

MODERATION IN INDONESIAN TAFSIR: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE TERMS OF *UMMATAN WASAT* IN THE AL- QUR'AN DAN TERJEMAHANNYA BY THE MINISTRY OF RELIGION OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

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Abstract: Various kinds of religious issues in the context of the state, such as intolerance between religious communities, have made the state formulate a program of religious moderation through the Kementerian Agama RI in 2019. The importance of this program can be seen from the inclusion of religious moderation in the Konsep Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional 2020-2024 by Bappenas. On the other hand, the Ministry of Religion has been producing Qur'anic literature for a long time through the Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya, Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya, Tafsir Tematik Moderasi Beragama, and others. This article attempts to trace the meaning of religious moderation through Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya from time to time (1990 and 2019 editions), with the following questions: How do the products of the Al-Qur'an Terjemah Kemenag discuss religious moderation? The meaning of the word *tawasut* will be traced from the Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya from time to time. This research is a text analysis (content analysis) with a qualitative research method that comes from two main data sources, namely primary data and secondary data. Furthermore, processing the data is done by using the literature mapping technique. The conclusions obtained from these two editions do not

exist in a vacuum. Texts were produced according to the context and socio-political setting of the time. After analyzing through text dimensions, discursive practices and sociocultural practices, it was found that the construction of ideology in the structure of the text can be seen in the translation changes in the two verses. Expanding the meaning and euphemism of the terms used responds to the context surrounding the Qur'an and its translation by the Kementerian Agama RI. The production and consumption of texts can then be seen from government policies through the Kementerian Agama in the socialization of moderation in all lines of people's lives, in religion, intellectuals and society.

Keywords: Religious Moderation, Al-Qur'an dan Terjemah, Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia

Introduction

The policy of religious moderation was initiated by the Indonesian government in 2019. This policy was socialized and internalized through the Ministry of Religion in various aspects. Religious discourses related to the mainstreaming of religious moderation fill the public space (Mabrur 2017). From the Ministry of Religion, several articles carry the mission of moderation in religion. In addition to the religious moderation handbook, there is the Tafsir Tematik Moderasi Beragama (LPMQ 2012). Also, in 2019, a revised and refined edition of the translation of the Qur'an by the Ministry of Religion was published. The euphoria of moderation accompanies the translation production. Authoritative religious ministries regarding the translation of the Qur'an (Faizin 2021; Chirzin 2016), also have the power to disseminate the results of their translations. Therefore, the use of the Ministry of Religion's version of the translation of the Qur'an is the most widely used.

As far as the author's search goes, there are two major themes which are the focus of research related to the translation of the Qur'an by the Ministry of Religion. First, research that focuses on the dynamics and characteristics of Qur'an translation (Faizin 2021). Second. Ideological Relation and Qur'an Translation (Ikhwan 2009). This paper is more likely to be on the second theme but with a specific discussion related to the translation of the Qur'an on the term *wasatīyah*, which is the breath of moderation. By using Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, this study aims to show that there is state intervention in translating the Qur'an by government policies and programs in the context of religious moderation.

This paper aims to fill in the gaps of previous research by identifying changes in the translation of the word *wasat* in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 143 and 238, QS. Al-Māidah [5]: 89, QS. Al-Qalam [68]: 28, as well as in QS. Al-Ādiyāt [100]: 5 is contained in two editions of the translation of the Qur'an by the Indonesian Ministry of Religion team. In line with that, three things formulate the problem in this paper. First, an analysis of the word *wasat* in the 1990 edition of the Ministry of Religion's translation and the 2019 revised and refined edition. Second, the factors underlying the change in the word's translation *wasat*. Third, the relevance of the translation of the word *wasat* to the current context regarding the policies of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion in efforts to strengthen religious moderation in Indonesia.

This study departs from the argument that discourse in a text is not only understood in terms of linguistic aspects that are seen explicitly, but the text is the result of a practice that is implicit or contains ideology in it (Eriyanto 2001). The translation of the Qur'an carried out by the Ministry of Religion team cannot be separated from this. The social context accompanying the translation process affects the changes in the form of revisions made throughout the existence of the Qur'an translation by the institution.

This study uses a qualitative research method with a type of literature study to prove it. The Norman Fairclough analysis approach will be used to analyze the micro, meso and macro dimensions of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion's translation of the Qur'an. Text analysis, discursive practice and social practice are carried out for each dimension (Fauzan 2013). The data used in this research are primary and secondary. The primary data are two versions of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion's Qur'an translation. At the same time, secondary data is determined from various studies that are relevant to the focus of the discussion. Data tracking is used in three ways: data reduction, data presentation and conclusion. All methodical tools used aim to critically reveal the factors, context and socio-historical conditions of the production of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion's Qur'an translation text.

Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis (a version of "critical discourse analysis") is based on the assumption that language is an irreducible part of social life, dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life, so that social analysis and research must always take language into account (Fairclough 2003). The main focus of the CDA is on the effects of power relations and inequality in generating social problems, and in particular on the discursive aspects of power relations and inequality: on the dialectical relationship between discourse and power, and the effect it has on other relations in social processes (Fairclough 2003). Fairclough seeks to reveal ideological patterns and forces in texts in his research analysis methods.

This research is a text analysis (content analysis) with a qualitative method. This research comes from two main data sources, namely primary data and secondary data. This study's primary data are obtained from various classical and modern interpretations of their interpretation of the QS. [2]: 143 and QS. [5]: 66. While secondary data sources are data from other studies

that are relevant to this paper. This research was conducted using the literature mapping technique. Researchers carried out data gripping (data collection) from the Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya from the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. The resulting data is structured according to the specified theme classification. Data unrelated to research is reduced so that the data obtained is by the theme under study. The selected data limitations are only related to the meaning of the word *wast* contained in the QS. [2]: 143 and QS. [5]: 68, so the research does not include other meanings other than words and verses. Data that has been classified and mapped, conclusions are drawn. From the concluding results, the data is displayed in sub-sections to be understood in one unit according to the specified sub-sections. The stages in the research process are carried out to answer the specified problem.

A Brief Description of the Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya By Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia

The Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia are translations of the Qur'an translated into Indonesian, published by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. The Indonesian government has long paid great attention to the translation of the Qur'an. In the first phase of the Planned Universal National Development, the translation of the Qurnan is one of the priority projects. This is stated in MPRS (Madjelis Permusjawaratan Rakjat Sementara) Decree number XI of 1960 article 2 and Project Pattern I Group AA 7 in the Field of Translation of the Holy Qur'an. As a follow-up to the MPRS Decree 1962, the Ministry of Religion established the Al-Qur'an Translator Organizing Agency. This institution succeeded in publishing the Ministry of Religion's translation of the Qur'an for the first time on August 17, 1965. This first version of the translation of the Qur'an was inaugurated

by the Minister of Religion KH. Saifuddin Zuhri. Printed in 3 volumes, each volume containing 10 juz (Purnomo 2019).

In 1971 the translation of the 1965 edition of the Qur'an underwent minor improvements in several parts, and then it was printed into one volume so that it looked pretty thick, around 1294 pages. This printed edition is entitled "Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya". In 1989 the Ministry of Religion, through Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf Al-Qur'an (LPMQ), conducted a study on improving the Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya. This first refinement needed to be more comprehensive, focusing on editorial improvements considered less appropriate to Indonesian then. The head of LPMQ led the team, then Drs. HA. Hafiz Dasuki, MA. In 1990 the results of this refinement were also published by the Saudi Arabian government. The Saudi government distributes the Al-Quran and its translation free of charge to Indonesian pilgrims before returning to their homeland. The Ministry of Religion carried out the second improvement from 1998 to 2002. This time, the improvement was more thorough, so it took about four years. The improvements made cover four main aspects, including 1) language aspect, 2) consistency aspect, 3) substance aspect, and 4) transliteration aspect referring to the 1987 Decree of the Minister of Religion and Minister of Education and Culture. The improvement team includes Prof. Dr. M. Quraish Shihab, MA, Prof. Dr. KH. Sayid Agil Husin al-Munawwar, MA and Prof. Dr. H.A. Baiquni. At that time, LPMQ was still led by Drs. HA. Hafiz Dasuki, MA. The finalization of the study was carried out during the LPMQ period led by Drs. H. Fadhal Bafadal, M.Sc with team members including Dr. KH. Ahsin Sakho Muhammad, MA, Prof. Dr. KH. Ali Mustafa Ya'kub, MA (late) and other experts (Hakim 2017; Basid and Ghani 2023).

The 2002 edition of the Qur'an and its translation look thinner than the 1990 one. From 1294 pages to 924 pages, a reduction of 370 pages. Apart from the shorter translation system,

the 2002 edition omitted several parts, such as the opening and footnotes. After 14 years had passed, following up on the recommendations of the Mukernas Ulama Al-Qur'an in 2015, the Ministry of Religion, through the LPMQ, conducted a third improvement study in 2016. The third revision study was chaired directly by the Head of LPMQ, Dr. KH. Muchlis M Hanafi, MA.

