

## **Wasathiyah Islam in Local Language Commentaries in Indonesia: An Analysis of Readers' Reception of Sundanese, Javanese, And Malay**

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### **Abstract**

This article examines the concept of Islamic *Wasathiyah* from the perspective of readers of Sundanese, Javanese, and Malay local commentaries. The study employed a qualitative approach, engaging readers of *Al-Ibriz* in Pati, Central Java, *Lanyepaneun* in Ciamis, West Java, and Hamka's Tafsir al-Azhar. The study revealed distinct interpretations among these groups. Javanese readers understood Islamic *Wasathiyah* in al-Baqarah 143 as being in the middle of religious practices. For Sundanese readers, it carried the same 'in the middle' connotation but with a specific focus on social life, denoting neither stinginess nor extravagance. In the Malay interpretation of Tafsir al-Azhar, it denotes the position of *ummatan wasathan*, signifying a community dedicated to upholding the straight path. The study also identifies two primary indicators of Islamic *Wasathiyah*, i.e., balance and fairness. According to readers of *al-Ibriz*, balance is interpreted as *wad'u syai fi mahallibi*, placing something in its proper place, while readers of *Lanyepaneun* emphasize being fair to oneself and others. In terms of tolerance, readers of *al-Ibriz* perceive it as the absence of compulsion when embracing different religions, emphasizing that the choice of truth should not be a matter of dispute. Conversely, readers of *Lanyepaneun* have their own interpretation of tolerance. All these interpretations are shaped by the socio-cultural contexts of the commentary authors and their readers, providing a rich tapestry of perspectives on *Islamic Wasathiyah*. In sum, while the Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay interpretations of '*ummatan wasathan*' share the overarching theme of moderation, each interpretation reflects the unique cultural, historical, and linguistic contexts in which it is situated. These interpretations demonstrate the Quran's adaptability to diverse cultural settings and its ability to convey universal principles through language and context-specific nuances.

**Keywords:** *Wasathiyah* Islam; Local Language; Sundanese; Javanese; Malay

### **Abstrak**

Artikel ini mengkaji konsep Wasathiyah Islam dari perspektif pembaca tafsir lokal Sunda, Jawa, dan Melayu. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, dengan melibatkan pembaca tafsir Al-Ibriz di Pati, Jawa Tengah, Lanyepaneun di Ciamis, Jawa Barat, dan Tafsir al-Azhar karya Hamka. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan interpretasi yang berbeda di antara kelompok-kelompok ini. Pembaca Jawa memahami Wasathiyah Islam dalam al-Baqarah 143 sebagai sesuatu yang berada di tengah-tengah praktik keagamaan. Bagi pembaca Sunda, kata ini memiliki konotasi yang sama 'di tengah-tengah' namun dengan fokus khusus pada kehidupan sosial, yang

tidak menunjukkan kekikiran atau kemewahan. Dalam tafsir Melayu Tafsir al-Azhar, kata ini menunjukkan posisi *ummatan wasathan*, yang menandakan sebuah komunitas yang berdedikasi untuk menegakkan jalan yang lurus. Studi ini juga mengidentifikasi dua indikator utama Wasathiyah Islam, yaitu keseimbangan dan keadilan. Menurut pembaca al-Ibriz, keseimbangan ditafsirkan sebagai wad'u *syai fi mahallibi*, menempatkan sesuatu pada tempat yang tepat, sementara pembaca Lanyepaneun menekankan pada sikap adil terhadap diri sendiri dan orang lain. Dalam hal toleransi, pembaca al-Ibriz memaknainya sebagai tidak adanya paksaan dalam memeluk agama yang berbeda, dengan menekankan bahwa pilihan kebenaran seharusnya tidak menjadi bahan perdebatan. Sebaliknya, para pembaca Lanyepaneun memiliki penafsiran mereka sendiri tentang toleransi. Semua penafsiran ini dibentuk oleh konteks sosial-budaya penulis tafsir dan pembacanya, sehingga menghasilkan permadani yang kaya akan perspektif tentang Wasathiyah Islam. Singkatnya, meskipun tafsir Jawa, Sunda, dan Melayu tentang '*ummatan wasathan*' memiliki tema yang sama yaitu moderasi, setiap tafsir mencerminkan konteks budaya, sejarah, dan bahasa yang unik di mana tafsir tersebut berada. Tafsir-tafsir ini menunjukkan kemampuan Alquran untuk beradaptasi dengan latar budaya yang beragam dan kemampuannya untuk menyampaikan prinsip-prinsip universal melalui bahasa dan nuansa yang sesuai dengan konteksnya.

**Kata kunci:** Islam Wasathiyah; Bahasa Lokal; Sunda; Jawa; Melayu

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic Moderation, known as *Wasathiyah Islam*, has become a prominent discourse within the Muslim world. In the context of Indonesian Muslims, *Wasathiyah Islam* is promoted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and supported by various Islamic organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, and various segments of society.<sup>1</sup> Notably, *Wasathiyah Islam* is regarded as the antithesis of religious liberalism and extremism in terms of religion. It stands in opposition to the emergence of various acts of terrorism carried out in the name of religion. *Wasathiyah Islam* is a viable solution for fostering a peaceful and dignified expression of Islam. Consequently, it has become a prominent subject of discourse in the field of Islamic studies.<sup>2</sup>

Various scholars have studied Islamic Moderation (*Islamic Wasathiyah*), approaching it from diverse perspectives. An intriguing question arises: Does *Wasathiyah Islam* also find representation in the interpretations of local languages in Indonesia? Addressing this question is crucial to understanding how the concept of Islamic Moderation is explored within the context of local language interpretation works of literature in Indonesia.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Ainun Najib and Ahmad Khoirul Fata, 'Islam Wasathiyah Dan Kontestasi Wacana Moderatisme Islam Di Indonesia', *Jurnal THEOLOGIA*, 31.1 (2020) <<https://doi.org/10.21580/teo.2020.31.1.5764>>.

