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## The Concept of Wasathiyah in QS. 2:143 Analysis of the Ma'na Cum Maghza Approach

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### Abstract

*Wasathiyah Islam has become one of the issues that has been widely researched recently. This issue arises as a response to the increasing behavior of extremism and radicalism in society. Several studies indicate that wasathiyah is a concept of teaching aimed at producing a moderate character in every aspect of community life. This research aims to uncover the concept of wasathiyah by using QS. 2:143 as the primary source and revealing its meaning through the ma'na cum maghza approach. This study is a library research using a qualitative method based on a deconstructive paradigm – the interpretation of QS. 2:143 is conducted with textual-literal analysis (grammar study) combined with contextual analysis (micro and macro historical study). Both reviews were conducted to understand the substance of the phenomenal historical meaning and the significant dynamics of the implementation of QS. 2:143. The sources of literature used are books on understanding, grammar, and history as data sources in this research. The results of the study show that based on QS. 2:143, wasathiyah is a hallmark of Islam, which does not teach ideologies and doctrines of extremism. Islam also provides certain limitations on radical and liberal thoughts that allow reason to work outside the control of the heart in practice. Thus, in the contemporary context, the discourse of wasathiyah represents Islam's position as a religion that has many methodologies and pays attention to the aspect of balance within it, not only in social behavior but also in worship practices, beliefs, and mu'amalah.*

**Keywords:** Wasathiyah; Hermeneutics; Ma'na Cum Maghza; QS. 2:143

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## Introduction

Today there are many acts of violence in the name of religion, both in the world and in Indonesia. The belief that is often used as a scapegoat for immoral behavior is Islam – starting from the suicide bombing case that targeted places of worship to the most recent bomb threat via social media against a concert by a boy band from South Korea. The events seemed to indicate that Islam was the mastermind behind all the existing divisions [1]. This image is attached because many groups adhere to fundamentalism.

Fundamentalism is a reality in the historical journey of global religious thought. The term Fundamentalism is given to certain groups that have ideas and views that tend to adhere to religious traditions, reject change, and are closed and rigid. Often, fundamentalism is associated with various actions that lead to violence and terrorism. However, in essence, the fundamentalist movement aims to socialize Islamic teachings through activities deemed part of Islamic preaching [2].

Historically, the term religious fundamentalism first emerged from movements within Protestant Christianity in the United States, which arose in the context of the conflict between urban and rural cultures after World War I, where there was a depreciation of agrarian values during the processes of industrialization and urbanization in that country. Over time, this term then spread and was adopted in the traditions of other religions, especially Islam. The phenomenon of fundamentalist movements in Islam arises as both a reaction and a response to understandings deemed deviant from the original teachings of Islam [3].

Fundamentalism is an ideology that strives and works hard to restore traditional religious norms and beliefs to confront the culture of secularism. Islamic fundamentalism is a collective response to emotional and intellectual crises, as it promises the return of 'true Islam' which is considered to solve all problems. Religious fundamentalism is born with the aim of reclaiming the essence of religion itself.

The emergence of fundamentalism is influenced by various complex factors, which are not solely of a purely religious nature, but also relate to political, economic, social, and ideological interests. Fundamentalism is referred to as a religious phenomenon that can arise from any religion at any time and place. Therefore, it is known that religion can be used as a shield by them to carry out their actions. In addition, they also twist several interpretations from holy texts. Religious texts are used as a pretext by them to commit acts of violence in the name of jihad.

Therefore, they understand that they want to destroy all values, culture and attributes seen as an infidel and require Indonesia to become a culture with an Arabic nuance. However, all forms of violence in the name of religion that are always echoed are irrelevant to Islam as a religion that is rahmatan lil 'alamin. Islam teaches and spreads love, peace and compassion, gentleness and respect for all human beings, giving them guidance throughout the world [4].

Therefore, to restore the image of Islam as a religion of justice and mutual respect, it is necessary to renew Islamic da'wah through the concept of wasathiyah, often called moderate. Wasathiyah, or moderation, is not a new discourse that emerged in the 20th century but has existed along with Islam's revelation and emergence on earth. The characteristics of wasathiyah are always providing convenience, of course, without violating the principles of Islamic teachings, not being excessively fanatical, respecting differences or diversity, and being open with various groups of people. In Indonesia's plural and diverse context, views like this will be very relevant.

