

THE EXISTENCE OF THE LIVING QUR'AN AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze the existence and position of the living Qur'an as a new method of studying the Qur'an and its relevance to the development of religious moderation in Indonesia. As a preliminary study, this study applied two data collection techniques: documentation and observation. Documentation is used by taking material from various written sources regarding the living Qur'an. At the same time, the observations focused on several applications of the living Qur'an in learning in the study program of Al-Qur'an and interpretation and the applied research model. The collected data is classified by using a qualitative approach. The results show that both theoretically and practically, the living Qur'an method has been accepted as a new method or approach to studying the Qur'an. It is a method, approach, and model of Qur'anic studies. It also has a role in developing religious moderation and contributes to the development of religious moderation in Indonesia. What is certain is that with various terms, the living Qur'an has received a positive response among Qur'anic scholars in Indonesia. The living Quran is necessary to develop religious moderation, anticipate, and prevent the spread of radicalism that threatens the nation's disintegration in Indonesia.

Keywords: living Qur'an, Qur'anic studies, religious moderation

A. Introduction

Living Quran and religious moderation are two prominent Islamic discourses. The Living Quran is a relatively new discourse still active in academic spaces. At the same time,

religious moderation has become a national agenda so that it gets intellectual, political, and legal support. The closest equivalent meaning to the term moderation is *wasatiyyah*. The concept of religious moderation is an antithesis of the spread of various phenomena of religious radicalism in different parts of the world. It must be developed based on the right epistemological concept (Yunus & T. Hanafiah, 2020: 1065-1074). Moderation is choosing to have a perspective, attitude, and behavior in the middle of the existing extreme choices. Easiness, being in the middle, and moderation are the characteristics of Islamic law and even the most important characteristics of Islamic law (Thayyib, 2016: 202). By analogy, a moderate characteristic is like a motion from the edge that always tends to the center or the axis (centripetal). At the same time, extremism is a reverse motion away from the center of the axis towards the outer and extreme sides (centrifugal) (Research and Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019: 17).

Failure to anticipate and prevent the spread of radicalism is sometimes caused by failure to build an epistemology in reading religious texts. Religious moderation ideas and movements will only be effective if they build a correct religious understanding [Q.s. ar-Ra'd/13:11] (Yusuf, 2014: 52-65). One of the new ways to understand the text in Islam (al-Quran) is through the living Quran method. No grand agenda can run effectively without the development of a proper epistemology. Departing from a misunderstanding of religious texts, radical groups make justifications for attacking other Islamic groups or even plot treason against the state under the pretext of truth and justice. Therefore, a method of understanding the revelation text is needed.

The conception of revelation and Arabic as the language of the Qur'an must be a study that precedes the study of the living Qur'an as an alternative approach to understanding the various realities of the Qur'an in socio-cultural life. In this context, the branches of al-Qur'an science in a socio-historical context (asbab al-nuzul and makkiyah-madaniyah) must be positioned as a dialectical reality between the revealed text and the socio-cultural context influences the formation of the text. Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid in his book "Mafhum al-Nash: Dirasat fiy 'Ulum al-Qur'an" (Zaid, 1993). Through his book, he shook the world by proposing a statement that the Qur'an is a *muntaj thaqafi* (product of civilization). If so, the text of the Qur'an should have a dialectic with the socio-cultural context of society or real life. In this context, Abu Zaid views that the texts of the Qur'an are closely related to the community's real life. The Living Qur'an begins with the phenomenon of the Qur'an in everyday life, which means real meanings and functions which are understood, experienced, and felt by the Muslim community. Living Qur'an can also be interpreted as a study of various phenomena or social facts related to the presence of the Qur'an in a certain community group, which is then applied in everyday life (Mansur, 2007: 8). In this context, Muhammad Yusuf said that the living Qur'an is a social response (reality) to the Qur'an, whether seen as a science, in the profane area on the one hand and as a guidebook in sacred values on the other (Yusuf, 2007: 36).

Religious moderation can only be understood and appropriately applied if the socio-cultural values that live in society can be dialogued with religious texts appropriately. *Wasatiyyah*

of Islam is described as the value of moderation in Islam, emphasizing justice, balance, and tolerance. Al-Qur'an contains these values but is often misunderstood and misapplied (Helmy et al., 2021: 377-401). Regarding the inter-religious relationship, *wasatiyyah* is key to creating tolerance and harmony at local, national, and global levels. By behaving moderately, religious people will ideally treat others with respect, accept differences, and live together in peace and harmony. It is quite compatible for Indonesia with its multicultural society to apply religious moderation, which is not only a choice but a necessity (Helmy et al., 2021: 377-401).

