

Religious Moderation and Interfaith Harmony in Maqashid Sharia: An Analytical Study of Quranic Hermeneutics

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Abstract

Ideally, religious moderation and communal harmony should serve as the cornerstone for building a harmonious social life, particularly in diverse societies. However, the reality reveals that interfaith conflicts and a lack of tolerance still often occur, driven by narrow and exclusive interpretations of religion. This phenomenon hinders the creation of peace and harmony within pluralistic communities. This article is based on qualitative research. The methodology employed is a content analysis of Quranic verses through a hermeneutic approach. The findings indicate that maqasid shariah provides a strong foundation for promoting religious moderation and communal harmony. Values such as justice, welfare, and the protection of individual rights embedded within maqasid shariah can serve as guidelines for creating a tolerant and harmonious society. The Quranic hermeneutic approach also aids in understanding the messages of moderation contextually, enabling practical solutions to the challenges of diversity in modern society.

Keywords: Religious Moderation, Maqasid Shariah, Hermeneutics.

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Abstrak

Idealnya, moderasi beragama dan kerukunan umat menjadi fondasi utama dalam membangun kehidupan sosial yang harmonis, terutama dalam masyarakat yang beragam. Namun, realitas menunjukkan bahwa konflik antaragama dan kurangnya toleransi seringkali masih terjadi, dipicu oleh pemahaman agama yang sempit dan eksklusif. Fenomena ini menghambat terciptanya perdamaian dan kerukunan di tengah masyarakat yang majemuk. Artikel ini termasuk dalam penelitian berbasis kualitatif. Metodologi yang digunakan adalah studi konten ayat melalui hermeneutika Al-Qur'an. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa maqasid syariah memberikan landasan yang kuat untuk mempromosikan moderasi beragama dan kerukunan umat. Nilai-nilai seperti keadilan, kesejahteraan, dan perlindungan hak individu yang terkandung dalam maqasid syariah dapat menjadi pedoman dalam menciptakan masyarakat yang toleran dan harmonis. Pendekatan hermeneutika Al-Qur'an juga membantu dalam memahami pesan-pesan moderasi secara kontekstual, sehingga mampu memberikan solusi aplikatif bagi tantangan keragaman masyarakat modern.

Kata Kunci: Moderasi Beragama, Maqasyid Syariah, Hermeneutik

Introduction

In the current era of globalization and pluralism, religious moderation and interfaith harmony are two crucial concepts for maintaining social cohesion. The various challenges faced by multicultural societies, such as intolerance, extremism, and interreligious conflicts, demand a deeper understanding of the values of moderation and harmony (Anzaikhan, Bahri, et al., 2023). The concept of religious moderation, often associated with *wasathiyah*, goes beyond merely avoiding extremism; it also seeks to create a conducive environment for cooperation among religious communities. In this context, *maqasid shariah* provides a solid foundation for understanding the primary objectives of Islamic law, which are to achieve the welfare and justice of all humanity.

In the context of understanding religious moderation and interfaith harmony, hermeneutic exegesis offers an innovative approach. Hermeneutic exegesis encourages us to interpret religious texts by considering the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which these texts were revealed. By employing this method, we can uncover deeper meanings of religious teachings and apply them to daily life. For example, in the context of *maqasid shariah*, religious moderation can be interpreted as an attitude that promotes justice, welfare, and harmony, which are essential in a diverse society (Inayatillah & Kamaruddin, 2023).

Ideally, religious moderation and interfaith harmony should serve as the main pillars in building a peaceful and tolerant society. These concepts should encourage mutual respect, collaboration, and the creation of a harmonious atmosphere among religious communities. However, the reality often differs. In many places, we witness increasing tensions between religious groups, intolerance, and even conflicts arising from differences in beliefs (Harahap, 2011).

Misunderstanding of religious teachings and extremist attitudes are the main causes of division within society.

Given these conditions, several research questions arise. First, how can hermeneutic exegesis be applied to enhance the understanding of religious moderation and interfaith harmony from the perspective of *maqasid syariah*? Second, what are the challenges in implementing religious moderation within diverse societies? Third, how can misunderstandings of religious teachings contribute to conflicts and social tensions? These issues are critical to investigate in order to find more effective solutions for achieving interfaith harmony.

