

CHAPTER II

CONCEPT OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION

A. Religious Moderation in Indonesia

1. Religious Moderation in Indonesia

Indonesia is one of the countries in the world that is complex with diversity and diversity of tribes, cultures, ethnicities, and religions. Behind the existence of official religions such as Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.¹ Indonesia also has thousands of tribes, languages, traditions, cultures, and characters that are patterned in people's lives. As in 2020, reported by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) that in Indonesia there are around 1331 and 633 numbers of tribes and large branch tribes.²

In fact, although religion has become a guideline for life adopted by the community. But the way to practice it is not uniform even among adherents of the same religion. Each person's religion is influenced by the beliefs and traditions of their ancestors. Clifford Geertz³ said that plural religious practices are influenced by ancestral traditions and understanding of

¹ Limas Dodi, *Konsep dan Kontekstualisasi Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia*, 1 Oktober 2022 (Kediri: IAIN Kediri Press, 2022), 17.

² Syamsul Bahri, "Pengembangan Kurikulum Berbasis Multikulturalisme di Indonesia (Landasan Filosofis dan Psikologis Pengembangan Kurikulum Berbasis Multikulturalisme)," *Jurnal DIDAKTIKA: Media Ilmiah Pendidikan dan Pengajaran* 19, no. 1 (2018): 69–88.

³ Clifford Geertz adalah seorang antropolog budaya asal Amerika Serikat yang sangat berpengaruh, terutama dalam kajian budaya, agama, dan simbolisme. Ia lahir pada 23 Agustus 1926 dan meninggal pada 30 Oktober 2006. Geertz dikenal sebagai pelopor pendekatan "interpretatif" dalam antropologi budaya, dimana budaya dipahami sebagai sistem makna simbolik yang perlu ditafsirkan seperti teks.

each religion. As a result, indirectly the practice can be ingrained for generations.

In the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) the term ‘moderation’ comes from the absorption of the word ‘*moderation*’ which means reduction and avoidance of extremes. Meanwhile, in Latin ‘*moderatio*’ means moderation (not excessive and not lacking).⁴ Lukman Hakim Saifuddin argued that the word moderation is juxtaposed with the word religion, so it becomes religious moderation. Then we get a meaning that refers to an attitude of non-violence or avoiding extremes in religious practice.⁵

The Arabic dictionary states that the word *wasathiyah* (وسطية) comes from the word *wasath* (وسط) which has many meanings. As the Egyptian Arabic Language Institute’s *al-Mu’jam al-Wasith* Dictionary explains:⁶

“Wasath sesuatu adalah apa yang terdapat di antara kedua ujungnya dan ia adalah bagian darinya... juga berarti pertengahan dari segala sesuatu. Jika dikatakan: syai’un wasath maka itu berarti sesuatu itu antara baik dan buruk. Kata ini juga berarti ‘apa yang dikandung oleh kedua sisinya walaupun tidak sama’. Kata wasath juga berarti adil dan baik. (ini disifati tunggal atau bukan tunggal). Dalam Al-Qur’an, “dan demikian kami jadikan kamu kaum ummatan wasathan,” dalam arti penyandang keadilan atau orang-orang baik. Kalau Anda berkata: ‘Dia dari wasath

⁴ Pengertian Moderasi pada “Hasil Pencarian - KBBI VI Daring,” diakses 28 Juni 2025, <https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/entri/moderasi>.

⁵ Lukman Hakim Saifuddin dan Menteri Agama RI, *Moderasi Untuk Kebersamaan Umat: Memaknai Rapat Kerja Nasional Kemenag 2019* (Menteri Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019).

⁶ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wasathiyah Wawasan Islam tentang Moderasi Beragama* (Ciputat, Tangerang Selatan: Lentera Hati Group, 2019), 2.

kaumnya', maka itu berarti dia termasuk yang terbaik dari kaumnya. Kata ini juga bermakna lingkaran sesuatu atau lingkarannya.”⁷

“The wasaṭh of something is that which is between its two ends and is part of it... it also means the middle of everything. If it is said: syai'un wasaṭh then it means that something is between good and bad. It also means 'what the two sides contain even though they are not equal'. The word wasaṭh also means fair and good. (It is either singular or not singular). In the Qur'ān, "and thus we made you the ummatan wasaṭhan," in the sense of the bearers of justice or the good people. If you say: 'He is from the wasaṭh of his people', then it means that he is among the best of his people. This word also means the circle of something or its circle”.

