Embracing Radicalism and Extremism in Indonesia with the Beauty of Islam

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author IN designed the study, performed the content and discourse analysis, managed the fund and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author AHN helped to design the study, did the analysis, whereas authors HF and HC managed the data collected, helped to do the analysis of the study. All authors searched for references and wrote and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The phenomena of radicalism and extremism in religiosity, especially are a global trend. They are widespread easily due to technological advancement, especially in the information and communication fields. This study tries to explore the mainstreaming of Islamic moderation in encountering such phenomena in Indonesia. It is qualitative research employing the documentary technique for collecting data, then analyzing them through discourse and content analysis. The results of this study indicate that, based on awareness of the reality of the struggle between radical extremism and the moderate Islam in today's global world, the portrait of "the beauty of Islam"

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consisting a blend of truth, goodness and beauty and a recognition to the highest respect of the preservation of man's religion, soul, offspring, intelligence and wealth, need to be probed and presented forward. Indonesia, - a country with the largest Muslim population and rich in diversity,- can become a role model in countering radicalism and extremism by disseminating the practices of moderate Islam to its adherents.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the new rounds of Indonesia after the collapse of the authoritarianism walls of the New Order regime is the appearance of a radical-fundamentalism Islamic style on the public stage. Fundamental and radical groups appear to dominate the public stage while beating on the drum of Islamization in various lines. With a loud voice laden with ideological-political obsession, this movement overturned the logic of the nation and state that had been established and steady based on the State ideology based on formal Islamic conceptions. The Islamization of the State and the application of Islamic Sharī'ah are continually voiced by radical fundamentalists. Signs of the group's emergence are the intensity of violence that often occurs in the name of religion, jihād (struggle in the way of Allah), and amar ma'rūf nahi munkar (enjoining goodness and preventing wrongdoings). Meanwhile, observed from different angles, it is increasingly difficult to ward off religion and terrorism attachment since many terrorists claim to act on Islam [1].

Such a phenomenon was exacerbated by the transition of democratization which is hijacked by groups of politicians flagged with the elite and certain groups' interest. The democracy in Indonesia was also harassed by fundamentalist and radical groups. The freedom in the reform era has given a breath of fresh air for these hardliners [2] to come back to the public offering ideological and political thought that is contrary to the principles of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia. Menus of violent bringing the name of religion brought by the radical groups are so paradox considering that the esoteric and exoteric values of Islamic teachings are to present Islam as a friendly and tolerant religion that spreads universal benefit. The logic of radicality used has gone beyond the logic of democracy and freedom of opinion and even it has to sacrifice the civilization and nobility of Indonesian religion and nation.

Observing the phenomena of fundamental and radical groups by borrowing the analysis of Imdadun Rahmat, it is clear that there is a pre-condition that underlies this movement. This is in the form of the opening of the tap of democratization with all its freedoms during the reform era. The fall of the Indonesian regime of New Order in 1998 provided the right time for any fundamental and radical groups, including those bringing the name of Islam, to emerge. Such models of Islamic movement are different from the existing classical Islamic movements such as Nahdhatul Ulama' (NU) and Muhammadiyah, even they are outside the main framework of the political and discourse process of the dominant Islamic movement [3].

The international Muslim thinkers and scholars have been placing great hopes to Indonesia since the early of the 1970s together with the birth of a new wave of Islamic fundamentalism and liberal Islam's thought and movement, however, their mainstream still follow the two major groups of Indonesian Muslim organizations namely NU and Muhammadiyah which function as the locomotor of moderation [4]. Unfortunately, Indonesia has not yet become a reference to Islamic civilization based on local wisdom. This is not because of the inability of the nation's figures to initiate it, but rather because the Indonesian Muslims' ideas and thoughts have not been fully read by the world since they have not been spread using international languages. So far, Indonesian Muslim scholars remained at the level of quoting and adopting the products of Middle Eastern and Western Muslims' thought which are transformed with their monumental works or magnum opuses through both books and journals distributed to any part of the world, including Indonesia.

In recent decades, the moderation of Islam has become the blueprint for mainstreaming Islam in Indonesia. Apart from being a solution to the pejorative religious issues and a locomotor of the global civilization, this idea is also an appropriate alternative for the moderate generation to take preventive and progressive steps. When radical, fundamental, extreme, and puritan groups echo their calls accompanied by acts of violence, moderate Muslims must call for universal peace

to symbolize and portray Islam as a religion of raḥmatan li al-'ālamīn (a blessing to all the universe) [5]. The moderation movement itself is an effort to re-incarnate the early era of Muslim generation whose religious practices are the closest to the Prophet's [6]. In another meaning, the moderation of Islam is a form of a comprehensive (kāffah) understanding of Islam, one of which is to understand the concept of maqāṣid sharī'ah (purposefulness of Islamic law) as the philosophical objective behind the formal institutions of Islamic law.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Radicalism and Extremism

Some experts define radicalism as an ideology (an idea) and an understanding to make changes to the social and political system through violent/extreme methods. The core of radicalism is the attitude and action of a person or a group of persons that use violent methods to bring about the desired change. Generally, radical groups want these changes to take place immediately and drastically and such changes are usually contrary to the prevailing social system.

Radicalism is believed to be associated with terrorism because radical groups will do anything they can to achieve their desires including terrorizing those who disagree with them. Although many people associate radicalism with certain religions, essentially it is a political problem and not part of the teachings of any religion. Radicalism always exists since it is already contained within human beings. However, the term radical was first recognized after Charles James Fox explained this credo in 1797. At that time, Fox called for a "Radical Reforms" in the governmental system in Great Britain. The reforms were used to explain the movements that supported the parliamentary revolution in the country. In the end, the ideology of radicalism began to develop and then blend with the ideology of liberalism [7].

According to Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, extremism means quality or state of being extreme or advocacy of extreme measures or views [8]. At present, the term is widely used in the essence of politics or religion which refers to ideologies that are considered (by those who use this term or some people who adhere to social consensus) to be far outside the attitude of society in general. However, extremism is also used in economic discourse.

Meanwhile, Schmid defined an extreme group as a group that adheres to the understanding of extreme violence or extremism. Compared to radicals, extremists tend to be closed-minded, intolerant, anti-democratic, and can justify any means, including fraud, to achieve their goals. This group is different from radical groups, - the groups that embrace radicalism [9].

