



Jurnal Ulunnuha
P-ISSN : 2086-3721 E-ISSN: 2865-6050
Vol. 15 No.1/June 2026

<https://ejournal.uinib.ac.id/jurnal/index.php/ulunnuha/index>

DOI: 10.15548/ju.v13i1.13425

Between Text and History: Reassessing Hadith-Based *Wasathiyyah* in Early Islamic History

Gusnanda

Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia

E-mail: gusnanda@uinib.ac.id

Sri Chalida

Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia

E-mail: srichalida@uinib.ac.id

Awis Karni

Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia

E-mail: awiskarni@uinib.ac.id

Ade Irwansyah

Hartford International University, USA

ade.irwansyah@stu.hartfordinternational.edu

Abstract:

This article examines the tension between the normative ideals of *wasathiyyah* (moderation) articulated in the hadith tradition and their historical implementation in early Islam. While previous studies have primarily focused on the theological and ethical dimensions of Islamic moderation, limited attention has been given to the relationship between normative hadith teachings and the political realities that emerged after the Prophet Muhammad's death. Employing a thematic hadith analysis combined with a historical-critical approach, this study analyzes selected hadiths on moderation, balance, anti-extremism (*ghulun*), and the fulfillment of rights, alongside historical sources concerning the Medina Charter and early Islamic political developments. The findings demonstrate that the hadith tradition consistently promotes moderation as an ethical framework grounded in justice, balance, and proportionality. These principles were institutionally embodied in the Prophet's leadership, particularly through the Medina Charter, which provided a model for managing religious and social diversity. However, the study finds that post-Prophetic political conflicts, succession disputes, and sectarian contestations complicated the realization of these ideals, transforming *wasathiyyah* from a lived political ethic into a contested moral aspiration. Theoretically, this study argues that *wasathiyyah* should be understood not merely as a theological doctrine but as a dynamic ethical framework whose implementation is shaped by historical and political contexts. By integrating normative hadith analysis with historical inquiry, the article contributes to contemporary scholarship on Islamic moderation, pluralism, and the relationship between religious ideals and political practice.

Keywords: *wasathiyyah; hadith; Islamic moderation; pluralism; early Islamic history.*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of moderate Islam (*wasathiyyah*) has become one of the most widely discussed themes in contemporary Islamic studies¹. While some Muslim scholars reject the term on the grounds that Islam is inherently balanced and therefore requires no qualifying adjective². Others, regard *wasathiyyah* as a particular interpretive orientation derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah that emphasizes justice, balance, tolerance, and the avoidance of extremism³. This debate reflects a broader methodological tension within Islamic studies between scriptural-normative approaches, which focus on the ethical ideals articulated in religious texts, and socio-historical approaches, which examine how those ideals are interpreted, negotiated, and transformed in specific historical contexts⁴.

Within the normative tradition, Mohammad Hashim Kamali's work remains one of the most influential contributions to the study of *wasathiyyah*. Drawing upon the Qur'an, hadith, and both Sunni and Shi'i intellectual traditions, Kamali argues that moderation constitutes a foundational principle of Islam and provides an ethical framework applicable to religious, social, and political life⁵. Similar arguments have been advanced by Yusuf al-Qaradawi and other Muslim scholars who view the Qur'anic notion of *ummatan wasatan* and the Prophetic condemnation of excess (*ghulum*) as evidence that moderation lies at the heart of Islamic teachings⁶. Research conducted in both Western and Muslim academic circles further demonstrates that moderation plays an important role in fostering social cohesion, managing diversity, and reducing religious extremism in increasingly pluralistic societies⁷.

Recent scholarship on *wasathiyyah* has expanded beyond normative theological discussions. Contemporary studies increasingly examine moderation as a framework for managing diversity, interreligious relations, and social coexistence⁸. Research on Islamic moderation in Indonesian pesantrens demonstrates how values of justice, balance, and tolerance are interpreted and transmitted through religious institutions and hadith-based

¹ John L. Esposito dan Arif Maftuhin, *Islam Warna-Warni: Ragam Ekspresi Menuju "Jalan Lurus" (al-Shirat al-Mustaqim)* (Paramadina, 2004), 278–79.

² Mohammad Hasan, *Moderasi Islam Nusantara (Studi Konsep dan Metodologi)* (Duta Media Publishing, 2017), 1.

³ Hasan, *Moderasi Islam Nusantara (Studi Konsep dan Metodologi)*, 1.

⁴ Abdullah Saeed, *Reading the Qur'an in the twenty-first century: A contextualist approach* (Taylor & Francis, 2014), 23–29.

⁵ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyyah* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 14–25.

⁶ Yūsuf Qaradāwī, *Islamic awakening between rejection and extremism* (The Other Press, 2010), 25.

⁷ John L. Esposito, *The future of Islam* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 52–50; Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid, "Regaining the Islamic Centre?," *Pathways to Contemporary Islam: New Trends in Critical Engagement*, 2020, 181.

⁸ Toton Fanshurna dan Isnadi Isnadi, "Religious Moderation in Minority Muslim Community Interactions: A Talcott Parsons Structural Functionalist Approach," *Eduvest-Journal of Universal Studies* 5, no. 9 (2025): 10679–92; Alifa Ihfazna Rafida dkk., "Contemporary Islamic Moderation: Insights from al-Qaradawi, Nurcholis Madjid, and Abdurrahman Wahid," *ISTIFHAM: Journal Of Islamic Studies*, 2025, 112–29; Muhammad Nasrulloh dkk., "REFRAMING THE PROPHET'S INTERACTIONS WITH NON MUSLIMS: A CONTEXT-SENSITIVE MODEL OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION FROM THE SĪRAH NABAWIYYAH," *Harmoni* 24, no. 2 (2025): 254–80.

teachings⁹. At the same time, studies of religious authority and Islamic governance have highlighted the role of social institutions, legitimacy, and authority formation in shaping contemporary understandings of moderation¹⁰. These studies suggest that *wasatiyyah* should be understood not merely as a theological doctrine but also as a socio-political discourse shaped by historical and institutional contexts.

Despite these important contributions, much of the existing scholarship remains predominantly normative and theological. Most studies focus on what Islamic texts prescribe regarding moderation rather than examining how those ideals were historically implemented and contested¹¹. In contrast, socio-historical studies of early Islam have documented the emergence of political conflicts, succession disputes, civil wars, and sectarian divisions following the death of the Prophet Muhammad. From the debates surrounding succession at Saqifah to the Battles of Jamal and Siffin, early Islamic history reveals political realities that appear difficult to reconcile with the ethical ideals of moderation articulated in the hadith tradition¹². This tension raises an important analytical question: how should scholars understand the relationship between normative Islamic teachings on moderation and the historical realities of political conflict?

To address this issue, the present study employs a historical-critical approach combined with thematic hadith analysis. Rather than treating hadith teachings and historical events as separate domains, the study examines the interaction between normative religious discourse and historical political practice. In doing so, it explores how ideals of moderation, justice, and communal harmony articulated in the hadith tradition were interpreted, negotiated, and challenged within the political realities of early Islam.

Although previous studies have examined either the theological foundations of *wasathiyyah* or its contemporary relevance for pluralism and social cohesion, relatively little attention has been devoted to the relationship between hadith-based constructions of moderation and the political realities of early Islamic history. This article seeks to fill that gap by analyzing selected hadiths that constitute the normative foundations of *wasathiyyah*, examining the Prophet Muhammad's management of diversity through the Medina Charter, and critically assessing the trajectory of moderation in the post-Prophetic period. By integrating textual analysis with historical inquiry, the study demonstrates that *wasathiyyah* functioned not only as a normative ethical ideal but also as a contested

⁹ Ahmad Shofi Muhyiddin, "Islamic Boarding Schools and Da'wah of Religious Moderation," *Alhadharah: Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 22, no. 1 (2023): 85–99; Asep Iwan Setiawan dkk., "Transforming Religious Education Through Inclusivity: How Indonesian Pesantren Cultivate Moderate Islamic Values and Da'wah Practices," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2026): 70–92.

