Exploring Sayyid Qutb's Wasatiyyah Concept in Tafsir Fi Zhilal Al-Qur'an: Implications for Religious Moderation in Indonesia

Debibik Nabilatul Fauziah

Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang, Indonesia debibiknabilatulfauziah@staff.unsika.ac.id

Eni Zulaiha

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia enizulaiha@uinsgd.ac.id

Badruzzaman M. Yunus

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia badruzzamanmyunus@uinsgd.ac.id

Asep Muhyiddin

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia asepmuhyiddin@uinsgd.ac.id

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Abstract:

The term wasaţiyyah comes from the sentence "ummatan wasaţan" in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143, which reflects the character of fair and best Muslims. This concept has developed into religious moderation, emphasizing the values of justice and balance. In Indonesia, the understanding of religious moderation is often debated, with pros and cons related to the meaning of wasaţiyyah and indicators of moderation that are considered forced. Sayyid Qutb, in Tafsir Fī Zilāl Al-Qur'ān, provides a comprehensive interpretation of the verse. This study uses a qualitative method with a comparative analytical approach, relying on data from the Tafsir book and other secondary sources. The analysis was carried out with a hermeneutic approach to understand the context of the verse. The results of the study show six indicators of wasaţiyyah, according to Sayyid Qutb, including aqidah, thought, law, social, place, and time. This concept is relevant to religious moderation in Indonesia, especially in national commitment.

Keywords: Wasatiyyah; Tafsir Fi Zhilal Al-Qur'an; Moderasi Beragama.

INTRODUCTION

The understanding of religious moderation in Indonesia in recent years has been intensively promoted by the government, especially the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, starting from the many books on religious moderation that have been published and seminars and training that have been conducted (Rosyad et al., 2021). The aim is to provide the public with an understanding of the

concept of moderate religion in order to avoid extremism and liberalism (Armita & Karuok, 2022; Basri & Zaki, 2023; Liebman, 1983; Wibisono et al., 2019). In the book Religious Moderation, the Ministry of Religion formulates four indicators of religious moderation in Indonesia, namely national commitment, tolerance, non-violence and accommodating to local culture. First, national commitment is an indicator to see the extent to which a person's worldview, attitudes and religious practices have an impact on loyalty to the basic national consensus, especially related to the acceptance of Pancasila as the State ideology, his attitude towards ideological challenges that are contrary to Pancasila, and nationalism. Second, tolerance is an attitude of giving space and not interfering with other people's rights to believe, express their beliefs and express opinions even though they are different from what we believe. The tolerance emphasized, in this case, is inter-religious tolerance and intra-religious tolerance; through inter-religious relations, one can see one's attitude towards followers of other religions, while intra-religious tolerance can be used to respond to minority sects that are considered to deviate from the mainstream of that religion. Thirdly, anti-violence, radicalism or violence in the context of religious moderation is an ideology that wants to make changes to the social and political system by using violent/extreme methods in the name of religion, both verbal, physical and mental violence. Radicalism is often associated with terrorism because radical groups can do whatever they can to achieve their desires, including terrorizing those who disagree with them. Radicalism is not related to a particular religion but can be attached to all religions. Fourth, they are accommodating to local culture; moderate people have a tendency to be more friendly in accepting local traditions and culture in their religious behavior as long as it does not conflict with basic religious teachings (Ri, 2019).

In Indonesia, the understanding of religious moderation cannot be separated from criticism from religious figures and academics delivered through lectures and webinars published on YouTube social media. Some figures criticize the four indicators of religious moderation above, as conveyed by Fahmi Salim in an online seminar uploaded by the Media Umat YouTube account:

Determining these 4 indicators is actually a new form of extreme, meaning that these 4 conditions are no longer moderate, meaning you have to be moderate according to what we have determined.

Other figures criticize religious moderation based on the perpetrators. As stated by Buya Yahya in his lecture uploaded by the Al-Bahjah TV YouTube account:

Moderation is a movement to reduce extremism; if that is the meaning, then we agree. Violent/extreme religious practices must be discouraged. However, if those who fight in the name of moderation are unrighteous people who infiltrate themselves wearing the clothes of moderation, then, in fact, they are the ones destroying Islam. Be careful. People who enforce moderation must be wise and intelligent people, but so far, what we hear calling for moderation are people who are less intelligent and less sharp, so those who are right are being cut and even want to make peace with people outside (followers of other religions) but are causing damage within their own religion, this is dangerous.

According to Quraish Shihab, the meaning of moderation is in line (although not as broad) with the meaning of wasaṭiyah. Wasatiyyah is not a school of thought in Islam, nor is it a new sect, but is one of the main characteristics of Islamic teachings (Shihab, 2019). The term wasaṭhiyyah inspired from QS. Al-Baqarah (2) verse 143:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۖ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الْقَبْلَةَ عَلَىٰ عَقبَيْهِ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَىٰ عَقبَيْهِ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ اللَّهُ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفَ رَحِيمٌ هَدَى اللَّهُ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفَ رَحِيمٌ

"And so (also) We have made you (Muslims), a just and chosen people so that you will be a witness to the (deeds) of people and so that the Messenger (Muhammad) will be a witness to your (deeds). And We did not determine the Qibla which is your Qibla (now) but so that We know (so that it is clear) who follows the Messenger and who has defected. And indeed (the transfer of the Qibla) feels very heavy, except for those

who have been guided by God; and God will not waste your faith. Indeed, God is Merciful and Merciful to mankind."