2.2 Mainstreaming Islamic Moderation

2.2.1 Definition of mainstreaming

Linguistically, mainstreaming is defined as *the process of becoming accepted as normal by most people* [10]. The Oxford dictionary defines mainstreaming as *to make a particular idea or opinion accepted by most people* [11]. Furthermore, as an adjective, the word mainstream means representing the prevalent attitudes, values, and practices of a society or group [12].

Initially, the term mainstream refers to the current/main flow of a river which is the biggest current and locates in the middle. The use of the word mainstream or mainstreaming figuratively can be traced back to Thomas Carlyle who used it in 1831 [13] to refer to the taste or mode prevailing in the society in the early 1599 AD [14]. Meanwhile, the figurative use of the word mainstream juxtaposed with the media can be proven when in 1980 it was used by left-wing critics in the United States towards the media coverage of national problems there [13].

History shows that the term mainstream is also used in the religious field, as in mainstream Christianity. This term is used collectively to refer to general views about the main denominations of Christianity (such as Orthodox Christian, Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Protestant) that contradict certain teachings of other Christian denominations. The context depends on the particular issues discussed, but usually contrasts the views of the orthodox majority against the views of heterodox minorities. In a most general sense, the mainstream refers to the Nicene Christianity, a tradition which accepts the Nicene Creed [15,16].

Mainstreaming has become one of the favourite words at international events, especially since the United Nations reserved it in the fight for gender equality through gender mainstreaming as a continuation of the Beijing Platform for Action of the UN Conference on Women in

Beijing in 1995. Previously, the term gender mainstreaming, as a new concept, appeared for the first time in international texts after the United Nations held the 3rd World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985 as its follow-up activity related to the debate in the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women about the women's role in development [17]. Borrowing the implied general understanding from the activities in Beijing and Nairobi, mainstreaming is considered important in the course of maintaining human rights and social justice for all people and to ensure that the objectives of social, economic, and other aspects of life can be achieved effectively. Mainstreaming can reveal the need for changes in goals, strategies, and actions to ensure that anyone can give a good influence, participate in, and benefit from social activities and development process. Thus, mainstreaming can cause changes in the order of society's life related to its structure, procedures, and culture to create a conducive living environment in achieving the human objectives of life and benefit [18].

Meanwhile, Trilling describes that 'mainstreaming works with a series of self-separation from the dominant culture. However, one thing that must also be understood, it works with a series of introjections into the dominant culture. There is no statistical data that can measure the effects of separation and introjection but the effect is very large' [19].

From some aforementioned explanations, mainstreaming can be understood as an effort to bring certain issues into the mainstream of society that consists of rules, organizations, and ideas related to general and specific policies. Therefore, mainstreaming is a re-organizing activity, improvement, development, and evaluation of policy process so that the discourse of achieving the desired objectives of such activity needs to be included in all policies at all levels and stages by related policymakers [19].

Addressing the term of mainstreaming, its definition highlights several things related to the objectives of mainstreaming: processes, objects, and active subjects of its activities. Its objects are all policies at all levels and stages, while its active subjects are all activity executants. In relation with policymaking at institutional levels, Yaakub and Othman explained that mainstreaming can contain the meaning that the policy process is re-organized in such a way that it becomes right and every executant

understands how to insert the issue or a particular value to be mainstreamed [20].

Robert Picciotto, a professor in the faculty of political economics at King's College London, explained that mainstream is 'the main road of activity' or 'the mainstream of opinion'. The first part of the word, *main*, connotes dominance and constancy, while the second part, *stream*, connotes a rural quiet area. Given its aquatic origin, this term evokes the feeling about fluidity, harmony, and inevitability [21]. Hence, adopting the nature of mainstream means 'going with the flow and avoiding activities which are against the force of social gravity'. Supporting and following the mainstream views means minimizing the risk of confrontation and isolation. Legalizing mainstream policies and programs also means getting the benefit of social approval. This circle of peaceful characteristics goes beyond the meaning of mainstream as a noun and colours the perceptions associated with its meaning as a verb [21]. However, this is not entirely justified; just the same as the calm surface of great waters can hide a lot of turbulence, existing mainstream in an organization or society is very likely to shift with the ups and downs and the flow of coalitions that supports it [21].

Furthermore, Picciotto explains that since there are many tributaries, the mainstream is a composite view of the competitive and diverse beliefs that can lead to a chaotic flow [38]. According to him, the verb 'to mainstream' is a concept that is dynamic and shows deliberate linkages in the natural order of things that exist. Mainstreaming efforts will create winners and losers, challenge interests, and trigger changes in alliances. It would also undermine the status quo but does not evoke chaotic changes or painful disorder. Accordingly, mainstreaming contains connotations of a gradual reform instead of confusing and panic-causing revolution. In policy terms, mainstreaming is usually achieved through changes that are done gradually in matters relating to the objectives of the program, protocol operations, and organizational culture [21].

2.2.2 The concept of Islamic moderation (Wasaṭiyyah)

The discourse of Islamic moderation (wasaṭiyyah), - or moderate Islam, modern Islam, progressive Islam, and reform Islam,- quite seized the attention of scholars. The terminology of Islamic moderation refers to the legitimacy of

the Quran and Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad which assert that Islam followers are ordered to be moderate because moderate attitude (wasaṭiyyah) is an identity and the basic character of Islam [5,6,22].

From the exploration of various Islamic literature, the word wasaṭiyyah with its various derivatives have much interpretation which show how dynamic and contextual the word is. Al-Salabi in his monumental work, al-Wasaṭiyyah fi al-Qur'ān al-Karīm elaborates on some meanings from the derivatives of the word wasṭ: in the form of ẓaraf (adverb) it means bayna (intermediate), in the form of isim (noun) it means between two ends, and in the form of ṣifat (adjective) it means khiyār (the selected, the most valuable, the best, just, or something that is between good and bad) [23].

Meanwhile, Yusuf al-Qardhawi identified the characteristics of wasaṭiyyah from a number of its broader meanings, namely: being fair, istiqāmah (consistent), the chosen and the best, security, strength, and unity [24]. In the Indonesian context, Masdar Hilmy in his essay identifies that the concept of moderation at least possesses some characters as follows: 1) in propagating Islam, it is an ideology that does not recognize violence, 2) it takes and utilizes the positive side of the modern way of life with all its forms, including science, technology, democracy, human rights, and others, 3) it appreciates and employs a logical and rational thought, 4) it uses a contextual approach in understanding the teachings of Islam, and 5) it gives space for the use of ijtihād (intellectual exercise to obtain legal conclusions if there is no explicit justification from the Qur'an and Hadith). These characteristics, in its implementation, can be extended to other characteristics such as tolerance, harmony, and cooperation among diverse religious groups [25].