Unlike the previous refinement studies, in this third refinement, there are five refinement instruments set to produce better translation results. The five instruments are 1) Offline public consultation. Conducted in Central Java, Jakarta, Padang and Malang, 2) Field research on the use of Al-Qur'an translations in the community, 3) Formed a team of 15 experts on the Qur'an, Arabic, and Indonesian language experts, 4) Online public consultation, to capture community proposals and aspirations online through the Public Consultation portal, and 5) Mukernas Ulama Al-Quran 2018, and Ijtima Ulama Al-Qur'an 2019 which will be held in Bandung on 8 July 2019 (Purnomo 2019).

The Meaning of Moderation and Its Derivation

The concept of moderation in Indonesian and Arabic is fundamentally different. The reason is that in Indonesian, moderation is built from just one word, namely moderation, while in Arabic, it is at least from three terms, namely *wasat*, *mīzān* and *'adl*. Etymologically, the word *tawāsut* comes from the word *wasata-yasitu-wasatan* which means to be or sit in the middle. According to Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Muhammad al-Sāri al-Zajjāj (842-822 M), as quoted by Ahmad Agus Salim, the word has two meanings, namely: *'adlan wa kbiyāran*, which is in the middle and, thus, fair (Salim and Riyadi 2022). According to Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī (1882 AD-1967 AD), the word *wasata* is mentioned five times in four different letters in the Qur'an, namely in QS. 100: 5, QS. 2: 143, 238, QS. 68: 28, and QS. 5: 89 (Al-Bāqī 1945). This word can be interpreted as fair and in the middle, or it can also be

interpreted as an intermediate position between two opposing positions (Shahabuddin and Shihab 2007).

Another explanation, the word *tawāsut* means *wasf al-syai'* (the middle of something), which means the part of something that has two ends that are the same size. Another opinion says the meaning of *tawāsut* is everything good and commendable according to its object. For example, courage is the middle between careless and fearful, and generosity is an intermediate position between wasteful and miserly (Shahabuddin and Shihab 2007). Meanwhile, according to al-Rāgib al-Aṣfahānī (1126 AD), the word *wasaf* is the noblest adjective compared to three other adjectives, namely *ifraṭ* (excessive), *tafriṭ* (too restrictive) and *taqsir* (narrow). Thus, the meaning of this word is not too excessive, not outrageous and not too restrictive (Jabbar 2012). Thus, the meaning of *tawāsut* here is to be fair and in the middle of everything that is excessive or restrictive or narrow.

The second is the word *tawāzun*. This word is mentioned in the Qur'an 22 times, both as the original word and its derivation (Al-Bāqī 1945). The basic meaning of this word is "something that is used to determine the size of something" (LPMQ 2012). The word *tawāzun* comes from the word *wazānana-yazīnu-waznan*, which means weighing. Another opinion says that the word's meaning is knowing the size of something. It is also said that *wazantubu-waznan-wazīnatan* means I weigh it. However, in general, the word *al-wazn* is a measure of weight calculated using balances and scales (Al-Aṣfahānī 2017). Thus, *tawāzun* means measuring justice with a scale, as Allah says in QS. Al-Ḥadīd [56]: 25 (Jabbar 2012). In addition, another opinion says that the word's meaning is balanced and compatible according to a very appropriate size. Thus the meaning of the word *tawāzun* is used to measure justice and balance, which of course, must be by the correct size.

Third is the word *'adālah*. In the Qur'an, according to Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, this word is mentioned 28 times, both from the original word and its derivation (Al-Bāqī 1945). The word is also interpreted by several other terms, such as *istiqāmah* (straight/not crooked), *al-musāwāh* (same) and *al-taswīyah* (equalize) (LPMQ 2012). 'Adālah comes from the word *'adīla-ya'dilu-'adlan* which means to punish pretty or reasonably. The word is *maṣḍar* from *'adala*, which means justice approved by law and witness, like an equal, ransom, or retribution (Yusoff, n.d.). According to al-Aṣfahāni, there are two variants of this word, namely *al-'adl* and *al-'idl*. *Al-'adl* is usually used in matters that cannot be digested by the senses, such as in law, as stated in QS. Al-Māidah [5]: 95. Thus, the word *al-'adl* can be interpreted by dividing equally. An example is found in history: "*bi al-'adl qāmat al-Samawāt wa al-arḍ*," which means "the heavens and the earth stand upright in balance (fairly)." While the word *al-'idl*, as well as *al-'adīl*, is used in material terms (which can be digested by the senses) such as scales, numbers, and measures (Al-Aṣfahāni 2017).

