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3 **Embracing Radicalism and Extremism in**  
4 **Indonesia with the Beauty of Islam**  
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11 **ABSTRACT**  
12

The phenomena of radicalism and extremism in religiosity, especially, are a global trend. They are widespread easily due to the 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 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" consisting a blend of truth, goodness, and beauty, 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.

13  
14 *Keywords: extremism, Islamic moderation, mainstreaming, maqāṣid sharī'ah, radicalism.*

15  
16 **1. INTRODUCTION**  
17

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

30 Such phenomenon was exacerbated by the transition of democratization which is hijacked  
31 by groups of politicians flagged with the elite and certain groups' interest. The democracy in  
32 Indonesia was also harassed by fundamentalist and radical groups. The freedom in the  
33 reform era has given a breath of fresh air for these hardliners [2] to come back to the public  
34 offering ideological and political thought that is contrary to the principles of the Unitary

35 Republic of Indonesia. Menus of violent bringing the name of religion brought by the radical  
36 groups are, in fact, so paradox considering that the esoteric and exoteric values of Islamic  
37 teachings are to present Islam as a friendly and tolerant religion that spreads universal  
38 benefit. The logic of radicality used has gone beyond the logic of democracy and freedom of  
39 opinion and even it has to sacrifice the civilization and nobility of Indonesian religion and  
40 nation.

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

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

61 In recent decades, the moderation of Islam has become the blueprint for mainstreaming  
62 Islam in Indonesia. Apart from being a solution to the pejorative religious issues and a  
63 locomotor of the global civilization, this idea is also an appropriate alternative for the  
64 moderate generation to take preventive and progressive steps. When radical, fundamental,  
65 extreme, and puritan groups echo their calls accompanied by acts of violence, moderate  
66 Muslims must call for universal peace to symbolize and portray Islam as a religion of  
67 rahmātan li al'ālamīn (a blessing to all the universe) [5]. The moderation movement itself is  
68 actually an effort to re-incarnate the early era of Muslim generation whose religious practices  
69 the closest to the Prophet [6]. In another meaning, the moderation of Islam is actually a form  
70 of a comprehensive (kāffah) understanding of Islam, one of which is to understand the  
71 concept of maqāṣid shari'ah (purposefulness of Islamic law) as the philosophical objective  
72 behind the formal institutions of Islamic law.

## 73 **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### 74 **2.1. Radicalism and Extremism**

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

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

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

97 Meanwhile, Schmid defined an extreme group as a group that adheres to the understanding  
98 of extreme violence or extremism. Compared to radicals, extremists tend to be closed-  
99 minded, intolerant, anti-democratic, and can justify any means, including fraud, to achieve  
100 their goals. This group is different from radical groups, - the groups that embrace radicalism  
101 [9].

## 102 **2.2. Maintreaming Islamic Moderation**

### 103 **2.2.1. Definition of Mainstreaming**

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

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

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

123 Mainstreaming has become one of the favorite words at international events, especially  
124 since the United Nations reserved it in the fight for gender equality through gender  
125 mainstreaming as a continuation of the Beijing Platform for Action of the UN Conference on  
126 Women in Beijing in 1995. Previously, the term gender mainstreaming, as a new concept,



127 appeared for the first time in international texts after the United Nations held the 3rd World  
128 Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985 as its follow-up activity related to the debate in the  
129 United Nations Commission on the Status of Women about the women's role in development  
130 [17]. Borrowing the implied general understanding from the activities in Beijing and Nairobi,  
131 mainstreaming is considered important in the course of maintaining human rights and social  
132 justice for all people and to ensure that the objectives of social, economic, and other aspects  
133 of life can be achieved effectively. Mainstreaming can reveal the need for changes in goals,  
134 strategies, and actions to ensure that anyone can give a good influence, participate in, and  
135 benefit from social activities and development process. Thus, mainstreaming can cause  
136 changes in the order of society's life related to its structure, procedures, and culture to create  
137 a conducive living environment in achieving the human objectives of life and benefit [18].

138 Meanwhile, Trilling describe that 'mainstreaming works with <sup>1</sup> series of self-separation from  
139 the dominant culture. However, one thing that must also be understood, it works with a  
140 series of introjections into the dominant culture. There is no statistical data that can measure  
141 the effects of separation and introjection but the effect is obviously very large' [19].