<sup>2</sup> Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *The Middle Parth of Moderation in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> Abdurrohman Kasdi, Umma Farida, and Choirul Mahfud, 'Islamic Studies and Local Wisdom at PTKIN in Central Java: Opportunities, Challenges, and Prospects of Pioneering Religious Moderation in Indonesia', *HIKMATUNA: Journal for Integrative Islamic Studies*, 6.1 (2020), 51–62 <<https://doi.org/10.28918/hikmatuna.v6i1.2618>>.

In Indonesia, local language interpretations of the Quran are available in languages such as Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay. Notable examples include the work of *Al-Ibriḏ* by K.H. Bisri Mustofa in Javanese, *Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun* by Mohammad E. Hasim in Sundanese, and *Tafsir al-Azhar* by Hamka in Indonesian Malay. These local language commentaries encompass all thirty chapters of the Quran, offering insights into various aspects of the text. They also delve into the interpretation of verse 143 in Surah al-Baqarah, which contains the key concept of *Wasathiyah*.

There is a noticeable scarcity of survey studies regarding Islamic *Wasathiyah* in the context of local commentaries in Indonesian languages, such as Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay, as well as a lack of insight into the reception of these interpretations by readers.<sup>4</sup> This research aims to address this gap by examining the perspectives of local commentators and their readers' responses to the concept of *Wasathiyah Islam* as presented in these local language interpretations. The study's objective is to gain a set of perspectives on how local commentaries interpret and convey the meaning of *Wasathiyah Islam* in their works and how these interpretations resonate with their readers. This research holds significance in shedding light on the unique insights offered by local interpreters and the impact of their interpretations on their respective readerships.

Numerous prior researchers have conducted studies related to the concept of *Wasathiyah Islam*, exploring various dimensions. In a study conducted by Nur and Lubis, titled "*Wasathiyah Islam* in the Interpretations of *At-Tabrir wa Tanwir* and *Aisar al-Tafasir*," the research examines the interpretations of *Wasathiyah Islam* by two notable scholars. Al-Jazair (*Tabrir wa Tanwir*) interprets *Wasathiyah* as referring to the chosen people, drawing from the interpretation of '*bil ma'tsur*'. In contrast, Ibn 'Asyur approaches Islamic Moderation by juxtaposing religious texts and contemporary contexts. He emphasizes that texts are limited while contexts are ever-changing, which leads to the recognition that wisdom can be found in various religious traditions, deserving recognition and respect.<sup>5</sup> Nur and Lubis' study sheds light on diverse interpretations of *Wasathiyah Islam*, demonstrating the richness and complexity of this concept in Islamic scholarship.

Islam & Khatun examined Islamic moderation from an Orientalist and Western viewpoint. They assert that Islamic moderation is closely associated with liberal social norms, hermeneutics, political pluralism, democratic processes, organizational alignment, and the perspective on the state's legitimacy in controlling violence. This interpretation portrays Islamic moderation as an

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<sup>4</sup> Jajang A Rohmana, 'Tafsir Al-Qur'an Dari Dan Untuk Orang Sunda: Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun Karya Moh. E. Hasim (1916-2009)', *Journal of Quran and Hadith Studies*, 9.1 (2020), 1–24 <<https://doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v9i1.15260>>.

<sup>5</sup> Afrizal Nur and Mukhlis Lubis, 'Konsep Wasathiyah Dalam Al-Quran (Studi Komparatif Antara Tafsir Al-Tahrir Wa at-Tanwir Dan Aisar at-Tafasir)', *An-Nur*, 4.2 (2015), 205–25.

adaptive approach marked by a willingness to cooperate and compromise. However, it's important to note that Islamic moderation is not a monolithic concept. In Islamic scholarship, there are multiple dimensions to its definition. Muslim scholars typically explore the term's meaning through two primary avenues: Lexical meaning means analyzing the Arabic term *wasatiyyah* and seeking to understand its inherent linguistic meaning, while textual meaning refers to delving into the textual usage of *wasatiyyah* in orthodox Islamic sources, namely the Quran and the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad. This study concludes that moderation is a middle ground, representing the most appropriate, balanced position between extremism and liberalism. This interpretation is contextualized regarding counter-extremism, promoting modest socio-religious behavior and endorsing moderate legal positions.<sup>6</sup> This research highlights substantial differences in using and understanding the term 'Islamic moderation' between Eastern and Western perspectives, underscoring this concept's complex and multifaceted nature.

Fahmi's work titled "Islamic Moderation in the Style of Islamic Boarding Schools" focuses on Islamic moderation within the context of Islamic boarding schools. This study reveals that Islamic boarding schools play a crucial role in nurturing values of Islamic moderation, such as tolerance, cooperation, and mutual respect, ultimately fostering harmony in individuals' lives. Hanapi's study, titled "The *Wasathiyah* (Moderation) in Islamic Epistemology: A Case Study of Its Implementation in Malaysia" (Hanapi, 2014: 51), delves into the concept of *wasatiyyah* as per the Quran and Hadith within the realm of Islamic epistemology. It underscores that this concept is not to be interpreted literally, as doing so would merely describe the inherent distinctions between good (*khayr*) and bad (*fasad*), or between justice (*'adl*) and transgression (*zulm*). Instead, it emphasizes the message of practicing goodness with fortitude, strength, truth, and consistency while abstaining from all forms of evil and using wisdom to prevent it.<sup>7</sup>

These studies collectively contribute to a richer understanding of Islamic moderation, highlighting its multifaceted nature and the various contexts in which it is discussed and practiced. Previous studies have examined Islamic *Wasathiyah* through lenses such as the Quran, Hadith, and the perspectives of Islamic scholars, as well as its manifestation in Islamic boarding schools. Some have even delved into an Orientalist perspective and explored its practical implementation in

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<sup>6</sup> Tazul Islam and Amina Khatun, "Islamic Moderation" in Perspectives: A Comparison Between Oriental and Occidental Scholarships', *International Journal of Nusantara Islam*, 3.2 (2015), 69–78 <<https://doi.org/10.15575/ijni.v3i2.1414>>.

<sup>7</sup> Mohd Shukri Hanapi, 'The Wasatiyyah (Moderation) Concept in Islamic Epistemology: A Case Study of Its Implementation in Malaysia', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 4.91 (2014), 51–62.