The discourse on the living Qur'an as a method of studying the Qur'an has become a part of the recently highlighted research. A thesis at UIN Kalijaga Yogyakarta, written by Uswatun Hasanah, she did a study on the purpose of reading the Qur'an by the people of Sukorejo Hamlet, Kenteng Village, Kec. Susukan, Kab. Semarang, Central Java. The study explained the purpose of reading the Qur'an for the people of Dusun Sukorejo, including worship, as a medium of treatment, as wirid, as a talisman, and as mahabbah (Hasanah, 2008).

It also found the same things in a thesis written by Didik Andriawan a UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta student. He reviewed the use of Al-Qur'an verses as medicine, the study of Living Qur'an in Dr. Medicine Practice. KH. Komari Safullah, Sunan Kalijaga Islamic Boarding School, Pakuncen Village, Kec. Patianrowo, Kab. Nudge. In the thesis, Didik explained that KH. Komari Safullah uses the verses of the Qur'an as a treatment through intuition and belief in these verses. The result is that the Qur'an is a physical and non-physical medicine (Andriawan, 2013).

Research conducted by Didi Junaedi in 2014 about living the Qur'an in Islamic Boarding Schools. He analyzed the tradition of reading Surah Al-Wāqī'ah daily at the As-Siroj Al-Hasan Islamic Boarding School in Kalimukti Village, Kec. Pabedilan, Cirebon Regency (Junaedi, 2014). He explained that the birth of this tradition was motivated by the existence of *manaqiban* activities once a week. Then the *manaqiban* activities were replaced with the activity of reading the Surah al-Wāqī'ah every day on the diploma of Sheikh Fadhil al-Jailani (one of the descendants of Sheikh Adbul Qadir al-Jailani). In addition, he also explained the process of reading Surah al-Wāqī'ah, which was carried out in two categories. First, it was carried out by all boarding school administrators, students, and the surrounding community on Monday at 20:00 WIB, followed by + 45 participants. Second, the reading of the Surah al-Wāqī'ah every day by all boarding school administrators and students at 21:30 WIB. The hope is that they will get ample sustenance, forgiveness, and the grace of Allah SWT.

He also published an article from the research result on living Qur'an as a new approach to studying the Qur'an. It is a case study at As-Siroj Al-Hasan Islamic Boarding School, Kalimukti Village (Junaedi, 2015: 169-190). This article focuses on studying the living Qur'an method as a new approach to studying the Qur'an. The living Qur'an is a scientific study or research on various social events related to the presence of the Qur'an or the existence of the Qur'an in a particular Muslim community. The living Qur'an also can be interpreted as "the text of the Qur'an that 'lives' in society." This approach seeks to portray the process of

community interaction with the Qur'an, which is not limited to the meaning of the text. It is more emphasized on aspects of the application of the texts of al-Qur'an. The Qur'an in daily life or the application of the Qur'anic texts has become an institutionalized tradition in people's everyday lives.

Similarly, Muhammad Azizan Fitriana and Agustina Choirunnisa also reviewed the living Qur'an in their study. He studied on living Qur'an among Prisoners. It is a case study of the At-Taubah Islamic Boarding School, the District Correctional Institution. Cianjur-West Java (Farhan, 2017: 87-96). The study was intended to examine the interaction of students at the Integrated Islamic Boarding School at-Taubah Class II B Cianjur Correctional Institution with the Qur'an in the form of riyadhah. By applying a qualitative approach to the living Qur'an model supported by a sociological, phenomenological, and psychological process, he emphasized that the students of the At-Taubah Integrated Islamic Boarding School Cianjur prison understand the uses and functions of the verses of the Qur'an used in riyadhah activities in their context as a prayer.

Itmam Aulia Rakhman also did the same thing in studying the living Qur'an in the Kliwonan Tradition of PP Santri. Attauhidiyyah Sheikh Armia bin Kurdi Tegal (Fitriana & A. Choirunnisa, 2018: 67-98). One of the socio-religious phenomena in Tegal Regency that can become a magnet for the community is the Kliwonan Tradition in PP. Attauhidiyyah Sheikh Armia bin Kurdi Tegal (Rakhman, 2019: 22-40), in the form of Istigasah Kubra. In this tradition, there is an atomistic reading of letters and fragments of verses from the Qur'an. The method applied aims to reveal the meaning of Attauhidiyyah students interacting with the Qur'an as their holy book. The approach taken is socio-anthropological. Meanwhile, to analyze the data that has been collected, the hermeneutic (interpretative) used paradigm is one of the living paradigms of the Qur'an. His research revealed the Social Reception of the Qur'an in the Kliwonan Tradition in PP. Attauhidiyyah Sheikh Armia bin Kurdi Tegal, found in (1) Reading Yasin Faḍilah (2) Reading al-Fātihah (3) Reading certain verses during istigathah and prayer together.