In terms of terms, Yusuf al-Qardlawi defines wasaṭhiyyah or moderation as meaning a balance between two opposing sides and not giving excessive influence. In the Qur'an itself, the meaning of religious moderation is mentioned normatively, as in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 143 as the verse below:

Meaning: *“Likewise We have made you (Muslims) a middle people) so that you may bear witness to (the deeds of) mankind and so that the Messenger (Prophet Muhammad) may bear witness to (the deeds of) you. We have not fixed the Qibla (Baitulmaqdis) to which you used to turn, except that We may know (in reality) who follows the Messenger and who turns back. Verily, it is very hard, except for those to whom Allah has guided. Allah will not waste your faith. Verily, Allah is indeed the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful to mankind”.*

⁷ Shihab, 2.

Meanwhile, religious moderation in the context of social media can mean using social media platforms wisely to spread messages of peace, tolerance, mutual understanding, and even avoid spreading content that triggers digital conflict.

During the Jokowi administration, Fachrul Razi was appointed as Indonesia's minister of religion. He was tasked with dealing with radicalism. This mandate was then triggered by the Head of the Research, Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Prof. Suyitno, who stated that Religious Moderation is a priority programme of the government and the Ministry of Religious Affairs.⁸ Furthermore, through the independent learning policy and based on KMA 347 of 2022. This is projected in the madrasah environment in the aspect of strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile and the *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* Student Profile.⁹

Among Islamic thinkers themselves, there has also been a phenomenon of differences in the treasures of interpretation that lead to aspects of religious rituals and practices. This matter is not a taboo phenomenon, because it is part of the scientific dialectic. The ideology of Pancasila is a strong pillar of Indonesia in fortifying the existence of this phenomenon. All religions must be recognized and practiced according to their respective beliefs without disturbing each other. In line with the body of Pancasila, which states the right

⁸ Rahmi Siregar, "Moderasi Beragama Bukan Sekedar Proyek," Pusdiklat Tenaga Administrasi - Moderasi Beragama Bukan Sekedar Proyek, diakses 28 Juni 2025, <https://pta.kemenag.go.id/article/read/moderasi-beragama-bukan-sekedar-proyek-OaZnT>.

⁹ Muchamad Mufid, "Penguatan Moderasi Beragama Dalam Proyek Profil Pelajar Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Kurikulum Merdeka Madrasah," *QuranicEdu: Journal of Islamic Education* 2, no. 2 (2023): 143, <https://doi.org/10.37252/quranicedu.v5i1>.

of every human being to embrace, believe in, and practice religion without coercion and interference from other religions.

The complexity of religious diversity produces different views, beliefs, principles, paradigms, and interests of religious believers. Over time, these differences interact, intersect, and can potentially cause friction, especially on sensitive issues.¹⁰ Fortunately, Indonesia is one of the countries with a high level of peace because it adheres to the ideology of Pancasila, moderate Islam, and is oriented towards scholars who uphold the values of tolerance and unity. So that all the differences that exist are successfully transformed into potential and wisdom that give birth to peace.¹¹

Here, the concept of religious moderation is present to find common ground between two conflicting extreme views. To equalize the perception of true moderation, we only need to understand how the concept of religious moderation is based on authentic sources such as the Qur'an and Hadith. This concept asserts that religion teaches peace, prevents harm, and addresses social problems.

In addition, religion also plays a role in creating morals, ethics and spirituality in the life of society, nation and state.¹² So, it can be understood that the position of religious moderation aims to prioritize the concept of *tabayyun* and deliberation, trying to understand religion comprehensively, and

¹⁰ Dodi, *Konsep dan Kontekstualisasi Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia*, 19.

¹¹ Geoffrey Hughes, "European Social Anthropology in 2018: An Increasingly Recursive Public," *Social Antropology* 10, no. 1 (2020): 1469–85.