Indonesia. Additionally, there have been studies investigating *Wasathiyah Islam* within various interpretations.

However, notably absent from prior research is an examination of Islamic *Wasathiyah* within the context of local language interpretations and how readers receive it. Diverging from the earlier studies, this research explores Islamic *Wasathiyah* within local language interpretation, focusing on the interpretation methodologies and readers' responses. This approach promises a unique perspective on Islamic *Wasathiyah*, offering insights into its understanding and impact in localized contexts. This study seeks to address two key questions: What interpretations and meanings are attributed to the concept of Islamic *Wasathiyah* by readers of Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay interpretations? What are the commonalities and distinctions in understanding Islamic *Wasathiyah* among readers of Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay local language interpretations? These questions will guide the exploration of Islamic *Wasathiyah* from diverse linguistic and cultural perspectives, shedding light on its shared and unique connotations among these reader communities.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research employs a qualitative approach, incorporating thematic analysis and field studies to examine the reception and understanding of Islamic *Wasathiyah* among readers of Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay commentaries. The study's participants comprise readers of local language interpretation books, such as readers of Bisri Mustofa's *Tafsir al-Ibriz* in Javanese from Rembang, Ciamis, and Tasikmalaya. Readers of Mohammad E. Hasim's *Lenyepaneun* in Sundanese, hailing from West Java. Readers of Hamka's *Tafsir al-Azhar* in interpretation in Malay. By engaging with readers across these diverse linguistic and regional contexts, this research aims to capture a comprehensive understanding of how *Wasathiyah Islam* is perceived and interpreted within these communities. This study begins with identification and codification which involves identifying and systematically codifying Quranic verses relevant to the concept of Islamic *Wasathiyah*. Subsequently, an extensive search for interpretations of these *Wasathiyah* verses is conducted within the contexts of Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay local interpretations. To ensure the accuracy and contextual relevance of the interpretations, this study engages readers from Central Java, West Java, and Sumatra who are familiar with the three respective interpretations. Their insights and feedback are integral to confirming the meanings attributed to *Wasathiyah*. Then, its analysis focuses on comparing the interpretations of *Wasathiyah* within

the three local language contexts. These steps are designed to systematically explore and analyze the multifaceted meanings of *Wasathiyah Islam* in various linguistic and cultural settings.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Three Local Interpretations: *Al-Ibriz*, *Lenyepaneun*, and *Al-Azhar*

*Tafsir al-Ibriz* whose full title is *Al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsiril al-Qurani al-aziz billoghab Jawiyah*, authored by Bisri Mustofa from Rembang, Central Java. Born in 1915 AD in Sawahan Village, Gang Palen, Rembang, Central Java, Bisri Mustofa emerged as a scholar nurtured within a traditional Islamic boarding school environment. His name, Mashadi, was later changed to Bisri Mustafa after completing the pilgrimage.

*Tafsir al-Ibriz* is notable for its utilization of the *pegon* Arabic script, a form of Javanese writing that employs Arabic letters without vowels. This script is specifically designed to enhance comprehension among the local Javanese community. Additionally, *al-Ibriz* is composed in a clear and straightforward style of the Javanese language, further simplifying its understanding for readers.<sup>8</sup> This *tafsir* is characterized by its adoption of the *bi ar-ra'y* method, composed over a span of six years, from 1954 to 1960. This interpretation combines elements of *qiraat*, *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), and *tasawuf* (Sufism).<sup>9</sup> Notably, it employs the Arabic-Pegon letters and Javanese language in the style and genre known as '*Pantura*,' reflecting the language of the northern coast of Java with an authentic nuance known as *blakasutha*.<sup>10</sup> Despite its regional nuances, *Tafsir Al-Ibriz* maintains referential power, evident through Bisri Mustofa's educational background and references to renowned commentary books such as *Tafsir al-Jalalain*, *Tafsir al-Baidlawi*, and *Tafsir al-Khazjin*. In terms of methodology, *Tafsir al-Ibriz* employs a predominantly literal approach, refraining from extensive comparisons among authoritative interpretation scholars. It also employs the *tablili* style, systematically commencing from Surah al-Fatihah to an-Nas.

Mohammad E. Hasim, the author of the *Tafsir Lenyepaneun*, was born to Awiti and H. Sultoni. He was born on August 15, 1916, in Bangbayung Kidul Village, Cieurih Village, Cipaku District, Kawali, Ciamis, West Java. The compilation of *Lenyepaneun* by Mohammad E. Hasim

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<sup>8</sup> Rizkiyatul Imtyas, 'Tafsir Al-Ibriz Lima'rifati Tafsir Al-Qur'an Karya K.H. Bisri Musthofa', *Ushuluna; Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin*, 1.2 (2020), 64–74 <<https://doi.org/10.15408/ushuluna.v1i2.15162>>.

<sup>9</sup> Ahmad Zainal Abidin and Thoriqul Aziz, 'Javanese Interpretation of Modernism: Contribution of Tafsir Al-Ibriz on Moderate Understanding of Sharia and Mu'amalah', *Justicia Islamica; Jurnal Kajian Hukum Dan Sosial*, 15.2 (2018), 239–62 <<https://doi.org/10.21154/justicia.v15i2.1462>>.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmad Zainal Abidin and Thoriqul Aziz, 'Vernacularization Aspects in Bisri Mustofa's Al-Ibriz Tafsir', *Jurnal At-Tibyan: Jurnal Ilmu Alqur'an Dan Tafsir*, 7.1 (2022), 1–16.

stemmed from his concerns about the prevailing mindset in the local community. He observed that many believed that merely reciting the Quran with correct tajwid and *qira'at* would suffice to earn rewards, neglecting the importance of understanding its meanings. Additionally, Hasim was dissatisfied with the translations and interpretations available to the public, finding them inadequate for enriching advanced students' knowledge.<sup>11</sup>

Motivated by these concerns, Hasim embarked on this project as a personal endeavor, even starting at seventy years old. He began with Surah al-Baqarah, initially using the Indonesian language. After approximately six months, a *Kiyai* (Islamic scholar) from Ciamis approached Hasim, expressing interest in his work. They requested that Hasim continue the interpretation in Sundanese, as they found it highly valuable. Initially hesitant, Hasim eventually agreed to continue his work in Sundanese. Armed with determination and utilizing resources such as a Sundanese dictionary and Arabic teaching books in English, he persevered in his efforts.<sup>12</sup>

*Tafsir al-Azhar* was written by renowned Malay scholar Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah (HAMKA). Hamka was born in 1908 into a respected family of reformist 'ulamā' in Minangkabau, Sumatra, Indonesia. His father, Abd al-Karim Amrullah, was a reformist scholar who co-founded the reformist journal *al-Munir*, similar to *al-Manār* founded by Riḍā in Egypt. As a child, Hamka was raised in a reformist environment, and the social rubric created by his father had a tremendous influence on his attitudes toward traditional *ulama* (clerics) and *adat* (customs).