The elaboration and enrichment of discourse and praxis of Islamic wasaṭiyyah received important contributions from Mohammad Hashim Kamali in his work, The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasaṭiyyah. As seen in the title, Kamali did not use the term' Islam wasaṭiyyah' which is commonly used in Indonesia. He preferred using the term 'middle path of moderation in Islamic' based on the Qur'anic principle of wasaṭiyyah. Kamali stated that the terms of wasaṭiyyah commensurate with tawassuṭ, i'tidāl, tawāzun, or iqtiṣad which all mean being fair or in the position between right and left extremities. Wasaṭiyyah is contrary to

taṭarruf which means outskirts, extreme, radical, and redundant [26].

Apart from the terminology, Kamali's book is an original and comprehensive work that discusses 'the middle path of moderation in Islam'. In that framework, he based the discussion of Islamic moderation on the Qur'anic principle of wasaṭiyyah from the point of conceptual analysis and a thematic perspective which was then accompanied by several recommendations. In his study, Kamali referred to many verses of the Holy Quran and the Prophet's sayings (hadith) as well as the interpretation of mainstream Islamic scholars. Not only did he explain the discussion of this issue from the opinions of Sunni scholars and thinkers, but also some Shi'ite ones. According to Kamali, he is a Sunni follower, the discussion by including the two large wings of Muslims is important to explore each other's views so that they can nurture, foster, and bring about a mutual understanding that can ultimately realize the unity of ummah (Muslim communities) [26].

Furthermore, Kamali stated that wasaṭiyyah was an important aspect of Islam. Unfortunately, it was forgotten by many of its followers. Islamic teachings on wasaṭiyyah contain many ramifications in various fields which are also of concern to Islam. Moderation is taught not only by Islam but also by other religions. For example, in the Greco-Jewish faith and Christianity, moderation is referred to as the 'golden mean', or the desired middle between two extreme angles that give rise to various kinds of excesses. The same thing is emphasized in the religious philosophy of Buddhism which enjoins its adherents to avoid religious strict asceticism or, contrarily, enjoys excessive worldly pleasures. Meanwhile, in Confucianism, there are the teachings of Zhongyong which assert the moderation of life [26].

Although not entirely by the orientation of Islamic moderation, in his paper on extremism as a norm, Charles Liebman also stated the need to explain moderation. He explicitly stated that: "... the natural tendency towards religious extremism does not require explanation because it is fully consistent with fundamental religious doctrine and original religious orientation. It is religious moderation or liberalism, the willingness of religious adherents to accommodate themselves to their environment, to adapt their behaviour patterns and beliefs to prevailing cultural norms, and to make peace with a world that requires discussion" [27].

Kamali may be considered right when stating that the need for understanding wasaṭiyyah finds significance in today's increasingly plural society. But at the same time, tensions between human groups have also been escalating, especially after the 9/11 incident in the United States, the bombings in Madrid, London, Bali, and so on until the event in Paris recently. The spread and increasing extremism and violence caused casualties not only in these places but also in various regions of the Muslim world. The number of lives and property damage in many Muslim countries in the Middle East and South Asia is far greater. Therefore, according to Hashim Kamali, raising the moderation of the middle way of Islam is urgently needed for Muslims. Here Kamali quoted Buya Syafi'i Ma'arif who stated that radical Muslim people are a very minority in the vast of moderates. "Therefore, the moderate majority has the power to condemn radical groups. Unfortunately, the majority of moderates would rather remain silent than face the radicals" [26,28].

In his review to Kamali's book, Felipe Souza mentioned that one example given by Kamali in his book on Islamic moderation is the existence of several different schools of law in fiqh (the science of jurisprudence). Such a plurality of theological interpretations is inherent among Muslim scholars and is recognized, so it is just right to say that factually that there is no single group claiming the monopoly of 'the most correct understanding'. The co-existence of various views and assimilation of different influences in the development of the schools of thought reinforces the element of tolerance and internal cohesion in Islam. Agreement (consensus) or disagreement can be done in tandem but without rejecting others' faith/belief. Otherwise, such will only end in the emergence of extremism. The search for consensus through dialogue and exchange of knowledge much more serves for the basis for implementing jihād and sharīʼah rather than enriching ideas of the 'holy war' (which incidentally is a Western term) and 'totalitarian law' to represent both of them [29].

Souza also stated that wasaṭiyyah refers to the practical wisdom used by Muslims in their daily relationships with others. Excessive alms, for example, is highlighted as a problem because no one is taught to endanger his/her own family by prioritizing to donate to charity. Likewise, the absence of alms is a problem because it is evidence of the thin feeling of empathy for the suffering of others. What is important is the middle position in giving charity, doing it with the right size for each individual in special conditions. Therefore, in Islam, garbage or industrial waste that is not handled properly and excessive consumption should not be a behaviour after understanding the meaning of wasaṭiyyah [29].

Also, Souza added that one document that was frequently cited was the Amman Message which was produced in 2005. In this document, there is mutual recognition from the Islamic groups that signed the document both in practice and in sources of their teachings. As a document on Sunni-Shiite dialogue, the Amman Message is an important thing to learn about how disputes between community members in Islam reflect more local and historical problems than about the legal basis of their teachings. Therefore, it becomes important to follow the principle of wasaṭiyyah to prevent crime in this world and among these crimes is the division of Muslims [29].

Furthermore, Souza appreciates Kamali's work. He stated that when nowadays all we hear on the TV news or we read from a variety of printed media is about radical groups like Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, ISIS, and others alike, Kamali's book reflects how much ignorance we are on the Islamic teachings/beliefs that ultimately lead to negative generalizations and Islamophobic ideas that in no way represent a religion practised by more than one and a half billion people worldwide. Souza also reminded that although many Muslims passed the challenges brought by colonialism, they generally lived in societies with certain structures where human history had recorded them in gold ink that they produced scientific knowledge, technological advancements, and facilitated the spirit of cooperation, dialogue, and tolerance. One of the manifestations of extremism highlighted by Kamali, explained Souza, was something practised by the extremist groups mentioned earlier: searching and exposing the mistakes of others and judging and condemning people in this process are very much contrary to the co-existence based on the principle of mutual recognition and respect. As Kamali asserted, the meeting of Muslims with others illustrates the intellectual, commercial, and cultural exchanges as the co-existence of Jews, Christians, and Muslims recorded in history [29].