Based on these studies, some research on the living Qur'an is still in the introduction stage, some are in the discourse stage, and some are in the application stage. This paper emphasizes strengthening the existence and position of the living Qur'an in the study of the Qur'an. It is time for the living Qur'an to be included as a method of studying the Qur'an alongside other methods of studying the Qur'an. Living Qur'an as a Qur'an study method should be drawn into the mainstream Qur'an study method. Several years ago, the study of the Qur'an was always focused on the interpretation of the Qur'an and works of commentary, so the study of the Qur'an was always a literature study. In contrast to the living Qur'an method, which directs the researchers of Qur'an studies to field research.

B. Result and Discussion

Definition and Development of the Living Qur'an Method

The word 'living Qur'an' is a combination of two different words. That is, living means life and the Qur'an, which is the holy book of Muslims (Syamsyuddin, 2007: xiv). The word 'living' is a trend from the English language "live," which means alive, active, and living. The verb, which means 'live,' gets an -ing affix at the end (verb-ing pattern), which in English grammar is called the present participle. The "live" verb, which ends in -ing, is also positioned as a present participle that functions as an adjective. So, the function will change from a verb (verb) to an adjective noun. The -ing suffix, which functions as an adjective in the present participle, occurs in the term "the living Qur'an" (Hasbillah, 2019: 20).

M. Mansur argues that the living Qur'an starts from the phenomenon of the Qur'an in everyday life, namely the real meaning and function of the Qur'an, which is understood and experienced by the Muslim community (Mansur, 2007: 5). In the book entitled "Science of Living Qur'an-Hadith" by Ahmad 'Ubaydi Hasbillah, there is a terminological understanding of the living Qur'an formulated from the results of studies, discussions, seminars, and book library surveys, and journals about the living Qur'an. Each of these offers a grand concept of the living Qur'an. Living Qur'an is an effort to gain solid and convincing knowledge of culture, practice, tradition, ritual, thought, or behavior of people's lives inspired by a verse of the Qur'an. The living Qur'an, according to Ahmad 'Ubaydi Hasbillah' in the book, is a science that aims to illuminate the phenomena or symptoms of the Qur'an that exist in human life (Hasbillah, 2019: 22-23).

Heddy Shri Ahisma Putra classified the meaning of the living Qur'an. First is the real figure of the Prophet Muhammad (Ahimsa, 2012; Junaedi, 2015: 173. It is based on the information from Aishah r.a. when asked about the morals of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. She replied that the character of the Prophet Muhammad SAW is the Qur'an. Thus the Prophet Muhammad SAW is the living Qur'an or the living Qur'an itself. Second is the living Qur'an which refers to a society whose daily life uses the Qur'an as a reference book. They live by what the Qur'an commands and stay away from what He forbids so that community is like the "living Qur'an". The Qur'an is manifested in their daily lives. Third, the living Qur'an can also be interpreted that the Qur'an is not just a **book** but a "living book" that is manifested in everyday life so that it is felt and authentic, and varied, depending on life.

The Living Qur'an begins with the phenomenon of the Qur'an in daily life, which means real meanings and functions. Those are understood, experienced, and felt by the Muslim community (Mansur, 2007: 8). It can be categorized as a study or scientific research on various social phenomena related to the existence of the Qur'an in certain Muslim communities or others who interact with it. Al-Qur'an is a verbatim text that has existed since a dozen centuries ago and has experienced the complexity of interaction between people, not only Muslims but also non-Muslims. Despite its relatively **long** journey, most of the Qur'anic studies that have

developed until now are still mostly text-oriented. It has not touched many other aspects, such as those directly related to the implementation of understanding and attitudes and acceptance of the readers towards it. Naturally, the study of the Qur'an by some groups is considered "boring", not to mention the material aspect, which is very little oriented directly to needs and not much directed to contemporary issues (Jabbar, 2006).

Studying the text of the Qur'an makes the phenomena that live in Muslim or even non-Muslim communities related to the Qur'an the object of study. Thus, this study is close to social studies in its diversity (Ahimsa, 2012: 258). Because the Qur'an that lives in daily human life can manifest in various, colorful forms that, for some Muslims, may even be considered to deviate from the basic teachings of Islam itself, this social phenomenon arises as a result of the presence of the Qur'an. It is then initiated into the area of study of the Qur'an. The phenomenon of the living al-Qur'an can also be as the "Qur'anization" of life, which means incorporating the Qur'an as it is understood—into all aspects of human life or making human life an arena for the realization of the Qur'an on earth. Or to borrow the term Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan al-Qur'an*.

