

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

The study of the Qur'an will not be separated from various domains of human life. The Qur'an is a pearl that emits light to solve all life problems, both creed, shari'ah, morals, and other issues.¹ As social creatures, humans have limitations in meeting the needs of their lives, so they need help from others. This forces a person to interact and communicate with people around him. As social creatures, humans always live together with others, so harmony between people is very important to be applied in order to get a sense of security when living side by side with all existing differences.² Especially in Indonesia, a country that has much diversity in terms of religion, culture, race, ethnicity, language, and local beliefs, from this situation, it can be imagined how diverse the opinions, views, beliefs, and interests of each person, including in terms of religion.³

One of the most discussed discourses lately is the issue of religious moderation. Religious moderation is now an actual issue that is often discussed regarding its meaning by academic and non-academic activists.⁴ Moderation is

¹ Andi Abdul Hamzah and Muhammad Arfain, "Ayat-ayat Tentang Moderasi Beragama (Suatu Kajian Terhadap Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Adzim Karya Ibnu Katsir)", *Jurnal Tafseer* Vol. 9, No. 1, July 2021, 28.

² Fadhillah Iffah and Yuni Fitri Yasni, "Manusia sebagai Makhluk Sosial", *Lathaif: Literasi Tafsir, Hadis, dan Filologi* Vol. 1, No.1, January-July 2022, 38.

³ Sania Alfaini, "Perspektif Al-Qur'an tentang Nilai Moderasi Beragama untuk Menciptakan Persatuan Indonesia", *Permata: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* Vol. 2, No.2, August 2021, 114.

⁴ Akhmad Syahri, *Moderasi Beragama dalam Ruang Kelas*, (Malang: CV. Literasi Nusantara Abadi, 2022), 1.

usually understood as a middle attitude in understanding religious teachings to avoid extremism in religion. Even though discussions in moderation are not only related to spiritual issues but also state and social issues, so that a wise person will be moderate in responding to various matters related to his life.⁵

In Bahasa, Religious Moderation is referred to as *Moderasi Beragama*, The term “*moderasi beragama*” (religious moderation) does not come from Arabic but a foreign language that has been absorbed into Indonesian. Therefore, the term moderation cannot be found explicitly in the Qur’an. The Qur’an does not always present lafaz, but its substance and meaning must be sought and explored deeper.⁶ One of the verses that scholars refer to when discussing religious moderation is Q.S. al-Baqarah/2:143.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۗ

Thus have We made of you An *Ummat* justly balanced. That ye might be witnesses over the nations, and The Messenger a witness over yourselves.⁷

The sentence *ummatan wasathan* in verse above is used as a starting point for the description of religious moderation in the Islamic view so that moderation is known as *wasath* or *wasathiyyah*,⁸ which has equivalent meanings with the words

⁵ Sania Alfaini, “Perspektif Al-Qur’an tentang Nilai Moderasi Beragama untuk Menciptakan Persatuan Indonesia”, 114-115.

⁶ Husna Zainuddin, Nur Latifah Salman, and Juliani, "Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Al-Qur'an Sebagai Solusi Terhadap Sikap Intoleransi", *Al-Mutsala: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Keislaman dan Kemasyarakatan* Vol. 4, No. 1, June 2022, 46-47.

⁷ Abdullah Yusûf ‘Alî, *The Holy Qur’an*, (King Fahd Holy Qur’an Printing Complex, n.xd.), 57-58.

⁸ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wasathiyyah: Wawasan Islam tentang Moderasi Beragama*, (Tangerang: PT. Lentera Hati, 2019), 6.

tawassuth (middle), *i'tidâl* (fair), and *tawâzun* (balanced).⁹ In the book “Wasathiyah: Wawasan Islam tentang Moderasi Beragama” by Quraish Shihab, he stresses that although the term *wasathiyah* correlates with the middle way, it has not been able to describe the religious moderation taught by Islam fully. According to him, something that is not in the middle position does not mean it has no virtue, and to describe moderation in Islam must still be accompanied by supporting arguments and other explanations.¹⁰ The term *wasathiyah* does have the same meaning as the principle of religious moderation, which is fair and balanced. It is just that the term seems to be limited to Islam, and it is not in accordance with Indonesia’s plural society.