¹⁰ Ahmad Kusjairi Suhail dkk., "Azyurmardi Azra dan Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia," *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 19, no. 2 (2025): 737–54; Jolaman Bulan dkk., "Abu Hanifa: Architect of Islamic Moderatism in Contemporary Contexts," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 15, no. 2 (2025): 253–68.

¹¹ Kamali, *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyyah*, 211–18; Milda Apriliana, "Religious Moderation From the Hadith Perspective: A Thematic Study on the Values of Balance in Islamic Studies," *Jurnal Al-Ahkam* 16 (2025): 77–95.

¹² Wilferd Madelung, *The Succession to Muhammad: A Study of The Early Caliphate* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 120; Madelung, *The Succession to Muhammad: A Study of The Early Caliphate*, 141; Asma Afsaruddin, *The first Muslims: History and memory* (Simon and Schuster, 2013).

framework whose implementation was shaped by political authority, social conflict, and historical circumstance. In this way, the article contributes to contemporary debates on Islamic moderation by offering a more critical understanding of the relationship between religious ideals and political realities in Islamic history.

This study employs a historical-critical hadith approach to examine the relationship between the normative ideals of *wasathiyyah* articulated in the hadith tradition and their historical implementation in early Islam. The primary sources consist of selected hadiths from Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan al-Nasa'i, and Sunan Ibn Majah, as well as historical accounts concerning the Medina Charter, the succession dispute following the Prophet's death, the Battles of Jamal and Siffin, and the political developments of the Umayyad and Abbasid periods. Secondary sources include classical hadith commentaries, contemporary scholarship on *wasathiyyah*, and theoretical works on religion and history. Hadith selection was conducted through thematic screening. Only narrations that explicitly or implicitly address moderation, balance, justice, anti-extremism (*ghulum*), proportional fulfillment of rights, and social coexistence were included. To ensure textual reliability, only narrations classified as sahih or hasan by recognized hadith scholars were analyzed. The analysis proceeded in three stages. First, sanad evaluation was conducted based on the assessments of classical hadith authorities such as Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, al-Nawawi, and al-Sindi to verify the authenticity and transmission quality of the selected narrations. Second, matan analysis was employed to identify the normative principles of moderation embedded in the hadith texts. Through thematic coding, the narrations were classified into categories such as balance, justice, anti-extremism, and recognition of rights. Third, a historical-critical analysis was undertaken to compare these normative principles with major political developments in early Islamic history. The comparative analysis focused on three indicators: (1) the management of religious and social diversity, (2) the handling of political disagreement and conflict, and (3) the application of justice and proportionality in political decision-making. These indicators were derived inductively from the hadith corpus and subsequently used to evaluate selected historical events.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Normative Foundations of Moderation (*Wasathiyyah*) in the Hadith

In Islam, the hadith or sunnah is the second source of law and teaching after the Quran. Therefore, in understanding the concept of moderate Islam or *wasathiyyah*, it is necessary to refer to these two sources of values. Hashim Kamali, explains that the concept of moderate Islam (*wasathiyyah*), is not merely a moral category, but a methodological principle that shapes the Islamic way of thinking: avoiding extremism, balancing rights and obligations, and accommodating diversity within a framework of justice¹³. Scholars have tried to elaborate on verses to formulate this concept, one of which is by referring to QS. Al-Baqarah verse 153. In this verse, Allah hints at the middle path or moderation with the phrase *ummatan wasathan*, as can be observed in the verse below:

¹³ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *The middle path of moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic principle of wasathiyyah* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 4–6.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۖ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ إِيْمَانَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

Meaning: "In the same way, We have made you (Muslims) a medieval community⁴⁰ so that you may be witnesses of human (deeds) and so that the Messenger (Prophet Muhammad) may be a witness of your (deeds). We have not established the Qibla (Baitulmaqdis) that you (formerly) turned to, except so that We know (in reality) who follows the Messenger and who turns back. Verily (moving the Qibla) is very difficult, except for those who have been guided by it. Allah. Allah will not waste your faith. Indeed, Allah is Most Gracious and Most Merciful towards humans ." (QS: Al-Baqarah: 153)

A number of commentators interpret the term "*ummatan wasathan*" in this verse as having three main meanings: a just, balanced community, and a witness to humanity¹⁴. This interpretation is based on the narrations or hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), including:

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ حَدَّثَنَا الْأَعْمَشُ عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي قَوْلِهِ { وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا } قَالَ عَدْلًا قَالَ أَبُو عِيسَى هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ

Meaning: "Has told us Ahmad bin Mani' has told us Abu Muawiyah has told us Al A'masy from Abu Salih from Abu Sa'id from the Prophet sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, Regarding the words of Allah: "And so (also) We have made you a middle people." (Al-Baqarah: 143) he said: "(the meaning is) Fair." Abu Isa said: This hadith is authentic."

If the Qur'an refers to Muslims as "*ummatan wasathan*" (QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 143), then the hadith of the Prophet SAW becomes a practical elaboration that explains how the principle of the middle way is realized in everyday life. To explain in more detail this principle of Islamic moderation, the Prophet Muhammad SAW through his other sayings presents practical guidance so that Muslims are able to live in balance between spiritual and material aspects, individual and social, worldly and hereafter¹⁵. In this context, the hadith of the Prophet SAW has a central position in grounding the principle of *wasathiyyah* that has been outlined by the Qur'an.

To explore hadiths relevant to the concept of *wasathiyyah*, it may be necessary to first search for this term in hadith books. In this case, there are two keywords used to search for it: *wasatha* and *ausath*. If we use the word *wasatha* (وسط), we will find 17 narrations. Meanwhile, if we search using the word *ausath* (أوسط), we will find 102

¹⁴ Muchlis M. Hanafi, ed., *Tafsir Al-Quran Tematik: Moderasi Islam* (Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2017), 44–46.

¹⁵ Kamali, *The middle path of moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic principle of wasathiyyah*, 12–15.

narrations. Meanwhile, if the intended meaning of *wasathiyyah* is *I'tidall, tawasuth, tawazun, iqtishad* we will find many relevant hadiths.

In relation to the equivalent word *wasathiyyah* Above, Hashim Kamali quotes a hadith about the concept of *wasathiyyah* with the wording "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was the best of the descendants of Quraysh."¹⁶ There are two important notes in Kamali's quote. First, after confirmation, the wording is not found in the authoritative hadith books. He does not base his argument by directly referring to the hadith books. Second, Kamali may have written it in the context of a lexical explanation (that *wasath* means best), rather than as an analysis of the sanad and matan. Perhaps, he used the phrase to indicate the nuances of linguistic meaning, not to build a legal argument. In substance, the wording is in line with the following hadith:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مِهْرَانَ الرَّازِيُّ وَمُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ سَهْمٍ جَمِيعًا عَنْ الْوَلِيدِ قَالَ ابْنُ مِهْرَانَ حَدَّثَنَا الْوَلِيدُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ حَدَّثَنَا الْأَوْزَاعِيُّ عَنْ أَبِي عَمَّارٍ شَدَّادٍ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ وَائِلَةَ بْنَ الْأَسْتَعِيقِ يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى كِنَانَةَ مِنْ وَلَدِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَاصْطَفَى قُرَيْشًا مِنْ كِنَانَةَ وَاصْطَفَى مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ بَنِي هَاشِمٍ وَاصْطَفَانِي مِنْ بَنِي هَاشِمٍ

Meaning: "Has told us Muhammad bin Mibran Ar Raazi and Muhammad bin Abdurrahman bin Shares all from Al Walid. Ibn Mibran said: Has told us Al Walid bin Muslim Has told us Al Anza'i from Abu Ammar Saddad that he heard Watsilah bin Asqa' say: I heard Rasulullah sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam say: "Indeed Allah has chosen Kinanah from the son of Ismail, chosen Quraish from Kinanah, chose Bani Hashim from Quraish, and chose me from Bani Hashim."