The Qur'anization of human life can be in the form of using verses in the Qur'an which are believed to have "certain supernatural powers to achieve certain goals, such as for treatment of diseases, used as a medium to expel the jinn and make a person visible". Powerful because it cannot be injured with any sharp weapon. The verses of the Qur'an here are no longer seen as "guidance," commands, prohibitions from doing something or telling stories about something, but rather as "mantras" which, if repeatedly read until they reach a certain amount, will be able to produce results. -Specific results as desired. The rate of development as the phenomenon above gave birth to a study known as the living Qur'an. In this case, living al-Qur'an in question is how the Qur'an is addressed and responded to by the Muslim community in real life. Thus, as far as the researcher observes, the phenomenon of living al-Qur'an is nothing but the call of the soul of a person or group of people, which is his moral obligation to appreciate and glorify the Qur'an based on what he understands.

The term living al-Qur'an, in other technical terms, is also called interaction or reception. The word reception can be used to represent the behavior of the interaction between the Qur'an and its adherents. According to Nur Kholis Setiawan, theoretically, there are three forms of the public reception of the Qur'an:

1. Cultural reception tries to reveal the Qur'an's influence and role in shaping society's culture and culture.
2. Hermeneutic reception reveals developments related to the study of text interpretation and the activity of text interpretation itself.
3. Aesthetic reception reveals the process of receiving with the eyes and ears, the experience of art, and the taste of an object or appearance.

Thus the locus of the study of the living Qur'an is in the cultural and aesthetic reception (Setiawan, 2006: 68).

In the context of the study of the living al-Qur'an, humans treat and study the Qur'an as a book containing instructions - as is done in schools and Islamic educational institutions. Even though this condition is no longer seen as the only activity or the most "correct" treatment of the Qur'an. Such meaning and treatment are only seen as one form of treatment that can be given to the Qur'an, and it is this meaning and treatment then becomes the object of the study itself. Of course, the role and position of the Qur'an as a book there also cannot be ignored. Because what is meant by "al-Qur'an" here is no longer only the book but also interpretations and patterns of behavior based on understanding the verses in the Qur'an (Ahimsa, 2012: 252).

According to Syamsuddin, the living Qur'anic text in society is what is called the living Qur'an (Syamsudin, 2007: xiv). While the institutionalization of the results of specific societal interpretations can be called "the living interpretation". Why does "the Qur'anic text that lives in society" appear? It is nothing but "the response of society to the text of the Qur'an and the results of one's interpretation. Included in the notion of "community response" is their reception of specific texts and the results of particular interpretations (Ulum, 2009: 136-139). We can find forms of social perception of the Qur'an in everyday life, such as the tradition of reading certain letters or verses at certain socio-religious events and ceremonies. And social reception of interpretation results is manifested in the institutionalization of certain forms of interpretation in society, both on a large and small scale (Ahimsa, 2012: 252).

M. Mansur argues that the understanding of the living Qur'an begins with the phenomenon of the Qur'an in everyday life. It is nothing but the meaning and function of the Qur'an which is understood and experienced by the Muslim community (Mansyur et al., 2007: 5). Thus, the living al-Qur'an is the practice of functioning the Qur'an in practical life, outside its textual conditions. Functioning Qur'an arises because of the practice of interpreting the Qur'an, which does not refer to an understanding of its textual message but is based on the assumption that there is "*fadhilah*" from specific units of the Qur'anic text; for practical purposes, the daily life of the people. These are some views about the living Qur'an.

History of Living Qur'an

Regarding the birth of these branches of Qur'anic science, most or all are rooted in the problems of the textuality of the Qur'an. Some Qur'anic science branches concentrate on the text's internal aspects. Some focus on the external of the text, such as *asbabul nuzul* and the date of the Qur'an, which involve writing, compilation, and translation. Meanwhile, certain practices in the form of withdrawing the Qur'an into practical interests in people's lives outside of its textual aspects do not seem to attract classical Qur'anic studies (Mansur et al., 2007: 5).

History records that the living Al-Qur'an has existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad. It can be seen in the practice of *ruqyah*, which is to treat oneself and others who are sick by reading certain verses in the Qur'an (Junaedi, 2015: 169-190). According to a narration, the Prophet Muhammad SAW used to cure diseases by *ruqiyah* using the letter Al-Fatihah or to reject magic by reading the letter *al-Mu'aawwizatain* (Al-Falaq and Al-Naas) (Faizin, 2011: 127).

More than that, the Companions had conducted a scientific and empirical study of the living Qur'an for the first time. They understand the teachings of religion from what they can see and what they have witnessed or experienced themselves before the Prophet. Not infrequently, they asked the Prophet about it, then reported it and made it a hadith *fi'li*. The method used by the friends is almost the same as the involved observation and in-depth interviews (in-depth interviews) to collect data in field research. They are actively involved in studies and daily activities with the Prophet Muhammad (Hasbillah, 2019: 111). The Living Qur'an carried out by friends is in the form of observations, such as when friends see the Prophet Muhammad wearing rings, friends are also busy wearing rings. And when the Prophet Muhammad took off his ring, the companions took it off too (Muslim, number 5605; Hasbillah, 2019: 66).