The purpose of this study is to analyze and explain the implications of hermeneutic exegesis for understanding religious moderation and interfaith harmony from the perspective of *maqasid syariah*. This research aims to provide new insights into how moderation and harmony can serve as foundations for building a harmonious society. Furthermore, it seeks to identify strategies to overcome existing challenges so that the understanding of religious moderation can be effectively internalized within society. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to creating better conditions for interfaith harmony.

Literature Review

The study of religious moderation, interfaith harmony, and hermeneutic exegesis is not a new discourse in the academic world. As pluralism and diversity in society increase, many researchers have attempted to explore and publish their findings on these topics. Arifin and Fatkul Chodir, in their work; *"Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Maqashid Al-Shariah"*, discuss the concept of religious moderation through the approach of *maqashid al-shariah*. The similarity between this work and the author's research lies in the use of *maqashid syariah* as the primary analytical framework (Arifin & Chodir, 2024). However, the difference is that Arifin and Fatkul Chodir focus more specifically on the fiqh dimension and its application in building the concept of moderation, while this research broadens the analysis by incorporating a hermeneutic exegesis approach to examine interfaith harmony.

Fadillah and Perwita Suci, in their article; *"Revealing Religious Moderation: Hermeneutics Study in Al-Qur'an and Tripitaka Scripture"*, have effectively articulated how religious moderation is explained in the context of interfaith studies. This article expands the perspective by showing that moderation exists not only in Islamic studies but also in the scriptures of other religions (Fadillah & Suci, 2024). The similarity between this work and the author's research lies in the use of the hermeneutic approach to discuss religious moderation. However, the difference is that Fadillah and Perwita's work is more cross-religious and comparative, while this study focuses on interfaith harmony and moderation within the context of *maqashid syariah*.

Hafidhuddin, in his work; *"Kerukunan Umat Beragama (Studi Maqashid As-Syari'ah Perspektif Jasser Auda)"*, has structured a detailed description of how religious moderation has existed since classical times, although its terminology was relatively different. The development of religious moderation has been heavily influenced by the socio-political dynamics of societies, particularly in countries

with heterogeneous national characteristics (Hafidhuddin, 2022). The similarity between this work and the author's research lies in its focus on the *maqashid shariah* concept to discuss interfaith harmony. The difference is in the analysis method; Hafidhuddin refers to Jasser Auda's systemic approach to *maqashid*, while this research uses hermeneutic exegesis as an additional method to deepen the analysis.

After reviewing the literature, there has been no work that combines the *maqashid shariah* perspective with hermeneutic exegesis analysis holistically in discussing religious moderation and interfaith harmony. Previous works have tended to focus on one approach, either *maqashid shariah* or hermeneutics, without integrating both into a single study. This research occupies a significant gap in the literature. The integration of *maqashid shariah* and hermeneutic exegesis offers a new framework that is not only theoretical but also applicable in understanding interfaith harmony. The novelty of this research lies in the unification of these two approaches, providing a fresh and richer perspective in interpreting religious moderation as the foundation for interfaith harmony.

Research Methodology

This article falls under library research with a qualitative approach. This approach was chosen to explore a deeper understanding of religious moderation and communal harmony from the perspective of *maqashid shariah* through hermeneutic interpretation. The qualitative approach allows researchers to explore the meaning and context of relevant religious texts. The methodology used is a content analysis of Quranic verses with a hermeneutic lens. This method aids in interpreting verses related to religious moderation and communal harmony while connecting them to the principles of *maqashid shariah*. In this way, researchers can identify the values of moderation and harmony embedded in the sacred texts and how they can be applied in the context of contemporary society.

The primary source of this research is the Qur'an, which serves as the fundamental text to be analyzed. Secondary sources include scholarly journals published in the last ten years that are relevant to the themes of religious moderation, communal harmony, and *maqashid shariah*. These journals provide additional perspectives and context for understanding how religious moderation and communal harmony are viewed in current academic studies. The data analysis method employed is thematic analysis, focusing on identifying themes that emerge from the analysis of Quranic verses. Data validation and reliability are ensured using triangulation techniques, where the researcher compares the analysis results with existing literature and secondary sources. Through this process, the research aims to provide a comprehensive overview of religious moderation and communal harmony from the perspective of *maqashid shariah* while affirming its relevance in broader social contexts.