In this section there are four history of hadith which has relevance in meaning to the concept of *wasathiyyah* which will be presented. First, the hadith regarding the prohibition of excessive behavior or *ghulum*, which was narrated by Imam Muslim from Ibn Abbas:

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ عَنْ عَوْفٍ عَنْ زِيَادِ بْنِ الْحَصِينِ عَنْ أَبِي الْعَالِيَةِ عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ غَدَاةَ الْعَقَبَةِ وَهُوَ عَلَى نَاقَتِهِ « الْقَطُّ لِي حَصَى ». فَلَقَطْتُ لَهُ سَبْعَ حَصَيَاتٍ هُنَّ حَصَى الْحَذَفِ فَجَعَلَ يَنْفُضُهُنَّ فِي كَفِّهِ وَيَقُولُ « أَمْثَالُ هَؤُلَاءِ فَارْزُمُوا ». ثُمَّ قَالَ « يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِيَّاكُمْ وَالْغُلُوفُ فِي الدِّينِ فَإِنَّمَا أَهْلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ الْغُلُوفُ فِي الدِّينِ ».¹⁷

Meaning: "Has told us Ali bin Muhammad: has told us Abu Usamah from Auf from Ziyad bin Hushain from Abu Aliyah from Ibn Abbas may Allah be pleased with him, he said: Rasulullah shallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam said on the morning of the Aqabah pilgrimage while he was on his camel: 'Please get me a pebble.' So I took seven pebbles for him, all the size of slingshot pebbles. He pounded (brushed off the dust) in the palm of his hand, saying: 'It is with pebbles like these that you should throw.' Then he said: 'O people, keep away from excesses in religion. Because people before you have perished because they were excessive in religion.'"

¹⁶ Kamali, *The middle path of moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic principle of wasatiyyah*, 9.

¹⁷ Muhammad bin Abu Abdullah Al-Quzainiy, *Sunan Ibn Majah* (Dar Al-Fikr, -), 2:1008.

This hadith emphasizes with a very strong prohibition (إِيَّاكُمْ: "avoid") that Muslims should not fall into *ghulum* (excess). According to Ibn Bathal, the use of the word *iiyakum* is a form of *tabẓīr* (strong warning) in Arabic, indicating that this prohibition is principled, not merely a recommendation¹⁸. The meaning of *ghulum* in this hadith is an attitude of going beyond the limits set by sharia, whether in belief, worship, or behavior. Imam al-Nawawī explains that *الْغُلُوُّ فِي الدِّينِ* is *المبالغة فيه وتجاوز حده* (excessive in practicing religion to the point of exceeding the limits of sharia)¹⁹.

The prohibition against being extreme in religion means that Muslims do not go beyond the limits, either by placing too much emphasis on hidden aspects or by revealing things that are outside the guidance of the Shari'a. This exaggeration was one of the factors that caused the destruction of the previous people, so that the lucky believers were those who were able to learn lessons from this history. Rasulullah SAW himself once emphasized this warning in the morning at Aqabah when he ordered the practice of throwing pebbles as part of the ritual of worship, not in an excessive way.²⁰

Ibn Taymiyyah emphasized that the Prophet's statement, "*Beware of extreme attitudes in religion*," was comprehensive and encompassed all forms of belief and behavior. In his view, extremism is an attitude of going beyond limits by giving excessive judgment, whether praise or blame. In this regard, Christians are described as the group that goes the furthest in practicing extremism, so Allah warned them through His words: "*Do not exceed the limits in your religion*" (Quran, An-Nisa: 171)²¹.

In its historical context, according to al-Sindi in *Hasyiyah al-Nasa'i*, this hadith is narrated in connection with the event of the Farewell Pilgrimage, when the Prophet warned the people not to be excessive in stoning the Jamrah with large stones, but rather to suffice with small ones. From this incident, it is clear that the prohibition of *ghulum* applies to all aspects of religious life, not just in certain rituals²². The Prophet's command to throw pebbles emphasizes the principle that obedience must be carried out according to guidance, without trying to replace it with something that seems greater or more effective, such as the use of large stones. This shows that completely moving away from the practices of the previous community is safer than imitating them, even if only in small parts, because it still risks leading to destruction. This narration reached Ibn Abbas through Ibn Mani', Al-Halwani, Al-Daylami, and other narrators. According to Ibn Taymiyyah, the chain of transmission of this narration is considered authentic according to the standards of Imam Muslim.²³

¹⁸ Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Khalaf bin Abdul Malik bin Bathal al-Bakri al-Qurthubi, *Syarab Ibn Bathal* (Beirut, Libanon, 1379), 15:440.

¹⁹ Abu Zakariya Muhyiddin Al-Nawawiy, *Shahib Muslim bi Syarb al-Nawawiy* (Dar Ihya Al-Turats, 1392), 220.

²⁰ Abdurrauf Al-Munawiy, *Faidh al-Qadir Syarb al-Jami' al-Shaghir* (Maktabah Al-Tijariyyah Al-Kubra, 1356), 3:125.

²¹ Ibn Taimiyyah Al-Harrani, *Majmu' Al-Fatawa*, vol. 28, ed. oleh Ahmad ibn'Abd Al-Halim (Majma 'al-Malik Fahd, 1995), 126–27.

²² Abul Hasan Muhammad bin Abdul Hadi Al-Sindi, *Hasyiyah al-Sindi 'ala al-Nasa'I* (Dar al-Ma'rifah, -), 268.

²³ Al-Munawiy, *Faidh al-Qadir Syarb al-Jami' al-Shaghir*, 3:125.

In substance, this hadith also provides a sociological reflection that the destruction of previous communities such as Jews and Christians, according to scholars' interpretations, began with a *ghulw* attitude. The Jews were excessive in their legal compliance, causing difficulties, while Christians excessively glorified the Prophet Jesus, elevating him to the status of God ²⁴. Thus, this hadith affirms Islam's position as a religion of the middle way (*wasathiyah*) that rejects all forms of extremism.

From a contemporary perspective, this hadith is highly relevant for protecting the community from two extreme poles : rigid religious fundamentalism and loose liberalism. Yusuf al-Qaradawi emphasized that *ghulw* is a real threat that must be anticipated, because it distances the community from the true *maqashid al-shari'ah* , namely the creation of balance and public welfare. Even in the context of fiqh, it must have a nature that is not excessive and not rigid, so that it always maintains the middle ground (*wasathiyah*) and balance. This is because Fiqh originates from Allah SWT, and there is no fiqh that approves of excessive or rigid thinking patterns. Excessive or rigid nature is the influence of the environment and the times in which a person lives. This is common to all people as humans who experience the process of change ²⁵. Thus, it can be understood that the above hadith is one of the main bases in upholding the principle of moderation, because it emphasizes Islam as a religion that avoids two extremes : burdensome and trivial .

Second, among the fundamental principles of Islam is that this religion is built on the principle of ease (*yusr*) and not hardship (*'usr*). This principle is in line with the spirit of *wasathiyah* which rejects all forms of extremism in religion. Allah emphasizes in the Qur'an: "*Allah desires ease for you and does not desire hardship for you*" (QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 185), and "*He has not placed on you in the religion any hardship*" (QS. al-Hajj [22]: 78). These two verses serve as the normative basis that Islam is not intended to burden, but rather to make it easier for humans to practice religious life. This principle of ease is further emphasized in the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad, for example, the narration of Imam Bukhari from Abu Hurairah:

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ السَّلَامِ بْنُ مُطَهَّرٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ عَنْ مَعْنِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ الْغِفَارِيِّ عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْمَقْبُرِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِنَّ الدِّينَ يُسْرٌ وَلَنْ يُشَادَّ الدِّينَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا غَلَبَهُ فَسَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالْغَدْوَةِ وَالرَّوْحَةِ وَشَيْءٍ مِنَ الدَّلْجَةِ.²⁶

Meaning: "Abdus Salam bin Muthabbar related to us that: Umar bin Ali related to us from Ma'an bin Muhammad Al Ghifari from Sa'id bin Abu Sa'id Al Maqburi from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam said: "Indeed, religion is easy, and no one makes religion difficult except that he will be overcome (increasingly difficult and difficult). So act uprightly, approach (to the truth) and give good news and seek help with Al Ghadwah (leaving early in the morning) and Ar Ruhah (leaving after Dhuhur) and something from Ad Duljah (leaving at night)."