As for the provisions from Prophet Muhammad SAW, which caused differences among the companions, they asked the Prophet about a form of tayammum events in the middle of the trip. Prophet Muhammad SAW instructed not to pray *Ashar* unless it arrived at the village of Banu Quraizhah. However, the friends in the middle of the trip had different opinions. Some of the companions continued to pray on time, though they were still on their way and "violating" the instructions from Prophet Muhammad. Some of the other friends remained "faithful" to the instructions of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (Hasbillah, 2019: 111). These friends only prayed *ashar* when they arrived at the Banu Quraizhah village even though the time for *Ashar* prayer had passed. The Companions then questioned this question to determine which of their actions was better. Then this incident was responded to by the Prophet wisely (Buhari num. 904 and 3893; Muslim num. 4701; Hasbillah, 2019: 70).

The provisions from Prophet Muhammad related to rings and tayammum activities, someone can understand from the form of the living Qur'an because it is based on the concept of the actions of the Prophet Muhammad SAW is the living Qur'an. Because of the function of the Prophet as role models, this provision is a juridical provision of the Qur'an. (Hasbillah, 2019: 108).

Based on the information, the living Qur'an has existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. However, this is not yet a living Qur'an in the form of scientific studies. Only the embryo of the living Qur'an has existed since the time of the Prophet and his companions. The Living Qur'an became an object of study when non-Muslim observers of the study of the Qur'an began. For them, there are many exciting things around the Qur'an in the lives of Muslims in the form of various social phenomena. For example, social phenomena related to learning to read the Qur'an in certain locations, the phenomenon of writing certain parts of the Qur'an in certain places, beheading verses from the Qur'an, which later become a means of treatment, prayers, and so on that exist in other Muslim societies. This study model makes the phenomenon that lives in the Muslim community related to the Qur'an become the object of their study, basically nothing more than social studies with its diversity. Only with this social phenomenon emerged because of the presence of the Qur'an. Then, it was initiated into

the study area of the Qur'an. In its development, this study is known as the living Qur'an (Mansyur et al., 2007: 6-7).

The figures observing the Qur'an study are Neal Robinson, Farid Essac, and Nash Abu Zaid. For example, Farid Essac explores the practice of the Qur'an more in his environment. At the same time, Neal Robinson tries to record the experiences of many cases, such as how Taha Husein's expertise was in studying the Qur'an in Egypt, how the experience of the Muslim community in India, and so on (Mansyur et al., 2007: 7-8).

The term living Qur'an first appeared by Fazhurrahman; this was said by Alfatih Suryadilaga even though the term used by Fazhulrahman showed a non-verbal sunnah known as the living tradition (Suryadilaga, 2009). However, the term living Qur'an, which is the forerunner of new knowledge, was introduced by Barbara Dali Metcalf in her research on the living Hadith entitled "Living hadith in the *Jamaat Tabligh*", which was written in 1992 (Hasbillah, 2019: 152). However, the living Qur'an started from the study of the Qur'an by non-Muslims. However, Muslim scholars of the Qur'an accept this study well by incorporating the study of the living Qur'an into the area of study of the Qur'an by observers of contemporary Qur'anic studies (Mansyur et al., 2007: 9). In this case, the living Qur'an is the development of the methodology of the study of the Qur'an.

Forerunner of Living Quran in Indonesia

Indigenization, as meant by K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid, is how Islamic doctrines are interpreted so that local culture applies to Islamic jurisprudence (Mukarom, 2017: 63-74). The indigenization of Islam in Indonesia is a necessity. It does not contradict the historical fact that the Qur'an was revealed gradually over 23 years with a full dialectical context, later referred to in the study of the Qur'an as *asbab al-nuzul*. The tempo is divided into the context of Mecca and Medina. In the study of the Qur'an, it is referred to as *makkiyyah and madaniyah* (Wahid, 1989 & 2000). The Meccan period lasted 13 years and the Medina period lasted ten years. It happened partly because the Qur'an was undergoing indigenization in Mecca and Medina. The idea of indigenizing Islam received responses to challenges from various groups, including the kyai, the kyai, and the Nahdhiyin themselves. However, Gusdur has a strong thinking base, so his idea gets support from various parties (Wahid, 1989). He believes that indigenization has historical roots, both in the context of the revelation of the Qur'an in Arabia and the journey of Islam in Indonesia.