Religious Moderation in the Qur'an and Its Interpretation

In the modern era, the world is faced with various social and political challenges, including the phenomena of extremism and intolerance between

religious communities. In this context, religious moderation becomes one of the relevant and important concepts to implement. Religious moderation aims not only to avoid extremism but also to create a harmonious, inclusive, and tolerant society (Irawan, 2018). In Islam, this concept of moderation is clearly articulated in the teachings of the Qur'an, which contains various guidelines for how religious communities should behave in their daily lives. The Qur'an provides a way of life that emphasizes balance, peace, and brotherhood among humanity.

The term most commonly encountered in the Qur'an regarding religious moderation is *wasathiyyah* (الْوَسْطِيَّةُ). This term literally means 'middle' or 'not leaning towards extremism.' In the Qur'an, Allah SWT describes the Muslim community as a *wasathiyyah* community, which means a middle, moderate, or balanced community in following religious teachings. Allah says:

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

“And thus We have made you a middle (moderate) nation, that you may be witnesses to mankind, and the Messenger (Muhammad) may be a witness to you...” (QS. Al-Baqarah; 143)

This verse indicates that Muslims are expected to be an example of a just, balanced nation, avoiding extreme behavior in worship, social matters, and interfaith relations. Thus, *wasathiyyah* becomes the primary term in the Qur'an that describes the concept of religious moderation in Islam. In addition to *wasathiyyah*, the Qur'an also uses several other terms that carry similar meanings to religious moderation. One of them is 'adl (الْعَدْلُ), which means justice. Justice in the Qur'an is a fundamental principle in human life. Allah says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ

“Indeed, Allah commands you to give trust to whom it is due, and when you judge between people, judge with justice...” (QS. An-Nisa: 58)

The justice mentioned here includes fairness in practicing religious teachings and interacting with fellow human beings. In the context of religious moderation, justice refers to the attitude of not leaning towards one side or group, but rather treating all parties fairly without discrimination. In addition, another term closely related to religious moderation in the Qur'an is *rahmah* (الرَّحْمَةُ), which means compassion or mercy. Allah says:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

“And We have not sent you (Muhammad) except as a mercy for the worlds.” (QS. Al-Anbiya; 107)

Mercy is a quality that is highly emphasized in Islam, both in the

relationship between humans and God, between fellow humans, and with other creatures. Religious moderation includes attitudes of tolerance and compassion towards differences, whether in terms of religion, culture, or worldview (Busyro et al., 2019). Thus, rahmah (mercy) plays a role as a foundation for creating harmonious interfaith relationships. In addition to 'adl (justice) and rahmah (mercy), the term tawassut (التَّوَسُّطُ) is also found in the Qur'an, which means a balanced or middle stance. One example of the use of this term can be found in the Qur'an, which says:

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

"And be forgiving and enjoin what is good and turn away from the ignorant."
(QS. Al-A'raf; 199)

Here, Allah teaches His followers to be balanced, between forgiving and encouraging others to do good, but also to distance themselves from ignorance and excessive behavior. This attitude of tawassut (moderation) is crucial in religious moderation, as it teaches people not to be extreme or rigid in practicing their religion, yet still uphold moral principles and religious teachings.

In tafsir, religious moderation is often understood as a stance that avoids extremism and radicalization. Many mufassir (exegetes) argue that religious moderation in the Qur'an is about finding a balance between individual freedom and religious obligations (Arif, 2020). For instance, in the tafsir of Ibn Kathir, religious moderation is explained as a stance of not being excessive in following religious teachings, whether in worship or in interactions with fellow human beings. From his perspective, a moderate person is one who can control their desires and is not influenced by ideologies that undermine the harmony of the community.

On the other hand, religious moderation is also linked to the concept of ijtihad (striving or effort) in understanding religious laws. According to some mufassir, a moderate stance is one that is open to broader and contextual understandings, while striving to adjust religious teachings to the realities of the times without altering the core of the teachings themselves (Sa'dan, 2017). This shows that religious moderation is not about merely following tradition, but about a deep and applicable understanding of religious teachings in the context of a constantly evolving social life.

Hermeneutic exegesis also offers a very relevant approach to understanding religious moderation. This approach encourages us to look at the social, cultural, and historical context of religious texts, so that the meaning of religious moderation can be understood in greater depth and applied more effectively. In this context, religious moderation can be understood as an attitude that supports the achievement of well-being and peace, not only for Muslims but also for all of humanity, including those with differing beliefs. The hermeneutic approach allows people of faith to better understand the meanings contained in the Qur'an to create a more tolerant and inclusive society.