The difference in the terminological meaning of Islamic moderation considers that its derivate involves a balance between logic and revelation,

material and spirit, rights and obligations, individualism and collectivism, transcendental texts and individual interpretations based on the mujtahid's (revivalist's) thought, ideality and reality, being permanent and temporal, absolute and relative, all of which are intertwined [30]. Wasaṭiyyah/moderation can be claimed as a comprehensive and integrated approach. This concept invites Muslim people massively to personalize Islam in a balanced and comprehensive way in all aspects of community life by focusing on improving and developing the quality of life, knowledge, development, economic system, political system, education system, nationality, defence, unity, equality, egalitarianism and equality between ethnicity, race and religion [31]. Ummatan wasaṭan (moderate Muslim) becomes a model that will be contested in front of other people in the whole world.

In the Holy Quran Surah (QS) al-Baqarah (2):143 [32], Allah says: "Thus, have We made of you 'ummatan wasaṭan' (people of justly balanced), that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves." In that verse, there is the term ummatan wasaṭan. The word wasaṭ means middle, moderate, middle way, balanced between two poles or two extremes (right and left). This means that ummatan wasaṭan are people who motivate, think, act, and behave fairly, moderately, and proportionally between the material and spiritual aspects, humanity and divinity, the past, present, and future, logic and revelation, individuals, groups, and public, between idealism and realism, and further between worldly and heavenly orientations.

In its daily life implementation, ummatan wasaṭan means that they are neither stingy nor wasteful, neither excessive nor lacking, and neither in left-extreme nor right-extreme. Everything is done fairly, balanced, proportional, not biased, and not arbitrary. Terminologically, the term wasaṭ shows the meaning of being fair or something that is in the middle. This interpretation was stated by Ibn Faris al-Razi in Mu'jam Maqayisil Lughah [33]. This is the meaning of the aforementioned Quranic verse. Meanwhile, according to Murtada al-Zubaidi, wasaṭ means the chosen (al-khiyar) and ultimate (afḍal) [34]. Likewise, Fairuzzabadi and Ibnu Manzhur as quoted by Fakhrudin stated that wasaṭ means the most just (a'daluhu) [35].

Meanwhile, Imam al-Tabari interprets ummatan wasaṭan as 'udulan (fair) and khiyār (the chosen) [36]. Muslims are a chosen people who act fairly. Meanwhile, Ibn Kathir also stated that the meaning of QS al-Baqarah (2): 143 is al-khiyar wa al-ajwad (the chosen and the best) [37]. As the Quraysh are considered awsaṭ al-'Arab (the best among the Arabs) both in terms of its lineage and the nation, so is the Prophet Muhammad considered wasaṭ amid his people, that is the noblest in lineage [38]. Furthermore, the "Ashr prayer, is regarded as shalat wusṭā, the most important prayer [38].

According to a hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari no. 4487 and Imam Ahmad no. 10891 [39,40], the verse was related to the words of the Prophet Muhammad which means: "On the Day of Judgment, Noah will be called (by Allah) and then asked:" Have You delivered (revelation)? He then answered: "Yes, I have." His people were then summoned and asked: "Has he (Noah) delivered it to you?" They replied: "No warning came to us." Then Noah was asked again, "Who testifies to you?" He replied: "Muhammad and his Ummah", then the verse was revealed.

There are two main characteristics inherent in ummatan wasaṭan, namely: 1) al-khairiyyah, orienting for the best-oriented in all, afḍal (prime), and fair, and 2) al-bainiyyah, middle, moderate, being neither of right nor left extreme. This can be understood among others from QS al-Furqān (25):67: "Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes)" [32].

According to Ibn Taimiyah, Islam is a moderate religion, a middle way [41]. Muslims are in the middle among the Prophets and Apostles as well as being righteous people who are not exaggerating in all their attitudes and behaviour. Unlike the Christians, Allah describes them in QS al-Tawbah (9):31 that "They take their priests and their anchorites to be their lords in derogation of Allah, and (they take as their Lord) Christ, the son of Mary; yet they were commanded to worship but One God. There is no god but He. Praise and glory to Him. (Far is he) from having the partners they associate (with Him)" [32].

Muslims are also middle people from various religious teachings. Islam does neither forbid whatever permissible nor legalize whatever unlawful as is often done by the Jews. Islam encourages people to get married and have a family whereas to Christian priests such is not

permissible. Islam commands its people to sami'nā wa aṭa'nā (listen and obey) to their Prophet while the Jews rebuked and even killed some of their Prophets. Allah says: " As to those who deny the Signs of Allah and in defiance of right, slay the prophets and slay those who teach just dealing with mankind, announce to them a grievous penalty" [32]. Ibn Kathir stated in his book of commentary relating to this verse that after being asked by a Companion, namely Abu Ubaidah Ibn Jarrah, about who would obtain the most poignant torment from Allah in the hereafter, the Prophet said: "A person who kills a prophet or kill someone who commands virtue and forbids evils" [37].

Ummatan wasaṭan (moderate people) is a prototype of people who have and uphold some principles. First, the principle of not exceeding the limits (ghuluw) in attitudes, speeches, and conducts even in worshipping. In this case, Allah says: "Say, O People of the Book, Exceed not in your religion. The bounds (of what is proper), trespassing beyond the truth, nor follow the vain desires of people who went wrong in times gone by – who misled many, and strayed (themselves) from the even way" [32].

Second, the principle of not doing things that are useless / in vain (lagha), both in speeches and deeds. He said: "Who avoid vain talk" [32]. The Prophet Muhammad said: "Among the Islamic goodness of a person is to leave things that are not useful" [42,43]. Third, the principle is always in al-shirāṭ al-mustaqīm (the straight and right). It means that ummatan wasaṭan is required to always be in the direction of a straight and true path (i.e. the teachings of Islam) by always obeying sharī'ah and following the rules contained in the Quran and Sunnah. According to Ibn Taimiyah, the straight and right path is the peak of moderation because being on the right and right path means being in the middle of the truth, not deviating, and not too extreme. Islam is not a liberal religion, nor is it secular, nor is it a religion that teaches extreme attitudes and behaviour [41].