Many Muslim scholars have actually explained the understanding of moderation from time to time. Given that there are more lay people than scholars, understanding regarding moderation needs to continue to be echoed and taught in society, especially in Indonesia, which is a multicultural country.¹¹ It is hoped that each person in religion can treat others with respect, accept all differences, and coexist peacefully.¹² For this reason, moderation and tolerance are a necessity amid many differences. Because God created people with different backgrounds to know each other and establish cooperation, this goal is often forgotten by humans so that it reaps conflict with others.

⁹ Kementerian Agama RI, “*Moderasi Beragama*”, (Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI: Jakarta, 2019), 16.

¹⁰ Riza Saputra, *Moderasi Beragama antara Definisi dan Ekstrapolasi: Menelaah Pemahaman Mahasantri terhadap Moderasi Beragama*, (Banjarasin: Antasari Press, 2022), 22.

¹¹ Hadi Wiryawan, “Pemahaman Konsep *Wasathiyah* dalam Hadis: Studi Komparatif Pemikiran Muhammad ibn Salih al-Usaimin dan Muhammad Quraish Shihab”, (Yogyakarta: Fakultas Ushuluddin dan Pemikiran Islam UIN Sunan Kalijaga), 1.

¹² Andi Abdul Hamzah and Muhammad Arfain, “Ayat-ayat Tentang Moderasi Beragama (Suatu Kajian Terhadap Tafsir al-Qur’an al-Adzim Karya Ibnu Katsir)”, 34.

A moderate attitude is needed in responding to various problems today, which are very different from the times and conditions when the Prophet was still there.¹³ A moderate attitude will also fortify a person not to get caught up in things that are contrary to Islamic law, such as being excessive, blind fanatics, prioritizing one's interests over many people, let alone going to extremes, and committing violence. This is very contrary to the teachings of Islam, which is *rahmatan lil 'alamîn*, the religion that brings peace to this earth.¹⁴

However, what still often happens is that not a few people think that moderate people have no stance and do not even practice religion seriously. Moderation is misinterpreted as the compromise of theological beliefs between one religion and another. There is also another mistake that assumes that if someone sides with the values of moderation in religion, it is the same as being liberal and ignoring religious teachings in order to respect the beliefs of followers of other faiths.¹⁵ Therefore, the understanding and application of religious moderation will differ if it is not seen and adjusted to the objective situation and conditions at hand. Because the meaning of moderation is very broad, it requires a deep understanding and insight into Islamic shari'a as well as the way and degree of its application.¹⁶

¹³ Panji Ansari, "Moderasi Berislam dalam Perspektif Tafsir Nusantara (Studi Komparatif Tafsir M. Quraish Shihab dan Tafsir Buya Hamka)", 2.

¹⁴ Shihabuddin Afroni, "Makna *Ghuluw* dalam Islam: Benih Ekstremisme Beragama" *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama dan Sosial Budaya* Vol. 1, No. 1, January 2016, 76.

¹⁵ Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi Beragama*, (Jakarta: Badan Litbag dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2019), 13.

¹⁶ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wasathiyyah: Wawasan Islam tentang Moderasi Beragama*, xv.

The implementation and strengthening of moderation cannot be done personally by individuals but must be carried out systematically and institutionally planned, even by the state. One example is done by Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia (Kemenag RI), which instructed rectors and heads of Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri (PTKIN) throughout Indonesia to socialize religious moderation attitudes by increasing literacy and establishing and organizing Rumah Moderasi Beragama (RMB) within PTKIN.¹⁷

Antasari State Islamic University Banjarmasin (UIN Antasari Banjarmasin) is one of the PTKIN that established the Rumah Moderasi Beragama and also established a community of Religious Moderation Ambassadors consisting of a collection of campus students representing each faculty at Antasari State Islamic University Banjarmasin. Religious Moderation Ambassadors are people who have an important role in disseminating religious moderation in addition to the other academic community, especially among scholars and millennials. However, before disseminating the correct understanding and application of religious moderation, of course, an Ambassador of Religious Moderation must have a qualified understanding and insight regarding existing moderate issues.¹⁸

Kementerian Agama (Kemenag) has formulated nine keywords containing four religious moderation indicators to measure the success of religious moderation in PTKIN and to assess moderate religious thinking and attitudes. Theoretically,

¹⁷ Wildani Hefni, "Moderasi Beragama dalam Ruang Digital: Studi Pengarusutamaan Moderasi Beragama di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri", *Jurnal Bimas Islam* Vol. 13, No. 1, Juli 2020, 4.