There must be a priority plan that must be put forward to realize the idea of indigenizing Islam. According to Abdurrahman Wahid, the first thing that must be done is to create public awareness about what Islam should do. From here, the ground will emerge for the inclusion of a socio-cultural approach capable of accommodating development and change needs (Wahid, 1989: 94). In other words, there is an urgent agenda that must be fulfilled by Muslims, namely the importance of understanding and applying social sciences in dealing with situations and demands of an ever-changing era. Even before K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid (Gusdur), several

figures had voiced ideas and the importance of understanding Islam in the context of a pluralistic Indonesia from various aspects of life.

Munawir Sjadzali, an Indonesian Muslim intellectual, came up with the idea of "Reactualization of Islamic Teachings" by prioritizing the *maslahah* aspect. In this case, Munawir Syadzali further concreted the three methodological frameworks: *adat*, *nasakh*, and *maslahah*. Munawir Syadzali's "reactualization of Islamic teachings" idea stems from the issue of inheritance (Sjadzali, 1995). Based on the socio-historical approach of the Qur'an, he saw that the determination of law in the Qur'an goes through a long stage. Now, Islam is in the context of space and time, which requires prime reform thinking. He saw that Islam (al-Qur'an) brought the spirit of renewal (Sjadzali, 1994 & 1997). He prioritized the benefit of the people because Islam came to realize the benefit of humanity (Sjadzali, 1996).

Based on the consideration of benefit, he encouraged the actualization of Islamic teachings that were more beneficial without injustice (Sjadzali, 1988). A historical approach, especially the socio-historical-cultural reality of Arab society, which was the initial target of the Qur'an, encourages historical awareness in understanding Islam (Sjadzali, 1990). Dialectics of historical context with text (as a source of Islamic teachings) teaches humanity, especially Muslims, to be aware of the history and contemporary realities (Sjadzali, 1993). Dialogue of the Qur'an with socio-cultural reality by paying attention to the practice of society based on the Qur'an is what is meant in this context by the living Quran. It has long been an awareness of Nusantara scholars to read sacred texts. Still, in recent years it has begun to be thought about systematically so that the study of the living Quran has been integrated into the curriculum in PTKIN, especially in the study program of al-Quran and interpretation.

A Qur'an expert, Prof. Dr. H. M. Quraish Shihab, M.A. Through his book, *Grounding the Al-Quran*, he expresses his ideas and ideas that are well-known among activists of Islamic studies in Indonesia, especially activists of al-Quran studies and interpretations (Shihab, 1994). Through his work, he sees the obstacles and challenges under the conditions and situations. Indonesia has a population of various ethnicities, religions, races, and beliefs. It is a problem in grounding the Qur'an. In addition to this, along with the speed of knowledge and technology as well as a culture that is turning it into a phenomenon and a challenge that requires a solution as a method to humanize the Qur'an. However, in the field, some opportunities can be used to approach or use the Qur'an's earthing. One of them is the condition of a religious society, political conditions that support, and opportunities for implementing the Qur'an earthing. The socio-cultural approach and the thematic method of reasoning are alternatives to the effort to ground the Qur'an (Luthfi, 2003: 21-40).

The idea of grounding the Qur'an is supported by developing and applying thematic interpretation methods to answer various socio-cultural problems and realities. Through the thematic interpretation method, the Qur'an is dialogued with the socio-cultural reality so that the Qur'an seems to be "alive" and greets people in all space and time. Because the Qur'an calls itself guidance for humans, then the Qur'an is here to guide people's lives. In other words, the

Qur'an is always alive (al-Quran is living). From the perspective of the living Quran, religious moderation and Islam Nusantara were confirmed as the agenda of the Qur'an in Indonesia. The living Quran method is evidence of a new awareness that is more academic and systematic to make the Qur'an a guide for humankind.

Living Qur'an in Indonesia

Before 2005, Fazhulrahman, Farid Essac, Nash Hamid Abu Zayd, Neil Robinson, Krisrina Nelson, and Abdullah Saeed wrote books that mapped the typology of human interaction with the Qur'an. In this figure's realm of Qur'anic science, the Qur'an is studied not only from its textual aspect but from the aspect of phenomena and reality in society. However, there is no formulation or name for the living Qur'an as a branch of Qur'anic science. At this stage, the research and study period is a social phenomenon. However, their works also influenced the emergence of the living Qur'anic science model.

As for the evidence from the living Qur'an, it is well accepted by Muslim scholars of Qur'an studies, especially in Indonesia (Hasbillah, 2019: 156). In January 2005, the Indonesian Hadith Interpretation Student Communication Forum (FKMTHI) held a National Seminar about living the Qur'an, the Qur'an in everyday life. Initial discourse and confirmation of the living Qur'an as a branch of Qur'anic science. In the same year, on January 10, 2005, Hammam Faizin (a FKMTHI activist and a student of Tafsir-Hadis at UIN Yogyakarta) published an article on the living Qur'an as an offering, which was published in the column for North Wood Study, Java Daily. Post. The discourse on the living Qur'an is broader and more massive because the discourse through seminars is considered to be local and temporal.

