

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MODERATION AS A SOLUTION IN OVERCOMING EXTREMISM: MOHAMMAD HASHIM KAMALI'S PERSPECTIVE

Mohammad Takdir

Universitas Annuqayah Sumenep

mohammadtakdir86@gmail.com

Abstract: This article aims to analyze Mohammad Hashim Kamali's thoughts on the concept of moderation or *wasatiyah* in the Qur'an as an important principle in overcoming extremism and radicalism movements in the public sphere. This research uses qualitative research with a literature review approach. The data collection technique used in this research is documentation. The research data source focuses on Mohammad Hashim Kamali's work entitled *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyah* and other works related to studying Islamic moderation and its relationship with contemporary issues. This research focuses on the concept of moderation or *wasatiyah* and its characteristics based on sacred religious texts and Islamic doctrine. Next, there will be a discussion of the concept of moderation as a middle way in overcoming extremism, and the relationship between Islamic moderation and contemporary issues, such as the practice of justice, peace, and humanitarian rights. The results of this research show that the concept of *wasatiyah* in Mohammad Hashim Kamali's view is not only at a conceptual level but also in a practical form by providing concrete examples of the life activities of Muslims which must be based on a moderate and balanced attitude.

Keywords: Moderation, Extremism, Justice, Peace, Islam

Abstrak: Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pemikiran Mohammad Hashim Kamali mengenai konsep moderasi atau *wasatiyah* dalam Al-Qur'an sebagai prinsip penting dalam mengatasi gerakan ekstremisme dan radikalisme di ruang publik. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan tinjauan pustaka. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah dokumentasi. Sumber data penelitian berfokus pada karya Mohammad Hashim Kamali yang berjudul *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyah* dan karya lainnya terkait kajian moderasi Islam dan kaitannya dengan isu-isu kontemporer. Penelitian ini fokus pada konsep moderasi atau *wasatiyah* dan ciri-cirinya berdasarkan teks suci agama dan doktrin Islam. Selanjutnya akan dibahas mengenai konsep moderasi sebagai jalan tengah mengatasi ekstremisme, serta hubungan antara moderasi Islam dengan isu-isu kontemporer, seperti praktik keadilan, perdamaian, dan hak asasi manusia. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa konsep *wasatiyah* dalam pandangan Mohammad Hashim Kamali tidak hanya dalam tataran konseptual tetapi juga dalam bentuk praktis dengan memberikan contoh nyata dalam aktivitas kehidupan umat Islam yang dilandasi oleh sikap moderat dan seimbang.

Kata kunci: Moderasi, Ekstremisme, Keadilan, Perdamaian, Islam

A. Introduction

Islamic scholar Mohammad Hashim Kamali is a prolific author of books and periodicals about Islamic studies. *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyah* is one of Kamali's significant publications. The Islamic scholar Mohammad Hashim Kamali was born and raised in Afghanistan but as of right now, Kamali is a resident of Malaysia. As a law professor at the International Islamic University of Malaysia, he is well-known in the academic community as an authority

on Islamic law.¹ Hashim Kamali is an intelligent man who is tenacious in his pursuit of knowledge. His educational background started with a bachelor's degree, he studied at the University of Kabul, Afghanistan, his birthplace. After completing his undergraduate education, he continued at the University of London. In 1976, Hashim Kamali succeeded in obtaining a PhD in Islamic law at the same campus.

Hashim Kamali's progress in the academic field was very brilliant and received a lot of recognition from several other figures. To be precise, in 1985, Hashim was appointed dean of the International Institute of Islamic Thought & Civilization (ISTAC), until 2007. He achieved his academic peak when he became a Professor at IIUM. This brilliant academic experience has made Hashim Kamali once again trusted to be an assistant professor at well-known campuses, such as the Institute of Islamic Studies, and McGill University, Canada, and has been a visiting professor at various well-known universities, such as the University of Columbus, Ohio, United States, and others. Hashim Kamali once received a prestigious award in the field of academic excellence, namely the Ismail al-Faruqi Award, in 1995 and 1997.

Mohammad Hashim Kamali's work entitled *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyah* is an important work in studying Islamic moderation with an approach to the Qur'an as a primary source. This important study begins with an expert introduction from an Islamic historian, namely Tariq Ramadan, who gives high appreciation to this phenomenal work even though there are quite a lot of notes and criticism that were made for the writing of this book. This important introduction by Tariq Ramadan will provide a very interesting review of Mohammad Hashim Kamali's work which fully elaborates the meaning and practice of moderation in Islam by referring to the principles contained in the Qur'an.