¹² Bhikhu Parekh, *Politics, Religion & Free Speech in Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002).

respecting differences of opinion.¹³ There are three reasons why religious moderation needs to be upheld in Indonesia.¹⁴

First, one of the essences of religion is to maintain human dignity as a creature of God, especially in maintaining existence. Every religion must carry a mission of peace and salvation. To achieve this goal, religions teach balance in various aspects of life and emphasize the importance of protecting human life. Therefore, destroying one life is equivalent to destroying all of humanity.

Second, humanity changes in various aspects, such as ethnicity, language, skin color, customs, thoughts, and civilization. Religion as a sacred text that is passive also undergoes development. One of them is marked by the emergence of various scholarly writings that are translated into various languages. Generally, religious texts explain many things, including absolute truth. However, as the interpretation of religion develops, many adherents no longer make pure religious teachings the main foundation. Instead, they prioritize thinking and logic that are influenced by external factors outside the religious text.

Third, in the Indonesian context, religious reinterpretation is useful as a cultural strategy to accommodate the existing religious diversity. As a heterogeneous country, since the beginning the founding fathers have bequeathed the ideological framework of Pancasila. The agreement emphasizes that Indonesia is not only a religious country, but also a country rich in culture, social norms, ethics, language, and various other aspects of

¹³ Karen Amstrong, *the Battle for God: a History of Fundamentalism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001).

¹⁴ Dodi, *Konsep dan Kontekstualisasi Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia*, 23–26.

multiculturalism. The values that live in Indonesia are not only plural, but also multicultural.¹⁵

2. Indicators of Religious Moderation

Lukman Hakim Saifuddin mentioned four main points of religious moderation indicators that become benchmarks in assessing whether someone has a moderate or extreme understanding and practice of religion.¹⁶ Among them include, anti-violence, tolerance, national commitment, and accommodating local culture.¹⁷

The first, is national commitment, which places religion and the state in a mutually supportive, not contradictory, relationship. A moderate must accept Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and Unity in Diversity as national agreements that should not be contradicted by religious teachings. This attitude shows that loyalty to the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia is not contrary to faith, but rather part of a religious manifestation that respects the nation's socio-political agreements.¹⁸

Second, tolerance, which is an attitude of respect for differences in views, both within religious communities and between religions. Tolerance reflects the awareness that diversity is sunnatullah or God's decree. Therefore,

¹⁵ Abdul Hamid Majid, "Moderasi dalam Islam dan Upaya Preventif Tindakan Radikal di Internet," *Tafsir Al Quran | Referensi Tafsir di Indonesia* (blog), 23 Oktober 2021, <https://tafsiralquran.id/moderasi-dalam-islam-dan-upaya-preventif-tindakan-radikal-di-internet/>.

¹⁶ Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi beragama*, ed. oleh Indonesia, Cetakan pertama (Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat, Kementerian Agama RI, 2019), 42.

¹⁷ Ahmad Arifin, "Konsep Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Lukman Hakim Saifuddin," *INNOVATIVE: Journal of Social Science Research* 3, no. 2 (2023): 6272–87.

¹⁸ Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi beragama*, 42.

moderate people will not impose their views on others and are able to coexist peacefully despite differences in beliefs.¹⁹

The other two indicators are non-violence and acceptance of tradition. Non-violence means rejecting all forms of violence, both physical and verbal, in conveying or fighting for religious values. Moderates choose peaceful approaches and dialog in resolving conflicts and reject extreme methods in the name of religion. Meanwhile, acceptance of tradition refers to an open attitude towards local culture as long as it does not conflict with the basic principles of religion.²⁰

Moderation in this case encourages healthy acculturation between religious values and local culture, so that religious teachings can be practiced contextually and down to earth. Lukman Hakim Saifuddin emphasized that religious moderation is a dynamic process that requires broad insight and a deep understanding of religious teachings and social reality, so that religious believers are not easily trapped in fanatical or extreme attitudes that ignore human and national values.

B. Tafsir in Social Media

The word '*tafsīr*' according to Az-Zarkasyi, quoting from *As-Suyūṭhi*'s in the *Al-Itqan fī 'Ulūmil Qur'ān*, is interpreted as a word of Allah that was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, while the science of *tafsīr* is the science of the wisdom and rulings contained in the Qur'ān accompanied by linguistic tools such as *naḥwu* and *ṣharaf*, *qira'at*, *uṣhul fiqh*, and *bayān*. In addition, a

¹⁹ Kementerian Agama RI, 44.