In the interpretation *Al-Kashshaf* term, *the people of the wasaţ an* interpreted as the best or most just people (Az-Zamakhsyari, n.d.). As the Qurţubi explains the interpretation of Q.S. Al-Baqarah verse 143 that just as the Kaaba is in the middle of the earth, so God made the people of Prophet Muhammad SAW *the people of the wasaţ*, a ummah whose position is middle, namely below the Prophets and above all other ummah, he also mentioned another meaning of *wasaţ an* namely fair (Al-Qurthubi, 2002). Interpretation of *the people of the wasaţ* and in the interpretation of Al-Mishbah, it is a community that is in the middle, takes a straight path and is not glued to the world so that it is enslaved by things and materials and is not only concerned with the spiritual. A community that takes the middle path accepts life in its reality, believes in the afterlife, and then does good in this world (Amrullah, n.d.). In *Tafsir al-Munir* term *ummatan wasatan* is interpreted as people with good character who combine knowledge and charity (Al-Zuhaili, 2013). While in *tafsir Al-Mishbah* term, *the people of the wasaţ an* interpreted as moderate and exemplary people, *wasathan* or the middle position makes humans impartial to the left and right, something which can lead humans to act fairly and be role models for all parties (Shihab, 2017).

Researchers found a modern-contemporary interpretation that interprets the term *ummatan wasatan* comprehensively, that is, Tafsir Fi Zhilal Al-Qur'an, the work of Sayyid Qutb. He interprets sentences of *the people of the wasat an* into six things, first the middle people in views, thoughts, perceptions and beliefs. Second, the middle people in thought and feeling. Thirdly, Muslims are intermediate in terms of rules and harmony of life. Fourth, Muslims are intermediate in ties and relationships. Fifth, Muslims are a middle-class community. Sixth, Muslims are a middle age people (Qutb, 2003). Therefore, the researcher wants to know the concept of wasatiyyah from Sayyid Qutb's perspective in tafsir *For Zhilal Al-Qur'an* and its relevance to religious moderation in Indonesia.

Pronunciation wasaṭiyyah comes from a word formed by three letters waw, sin, And facing (و س الله على). This three-letter word has two forms of reading., first old man (و سُطٌ) with the letters sin lined up with breadfruit; this word is a form dharaf (adverb), which means بَيْنُ (between). Second Satan (و سُطٌ) with letters sin lines up the victory, this word contains several nearby meanings, forms a name (noun) to indicate something that is located between two ends (middle), and a meaningful adjective form cucumber (selected/best), afdal (most important), and ajwad (most qualified). Based on this meaning, the middle of something is the most important and best part. Whatever the word form wasaṭ the meaning will not come out of justice, priority, goodness, the middle, in between, and the middle position between two ends (Al-Shalabi, 2001).

Dalam Al-Qur'an kata wasat with various fractional forms he said found 5 times, namely in surah Al-Baqarah verse 143 and verse 238, surah Al-Maidah verse 89, surah Al-Qalam verse 28, and surah Al-Adiyat verse 4 (Abdul Baqi, 2001). As for the hadith, there are several hadiths in which there are words in his eyesz which contain the word wasat and the fragments, including the hadith about the blessings of food, are in the middle:s

Narrated to us Abu Raja', he said narrated to us Jarir from Aṭa' bin Sa'ib from Sa'id bin Jubair, from Ibn 'Abbas, Rasulullah SAW said, "Blessings descend in the middle of the food, so eat from the sides first, and do not eat from the middle." (H.R. At-Tirmidzi, No. Hadits 1805) (Al-Tirmidzi, n.d.)

Al-Mubarakfuri explains the meaning of the hadith above that the word وَسَعُ is the most just/balanced place, the most appropriate place for blessings to descend. And the meaning of the word إِذَا اللهُ أَكُلُوا مِنْ وَسَطِه is the edge/side of the food. The sentence وَ لَا تُأَكُلُوا مِنْ وَسَطِه is an order to eat food from the sides first before the middle (Al-Mubarakfuri, 1983).

Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi means wasatiyyah with a fair and middle attitude between two opposing ends, where one end does not have a greater influence so as to ward off the other end, and one of them does not

dominate and does not take more rights than the other. Examples of conflicting sides are spirituality and materiality, individuals and groups, realism and idealism, static and dynamic, and the like (Al-Qaradhawi, 1983).

As for according to Quraish Shihab *wasatiyyah* is a balance in all matters of worldly and spiritual life, *wasatiyyah* which must always be accompanied by efforts to adapt to the situation faced based on religious guidance and the objective conditions being experienced. Wasatlyyah is a balance accompanied by the principle of "neither lack nor excess," but at the same time, it is not an attitude of avoiding difficult situations or running away from responsibility. Because Islam teaches siding with truth actively but with wisdom. Wasatiyyah, which characterizes Islamic teachings, is the balance between spirit and body, world and afterlife, religion and state, individual and society, ideas and reality, old and new, modernity and tradition, and so on (Shihab, 2019).

The history of religious moderation in Indonesia was born from the religious moderation policy in the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, which promoted a religious moderation policy as a form and effort to maintain national integrity and harmony in religious diversity. In the context of religion, the Ministry of Religion adheres to the view that every individual is not only supposed to be moderate towards the religion he adheres to, but also respects the existence and diversity of other religions. This policy is believed to be one of the government's best efforts to restore the values of peace and tolerance contained in every religious teaching. The Ministry of Religion's concern about the rise in acts of intolerance and ideas of radicalism in religion has encouraged an anti-radicalism attitude from society consisting of various elements, including academic circles both in schools and universities. Several events held nationally were used to convey commitment-building declarations to deal with radicalism in religion, such as the Manado declaration, Cibubur declaration, Lampung declaration, Aceh declaration, Nusa Dua Bali declaration, and Serpong declaration (Masykur & Dkk, 2019).

Religious moderation means balance in understanding religious teachings, where this balanced attitude is expressed consistently in upholding the principles of one's religious teachings by recognizing the existence of other parties. Religious moderation behavior shows a tolerant attitude, respecting differences of opinion, respecting diversity, and not imposing one's will in the name of religious understanding through violence. Religious moderation has several principles related to the concept of wasatyes, that is *softţ* (take the middle path), *tawazun* (balanced), *i'tidal* (straight and firm), *Tasamuh* (tolerance), *musawah* (egalitarian), and *shura* (deliberation) (Abdul Aziz & Dkk, 2019).

The Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia formulated four indicators of religious moderation in Indonesia, namely:

- National Commitment. The issue of national commitment is important to pay attention to, especially when it is related to the emergence of religious understanding that is not accommodating to values and culture as a noble national identity. The emergence of religious understanding that is not accommodating to the nation's values and culture will lead to an attitude of conflict between religious and cultural teachings. This kind of religious understanding is less adaptive and wiser because religious teachings actually contain the spirit of fostering a feeling of love for the homeland and nation. All forms of religious understanding that have an ideology to distance individuals and groups of society from national commitment with the goal of establishing a state outside the system of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia are considered incompatible with indicators of religious moderation.
- Tolerance. An indicator of tolerance in religious moderation is the ability to show religious attitudes and expressions to respect the differences that exist in society. In this case, the context of tolerance is emphasized in understanding and respecting differences based on religious understanding factors..
- 3. Non-violence. All religious teachings, especially Islam, essentially uphold human values; Islam is present on earth as a blessing for the universe (rahmatan lil 'alamin). However, there are still religious expressions emerging from some Muslims today that appear rigid and exclusive in their religion, as a result, the face of Islam in public spaces seems unfriendly, extreme and discriminatory. This is, of course, not correct because the true face of Islam is spreading love for the entire universe. Apart from rigid religious understanding factors, radicalism and violence also arise from religious understandings that carry the ideology of revivalism with the aspiration of establishing an Islamic State such as caliphate, darul Islam and the priesthood. Indicators of non-violent religious

- moderation lie in balanced and fair religious attitudes and expressions, namely attitudes that prioritize justice and respect the reality of differences in society
- Accommodating local culture. The encounter between Islam and culture often invites debate and leaves problems. Islam as a religion originates from revelation, while culture is the result of human creation, which can change according to the needs of human life; at this point, there is often conflict between Islamic understanding and local traditions that develop in society. In Islam, the resolution of tensions between religious teachings and local traditions is bridged by figh and usul al-figh, which are the ijtihad of the ulama, opening up space to resolve tensions. A number of Usul al-Figh rules, such as al-'adah al-muhakkamah (good traditions can be used as a source of law), have proven effective in reconciling conflicts between Islamic teachings and local traditions. This resolution of tension proves that Islamic law is flexible and dynamic; it can adapt to space and time. In the context of Islam in Indonesia, adapting religious teachings to traditions that do not conflict with the Shari'a is called Islamic indigenization. The concept of Islamic indigenization is the embodiment of Islamic teachings so that they do not conflict with local traditions and culture. Indigenization does not mean abandoning Islamic norms for the sake of culture, but rather that these norms accommodate cultural needs by using the opportunities provided by variations in the understanding of the texts (Al-Qur'an and Hadith), the combination of the two being complementary. The fact about indigenization of Islam is a trace of the legacy and legacy of the preaching of the early generations of Islam bearers, such as the Wali Songo which is still visible to this day, such as the use of local languages instead of Arabic, for example, Kanjeng Nabi to refer to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, fasting to replace the term sawm, and many others (Abdul Aziz & Dkk, 2019).

METHOD

This research uses a type of library research. The substance of library research lies in its content, meaning that this type of research is more concerned with things that are theoretical, conceptual, ideas, ideas, and so on (Baidan & Aziz, 2019). In this research, the primary data source used is the book *Tafsir Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an* by Sayyid Quṭb. Meanwhile, secondary data comes from classical tafsir books and modern-contemporary tafsir books. Other secondary sources come from books, various research and articles that discuss *wasatiyyah* and religious moderation in Indonesia.

The data collection technique begins with technical preparation, namely, preparing everything needed to carry out the research, both hardware and software. Then, identify the *wasatiyyah* verses, which are grouped into two categories, namely the verses of the Qur'an that contain the lafaz Wasath and verses of the Qur'an related to character *wasatiyyah*, namely goodness, justice, ease in religion, wisdom, *istiqamah*, and intermediate.

The data analysis in this research is Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic analysis, where the theory built by Gadamer emphasizes a reader (*mufassir*) to carry out historical-linguistic analysis in order to obtain what is called a text horizon which will then be relevant to the interpreter's initial assumptions (mufassir's horizon) to be re-actualized (Kurdi, n.d.). The data analysis technique used is an analysis of the context of the verse by examining the background of the revelation of the verse (*asbab al-nuzul*), linguistic rules, and the life background of the interpreter. Analyzing the context of the verse is necessary so that the message conveyed by the verse can be understood properly and correctly so that an interpretation can be found that is appropriate to current developments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Sayyid Qutb

Sayyid Qutb Hasan Al-Shadzili was born in Mosha village, one of the villages in the Asyut province of the Egyptian highlands, on October 9, 1906. The origins of his family come from India, from the ancestors of an Indian merchant named Al-Faqir 'Abdullah, who was descended from his father Sayyid Qutb, namely Al-Haj Qutb Ibrahim Hasan Al-Shadzili. Sayyid Qutb's father had two wives; his second wife, Fatimah Husain 'Uthman, was Sayyid Qutb's mother. Sayyid Qutb grew up in a village with a simple and charming nature through upbringing by two obedient and noble parents; this good environment had a big influence on his Islamic and literary future (Al-Khalidi, 2000b).

In 1912, before the age of six, Sayyid Qutb entered the State Elementary School and graduated in 1918. In 1921, Sayyid Qutb settled in Cairo and entered junior high school, then continued to the teaching education school from 1925 to 1928 (Abu Zaid, 2009). In 1930 Sayyid Qutb continued his education at Darul 'Ulūm University (Cairo University) and succeeded in obtaining a license in literature and languages in 1933. After graduating from college, he was placed as a teacher under the Ministry of Basic Education for six years (1933-1939). After that, he moved to work as a staff member at the Ministry of Education office for eight years as an education supervisor until he became a director at Dr. Twhy Husain Head of the Department of Education (Al-Khalidi, 2000b). On November 3, 1948, the Ministry sent Sayyid Qutb to America to learn about Western educational methods and systems. He studied at Wilson's Teachers College (The University of the District of Columbia), and he earned an MA at that university and also at Stanford University. After approximately two years, he returned from America to Cairo on August 23, 1950 (Abu Zaid, 2009).