Hamka's commentary demonstrates his extensive knowledge of both religion and modern science. *Tafsir al-Azhar*, as a whole, formed the subject of a series of HAMKA dawn lectures delivered at Masjid al-Azhar, Kebayoran Baru Jakarta beginning in 1959. This work has been referred to as his masterwork. It is written in his lucid style and reflects the scholarship of his time and his contemporaries. All of his works demonstrate his interest in Islamic reform, particularly his tafsir, in which he presents explanations of Qur'anic verses while also addressing local social and religious issues.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Jujun Juanda and Satria Khresna W, 'Pemikiran Tafsir Sunda (Analisis Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun)', *Al Burhan: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Dan Pengembangan Budaya Al-Qur'an*, 17.1 (2017), 1–18 <<https://doi.org/doi.org/10.53828/alburhan.v17i1.82>>.

<sup>12</sup> Mohammad Emon Hasim, *Pangalaman Nyusun Naskah Tafsir Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun* (Bandung: Pustaka, 1984).

<sup>13</sup> Muhammad Ulinnuha and Mamluatun Nafisah, 'Religious Moderation in the Perspectives of Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, Hamka, and Quraish Shihab: A Study on an-Nur Exegesis, Al-Azhar, and Al-Misbah', *Subufi: Jurnal Pengkajian Al-Quran Dan Budaya*, 13.1 (2020), 55–76.

### The Concept of Wasathiyah

The concept of *Wasathiyah Islam* is based on surah al-Baqarah: 143 on the keyword *ummatan wasathan*. Verse 143 of surah al-Baqarah, in the Javanese interpretation, is interpreted as the people in the middle as follows:

“Lan koyo mengkonon-mengkonon indadake sopo ingsun kan ingsun ing siro kabeh ing dadi **golongan kang tengah-tengah/bagus** supoyo ono sopo siro kabeh iku dadi saksiingatasi manuso lan supoyo ono utusan ingatasi siro kabeh iku dadi saksilan ora indadake sopo kan ingsun ing kiblat kang ono siro iku natapi ingatasi kiblat anging keronu ambukeyakekan sopo ingsun ing wong kang inderek sopo man ing utusane saking wong kang kuale sopo man ingatasi tungkak lorone man lan satubune kelakuan iku ono opo mengkonon-mengkonon madek iku yakti abot kejobo ingatasi wong akeyah kang paring petuduh sopo Allah ing alladzina lan ora ono sopo Allah iku daropun sia-sia sopo Allah ing iman iro kabehsetubune gusti kalawan manusoyakti iku agung welase tukang agung asih”.<sup>14</sup>

While the Sundanese Interpretation of *Lenyepaneun*, “*ummatan wasathan*” was interpreted as:

“Jeung kitu tab kami geus ngajadikeun maraneh **ummat anu siger tengah** sangkan maaneh jadi saksi ka balarea, jeung sangkan Rasul jadi saksi ka maneh. Jeung kami teu kapati-pati nyieun kiblat tempat maraneh madep anging sangkan kami nyaho saba anu nurut ka Rasul jeung saba anu nukang nonggong...Jeung kitu tab kami geus ngajadikeun maraneh **ummat anu siger tengah** sangkan maaneh jadi saksi ka balarea, jeung sangkan Rasul jadi saksi ka maneh. Jeung kami teu kapati-pati nyieun kiblat tempat maraneh madep anging sangkan kami nyaho saba anu nurut ka Rasul jeung saba anu nukang nonggong. Saenyana pindah kiblat teh karasana beurat kacida kajaba pikeun jalma-jalma anu geus dipaparin pituduh ti Allah, jeung Allah moal rek ngaremebkeun iman maraneh. Satemenna Allah teh mikawelas mikaasih ka manusa.”<sup>15</sup>

Whereas in the Malay Hamka interpretation, it is interpreted as:

*Dan demikian (pula) Kami telah menjadikan kamu (umat Islam), **umat yang adil dan pilihan** agar kamu menjadi saksi atas (perbuatan) manusia dan agar Rasul (Mubammad)*

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<sup>14</sup> Bisri Mustafa, *Tafsir Al-Ibriz Li Ma'rifat Al-Qur'an Al-'Aziz* (Kudus: Menara Kudus).

<sup>15</sup> Mohammad Emon Hasim, *Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun* (Bandung: Pustaka, 1989).



*menjadi saksi atas (perbuatan) kamu. Dan Kami tidak menetapkan kiblat yang menjadi kiblatmu (sekarang) melainkan agar Kami mengetahui (supaya nyata) siapa yang mengikuti Rasul dan siapa yang membelot. Dan sungguh (pemindahan kiblat) itu terasa amat berat, kecuali bagi orang-orang yang telah diberi petunjuk oleh Allah; dan Allah tidak akan menyia-nyiakan imanmu. Sesungguhnya Allah Maha Pengasih lagi Maha Penyayang kepada manusia.<sup>16</sup>*

Regarding the background of the revelation of Surah Al-Baqarah: 144, the three local commentaries draw upon the interpretations of al-Qurtubi and Ar-Rozi. They narrate that this verse pertains to the significant event of shifting the Qibla direction. Initially, the Qibla was oriented toward Baitul Maqdis in Jerusalem, but it was later redirected towards the Kaaba in the Grand Mosque in Mecca. Imam al-Qurtubi, in his commentary, emphasizes that most commentators concur that Surah Al-Baqarah verse 144 was revealed prior to the preceding verse. Meanwhile, Imam Ibn Kathir underscores that the change in the Qibla direction constituted the first abrogation in the Quranic legislation. Following the relocation, the Prophet Muhammad continued to pray towards Baitul Maqdis for several months before the directive was altered.<sup>17</sup>