As for the terminology, the word *'adālah* makes the right decision among humans (Jabbar 2012). Another opinion says that the word means dividing equally, which is based on the following history: *bi al-'adl qāmat al-samawāt wa al-arḍ*, which means that the heavens and the earth stand upright in balance (*'adl*) (Al-Aṣfahāni 2017). Abu al-Baqā Ayūb Ibn Mūsa al-Kafawi (1683 AD) said the word's meaning is every place Allah mentions, in which there are scales and reckoning (Yusoff, n.d.). Thus the meaning of the word is an act of giving decisions to humans by giving the same or balanced and correct.

Text Dimensions

As previously mentioned, the term moderation is associated with the word *wasaf* in Arabic. Etymologically, this term means two endings of the same size (LPMQ 2012). However, generally, the word *wasaf* is used to indicate something that is in the middle. This term is mentioned in the Qur'an five times, namely in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 143, QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 238, QS al-Māidah [5]: 89, QS. Al-Qalam [68]: 28 and QS. al-‘Adiyat [100]: 5 (LPMQ 2012). The search conducted by the author found that translation changes only occurred in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 143 and QS. Al-Qalam [68]: 28.

Changes in the Ministry of Religion's translation of *ummatan wasaṭan* and *awsaṭuhum* show the development and dynamics of the meaning of the Qur'an. This responded to the socio-cultural conditions in each period when the text was produced. The term *ummatan wasaṭan* in the 1990 edition of the Ministry of Religion translation is translated as “just and chosen people” (Al-Qur'an 1990a) with an explanation provided in the footnotes:

“Umat Islam dijadikan umat yang adil dan pilihan, karena mereka akan menjadi saksi atas perbuatan orang yang menyimpang dari kebenaran baik di dunia maupun di akhirat”.

(Muslims are made a just and chosen people because they will be witnesses of the actions of people who deviate from the truth both in this world and in the hereafter)

From the experiential aspect, the dictions “fair” and “choice” are used as translations of *wasafan* which convey the meaning of the superiority of Muslims over other people. This translation cannot be separated from the relational meaning of the term, which relates to the witness of Muslims to humanity (in all verses), which is understood in the context of the hereafter and in

this world. While in the 2019 edition of the translation, the word *ummatan wasaʿatan* is not given a literal translation but is given a footnote: “umat pertengahan berarti umat pilihan, terbaik, adil, dan seimbang, baik dalam keyakinan, pikiran, sikap, maupun perilaku” (Medieval ummah means the chosen, best, fair, and balanced people, both in beliefs, thoughts, attitudes, and behaviour) (Al-Qur’an 1990a). There is a development in the meaning of *ummatan wasaʿatan* compared to the previous Ministry of Religion translation. The dictions “fair” and “choice” are still used by developing the meaning of *wasāʿatan* with balance (*tawāzūn*) which are classified into beliefs, thoughts, attitudes and behaviour. The emphasis on process and active participation by the “people” is evident in this translation.

The word *awsaṭubum* in QS. Al-Qalam [68]: 28 also underwent revision in its translation. In the 1990 edition, this word was translated as “seseorang yang paling baik pikirannya” (a person with the best in mind) (Al-Qur’an 1990b). The 2019 edition is translated as “seorang yang paling bijak di antara mereka” (The wisest of them) (Al-Qur’an 1990c). The two translations transformed meaning from “paling baik pikirannya” (the best in mind) was actualized to “paling bijaksana” (the wisest). The word *awsaṭubum* is shifted from the realm of ideas (thoughts) to reality because wisdom cannot be seen only through ideas or thoughts but also through the actualization of those ideas (Basid and Kusumawati 2022).

Dimensions of Discourse Practice (Discursive)

Discourse practice is a dimension related to the production and consumption process of texts. Discourse is produced through different production processes, such as work patterns, work charts, and routines in producing texts (Eriyanto 2001). The process of text consumption may also be different in different social contexts. While in the distribution of texts depends on the pattern and type of text and the nature of the

institutions inherent in the text. Political leaders, for example, can distribute the text by inviting journalists and holding press conferences for wide distribution to the public (Eriyanto 2001).