Islamic scholars have extensively examined and analyzed this significant work by Hashim Kamli, and they provide a detailed explanation of the concept of moderation, or *wasatiyah*, as a tenet of religious life. A rigorous examination of this study will demonstrate not only the significant contribution of this enormously influential work but also the explanations provided by Kamali in several other publications. Many Islamic scholars who have researched a wide range of Islamic moderation issues refer to Hashim Kamali's work as the product of extremely bright thinking.

According to Tariq Ramadan, Hashim Kamali made a significant contribution to the field of Islamic studies, particularly in the application of the idea of moderation, which should serve as a guide for all Muslims. According to Tariq Ramadhan, Kamali takes a different stance when elucidating the idea and practice of *wasatiyah* in Islam; specifically, he does it from the standpoint of Islamic jurisprudence and freedom of expression. The work of Tariq Ramadan and Hashim Kamali is regarded as having made an outstanding contribution to Islamic studies, particularly when it comes to the emergence of radical and extremist groups that are harming Islam's reputation as a faith that promotes inclusivity and tolerance toward various religious groups.

Islamic scholar Tariq Ramadan is impressed by Kamali's exceptional critical expertise in articulating his insightful theories regarding the notion of *wasatiyah*.

¹ Muhammad Hedayatul Islam, "The Moderation (Wasatiyah) Paradigm in the Malay World: Thoughts of M. Kamal Hassan," *Archives of Business Research* 7, no. 11 (2019): 130-41, <https://doi.org/10.14738/abr.711.7456>.

Impressive remarks were made by Tariq Ramadan about Kamali's ability to clarify the matter of Islamic moderation. According to him, Kamali saw the legal school or jurisprudence, and the *maqasid* school as the pinnacle of Islam's efforts to give an explicit picture of laws or regulations. He claimed that Islam is not alone predicated on moderation but also on comprehending its objectives. more balanced and inclusive. According to Tariq Ramadhan, Kamali's writings offer an honest and critical assessment of how those who identify as Muslims and claim to follow Islam are creating Islamic issues.

As a scholar of Islam, Hashim Kamali thoroughly explained moderation, both theoretically and practically speaking, describing how it appears in the daily lives of Muslim communities. A well-known Muslim scholar, Hashim Kamali is regarded as an authority in Islamic law and has published numerous publications in recent years. A remarkable work that was recognized with an award for its outstanding intellectual contribution is *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyah*. In this book, Kamali makes the case that academics, decision-makers, and the Muslim community should support opposition to radical organizations that reject the moderate lessons that the Prophet Muhammad taught.

Hashim Kamali interprets moderation as a key component of Islamic teachings that has a significant impact on all facets of life in Muslim culture by taking a modern perspective on Islamic traditions. Kamali emphasized that moderation is a moral virtue that is important for maintaining human integrity and unity as well as for the goals of individual behavior. The teaching of moderation in daily life embodies a balanced and tasteful way of living that takes into account both one's interests and those of society.

In the Islamic tradition, a moderate attitude is an attitude that is needed to avoid extremism which is in direct conflict with the teachings of *wasatiyah* in Islam. Kamali provides a very interesting review using the principles of the Qur'an as an important source of the teachings of moderation which are a central point in the lives of Muslims. This is proven by his ability to highlight and interpret verses from the Qur'an regarding the meaning and scope of the teachings of moderation by providing realistic examples in people's lives. According to Kamali, the manifestation of the teachings of moderation is an important stage in socializing and promoting moderate, balanced, and fair Islamic values in every interaction and relationship with other communities. The principles of moderation teachings outlined by Hashim Kamali have become a significant contribution to the promotion of a middle path of moderation in Islam which has received many challenges from extremist and conservative groups whose ideological and religious norms are different from the moderation teachings taught in the lives of Muslims.²

B. Research Methods

To combat extremism and radicalism movements in the public domain, this article will examine Mohammad Hashim Kamali's views on the idea of moderation in the Qur'an.

² Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Islamic Cosmopolitanism in the Contemporary World: With Special Reference to the Contributions of Mohammad," *Kyoto Bulletin of Islamic Area Studies* 11, no. 2 (2018): 128-39.

In this study, a literature review methodology is combined with qualitative research. In this study, documentation was the method of data gathering. *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyah* by Muhammad Hashim Kamali and other books about the study of Islamic moderation and its connection to modern challenges are the main sources of research data.