Imam al-Razi offers insights into why Prophet Muhammad chose to pray facing the Kaaba instead of Baitul Maqdis. He highlights several factors, including the arrogance of some Jews who criticized Islam for allegedly contradicting Jewish teachings while adopting their Qibla in worship. Additionally, al-Razi underscores the significance of the Kaaba as the Qibla of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham), recognized as the patriarch of prophets and messengers. Moreover, al-Razi reveals the attempts by certain individuals, particularly from the Jewish community, to spread false allegations and maintain Baitul Maqdis as the Muslims' Qibla. Some falsely claimed that if facing Baitul Maqdis was deemed incorrect, all previous Muslim prayers would be nullified. Conversely, if facing Baitul Maqdis was deemed correct, then turning toward the Kaaba would be futile and vain. These false narratives extended to questioning the prophethood of Muhammad and the message he brought. In response to these challenges, Allah revealed Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143 as a solution, reaffirming the Prophet Muhammad's Qibla choice and addressing the accusations made by the Jews. This verse played a pivotal role in resolving the Qibla issue and establishing the Kaaba as the new direction of prayer for Muslims.

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<sup>16</sup> Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* (Singapore: Pustaka Nasional, 1989).

<sup>17</sup> Ibn Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Azim* (Lebanon: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1997).

In Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143, Allah provided not only a solution to the immediate challenge posed by the change in the Qibla direction but also conveyed a profound message about the unity of the Abrahamic faiths and the continuity of divine guidance.<sup>18</sup> The verse states, *'We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a Qibla with which you will be pleased. So, turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram. And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces toward it [in prayer].'* (Quran, 2:143).

This verse holds several key implications. Firstly, it reassured the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslim community that the change in the Qibla direction was divinely ordained and part of a larger plan. Allah's promise to turn the Prophet's face towards a Qibla that he would find pleasing affirmed the legitimacy of this transformation. Secondly, the verse addressed the accusations made by some Jewish groups who had questioned the authenticity of the Muslim faith and the direction of their prayer. Allah affirmed the Abrahamic lineage of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity by highlighting the sanctity of al-Masjid al-Haram, the sacred mosque in Mecca. This connection to the Abrahamic tradition underscored the shared religious heritage and the authenticity of the Muslim faith.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, the verse emphasizes the universality of Islam. It declares that Muslims should turn their faces towards the Kaaba, not just when they are in Mecca but *'wherever you [believers] are.'* This directive reinforced the idea that prayer and the orientation towards the Kaaba served as a unifying symbol for Muslims worldwide, regardless of their geographical location.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, Surah Al-Baqarah: 143 plays a pivotal role in resolving the Qibla issue, offering reassurance to the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslim community, addressing the accusations made by the Jews, and emphasizing the universal nature of Islam. It served as a cornerstone in establishing the Kaaba as the new direction of prayer for Muslims and reinforced the ties that bind the Abrahamic faiths together.<sup>21</sup>

Regarding interpreting the phrase *'ummatan wasathan'*, Bisri Mustofa offers a distinctive perspective. He interprets it in the local Javanese language as 'umamah, who is in the middle.'

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<sup>18</sup> MK Ridwan and Siti Robikah, 'Ethical Vision of the Qur'an: Interpreting Concept of the Qur'anic Sociology in Developing Religious Harmony', *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura*, 18.2 (2019), 308–26 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v19i2.5444>>.

<sup>19</sup> Hamid Fahmi Zarkasyi, 'Appraising The Moderation of Indonesian Muslims with Special Reference to Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama', *Addin; Media Dialektika Ilmu Islam*, 12.1 (2018), 1–30 <<https://doi.org/dx.doi.org/10.21043/addin.v12i1.4179>>.

<sup>20</sup> Muhammad K Ridwan, 'Jalan Baru Gerakan Moderasi Islam Di Indonesia; Reagensi Lembaga Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sebagai Basis Gerakan Moderasi?', *MAARIF*, 16.1 (2021), 60–78.

<sup>21</sup> Masdar Hilmy, 'Whither Indonesia's Islamic Moderatism? A Reexamination on the Moderate Vision of Muhammadiyah and NU', *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 7.1 (2013), 24–48 <<https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2013.7.1.24-48>>.

This translation choice reveals the unique character of Bisri Mustofa's Quranic translations.<sup>22</sup> In his work on Al-Baqarah: 143, he meticulously translates each word into Javanese using the Arabic script. This approach is intended to enhance the accessibility and comprehension of the Quranic text, particularly for individuals of Javanese ethnicity. Bisri Mustofa's choice of words in his translation reflects his intention not only to translate but also to provide an interpretation based on his reasoning. As a result, his interpretation can be categorized as a *bi al-ra'yi*, where personal reasoning and insight are incorporated into the translation process. This approach makes the Quranic message more accessible and relatable to Javanese-speaking readers.<sup>23</sup>

Mustofa's translation and interpretation of Al-Baqarah 2:143 reveal his interpretation of *ummatan wasathan* as a virtuous middle class. As he translates it, this term signifies the "*kang tangah-tangah*/good group."<sup>24</sup> In his concept of religious moderation, Mustofa emphasizes that Muslims are not merely designated as *ummatan wasathan* to represent a virtuous middle-class but also to serve as witnesses for humanity and successors to the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>25</sup> From Mustofa's perspective, religious moderation entails fostering an approach that mediates between individuals, bridging differences, and carrying forward the Prophet's teachings. This approach ensures that the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad remain accessible and applicable, contributing to the betterment of humanity in all aspects of life. Mustofa's interpretation underscores the significance of religious moderation as an inclusive and constructive attitude.