One of the scholars and commentators in Indonesia who is known for his moderate attitude is M. Quraish Shihab. Through his many works, this Indonesian mufassir figure is known as a scholar who upholds national unity amidst the plurality of religions in Indonesia. According to Maria Fransisca, as quoted in research by Risma Savhira, a person is said to be moderate if he always seeks a middle way in dealing with various problems. A person does not rely on his ego but puts forward a high-tolerance attitude [5]. With this attitude, we can minimize all forms of violence perpetrated by elements who always act in the name of religion. Islam also returns to its nature as a religion that can dialogue all differences to find common ground.

Based on the data and arguments described above, the authors consider it essential to conduct a study by reviewing the commitment of Islamic teachings as a religion of rahmatan lil 'alamin in eradicating all forms of violence that make religion a scapegoat. By reviewing the significance of wasathiyah contained in QS. 2:143. Therefore, this study will focus on formulating the problem, namely, how the hermeneutics of Ma'na Cum Maghza reviews the interpretation of QS. 2:143.

Various previous studies have examined the concept of wasathiyah, including those carried out by Irawan, MD This research discusses Indonesia's role in shifting the image of Islam from violent sentiments to a peace-loving perspective but still within an Islamic frame [6]. Munir examines the meaning of wasathiyah so that it can be implemented in the work program of the Indonesian Ulema Council in the Madiun residency [7]. Zainun tried to see the concept of wasathiyah Islam carried by NU Moreover, Muhammadiyah, in the context of

national brotherhood, is an effort to present a peaceful Islam [8]. Quraish Shihab also researched Wasathiyah Islam in his book, which explains the meaning of moderation and offers to apply excellent and accurate religious moderation [9].

Edi Junaedi also examines the meaning of moderation, but is limited to a review of the meaning of religious moderation in a book published by the Ministry of Religion entitled Religious Moderation [10]. The research conducted by Faelasup is more focused on discussing the hadiths of moderate Islamic characters. Therefore, the research conducted by this researcher complements the research conducted by previous researchers. By trying to be involved in studying the interpretation of QS. 2:143 uses a hermeneutic review Ma'na Cum Maghza. The aim is to get the meaning and significance of wasathiyah. So that in this case, the wasathiyah discourse is to show the position of Islam as a religion that is rich in methodologies and pays attention to the sides of balance in it, not only in social behavior but also in the practice of worship, belief, and mu'amalah.

## Method

The research that can be used in this article is qualitative research with the type of library research. Meanwhile, the primary sources used are books of tafsir, and the secondary sources are books, articles, and other research that are relevant and related to the concepts of wasathiyah as well as theories of the ma'na cum maghza approach. Some stages that can be carried out in this research include understanding specific verses, particularly QS. 2:143 which relates to the concept of wasathiyah, then understanding textually as well as from various tafsir books, followed by conducting linguistic analyzes to explore intertextual and intratextual meanings, searching for both micro and macro aspects of asbab nuzul, and finally using the Ma'na Cum Maghza approach. Through these stages, it is possible to understand and provide comprehensive answers to the established issues

## Result and Discussion

### A Brief Overview of the Concept of Ma'na Cum Mahgza

Etymologically, the combination of the words Ma'na Cum Mahgza consists of three words: ma'nā, maghzā (both from Arabic) and cum (from Latin). Ibn Manzūr in Lisān al-'Arab said, "'anaytu fulānan 'anyan" means qasadtuhu [11]. So, lexically, the word ma'nā means intent or meaning. Terminologically, the term al-ma'nā means: mā yadullu 'ayhi al lafzu (what is indicated or intended by the lafadz/word). Based on this, in Indonesian, this word is often translated as: meaning, meaning, or intention of lafadz/word. This theory is used as an approach to interpret the verses of the holy book and hadith. The hermeneutic school in terms of meaning towards the object of interpretation is divided into

three schools, namely objective, subjective and something that mediates the two (objective cum subjective) [12]. Sahiron sees these general schools as having similarities with schools in the interpretation of the Qur'an. Then Sahiron typologizes contemporary interpretation into three parts, namely quasi-traditionalist, quasi-objective, and quasi-objective modernist. Based on the three typologies, the most acceptable is quasi-objective modernist because in this view, there is a balance between the original literal meaning and the main message contained in the literal meaning. So Sahiron added an explanation of significance and named it with the term Ma'na Cum Mahgza as a form of combining the original meaning and the main message contained therein [13].