The data analysis technique used in this research is content analysis of Hashim Kamali's works on Islamic moderation from the perspective of the Qur'an. Researchers analyze the substance of Hashim Kamali's thoughts in the book *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyah*. There are several practical steps taken by researchers in examining Hashim Kamali's thoughts on Islamic moderation. First, the researcher examines the concept of moderation its characteristics, and the implementation of moderation through moderation institutions. This study aims to expound on the notion of moderation, also known as *wasatiyah* and its attributes as they relate to Islamic ideology and holy religious writings.

Second, the researcher examines several Islamic principles and doctrines regarding moderation and their relationship to contemporary issues developing in the Muslim world. Subsequently, the notion of moderation as a means of mitigating extremism will be deliberated, along with the connection between moderation and modern Islamic concerns like the upholding of justice, peace, and humanitarian principles.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Concept of Moderation in Islam

From the viewpoint of the Qur'an, Mohamad Hashim Kamali provides a thorough explanation of moderation, or *wasatiyah*, as a crucial concept in forging bonds with one's group and other groups. Using the sources or statements on moderation found in the Qur'an and hadith, Kamali offers a conceptual analysis of the meaning and application of moderation. Aside from that, Kamali provided a thorough explanation of the traits of extremism and moderation, as well as the identification, expression, and institutional growth of moderation. Stated differently, this section provides a detailed explanation of the meaning of moderation as it relates to Islamic theology and holy religious writings.

According to Kamali, Islamic teachings are the source of moderation's meaning and application. Kamali clarified that the phrases *al-wasatiyah* (the middle way) and moderation have nearly identical meanings. The ideas of *tawasuth*, *i'tidal*, *tawazun*, and *tasamuh*—all of which are regarded as an attitude of taking a position or finding a medium ground between extreme viewpoints—are synonyms for the term *wasatiyah*. According to Kamali, moderation is based on two essential principles: justice and balance. The relationship between moderation and the beliefs, dispositions, and actions of religious individuals who do not go beyond what is necessary in terms of comprehending and applying religious teachings is corroborated by these two concepts. Kamali highlighted that moderation is the antithesis of radicalism and extremism as a religious ideology that is contrary to moderate Islamic preaching.

The term moderation or *al-wasatiyyah* in Arabic comes from “*wasatha*”, which means the middle way as part of Islamic teachings that are practiced in everyday life. When translated into English, the term *wasatiyyah* itself is called moderation, which means “choosing a middle path/position” between extremist attitudes. The meaning of “*wasatha*” itself means the chosen one, the best, doing justice, being humble, moderate, consistent, applying religious teachings in a balanced manner, and not being extreme. This view emphasizes that religious moderation is based on a balanced and non-extreme attitude, whether right or left. If religious people practice the teachings of moderation according to religious teachings, then exclusive and conservative attitudes will disappear by themselves.³

According to Mohammad Hashim Kamali, moderation means that all religious communities should be able to act justly and in balance when upholding their respective religious beliefs, even when coexisting alongside non-Muslim populations. The phrase “justly balanced community, the middle path, and the middle way” alludes to the idea of *al-wasatiyyah* Islam, which implies that Islam is a community that can coexist peacefully with non-Muslim communities in the same manner as the Prophet Muhammad was able to be just and treat people well, not a Muslim. This fact demonstrates that the Muslim community uses the word “just balanced community,” or *ummatan wasatan*, to describe their ability to live in harmony with other groups, such as the Jewish and Christian communities. The moderation taught by the Prophet reflects an attitude of balance, justice, humility, and peace towards fellow humans without considering their religious background as an obstacle.⁴

The theory of moderation created by Mohammad Hasyim Kamali aligns with the reform concept of Lukman Hakim Syaifuddin, which served as the cornerstone for the idea of religious moderation within the Ministry of Religion. This is true from the standpoint of adopting a moderate stance, acting justly, and refraining from taking drastic measures. Three basic principles—moderation of thoughts, moderation of movements, and moderation of actions—are used to explain religious moderation in publications from the Ministry of Religion. Hashim Kamali defines moderation as a balanced viewpoint and attitude toward practicing religious teachings based on one’s own religious experience and maintaining an open mind about the existence of various religions.⁵

Hashim Kamali drew heavily on hadith and the Qur’an, two holy religious writings, as his primary sources for the *wasatiyah* idea. Surah al-Baqarah verse 143 holds significant importance as it provides a detailed explanation of the Islamic principle of moderation. It states: “Likewise, I have made you a *wasath* (moderate) people.” For you to bear witness to human (deeds) and for the Messenger (Muhammad) to bear testimony to your (deeds), a righteous and chosen Ummah is necessary. This verse describes in detail the Islamic principle of moderation known as *khairu ummah*, which

³ Mohd Shukri Hanafi, “The Wasatiyyah (Moderation) Concept in Islamic Epistemology: A Case Study of Its Implementation in Malaysia,” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 4, no. 9 (1) (2014): 51–62.