Bisri Mustofa's perspective on religious moderation aligns with the broader ethos of Indonesia, a nation known for its diverse and pluralistic society. In this Southeast Asian archipelago, various tribes, religions, and cultures have coexisted for centuries. As such, the idea of religious moderation, as articulated by Bisri Mustofa, holds immense relevance in fostering community harmony and understanding.<sup>26</sup> One of the core aspects of Mustofa's interpretation of religious moderation is its emphasis on mediation and bridging differences. This approach becomes instrumental in preventing interreligious conflicts and promoting peaceful coexistence. By advocating for dialogue, tolerance, and mutual respect, Mustofa's vision of

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<sup>22</sup> Imtyas.

<sup>23</sup> Ahmad Yani, 'Moderasi Beragama Dalam Perspektif Tafsir Al-Ibriz Karya Bisri Musthofa Kajian Terhadap QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 143', *Jurnal Pendidikan, Kebudayaan Dan Keislaman*, 1.1 (2022), 25–38 <<https://doi.org/doi.org/10.24260/jpkk.v1i1.1043>>.

<sup>24</sup> Mustafa.

<sup>25</sup> Abidin and Aziz, 'Vernacularization Aspects in Bisri Mustofa's Al-Ibriz Tafsir'.

<sup>26</sup> Yani.

religious moderation is a guiding principle for building bridges between different faith communities.<sup>27</sup>

Moreover, Mustofa's perspective ensures the continued relevance of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. By promoting an approach that is accessible and applicable to contemporary challenges, he helps bridge the gap between tradition and modernity. In a rapidly changing world, where the dynamics of society, politics, and technology constantly evolve, this adaptability of religious teachings is vital for their continued impact on the betterment of humanity.<sup>28</sup> Religious moderation, as envisioned by Bisri Mustofa, is not a passive or indifferent stance. Instead, it represents an active commitment to building a more inclusive and constructive society. It encourages individuals to engage with their faith in a way that contributes positively to their own lives and the lives of others. This approach reflects the Islamic principle of '*wasatiyyah*' or balance, which calls for moderation and avoidance of extremism.<sup>29</sup>

Mohammad E. Hasim's interpretation of '*ummatan wasathan*' sheds light on the concept of moderation within the Islamic tradition. He defines it as a community that embodies a sense of balance and equity in their actions. Specifically, this moderation applies to matters of wealth and generosity, emphasizing neither excessive stinginess nor extravagance but maintaining a fair and equitable approach to performing good deeds.<sup>30</sup> The concept of moderation, as articulated by Hasim, draws from Islamic teachings and principles that promote balance and justness in all aspects of life. It reflects the broader Islamic ethos of avoiding extremes, a principle encapsulated in the term '*wasatiyyah*.' This concept encourages individuals and communities to find a middle path that avoids excesses and deficiencies.<sup>31</sup>

Hasim's interpretation finds particular relevance in Surah Al-Ma'idah: 89, where he illustrates the practical application of '*ummatan wasathan*.' In this verse, believers are instructed to pay a fine as an expiation for certain oaths they have violated. Hasim's interpretation of '*wasath*' in this context underscores the idea of balance and equity. According to Hasim, the expiation involves offering two garments or two sarongs—one in good condition and the other

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<sup>27</sup> Mustafa.

<sup>28</sup> Zarkasyi.

<sup>29</sup> Ahmad Mustaniruddin, 'Paradigm Shift in the Interpretation of Religious Moderation In Indonesia: A Review of Some Indonesian Mufassir', *Al-Wasatiyyah; Journal of Religious Moderation*, 2.1 (2023), 71–94.

<sup>30</sup> Jajang A Rohmana, 'Memahami Al-Quran Dengan Kearifan Lokal: Nuansa Budaya Sunda Dalam Tafsir Al-Quran Berbahasa Sunda', *QUHAS; Journal of Quran and Hadits Studies*, 3.1 (2014), 79–99 <<https://doi.org/doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v3i1.1164>>.

<sup>31</sup> Juanda and W.

worn, or according to one's ability.<sup>32</sup> This act of providing both a new and a used garment exemplifies the principle of moderation in giving. It allows individuals to fulfil their religious obligations without excessive burden or extravagance. They maintain a balanced approach to their religious duties by offering what is within their means.<sup>33</sup>

In essence, Hasim's interpretation of '*ummatan wasathan*' and its application in Surah Al-Ma'idah: 89 emphasizes the importance of moderation and equity in the practice of Islam.<sup>34</sup> It serves as a reminder that the Islamic tradition encourages individuals to act in a balanced and just manner in all aspects of life, including charity matters and religious obligations.<sup>35</sup> This approach aligns with the broader principles of social justice and compassion found within Islam, promoting a community that embodies moderation and fairness. Moreover, *wasath* denotes something between two undesirable extremes. The verse mentioned represents the quality of being a benefactor, striking a balance between extravagance and miserliness, akin to pure milk that stands between blood and impurities.<sup>36</sup> Hasim's interpretation emphasizes the virtue of moderation and balance in various aspects of life, including charitable acts, aligning with the Quranic concept of *ummatan wasathan*.<sup>37</sup>

In *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, Hamka commences his interpretation of Surah Al-Baqarah: 143 by drawing a connection to the preceding verse, Al-Baqarah: 142, emphasizing thematic continuity. Hamka firstly draws upon the interpretation of Al-Zamakhshari from *Tafsir Al-Kasyāf* to elucidate the meaning of the phrase '*so that you become witnesses over humans.*' In accordance with Al-Zamakhshari's viewpoint, Hamka posits that the people of Muhammad, who embody the middle way, are destined to serve as witnesses to other communities who have received messages through different prophets. They will attest to the authenticity of the messages conveyed by these messengers.<sup>38</sup> Hamka also underscores the significance of the subsequent part of the verse, which states, '*and is The Apostles also bear witness over you.*' In this context, the term 'apostles' refers to the Prophet Muhammad and those who followed his path. They, too,

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<sup>32</sup> Jajang A Rohmana, 'Warisan Islam Lokal Untuk Peradaban Islam Nusantara: Kontribusi Penafsiran Al-Qur'an Di Tatar Sunda', *Jurnal Refleksi*, 14.1 (2015), 95–120 <<https://doi.org/doi.org/10.15408/ref.v14i1.10172>>.