The idea of the Ma'na Cum Mahgza approach is an attempt to achieve a hermeneutic balance that is not found in previous ideas. Hermeneutic balance is achieved by giving equal portions between the literal original meaning (al-ma'nā al-asli) and the main message (al-maghza) behind the literal meaning. The process of searching for the literal original meaning is carried out simultaneously with the search for historical phenomenal significance through four components of analysis: linguistic analysis, intratextuality analysis, intertextuality analysis, and historical context analysis. The four analyses above synergize to produce meaning when the verse is understood during the revelation period (al-maghzā at-tarikhi) and become the basis for the discovery of new meanings that are under the main dynamic phenomenal message (al-maghzā al-mutaharrik al-mu'assir) [14].

Sahiron's Ma'na Cum Mahgza approach has gone through a long application process since 2012-2020, recorded and structured. Through this long process, the core of the approach he offers was discovered, namely, to find the maghzā of a verse. In general, the Ma'na Cum Mahgza approach consists of 3 stages, including: seeking historical meaning (al-ma'nā al-tārikhi), historical phenomenal significance (al-maghzā at-tārikhi) and the core is in the third stage, namely dynamic phenomenal significance (al-maghzā al mutaharrik).

The next stage, to find historical meaning and historical phenomenal significance, researchers must go through the following five steps: First, Conduct Language Analysis. According to Sahiron Syamsuddin, who has quoted from several previous opinions that one of the languages is Arabic, which has developed from time to time both in structure and meaning. At this stage, a researcher must look for the original meaning that existed before the 7th century AD, which has its characteristics both in terms of vocabulary and structure. So to find this linguistic study, someone must be able to use previous dictionaries such as *lisān al arab* and several *tafsir* books that focus on language to make it easier to analyze the text. Second, Searching for Intratextuality. A researcher must conduct intratextuality by comparing and analyzing the use of the word being

studied in other verses. This is done to sharpen the analysis by finding the munasabah of the verse and then comparing the verses. Third, searching for Intertextual texts. At this stage, a researcher must be able to use analysis by connecting and comparing other texts that exist around the Qur'an, such as hadith, Christian and Jewish texts, Arabic poetry, or other texts that lived during the revelation of the Qur'an [15]. Based on this, the meaning of the word being studied is found by distinguishing the concept of terms used in the Qur'an from other texts. This process can also find the dynamics or not of things related to the word being studied. Fourth, looking for macro and micro asbabun nuzul. A researcher must be able to find macro or micro aspects in the Qur'an. Macro asbabun nuzul means the conditions and situations when the Qur'an was revealed, which can be in terms of social, economic, political, and environmental conditions, while micro asbabun nuzul can be interpreted as events or causes that underlie the verse being revealed. At this stage, researchers are expected to be able to understand the history of the verse being interpreted [16].

Maghzā can be interpreted as the meaning contained behind the original meaning. The steps that the researcher summarizes to achieve the maghzā being studied are to pay attention to the angle of development of social values in the verse being interpreted. This is necessary to see the subjectivity of the interpreter, which is always related to *sahih li kulli zaman wa makan*. So, subjectivity and objectivity will always be related to one another. So, the interpreter can develop the right maghzā which has been adjusted to the current context [17]. After this stage, it is necessary to search for the symbolic meaning contained in a verse.

The search for symbolic meaning is used to provide direction to other readers that there are advantages that are relevant to the development of meaning. After that, consider other social sciences such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, and other scientific fields [18]. With the help of scientific knowledge, it can help find the right maghzā for a mufassir who is solving a problem or topic that is raised.

### **The Ma'na Cum Maghza Approach to the Al-Quran**

The “Ma'na Cum Mahgza” approach to the Qur'an and hadith is an idea and thought by Sahiron Syamsuddin as an effort to answer socio-religious problems in the contemporary era. At first, “Ma'na Cum Maghza” was only a term, then it was developed and introduced into a new method, so that until now Indonesian academics continue to try to develop it with various modifications [19].

In general, the hermeneutical approach Ma'na Cum Maghza assumes that every word (symbol) in any text including the Quran has a specific historical meaning in a certain context [20]. In detail, the approach initiated by Sahiron is a

theoretical approach, namely where someone digs and reconstructs the meaning and main historical message, meaning (ma'na) and main message/ significance (maghza) intended by the author of the text or understood by the historical audience, and then develops the significance of the text for the current and present context. This approach is a combination of objectivity and subjectivity in interpretation, between the insight of the text and the insight of the interpreter, between the past and the present, and finally between the divine aspect and the human aspect [21].