Thus, religious moderation in the Qur'an is not only a theological command but also has a profound social dimension. It teaches us to always maintain balance,

avoid extremes in practicing religion, and prioritize principles of justice, mercy, and tolerance. Religious moderation also invites us to distance ourselves from extremism, whether in the form of radicalized thinking or actions that contradict humanistic principles. In practice, religious moderation is expected to be internalized in the daily lives of Muslims (Rohmiyanti & Nursikin, 2023). This includes how Muslims carry out religious teachings in a balanced and wise manner, maintain harmony in religious practice, and contribute to creating a peaceful and harmonious society. As stated in the Qur'an, Muslims are expected to be a '*wasathiyyah*' community—just, moderate, and full of mercy—in every aspect of their lives.

Religious Moderation in the Perspective of Maqashid Syariah

Religious moderation in the perspective of Maqashid Syariah is a concept that is highly relevant in contemporary life. Maqashid Syariah, which means 'the objectives of Sharia,' refers to the fundamental principles that serve as the main goals of Islamic law. The primary goal of Sharia is to ensure the welfare of humanity by safeguarding five essential elements: religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property (Musoffa, 2021). Religious moderation, within this framework of maqashid, becomes important as it helps maintain a balance in practicing religious law without falling into extremism or neglecting the essential goals of Sharia itself.

In the view of Al-Ghazali and Al-Syatibi, two prominent figures in Maqashid Syariah thought, Sharia aims to achieve the well-being of humans in this world and the hereafter. Moderation becomes the ideal middle path in practicing religious teachings in a proportional way, not too rigid and not too lenient. According to Al-Syatibi, any form of extremism or excessive fanaticism in practicing religious teachings can undermine the main objectives of Sharia, which are to protect individual rights and maintain social balance (Mufid, 2020). Conversely, moderation is considered a strategy to ensure that religion does not become a burden or an instrument of oppression.

Maqashid Syariah emphasizes that in the application of Islamic law, the principles of public interest (*maslahah*) and the avoidance of harm (*mafsadah*) must be considered. Religious moderation requires Muslims to always think about the benefit for the broader society and not focus solely on personal or group interests. In the context of religious life, this means that Muslims are expected to actively maintain interfaith harmony, respect differences, and avoid all forms of violence or discrimination in the name of religion (Hafidhuddin, 2022).

Furthermore, moderation in the perspective of Maqashid Syariah also demands *ijtihad*, which is the intellectual effort to understand religious texts in accordance with the developments of the time. *Ijtihad* is necessary for Muslims to face modern challenges without abandoning the fundamental principles of Islam. In this regard, moderation is the foundation for legal renewal or *tajdid*, which aims to adapt Sharia to the social and cultural context that is constantly changing (Fatia, 2013). Through this approach, Maqashid Syariah becomes an important tool for maintaining the relevance of Islam in the era of globalization, while ensuring that its application does not exceed the boundaries of humanity.

In the framework of Maqashid Syariah, the protection of religion (*hifz ad-*

din) also includes the protection of religious diversity. Religious moderation requires respect for the beliefs of others and rejection of fanaticism that imposes a particular viewpoint or interpretation of religion upon everyone. This aligns with the Sharia principle that emphasizes there should be no compulsion in religion (Marhaban et al., 2024). Therefore, religious moderation in Maqashid Syariah is not only relevant for Muslims but also serves as a guide in maintaining harmonious relationships with followers of other religions. Moderation is also closely related to the protection of life (*hifz an-nafs*). Sharia obliges Muslims to protect human life, both of Muslims and non-Muslims, by all possible means.

In this case, any form of violence in the name of religion not only contradicts the principle of moderation but also violates Maqashid Syariah. The obligation to protect human life is at the core of Islamic teachings, and religious moderation helps ensure that religion is not misused as an excuse to destroy life (Setiyanto, 2019). In the domain of protecting intellect (*hifz al-aql*), religious moderation also requires Muslims to avoid blind fanaticism that rejects rationality and critical thinking. Maqashid Syariah encourages the use of sound reasoning in understanding religion, avoiding excessive taqlid (blind imitation) or accepting opinions without clear foundations. Moderation, in this context, ensures that religion remains relevant and can be understood by generations living in the modern era, where science and technology are rapidly advancing. Imam Al-Ghazali himself emphasized the importance of intellect in understanding revelation and practicing religion correctly.