His experience in America seems to have been an important turning point in Sayyid Qutb's life, instead of being an admirer of America, he became a sharp critic of America (the West). He experienced a number of events that caused him to experience culture shock. This then made him even more religious and increasingly convinced that the US was experiencing moral decadence and a very biased anti-Arab view. Sayyid Qutb was also hit by the phenomena of sexual freedom, drug use and free alcohol consumption that were destroying American society. In 1952 he joined the Ikhwānul Muslimīn and was appointed editor of the weekly newspaper Al-Ikhwān Al-Muslimūn, then he served as head of the section for spreading da'wah. In July 1952 the Egyptian revolution occurred to overthrow King Fārūq. The revolution launched by Gamāl 'Abd Al-Nāshir received strong support from Sayyid Qutb (Muslim Brotherhood). When the revolution succeeded Sayyid Qutb served as advisor to the revolutionary command council and cultural affairs, then became secretary for the press publishing agency. However, the closeness between the Ikhwan and Al-Nashir didn't last long, Sayyid Qutb disappointed because of Al-Nā's governmentshir did not accept his idea of forming an Islamic State. Two years later, in November 1954, Sayyid Qutb arrested by Egyptian President Gamāl 'Abd Al-Nāshir with the accusation of conspiring to kill Al-Nāshir and carrying out anti-government agitation activities. Until finally he was sentenced to 15 years in prison and put in Liman prison Turrah It was there that he finished writing the Fī tafsir Zilāl Al-Qur'ān. After 10 years of serving his sentence, in 1964 Sayyid Quţb released from prison by Al-Nāshir due to the intervention of Iragi President Abdul Salām'Areef. After being free he wrote the book Ma'ālim fī Al-Ṭarīq which resulted in him being thrown into prison again in 1965, this time on charges of conspiring to overthrow the power of the Al-Nāhir governments. He was arrested along with other Muslim Brotherhood activists, as well as their friends and relatives. Trial of Sayyid Qutb took place unfairly, until finally the judge sentenced Sayyid Qutb to death and seven of his colleagues (Hidayat, 2005). The execution was carried out on Sunday 12 Jumādī Al-Śāniyah 1386 AH coincides with August 28, 1966 (Al-Khalidi, 2000b).

During his lifetime Sayyid Qutb wrote more than 20 books. He began to develop his writing talent by creating books for children that narrated the experiences of the Prophet Muhammad. And other stories from Islamic history. His attention then expanded to include writing short stories, poetry, literary criticism, and articles for magazines. At the beginning of his writing career, he wrote two books about beauty in the Koran, namely Al-Tashwīr Al-Fannī Fī Al-Qur'ān (Description of Beauty in the Qur'an) and Musyāhidāt Al-Qiyāmah Fī Al-Qur'ān (View of the Hour in the Qur'an). In 1948, he published his monumental work Al-'Adālah Al-Ijtimā'iyyah Fī Al-Islām (Social Justice in Islam), followed by Fī Żilāl Al-Qur'ān (Under the Shade of the Qur'an) which he completed in prison. While in prison, he wrote his final work Ma'ālim Fī Al-Ṭarīq (Guidelines) (1964). In this book, he expressed his ideas about the need for total revolution, not only in individual attitudes, but also in state structures. It was during this period that the logic of Sayyid Qutb's initial conception of the Islamic state presents. This book was used as the main evidence in the trial that accused him of conspiring to overthrow the Nasser regime. The blood drops of the struggle and the scratches of the pen inspire and blow the spirit of jihad in almost all Islamic movements in the world (Qutb, 2000).

Profile Tafsir Fi Zhilal Al-Qur'an

Seen from *mashdar* (source) interpretation, *mashdar* Interpretation *Fi zilāl Al-Qur'ān* is different from other interpretations due to the different characteristics and objectives it has. *Mashdar* in Tafsir *Fi zilāl Al-Qur'ān* not a primary source but a secondary source, where Sayyid Quţb uses it as a parable and proof of what he says. This is what makes Tafsir special *Fi zilāl Al-Qur'ān*, where Sayyid Quţb entering the vast world of the Qur'an without the determinants of previous thoughts. Sayyid Quţb let the Qur'an mold his personality, develop his thinking, explain his imagination, and form his scientific background and knowledge. So with this the Al-Qur'an is the primary reference and direct source in Tafsir *Fi zilāl Al-Qur'ān*. The provisions of the Qur'an, its instructions, ideas and guidance are the sources that equip Sayyid Qutb's thoughts, imagination, views and attitudes which he explains very well in Tafsir *Fi zilāl Al-Qur'ān*. There are secondary sources used as references by Sayyid Quţb in Tafsir *Fi zilāl Al-Qur'ān* are books of interpretation, books of hadīs, Sirah books, Tarikh books, science books, Islamic culture, his own life experience, and the Muslim Brotherhood group with its ideas and principles (Al-Khalidi, 2000b).

In terms of *manhaj* or method of interpretation, Al-Khalidi mentioned 14 manhaj used by Sayyid Qutb in interpreting activities, namely looking at the Qur'an with a general and comprehensive view, strengthening the main objectives of the Qur'an, explaining the operational mission of the movement of the Qur'an, maintaining the context of the verses of the Qur'an, avoiding long-winded explanations that hinder the meaning of the Qur'an, recording the ideas and guidance of the text of the Qur'an, entering the realm of the Qur'an without prior guidance, believing absolutely in the text. Al-Qur'an and accept its full meaning, explain the content of the Al-Qur'an text which is rich in meaning and guidance, explain the urgency of aqidah and its influence, eliminate erroneous contradictions between Al-Qur'an texts, explain the concept of the unity of the themes of the Al-Qur'an, apply the content of Al-Qur'an verses as relevant throughout all places and times, and explain the wisdom of making the Shari'ah and legal justification (Al-Khalidi, 2000a).