In applying the Ma'na Cum Mahgza approach, there are steps or three important things that must be done by an interpreter, first, the excavation of historical meaning (al-ma'na at-tarikhi) namely by analyzing the language of the text of the Qur'an, both vocabulary and structure, then conducting intratextuality to sharpen the analysis, then conducting intertextuality analysis, this is done by connecting and comparing the verses of the Qur'an with the texts of the Qur'an around it. The second step is to find the historical phenomenal significance (al-ma'na al-tarikhi) by paying attention to the historical context of the revelation of the verses of the Qur'an, which are micro or macro. Furthermore, the excavation of maqshad or maghza al-ayah is carried out after carefully examining the linguistic expression or historical context of the verses of the Qur'an.

The third step, building dynamic phenomenal significance, namely the interpreter tries to contextualize the maqshad or maghza al-ayah to the current context by determining the category of verses, whether they are classified as verses of monotheism or verses of law or verses about the stories of the prophets of previous peoples, then finding al-maghza al-tarikhi about interests and needs in the current context and discipline where the text of the Qur'an can capture the symbolic meaning of the verses of the Qur'an, then finally developing the interpretation using a broader perspective [22].

### **The Concept of Wasathiyah in a Review of Classical and Contemporary Interpretations**

Explanation of the concept of moderation contained in QS. 2:143 basically by the mufasssir refers to moderation in religion. When traced from various classical and contemporary commentary books, several interpretations of the meaning of wasathiyah exist. Classical commentators such as al-Qurthubi explain that wasathan is justice because the best thing is the fairest magic [9]. Also, At-Tabari, who quoted from the opinion of Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, and Atha' when interpreting verse 143, The Universal Community's justice', so the meaning of this verse is 'Allah made Muslims the most just people' [23]. Similarly, other commentators such as Abdurrahman As-Sa'dy and Rashid Ridha interpret the meaning of wasathan in this verse as justice and goodness [24]. In line with that,

in his commentary, Ibn Kathir reveals that al-wash in this verse means the choice and the best. As the Quraysh say, they are the best Arabs of descent and position. The Prophet Muhammad was the best among his people and the most honorable of his descendants [25].

Similarly, other commentators such as Abdurrahman As-Sa'dy and Rashid Ridha interpret the meaning of wasathan in this verse as justice and goodness [26]. In other words, Muslims have the perfect religion, the best morals, and, most importantly, charity. Allah SWT has bestowed knowledge, gentleness of character, justice, and goodness not given to other peoples [27]. Meanwhile, Muhammad Jawad Mughniyah, in the book of Tafsir al-Kasyif, related to this, that Allah guides whomever He wants to go to the straight path. Allah SWT gives pleasure to the followers of the Prophet SAW in the form of guidance. Allah has made the followers of the Prophet SAW act in various ways to act upright and, in the middle between exaggerated things, that is, by adding things like deifying more than one God as well as being exaggerated in terms of subtracting, like turning away from a correct religion [28].

Meanwhile, according to Quraish Shihab Wasathiyah in QS. 2:143 This has given instructions about the ideal or good position, namely, the middle position. The middle position makes humans impartial between the left and right, which can lead humans to be fair [29]. As with Buya Hamka's view in al-Azhar's interpretation, Islam is in the middle, namely on the path of justice. This position places Islam as a moderate religion, not too inclined to worldly life, and does not neglect the issues of the afterlife. Moderation taught by Islam is a just attitude between the limits of the hereafter and the world.. In another interpretation, a modernist scholar, namely Hasbi Ash-Shiddiqiy, in interpreting wasathiyah, is a person who embraces Islam in a balanced way, namely, moderate. Not people who live excessively in religion (extreme), and also not including people who are too lacking in practicing their religious teachings. Islam is a moderate religion in the middle between the two extremes, right and left [30].

Based on various reviews of classical and contemporary interpretations regarding the meaning of moderate in QS. 2:143, it can be concluded that classical and contemporary mufassir interpret wasathiyah as the chosen people who can act pretty. Able to position yourself in the middle, that is, not leaning too far to the left or the right. In this case, it means that no people are better than Muslims because Allah has explained and made Islam a teaching of nature to be in the middle in responding to life's problems.