The protection of lineage (*hifz an-nasl*) is also an important aspect of religious moderation. Sharia regulates social relations, including marriage and family, with the aim of preserving human dignity and ensuring the well-being of future generations. Religious moderation prevents harmful practices such as child marriage, domestic violence, or the exploitation of women. In this regard, Maqashid Syariah demands that all rules in Islamic family law be guided by the principle of public interest, ensuring the well-being of all parties involved (Maimun et al., 2024). From the perspective of the protection of property (*hifz al-mal*), religious moderation encourages Muslims to maintain a balanced attitude toward wealth and poverty.

Islam does not advocate excessive living or wastefulness, but it also does not encourage living in deliberate poverty. Through the principle of moderation, Sharia requires Muslims to maintain economic balance by sharing with those in need through zakat, charity, and voluntary donations, and avoiding harmful actions such as usury and fraud. Moderation in this regard directs Muslims to achieve material welfare while not neglecting their social obligations (Nur, 2023).

Harmony Among Communities in the Perspective of Maqashid Syariah

Harmony among communities in the perspective of Maqashid Syariah is one of the key principles rooted in the objectives of Islamic law to create a peaceful and harmonious life. Maqashid Syariah, which refers to the primary goals of Islamic law, focuses on the protection and preservation of five fundamental elements: religion, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth (Qodim & Darwis, 2022). Community harmony, especially within a society characterized by religious, belief, and cultural

diversity, represents a manifestation of these principles. Within the context of harmony, Maqashid Syariah provides guidance for fostering interfaith relationships based on tolerance, justice, and mutual respect, aiming to maintain social stability and achieve collective well-being.

One crucial aspect of Maqashid Syariah is *hifz ad-din* (the protection of religion). This concept emphasizes the importance of preserving religious purity while respecting the beliefs of others. Harmony among communities, from this perspective, means respecting the right of every individual to practice their religion freely and without coercion. This aligns with the Qur'anic teaching, "*There is no compulsion in religion*," which underscores Islam's recognition of religious freedom and its rejection of any form of compulsion in matters of faith. Al-Ghazali, in his thoughts on Maqashid Syariah, highlights that the purpose of Islamic law is to promote welfare (*maslahah*) and prevent harm (*mafsadah*) (Mufid, 2020). In terms of community harmony, this principle suggests that all efforts should aim to create a peaceful social environment where religious differences do not lead to conflict or division. Interfaith harmony is part of the welfare that Islamic law seeks to achieve, as living in harmony enables society to attain stability and collective progress.

In the context of *hifz an-nafs* (the protection of life), Maqashid Syariah emphasizes that safeguarding human life, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, is a top priority. Interfaith harmony ensures that there is no violence or threat to human life due to differences in belief. Every individual, regardless of their religion, has an equal right to live peacefully and securely. Islamic law prohibits all forms of violence or discrimination that could endanger lives, making harmony among communities a vital effort to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of society (Hasibuan et al., 2023). Additionally, *hifz al-aql* (the protection of intellect) is a significant foundation for fostering community harmony. Islamic law values intellect as one of the greatest gifts granted by Allah to humanity. Through moderation and rationality, Muslims are encouraged to think critically and fairly in assessing differences in beliefs and viewpoints. Community harmony can be achieved when intellect is used to foster constructive interfaith dialogue, avoid fanaticism, and seek mutual understanding for the benefit of humanity. Sound reasoning leads to a tolerant and open-minded attitude toward differences.

Hifz an-nasl (the protection of lineage) also calls for maintaining good social relations among religious communities. From the perspective of Maqashid Syariah, families and societies should be built on harmony and mutual respect. Interfaith harmony contributes to forming peaceful families where values of tolerance and mutual respect are instilled from an early age. By maintaining positive interfaith relationships, future generations will grow up in a peaceful environment, accustomed to diversity, and capable of becoming agents of change who promote peace and justice (Ismanto, 2020). The aspect of *hifz al-mal* (the protection of wealth) is also relevant in creating community harmony. Religious conflicts are often triggered by economic issues and social injustices. Maqashid Syariah demands economic justice and fair distribution of resources to prevent social tensions. Interfaith harmony can be achieved when economic well-being is equitably experienced by all groups, without discrimination based on religion or

belief. Therefore, harmony among communities in the perspective of Maqashid Syariah also involves efforts to realize social and economic justice.