Translating the Qur'an by the Ministry of Religion is also inseparable from this dimension. Until now, there have been five translation editions as official works of the Indonesian government, which have become the standard for other translated works and are authoritative (Faizin 2021). First, the Jamunu Edition (1965-1969). Second, Mukti Ali Edition (1971). Third, Saudi Arabia Edition (1989-1990). Fourth, 2002 Enhanced Edition (1998-2002) and fifth, 2019 Enhanced Edition (2016-2019).

Jamunu Al-Qur'an edition was translated for the first time. It is called *Jamunu* because it was printed by the *Jajasan Mu'awanah Nabdlatul Ulama* printing house, abbreviated as *Jamunu Djakarta*. This *Jamunu* edition was born from the mandate of the decision of the Madjlis Permusjawaratan Rakjat Sementara (MPRS) No. II/MPRS/1960 concerning the outlines of the pattern for developing the first phase of the universal plan (Faizin 2021). This edition was published under the Old Order and the New Order. The translation method applied is *harfiyah* and *tafsiriyah*. This edition was later refined in the Mukti Ali Edition (1971), besides that the print size was smaller and more concise.

After fifteen years, an initiative emerged to perfect the translation of the Qur'an, which was realized in the Saudi Arabian Edition (1990), called that; at that time, the Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an (LPMQ) received an offer to print an Indonesian translation of the Qur'an at *Mujamma' Khādim al-Haramayn al-Sharifayn al-Malik Fahd li Tiba'at al-Mushaf al-Sharif* in 1990 (Faizin 2021). In this edition, the Saudi Arabian government asks to incorporate their understanding into the translation that the *mutashabihat* verses must be adapted to Saudi Arabian

understandings. In fact, since the beginning, the government has tried the translation can accommodate all understandings in Indonesia. So the translation team tried to add information in brackets and footnotes (Faizin 2021). The subsequent refinement occurred in 2002 (which had been started in 1998). The refinements are euphemistic, such as the word marriage is replaced by marriage, the face is replaced by face, rewards replace wages and so on.

Fourteen years later, revisions and improvements were made again. Starting from 2016 to 2019. Interestingly, besides being based on input from the community, this revision was also carried out based on research focused on the use of translations of the Qur'an in society. One of the recommendations is that verses that are prone to be misunderstood, such as verses on war, jihad, gender and the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims, need additional explanation.

The changes that occurred in the translation of the Qur'an had socio-political impacts. Especially in the translation of verses which often become polemic and debated among Muslim scholars. For example, in translating the word *awliya'* in QS. Al-Māidah [5]: 51. In 2016, there was the circulation of a "false" the Qur'an narrative, which refers to a change in the translation of the word *awliya'* from "leader" to "loyal friend". The translation of *awliya'* as "leader" is found in the 1990 edition, while the translation of *awliya'* as "loyal friend" is found in the 2002 edition. The heated political constellation at that time was prone to causing politicization by certain groups to legitimize their interests. As a response to these dynamics, the Ministry of Religion, through the LPMQ, took the initiative to review the Qur'an and its translations, which are considered less relevant to today's society. This is also momentum for the government to launch a policy of moderation in religion in 2019 (Junaedi 2019).

Dimensions of Sociocultural Practice

Analysis of this dimension refers to the socio-cultural conditions surrounding the texts produced. This socio-cultural condition is divided into three parts, namely: (a) situational, namely the unique situation when a text is created, (b) institutional, namely the influence of organizational institutions on the resulting text, and (c) social, namely looking at macro matters in society, such as the political system, economic system, or community culture (Fauzan 2013).

In Indonesia, plurality, especially religion-related, is in a difficult position. One side of the problem is the potential for conflict. This is ironic because every religion has humanistic values that should be the antithesis of conflict. The conditions underlying the translation of the 1990 and 2019 editions of the Qur'an are different. Scientific developments that occur.

Conclusion

This research examines several issues related to the structure of ideological discourse in the Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya in the 1990 and 2019 editions. These two editions do not exist in a vacuum. Texts were produced according to the context and socio-political setting of the time. To reveal this influence, the researcher uses Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis theory to translate the word *wasqat* in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 143 and QS. Al-Qalam [68]: 28.

Based on the research that has been done, after analyzing the dimensions of the text, discursive practices and sociocultural practices, it is found that ideological construction in the structure of the text can be seen in the translation changes in the two verses. Expanding the meaning and euphemism of the terms used

responds to the context surrounding the Al-Quran dan Terjemahnya by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. The production and consumption of texts can then be seen from government policies through the Ministry of Religion in the socialization of moderation in all lines of people's lives, in religion, intellectuals and society.

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