## The Wasathiyah Concept in Review of Ma'na Cum Maghza Hermeneutics

### Textual (grammatical language) studies

In this study, the author will try to parse the meaning of QS. 2:143 and use a grammatical analysis of language by first dividing the fragments (sentences) composed in verse. The fragments in question consist of five sentence arrangements, each fragment consisting of key phrases that can be broken down using a grammatical analysis of language, along with a description based on the five fragments referred to as follows:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا

*"And so we have made you (Muslims), a just and chosen people."*

The word al-waste means fair and is in the middle; more than that is said to be fat (exaggeration), and if it is less than it is called afrit or tafsir, which means too restrictive or narrow [31]. In this verse, there is an explanation that describes the struggle described in the previous verse regarding the desire of the Prophet Muhammad to change his Qibla. This event is a form of a warning from the Prophet Allah that the change of Qibla will bring conflict or division because they do not accept the conditions explained by Allah SWT [32]. Therefore, the principle of wasathan described in the verse is a solution to overcome problems or divisions that occur.

لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

*"That you may be a witness to the deeds of men and that the apostle may be a witness to you."*

The snippet of the verse above suggests that Muslims are witnesses to humans or other people for the goodness and badness of human behavior. The snippet of the verse above suggests that Muslims are witnesses to humans or other people for the goodness and badness of human behavior [33]. Quraish Shihab also interpreted that being a witness to human actions is also understood in the sense that Muslims will be witnesses for the good and bad of human actions in the future.

Table 1. Types of Witnesses and Their Roles

| Witness | Aspects witnessed          | Reasons to be a witness                                                                                        |
|---------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Muslims | Human deeds (good and bad) | Muslims have the responsibility to practice Islamic teachings, including encouraging good and preventing evil. |
| Angel   | Human deeds                | Angels are tasked with recording all human deeds while on earth.                                               |
| Apostle | Human deeds                | The Apostle became an example and role model for his people.                                                   |
| Earth   | Human deeds                | The earth will bear witness to human deeds.                                                                    |
| Limb    | Human deeds                | The limbs of the body will speak as witnesses on the Day of Resurrection.                                      |
| Self    | Human deeds                | I myself will be a witness to the deeds that have been done.                                                   |

The meaning of the future is understood from the use of the verb in the future in the wordmy life; this word fragment implies the struggle of views and the conflict of various isms. So that with stain, it will become a reference and witness about the truth and erroneous views and isms. This also means that Islam will be a witness for other people in Islam, according to what the Prophet SAW taught. With this, the Islamic community will refer to the isms that have sprung up. Then the Prophet will be a witness to whether the attitudes and movements of Muslims are following divine guidance or not [34].

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَن يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّن يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ

*"And we did not determine the Qibla which is your Qibla (now) except that we know (who is real) who follows the Messenger and who is defected."*

The fragment of the verse explains that moving the Qibla is a test of faith in Allah SWT, namely who truly believes and who follows the Prophet and who defects or doubts their faith in Allah. Word of Allah explained in QS. 29:2-3:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَن يُتْرَكُوا أَن يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ

*"The verse fragment explains that moving the Qibla is a test of faith in Allah SWT, namely, who truly believes and follows the Prophet and who defects or doubts their faith in Allah" (Al-Maraghi, 1994). Word of Allah SWT. Explained in QS. 29:2-3.*

The verse above explains 'who follows the Messenger' but does not say 'who follows you'. The meaning is that God appointed the Messenger of God as a guide. Therefore, Muslims must obey the Messenger's orders. As for the phrase 'who defected', which initially means turned back, it is an indication of the backward form of attitude, that is, retreating from the Divine truth [35]. These people have a disease in their hearts; that is, every time something happens, doubts arise in their hearts. Unlike the believers whom God guided. That's Allah swt. can do whatever He wants and give decisions according to what He wants. He has the right to burden His servants with what He wills and abolish what He wills. He has perfect wisdom and a strong argument for all of that [36].

وَأِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ

*"And really (moving the Qibla) feels very heavy, except for those who have been guided by God."*

The transfer of Qibla is complicated for people who are used to the previous Qibla because they tend towards habits that have been done for a long time and are very reluctant to do something new, except for those given guidance by Allah SWT. This shows that facing the Kaaba in prayer manifests obedience to God, not because of the secret behind the Kaaba [37].