By holding firmly on and practising these principles, ummatan wasaṭan will eventually transform themselves into khaira ummah (the best people) among other peoples with distinctive characteristics: calling to goodness and forbidding evils as well as believing in Allah [32] and always make their life full of balance in all aspects which is oriented solely to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter while simultaneously display Islam as a religion that is raḥmatan lil 'ālamīn (bringing mercy and goodness to the universe) [32].

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The study on mainstreaming Islamic moderation is qualitative research, this study aims to find the underlying motives, reasons and desires [44] in mainstreaming moderation. As quoted by Creswell [45] and Denzin and Lincoln [46], qualitative research is composed of a set of interpretative material practices that makes the world being observed become apparent. Meanwhile, this qualitative research was carried out using the case study method, referring to Yin [47], with the consideration that this method enables researchers to conduct empirical investigations of phenomena in the context of their environment so that the relationship between phenomena and the environment that has not been transparent will be revealed clearly.

This study began with philosophical questions using research questions including how, why, who, and what, and ended with the interpretation of research findings. Furthermore, from the data gathered, the points of similarity and difference were taken so that the meaningful and actual holistic characteristics in qualitative research are expected to provide maximum results [47]. This qualitative research starts with the assumption and a theoretical and naturalistic interpretative framework that inform the study on the said mainstreaming.

The analysis step of the case study was carried out as stated by Atkinson [48] namely: 1) making a data repository using basic relational database theory, 2) coding to identify 'chunks' of data. The codes generated were then analyzed and rationalized, 3) analyzing case study data by producing various reports, 4) producing the final proposition by linking the rationalized codes back to the initial proposition where the corresponding new proposition was produced. The data validity was then checked through triangulation techniques [44], checking by research members, and discussions with colleagues. Triangulation technique was done through two methods namely technical triangulation and data triangulation. The quality of the research design was checked before the start of the observation until obtaining the data, then the data validation was conducted so that it further strengthened the research discussion.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Cases of Radicalism and Extremism in Indonesia

Several cases of intolerance that disfigured and wounded the face of religiosity and democracy in Indonesia throughout 2018 can be mentioned but not limited to:

- The destruction of a temple in Senduro, Lumajang, East Java, resulting in at least three statues destroyed,
- An attack on one of Muslim clerics in Lamongan, Mr. Abdul Hakam Mubarok, the caretaker of an Islamic boarding school in Karangasem, Paciran, Lamongan, East Java, by a man who acted as a crazy man,
- The destruction of a mosque in Tuban, East Java,
- The destruction of a church in Yogya and the expulsion of a Bikhsu in Tangerang, West Java,
- The attack on "Baiturrahim" mosque in Tuban, East Java,
- The bomb threat to the Kwan Tee Koen temple, Karawang, West Java,
- The persecution of a monk named Mr. Mulyanto Nurhalim and his followers in Caringin Village, Legok, Tangerang, Banten,
- The persecution of a cleric and the head of Persatuan Islam (Persis) organization, Mr. H. R. Prawoto, until he lost his life, and
- The persecution that befell onto Mr. Umar Basri. an NU leader and an educator at al-Hidayah Islamic Boarding School in Cicalengka, Bandung, West Java.

These cases of religious violence is a 'slap' to the religious leaders and the government who recently just held a Great Council of Religious Leaders for the Nation's Harmony in Jakarta on 8th to 10th of February 2018.

Various kinds of violence including those in the name of religion are still often found in Indonesia. As reported by the Wahid Foundation (WF) in its annual reports about the Freedom of Practicing Religion / Faith (Kemerdekaan Beragama Berkeyakinan or KBB, Ind.) from 2015-2018, there had been occurrences of violence against the said freedom. They can be summarized as shown in Table 1.

These findings show that indeed radicalism and extremism are occurring in Indonesia amid the reality that its majority of people are Muslim and the victims can be anyone regardless of their social status and religious affiliation. The table also shows that both non-state (individuals, mass organisations, NGOs, and alike) and state (government institutions, police, government officials, state educational institutions, and alike) actors are capable of conducting violence of KBB. Although the number of religious politicization in 2018 decreased pretty significantly, it would be interesting to see whether in 2019 it remains so when Indonesia held a national poll to elect its President and members of central and local parliaments. Unfortunately, the WF has not released the data about it yet.

Acts of radicalism and extremism with their terrorism activities may afflict anyone. The Indonesian National Police Chief, General Idham Aziz, explained that the intensity of terrorist acts in Indonesia in 2019 decreased compared to the previous year. He said that this year there were 8 acts of terrorism, while in 2018 there were 19. This means a 57 per cent decrease. Furthermore, he claimed that the police succeeded in arresting 275 perpetrators of criminal acts related to terrorism throughout 2019. Of that number, 2 perpetrators had already been sentenced, 42 were in the trial process, 220 were in the investigation process and 3 were dead. He said during the July-November 2019 period there were only two major acts of terror in Indonesia [52]: an attack on the former Minister of Politics, Law and Security, General (ret) Wiranto, in the Menes Square, Pandeglang, Banten [53] and a suicide bombing at Medan City's police headquarter some time ago [54].

4.2 Reading the Phenomena of Radicalism and Extremism Wisely

Talking about radicalism and extremism, some points need to be put proportionally. First, it is pity that the definition of both terms as an extraordinary crime is always connoted to religious radicalism and extremism, especially Islam. Haedar Nashir, the current Chairman of Muhammadiyah, stated that the radical links of Islam are even identical with extremists, jihadists, and terrorists. This paradox and ambiguity of diction become more acute in the following phenomena. When a group of people in the name of "nationalism and defending the Republic of Indonesia" conduct a sweeping or expelling other groups with different political orientations and different religious understandings, they are

not called radicals; when certain groups take up arms and occasionally cry out their slogan and demand for an independence followed by anarchy, they are simply referred as a separatist group, not a radical one; and also when a group of people screaming out the slogan of "willing to die for the Homeland" or "the Homeland is a non-negotiable fixed price" coupled with blood thumb printing, they will not be accused of being radical, even they are regarded as the true defender of the homeland, the nationalism heroes or the nationality jihadists. Furthermore, when radical action under the pretext of defending the homeland using the slogan of "hubbul watan" (loving the Homeland) is conducted, then an image of pure nationalism is pinned onto the executants. Contrarily, when a handful of Muslims conduct a sweeping to places used for immoral deeds (gambling, prostitution, bars), or reject some of the dictum articles on marital rape in the draft of Indonesian Penal Code, or proclaim that they are willing to die for the sake of religion, then they will certainly be called jihadists, radicals, and terrorists [55]. Therefore, objective, clear, honest, fair, and not manipulative parameters are required in categorizing a variety of radical phenomena. A massive intelligence is also needed in reading the phenomena of radicalism, extremism, terrorism, and other similar dictions.