In the perspective of Maqashid Syariah, interfaith harmony also reflects one of Islam's most fundamental values: justice. The Qur'an frequently emphasizes the importance of acting justly, even toward those of different beliefs. Moderation and justice in interfaith relations are key to achieving peace and social stability. When Muslims implement justice in their interactions with people of other religions—whether socially, economically, or politically—harmony and cohesion can be achieved (Ramdayani et al., 2022). Beyond justice, mutual respect and appreciation for differences are also essential foundations for community harmony in Maqashid Syariah. Respecting the beliefs and religious practices of others is part of Islam's noble ethics.

In Islamic history, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) set a concrete example of how to interact with Jewish, Christian, and other religious communities in Medina. The Medina Charter, as an early example of interfaith cooperation, demonstrates that Islam acknowledges and values religious diversity within society (Woda, 2023). Community harmony is further strengthened through interfaith dialogue, which aims to foster understanding and cooperation on shared interests. Maqashid Syariah encourages Muslims to engage openly in dialogue with followers of other religions to achieve broader humanitarian goals. Dialogue is not merely a means to address differences but also a way to find common ground in efforts to realize shared welfare. Through dialogue, conflicts and prejudices rooted in ignorance can be avoided, creating opportunities for mutual learning and understanding (Auda, 2008).

The Hermeneutic Interpretation Method in Understanding Moderation and Harmony

The hermeneutic interpretation method in understanding the concepts of moderation and harmony is highly relevant in the context of social and religious diversity. Hermeneutics, as a method of text interpretation, emphasizes the importance of understanding the meaning contained in a text by considering its historical, cultural, and social context (Kristanti et al., 2021). In relation to the Qur'an, hermeneutic interpretation offers a way to read verses related to moderation and harmony in a more dynamic and relevant manner to contemporary situations. Through this approach, the concepts of moderation (*wasathiyah*) and communal harmony can be understood as essential principles in religious life, which are always contextual and adaptive.

In hermeneutics, there is an emphasis on dual understanding: the meaning of the text in the past and its relevance to the present. Moderation and harmony in Islam, as depicted in the Qur'an, can be seen as principles that govern how Muslims behave toward themselves and others. Hermeneutic interpretation helps in understanding how teachings on moderation, such as in Surah Al-Baqarah: 143, which describes Muslims as an '*ummatan wasathan*' (a moderate community), can be applied across different eras (Irawan, 2018). Through this approach, moderation is not confined to past contexts but evolves in response to contemporary challenges.

Moderation, or *wasathiyah*, in hermeneutic interpretation emphasizes balance between two extremes, both in beliefs and practices. This interpretation seeks to uncover the essence of this teaching not only as individual behavior but also as a guideline for interacting with others, including those with different beliefs (Nadhrah et al., 2023). In the context of moderation, hermeneutic interpretation can clarify how Islam teaches against fanaticism or extremism, whether in worship or religious teachings in general. Islam encourages its followers to adopt a middle path, avoiding excessive behavior that could lead to division and conflict.

An important aspect of hermeneutics is the dialogue between the text and the reader. When interpreting verses about communal harmony, hermeneutic interpretation does not only focus on the literal meaning but also considers the social and political contexts in which the verse is relevant. For instance, in Surah Al-Hujurat: 13, which states that Allah created humanity in various tribes and nations to know one another, hermeneutic interpretation helps us understand how this verse encourages interfaith dialogue and intercultural tolerance (Anzaikhan, Idani, et al., 2023). Thus, hermeneutic interpretation encourages readers to find the relevance of these teachings in fostering harmony in plural societies.

Communal harmony in hermeneutic interpretation involves understanding how religious texts teach peace and harmony amid diversity. Verses emphasizing the importance of maintaining brotherhood among humans and preventing conflict must be understood not only in their historical context but also in the current reality, where conflicts often arise from religious and cultural differences. Hermeneutic interpretation highlights peace as a primary goal of *sharia* and Islamic teachings. Through this approach, Muslims can find relevant solutions to modern issues related to harmony and peace. Additionally, hermeneutics emphasizes that the meaning of a text evolves along with changes in social contexts and human understanding.