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

148 Addressing the term of mainstreaming, its definition highlights several things related to the  
149 objectives of mainstreaming: processes, objects, and active subjects of its activities. Its  
150 objects are all policies at all levels and stages, while its active subjects are all activity  
151 executants. In relation with policy making at institutional levels, Ya'kub and Othman  
152 explained that mainstreaming can contain the meaning that the policy process is re-  
153 organized in such a way that it becomes right and every executant understands how to insert  
154 the issue or a particular value to be mainstreamed [20].

155 Robert Picciotto <sup>1</sup> a professor in the faculty of political economics at King's College London,  
156 explained that mainstream is 'the main road of activity' or 'the main stream of opinion'. The  
157 first part of the word, *main*, connotes <sup>1</sup> dominance and constancy, while the second part,  
158 *stream*, connotes a rural quiet area. Given its aquatic origin, this term evokes the feeling  
159 about fluidity, harmony, and inevitability [21]. Hence, adopting the nature of mainstream  
160 means 'going with the flow and avoiding activities which are against the force of social  
161 gravity'. Supporting and following the mainstream views means minimizing the risk of  
162 confrontation and isolation. Legalizing the mainstream policies and programs also means  
163 getting the benefit of social approval. This circle of peaceful characteristics goes beyond the  
164 meaning of mainstream as a noun and colors the perceptions associated with its meaning as  
165 a verb [38]. However, this is not entirely justified; just the same as the calm surface of great  
166 waters can hide a lot of turbulence, existing mainstream in an organization or society is very  
167 likely to shift with the ups and downs and the flow of coalitions that supports it [21].

168 Furthermore, Picciotto explains that since there are <sup>1</sup> many tributaries, the mainstream is a  
169 composite view of the <sup>1</sup> competitive and diverse beliefs that can lead to a chaotic flow [38].  
170 According to him, the verb 'to mainstream' is a concept that is dynamic and shows deliberate  
171 linkages in the natural <sup>1</sup> order of things that exist. Mainstreaming efforts will create winners  
172 and losers, challenge interests, and trigger changes in alliances. It would also undermine the  
173 status quo but does not evoke chaotic changes or painful disorder. Accordingly,  
174 mainstreaming contains connotations of a gradual reform instead of confusing and panic-

175 causing <sup>1</sup>revolution. In policy terms, mainstreaming is usually achieved through changes that  
176 is done gradually in matters relating to the objectives of the program, protocol operations,  
177 and organizational culture [21].

### 178 **2.2.2. The concept of Islamic Moderation (Wasatīyyah)**

179 The discourse of Islamic moderation (wasatīyyah), - or moderate Islam, modern Islam,  
180 progressive Islam, and reform Islam,- quite seized the attention of scholars. The terminology  
181 of Islamic moderation refers to the legitimacy of the Quran and Hadith of the Prophet  
182 Muhammad who asserts that Islam followers are ordered to be moderate because moderate  
183 attitude (wasatīyyah) is an identity and the basic character of Islam [5] [6] [22].

184 From the exploration of various Islamic literature, the word wasatīyyah with its various  
185 derivatives have many interpretation which shows how dynamic and contextual the word is.  
186 Al-Salabi in his monumental work, al-Wasatīyyah fi al-Qur'ān al-Karīm elaborates on some  
187 meanings from the derivatives of the word wasat: in the form of zaraf (adverb) it means bayna  
188 (intermediate), in the form of isim (noun) it means between two ends, and in the form of  
189 shifat (adjective) it means khiyār (the selected, the most valuable, the best, just, or  
190 something that is between good and bad) [23].

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

203 The elaboration and enrichment of discourse and praxis of Islamic wasatīyyah received  
204 important contributions from Mohammad Hashim Kamali in his work, The Middle Path of  
205 Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatīyyah. As seen in the title, Kamali did  
206 not use the term 'Islam wasatīyyah' which is commonly used in Indonesia. He preferred  
207 using the term 'middle path of moderation in Islamic ' based on the Qur'anic principle of  
208 wasatīyyah. Kamali stated that the terms of wasatīyyah commensurate with tawassuṭ, i'tidāl,  
209 tawāzun, or iqtisād which all mean being fair or in the position between right and left  
210 extremities. Wasatīyyah is contrary to taḡarruf which means outskirts, extreme, radical, and  
211 redundant [26].