Secondly, a new reading and understanding are necessitated on the classical feud about gender pros and cons or radical-liberal movements which have to be realized as episodes of the fourth generation war (i.e. the proxy war, asymmetric warfare, and cyber warfare). A proxy war is a confrontation between two great powers by using replacement players to avoid confrontation with the reasons for reducing the risk of fatal destruction. This is because wars using weapons or "hard power" is considered to be no longer efficient so that new ways that are far more efficient by using "soft power" emerge

through forms of ideology warfare, education welfare, cultural warfare, economic and financial warfare, information warfare, and so on. The purpose of the war has shifted from mastery of territory to mastery of resources.

Naturally, culturally and demographically, Indonesia has become one of the targets of this fourth-generation war. From the aspects of geography, it is an archipelagic country located on the "cross position" between the two continents and two oceans and has abundant natural resources. Culturally, Indonesian people, in general, have long been developing and even been ingrained with noble values such as brotherhood, mutual help, tolerance, hospitality, good manners, and so forth. Demographically it has a diversity of life dimensions such as race, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, customs, social, economic, and others. Ninety percent of the energy needed by Japan are shipped through the Indonesian waters whereas 60% of Australia's exports are shipped to Asia through Indonesian waters. The United States requests the Innocent Passage to cross from east to west within the Indonesian territorial waters for the maintenance of its hegemony and access to the oil fields in the Middle East. So, it is not surprising that many countries have an interest in the stability or instability of Indonesia which is rich in oil, minerals, forests, and a variety of marine resources.

Third, Indonesia is in the trap of a battle of global ideologies: neo-liberalism, neo-colonialism, and religious fundamentalism. Such trap changes the beautiful face of the nation into individualistic, materialistic, hedonic, fanatic, and radical. The reform era that is not accompanied by the clear concept, readiness, and leaders with good characters is nothing more than an overthrow to the old regime. It is just a substitution with a liberal-democratization which moves very fast beyond the threshold of the Indonesian original

Table 1. Comparison of violence of KBB in Indonesia 2015-2018

No.	Aspect of report	The number on particular year			
		2015 [1]	2016 [1]	2017 [2]	2018 [3]
1	Incidence(s) of violence	190	204	213	192
2	Act(s) of violence	249	313	265	276
3	Violence conducted by a non-state actor(s)	119	156	170	146
4	Violence conducted by a state actor(s)	130	159	95	130
5	Province(s) with KBB violence (out of 34)	n/a	30	27	26
6	The average number of violence per month	15	17	18	16
7	Incidence of religious politicization	n/a	28	36	7

Sources: [1] *= [49],* [2] *= [50],* [3] *= [51]*

characteristics. Even worse, it is compounded by the rapid flow of globalization which opens the gates of various ideologies of neoliberalism, capitalism, and neo-colonialism. These ideologies give birth to new viruses in the form of individualism, materialism, hedonism, consumerism, narrow fanaticism, radicalism, and even terrorism which contradict to the religious values as well as the national-ideological values of Pancasila (the five principles).

The clashes of liberal-radical Islamic groups in Indonesia must be read intelligently as one of the proxy war strategies, not merely as a claim of truth in understanding the transcendental revelation. The phenomenon of proxy wars that use third parties or certain groups to fight through various aspects of ideology/religion, politics, economy, social, and culture, is very difficult to identify. The clashed groups are usually so submerged and lack of consciousness that they are just pitted puppets. Therefore, a formula for the right solution in overcoming various conflicts occurring in the country is required. Such is needed by abandoning physical strength and weapons, so, massive awareness-raising movements in the form of moderate attitudes are expected to be able to conquer the occurring radicalism and extremism and avoid the state from becoming a proxy war victim.

4.3 Mainstreaming Islamic Moderation as the Solution

4.3.1 Causes, characteristics and indicators of radicalism and extremism

Presenting the proper solution to deal with radicalism and extremism must be based on the understanding of several factors related to their emergence. They include understanding the causes underlying such phenomena, their characteristic, and their indicators. According to Asrori, there are at least 3 (three) main factors causing radicalism and extremism to emerge, namely: 1) the chaotic situation in the Middle–Eastern countries, 2) the spread of Wahhabism, and 3) the poverty [56]. Meanwhile, a research done by the INFID (International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development) and P3M (Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat or the Association of Islamic Boarding Schools and Communities Development) concluded the factors causing extremism, especially in Indonesia, are: 1) long-standing social and economic inequality at the national and global level that eventually cause

people's dissatisfaction, 2) the usage of social media and public facilities and spheres by extreme groups to spread their influence and propaganda, 3) the existence of infiltration of radicalism and extremism in Indonesian education, and 4) the rise of extremism campaigns on the internet and social media [57].

Addressing its characteristics, according to Noorhaidi Hassan, the phenomena of radicalism and extremism in Indonesia has some, namely: 1) having the vision of the Islamic political order which rejects the legitimacy of the modern nation-state and seeks to establish a pan-Islamic government or revitalize the caliphate system, 2) emphasizing on the struggle through violence (they term it as jihād) as the main and even the only method considered valid to bring about political change, and 3) being exclusive, which means that those radical and extremists do not want to respect others' opinions and beliefs and claim theirs to be the most truthful [57]. Other characteristics include 1) uniting religion and man's thought, 2) theologization of social and natural phenomena, 3) heavy dependency on the previous scholars' thought, 4) being too fanatic and reject dialogue, and 5) denying the importance of historical dimension [57,58].

Understanding the indicators of radicalism and extremism is no less important. As explained by Nadirsyah Hosen, there are 3 (three) indicators to see that someone had been exposed to radicalism/extremism. First, in terms of belief, such people easily consider others who have different religious and political views as non-believers (so-called takfīri). Second, they easily injure or even kill others without justifiable reasons. Third, they want to change the basis of the state, that has gone through an agreement of the nation's founders consisting of various elements, and substitute it with their system whether in the forms of an Islamic state, the khilafah, or other state system differing from the existing agreement [59].