²⁴ Fakhruddin Al-Razy, *Mafatih al-Ghaiyb* (Dar Al-Fikr, 1981), 56.

²⁵ Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, *Buku Terjemah: Perkembangan Fiqh antara Statis dan Dinamis*, trans. oleh Husni Mubarrak (Cita Varia Kreativitas, 2022), 11.

²⁶ Abu 'Abdillah Muhammad ibn Isma'il ibn Ibra'hîm ibn al-Mughîrah ibn al-Bardizbah Al-Bukhariy, *Shahih Al-Bukhariy* (Dar Ibn Katsir, 1407), 2:23.

This hadith explicitly emphasizes that religion should be easy and not complicated by demands that exceed human capabilities. The Prophet's statement that " *religion is easy; whoever goes to extremes in his religion will overcome him* " indicates that excessive behavior (*ghulum*) in religious practices risks exhaustion, despair, or even abandonment. In other words, forcing oneself to perform excessive acts of worship without considering one's capabilities and the sustainability of the practice can actually damage a believer's spiritual and practical order ²⁷. This statement is understood by scholars as a warning to the community to be moderate, namely to carry out obligations according to one's ability, consistently, and not turn sharia into a burden that stops religious practice.

Imam al-Nawawi explained that this hadith is a warning for Muslims to adopt a moderate stance in religion, because an overly strict stance will actually lead to boredom, fatigue, and ultimately abandonment of worship ²⁸. The wording "*fasaddidu wa qaribu wa abshiru*" is a directive for the people to take the straight path (*saddad*), approach perfection with maximum effort (*muqarabah*), and remain joyful (*busyra*) with God's promises. This means that the principle of moderation does not mean belittling religion, but maintaining a balance between sincerity and ability. This hadith is an important foundation for fighting the phenomenon of *tasyaddud* (extremism in religion) which often gives rise to violence or intolerance.

Third, the concept of *wasathiyyah* in Islam is not only understood as a "middle" between two extremes, but also as the best choice that represents balance. This principle is emphasized in a number of hadiths that emphasize that true goodness lies in a moderate attitude, not in an excessive or trivial attitude, for example: the narration about خير الأمور أوسطها (*the best of matters is the middle*). Although the status of its sanad is not as strong as the previous authentic hadiths, it is often cited by scholars as normative evidence and wisdom that is in line with the Qur'an and sunnah. This narration can be found in several books, such as *Ihya 'Ulumuddin, Kasyful Khafa' wa Mu'izil Ilbas 'amma Isyabara min al-Ahadith 'ala Alsinati an-Nas*, and the book *Syarab Bulughul Maram* by Sheikh 'Athiyah Muhammad Salim ²⁹.

If we refer to al-Ghazali's view regarding the hadith above, then this hadith "*the best matter is the middle*" even though it is considered weak in its sanad, still reflects the great principle of sharia about *wasathiyyah* . Imam al-Ghazali in *Ihya 'Ulum al - Din* interpreted this principle in the context of "anger " . According to him, anger is one of the powers of the soul that if excessive will lead humans to destructive behavior—such as cursing, destroying objects, holding grudges, envy, and various other heart diseases. However, if it is too weak, anger makes humans lose their sense of jealousy (*ghayrah*), honor, and the ability

²⁷ Al-Hafizh Ahmad ibn 'Aliy Ibn Al-Asqalaniy, *Fathul Bariy bi Syarh Shabih al-Bukhariy* (Beirut, Libanon, 1379), 1:76.

²⁸ Abu Zakariya Muhyiddin Yahya bin Syaraf An-Nawawi, *Al-Minhaj Syarh Sahih Muslim* (Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, t.t.), 16:220.

²⁹ 'Athiyah Muhammad Salim, *Syarab Bulughul Maram* (Maktabah Asy-Syuruq, 2001), 2:420; Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad Al-Ghazali, *Ihya 'Ulumuddin* (Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiah, -), 4:291; Syaikh Ismail bin Muhammad Al-'Ajluni, *Kasyful Khafa' wa Mu'izil Ilbas 'amma Isyabara minal Ahadits 'ala Alsinatin Nas* (Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiah, 2012), 2:1206.

to uphold the truth³⁰. Al-Ghazali's view aligns with the meaning of *awsat* in the hadith, namely the middle path that avoids two extremes: *ifrat* (overwhelming anger) and *tafrit* (complete disappearance of anger). Within this framework, al-Ghazali stated that righteous anger is anger that is subject to reason and religion; it flares up when the spirit of upholding truth is needed, and is extinguished when patience is needed³¹.

Thus, the hadith "*khairu al-umur awsatuha*" finds its application in al-Ghazali's description, namely controlled anger, not exploding uncontrollably and not disappearing until it causes humiliation, is a real form of *wasathiyyah*. This middle path in managing anger is also what he called *Shiratha al-Mustaqima*, finer than a strand of hair and sharper than a sword, which is the essence of a Muslim's morals³². In practical life, this hadith serves as a guideline that goodness always lies in choosing the middle path. For example, in religious matters, a Muslim is required to be sincere without burdening himself; in social matters, a Muslim must be generous without being wasteful, and frugal without being stingy. This is the concrete implementation of the principle of *awsath*, the best good.

Fourth, the concept of moderation (*wasathiyyah*) in Islam is not only emphasized in the prohibition against excessive behavior (*ghulum*), but also in the regulation of rights that must be fulfilled proportionally. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) instructed Muslims not only to fulfill their obligations to Allah but also to pay attention to the rights of their bodies and families. This principle of balance is the essence of *wasathiyyah*, not forgetting the spiritual aspect, but also not neglecting the human aspect. This view can be found in the following hadith:

حدثنا محمد بن بشار حدثنا جعفر بن عون حدثنا أبو العميس عن عون بن أبي جحيفة عن أبيه قال
 أخى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بين سلمان وأبي الدرداء فزار سلمان أبا الدرداء فرأى أم الدرداء متبذلة
 فقال لها ما شأنك قالت أخوك أبو الدرداء ليس له حاجة في الدنيا فجاء أبو الدرداء فصنع له طعاما فقال
 كل قال فإني صائم قال ما أنا بآكل حتى تأكل قال فأكل فلما كان الليل ذهب أبو الدرداء يقوم قال نم
 فنام ثم ذهب يقوم فقال نم فلما كان من آخر الليل قال سلمان قم الآن فصليا فقال له سلمان إن لربك
 عليك حقا ولنفسك عليك حقا ولأهلك عليك حقا فأعط كل ذي حق حقه فأتى النبي صلى الله عليه
 وسلم فذكر ذلك له فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم صدق سلمان³³.

Meaning: "Muhammad bin Basysyar has told us Ja'far bin 'Aun has told us Abu Al 'Umais from 'Aun bin Abu Jubai'ah from his father said: The Prophet sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam made Salman and Abu Darda brothers'. One day Salman visited Abu Darda', then he saw Umm Darda' in dirty clothes, then he said to her: "What's wrong with you?" He answered: "Your brother Abu Darda', he does not pay attention to the needs of the world". Then Abu Darda' came, then he made food for Salman. Salman said to Abu Darda': "Eat!". Abu Darda'

³⁰ Al-Ghazali, *Ihya 'Ulumuddin*, 4:290–91.

³¹ Al-Ghazali, *Ihya 'Ulumuddin*, 4:291.

³² Al-Ghazali, *Ihya 'Ulumuddin*, 4:291–92.

³³ Al-Bukhariy, *Shahih Al-Bukhariy*, 2:694.

answered: "I am fasting". Salman said: "I will not eat until you eat". He said: "Then Abu Darda' joined in eating". At night Abu Darda' woke up, then Salman said: "Continue sleeping". So he slept and then woke up again, then Salman said: "Continue sleeping". So he slept again. On end of the night Salman said: "Now get up". Then they both prayed at night." Then Salman said to Abu Darda': "Indeed, your Rabb has rights over you, and your soul has rights over you, and your wife has rights over you, so give every right to the person who has the right". Then Abu Darda' met the Prophet sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam and he told him about this. So he said: "Salman is right."