212 Apart from the terminology, Kamali's book is an original and comprehensive work that  
213 discusses 'the middle path of moderation in Islam'. In that framework, he based the  
214 discussion of Islamic moderation on the Qur'anic principle of wasatīyyah from the point of  
215 conceptual analysis and a thematic perspective which was then accompanied by a number  
216 of recommendations. In his study, Kamali referred to many verses of the Holy Quran and the  
217 Prophet's sayings (hadith) as well as the interpretation of mainstream Islamic scholars. Not  
218 only did he explain the discussion of this issue from the opinions of Sunni scholars and  
219 thinkers, but also from some Shi'ite ones. According to Kamali, he himself is a Sunni  
220 follower, the discussion by including the two large wings of Muslims is important to explore

221 each other's views so that they can nurture, foster, and bring about mutual understanding  
222 that can ultimately realize the unity of ummah (Muslim communities) [26].

223 Furthermore, Kamali stated that wasaṭiyyah was an important aspect of Islam. Unfortunately,  
224 it was forgotten by many of its followers. In fact, Islamic teachings on wasaṭiyyah contain  
225 many ramifications in various fields which are also of concern to Islam. Moderation is taught  
226 not only by Islam, but also other religions. For example, in the Greco-Jewish faith and  
227 Christianity, moderation is referred to as the 'golden mean', or the desired middle between  
228 two extreme angles that give rise to various kinds of excesses. The same thing is  
229 emphasized in the religio-philosophy of Buddhism which enjoins its adherents to avoid  
230 religious strict asceticism or, contrarily, enjoy excessive worldly pleasures. Meanwhile, in  
231 Confucianism there are the teachings of Zhongyong which asserts the moderation of life  
232 [26].

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

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

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

265 Souza also stated that wasaṭiyyah refers to the practical wisdom used by Muslims in their  
266 daily relationships with others. Excessive alms, for example, is highlighted as a problem  
267 because no one is taught to endanger his/her own family by prioritizing to donate to charity.  
268 Likewise the absence of alms is a problem because it is evidence of the thin feeling of



269 empathy for the suffering of others. What is important is the middle position in giving charity,  
270 doing it with the right size for each individual in special conditions. Therefore, in Islam,  
271 garbage or industrial waste that is not handled properly and excessive consumption should  
272 not be a behavior after understanding the meaning of wasaṭiyyah [29].

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

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

297 The difference in the terminological meaning of Islamic moderation considers that its  
298 derivate involves a balance between logic and revelation, material and spirit, rights and  
299 obligations, individualism and collectivism, transcendental texts and individual interpretations  
300 based on the mujtahid's (revivalist's) thought, ideality and reality, being permanent and  
301 temporal, absolute and relative, all of which are intertwined [30]. Wasaṭiyyah/moderation can  
302 be claimed as a comprehensive and integrated approach. This concept invites Muslim  
303 people massively to personalize Islam in a balanced and comprehensive way in all aspects  
304 of community life by focusing on improving and developing the quality of life, knowledge,  
305 development, economic system, political system, education system, nationality, defense,  
306 unity, equality, egalitarianism and equality between ethnicity, race and religion [31].  
307 Ummatan wasaṭan (moderate Muslim) becomes a model that will be contested in front of  
308 other people in the whole world.

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



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

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

334 According to a hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari no. 4487 and Imam Ahmad no. 10891  
335 [39] [40], the verse was related to the words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW which means:  
336 "On the Day of Judgment one day Noah will be called (by Allah) and then asked:" Have You  
337 delivered (revelation)? He then answered: "Yes, I have." His people were then summoned  
338 and asked: "Has he (Noah) delivered it to you?" They replied: "No warning came to us."  
339 Then Noah was asked again, "Who testifies to you?" He replied: "Muhammad and his  
340 Ummah", then the verse was revealed.

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

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

353 Muslims are also the middle people from various religious teachings. Islam does neither  
354 forbid whatever permissible nor legalize whatever unlawful as is often done by the Jews.  
355 Islam encourages people to get married and have a family whereas to Christian priests such  
356 is not permissible. Islam commands its people to sami'nā wa aṭa'nā (listen and obey) to their  
357 Prophet while the Jews rebuked and even killed some of their Prophets. Allah says: " As to  
358 those who deny the signs of Allah and in defiance of right, slay the prophets and slay those  
359 who teach just dealing with mankind, announce to them a grievous penalty" [32]. Ibn Kathir  
360 stated in his book of commentary relating to this verse that after being asked by a  
361 Companion, namely Abu Ubaidah Ibn Jarrah, about who would obtain the most poignant  
362 torment from Allah in the hereafter, the Prophet said: "A person who kills a prophet or kill  
363 someone who commands virtue and forbids evils" [37].