As for in terms of *ittijah* (tendency) tafsir, according to Ibrāhīm Sharīf tafsir *Fi ẓilāl Al-Qur'ān* is an interpretation that represents the idea of a religious group whose orientation is to serve Islam, calling for the words of Allah and returning its power. Interpretation *Fi ẓilāl Al-Qur'ān* has the advantage of its methodical principles, which bring renewal to the field of interpretation; apart from that, the author has his own personal and artistic views but does not depart from the point of view of direction and guidance (*hidayah*). So based on this, according to Ibrāhīm Sharīf *ittijah* which is attached to the interpretation *Fi ẓilāl Al-Qur'ān* is a unity that gathers *ittijāh hidāiyyah* (hint) and *ittijah adabiyyah* (literature) (Syarif, 2008). Fahd Al-Rūmī also groups tafsir *Fi ẓilāl Al-Qur'ān* in the group of interpretive interpretations *etiquette*, which in other terms it also calls it with *manhaj al-tażawwuq al-adabī fī al-tafsīr* (method of literary inspiration in interpretation), the meaning is balance between subjects (*żāt*) and object (*mauḍū'*) (Al-Rumi, 1997).

Interpretation of Wasatiyyah Verses in Qutb's Perspective

Sayyid Qutb interprets the verses in which there are words *wasat* in surah Al-Baqarah verse 143, Al-Baqarah verse 238, and Al-Māidah verse 89 by explaining the meaning of the word *wasat* in surah Al-Baqarah verse 143 and the meaning of the pronunciation *wasat* in surah Al-Māidah verse 89. According to him, there are three meanings of pronunciation wasat in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143, which is taken from the word in wisat, which means good and main, *wasat* which means fair and balanced, and *wasat* in the sense of sensory material (middle position). Interpretation *of the people of the wasat in surah Al-Baqarah verse 143*, according to Sayyid Qutb, Muslims are the intermediate or just and chosen people, becoming enforcers of justice and balance between people. *People playtan* according to Sayyid Qutb is reflected in five things:

- 1. Thoughts and beliefs, not people who follow spiritualism or materialism, but people whose spiritual fulfillment is balanced with physical fulfillment.
- 2. Thoughts and feelings, not people who turn a blind eye to science or people who are easily blind to something, but people who hold fast to the principles and teachings of their religion, and are not against researching various sciences.

- 3. Rules and harmony of life, not people who submit to rules made by humans without following God's rules. Rather, it is the people who mix social affairs with rules that come from revelation (God's instructions) and are implemented by leaders.
- 4. Bonds and relationships, not selfish and individualistic people, or excessively socialist people. Rather, it is a people who live in balance and synergy between individuals, society and their country.
- 5. A place, namely a place on earth where Muslims in all corners are witnesses to other humans.
- 6. Age or time, that is the people who end the time of ignorance and face the time of mature thinking (Qutb, 2003).

Character wasatiyyah goodness (al-khairiyyah) is mentioned in Al-Qur'an surah Ali 'Imrān verses 104 and 110. Sayyid Qutb, interpreting the surah Ali 'Imrān verse 104, states that there must be a group of people or a power that commands what is right and prevents what is evil from upholding Allah's manhaj on this earth. Commands and prohibitions cannot be carried out except by people who have power. Manhaj Allah is not merely advice and guidance, there is another important aspect, namely establishing the power to command and prohibit. Proclaiming virtue and preventing evil is not an easy task, because it often clashes with power and interests. Therefore, there must be a congregation or group that stands on the foundation of faith in Allah and brothers (brotherhood) because of Allah to be able to fulfill this difficult task. This is what the first Muslims in Medina (Muhājirīn and Anshār) hold fast to the two pillars of faith and ukhuwwah so that the way of God can be upright on the face of this earth. Sayvid Qutb continues the interpretation by revealing the meaning of the sentence save (born/released) surah Ali 'Imrān verse 110, according to him, this sentence describes the existence of a secret movement that works smoothly which leads the people to the front line and takes control of leadership because they are the best people. The main requirement of this position is to protect life from evil and damage; for this reason, they must have the strength to enable them to command goodness and prevent evil accompanied by faith to determine what is right and what is wrong (Qutb, 2003).

Character wasaţiyyah justice (al-'is) mentioned in the Al-Qur'an surah Al-Nisā: 58, Al-Nisā: 135, Al-Māidah: 8. Sayyid Qutb interpreting Surah Al-Nisā' verse 58 that fulfilling the mandate to those who are entitled to receive it and deciding the law fairly is the duty and morals of Muslims. The meaning of the mandate is the greatest mandate in the form of guidance, ma'rifat, and faith in Allah with intention, sincerity and direction. From this mandate emerged another mandate, namely the mandate shahādah (testimony) to the Islamic religion by calling people to Islam after the teachings of Islam have been realized in himself. As for the order to decide the law fairly between people, it includes comprehensive justice between all people, not just between fellow Muslims. Justice is the right of every believer or non-Arab, Arab or non-Arab, black or white. In Surah Al-Nisa' verse 135, God commands believers to uphold justice for the sake of God, not for personal or group interests. This verse forbids believers from following their various passions in the form of love for themselves and family, excessive fanaticism towards groups, communities, and nations to the point of turning them away from the truth. Sayyid Qutb cites the story of the Jews living in Khaibar who tried to bribe Abdullah bin Rawahaih to not be fair in the distribution of agricultural produce, but he firmly refused. because he was a graduate of the Rasulullah's madrasah who was educated in the Rabbani way of teaching. Sayyid Qutb ends this verse by saying that only Rabbani's manhaj is easy for humans to follow, not man-made manhaj. In Surah Al-Māidah verse 8, Allah commands believers to uphold justice and forbids them to act unfairly towards their enemies. This is the pinnacle of soul control and tolerance. This wise Manhai Rabbani is difficult to do except for those who uphold the truth for the sake of Allah. This high level of humanity was not known except during the heyday of Islam, namely when commands and realities were implemented in life, when religion was reflected in regulations that regulated all aspects of life. There is no religion or law on this earth that guarantees absolute justice against such a hated enemy as Islam. However, in the modern era, Islam has become mere symbols but is separated from the order of life so that the essence of Islam has no form in life (Qutb. 2000).