⁴ Nuraan Davids, “Islam, Moderation, Radicalism, and Justly Balanced Communities,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 37, no. 3 (2017): 3.

⁵ Tim Penyusun Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi Beragama* (Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama, 2019).

serves as a guide for Muslims in fostering positive interpersonal interactions.⁶ The concept of *khairu ummah* is by the verses of the Qur'an relating to the formation of a moderate community that is in line with the principles of Islamic teachings.

Hashim Kamali quoted a verse from the Qur'an regarding the principle of moderation as a reference to achieving the best and chosen people. The verse quotes about the *wasathan* community can be understood as a concept that leads to a people who are just, chosen, and the best among other people. As the best and chosen people, Muhammad's people are God's choice to spread goodness and peace to fellow humans. One of the real forms of the best and chosen people is not being arrogant and always being humble in giving kindness to fellow humans. Likewise, an important source of Islamic moderation teachings was adopted by Hashim Kamali from a hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas which quotes the Prophet's words that moderation or the middle way is always the best and is a rational choice in responding to the diversity of a very pluralistic society.

Hashim Kamali cited the opinions of several modern Islamic intellectuals who are worried about Islam's ability to continue as a faith that upholds tolerance for all people while elucidating the idea of moderation. When it comes to the historical context of the concept of moderation in Islam and its relevance in the Muslim community since the time of the Prophet Muhammad in Mecca and after the migration to Medina, Kamali directly mentions the opinions of ulama and commentators.

Hashim Kamali cites several modern Muslim scholars, including Muhammad Abduh, Yusuf Qardawi, Mustafa Kamal al-Tunisi, Abd Latif al-Farfur, Wahbah al-Zuhayli, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, Farhan Nizami, and others, as significant sources for elucidating the idea of *wasatiyyah* in Islam. Islamic reformer Muhammad Abduh, for instance, claimed that Islam is a natural religion that incorporates moderation's precepts both conceptually and practically. Muhammad Tahir Ibnu Ashur, a Muslim scholar from Tunisia, expressed a similar viewpoint, stating that moderation is a way to reject activities that go against religious principles, such as corruption, and promote virtue.

Hashim Kamali also elaborated on Yusuf Qardawi's opinion that moderation is the path of truth towards the ideal or best people, both in the spiritual and material dimensions. Yusuf Qardawi believes that the humanitarian and moral mission of the Muslim community can be achieved through moderation. This is because deviation from the practice of moderation will only lead to destruction and loss of morals. Therefore, according to Yusuf Qardawi, the moderation view includes respect for different communities in the form of interactions and relationships between people. This is because moderation is the antithesis of extremism, which is embedded in Islamic beliefs, worship, behavior, and law.⁷ Hashim Kamali also quoted Mustafa Kamal al-Tunisi who explained that moderation in Islam is related to all aspects of life within the spectrum of Islamic teachings, dogma and beliefs, religious rituals, social

⁶ Haslina Ibrahim, "The Principle of Wasatiyyah (Moderation) and the Social Concept of Islam: Countering Extremism in Religion," *Al-Itqan* 1, no. November (2018): 39–48, website: <http://journals.iium.edu.my/al-itqan/index.php/alitqan/index>.

⁷ Yūsuf Al-Qarḍāwī, *Islamic Awakening Between Rejection and Extremism* (Washington, DC: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1991).

relations, relations between human beings, and all matters relating to rights and freedoms. every individual. Likewise, al-Zuhaily's view is that as a moderate religion, Islam occupies a position or middle ground in every relationship and interaction with others.

2. Moderatism vs Extremism

Mohammad Hashim Kamali explains the opposite of moderation or *wasatiyah* as extremism. Hashim Kamali elaborates on the concept of extremism, its indicators and characteristics which are in direct conflict with the teachings of moderation in Islam. Hashim Kamali explained that extremism is seen as behavior that exceeds the boundaries of sharia and deviates from the values of religious moderation. He showed that extremist groups tend to consider themselves to be the right group, thirst for power, and always carry out acts of violence in the name of religion.