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

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

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

### 386 **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

387 The study on mainstreaming Islamic moderation is a qualitative research, this study aims to  
388 find the underlying motives, reasons and desires [44] in mainstreaming moderation. As  
389 quoted by Creswell [45], and Denzin and Lincoln [46], a qualitative research is composed of  
390 a set of interpretative material practices that makes the world being observed become  
391 apparent. Basically, these practices transform the world into a series of representations  
392 which include field notes, interviews, conversations, photos, recordings, and personal  
393 memos. Meanwhile, this qualitative research was carried out using the case study method,  
394 referring to Yin [47], with the consideration that this method enables researchers to conduct  
395 empirical investigations of phenomena in the context of their environment so that the  
396 relationship between phenomena and the environment that has not been transparent will be  
397 revealed clearly.

398 This study began with philosophical questions using research questions including how, why,  
399 who, and what, and ended with the interpretation of research findings. Furthermore, from the  
400 data gathered, the points of similarity and difference were taken so that the meaningful and  
401 actual holistic characteristics in qualitative research are expected to provide maximum  
402 results [47]. This qualitative research starts with the assumption and a theoretical and  
403 naturalistic interpretative framework that inform the study on the said mainstreaming. The  
404 stages through which researchers analyzed the data used the Creswell's spiral analysis [45].

405 The analysis step of the case study was carried out as stated by Atkinson [48] namely: 1)  
406 making a data repository using basic relational database theory, 2) coding to identify  
407 'chunks' of data. The codes generated were then analyzed and rationalized, 3) analyzing  
408 case study data by producing various reports, 4) producing the final proposition by linking  
409 the rationalized codes back to the initial proposition where the corresponding new  
410 proposition was produced. The data validity was then checked through triangulation

411 techniques [44], checking by research members, and discussions with colleagues.  
 412 Triangulation technique was done through two methods namely technical triangulation and  
 413 data triangulation. The quality of the research design was checked before the start of the  
 414 observation until obtaining the data, then the data validation was conducted so that it further  
 415 strengthened the research discussion.

416 **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

417 **4.1. Cases of Radicalism and Extremism in Indonesia**

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

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

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

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

444 **Table 1: Comparison of Violence of KBB in Indonesia 2015-2018**

No.	Form of Violence	Number of Incidences on Particular Year			
		2015 <sup>1)</sup>	2016 <sup>1)</sup>	2017 <sup>2)</sup>	2018 <sup>3)</sup>
1	Incidence of Violence	190	204	213	192
2	Action of violence	249	313	265	276
3	Violence conducted by non-state actor(s)	119	156	170	146
4	Violence conducted by state actor(s)	130	159	95	130
5	No. of provinces with KBB violence (out of 34)	n/a	30	27	26
6	Average number of violence per month	15	17	18	16
7	Incidence of religious politicization	n/a	28	36	7

445 Sources: <sup>1)</sup> = [49], <sup>2)</sup> = [50], <sup>3)</sup> = [51]  
 446

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

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

#### 467 **4.2. Reading the Phenomena of Radicalism and Extremism Wisely**

468 Talking about radicalism and extremism, some points need to be put proportionally. First, it  
469 is pity that the definition of both terms as an extraordinary crime is always connoted to  
470 religious radicalism and extremism, especially Islam. Haedar Nashir, a political analyst **and**  
471 **the current Chairman of Muhammadiyah**, stated that the radical links of Islam are even  
472 identical with extremists, jihadists, and terrorists. This paradox and ambiguity of diction  
473 **become** more acute in the following phenomena. When a group of people in the name of  
474 "nationalism and defending the Republic of Indonesia" conduct a sweeping or expelling other  
475 groups with different political orientations and different religious understandings, they are not  
476 called radicals; when certain groups take up arms and occasionally cry out their slogan and  
477 demand for an independence followed by anarchy, they are simply referred as a separatist  
478 group, not a radical one; and also when a group of people screaming out the slogan of  
479 "willing to die for the Homeland" or "the Homeland is a non-negotiable fixed price" coupled  
480 with blood thumb printing, they will not be accused of being radical, even they are regarded  
481 as the true defender of the homeland, the nationalism heroes or the nationality jihadists.  
482 Furthermore, when radical action under the pretext of defending the homeland using the  
483 slogan of "hubbul watan" (loving the Homeland) is conducted, then an image of pure  
484 nationalism is pinned onto the executants. Contrarily, when a handful of Muslims conduct a  
485 sweeping to places used for immoral deeds (gambling, prostitution, bars), or reject some of  
486 the dictum articles on marital rape in the draft of Indonesian Penal Code, or proclaim that  
487 they are willing to die for the sake of religion, then they will certainly be called jihadists,  
488 radicals, and terrorists [55]. Therefore, objective, clear, honest, fair, and not manipulative  
489 parameters are required in categorizing variety of radical phenomena. A massive intelligence  
490 is also needed in reading the phenomena of radicalism, extremism, terrorism, and other  
491 similar dictions.