Furthermore, on January 16, 2005, Islan Gusmian (lecturer of Tafsir-Hadith at the State Islamic High School (STAIN) Surakarta) published an opinion article responding to Hammam Faizin's opinion on the Qur'an in the struggle of Indonesian Muslims. In the North Wood Study column, Harian Jawa Pos. It is a broader and more serious response to the discourse on the science of living the Qur'an. The living Qur'an has not yet formulated a scientific methodology at this stage.

The following year, August 8-9, the Department of Tafsir-Hadith, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, held a workshop on the living Qur'an and hadith methodology. This stage began to **formulate** the methodology of the science of the living Qur'an. And at that time, the living Qur'an was developed because of hadith science. It is because, at that time, the study of the Qur'an and hadith was positioned like two sides of a coin, different but inseparable.

In May 2007, the team of speakers in the 2006 workshop followed up by publishing the workshop paper into a book, which contains about research methodology of living Qur'an and hadith by publisher TH Press UIN Yogyakarta in collaboration with publisher Teras, Yogyakarta. This stage is still the stage of discourse on the living **Qur'an** and hadith as a branch of science. Before being applied as a science, the methodology and guidebook must be formulated first.

In further developments, in 2010, PTAIN (UIN Yogyakarta as a pioneer, followed by several PTKIN) Established the living Qur'an as a subject that students of Tafsir Hadith must take under the name of hadith and socio-culture. In the 2013 curriculum, courses called the living Qur'an and living hadith began to appear. The first step is to determine the living Qur'an as a curriculum for Tafsir and Hadith education. Indirectly the determination of the curriculum is a form of affirmation of the living Qur'an and living Hadith as a branch of knowledge of the Qur'an and Hadith.

In 2013, the Researchers of the Science of the Qur'an, Tafsir, and Hadith began to apply it in Research in Journals and Thesis. Applications and testing of methodological tests are being encouraged. Scientific, academic research strengthens the epistemological building of the living Qur'an. In the same year (2013) also, the Center for the Study of the Qur'an (PSQ) Ciputat, South Tangerang, Banten (the foundation founded by Prof. Dr. M. Quraish Shihab, MA). He is an interpreter in Indonesia who created a program called living The Qur'an, with the mission of grounding the Qur'an and carrying the tag line, "understanding, loving and piety." The term living Qur'an used by PSQ has a different meaning from the living Qur'an promoted by UIN Yogyakarta. The PSQ version of the Qur'an is a concrete manifestation of the ideal of "*Membumikan al-Qur'an*," which was once written by M. Quraish Shihab.

The stretching of the study of the Qur'an with the living Qur'an method is getting stronger. So, searches in various journals and research reports for completing studies at certain strata and other research have significantly increased. It can also trace to PTKIN/PTKIS repositories throughout Indonesia. Even the lecturers who teach courses in the study program of al-Qur'an science and interpretation at all levels have encouraged and guided their students to apply the living Qur'an method to study the Qur'an. At UIN Alauddin, for example – as a place for the author to teach –, has also implemented the living Qur'an method and received a good response, especially from students majoring in the study program of al-Qur'an sciences and tafsir at strata one (S1), strata two (S2), and strata three (S3). In short, the living Qur'an method is well received.

Living Quran's Contribution to the Development of Religious Moderation

Before further explaining the contribution of the living Quran method to the development of religious moderation, it is necessary first to understand the meaning of religious moderation (Idris et al., 2021: 1-16). Religious moderation is the most appropriate content of values and practices to realize the benefit of the Indonesian earth. A moderate, fair, balanced mental attitude is the key to managing our diversity. In being solemn to build the nation and state, every Indonesian citizen has balanced rights and obligations to develop a peaceful and reassuring life together. If we can realize this, then every citizen can become a complete Indonesian human being and a human being who practices religion as a whole.

The teaching to be moderate does not belong only to one particular religion but exists in the traditions of various religions and even in world civilizations. Fair and balanced, as described previously, is also highly upheld by all religious teachings. Not a single religious

teaching advocates persecuting/unjustly or teaching excessive behavior. *Wasathiyah* teaching, as its meaning has been explained, is one of the characteristics and essence of religious teachings. The word has at least three meanings: first means middle, second means fair, and third means the best. These three meanings do not mean that they stand alone or are not related to each other because being in the middle often reflects the attitude of fairness and the best choice.

The word "*wasathiyah*" in everyday life is the word "referee". It is the profession of someone who mediates a game, which is always required to do justice and decide what is best for the parties. Another example of generosity is good because it is between wastefulness and stinginess. Courage is also good because it is between fear and recklessness. And so on. That is why to manage differences to be fair and balanced, and a leader must appear like a referee profession so that the game can run fairly and balanced and become beautiful and quality. 'Islamic moderation', 'moderate Muslim' and 'moderate Islam' are highly contextualized terms as deferent regions and contexts provide different sheds of denotations (Islam & A. Khatun, 2015: 69-78).