Character wasaţiyyah religious facilities are mentioned in surah Al-Baqarah verse 286, Al-Nisa verse 28, and Al-Haj ayat 78. Sayyid Qutb interprets Surah Al-Baqarah verse 286 by explaining that Allah does not burden a person but according to his ability. Therefore, a servant feels calm and does not feel burdened in carrying out this task. Because he knows that Allah knows his abilities, if he is not capable, of course Allah will not make it mandatory for him. This image can comfort the heart and gather the enthusiasm of believers to carry out their duties. Then explained that everyone will return to their Lord with their own

rewards and sins, they cannot protect or ask for help from others. This belief will make humans always defend God's rights because they will be held accountable. From this consequence, every member of the congregation must be enthusiastic about fulfilling the rights of the congregation because this includes Allah's rights over themselves, then together with the congregation fight to uphold the truth and eradicate falsehood. Sayyid Qutb interpreting Surah Al-Nisā verse 28 by giving a real example of convenience in the Islamic religion, namely the ease of marriage laws in Islam and comparing it with the phenomenon of sexual freedom in Europe and America. Sayyid Qutb explains that Allah provides relief to humans while maintaining their nature, potential and needs. Sayyid Qutb comparing Allah's manhaj in matters of biological relations (marriage) with the phenomenon of sexual freedom in the West, especially in France, Sweden, America and England, accompanied by evidence in the form of expert opinions and figures showing the impact and dangers of free sex which can damage the social order. Sayyid Qutb refers to a lifestyle that is far from God's way with the term modern ignorance. Surah Al-Haj verse 78 interpreted by Sayyid Qutb that Islamic law always takes into account human nature and directs it towards progress. Islam is the pure manhaj of Allah which is based on monotheism and its people are called Muslims (Qutb, 2000).

Character wasaţiyyah wisdom is mentioned in Al-Qur'an surah Al-Bagarah verse 268, Al-Nahl verse 12, and Lugmān verse 12. Sayyid Qutb interpreting Surah Al-Bagarah verse 268 by explaining the linguistic aspects contained in the verse, namely explaining the meaning of the word hikmah which is defined as spaciousness and straightness of purpose, understanding causes and goals, and placing things in proportion. A person who is given wisdom has been given knowledge about causes and goals so that he does not get lost in determining matters, he has also been given inner insight that guides him to benefit. Wisdom is not given except to people who are intelligent, namely people whose intelligence is used to remember Allah's instructions and take advantage of them so that they are not careless or negligent which can lead them into error. Sayvid Qutb explains the three principles of da'wah in surah Al-Nahl verse 125. First preach with wisdom, that is mastering the state of mad'ū (the object of preaching) and the limitations that are conveyed to them so that they are not burdensome, and the methods used in dealing with them. Second, preach with good advice that can penetrate the human heart and be absorbed by the conscience, not by scolding and violence. Third, preaching by debating in the best way, without being cruel to people who oppose his preaching. The duty of a preacher is only to convey the truth from God, he does not need to defend his opinion or impose his will to defeat others, let the results of his preaching be left to God because He is the one who knows best who is lost and who is guided. However, when there is hostility towards the preacher, then the preaching attitude can change from the three principles above, the preacher is allowed to respond to the hostility in order to defend himself and his family, in a way that does not go beyond the limits because Islam is a religion of justice and moderation, a religion of peace and reconciliation. Sayyid Qutb relates the interpretation of this verse to wasativyah Sayvid Qutb explains the nature and character of the most prominent wisdom according to Surah Lugman verse 12, namely directing oneself to be grateful to Allah and then directing it with advice (Qutb, 2000).

Character wasatiyyah istiqamah is mentioned in Al-Qur'an surah Hūd verse 112. Sayyid Qutb interpreted surah Hūd verse 112 by explaining the linguistic aspects contained in the verse, he explained the meaning of istiqamah, namely acting straight and following the path without deviating. Istiqamah requires continuous awareness, attention and emotional control. Sayyid Qutb explicitly links his interpretation of istiqamah with wasatIslamic iyyah is by explaining that Allah forbids excessive actions and going beyond the limits in practicing stiqamah because it can change religion from something easy to something very difficult (Qutb, 2000).

Based on Sayyid Qutb's interpretation of the verses in which there is the word wasat and verses related to the characteristics of wasatiyyah, the researcher concludes as follows:

Sayyid Qutb interpret the people of the wasatan comprehensively, namely a people who are in the middle from the most fundamental aspects for humans, namely faith and aqidah, to the social relations side of society and the state. Factors underlying the interpretation of ummatan wasat This comprehensive analysis, according to the researcher's analysis, is because Sayyid Qutb is a modern-contemporary interpreter whose interpretive products are functional and answer the challenges of modernity. Sayyid Qutb witnessed the setbacks experienced by Muslims in various aspects of life, from political, economic, social, to educational aspects. This decline was caused by the influence of Western colonialism, deviations and injustices carried out by leaders, then