Therefore, hermeneutic interpretation of moderation and harmony strives to accommodate social changes occurring in the modern world. For example, in the context of globalization and increasingly intense cross-cultural interactions, hermeneutic interpretation can reinterpret concepts such as tolerance and interfaith cooperation, which are essential for maintaining social stability and harmony in a more connected world (M. M. Najib, 2023). The hermeneutic approach in interpretation also invites readers to consider the moral intentions behind the teachings of moderation and harmony. Hermeneutic interpretation does not merely seek literal meaning but also aims to understand the moral objectives of these teachings.

For instance, when Islam teaches the importance of interfaith harmony, hermeneutic interpretation asks: What is the moral purpose of this teaching? The answer is to create peace, justice, and collective well-being. Thus, hermeneutics serves not only as a method of interpretation but also as a tool to uncover ethical values in religious teachings. Contextualization is another key element in hermeneutic interpretation (Widiarto & Wilaela, 2022). Moderation and harmony must adapt to changing times. In a world filled with global challenges such as radicalism, extremism, and social injustice, hermeneutic interpretation plays a crucial role in finding ways to ensure that Islamic teachings on moderation and harmony remain relevant in addressing these issues (Ricoeur, 2016).

This interpretation emphasizes that each generation of Muslims must be capable of rereading religious texts according to the challenges they face. Moderation in hermeneutic interpretation functions not only as an individual principle but also as a framework for creating a just and peaceful society. Through the hermeneutic approach, moderation can be understood as a strategy for building a balanced social life, where individual and community rights are respected, and differences are seen as assets rather than threats (Hazwani & Matang, 2022). Hermeneutic interpretation creates space for readers to think critically and creatively when interpreting religious texts, so that moderation can be applied in various aspects of life, including interfaith relations, politics, and economics. Communal harmony in hermeneutic interpretation is emphasized through respect for plurality.

The Qur'an acknowledges the existence of other religions and respects their right to worship according to their beliefs. For example, in Surah Al-Kafirun: 6, it is stated, *"For you is your religion, and for me is my religion."* Hermeneutic interpretation of this verse highlights the importance of respecting differences in belief and not imposing religion on others (Ma'shum et al., 2023). Communal harmony is understood as part of efforts to uphold human rights and promote peaceful coexistence amid diversity. Ultimately, the hermeneutic interpretation method in understanding moderation and harmony offers a dynamic and inclusive approach. By understanding religious texts through hermeneutics, Muslims are encouraged to explore the meanings of moderation and harmony in ever-changing contexts. Hermeneutic interpretation allows believers to adapt Qur'anic teachings so that they remain relevant to global challenges, transforming the teachings on moderation and harmony from mere theoretical principles into practical guides for building harmonious lives in diverse societies.

The Implications of Hermeneutic Interpretation for Understanding Moderation and Harmony

The implications of hermeneutic interpretation for understanding moderation and harmony have profound effects on the religious world. Hermeneutics, as an interpretative method emphasizing the interaction between text and context, opens space for a more inclusive and relevant understanding of religion. In this approach, the meaning of religious texts, especially the Qur'an, is not only interpreted textually but also by considering social, cultural, and historical changes (M. A. Najib & Fata, 2020). The understanding of moderation (*wasathiyah*) and harmony derived from Qur'anic texts becomes more dynamic through hermeneutic interpretation, as these concepts can be adapted to contemporary situations.

In the concept of moderation, hermeneutics allows for flexibility in interpretation, enabling Muslims to understand the importance of maintaining balance without falling into extremism. Hermeneutic interpretation invites believers to see moderation as an effort to maintain equilibrium between faith and social life. Moderation is not solely about worship and beliefs but also about how to live harmoniously with others, including those of different faiths (Shafwan, 2022).

With the hermeneutic approach, moderation evolves beyond being merely a theological concept into a practical guide for daily life.

Hermeneutics also impacts the understanding of harmony among communities, often viewed as a vital component in pluralistic societies. In hermeneutic interpretation, harmony is seen as a form of acceptance of differences and a respect for diversity. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of peaceful coexistence amidst differences, as expressed in Surah Al-Hujurat: 13, which states that Allah created humanity in diverse tribes and nations so they may know one another (Daimah, 2018). Hermeneutic interpretation helps contextualize this verse in modern times, where interfaith dialogue and cross-cultural cooperation are crucial for maintaining peace.