Kamali considers extremist actions to be the antithesis of the teachings of moderation because such actions conflict with religious teachings. Then, Kamali gave an example of Israel's policy in carrying out attacks on Palestine, which he believed were acts of extremism and aimed at seizing Palestinian power or territory. According to Hashim Kamali, there are at least types or characteristics of extremism that are related to each other, because they show a symbiotic relationship of mutualism, namely theological extremism, political extremism, and practical extremism.⁸

Hashim Kamali elaborates a perspective on how Islam manifests the teachings of moderation in the lives of Muslim communities amidst the threat of extremism and radicalism. Hashim Kamali observed that the practice of moderation has a major contribution to the development of peaceful Islamic teachings to social change in Muslim communities. According to Kamali, the Islamic conception of *moderation* shows the purity of Islam as a religion that is balanced and harmonious in responding to every problem that occurs, not extremist attitudes and actions that damage the image of Islam.

So, how is the concept of *wasatiyah* manifested in real terms in relationships and interactions between people and how does moderation play an important role in the dynamics of life in Muslim communities amidst the threat of extremism? First, *wasatiyah* relates to Islamic principles and teachings that are inclusive and open to any group. Second, the concept of *wasatiyah* tends to unite various dimensions of Islam, not only as a religion but also as a legal system affiliated with economic and political aspects.⁹ The concept of *wasatiyah* helps Islam to remain focused on its main goal, namely the integration of Muslims. Third, the concept of *wasatiyah* provides a way to balance between attention to continuity and change while maintaining things that are permanent and unchanging. Fourth, *wasatiyah* was manifested gradually in carrying out social reforms, missionary da'wah, and political policies in all fields.

Kamali elaborated on the moderation indicators, which started from the characteristics of moderation as teaching practiced by the Prophet because it

⁸ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Extremism, Terrorism and Islam : Historical and Contemporary Perspectives," *Islam and Civilisational Renewal* 06, no. 02 (2015): 148–65.

⁹ Ghousia Mobeen and Shahzadi Pakeeza, "Concept of Moderation in Context of Jurists' Discourses," *Research Journal Al-Meezan* 4, no. 2 (2022): 105–25.

represents a middle, fair, and moderate way in all aspects of Muslim life. Kamali illustrates in detail how the concept of moderation is a ray of light and hope for the progress of Islamic civilization with an attitude of respect for human values which are the epicentre of human life in the world.¹⁰ Among the indicators of religious moderation in Hashim Kamali's view, include a person's openness to other communities, active involvement, dialogue, and an important role in maintaining relations between religious communities. Apart from that, the moderation indicator also shows an important essence in Islamic teachings which is in no way contradictory to an inclusive attitude and rejecting all forms of acts of extremism.¹¹

In explaining the resistance between moderatism and extremism, Hashim Kamali elaborates on the institutional development of the concept of *wasatiyah* in Islam and the practical steps taken by countries and Muslim leaders to internalize the concept of *wasatiyah* in the realm of the state and relations with the outside world. There are at least six institutional arrangements that specifically resonate and promote *wasatiyah* Islam in the global order of life as a form of resistance to extremist views and actions. Among the six institutions that focus on developing Islamic moderation are the International Assembly for Moderate Islamic Thought and Culture in Jordan, al-Qardawi's Center for Islamic Moderation and Renewal in Doha, Global Movement of Moderates Foundation (GMMF), Institute Wasatiyah Malaysia (IWM) in Malaysia, *International Institute of Wasatiyah (IIW), Amman Massage, and A Common Word*.¹²

3. Islamic Moderation, Justice, and Peace

In this section, Hashim Kamali explains explicitly the concept of *wasatiyah* in Islam and its relationship to contemporary issues. There are several important issues discussed by Hashim Kamali in studying moderation and its relationship in responding to global and contemporary issues, including the relationship between moderation and the concept of justice, religiosity, environmental degradation, differences of opinion (*ikhtilaf*), the influence of moderation in Sufism, women's rights, globalization, and moderation in individual character and lifestyle. Apart from that, some studies explain the role of Islam in building moderate relations with the outside world and how Islam can moderate itself through the instruments of renewal (*tajdid*) and peace (*islah*) in Islam.¹³

Hashim Kamali began his explanation about the relationship between moderation and the concept of justice. Kamali emphasized that justice is conceptually the closest synonym to the concept of moderation which is an important basis in forming the best ummah or *ummattan wasatan* according to what is contained in the Qur'an. The concept of justice in Hashim Kamali's view is the opposite of extremist attitudes which tend to be excessive in responding to things. This is by the interpretation of Surah al-

¹⁰ Mohamad Hashim Kamali, "The Middle Grounds of Islamic Civilisation :," *IAIS JOURNAL OF CIVILISATION STUDIES* 1, no. 1 (2008): 7-41.