- exacerbated by the condition of Muslims who distanced themselves from the teachings of their religion so that religious teachings were only symbols without real form. Seeing this phenomenon, Sayyid Qutb, through his interpretation, tries to express the instructions of the Qur'an regarding the rules of society and state, rules that originate from Allah and whose aim is to uphold justice on earth.
- Sayyid Qutb paid attention to the linguistic aspects contained in the verses that were interpreted. The linguistic aspect referred to here is explaining the meaning of the words found in the sentence. An example in explaining the meaning of the verse, Sayyid Qutb explain the meaning of the word wasat in surah Al-Bagarah verse 143, Al-Bagarah verse 238, and Al-Mā'idah verse 89. Sayyid Qutb also expresses the meaning of the word save in the surah Ali 'Imrān verse 110, explains the meaning of wisdom in surah Al-Bagarah verse 268, and explains the meaning of istigamah in surah Hūd verse 112. Factors behind Sayyid Qutb paying attention to linguistic aspects in the verses interpreted according to the researcher's analysis is due to Sayyid Qutb influenced by Al-Zamakhshari in the interpretation of Al-Kasysyāf. Since childhood Sayyid Qutb already knows this tafsir, he often attends knowledge gatherings in his village and one of the things he studies is tafsir Al-Kasysyāf. Al-Zamakhshari's thoughts in tafsir Al-Kasysyāf can be said to be a role model for Sayyid Qutb in interpreting the Koran. Apart from that, there are other factors behind Sayyid Qutb in paying attention to linguistic aspects is Sayyid Qutb's educational background who deepens the study of the Arabic language. Sayyid Qutb received a license degree in literature and languages from Cairo University. His interest in literature was influenced by the thoughts of the great Egyptian writer 'Abbās Al-'Aqqād. He practiced his writing talent by actively writing poetry, articles and books discussing various fields. Based on the two factors above, the researcher concluded that teachers and educational background are one of the factors that influence a mufassir in interpreting the Al-Qur'an.
- 3. In Sayyid Quţb's interpretive activities often cites a history relevant to the verse being interpreted, such as when interpreting verses about justice in surah Al-Nisā' verse 135 Sayyid Quţb quotes a history about Jews who tried to bribe Abdullah bin Rawahaih's friend not to be fair in the distribution of agricultural produce, but the Prophet's friend refused. The factors behind Sayyid Quţb quotes narrations that are relevant to the verse which is interpreted according to the researcher's analysis as being due to one of the reasons and but (source) the interpretation that is used as a reference by Sayyid Quţb is hadīs and hadī books. Although Tafsir Fi zilāl Al-Qur'ān included in the criteria commentary by al-Ra'yi, but the author uses hadīs and hadī books as a reference for their interpretation. This is normal considering that there are no mufassir commentary by al-Ra'yi who is truly authentic using his intellect and ijtihad in interpreting the Qur'an. The author is sure to use sources as well tafsīr bi al-ma'tsūr such as the verses of the Qur'an, the hadiths of the Prophet, the words of companions, tābi'īn, and the Salaf scholars that have a correlation with the interpreted verse.
- 4. Sayyid Quţb relates the interpretation of the surah Ali 'Imrān verses 104 and 110 about character wasaţiyyah al-khairiyyah (goodness) with political aspects. According to him, the amar ma'rūf nahi munkar cannot be enforced except with power and leadership. Dawah to virtue and preventing evil is not an easy task, so there must be a group that stands on the foundation of faith in Allah and brotherhood (fellowship) because Allah can fulfill this task as did the Muhājirīn and Anshār so that Allah's manhaj can be established on this earth. The factors behind Sayyid Quţb linking interpretation with politics is due to Sayyid Quţb is a high ranking member of the Ikhwān Al-Muslimīn group, his thoughts are feared by the Gamāl Abd Al-Nā regimeshir so he was thrown into prison twice until he was finally executed. Interpretation Fi Zilāl Al-Qur'ān he even finished writing it in detention which was full of pressure and torture. Therefore, some of the ideas in his interpretation are linked to politics considering the situation and conditions experienced by the author as a political prisoner. Apart from that, it is one of the manhaj in Tafsir Fi Zilāl Al-Qur'ān is to explain the operational mission of the Al-Qur'an movement, namely to make the Al-Qur'an a living guide to guide generations of people, educate and prepare them for righteous leadership duties. This mission according to Sayyid Qutb is explained in the surah Ali 'Imrān verse 110. Another Manhaj in Tafsir Fī

Zilāl Al-Qur'ān is applying the content of relevant verses of the Qur'an throughout all places and times, where in interpreting the Qur'an Sayyid Qutb depicting the reality of the condition of Islamic society in the first century of the Hijriyah and the solutions to social problems at that time and then applying it to similar conditions or problems today. Based on this, the interpretation of enforcing good and evil must emulate the leadership of Muslims in the first century so that the manhaj of Allah is established on this earth.

5. When interpreting verses about character *wasaţiyyah* ease in religion, Sayyid Quţb provides an example of the convenience of Islam in the aspects of marriage law and compares it with the phenomenon of sexual freedom in America and Europe. According to the researcher's analysis, the factors influencing this interpretation are caused by Sayyid Quţb's life background where he lives. Sayyid Quţb lived in America to receive education for two years and traveled around European countries. There he experienced a culture shock seeing the deviations committed by American and European society, especially free sex, which were destroying the young generation in the West. This sexual freedom is truly inversely proportional to the marriage law in Islam which protects women's honor and maintains the purity of offspring. Sayyid Quţb's life experience in the West this is the reference in interpreting the Al-Qur'an, especially the verses that talk about convenience in the Islamic religion.