<sup>33</sup> Hasim, *Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun*.

<sup>34</sup> Irwan Evarial and Muhammad Azwar, 'Contributions of "Tafsir Ayat Suci Dalam Renungan" for West Java (Methodological Analysis of "Tafsir Ayat Suci Dalam Renungan" by Moh. E. Hasyim)', *International Journal of Transdisciplinary Knowledge*, 3.2 (2022), 6–25 <<https://doi.org/doi.org/10.31332/ijtk.v3i2.29>>.

<sup>35</sup> Hasim, *Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun*.

<sup>36</sup> Irfan Setia Permana, Siti Juju Juariah, and Ari Prayoga, 'Moderasi Islam Pada Tafsir Sunda Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun Karya Mohammad Emon Hasim', *Al-Tarbawi Al-Haditsab: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 6.1 (2021), 58–88 <<https://doi.org/10.24235/tarbawi.v6i1.7739>>.

<sup>37</sup> Rohmana, 'Tafsir Al-Qur'an Dari Dan Untuk Orang Sunda: Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun Karya Moh. E. Hasim (1916-2009)'.

<sup>38</sup> Hamka.

will serve as witnesses before God, ensuring they have faithfully fulfilled their duties as proponents of the middle way. This responsibility involves upholding the principles of moderation and safeguarding the integrity of the message, preventing any distortion or deviation from the middle path.<sup>39</sup>

Hamka's interpretation extends to the discussion of the change of Qibla, a topic introduced in the preceding verse, Al-Baqarah 142.<sup>40</sup> According to Hamka, this change in the direction of prayer manifests God's divine will aimed at awakening *ummatan wasaṭana*, identifying the faithful from those who turn away. In elucidating the change of Qibla, Hamka first emphasizes the Kaaba as the original Qibla. He underscores that this change was a test from Allah that was perceived as challenging except for those guided by divine wisdom. To support his interpretation, Hamka references several hadiths narrated by scholars like Ibn Jarir, Ibn Juraij, Imam Ahmad, Abd Humaid, Tarmidzi, Ibn Hibban, at-Ṭabrani, and al-Hakim. These hadiths portray the doubts and concerns of newly converted Muslims regarding the change of Qibla.<sup>41</sup> Some questioned whether those who died before the Qibla change would lose the rewards of their faith. The following verse was revealed in response: "*And Allah will not waste your faith.*" This verse reassures that those who passed away before the change of Qibla would not lose the rewards of their deeds, as their actions were driven by faith. Allah accepts their obedience and sincere worship with utmost favor.<sup>42</sup>

Hamka underscores that the essence of '*ummatan wasaṭan*' is to serve as guardians of the straight path, an implication hinted at in the concluding part of the previous verse. Hamka's interpretation of '*ummatan wasaṭan*' offers a unique perspective on the concept of moderation within the Islamic tradition. He defines it as the people in the middle, specifically referring to the followers of Prophet Muhammad.<sup>43</sup> Hamka's understanding of moderation hinges on a balanced approach to life that seeks to avoid the extremes exemplified by previous religious communities, namely the Jews and Christians. Hamka believes moderation encompasses a delicate equilibrium between worldly pursuits and spiritual devotion. He contrasts this approach with the characteristics of the Jews, who, he argues, became excessively attached to worldly

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<sup>39</sup> Iqbal Ansari and Mutaqin Alzamzami, 'Buya Hamka's Perspective Religious Moderation in Tafsir Al-Azhar QS. Al-Baqarah: 256', *Al-Wasathiyah; Journal of Religious Moderation*, 1.2 (2022), 106–30.

<sup>40</sup> Hamka.

<sup>41</sup> Hamka.

<sup>42</sup> Achmad Junaidi and Agus Kharir, 'Konsep Moderasi Islam Dalam Al-Qu'ran (Studi Komparatif Antara Tafsir An-Nûr Dan Al-Azhâr)', *El-Waroqoh : Jurnal Ushuluddin Dan Filsafat*, 4.2 (2020) <<https://doi.org/10.28944/el-warqoh.v4i2.247>>.

<sup>43</sup> Hamka, *Tafsir al-Azhar*, Vol. 1.

possessions.<sup>44</sup> Historically, the Jews have been known for focusing on material wealth and worldly success. Hamka's interpretation of '*ummatan wasaṭan*' suggests Islam encourages its followers to avoid excessive materialism and greed, fostering a sense of detachment from worldly possessions. On the other hand, Hamka also critiques the Christians for what he perceives as an over-absorption in spiritual matters. Some Christian traditions have been known for their asceticism and monastic lifestyles, where individuals may detach themselves from worldly concerns to focus solely on spiritual pursuits.<sup>45</sup> Hamka's interpretation underscores the importance of maintaining a balanced approach in which spiritual devotion coexists harmoniously with worldly engagement.

Hamka argues that the emergence of Prophet Muhammad in the Arabian community aimed to propagate teachings that would awaken '*ummatan wasaṭan*', signifying religious moderation. These people embrace a balanced approach to life, acknowledging the realities of this world while firmly believing in the afterlife. They strive to perform good deeds in this world, seeking wealth to uphold justice and prioritize both physical and spiritual well-being, recognizing the interdependence of the two.<sup>46</sup>

In Hamka's perspective, Islam unites these two dimensions of life, encouraging its followers to strike a balance between material and spiritual needs. This balance reflects the broader Islamic concept of '*wasatiyyah*,' which promotes moderation, fairness, and avoiding extremes in all aspects of life.<sup>47</sup> For instance, Hamka likens the act of prayer to a meeting point between the physical and spiritual aspects of worship. While the body performs physical actions like standing, bowing, and prostrating, the essence of prayer lies in the sincerity and solemnity of the heart. Hamka extends this perspective to other daily acts of worship, such as *zakat* (charity) and Friday prayers, which exemplify the characteristics of moderation by harmonizing material and spiritual aspects of life. Hamka's interpretation of '*ummatan wasaṭan*' serves as a reminder that, in Islam, moderation does not imply a rejection of either the material or the spiritual realm but rather a harmonious integration of both. It encourages individuals to navigate the complexities of life with balance, recognizing that their faith should inform their actions in both the material and spiritual domains. Hamka emphasizes the importance of nurturing intellectual faculties while strengthening one's devotion to refine emotions and feelings.