¹⁸ Babun Suharto *et al.*, *Moderasi Beragama: Dari Indonesia untuk Indonesia*, (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2019), 56.

religious moderation at Kemenag always leads to these nine keywords and their values. The nine keywords are humanity, public interest, justice, balance, obeying the constitutions, national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and respecting the tradition.¹⁹ While there may be other similar keywords in various literature, the nine keywords discussed here are specifically from Kemenag.

The nine keywords mentioned above are universal in nature to be practiced by Indonesia's diverse society. Nonetheless, these keywords are grounded in strong theological or religious principles that have been practiced by righteous people throughout the history of Islamic civilization. Some of these keywords even have corresponding terms in Arabic, such as *al-Qist/al-'Adl* (justice), *tawâzun* (balance), *tasâmuḥ* (tolerance), and respect for *'urf* (customs and traditions), because good customs and traditions of a society can serve as a source of law in Islam.

For a deeper explanation of the nine keywords of religious moderation, the author chose Tafsir al-Mishbah by Quraish Shihab and Tafsir Kemenag. Both of these tafsirs are known for their moderate and tolerant approach, considering historical, linguistic, and contextual aspects in interpreting the Qur'an. Kemenag plays a crucial role in promoting and implementing religious moderation in Indonesia, while Quraish Shihab frequently relates Qur'anic teachings to contemporary challenges faced by Muslims. Therefore, these two tafsirs are relevant for studying the issue of religious moderation, which has become a focal point in recent years.

¹⁹ Riza Saputra, *Moderasi Beragama antara Definisi dan Ekstrapolasi: Menelaah Pemahaman Mahasantri terhadap Moderasi Beragama*, 18-24.

This is what concerns researchers, namely their responsibilities as students who were chosen to be Religious Moderation Ambassadors at Antasari State Islamic University Banjarmasin, as well as their understanding and insight into religious moderation, especially from the perspective of the Qur'an. Is their knowledge of religious moderation in accordance with the moderation referred to in the Qur'an? Therefore, researchers are interested in researching students who become Religious Moderation Ambassadors at Antasari State Islamic University Banjarmasin with the title **“The Understanding of Religious Moderation Ambassador of Antasari State Islamic University on Religious Moderation Verses in The Qur'an.”**

B. Problem Statements

1. What are the religious moderation verses in the Qur'an known by The Religious Moderation Ambassador of Antasari State Islamic University?
2. How does The Religious Moderation Ambassador of Antasari State Islamic University understand the religious moderation verses in the Qur'an?

C. Research Purposes

1. To find out what are the religious moderation verses in the Qur'an known by The Religious Moderation Ambassador of Antasari State Islamic University.
2. To find out how The Religious Moderation Ambassador of Antasari State Islamic University understands the religious moderation verses in the Qur'an.

D. Research Significances

1. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich Islamic scientific treasures and add intellectual insight for academics in the Qur'anic interpretation studies, especially related to moderation in the Qur'an.
2. Practically, this research can be helpful as reference material for researchers examining similar studies.

E. Operational Definition

To avoid misunderstandings in this study, especially regarding the problem to be studied, the author felt the need to inform the operational definition to explain the meaning contained in the title of this study. This is expected to be easy to understand, especially regarding the problems targeted in the title, as follows:

1. Understanding

The term “understanding” in Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries means the knowledge that somebody has about a particular subject or situation.²⁰ What is meant in this research is the respondents’ understanding, namely The Religious Moderation Ambassador of Antasari State Islamic University, regarding the religious moderation verses in the Qur'an.