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرُؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

*"And God will not waste your faith, indeed God is Merciful and Merciful to mankind."*

This part of the verse gives an explanation to the Muslims as good news in the face of the Jews, saying that their worship is in vain and their reward will be lost, while the Muslims are still facing Baitul Maqdis. Also appealing the families of Muslims who have died who did not have time to face the Kaaba. 'indeed Allah is Most Merciful and Most Merciful', this part of the verse as the last sentence of verse 143 gives a message to Muslims that God is so abundant in His love and affection, that He cannot waste your efforts. Allah will not test every Muslim beyond his abilities [38].

### Contextual study (historical micro and macro)

According to Jalaludin al-Suyuthi, the cause of the revelation QS. 2:143, as narrated by Bukhari and Muslim from al-Barra', he said, 'Some people died and were killed before the direction of the Qibla was changed so that we did not know what we said about them', then the QS. was revealed. 2:143 [39]. Also, Quraish Shihab, in the interpretation of al-Misbah, mentions several narrations related to the reason for the revelation of QS. 2:143. One is from Barra', where the

Messenger of Allah prayed towards Baitul Maqdis for 16 or 17 months, while he preferred his Qibla towards Baitullah. He prayed, or did it (the first time towards Baitullah), the Asr prayer and joined a group praying with him. Then one of those who were praying with him left. He passed the worshipers of the mosque who were bowing. He said, "I bear witness in the name of Allah. Indeed, I have prayed with the Prophet SAW in the direction of Makkah. "Then they turned towards the Baitullah while remaining in their positions. Moreover, we do not know what we have to say about the people who died while still oriented towards Baitul Maqdis before moving towards Baitullah, namely, some people who were killed. So Allah sent down this verse [40].

In another narration, it is also mentioned asbabun nuzul verse 143, which was narrated by Ibn Ishaq from Ismail bin Abi Khalid, from Abu Ishaq, which is sourced from al-Barra', it is said that the Messenger of God prayed to face Baitul Maqdis, and often looked to the sky waiting for God's order (expecting the Qibla to be directed towards the Kaaba or Haram) until the QS. is revealed. 2:143, which shows the Qibla towards the Grand Mosque. Then some Muslims said, 'We would like to know about the people who died before the transfer of the qibla (from Baitul Maqdis to the Kaaba), and what about our prayer before when we faced Baitul Maqdis?' Then QS. came down. 2:143 asserts that God will not waste the faith of those who worship according to the provisions at that time. The dumb people at that time said, 'What is it that turns them (Muslims) away from the qibla they have been facing all this time (from Baitul Maqdis to the Kaaba)?' Then come down another verse, namely QS. 2:144, as an affirmation that it is God who determines the direction of the Qibla [41].

Based on the narrations mentioned above, it can be understood that the context of the revelation of QS. 2:143 is motivated by the conditions that occurred to Muslims while moving the Qibla. The followers of the Prophet who were in Medina were divided into several groups. Some followed the Prophet, turned around, denied the change of Qibla, and some even opposed him. Those ignorant people will surely think that moving the Qibla is a mistake, or the Prophet Muhammad SAW and the Muslims are following their desires [42].

On a macro level, if you trace the socio-historical history of Arab society at that time, the decline of QS. 2:143 happened after the Prophet Muhammad made the migration from Mecca to Medina and made changes to the Islamic Kaaba, which previously faced Baitul Maqdis in Jerusalem, to the Grand Mosque of Mecca, which occurred in the month of Rajab. Based on some historical literature, the thing that became the main trigger was the conflict between Muslim groups and infidels who opposed Islamic teachings. The group that opposes the teachings of Islam considers that the teachings of Islam are the same as theirs because the Qibla direction and ways of worship are similar to theirs.

Ali bin Abu Talhah narrated from Ibn Abbas that when the Prophet Muhammad migrated to Medina, Allah SWT ordered him to make Baitul Maqdis the Qibla. The Jews also felt happy to hear the command of Allah SWT [43].