4.3.2 Views of Indonesian muslim scholars on moderate Islam

Dealing with radical and extreme phenomenon as previously mentioned will be wise by answering it through the concept of wasaṭiyyah (Islamic moderation), which is a concept in Islamic epistemology that promotes a moderate, virtuous, wise, and just approach. This concept aims to minimize extreme, radical, and fanatical attitudes and actions as well as violence in the name of religion. Malaysia is said to be one of

the countries that have implemented such a concept to unite various races, tribes, and religions to reduce social unrest in a multi-cultural society [31]. The ideal concept of Islamic moderation must be dialogued with transcendental revelation and dialecticism with the socio-cultural conditions of the community. Through such activities, the concept of moderation can be grounded using religious language in various aspects of social life [20].

In Indonesia, the discussion about the concepts, discourse, and praxis of Islam wasaṭiyyah finds the most powerful momentum since the convening of the congress of Muhammadiyah and one of NU which was held just a couple of days apart in August 2015. The term 'Islamic moderation' or 'moderation in Islam' associated with the term 'moderate Islam' are often disputed by a handful of Muslims themselves. For them, Islam is just Islam so there is no such Islamic moderation or moderate Islam. For this reason, the term 'Islam wasaṭiyyah' which is 'Qur'anic' – i.e. derived from the verses of the Qur'an in Surah (QS) al-Baqarah (2): 143 [32] - is more accepted and therefore more commonly used.

In the Indonesian context, the views of moderate Islam may be summarized from some of the leading Muslim figures. Quraish Shihab, a prominent Indonesian Muslim intellectual and the then Minister of Religion in the last era of Suharto's regime, said that diversity in life was a necessity that God desires. Included herein are differences and diversity of opinions in the scientific field and even the diversity of human responses concerning the truth of the holy scriptures, interpretation of their contents, and the forms of their practices [60]. The problem is whether such differences can cause people to respect each other, not blame others, not claim themselves to be the most truthful, and have goodwill to dialogue. In such a condition, the differences among mankind will truly be reflected as a blessing. Whenever it is used as a foothold in practising their religious teachings, then this is the meaning of the concept of 'moderate Islam' which implies that anyone who behaves according to these criteria may be called as a moderate Muslim [61].

Sagaf Pettalongi, another scholar, stated that, in the Quranic language, moderate Muslim is a group that positions themselves in the middle, they do not favour one particular group and adopt a fair and objective perspective. Moderate Islam possesses three characters, namely: 1) being an intermediary, peaceful, and reconciling, 2) being fair and impartial, and 3) being open-minded and wise to others. The moderate Islam is a model of preaching taught by the Prophet Muhammad in spreading the values of Islam as *raḥmatan li al-'ālamīn* since it teaches that there is no coercion in embracing the religion and that people must respect differences in ethnicity, religion, race, culture, and class [62].

Meanwhile, Syafi'i Ma'arif, a leading Muslim intellectual who was the Chairman of Muhammadiyah (1998-2005) said that the future generation bearing a moderate Islam in Indonesia may refer to Islamic practices conducted by adherents of religious organizations such as Muhammadiyah and NU. According to him, practising Islamic teachings in the Indonesian context is more suitably expressed as 'practising Islam in the frame of Indonesianism' [63]. In line with that, Dien Syamsuddin who succeeded him as the Chairman of Muhammadiyah for 2 periods (2005-2010 and 2010-2015) and had served as the Chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council or MUI (2014-2015) portrays that moderate Islam in Indonesia is upheld on the principles as resulted from the activity of the High-Level Consultation (HLC) of World Muslim Scholars on Wasaṭiyat al-Islām in Bogor, West Java conducted in May 2018. These are: tawasuṭ (being in the middle path), i'tidāl (being straight), tasāmuḥ (being tolerant), shurā (counselling), iṣlāḥ (reconciling), qudwah (patronizing), and muwāṭanah (recognizing the nation, state, and citizenship). Not only moderate Islam emphasize compassion and peace but it also asserts that humanity tends to be on the middle and straight paths [64,65].

Dien explained further that the principle of moderate Islam is the principle of the middle way, a straight path, and a moderate one which rests on monotheism. Moderate means rejecting all forms of extremism and ṭāghūt (transcending borders) whether in economic, social, political, or cultural aspects which are contrary to the content of Islam. This concept, said Dien, is expected to be able to provide solutions to the problems of the world which are currently experiencing accumulative damages. Poverty, ignorance, inequality, and environmental damages are caused by systems that do not favour religious and moral values. Such a condition, according to him, results from the fact that the world now relies on liberalism and secular humanism which give birth to the secular cultural economic system [65].

From the NU's intellectual circles, Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) who had served as the Chairman of NU Executive Board or PBNU (1991-1999) and the former President of Indonesia (1999-2001) was well known as a moderate and pluralist figure. Gus Dur often emphasized the approach of unity, peace, and coolness. He even once said that "jihād" activities carried out by terrorists were a wrong attitude in understanding Islam [66]. His successor as the Chairman of PBNU in 1999-2010, Hasyim Muzadi, who also served as the Secretary-General of the International Conference of Islamic Scholars (ICIS) for some years, also asserted that moderate Islam is Islam as a religion which is raḥmatan li al-'ālamīn; it is Islam with teachings and religious attitudes that bring mercy to the universe, not specifically to Muslims. The entity of Islam as a mercy to the universe at a certain point recognizes the existence of religious plurality. This is because diversity is an inevitable natural reality [67].

These views, at the same time, also reflect the stances of the organizations they lead about Islamic moderation in Indonesia. From their views, it may be summarized that moderate Islam is the middle path that enjoins and promotes all good virtues of Islam to be practiced by Muslims in their daily lives both in terms of their relation with God (hablun min Allah) and with mankind (hablun min al-nās) so that the vision of presenting Islam as the blessing to all may be realized.

4.3.3 Methods of preventing and countering radicalism and extremism

As reported by the Wahid Foundation, radicalism and extremism are difficult to be separated from violence [49,50,51]. They bring damages to mankind, physically and psychologically, to the wealth, and to the environment they live in. In the Islamic context, they wound the purposefulness of Islamic law and the beauty of Islamic teachings. The beauty of Islam may be presented by its teachings of good virtues and the objectives of its law (maqāṣid sharī'ah). Imam al-Shaṭibi explained and concluded that all scholars agree that Allah establishes various law provisions with a purpose to maintain the five basic elements of human *(al-ḍarūriyyat al-khams)* which uphold the life of human; namely ḥifẓ al-dīn (preserving one's religion), ḥifẓ al-nafs (preserving one's soul), ḥifẓ al-nasl (preserving one's offspring), ḥifẓ al-'aql (preserving one's mind), and ḥifẓ al-māl (preserving one's wealth).