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<sup>44</sup> Anwar Mujahidin and Kim Hyung-Jun, 'The Implication of Local Wisdom in Tafsir Al-Azhar on Moderate Islamic Thought By Hamka', *El-Harakah*, 23.2 (2021), 239–55 <<https://doi.org/10.18860/eh.v23i2.13414>>.

<sup>45</sup> Ansari and Alzamzami.

<sup>46</sup> M. Quraish Shibah, *Wasathiyah: Wawasan Islam Tentang Moderasi* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2019).

<sup>47</sup> Mujahidin and Hyung-Jun.

Pursuing wealth is not merely for personal gain but a tool for performing acts of benevolence and righteousness. The individuals belonging to "*ummatan wasaṭan*" consider themselves Allah's stewards on earth, responsible for providing for the hereafter, as they understand that they will be held accountable before Allah. Ultimately, this interpretation underscores the holistic nature of Islam, which seeks to guide its followers toward a well-rounded and moderate way of life.

### The Shared Theme of Moderation

Among the three interpretations in local languages, Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay, there is a shared theme of 'moderation,' albeit with nuanced contextual variations. The Javanese interpretation emphasizes cultivating a moderate religious disposition, particularly in navigating differences to foster a harmonious religious life within a diverse community comprising various ethnicities and faiths. On the other hand, the Sundanese interpretation, *Lanyepaneun*, strongly emphasizes moderation in social interactions, referred to as '*muamalah*.' This includes not being parsimonious in sharing wealth and extending care to needy people. In contrast, the Malay interpretation by Hamka, drawing a connection to the preceding verse, accentuates the concept of '*Wasathiyah*' or moderation within religion. Hamka's interpretation aligns with the broader context of the verse, which discusses Judaism and Christianity. While Jews are characterized by their materialistic focus, and Christians are known for their spiritual emphasis, Islamic moderation, according to Hamka, unites these two tendencies, striking a balance between life's material and spiritual aspects.

**Table 1**

*Shared Theme Moderation*

<i>Mufassir</i>	<b>Contextual Nuances</b>	<b>Linguistic Contexts</b>	<b>Dimension</b>
<b>Bisri Mustofa</b> <i>(Al-Ibriz)</i>	Harmony in diversity; respecting people in different religions	Moderation in beliefs and practices; Moral excellency	Rituals; Plurality
<b>M. E. Hasim</b> <i>(Lanyepaneun)</i>	Social harmony and economic equity	Sharing wealth and prosperity; Justice	Economic; Justice
<b>Hamka</b> <i>(Al-Azhar)</i>	Avoid extreme materialism and spiritualism	Antithesis for Christianity and Judaism	Theology; Balance



In the local interpretations of '*ummatan wasaṭan*' in Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay, this study discovers a common thread of 'moderation,' albeit with distinct contextual nuances. These interpretations highlight the flexibility and adaptability of the Quranic message to various cultural and linguistic contexts. The Javanese interpretation underscores the importance of cultivating a moderate religious disposition. It emphasizes the need for individuals to embrace moderation in their beliefs and practices, particularly when navigating differences within a diverse community comprising various ethnicities and faiths. In the context of Javanese culture, which has a rich history of religious diversity and syncretism, this interpretation resonates with the imperative of harmonious coexistence.

In the Sundanese interpretation, known as *Lanyepanoun*, moderation takes on a distinct focus on social interactions, encapsulated in the term '*muamalah*.' Here, moderation is not confined to religious practices alone but extends to how individuals engage with one another in society. It emphasizes the importance of not being overly parsimonious in sharing wealth and encourages people to extend care and support to those in need. This interpretation underscores the value of social harmony and economic equity within the Sundanese cultural context.

Contrastingly, Hamka's Malay interpretation places a strong emphasis on the concept of '*Wasathiyah*,' which aligns with the broader context of the Quranic verse and its discussion of Judaism and Christianity. Hamka's interpretation centers on the concept of moderation within religion itself. It highlights the balanced approach advocated by Islam, which seeks to avoid extremes and find a middle path between worldly pursuits and spiritual devotion. This interpretation resonates with the overarching message of the Quran and its call for believers to maintain a balanced and equitable way of life.

In sum, while the Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay interpretations of '*ummatan wasaṭan*' share the overarching theme of moderation, each interpretation reflects the unique cultural, historical, and linguistic contexts in which it is situated. These interpretations demonstrate the Quran's adaptability to diverse cultural settings and its ability to convey universal principles through language and context-specific nuances.

## CONCLUSION

The local Javanese interpretation centers on fostering moderate religious attitudes to promote harmony in a diverse community. This perspective emphasizes the significance of maintaining a

balanced approach to religious practices and beliefs. Doing so aims to facilitate peaceful coexistence among people from different ethnicities and faiths. In this context, moderation serves as a bridge for understanding and tolerance, fostering a harmonious religious life within the community. The Javanese interpretation emphasizes cultivating a moderate religious disposition, particularly in navigating differences to foster a harmonious religious life within a diverse community comprising various ethnicities and faiths. While the Sundanese strongly emphasizes moderation in social interactions. This encompasses economic and social transactions, and moderation is perceived as a fundamental principle in this context. This interpretation advocates against miserliness in wealth-sharing and encourages individuals to exhibit care and generosity towards those in need. Moderation serves as a guide for ethical and compassionate behavior within Sundanese society. Apart from that, the Malay interpretation by Hamka connects moderation to the preceding verse, highlighting its significance within the realm of religion. This interpretation aligns with the broader context of the verse, which discusses Judaism and Christianity. While Jews prioritize material life and Christians emphasize spiritual life, Islamic moderation, as per Hamka, harmonizes these two tendencies, striking a balance between the material and spiritual aspects of existence. While Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay cultures value moderation, they apply it differently to address the unique challenges and priorities within their respective communities. These interpretations reveal how various communities prioritize and embody the concept of moderation. The juxtaposition of these interpretations highlights the nuanced nature of moderation as a cultural value.

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