The harmony fostered by hermeneutic interpretation goes beyond tolerance, encouraging the strengthening of interfaith relations. This interpretation motivates Muslims to develop an inclusive attitude, respecting other religions and safeguarding their rights. In an increasingly interconnected world, hermeneutics enables Qur'anic texts to be understood as a source of ethics prioritizing cooperation and solidarity among religious communities. Hermeneutic interpretation highlights that harmony is not merely an ultimate goal but part of the process of maintaining good relationships amidst diversity.

The hermeneutic approach to understanding moderation also emphasizes contextual adaptation. For example, in Surah Al-Baqarah: 143, Muslims are described as '*ummatan wasathan*' or a moderate community. Hermeneutic interpretation provides an opportunity to explore how this moderation can be practiced across different times and situations. In the current context, where radicalism and extremism pose global threats, hermeneutic interpretation provides guidance that moderation must always be upheld in every aspect of life (Ramadhan et al., 2020). Moderation should encompass all actions and thoughts, whether in religious practices or social interactions.

Hermeneutic interpretation also implies the importance of a critical understanding of texts. When interpreting moderation and harmony, readers are expected not to rely solely on literal meanings but to delve into the moral and ethical purposes contained within. Moderation, for instance, is understood as the effort to balance various human needs—both spiritual and material. This interpretation emphasizes that Muslims must understand and apply moderation in daily life, including interactions with others, whether fellow Muslims or non-Muslims (Darman, 2022). Harmony among communities, from a hermeneutic perspective, is also seen as the result of a profound process of interpreting religious texts. In this regard, hermeneutics encourages readers to understand that peace and harmony are part of *maqasid shariah*, the ultimate objectives of Islamic law.

Harmony not only serves to maintain social stability but also ensures that every individual can exercise their fundamental rights without feeling threatened by differences in religion or belief. Hermeneutic interpretation opens the door to interpretations that promote harmonious living in diverse societies. Through a hermeneutic approach, moderation and harmony are not viewed as static concepts but as dynamic and continually evolving. This provides flexibility for Muslims to contextualize Qur'anic teachings to remain relevant to current conditions (Sabri,

2022). Hermeneutics allows Muslims not to be confined by outdated interpretations that may no longer align with modern times, enabling them instead to discover new meanings that remain consistent with the core values of Islam. This approach fosters dialogue between the text and ever-changing social realities.

The implications of hermeneutics for understanding harmony can be seen in how this concept is continually updated to address global challenges. Interfaith harmony has become increasingly significant in a world polarized by differences in beliefs and ideologies. Hermeneutic interpretation offers solutions by emphasizing the importance of understanding religious texts contextually and relevantly to contemporary challenges, ensuring harmony amidst the frequent occurrence of religious conflicts in various parts of the world (Rahman & Aspandi, 2023). In practice, hermeneutic interpretation also encourages innovation in understanding moderation and harmony. This approach teaches Muslims not merely to accept existing interpretations but to strive to uncover new meanings that are more relevant and contextual. Thus, moderation and harmony become not only doctrines but also integral to daily thoughts and behaviors that reflect the Islamic values of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, bringing mercy to all of creation (Fazlur Rahman, 2015).

Conclusion

Religious moderation and communal harmony from the perspective of *maqasid syariah* serve as essential foundations for building a harmonious and tolerant society. Through a profound understanding of the objectives of *syariah*, such as justice, welfare, and the protection of individual rights, religious communities are expected to respect and collaborate with one another despite their differing beliefs. The *maqasid syariah* approach provides a clear framework for promoting the values of moderation and harmony, thereby creating conducive conditions for social cohesion.

On the other hand, the analysis of hermeneutic interpretation offers an effective tool for interpreting religious texts in a relevant context. By employing hermeneutic methods, researchers can uncover deeper meanings of the teachings on moderation and harmony found in the Qur'an and connect them to the challenges faced by contemporary society. This approach not only aids in comprehensively understanding religious teachings but also encourages the practical application of these values in everyday life, ensuring that religious moderation and communal harmony are tangibly realized amidst the existing diversity.

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