²⁰ Kementerian Agama RI, 46.

sign that a person can be called a mufassir is when he has equipped himself with the knowledge of *asbāb an-nuzūl*, knowledge of *nāskh mansūkh*, *aḥkam* and *mutasyābihāt*, and another.²¹ Meanwhile, media itself means an intermediary channel in sending messages.

Media in the current context can be understood as an intermediary tool that presents information or content interactively. The reciprocity is so that the audience or citizens can receive information precisely and quickly. McQuail clarifies new media into two elements, namely digitalization and convergence. The internet itself is evidence of this convergence. Lately, many new media have successfully penetrated the hierarchy of science. In fact, one of them is the study of the interpretation of the Qur'an, which initially used conventional studies from the Prophet Muhammad, then in this contemporary era managed to utilize technological developments that did not in any way reduce the essence of the Qur'an itself.²²

McLuhan harmonizes that the development of media also has an impact on the development of interpretation. Then, he presents in the theory of Technological Determinism which is divided into four eras including, Tribal Age, Literature Age, Print Age, and Electronic Age.²³ The Tribal Age era is characterized by the memorization process obtained from direct hearing or dominated by oral culture. Moreover, when the Companions found a difficulty, they could directly ask the Prophet Saw. as the first mufasir as well as the recipient of revelation.

²¹ As Suyuthi, *Al-Itqan fi Ulumil Qur'an*, Cetakan Pertama 2008, t.t., 15.

²² Wulandari, "Kajian Tafsir Youtube (Analisis Media Siber dalam Etnografi Virtual pada Channel Youtube Quraish Shihab)," 18–19.

²³ Rusli Nasrullah, *Teori dan Riset Media Siber (cybermedia)* (Kencana, 2016), 3–4.

Then, during the Literature Age or the era of writing, this civilization began to focus on reading-writing culture which made it easier for humans to get information. The number of media such as paper, stone, animal skins, and date palm fronds became writing media. The Golden Age era is also closely related to the emergence of books of hadith, tafsir, fiqh, Sufism, astrology, and so on.²⁴ Even the appearance of the books of interpretation in this era is evidence of the contribution of Islamic science to the development of science.

Furthermore, when entering the Print Age, it was marked by the emergence of print media that began to contribute by recording Islamic sciences. Until finally, it was closed with the electrochemical era or Electronic Age. In this era, technology became the biggest influence on the development of science and communication. So that at this time, the culture of oral, written, read, see, and hear can be well integrated.²⁵

The explosion of technology has also succeeded in changing the order of knowledge that makes digital media websites the main source of in grounding religion in modern society. In fact, this is also very significant in influencing the existence of the production and distribution of Al-Qur'an interpretation study content that is open through the Google search engine, social media, and Youtube.²⁶ This can also have fatal consequences for source accountability and scientific validity which are not guaranteed due to lack of verification. So that people who enjoy the content can be trapped in mainstream and misguided views of interpretation. Thus, it is very necessary

²⁴ Nasrullah, 3.

²⁵ Nasrullah, 4.

²⁶ Putra, "Pesan Agama di Website Signifikansi Penafsiran tafsiralquran.id," 56–57.

to study the validity of religious content so that the authenticity of interpretation in this digital era can be maintained valid, moderate, accountable, and free from extremity and secularism.

The presence of tafsir on social media is very relevant along with the times, technology, and science, especially on the internet which is often accessed by the public compared to books in the library. By making the content of the interpretation of the Quran, people can more easily understand the meaning of the verses, which may initially be difficult to understand if only presented in the form of interpretation. Actually, the existence of interpretation on social media is not new, one of the books of interpretation that applies it is *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qurān al-Karīm* by Thanthawi al Jauhari.

However, the focus of this research is not on the interpretation contained in the form of printed media or books, but the interpretation presented in social media. Precisely in the website *tafsiralquran.id* which presents many verses related to social issues of society, the youth of today, to trending topics that are booming to be the subject of discussion of netizens today. The majority of all titles and language styles used in the website are packaged attractively according to trending topics. Moreover, this is also supported by the activities of today's youth and society whose daily lives are busy with gadgets.