2. Religious Moderation Ambassador

The term “Ambassador” in Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries means a person who represents or promotes a particular activity.²¹ Meanwhile, Religious Moderation (*Moderasi Beragama*) is one of the national programs from

²⁰ “Understanding” in *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, April 1, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/understanding_1?q=Understanding

²¹ “Ambassador” in *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, April 1, 2024, <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/ambassador?q=Ambassador>

Kementerian Agama RI, which aims to create a harmonious religious life amidst the diversity of this nation. The ambassadors referred to in this research are several students from UIN Antasari Banjarmasin who are representatives of spreading religious moderation within the campus environment.

3. Verses

The term “Verse” in Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries means any one of the short numbered divisions of a chapter in the Qur’an.²² What is meant in this research will focus on several verses in the Qur’an related to religious moderation.

F. Previous Research

1. An undergraduate thesis entitled “Moderasi Beragama Menurut Penafsiran Habib Ali al-Jufri dalam Kitab *Al-Insaniyyah Qablat Tadayyun*” written by Ahmad Saufi Abie in 2022. This paper discusses the meaning of religious moderation in the Qur'an according to Habib Ali al-Jufri, namely Q.S. al-Baqarah/2: 83 (a command of good speech), Q.S. al-Mâ'idah /5: 32 (a prohibition of taking one’s life), and Q.S. an-Nisâ’/4: 135 (a command to establish justice), which is closely related to the principles of religious moderation such as fairness, tolerance and balance.²³
2. An undergraduate thesis entitled “Moderasi Beragama dalam Al-Qur’an (Studi Analisis Kitab Tafsir *Al-Qur’anul Majid An-Nuur* Karya Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy)” written by Kuni Khilyatal Khadrah in 2022. This paper

²² “Verse” in *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, April 1, 2024, <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/verse?q=Verse>

²³ Ahmad Saufi Abie, “Moderasi Beragama Menurut Penafsiran Habib Ali al-Jufri Dalam Kitab *Al-Insaniyyah Qablat Tadayyun*”, (Banjarmasin: Fakultas Ushuluddin dan Humaniora UIN Antasari, 2022), 63.

discusses religious moderation in the Qur'an, which is interpreted using the book of Tafsir *Al-Qur'an Majid An-Nuur*, by taking verses on moderation, namely Q.S. al-Baqarah/2: 143, Q.S. al-Baqarah/2: 256, and Q.S. an-Nisâ'/4: 135. These verses are then correlated with religious moderation in Indonesia.²⁴

3. An undergraduate thesis entitled "*Ummatan Wasathan dalam Al-Qur'an dan Kontekstualisasinya dalam Moderasi Beragama*" written by Aldila Danny Attahriri in 2024. This paper discusses *ummatan wasathan*, which is contained in Q.S. al-Baqarah/2:143. In this study, it was explained that the term *ummatan wasathan* is a characteristic of Muslims who are good in beliefs, thoughts, and attitudes, always prioritize compromise, and are always in the middle when facing a problem, including religious issues. It was also found that the concept of *ummatan wasathan* can be used as a basis in the practice of applying moderation in religious life because there are various elements of moderation (*wasathiyyah*) contained in it, one of which is religious moderation.²⁵
4. An article entitled "Moderasi Beragama Menurut Al-Qur'an dan Hadist" was written by Fauziah Nurdin. This article examines the Qur'anic verses used in the meaning of religious moderation, namely Q.S. al-Baqarah/143 (religious moderation which means the elect), Q.S. ar-Ra'd/13: 3 (religious

²⁴ Kuni Khilyatal Khadrah, "Moderasi Beragama dalam Al-Qur'an (Studi Analisis Kitab Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Majid An-Nuur Karya Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy)", (Jember: Fakultas Ushuluddin, Adab dan Humaniora UIN Kiai Haji Achamd Shiddiq, 2022), 70.