¹¹ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "The Indicators of Wasatiyyah or Moderation in Islam," *Islam and Civilisational Renewal* 7, no. 2 (2016): 264-66.

¹² Tumin Wagiman, "Wasatiyyah and Its Relevancy to Religious Tolerance and Co-Existence in a Multi-Religious State: Malaysia As a Case Study," 2019.

¹³ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Peace in the Islamic Tradition: One Vision, Multiple Pathways," *Islam and Civilisational Renewal* 7, no. 2 (2016): 157-87.

Baqarah verse 143, which explains that the word *wasatan* (middle path) can be interpreted as justice. The word *awsatuhum* (the middle among them) is a derivative of the word *wasatiyah* in the Qur'an, which means being in the middle position or having an equal relationship with fellow humans.

Hashim Kamali understands the relationship between moderation and justice as an inseparable relationship because it contains the principles of equality and partiality for minority groups. In the dimension of justice, there is an aspect of balance and proportional action without ignoring the interests or needs of other people. So, one of the symbols in the Qur'an which is often compared with *wasatiyah* and justice as dimensions that bind each other is called *al-mizan* (balanced scales). This is because, God created everything in this universe in proportion, harmony, and balance.¹⁴ This is stated in the verse of the Qur'an, surah al-Hijr verse 19, which reads: "And We spread out the earth and planted on its mountains and We grew there everything according to size."

An important principle in the concept of *khairu ummah* is justice as the principle of respecting human dignity by putting aside ego, emotions, and personal interests in all aspects of life. Justice is a principle of life that must be fought for because it is related to human equality before God. This is because justice is a prerequisite for creating a good and harmonious social order amid a pluralistic society.¹⁵ In the concept of religious moderation, justice is an important principle in living a pluralistic life because it is related to taking sides with minority groups. As a basic principle for the formation of *khairul ummah* (the best community), every human being must be able to practice religious teachings in a balanced and proportional manner. As Nurcholish Madjid's idea is, he defines the concept of *al-adl* as balance or impartiality.¹⁶

Mohammad Hashim Kamali also discussed the relationship between moderation and religiosity. In recent years, according to Kamali, the revival of religion and religiosity in Muslim communities has experienced significant development. This can be seen from the struggle of Muslims to integrate moderation in the theological and political realms. As is known, Islam shows itself as a Hanif religion that upholds the values of patience and resistance to injustice. In this section, Kamali reviews the struggle for moderation and eradicating extremism in Shia thought. Shiite clerics struggle to promote the teachings of moderation in two areas, namely moderation in religious thought and moderation in political thought through the issuance of fatwas.

Hashim Kamali explained that one indicator of moderation is tolerance or respect for the opinions or interpretations of different groups. This is also related to the form of justice previously explained. Hashim Kamali understands that differences of opinion or interpretation are one of the characteristics of law and theology in Islam, which shows that the texts of the Qur'an and hadith are very open to interpretation by the Muslim community. This inclusiveness in interpretation marked the beginning of the emergence of many madhhabs in Islamic history, which have survived to this day.

¹⁴ Kamali, *The Middle Path of Moderation Is Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyyah*, 86.

¹⁵ Majid Khadduri, *Teologi Keadilan Perspektif Islam* (Jakarta: Risalah Gusti, 1999).

¹⁶ Budhy Munawar Rachman, *Ensiklopedi Nurcholish Madjid Jilid I* (Bandung: Mizan & Paramadina, 2006).

In explaining the role of moderation in upholding differences (*ikhtilaf*) among Muslims, Hashim Kamali was inspired by several views of classical Islamic figures who tended to moderate thinking in responding to all differences in religious views and understandings among Muslims. One of them is the opinion of Imam Syafii, a founder of the Shafi'iyah madzhab, as expressed in his motto: "My opinion is right, but maybe wrong, while other people's opinions are wrong but maybe right". Imam Syafi'i's view emphasizes that he wants to avoid dogmatism and absolutism while also wanting to get rid of the traps of relativism which justifies all opinions or interpretations of religious teachings.