The hadith narrated by al-Bukhari from Abu Juhayfah regarding the interaction between Salman al-Farisi and Abu al-Darda' is one of the important narrations in explaining the principle of *wasathiyyah* in Islam. The Prophet SAW brought the two of them together (*mu'akhab*), and one day Salman visited Abu al-Darda's house. He found Umm al-Darda' in a shabby condition, because Abu al-Darda' ignored worldly life due to his busy life in worship. Salman then reprimanded him in a practical way, forcing him to break his sunnah fast, telling him to sleep when he was about to go to qiyām al-layl, and only inviting him to pray at the end of the night. After that, Salman emphasized a basic rule:

إِنَّ لِرَبِّكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا، وَلِنَفْسِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا، وَلِأَهْلِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا، فَأَعْطِ كُلَّ ذِي حَقٍّ حَقَّهُ

"Indeed, your Rabb has rights over you, you have rights over you, and your family has rights over you. So give everyone who has rights their rights" (HR. al-Bukhari). The Prophet SAW justified Salman's attitude with his words: صَدَقَ سَلْمَانُ ("Salman is right").

This hadith contains the normative foundations of *wasatiyyah* in three main aspects. First, it emphasizes the balance between the rights of God, individual rights, and family rights. The emphasis on "every right must be given to its rightful owner" suggests that Islam rejects a "reductionist" view that emphasizes only one aspect of life at the expense of others. Second, this hadith demonstrates that voluntary worship should not be performed excessively to the point of interfering with other rights mandated by sharia. Third, this hadith demonstrates the practice of the Companions correcting one another, and the Prophet's recognition of Salman's truthfulness makes it a universal religious principle.

Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani emphasized that this hadith is evidence of the obligation to maintain proportionality in life. According to him, the expression *fa a'thi kulli d'zi haqqin haqqahu* is a *qa'idah kulliyah* (general principle) that regulates human interaction with God, with oneself, and with others ³⁴. This hadith of Salman and Abu al-Darda' also shows that *wasathiyyah* is not merely a normative ideal, but a practical principle applied by the Prophet Muhammad and his companions in real life. He emphasized that the balance of rights—whether the rights of God, the rights of oneself, or the rights of one's family—is an integral part of true religiousness in Islam. While the hadiths discussed above establish a strong normative framework for moderation, balance, and proportionality, an important question remains: to what extent were these principles reflected in the historical experience of the early Muslim

³⁴ Al-Asqalaniy, *Fathul Bariy bi Syarh Shahih al-Bukhariy*, 1:271.

community? Addressing this question requires moving beyond textual prescriptions and examining the relationship between Prophetic ideals and historical practice.

The hadiths condemning *ghulw* establish moderation as a central ethical principle within the Prophetic tradition. At the normative level, these narrations emphasize balance, restraint, and the rejection of excessive religious and political behavior. However, when examined against the backdrop of early Islamic history, a significant tension emerges between these ethical ideals and historical practice. Several Companions who transmitted or embodied Prophetic teachings on moderation were later involved in political conflicts that culminated in the Battles of Jamal and Siffin. Although these conflicts were often justified in terms of justice, political legitimacy, or communal welfare, they nevertheless resulted in armed confrontation among members of the same religious community.

This apparent contradiction should not be understood merely as evidence of hypocrisy or failure. Rather, it demonstrates the complex relationship between normative religious teachings and the realities of political life. The Companions did not necessarily reject the ethical ideal of moderation; instead, they interpreted and applied it differently within competing political contexts. What one group considered a defense of justice and communal unity was viewed by another as a threat to political legitimacy. Consequently, moderation functioned less as a fixed political program than as a contested moral ideal whose meaning was shaped by historical circumstances.

From the perspective of Islam as a discursive tradition, this tension illustrates that religious norms do not operate independently of social and political realities. The hadith tradition provided an ethical framework that discouraged extremism and promoted balance, yet the implementation of these principles remained dependent upon historical actors operating within specific structures of power and conflict. Therefore, the gap between normative teachings and historical practice should not be interpreted simply as a deviation from religious ideals but as evidence of the dynamic interaction between ethical principles and political realities.

The Medina Charter and the Prophet's *Moderate Attitude in Managing Diversity*

Before explaining how the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) managed diversity using the principles of *wasatiyyah*, it is important to highlight the diverse *landscape* of Medina's society. As explained earlier, the key verse on *wasatiyyah* (Surah 2:143) was revealed after the Prophet Muhammad's migration from the pagan-dominated environment of Mecca to Medina, where Islam intersected with other religions and communities.³⁵

When the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) migrated to Medina, the city was inhabited by a complex society, with many different groups, tribes, and races. The diversity of Medina's population increased after some Meccans immigrated to Medina. According to Hasan Ibrahim Hasan, the population of Medina can be divided into three large groups. First, the Muhajirs, who were immigrants who exodus from Mecca to Medina to save their religion. Second, the Ansar, who were native inhabitants of Medina who later voluntarily converted to Islam. They were the Awus and Khazraj tribes. Third, the Jews,

³⁵ Kamali, *The middle path of moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic principle of wasatiyyah*, 211.

who were Jewish tribes or Arabs who had converted to Judaism, then gradually left the Arabian Peninsula ³⁶.

In line with that, Muhammad Zafrullah Khan also mentioned four groups with different formulations. First, the Muslims, consisting of the Muhajirin and Ansor. Second, the 'Aus and Khazraj groups whose Islam is still at a nominal level, some are even secretly hostile to the Prophet SAW. Third, the 'Aus and Khazraj groups who still adhere to paganism, but in a short time have become Muslims. And fourth, the Jewish group which consists of three main tribes, namely Banu Qaynaqa', Banu Nadhir, and Banu Quraizhah ³⁷.

The description above demonstrates the heterogeneity of Medina's population during the early days of the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) residence there. This diversity was evident in various aspects: different ethnicities, diverse regions of origin, uneven economic strata, pluralistic religions and beliefs, and unique customs for each group. This pluralistic social environment gave rise to differences in mindsets, characters, and behaviors that reflected their respective outlooks on life and religious traditions. Medina's society at that time experienced a dualism. On the one hand, they needed a unifying figure capable of ending the ongoing conflict, both between groups and between tribes. However, on the other hand, there was also a desire from some groups to dominate and control Medina, both politically and economically³⁸.

This condition was truly understood by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He saw that the people of Medina, which were often riddled with conflict, desperately needed a mediator and unifier. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) realized the importance of restructuring the social structure of Medina's society to build harmonious patterns of relationships and cooperation in the social, political, economic, and religious fields ³⁹. Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad's initial steps in his preaching in Medina were evident from his first project, namely establishing a mosque that later became known as the Prophet's Mosque as a place of worship, a center for community togetherness, and a means of strengthening the bonds of brotherhood. ⁴⁰Next, the Prophet Muhammad went directly into the community to build social solidarity based on ideological bonds, namely faith and monotheism, and to erode tribal fanaticism that had long been a trigger for conflict in Medina. This strategy proved appropriate and effective, thus uniting the residents of Medina, both immigrants and natives, within a religious framework ⁴¹. The first and second steps show that politically the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) focused more on his preaching strategy on internal consolidation, in order to strengthen the ranks of the community before expanding his preaching to external groups.

In subsequent developments, specifically in the first year of the Hijri era, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) succeeded in gaining broader and legal

³⁶ Hasan Ibrahim Hasan, *Tarikh al-Islam: al-Siyasi, wa al-Tsaqafi wa al-Ijtima'i* (Maktabah Al-Mahdiyyah, 1964), 101.

³⁷ Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, *Muhammad, seal of the prophets* (Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, 1980), 88.

³⁸ Cholil Nafis, *Piagam Madinah dan Deklarasi HAM* (Mitra Abadi Press, 2015), 44.

³⁹ Nafis, *Piagam Madinah dan Deklarasi HAM*, 49.

⁴⁰ Ahmad Ibrahim Syarif, *Daulat Al-Rasul Fi Al-Madinah* (Dar Al-Bayan, 1972), 87.