²⁵ Aldila Danny Attahriri, "*Ummatan Wasathan dalam Al-Qur'an dan Kontekstualisasinya dalam Moderasi Beragama*", (Banjarmasin: Fakultas Ushuluddin dan Humaniora UIN Antasari, 2024), 58.

moderation in the balance of natural phenomena), Q.S. an-Nisâ'/4: 58 (justice), Q.S. al-Qashash/28: 77 (balance of lifestyle), Q.S. Luqman/31: 19, Q.S. asy-Syams/91: 7-9 and Q.S. al-Hujurat/49: 13 (religious moderation in attitude, morals, nation and state).²⁶

5. An article entitled “Tafsir Ayat *Wasathiyyah* dalam Al-Qur’an dan Implikasinya dalam Konteks Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia” written by Rahmadi, Akhmad Syahbuddin and Mahyuddin Barni. This article examines the concept of *wasathiyyah* in the Qur’an and the interpretation of the verse *wasathiyyah* in Q.S. al-Baqarah/2:143 by classical, modern, and contemporary mufassirs. The interpretation of *wasathiyyah* then looks at the implications for practicing religious moderation in Indonesia, where several parties are socializing.²⁷
6. A book entitled “Moderasi Beragama” by Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia in 2019. This book explains the concept and reasons why Religious Moderation must be applied and how to strengthen and implement it in personal life, society, nation, and state.²⁸
7. A book entitled “Moderasi Beragama Berlandaskan Nilai-Nilai Islam”. Works by Abdul Aziz and A. Khairul Anam. This book discusses the nine values of religious moderation derived from Islamic teachings. The

²⁶ Fauziah Nurdin, “Moderasi Beragama Menurut Al-Qur’an dan Hadist”, *Jurnal Ilmiah Al Mu’ashirah: Media Kajian Al-Qur’n dan Al-Hadits Multi Perspektif*, Vol. 18, No. 1, January 2021, 63.

²⁷ Rahmadi, Akhmad Syahbuddin dan Mahyuddin Barni, “Tafsir Ayat *Wasathiyyah* dalam Al-Qur’an dan Implikasinya dalam Konteks Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia”, *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Ushuluddin*, Vol 2, No. 1, January-June 2023, 1.

²⁸ Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi Beragama*.

nine values are *tawassuth* (middle), *i'tidâl* (perpendicular), *tasâmuḥ* (tolerance), *syûrâ* (deliberation), *al-Ishlâḥ* (reform), *qudwah* (pioneering), *muwâthanah* (citizenship/love of the motherland), *la 'unf* (nonviolence) and *i'tirâf al-'Urf* (cultural friendliness). These nine values are discussed along with relevant Qur'anic verses.²⁹

8. A book entitled “Moderasi Beragama antara Definisi dan Ekstrapolasi: Menelaah Pemahaman Mahasantri Terhadap Moderasi Beragama” by Riza Saputra. This book examines the theme of religious moderation from the perspective of students at Ma'had al-Jami'ah Antasari State Islamic University Banjarmasin.³⁰

From some of the previous studies described above, the author found similarities and differences with this thesis. In terms of similarities, it is a mutual discussion of religious moderation. The difference lies in the focus that the author wants to examine and the object of research studied, namely The Understanding of Religious Moderation Ambassador of Antasari State Islamic University on Religious Moderation Verses in The Qur'an, in this case, of course, the research that the author will examine is different from the object and focus of previous research.

G. Writing Structure

The writing systematic of this research is divided into five chapters with the following details:

²⁹ Abdul Aziz and A. Khoirul Anam, *Moderasi Beragama Berlandaskan Nilai-nilai Islam*, (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Islam Kementerian Agama RI, 2021).

³⁰ Riza Saputra, *Moderasi Beragama antara Definisi dan Ekstrapolasi: Menelaah Pemahaman Mahasantri Terhadap Moderasi Beragama*, (Banjarmasin: Antasari Press, 2022).

Chapter I is the introduction, includes the research background, problem statement, research purpose, research significance, operational definition, previous research, and writing structure.

Chapter II contains the theoretical basis regarding the understanding and general knowledge regarding the concept of religious moderation and an explanation of the nine keywords for religious moderation accompanied by relevant propositions or verses of the Qur'an.

Chapter III explains the methods used in this research, including research types and approaches, location, research subjects and objects, data and data sources, data collection techniques, and data analysis techniques.

Chapter IV presents research results in the form of the understanding of the Religious Moderation Ambassador of Antasari State Islamic University regarding the religious moderation verses in the Qur'an.

Chapter V is the closure that contains conclusions from the author and suggestions for future research.