492 Secondly, a new reading and understanding is necessitated on the classical feud about  
493 gender pros and cons or radical-liberal movements which have to be realized as episodes of  
494 the fourth generation war (i.e. the proxy war, asymmetric warfare, and cyber warfare). **A**  
495 **proxy war is a confrontation between two great powers by using replacement players to**



496 avoid direct confrontation with the reasons for reducing the risk of fatal destruction. This is  
497 because wars using weapons or "hard power" is considered to be no longer efficient, so that  
498 new ways that are far more efficient by using "soft power" emerge through forms of ideology  
499 warfare, education welfare, cultural warfare, economic and financial warfare, information  
500 warfare, and so on. The purpose of the war has shifted from mastery of territory to mastery  
501 of resources.

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

516 Third, Indonesia is in the trap of a battle of global ideologies: neo-liberalism, neo-colonialism,  
517 and religious fundamentalism. Such trap changes the beautiful face of the nation into  
518 individualistic, materialistic, hedonic, fanatic, and radical. The reform era that is not  
519 accompanied with the clear concept, readiness, and leaders with good characters is nothing  
520 more than an overthrow to the old regime. It is just a substitution with a liberal-  
521 democratization which moves very fast beyond the threshold of the Indonesian original  
522 characteristics. Even worse, it is compounded by the rapid flow of globalization which opens  
523 the gates of various ideologies of neo-liberalism, capitalism, and neo-colonialism. These  
524 ideologies give birth to new viruses in the form of individualism, materialism, hedonism,  
525 consumerism, narrow fanaticism, radicalism, and even terrorism which contradict to  
526 the religious values as well as the national-ideological values of Pancasila (the five principles).

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

### 537 **4.3. Mainstreaming Islamic Moderation as the Solution**

#### 538 **4.3.1. Causes, Characteristics, and Indicators of Radicalism and Extremism**

539 Presenting the proper solution to deal with radicalism and extremism must be based on the  
540 understanding of several factors related to their emergence. They include understanding the  
541 causes underlying such phenomena, their characteristic, and their indicators. According to  
542 Asrori, there are at least 3 (three) main factors causing radicalism and extremism to emerge,

543 namely: 1) the chaotic situation in the Middle–Eastern countries, 2) the spread of  
544 Wahhabism, and 3) the poverty [56]. Meanwhile, a research done by the INFID (International  
545 NGO Forum on Indonesian Development) and P3M (Perhimpunan Pengembangan  
546 Pesantren dan Masyarakat or the Association of Islamic Boarding Schools and Communities  
547 Development) concluded the factors causing extremism, especially in Indonesia, are: 1)  
548 long-standing social and economic inequality at the national and global level that eventually  
549 cause people's dissatisfaction, 2) the usage of social media and public facilities and spheres  
550 by extreme groups to spread their influence and propaganda, 3) the existence of infiltration  
551 of radicalism and extremism in Indonesian education, and 4) the rise of extremism  
552 campaigns on the internet and social media [57].

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

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

#### 572 **4.3.2. Views of Indonesian Muslim Scholars on Moderate Islam**

573 Dealing with radical and extreme phenomenon as previously mentioned will be wise by  
574 answering it through the concept of wasaṭiyyah (Islamic moderation), which is a concept in  
575 Islamic epistemology that promotes a moderate, virtuous, wise, and just approach. This  
576 concept aims to minimize extreme, radical, and fanatical attitudes and actions as well as  
577 violence in the name of religion. Malaysia is said to be one of the countries that has  
578 implemented such concept to unite various races, tribes, and religions so as to reduce social  
579 unrest in a multi-cultural society [31]. The ideal concept of Islamic moderation must be  
580 dialogued with transcendental revelation and dialecticized with the socio-cultural conditions  
581 of the community. Through such activities, the concept of moderation can be grounded using  
582 religious language in various aspects of social life [20].