⁴¹ Syarif, *Daulat Al-Rasul Fi Al-Madinah*, 93–94.

recognition beyond the internal Muslim community. The culmination of these efforts was marked by the birth of a written agreement that later became known as the "Medina Charter." This charter was agreed upon by Muslims, both Muhajirin and Ansar, along with the Jewish community and their allies, and even Christian groups. In the charter, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was recognized as the supreme leader and hakam (arbitrator) for all parties who signed it, as well as for anyone who joined the agreement ⁴². In the Medina Charter, tribal leaders and elites from both Muslim and non-Muslim communities were present as representatives of their respective groups. Although only certain figures were present, their presence can be seen as a reflection of the aspirations of the Medina population as a whole. This is evident in the fact that nearly all the tribes in Medina at that time were listed in the Charter ⁴³.

In AJ Wensinck's notes, the Medina Charter contains 47 articles. The contents of the articles describe the social diversity of Medina society as recorded in history and the Qur'an, including the Muhajirin from Quraysh and the Muslims of Yathrib from the Khazraj tribes (Banu 'Auf, Banu Sa'idah, Banu al-Harith, Banu Jasyam, Banu al-Najjar) and Aws (Banu 'Amr bin 'Auf, Banu al-Nabit, Banu al-Aus). From the perspective of hadith, this manuscript is not a marfū' hadith, but rather a historical document whose authenticity is strengthened by the narrations of the companions, tabi'in, and the records of early historians such as Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Hisham ⁴⁴.

The Medina Charter, the first constitution in the history of Islamic governance, was drafted by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This document not only prioritized the interests of Muslims but also prioritized the common interests of all Medinan residents, both Muslim and non-Muslim. The charter's contents served as a foundation for unity among the heterogeneous community and a symbol of shared victory in building an integral social and political order ⁴⁵.

The importance of the Medina Charter for the people of Medina and the Prophet Muhammad's struggle lies in its function as a collective agreement that binds the entire population through rules that benefit all parties. Wensinck views this charter as a constitution that establishes the relationship between three main groups: the Muhajirin, the Ansar, and the Jews. The creation of this charter is a testament to the Prophet's great authority, despite his short stay in Medina. As a newcomer, he succeeded in formulating laws applicable to all groups, controlling existing powers, and uniting the city politically ⁴⁶.

The Medina Charter has been proven authentic and serves as the foundation of the first Islamic state, as well as a constitution that united all groups of the Medina population. It contains general principles governing the communal life of a heterogeneous society under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Therefore, the

⁴² Nafis, *Piagam Madinah dan Deklarasi HAM*, 52.

⁴³ Robert Morrison MacIver, *The Web of Government* (The MacMillan Company, 1961), 87.

⁴⁴ Ridwan Rustandi dan Syarif Sahidin, "Analisis Historis Manajemen Dakwah Rosulullah Saw dalam Piagam Madinah," *Jurnal Tamaddun: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan Islam* 7, no. 2 (2019); Ali Mohtarom, "Interaksi Sosial Masyarakat Multikultural Madinah Perspektif Kajian Hadis," *Jurnal Mu'allim* 7, no. 1 (2025): 23–34.

⁴⁵ Nafis, *Piagam Madinah dan Deklarasi HAM*, 58.

⁴⁶ AJ Wensinck, *Muhammad and the Jews of Medina*, ed. oleh Wolfgang Behn (Freiburg Im Breisgau, 1975), 56.

following discussion will outline the general principles contained in the Medina Charter based on the perspectives expressed in the text. To facilitate understanding of the contents of the Medina Charter, the following table can be found:

Table 1
Overview of the Contents of the Medina Charter

Principle	Chapter	Main Contents
Monotheism (Specifically for Muslims)	Introduction , 22, 23, 47	Preamble started with basmalah as mark monotheism ; Article 22 prohibits help murder for believers ; Article 23 disputes returned to God and Apostle ; Article 47 Allah and Apostle become guarantor of the person who does Good And piety .
Equality & Justice	13, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 37, 40	Article 13 justice even though to child itself ; Article 15 equality right fellow believer ; Article 16 rights of participating Jews believer ; Articles 22–23 equality right guard unity And referring to to Allah & the Messenger ; Article 24 equality obligation believer And Jews ; Article 37 obligations together guard shahifah ; Article 40 equality right for those who get guarantee .
Unity & Oneness	1, 15, 17, 25	Article 1: society Medina One community ; Article 15: the guarantee of one God , one fellow believer each other help ; Article 17: unity Muslims in peace ; Article 25: all resident Medina , good believer and Jews , one clump without religious/ ethnic discrimination .
Freedom Religious	25	Believer And Jewish as inhabitant Medina own equal rights ; free embrace religion/ belief ; have right And the same obligations , except for those who do cruel .
Defending the Nation	24, 37, 38, 44, 40	Article 24: obligations finance war ; Articles 37–38: believers And Jewish must defend constitution ; Article 40: guarantee for citizens who do not treason ; Article 44: affirmation obligation defense together .

Note: Adapted from the book Medina Charter and Human Rights Declaration by Cholil Nafis

From the principles of the Medina Charter outlined above, it is clear that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) built Medina society on a foundation of justice, equality, unity, religious freedom, and national defense. All of these principles demonstrate the Prophet Muhammad's *moderate* leadership, a stance that prioritizes a balance between rights and obligations, between individual and collective interests, and between commitment to Islamic faith and respect for diversity. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did not build Medina by imposing his beliefs, but by creating a peaceful, just, and inclusive shared living space. Thus, the Medina Charter is not merely a political document, but also a concrete manifestation of Islamic *moderate* social practice, which remains relevant as an example in building a multicultural society in the modern era.

***Wasathiyyah* After the Prophet SAW: From the Caliphate to the Modern Era**

The concept of *wasathiyyah*, as practiced by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through the Medina Charter, portrayed Islam as a just, inclusive, and peace-loving religion. However, after the Prophet's death, the political and social dynamics of the Muslim community entered a turbulent phase⁴⁷. Leadership issues became one of the starting points of differences that gave rise to tensions⁴⁸. The Caliphate, for example, although known as a glorious period, was not free from internal conflicts such as the Battle of Jamal and the Battle of Siffin. This demonstrates that implementing *wasathiyyah values* amidst differing political interests does not always run smoothly.

The period of *the Rightly Guided Caliphate* is often viewed as a golden age, but in reality, it was not free from internal strife. The Battle of Jamal and Siffin, which involved prominent companions, demonstrated that political realities often outweighed the principles of moderation. This situation continued into the Umayyad⁴⁹ and Abbasid⁵⁰ Caliphates, where the glory of Islamic knowledge and civilization went hand in hand with sectarian conflict, power struggles, and the marginalization of certain groups⁵¹.

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), a profound leadership crisis emerged. The lack of a clear successor led to disagreements among Muslims⁵². Some supported Abu Bakr as the first caliph, while others argued that Ali ibn Abi Talib, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, was the legitimate choice⁵³. This difference gave rise to a deep schism, which later developed into significant theological and political differences between Sunnis and Shiites⁵⁴.

For example, if we look at some anti- *mainstream references* such as Lesley Hazleton in her book *After the Prophet*, she describes how events such as the "Pen and Paper Incident" show how difficult it was to reach consensus among the Prophet's companions regarding the leadership of the Muslim community after his death. Hazleton writes, "Muhammad asked for pen and paper to write a will, but the companions delayed, each wanting to

⁴⁷ Muḥammad Riḍā, *Al-Imam Ali Ibn Abi Thalib: Rabi' Al-Khulafau ar-Rasyiduun* (Dar al-Kotob al-Ilmiyah, 1999), 32–35.

⁴⁸ Madelung, *The Succession to Muhammad: A Study of The Early Caliphate*; Afsaruddin, *The first Muslims: History and memory*; Hassan Ansari dan Nebil Husayn, *Caliphate and imamate: an anthology of medieval Muslim texts on political theology* (Cambridge University Press, 2023); G. R. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661–750* (Routledge, 2000).