This is also mentioned in Bukhari;

عَنِ الْبَرَاءِ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - كَانَ أَوَّلَ مَا قَدِمَ الْمَدِينَةَ نَزَلَ عَلَى أَجْدَادِهِ أَوْ قَالَ أَخْوَالِهِ - مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ، وَأَنَّهُ صَلَّى قِبَلَ بَيْتِ الْمُقَدِّسِ سِتَّةَ عَشَرَ شَهْرًا، أَوْ سَبْعَةَ - عَشَرَ شَهْرًا، وَكَانَ يُعْجِبُهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ قِبَلَتُهُ قِبَلَ الْبَيْتِ، وَأَنَّهُ صَلَّى أَوَّلَ صَلَاةٍ صَلَّاهَا صَلَاةَ الْعَصْرِ، وَصَلَّى مَعَهُ قَوْمٌ، فَخَرَجَ رَجُلٌ مِمَّنْ صَلَّى مَعَهُ، فَمَرَّ عَلَى أَهْلِ مَسْجِدٍ، وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ فَقَالَ أَشْهَدُ بِاللَّهِ لَقَدْ صَلَّيْتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قِبَلَ مَكَّةَ، فَدَارُوا كَمَا هُمْ قِبَلَ الْبَيْتِ، وَكَانَتِ الْيَهُودُ قَدْ أَعْجَبَهُمْ إِذْ كَانَ يُصَلِّي قِبَلَ بَيْتِ الْمُقَدِّسِ، وَأَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ، فَلَمَّا وَلَّى وَجْهَهُ قِبَلَ الْبَيْتِ أَنْكَرُوا ذَلِكَ. قَالَ زُهَيْرٌ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو إِسْحَاقَ عَنِ الْبَرَاءِ فِي حَدِيثِهِ هَذَا أَنَّهُ مَاتَ عَلَى الْقِبْلَةِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تُحَوَّلَ رِجَالٌ وَقُتِلُوا فَلَمْ نَدْرِ مَا نَقُولُ فِيهِمْ، فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيْمَانَكُمْ

*"From Bara' bin 'Azib, may Allah be pleased that at the beginning of arriving in Medina, the Prophet, SAW, stopped at the house of his grandparents, or Bara' said, at the house of his paternal uncles from the Ansar. And he prayed towards Baitul Maqdis for 16 or 17 months, even though he preferred to be oriented towards Baitullah. And the first prayer he did (towards the Baitullah) was the Asr prayer. Several people were also praying with him, then one of those who were praying with him left. He passed the congregation of a mosque who were bowing (towards Baitul Maqdis). He said, 'I testify to Allah. Indeed, I have prayed with Rasulullah SAW towards Mecca.' Then they turned in a bowing position towards the Baitullah. The Jews were happy when the Prophet prayed towards Baitul Maqdis, and so were the people of the book. But when he turned his face towards the Baitullah, they denied him."* (HR Bukhari no. 40) [44].

In the narration above, the Jews are a people whose Qibla is towards Baitul Maqdis, happy when they hear the Prophet Muhammad and his people follow their Qibla because it is a victory for them, and commit disobedience when the Qibla is directed to Baitullah [45]. This is further explained by at-Tabari. According to him, the placement of the first Qibla to Baitul Maqdis is part of a strategy to attract the hearts of the Children of Israel, clearly with the same Qibla; they are willing to follow Islamic teachings because their Qibla also points there, and because Baitul Maqdis was built by Prophet Sulaiman AS. the ancestors of the Children of Israel whom they admired greatly. Qibla to Baitul Maqdis lasted

for more than a year, hoping that the Jews would embrace Islam, but the facts said otherwise; let alone embracing Islam, being friendly, or even being neutral, was not shown. They were otherwise hostile to the Prophet and Muslims at that time [46].

The conditions of harmony between the people of Medina then turned into disharmony and formed certain groups as before. Some followed the Prophet, who turned their backs on the Prophet and denied the change of Qibla, so some were hostile to the Prophet and those who supported the Prophet. This can be seen in the question because they were concerned about the futility of the deeds of their brothers and sisters who had died by orienting towards Baitul Maqdis. This is as stated in the Hadith, as in the interpretation of Al-Misbah;

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ لَمَّا وَجَّهَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى الْكَعْبَةِ قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ كَيْفَ بِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ مَاتُوا وَهُمْ يُصَلُّونَ إِلَى بَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ؟ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ: وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ

*"From Abdullah bin Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, he said, 'When the Prophet SAW was directed to the Kaaba, they (Muslims) said, 'O Messenger of Allah, what about our brothers who died before this, namely people who died while still praying to the direction of Baitul Maqdis?' So Allah sent down His words, '... And Allah will not waste your faith'" (HR Abu Dawud no. 4680; Ahmad I/305; and Tirmidhi no. 2964) [47].*

For groups that support the Prophet, they are satisfied with the answers given, but for groups that reject and deny they are on the contrary against every argument issued and consider that this was done because of the lust of the Prophet and his followers alone, even if this comes from the Qur'an [48]. This has made the Muslims restless and doubtful; some have even returned to their previous religion. Before this happened, Allah SWT had explained how their response to the Qibla shifting event had been described previously and how to deal with the ignorant people in QS. Al-Baqarah verse 142 is called as-Sufaha, namely by becoming a wasathan community [49].