583 In Indonesia, the discussion about the concepts, discourse, and praxis of Islam wasaṭiyyah  
584 finds the most powerful momentum since the convening of the congress of Muhammadiyah  
585 and one of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) which were held just a couple of days apart in the month  
586 of August 2015. The term 'Islamic moderation' or 'moderation in Islam' associated with the  
587 term 'moderate Islam' are often disputed by a handful of Muslims themselves. For them,  
588 Islam is just Islam so there is no such Islamic moderation or moderate Islam. For this  
589 reason, the term 'Islam wasaṭiyyah' which is 'Qur'anic' – i.e. derived from the verses of the

590 Qur'an in Surah (QS) al-Baqarah (2): 143 [32] - is more accepted and therefore more  
591 commonly used.

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

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

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

627 Dien explained further that the principle of moderate Islam is the principle of the middle way,  
628 a straight path, and a moderate one which rests on monotheism. Moderate means rejecting  
629 all forms of extremism and *ṭāghūt* (transcending borders) whether in economic, social,  
630 political, or cultural aspects which are contrary to the content of Islam. This concept, said  
631 Dien, is expected to be able to provide solutions to the problems of the world which are  
632 currently experiencing accumulative damages. Poverty, ignorance, inequality, and  
633 environmental damages are caused by systems that do not favor religious and moral values.  
634 Such a condition, according to him, results from the fact that the world now relies on  
635 liberalism and secular humanism which give birth to the secular cultural economic system  
636 [65].



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

648 These are the views of Indonesian Muslim intellectual figures, of the MUI officials as well as  
649 the leaders of the two largest religious organizations in Indonesia, - NU and  
650 Muhammadiyah,- about moderate Islam which, at the same time, reflect the stances of the  
651 organizations they lead. From their views, it may be summarized that moderate Islam is the  
652 middle path that enjoins and promotes all good virtues of Islam to be practiced by Muslims in  
653 their daily lives both in terms of their relation with God (hablun min Allah) and with mankind  
654 (hablun min al-nās) so that the vision of presenting Islam as the blessing to all may be  
655 realized.

#### 656 **4.3.3. Methods of Preventing and Countering Radicalism and Extremism**

657 The INFIDs' findings suggest that the approach that has been carried out by the Indonesian  
658 government against the rampant radicalism and extremism is more of securitization  
659 approach. It is proven that this type of approach is not effective, it even triggers the  
660 emergence of other radical actions. The occurring phenomena of radicalism and extremism  
661 indicate the failure of the Government to understand that, actually, those exposed to  
662 radicalism and extremism can be approached through fulfilling their rights as citizens – in  
663 which they are a part of a plural society and most of them are in a communitarian social  
664 logic. An important principle of citizenship approach in relation to democracy and pluralism is  
665 *deseuritization* that rejects the logic of securitization. The logic of deseuritization is a  
666 democratic approach and the fulfillment of rights by the state based on equality for all  
667 citizens [68].

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

679 The national identity can be weighted through its moderate attitude. Hence, should the noble  
680 personality and moderate attitude be absent, the social productivity and stability would never  
681 be realized. One's knowledge and reasoning also give important contributions which have  
682 implications to the moderate, modern, inclusive, and progressive attitudes and personalities  
683 [2].



684

685 **5. CONCLUSION**

686 The 4.0 Industrial Revolution era certainly does not escape from its various negative  
687 excesses such as challenges of hoax and slander news and the spreading of extreme  
688 religious narratives, both right extreme (conservatism, fundamentalism, radicalism, etc.) and  
689 left one (liberal), which are certainly irrelevant to the Indonesian context with all its diversity  
690 reality. It is in this context that the Islamic moderation finds its urgency to be implemented.

691 Islamic moderation is believed to become a solution step for creating global civilization. It  
692 promotes moderate, virtuous, wise, and fair approaches aiming to minimize extreme, radical,  
693 and fanatical attitudes and actions and any violence under the name of religion.  
694 Furthermore, it also serves as the blueprint for mainstreaming the ideal model of Islam in  
695 Indonesia. However, the clashes of liberal-radical Islamic groups in Indonesia must also be  
696 read intelligently as one of the proxy war strategies, not merely as a claim of truth in  
697 understanding the transcendental revelation.

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

707

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709

**COMPETING INTERESTS**

710 The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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