These five things are a necessity to enforce benefit in this world. Should they not be met, the worldly benefit for mankind will never be attained [68]. Hence, it is pretty clear that radicalism and extremism with all their violent conducts jeopardise these noble objectives.

Radicalism and extremism in religiosity have indeed tarnished the beautiful face of Islam as the religion embraced by the majority of Indonesians. Not only they contradict to the moderate teachings of the religion, they also erode the national identity which may be weighted through its moderate attitude. Therefore, should the noble personality and moderate attitude be absent, the social productivity and stability would never be realized. One's knowledge and reasoning also give important contributions which have implications to the moderate, modern, inclusive, and progressive attitudes and personalities [69]. In this case, the role of the state in encountering radicalism and extremism becomes a must.

The INFID's findings suggest that the approach that has been carried out by the Indonesian government so far against the rampant radicalism and extremism tends to be of securitization type. Sadly, not only such approach is proven to be ineffective, but it also even triggers the emergence of other radical actions. The occurring phenomena of radicalism and extremism indicate the failure of the Government to understand that, actually, those exposed to radicalism and extremism can be approached and embraced through fulfilling their rights as citizens – in which they are a part of a plural society and most of them are in a communitarian social logic [70].

An important principle of citizenship approach in relation to democracy and pluralism is *de-securitization* that rejects the logic of securitization. The logic of desecuritization is a democratic approach and the fulfillment of rights by the state based on equality for all citizens. The practical steps based on the de-securitization approach can be summarized as follows [70]:

1. Moderate Islamic groups such as NU and Muhammadyah along with other government stakeholders need to refill and reutilize religious spaces in schools, universities, and other public spaces in spreading and instilling understanding about moderate Islam to people This

strategy is more of a social and cultural approach to avoid sharp conflicting interests, therefore dialogue in pluralism must become the key word.

2. Moderate Islamic groups need to gain access to scholarships at the university level to produce moderate religious teachers, preachers or scholars to disseminate and propagate the teachings of moderate Islam. The government also needs to activate the role of moderate groups to actively fill religious activities, with incentives from the government, in public spaces such as mosques or communities religious study circles.

3. Diverting people from obtaining information through radical contents on the internet and other social media by encouraging and facilitating moderate groups to provide information needed by the public, - such as religious views, moderate characters of Islam, noble virtues of islam, and so forth,- to moderate and trusted channels so that sites with radical contents will not become the dominant source of information.

4. The government together with moderate groups consistently campaign and disseminate messages both *online* and *offline* in the form of radical counter-narratives or convey alternative moderate narratives and disseminate them as widely as possible through various media.

Meanwhile, the role of the state in dealing with radicalism and extremism can take the following forms: 1) giving appropriate rights to all people, including those deemed extremist and radical, to express their views on state and public policies, 2) meeting the basic needs of people including occupation, health, and education to the fullest, so that the state is seen as positively present, 3) formulating schemes for regulating religious life more comprehensively, while still observing the principles of freedom of religion or belief, 4) upholding justice in all fields, especially, in the context of Indonesia, by eradicating the practices of corruption, collusion, and nepotism that have weakened the state, and 5) enforcing the law and regulation on spaces of intolerance and radicalism/extremism to the maximum [71,72].

All of these are actually taught by Islam since Allah has commanded us to deliver a mandate to those entitled to receive it and to establish law among mankind fairly (QS al-Nisā' (4): 58), not to ignore the worldly affairs including having occupation, caring for education and health

among others (QS al-An'ām (6): 37), to consult in all matters (QS Àli 'Imrān (3): 159), not to impose a belief to others (QS al-Baqarah (2): 256) but, rather, to respect others' belief (QS al-Kāfirūn (109): 6) and to act justly, to do good, to give to relatives, and not to commit shameful deeds, injustice, and rebellion (QS al-Naḥl (16): 90) [32].

So, from this discussion we may summarize that countering radicalism and extremism may be conducted by mainstreaming Islamic moderation in which beautiful virtues of Islamic teachings have to be presented forward and practiced by all its adherents. Such beauty must be massively represented in the form of displaying noble attitudes that is fair, virtuous, wise, tolerant, egalitarian, equality, security, strength, unity, a spirit of dialogue, a spirit of cooperation, non-violence, employing logical and rational way of thinking and using a contextual approach, balancing logic and revelation, material and spiritual, rights and obligations, individualism and collectivism, transcendental texts and individual interpretations based on mujtahid thought, ideality and reality, knowing which are permanent and temporal, absolute and relative, and respecting multiple theological interpretations. This progressive solution may be contested before other people in all parts of the world.

5. CONCLUSION

The 4.0 Industrial Revolution era certainly does not escape from its various negative excesses such as challenges of hoax and slander news and the spreading of extreme religious narratives, both right extreme (conservatism, fundamentalism, radicalism, etc.) and left one (liberal), which are certainly irrelevant to the Indonesian context with all its diversity reality. It is in this context that the Islamic moderation finds its urgency to be implemented. Islamic moderation is believed to become a solution step for creating a global civilization. It promotes moderate, virtuous, wise, and fair approaches aiming to minimize extreme, radical, and fanatical attitudes and actions and to prevent any violence under the name of religion from occurring. Furthermore, it also serves as the blueprint for mainstreaming the ideal model of Islam in Indonesia. However, the clashes of liberal-radical Islamic groups in Indonesia must also be read intelligently as one of the proxy war strategies, not merely as a claim of truth in understanding the transcendental revelation.

The call to return to moderation needs to be reminded to adherents of all religions, philosophies, cultural traditions, and society. Furthermore, moderation advocacy is needed on earth, not only by Muslims but also by Christians, Jewish, Hindus, Buddhist, and other faiths. Moderation, especially as it relates to moral virtue, is very relevant because not only it relates to individual life but also concerns the integrity and self-image of the community and nation. Moderation in the Quranic projections will ultimately involve the identity of a Muslim and the world community's view on the Muslim people. Moderation is also a virtue that helps create social harmony and balance in life and personal problems, in the family and society as well as the spectrum of more spacious human relationships.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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