Kamali understands that tolerance for people with different beliefs or opinions is an important part of the indicators of moderation.¹⁷ The meaning of tolerance in Islam reflects respect for human values as the main foundation in building interactions with others.¹⁸ Tolerance is closely related to humility, generosity, friendliness, and politeness in respecting other people as fellow humans or God's creatures.¹⁹ The attitude of respecting other people in Islam is a fixed price that represents the spirit of faith without having to harbor seeds of hatred towards other people. This was emphasized by Fethullah Gulen that tolerance is an attitude of mutual respect that shows compassion, generosity, and patience in facing all differences, whether differences of ideology, ethnicity, and beliefs.²⁰

Hashim Kamali also elaborated on the role of Sufism in the Muslim community which is dominated by the teachings of sharia (Islamic law), which emphasizes exoteric religious teachings. Kamali highlighted the resistance and gap between Sufism and Sharia (fiqh) which still appears in the Muslim community but recently there has begun to be acceptance and mutual respect. Kamali explained that Sufism places more emphasis on inner aspects and spiritual teachings, which contrasts with the teachings of law, fiqh, and sharia which focus on manifestations of religious practice. However, according to Kamali, Sufism and fiqh or Islamic law are both legal dimensions of Islam, because they also teach a moderate attitude in responding to any differences in views within the Muslim community.

In this section, Kamali also explains the role and influence of Sufism in Shia thought and how Sufism contributes to unity and oneness between Shia and Sunni groups who often have different views on the issue of interpreting religious teachings. In explaining the contribution of Sufism in instilling the teachings of moderation in the Muslim community, Kamali quoted the views of several Sufism or Sufi figures who had moderate thoughts in practicing esoteric spiritual teachings. Among them is the famous Sufi and poet, Jalaluddin Rumi, who is known for his magnum opus, namely *Mastnawi*. Even by AJ Arberry, Rumi is called the greatest Sufistic poet in the history of humanity. Rumi's work discusses the concept of love for Allah and writes about the

¹⁷ Kamali, *The Middle Path of Moderation Is Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyyah*, 111.

¹⁸ Mohammad Takdir and Umi Sumbulah, "Understanding and Practice of Religious Tolerance: A Study of the Living Qur'an in Madura, Indonesia," *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 28, no. 1 (2024): 257–80.

¹⁹ Tayla Kapelles, *Distinguishing Between Attitudes towards Muslims and Tolerance of Islamic Practices* (Australia: Australian Catholic University, 2021).

²⁰ M. Fethullah Gulen, *Toward a Global Civilization of Love and Tolerance* (New Jersey: Princeton University of Press, 2004).

metaphysical meaning of tawhid (divine oneness) which is an indicator of the transcendence of all religious teachings, including Islam.²¹

Hashim Kamali has his perspective that between fiqh and sharia law it focuses on religious practices of an extraordinary nature which are based on the manifestation of the behavior of the people in their rituals. Meanwhile, Sufism tends to focus on aesthetic (inner) teachings that aim to gain direct closeness to Allah. The attitude towards Shari'a and Sufism is an important principle in reducing tension between the two because the goal to be achieved from the harmony of Shari'a and Sufism is to find a middle path between two opposing extreme poles so that Islamic practice is not misunderstood as a set of legal rules and governed by a logic that is dry of value and meaning.²²

From Hashim Kamali's thoughts on the moderating influence of Sufism, he emphasized that the teachings of moderation are contained in the thoughts of fiqh and Sufism which contain the teachings of moderation. The practice of Sufism teachings in the dimension of religious moderation shows that every Muslim must have a soul, heart, and mind that is *Salim* (safe, prosperous, and peaceful) by the stated aim of Islam as a religion that brings salvation and peace to all mankind in the world. The teaching of moderation itself is related to the dimension of Sufism as an important pillar of religious teachings that uphold justice and support for oppressed groups.

One form of the relationship between moderation and justice and peace or balance of life is Hashim Kamali's view of the importance of preventing damage, danger, and difficulty as the main principle in Islamic teachings. The attitude of preventing and eliminating danger and damage is an important principle in maintaining balance and order in community life fairly and equitably. This section examines the role of Islamic law in protecting the community environment by ensuring that every individual and government is actively involved in preventing abuse of authority and taking corrective action against various forms of violations that cause harm to society. According to Islamic teachings, to restore the balance of life that is disturbed due to violations committed, compensation is the solution and must provide compensation to the injured party.²³

Hashim Kamali highlighted the importance of Moderation in Jihad, which provides an understanding of the meaning of jihad as a form of moderation in religion. Hashim Kamali discusses the meaning, definition, scriptural evidence, and history of jihad, while also dealing with the widespread misunderstanding of this concept by both Western media and radical jihadist groups. In Kamali's view, this misunderstanding about jihad has caused the public to be less informed about the true meaning of jihad as a continuous struggle against low self-esteem, egoism, and behavior that is contrary to religious teachings. Kamali pithily reviews the rules of war in the Shari'a and their application to jihad, followed by a survey of opinions from fiqh scholars and leading scholars in the field of terrorism and violence—concluding that much of what is called jihad today fails to meet the requirements of the rule's true jihad according to sharia.