Sayyid Qutb;s Relevance to Religious Moderation in Indonesia

Based on the study of the interpretation of Sayyid Qutb to the surrounding verses wasatiyyah Islam, the researcher formulated the concept wasatiyyah Sayyid Qutb as follows:

In terms of meaning, Sayyid Qutb means pronunciation *wasat* with the meanings of good and main, fair or balanced, and middle. In terms of characteristics, *wasatiyyah* according to Sayyid Qutb is:

- 1. Middle, fair and choice. According to Sayyid Qutb *the people of the wasaṭan* is a middle or just and chosen people, meaning upholding justice and balance between humans.
- 2. Stick. Sayyid Qutb relate Islamic wasatiyyah with istiqamah which he defines as acting straight and not deviating, according to him the character of istiqamah should not be excessive because it can change an easy religion into a difficult one and can remove religion from the wasatiyyah character.
- Wisdom. Sayyid Qutb also relates Islamic wasatiyyah with wisdom which is defined by spaciousness and straightness of purpose, understanding causes and goals, and placing things according to their proportions.
 - And in terms of indicators, wasaţiyyah in interpretation Fi Zilāl Al-Qur'ān, that is:
- 1. Wasaţiyyah in aqidah, in the form of beliefs that provide space for the spiritual and physical sides of humans.
- 2. Wasaţiyyah in thinking, namely thinking that is balanced between the principles of religious teachings and various branches of science.
- 3. Wasaţiyyah in statutory regulations, namely a combination of man-made rules with revealed rules from Allah which are then implemented by leaders.
- 4. Wasatiyyah in social bonds, in the form of a balance of life between individuals, society and the State.
- 5. Wasatiyyah in a place, where Muslims are witnesses to other humans wherever they are.
- 6. Wasaţiyyah in the age/time, by leaving the time of ignorance and facing the time of mature thinking.

Based on the wasaţiyyah concept above, the researchers see relevance between Sayyid Quţb's interpretation with religious moderation in Indonesia. Relevance is the relationship between concepts wasaţiyyah with national ideology. One of several indicators wasaţiyyah according to Sayyid Quţb is wasaţiyyah in social bonds, in the form of balance of life and synergy between individuals and society or their country. According to the researcher's analysis, this indicator has relevance to the indicator of religious moderation in Indonesia, namely national commitment. National commitment is an indicator to see the extent to which a person's worldview, attitudes and religious practices have an impact on loyalty to the basic national consensus, especially related to the acceptance of Pancasila as the State ideology,

his attitude towards ideological challenges that are contrary to Pancasila, and nationalism. Wasaţiyyah indicator Sayyid Quţb is wasaţiyyah in social bonds requires individuals and society to obey their national ideology. So that a synergistic relationship will grow between individuals, society and the State. Apart from that, it will create a sense of pleasure for each individual in serving their community or country, and vice versa.

Exploring Sayyid Qutb's Wasatiyyah concept in Tafsir Fi Zhilal Al-Qur'an intersects with international concerns and theoretical frameworks through its engagement with global discourses on Islamic moderation, hermeneutics, and socio-political models of religious pluralism. Sayyid Qutb's interpretation of Ummatan Wasatan (a balanced community) in Tafsir Fi Zhilal Al-Qur'an aligns with international theories on religious moderation, particularly the concept of Wasatiyyah (middle-path Islam). His emphasis on justice, balance, and Muslims as "witnesses to all mankind" resonates with broader academic discussions about Islam's compatibility with pluralism and democracy (Rosyid et al., 2022). Qutb's method combines *tahlili* (analytical) and *adab al-ijtima'i* (socioliterary) approaches, which parallels Western hermeneutical theories that stress contextual interpretation (Rahman, 2014). This bridges classical Islamic exegesis and modern textual analysis, a theme explored in global Islamic studies. Qutb's framework challenges radical interpretations of Islam, offering a theological basis for moderation. Internationally, this aligns with efforts to counter violent extremism (CVE) through theological reformation, as seen in programs like Indonesia's Wasatiyyah Islam (Amin, 2018).

Indonesia's adoption of Wasatiyyah Islam as a state-guided model for religious harmony reflects global interest in its unique approach to balancing Islam with multiculturalism. Indonesia's integration of Wasatiyyah principles (e.g., tawassut [middle way], tasamuh [tolerance]) into its state ideology provides a case study for theories on secular-religious coexistence, such as José Casanova's "public religions" model. Organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah operationalize the ideals through initiatives like Islam Nusantara (Islam of the Archipelago) and Islam Berkemajuan (Progressive Islam). These efforts mirror global debates on indigenizing Islam to foster socio-cultural resilience against transnational extremism (Amin, 2018; Setia & Rahman, 2022).

Qutb's socio-political exegesis in Fi Zhilal Al-Qur'an—often associated with Islamist activism—is reinterpreted here to support moderation, challenging his legacy as a figure co-opted by radical movements. While Qutb is frequently cited by Islamist groups, his emphasis on justice and balance offers a counter-narrative. This aligns with Olivier Roy's theories on the "failure of political Islam" and the need for adaptive theological frameworks (Merlini & Roy, 2013; Roy, 1994). Qutb's blend of classical tafsir with contemporary socio-political critique contributes to theories of "living Qur'an" hermeneutics, emphasizing scripture's evolving relevance—a focus in international Islamic studies (Aji et al., 2021). This research's focus on Indonesia's religious moderation strategies has practical implications for international policy and education: Counter-Extremism Models and Interfaith Dialogue. Indonesia's success in institutionalizing Wasatiyyah through education (e.g., Alkhairaat's moderation curriculum) provides a template for other Muslim-majority nations grappling with extremism. The study's emphasis on Wasatiyyah as a tool for multicultural cohesion intersects with global interfaith initiatives promoted by organizations like the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) (Haris et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

Verses wasatiyyah interpreted by Sayyid Qutb comprehensively, namely a people who are in the middle from the most fundamental aspects for humans, namely faith and aqidah, to the social relations side of society and the state. In his interpretation, Sayyid Qutb pays attention to the linguistic aspects contained in the verses being interpreted, citing narrations that are relevant to the verses being interpreted, linking the interpretation to the characters. wasatiyyah al-khairiyyah (goodness) with political aspects, interpreting verses about character wasatiyyah ease in religion by giving examples of the convenience of the Islamic religion in aspects of marriage law, and comparing it with the phenomenon of sexual freedom in America and Europe. Wasatiyyah in Sayyid Qutb's perspective is summarized in six indicators, namely wasatiyyah in faith, wasatiyyah in thought, wasatiyyah in rules and regulations, wasatiyyah in social ties, wasatiyyah in place, and wasatiyyah in era or time. Concept wasatiyyah Sayyid Qutb is wasatiyyah in social ties has relevance to indicators of religious moderation in Indonesia, namely national commitment.

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