al I'rab, is an explanation of the Arabic grammatical of certain words that are considered as keywords in explaining a verse. This section is although only briefly presented (Ijaz), but is considered the entrance of interpretation from the linguistic side.
7. Lataif al Tafsir, Exploring the depth of interpretation, both in terms of the secrets of language beauty (Balagha) of the Qur'an and in terms of the depth of scientific power contained in the verses are being discussed.
8. Al Ahkam al Shar'iyah wa Adillah al Fuqaha, is a discussion about the content of Islamic laws along with the evidence used by the scholars. In this section, there are often some differences of opinion between the sects or among the scholars. Therefore, Al Shabuni completed his discussion by doing Tarjih against these opinions.
9. Ma Turshid Ilaih al Ayat, is conclusion of the interpretation. However, Al Shabuni did not always draw conclusions about the interpretations he had made.
10. Khatimah al Bahth, is the final part of discussion (closing) that explains the hikmah al tashri' from the legal issues contained in the verses that are the subject of discussion.<sup>(3)</sup>

In the two volumes of Rawai al Bayan there are 70 themes of discussion termed Muhadhara "lectures", because at first the book was intended to be a lecture material on the campus where Al Shabuni teaches. The interpretation performed by Al Shabuni focuses only on the Ahkam verses starting from surah Al Fatiha to surah Al Muzammil. In the themes of the discussion, there are more than 60 problems that are solved using the Tarjih method. However, Al Shabuni did not write about the principles and methods of Tarjih he used, so in some of the Tarjih he did seem very simple, and inconsistent. Even in some of the Tarjih is not in accordance with the stages of Tarjih that have been determined by the scholars. In other words, some of the Tarjih processes were done in haste, so that the results were not maximized.

Among the examples is the Tarjih of the position of basmalah in the Qur'an. In this regard, there are three different opinions. First, according to Shafi'iah group that, basmalah is the beginning of surah Al Fatiha and other surahs. They base this opinion on several narrations of hadith, including hadith about basmalah that the Apostle read before reading surah Al Kauthar.<sup>(4)</sup> Second, the Malikiyah argue that basmalah is not the beginning of surah al Fatiha or other surahs. The mention in the Qur'an is to expect blessings from the recitation. They hold on to some narrations hadith, especially hadith which states that the Messenger of Allah reads surah Al Fatiha in prayer, without basmalah.<sup>(5)</sup> Third, the group of Hanafiah states that, basmalah is part of the Qur'an that serves as a separator (Fasilla) between surahs, but it is not a verse of any surah. This view is reinforced by the narration of hadith that the Messenger of Allah did not know the separation between the surahs in the Qur'an, before the revelation of basmalah.<sup>(6)</sup>

The opinions above are based on several different narrations of hadith. But all of that was not considered by Al Shabuni, even he immediately did Tarjih using ra'yu (sense), and favored the opinion of Hanafiah, because it is considered more moderate.<sup>(7)</sup> According to the author, the step was taken by Al Shabuni because he used the principle of Tarjih "al khuruj min al khilaf mustahab" which is recommended to exit the debate.<sup>(8)</sup> However, in performing Tarjih should not ignore the Tarjih measures agreed upon by the scholars. Especially if there is a conflict between the evidences (nass), then the evidence should be resolved first, before stepping to use al-ra'yu, because that is where the root cause of dissent arises.<sup>(9)</sup>

Another example above, is the interpretation of Q.S. al-Baqarah: 102, about the nature of magic, which is disputed by Mu'tazilah and the majority of scholars (Jumhur). In fact, the problem can be compromised by the method of al jam'u wa al taufiq, but it was not done by Al Shabuni. Similarly, the debate of Al Shafii and Jumhur when interpreting Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 217, concerning the melting of good practice from the apostates, which should also be compromised by applying conflicting evidences, under different conditions.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that not all results of Al Shabuni's tarjih in the book of Rawai al Bayan can be used as hujjah (evidence and legal handle), because there are still some Tarjih processes that did not correspond to the stages must be passed. However, the majority of Tarjih results that he had

attempted can be used as hujjah because it has fulfilled the stages of Tarjih implementation in question. Regardless of the problem, it is worth acknowledging that the book of Rawai al Bayan by Al Shabuni has enlightened in the interpretation of Ahkam verses, because it is more structured and objective to do Tarjih, when compared to many books of interpretation of Ahkam verses before.

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