²¹ R. A. Nicholson, *The Mastnawi of Jalal Al-Din Rumi* (London: rustees of the E.J. W. Gibb Memorial, 2012).

²² Kamali, *The Middle Path of Moderation Is Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyyah*, 115.

²³ Ibid, 123.

As an Islamic intellectual, Hashim Kamali also pays attention to the issue of women's rights who are marginalized in modern life. Among women's rights to civil liberties are the rights to education, employment, property and ownership, and participation in political affairs. Often in political matters, we are caught in an extreme view between being too restrictive and being free in making choices. In this section, Kamali highlights the position of women as a group that is often marginalized in the public sphere, so there needs to be affirmation and recognition of women's involvement in the world of politics. This aims to ensure that women obtain their autonomous rights to determine their future as a form of justice which is very important in the dynamics of social life.

In highlighting the problems faced by Muslims, Hashim Kamali also has a global perspective to address the challenges of life which are increasingly developing rapidly, especially in the era of globalization which gives Muslims the freedom to compete and contest in wider dynamics. Freedom of expression is of course limited by ethics as a guideline for Muslims.²⁴ Hashim Kamali provides a perspective on the advantages and disadvantages of the era of globalization highlighted by developing countries, especially Muslim communities in various countries. Kamali explained that on the one hand, globalization has the potential to make relations and communication easier, especially in dealing with human rights issues, public accountability, women's issues, corruption, trade, and foreign investment. However, on the other hand, globalization tends to create a greater gap between rich and poor groups, as well as popularizing consumerist culture and placing greater emphasis on materialist possessions which erode traditional values.

Kamali explains the narrative of Islamic history with the commitment of holy books towards the moderate attitude that Muslims must show. Hashim Kamali asks about how Islam positions itself about other major religions on the one hand, and the era of the European Enlightenment, as well as post-Enlightenment modernity on the other. In explaining Islam's position with Christianity and Judaism, and its commitment to universality, rationality, unity (tawhid), and equality, all represent elements of continuity and persistence to play a moderate role in the broader arena of history and civilization.

In the context of world peace, Kamali highlighted the importance of renewal (*tajdid*) and reform which requires adaptation and openness to accommodate and reconcile religious traditions with current realities. Kamali very insightfully discusses the role of *tajdid* and several related concepts as a means of adapting and reforming Islam and finally discusses the capacity and resources of Islam to moderate itself from within so that it becomes an inclusive community. Regarding the definition and background of the need for *tajdid*, it cannot be separated from the narrative of the twentieth century which brought together Islam with modernization and globalization with rational thinking. Kamali straightforwardly reviews the concrete forms of the manifestation of *tajdid* in the works of Muslim scholars to renew thinking and

²⁴ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Limits on Freedom of Expression With Special Reference to Islam," *Freedom of Speech: Background, Issues and Regulations* 12, no. 2 (2020): 7-96.

understanding of cooperation between religious communities and between civilizations in society at large to create world peace that is controlled by all Muslims.

D. Conclusion

This study shows that the teaching of moderation aims to provide a middle way for religious people to implement religious teachings in a balanced and flexible manner. Kamali uses an Islamic jurisprudential perspective in explaining moderation as a proportional attitude in living a religious life, including the principles of fiqh which can help realize moderation in the context of social relations and balance between individual interests and the interests of society in general. Hashim Kamali emphasized that the concept of *wasatiyah* is not only at a conceptual level but also in a practical form by providing concrete examples of Muslim life activities which must be based on a moderate and balanced attitude.

To conclude this study, there are several policy proposals and recommendations that can be followed up on several themes from this study. Among the important points that need to be followed up are the importance of action plans, policy implementation, and strategic steps in reducing tensions in society and overcoming the factors that cause extremism and radicalism which are increasingly rampant.²⁵ So, government leaders from top to bottom, religious figures, academics, teachers, and media figures have a very important role in socializing and promoting the teachings of moderation through enlightenment and a deeper understanding of Islam which is in line with the needs of society today.

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²⁵ Rahman Hakim and Mudofir, "The Threat of Religious Moderation To Religious Radicalism," *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam* 24, no. 01 (2023): 01–06.

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