⁴⁹ Z. G. Altalafha, "Sectarian Conflict and Its Impact on the Stability of the Umayyad State: An Analytical Study of the Relationship Between Power and Islamic Sects (41–132 AH ...," dalam *International Journal of Humanities and Social ...*, ijhss.thebrpi.org, 2025, https://ijhss.thebrpi.org/journals/Vol_15_2025/35.pdf.

⁵⁰ H. D. H. Al-Darraj dan N. H. Jaafar, "RELIGIOUS CAUSES OF EXILE PUNISHMENT DURING THE ABBASID ERA (334–656 AH/945–1258 AD)," *Lex Localis*, 2025, <https://search.proquest.com/openview/9c144b9388f932d97f6b68d58316c8ae/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=55210>.

⁵¹ Ahmad Syafii Maarif, *Krisis Arab dan Masa Depan Dunia Islam* (Bentang Bunyan, 2018), 1–5.

⁵² Riḍā, *Al-Imam Ali Ibn Abi Thalib: Rabi' Al-Khulafau ar-Rasyiduun*, 32–35.

⁵³ Afsaruddin, *The first Muslims: History and memory*, 19–22; Madelung, *The Succession to Muhammad: A Study of The Early Caliphate*, 30–35.

⁵⁴ Ḥāzim Ṣāghiyah, *Nawāṣib wa-Rawāfiḍ: Munāza'āt al-Sunnah wa-al-Shī'ah fī al-Ālam al-Islāmī al-Yawm* (Dār al-Sāqī, 2009), 42–43; Maarif, *Krisis Arab dan Masa Depan Dunia Islam*.

ensure that their candidate was chosen as leader." This reflects how political ambition began to overcome the spirit of unity and moderation taught by the Prophet ⁵⁵. Hazleton also notes that after the Caliphate, the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties took power, often in ways that did not reflect the principles of moderation. These dynasties often used religion as a tool to justify their power, which exacerbated divisions among Muslims. Hazleton writes, "Political and religious power often overlapped, with rulers using religion to strengthen their legitimacy."

The principles of *moderation* taught by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through the Medina Charter hold crucial relevance for the contemporary Islamic world. Since the Prophet's death, Muslims have faced a variety of complex challenges, including sectarian conflict, radicalism, social inequality, and the pressures of globalization. Despite the changing circumstances of the times, the values of moderation—justice, tolerance, deliberation, and a balance between individual and collective interests—remain the solution to many modern problems.

In the era of globalization, Muslims interact intensely with other cultures, ideologies, and religions. Tensions arise when the principle of moderation is not implemented, whether in the social, political, or religious spheres. Regaining the Islamic Centre⁵⁶. For example, radicalism and extremism often arise from a narrow understanding of religious texts or political interests that misuse Islamic teachings. In this context, authentic *wasatiyyah* serves as an ethical guide to curb extremism, encourage dialogue, and build an inclusive society.

Furthermore, modern challenges also require Muslims to harmonize religious values with the demands of contemporary life. Global issues such as human rights, gender equality, and social justice require a moderate, flexible, and adaptive interpretation of Islam⁵⁷. Applying the principle of *wasatiyyah* (*moderation*) requires Muslims to balance tradition and modernity, maintaining their Islamic identity without closing themselves off to the changing times. The relevance of *wasatiyyah* is also evident in the context of public policy and leadership. Muslim leaders who apply the principle of moderation are able to establish social justice, foster solidarity between groups, and balance the interests of the majority and minorities. Thus, *wasatiyyah* is not merely a theoretical concept but also a practical guideline for managing diversity in modern society.

Furthermore, the application of authentic *wasatiyyah* can help mitigate internal conflict within the Muslim community. By emphasizing dialogue, deliberation, and respect for differences, Muslims can re-establish internal solidarity fragmented by historical divisions. This aligns with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, who emphasized balance, justice, and tolerance as the foundations of communal life.

⁵⁵ Lesley Hazleton, *After the Prophet: The Epic Story of The Shia-Sunni Split in Islam* (Vintage, 2010), 99–100.

⁵⁶ Hamid, "Regaining the Islamic Centre?"; Muhammad Nurkholish dan Nasuka Faqih, "Strategies and Challenges of Religious Moderation in Sustaining Social Harmony Amid Globalization," *Abrahamic Religions: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 5, no. 2 (2025): 117–29.

⁵⁷ Hicham Diouane dkk., "The Dynamics of Islamic Thought in Responding to Contemporary Challenges," *Bulletin of Islamic Research* 3, no. 4 (2025): 671–86.

Overall, *wasathiyyah* remains relevant and urgently needs to be actualized in the modern era. Muslims are required to uphold the principle of moderation in social, political, and religious life, so that the values of justice, inclusivity, and peace exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) can be realized amidst the challenges of globalization and modernity. By reviving the spirit of authentic *wasathiyyah*, Muslims can make religion a source of solutions, not conflict, while maintaining harmony between tradition and progress.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the relationship between normative ideals of *wasathiyyah* in the hadith tradition and their historical manifestation in early Islamic society. By bringing textual analysis into conversation with socio-historical inquiry, the study highlights the tension between Prophetic ideals of moderation and the political realities that emerged after the Prophet's death. The findings demonstrate that the hadith corpus consistently presents moderation as an ethical framework grounded in balance, justice, proportionality, and the rejection of extremism. These principles were not merely articulated as moral ideals but were institutionally expressed through the Prophet's leadership, particularly in the governance model reflected in the Medina Charter.

At the same time, the study reveals a significant tension between the normative ideals of moderation and their historical implementation. While the hadith tradition promotes social cohesion, restraint, and communal unity, the post-Prophetic period was marked by political contestation, succession disputes, and civil wars involving actors who themselves operated within the broader framework of the Islamic tradition. Rather than viewing this tension simply as a failure to uphold religious teachings, the study argues that it reflects the complex interaction between ethical norms, political authority, and historical circumstances. In this sense, *wasathiyyah* functioned not as a fixed political program but as a contested moral ideal whose meaning and application were continuously negotiated in changing contexts.

Theoretically, this article contributes to contemporary hadith scholarship by bridging normative textual analysis and socio-historical inquiry, two approaches that are often treated separately in studies of Islamic moderation. By demonstrating how Prophetic teachings were interpreted and contested within historical processes, the study offers a more dynamic understanding of the relationship between religious ideals and political realities. Future research could further explore how different Islamic intellectual traditions, including Sunni and Shi'i perspectives, have interpreted the concept of *wasathiyyah* in response to changing political conditions. Comparative studies on the reception of moderation narratives in later Islamic societies may also provide a deeper understanding of how ethical ideals are transformed into social and political practice.

REFERENCES

- Afsaruddin, Asma. *The first Muslims: History and memory*. Simon and Schuster, 2013.
- Al-'Ajluni, Syaikh Ismail bin Muhammad. *Kasyful Khafa' wa Muzilul Ilbas 'ammaa Isytahara minal Abadits 'ala Alsinatin Nas*. Vol. 2. Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiah, 2012.