From several interpretations, the term "*wasatha*" means the chosen one, the best, being just, humble, moderate, *istiqamah*, following the teachings, not being extreme, either in matters relating to this world or the hereafter, nor is it extreme in spiritual or physical matters but rather a balance between the two. In more detail, *wasathiyah* means something good and is in a position between two extreme poles. Therefore, people will not have extreme attitudes when the concept of *wasathiyah* is practiced daily. In this context, living Quran aims to direct the study of the Qur'an to deal (dialogue) with the reality of socio-cultural diversity and the plurality of religions and beliefs. Moderation uses three main principles (Husna, 2020: 199-222), namely *tawassuth* (middle); *ta'adul* (fair); and *tawazun* (balanced) principles are able to create a moderate situation, create a school of peace, progress, and form a generation with moderate views.

The social phenomenon arises because of the presence of the Qur'an, included in studying the Qur'an as the term living Qur'an (Mansur, 2007: 7). The Living Quran and religious moderation both highlight socio-cultural realities. Living Quran is a method of dialogue between text and reality, while religious moderation is an agenda to organize the existence of the diversity that occurs.

Indonesia is a country where various cultures thrive and are nurtured and guarded by its people. In this country, there are more than 740 ethnic groups and 583 languages and dialects of the 67 main languages used by various ethnic groups (Truna, 2010: 1). In addition, they also adhere to multiple religions such as Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and hundreds of local religions and beliefs that are part of the local culture. Cultural diversity (multicultural) is a natural event due to the meeting of various cultures, the interaction of various individuals and groups carrying cultural behavior, and different and specific lifeways. Diversities such as cultural diversity, family background, religion, and ethnicity interact in the Indonesian community (Akhmadi, 2019). Al-Qur'an is the holy book of Muslims who are complete and perfect and simultaneously the first source of law for Muslims. Al-Qur'an

is a book that guides anyone who needs it as an example and teaches it to anyone who wants to interpret it (Anwar, 2009).

Moderation of Islam has become a hot discourse. In articulating Islam's teachings, some groups sometimes appear extreme views, so sometimes it triggers acts of intolerance and violence. In Islam, the religious reference is indeed one, namely the Qur'an and Al-Hadith, but the phenomenon shows that the face of Islam is many. Various Islamic groups sometimes have their characteristics in religious practices and practices. It seems that the difference has become natural, *sunatullah*, and even a blessing. Diversity in life is a necessity that Allah wills (Yusuf et al., 2020: 107-119). It includes a diversity of opinion in the scientific field, the diversity of human responses regarding the truth of the holy books, the interpretation of their contents, and the form of their practice.

The existence of the living Quran must be an epistemological reading of sacred texts to have a dialogue with the reality of cultural, religious, and belief pluralism. In this context, the living Quran and religious moderation find relevance. Religious moderation is our perspective on moderate religion, namely understanding and practicing religious teachings without being extreme, both right and extreme left. Extremism, radicalism, hate speech, and fractured relations between religious communities are the problems faced by the Indonesian nation today. In an analogy, moderation is movement from the edge that always tends towards the center or axis (centripetal).

In contrast, extremism is the opposite movement away from the center or axis, towards the outer and extreme (centrifugal). Like the pendulum of a clock, there is a dynamic motion, not stopping at one extreme outside but moving towards the middle (Nurdin, 2021: 59-70). Living Quran is a new awareness to respond to reality marked by the plurality of cultures, races, religions, and beliefs that grow, develop, and coexist in a tolerant and peaceful situation.

C. Conclusion

The existence of the living Quran is a new trend in studying the Qur'an in Indonesia. The Living Quran has a long history, from its revelation until now. Prophet Muhammad SAW is referred to as the living Qur'an or the running Qur'an because his morals apply the morals taught by the Qur'an. The current existence of the living Quran is not in line with its predecessor methods, such as the *tahlili*, *ijmali*, *muqaran*, and *maudhu'i* methods. However, the living Quran is now an alternative in responding to socio-cultural reality. Tolerance and moderation are needed in dealing with Indonesia's diversity and a plurality of religions and cultures. Diversity is an undeniable fact and necessity. The pillar of Unity in Diversity is the pillar of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. It has been recognized since the beginning of the founding of the Republic of Indonesia. In these diverse circumstances, it can still be managed through awareness of the precepts of "Indonesian Unity". Living Quran is an effort or steps to realize the unity of Indonesia and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. Moderation is evidence of theological awareness

that diversity is a necessity that must be accepted and treated appropriately. Allah created and willed that diversity to occur.

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