## Revealing the Significance of QS. 2:134

After looking at various reviews of data analysis and arguments that have been described in the previous discussion, both through textual-literalistic research (grammatical language) and through historical contextual analysis (micro and macro), the writer's savings of interpretation of the Qur'an does not look at the context. The product of the performance did not follow the conditions when the verses of the Qur'an were interpreted. Therefore, the meaning of

moderate contained in QS. 2:143 can be solved by Islam as a religion that upholds the middle attitude, that is, not leaning too far to the right and not leaning to the left. Not people who live excessively in faith (extreme), and not including people who are too lacking in practicing their religious teachings. Islam is referred to as a moderate religion that is in the middle between the two extremes, right and left.

Meanwhile, the phenomenal dynamic significance was revealed through QS. 2: 143 is that Islam can offer balanced solutions to all the problems in today's context. Both in the teachings of worship, akidah, and mua'malah. In terms of aqidah, Islam is to fight the atheist belief system, which denies the existence of God. Islam also rejects God's pluralism, which sometimes goes so far as to worship objects, animals, or other creatures. Islam calls for the unity of God Almighty, as QS. Al-Ikhlâs describes God, who is childless and not begotten. Furthermore, wasathiyah, in terms of worship, is counter to the emergence of fundamentalism and radical groups. These groups are not in line with Islamic principles, but not with the practices taught by the Prophet.

Then, moderate, in terms of mu'amalah, there are cultural, social, economic, political, and many other spaces. Something that is in the muamalah room may not be included in the aqidah room. Therefore, it is not permissible to say that when someone is different in terms of mu'amalah due to weak faith. Because the difference is in the mu'amalah room. Also, the difference is a sign of God's power, as described in QS. Ar-Rum verse 22. So, if you can put something in its place and time, that is wasathiyah in mu'amalah.

## Conclusion

Based on the research that has been conducted on the verse QS. 2:143 using the Ma'na Cum Maghza approach, several conclusions can be drawn, among which is that the revelation of QS. 2:143 is a response to the concerns of the Prophet's companions regarding what Allah has determined with the change of the qibla from Baitul Maqdis to Masjidil Haram. Therefore, this could affect their steadfastness and faith, so with the revelation of QS. 2:143, Allah wants to clearly explain to the Muslim community their position as a wasathiyah community, which is the best community among other communities.

This is a form of reinforcing their position so that they do not doubt Islam and remain steadfast in following the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW Allah also wants to explain that He (Allah) wishes to make Muslims a chosen community, a middle nation. Thus, in that historical context, the phrase 'ummatan wasathan' is intended to mean the best chosen community that will serve as an example for other nations. Meanwhile, the analysis is conducted in the contemporary context of QS. 2:143 can be expressed that every individual

Muslim should embody the attitude of a just community, an exemplary community that can lead and bring social change by allowing people to act and behave justly, thereby aligning with the location and position of the Kaaba, which is in the middle.

Muslims must have the "mediator" trait as seekers of solutions in the sense of not being fanatical or leaning towards one side, just as in religious life, where one should not insult other religions, yet should not be influenced by other religions either. Instead, we must remain consistent with our religion, have a good attitude towards followers of other religions, without disturbing each other. It should also be emphasized that Muslims as a "middle community" must be ready to continuously prioritize and uphold attitudes of tolerance, mutual respect, not undermining beliefs, acting by respecting differences, openness, and wisdom in accepting diversity while firmly believing in the truth, teachings, and beliefs of each respective religion and sect. Thus, with this, all components will willingly accept any decisions or policies without having to engage in extreme and radical actions.

### **Author Contributions**

**Khairuddin:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. **Rahman, Perdamaian:** Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Investigation. **Suardi, Wasalmi, Syahrudin Srg:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Investigation.

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