- Al-Asqalaniy, Al-Hafizh Ahmad ibn 'Aliy Ibn. *Fathul Bariy bi Syarh Shahih al-Bukhariy*. Vol. 1. Beirut, Libanon, 1379.
- Al-Bukhariy, Abu 'Abdillah Muhammad ibn Isma'il ibn Ibra'him ibn al-Mughirah ibn al-Bardizbah. *Shahih Al-Bukhariy*. Vol. 2. Dar Ibn Katsir, 1407.
- Al-Darraj, H. D. H., dan N. H. Jaafar. "RELIGIOUS CAUSES OF EXILE PUNISHMENT DURING THE ABBASID ERA (334–656 AH/945–1258 AD)." *Lex Localis*, 2025. <https://search.proquest.com/openview/9c144b9388f932d97f6b68d58316c8ae/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=55210>.
- Al-Ghazali, Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad. *Ihya 'Ulumuddin*. Vol. 4. Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiah, -.
- Al-Harrani, Ibn Taimiyyah. *Majmu' Al-Fatawa*. Vol. 28, disunting oleh Ahmad ibn'Abd Al-Halim. Majma 'al-Malik Fahd, 1995.
- Al-Munawiy, Abdurrauf. *Faidh al-Qadir Syarh al-Jami' al-Shaghir*. Vol. 3. Maktabah Al-Tijariyyah Al-Kubra, 1356.
- Al-Nawawiy, Abu Zakariya Muhyiddin. *Shahih Muslim bi Syarh al-Nawawiy*. 16 vols. Dar Ihya Al-Turats, 1392.
- Al-Qaradhawi, Yusuf. *Buku Terjemah: Perkembangan Fiqh antara Statis dan Dinamis*. Diterjemahkan oleh Husni Mubarrak. Cita Varia Kreativitas, 2022.
- Al-Quzainiy, Muhammad bin Abu Abdullah. *Sunan Ibn Majah*. Vol. 2. Dar Al-Fikr, -.
- Al-Razi, Fakhruddin. *Mafatih al-Ghaiyb*. 8 vols. Dar Al-Fikr, 1981.
- Al-Sindi, Abul Hasan Muhammad bin Abdul Hadi. *Hasyiyah al-Sindi 'ala al-Nasa'I*. 5 vols. Dar al-Ma'rifah, -.
- Altalafha, Z. G. "Sectarian Conflict and Its Impact on the Stability of the Umayyad State: An Analytical Study of the Relationship Between Power and Islamic Sects (41–132 AH" Dalam *International Journal of Humanities and Social* Ijhss.thebrpi.org, 2025. https://ijhss.thebrpi.org/journals/Vol_15_2025/35.pdf.
- An-Nawawi, Abu Zakariya Muhyiddin Yahya bin Syaraf. *Al-Minhaj Syarh Sahih Muslim*. Vol. 16. Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, t.t.
- Ansari, Hassan, dan Nebil Husayn. *Caliphate and imamate: an anthology of medieval Muslim texts on political theology*. Cambridge University Press, 2023.
- Apriliana, Milda. "Religious Moderation From the Hadith Perspective: A Thematic Study on the Values of Balance in Islamic Studies." *Jurnal Al-Ahkam* 16 (2025): 77–95.
- Bulan, Jolaman, Tussipkhan Imammadi, Aiyman Ryskiyeva, dan Asset Kuranbek. "Abu Hanifa: Architect of Islamic Moderatism in Contemporary Contexts." *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 15, no. 2 (2025): 253–68.
- Diouane, Hicham, Muhammad K. Ridwan, Muhammad Zawil Kiram, dan Abdalrahman Abulmajid. "The Dynamics of Islamic Thought in Responding to Contemporary Challenges." *Bulletin of Islamic Research* 3, no. 4 (2025): 671–86.
- Esposito, John L. *The future of Islam*. Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Esposito, John L., dan Arif Maftuhin. *Islam Warna-Warni: Ragam Ekspresi Menuju" Jalan Lurus"(al-Shirat al-Mustaqim)*. Paramadina, 2004.

- Fanshurna, Toton, dan Isnadi Isnadi. "Religious Moderation in Minority Muslim Community Interactions: A Talcott Parsons Structural Functionalist Approach." *Edwest-Journal of Universal Studies* 5, no. 9 (2025): 10679–92.
- Hamid, Ahmad Fauzi Abdul. "Regaining the Islamic Centre?" *Pathways to Contemporary Islam: New Trends in Critical Engagement*, 2020, 181.
- Hanafi, Muchlis M., ed. *Tafsir Al-Quran Tematik: Moderasi Islam*. Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2017.
- Hasan, Hasan Ibrahim. *Tarikh al-Islam: al-Siyasi, wa al-Tsaqafi wa al-Ijtima'i*. Maktabah Al-Mahdiyah, 1964.
- Hasan, Mohammad. *Moderasi Islam Nusantara (Studi Konsep dan Metodologi)*. Duta Media Publishing, 2017.
- Hawting, G. R. *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661–750*. Routledge, 2000.
- Hazleton, Lesley. *After the Prophet: The Epic Story of The Shia-Sunni Split in Islam*. Vintage, 2010.
- Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyyah*. Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. *The middle path of moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic principle of wasatiyyah*. Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Khan, Muhammad Zafrulla. *Muhammad, seal of the prophets*. Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, 1980.
- Maarif, Ahmad Syafii. *Krisis Arab dan Masa Depan Dunia Islam*. Bentang Bunyan, 2018.
- MacIver, Robert Morrison. *The Web of Government*. The MacMillan Company, 1961.
- Madelung, Wilferd. *The Succession to Muhammad: A Study of The Early Caliphate*. Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Mohtarom, Ali. "Interaksi Sosial Masyarakat Multikultural Madinah Perspektif Kajian Hadis." *Jurnal Mu'allim* 7, no. 1 (2025): 23–34.
- Muhyiddin, Ahmad Shofi. "Islamic Boarding Schools and Da'wah of Religious Moderation." *Albadharab: Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 22, no. 1 (2023): 85–99.
- Nafis, Cholil. *Piagam Madinah dan Deklarasi HAM*. Mitra Abadi Press, 2015.
- Nasrulloh, Muhammad, Mohamad Zakky Ubaid Ermawan, Khoirul Anam, dan Moh Thoriquddin. "REFRAMING THE PROPHET'S INTERACTIONS WITH NON MUSLIMS: A CONTEXT-SENSITIVE MODEL OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION FROM THE SĪRAH NABAWIYYAH." *Harmoni* 24, no. 2 (2025): 254–80.
- Nurkholish, Muhammad, dan Nasuka Faqih. "Strategies and Challenges of Religious Moderation in Sustaining Social Harmony Amid Globalization." *Abrahamic Religions: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 5, no. 2 (2025): 117–29.
- Qaradāwī, Yūsuf. *Islamic awakening between rejection and extremism*. The Other Press, 2010.
- Qurthubi, Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Khalaf bin Abdul Malik bin Bathal al-Bakri al-. *Syarab Ibn Bathal*. Vol. 15. Beirut, Libanon, 1379.

- Rafida, Alifa Ihfazna, Sahri Sahri, dan Faizal Amin. "Contemporary Islamic Moderation: Insights from al-Qaradawi, Nurcholis Madjid, and Abdurrahman Wahid." *ISTIFHAM: Journal Of Islamic Studies*, 2025, 112–29.
- Riḍā, Muḥammad. *Al-Imam Ali Ibn Abi Thalib: Rabi' Al-Khulafau ar-Rasyidun*. Dar al-Kotob al-Ilmiyah, 1999.
- Rustandi, Ridwan, dan Syarif Sahidin. "Analisis Historis Manajemen Dakwah Rosulullah Saw dalam Piagam Madinah." *Jurnal Tamaddun: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan Islam* 7, no. 2 (2019).
- Saeed, Abdullah. *Reading the Qur'an in the twenty-first century: A contextualist approach*. Taylor & Francis, 2014.
- Ṣāghiyah, Ḥāzim. *Naḥṣib wa-Rawāfiḍ: Munāẓa'āt al-Sunnah wa-al-Shi'ah fī al-'Ālam al-Islāmī al-Yawm*. Dār al-Sāqī, 2009.
- Salim, 'Athiyah Muhammad. *Syarab Bulughul Maram*. Vol. 2. Maktabah Asy-Syuruq, 2001.
- Setiawan, Asep Iwan, Yusuf Zaenal Abidin, Ridwan Rustandi, Ahmad Sarbini, dan Rohmanur Aziz. "Transforming Religious Education Through Inclusivity: How Indonesian Pesantren Cultivate Moderate Islamic Values and Da'wah Practices." *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2026): 70–92.
- Suhail, Ahmad Kusjairi, Daud Lintang, Ade Pahrudin, dan Willy Oktaviano. "Azyurmardi Azra dan Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia." *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 19, no. 2 (2025): 737–54.
- Syarif, Ahmad Ibrahim. *Daulat Al-Rasul Fi Al-Madinah*. Dar Al-Bayan, 1972.
- Wensinck, AJ. *Muhammad and the Jews of Medina*. Disunting oleh Wolfgang Behn. Freiburg Im Breisgau, 1975.



© 2026 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY SA) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>).