

Hijriyah Months and The Construction of Religious Moderation in The Sombaopu Community of Gowa, South Sulawesi

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Abstract: This research examines the response of the people of Sombaopu District, Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi in responding to difference views in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* (Islamic lunar calendar) months. This issue needs special attention because it holds the potential for internal conflict among Muslims. This research is classified as descriptive qualitative field research. The aim is to obtain an overview of social phenomena that exist among the Muslim community in Sombaopu District, Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi Province. This research focuses on the public's response to differences in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* months which is connected to the concept of religious moderation as an effort to prevent society from extreme understandings and practices that are not in accordance with religious guidelines and regulations. This research concludes that religious moderation can be a solution in preventing the emergence of social conflict while strengthening the sense of unity and integrity in society. The success of this effort can be achieved more quickly if the relevant parties, especially government institutions, religious organizations and community leaders are actively involved in this activity.

Keywords: determination of the beginning of the *Hijriyah* month, religious moderation, astronomy

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji respons masyarakat Kecamatan Sombaopu Kabupaten Gowa Sulawesi Selatan dalam menyikapi perbedaan pandangan dalam penetapan awal bulan *Hijriyah*. Isu ini perlu memperoleh perhatian khusus karena menyimpan potensi konflik internal di kalangan umat Islam. Penelitian ini tergolong dalam penelitian lapangan yang bersifat deskriptif kualitatif. Tujuannya untuk memperoleh gambaran tentang fenomena sosial yang ada di kalangan masyarakat Muslim Kecamatan Sombaopu, Kabupaten Gowa, Provinsi Sulawesi Selatan. Penelitian ini berfokus pada respon masyarakat terhadap perbedaan penentuan awal bulan *Hijriyah* yang dihubungkan dengan konsep wawasan moderasi beragama, sebagai suatu upaya dini untuk menghindarkan masyarakat dari pemahaman dan praktik-praktik yang bersifat ekstrim yang tidak sesuai dengan petunjuk agama dan peraturan yang berlaku. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa moderasi beragama dapat menjadi solusi dalam mencegah timbulnya konflik sosial sekaligus memperkuat rasa persatuan dan kesatuan dalam masyarakat. Namun, keberhasilan dari upaya itu akan lebih cepat tercapai jika pihak-pihak terkait khususnya lembaga Pemerintah, ormas keagamaan, dan tokoh masyarakat terlibat aktif dalam kegiatan ini.

Kata kunci: penetapan awal bulan Hijriah, moderasi beragama, astronomy

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Introduction

Islamic law is basically all the rules relating to the actions of *mukallaf* (legally capable persons) both in terms of *ibādah* (worship) and *mu'āmalah* (social relations). The rules in question are the result of *ijtihad* (legal discovery) by *mujtahids* (legal experts) which cover aspects of human relationships with Allah (*ibādah*), relationships among humans (*mu'āmalah*), and relationships between humans and the physical environment (*isti'māru'ul ard*).¹

In the context of social activities, Islamic law, as interpreted by Koentjaraningrat, is a system of behavior and relationships that is centered on activities that meet the special needs of society.² Islamic law also recognizes diversity as a manifestation of the perfection of God's creation and for humans to get to know each other. This fact, at the same time, has implications for the emergence of spaces of difference that have been of concern to mankind throughout history, especially in matters of humanity, economics, culture, education etc. Responding to these facts, Islamic law, along with its values and its characteristics, namely *harakah* (developing), *wasathiyah* (harmonious, balanced), and *takāmul* (perfect),³ adopts various human problems and formulates them in a set of rules based on fundamental values (*maqāshid al-sharīa*), instrumental values, and practical values (the actualization process of Islamic law).⁴

Meanwhile, the people of Sombaopo District can be said to be a relatively dynamic society, one hundred percent Muslim, and obedient in carrying out religious orders. One of the questions that commonly arise among the Sombaopo Muslim community as the month of Ramadhan approaches is when to start fasting when to celebrate Eid, whether all Muslims will fast simultaneously, or whether will there be differences according to the understanding of each group.

Furthermore, in Islamic tradition, every time the month of Ramadhan, Shawwal, or Dzulhijjah approaches, there is one activity that must be

¹ A. Djazuli, *Ilmu Fiqih*, Cet. 7 (Kencana, 2010).p.18

² Koentjaraningrat, *Pokok-Pokok Antropologi Sosial* (Jakarta: Aksara Baru, 1985), p. 24.

³ Hasbi Ash-Shiddiqy, *Falsafah Hukum Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1988), p. 105.

⁴ Beni Ahmad Saebani dan Mustafa Hasan, *Hukum Pidana Islam* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2020), p. 24.

carried out, namely observing the *hilāl*. *Hilāl* is a young crescent moon that can be seen for the first time right after the new moon phase (*ijtimā'*). *Hilāl* monitoring is carried out to determine whether the start of the month in the Islamic calendar will occur tomorrow or on the following day. Monitoring the presence of the new crescent is also important because it determines the start or the end of a worship service that is linked to the lunar calendar.

In Indonesia, as well as in other countries, the appearance of the new crescent moon can be known in two ways, namely: through direct observation (*ru'yat*) or astronomical calculations (*hisāb*). The *ru'yat* method is generally used among the *Nahdiyyīn* members (the followers of the Islamic Mass organization of Nahdlatul 'Ulama), while the *hisāb* method is generally used among the Islamic Mass Organization of Muhammadiyah.⁵ The Muhammadiyah Tarjih Council through Decision No. XXVI of 2003, equated the reckoning method with the rukyat method, considering that both have a legal basis and are in accordance with the *Sunnah* (Prophet's Traditions).⁶ Besides the *ru'yat* and the *hisāb* method, there is another method, as adopted by the Government through the Ministry of Religion, namely the combination of the *hisāb* with the *ru'yat* method, known as the *Imkānu Ru'yat*.

In America, the determination of fasting or the beginning of Ramadhan is carried out by the American Fiqh Council which is part of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) using the reckoning method which has been implemented since 2006. In Pakistan, Pakistani Minister of Science and Technology Fawad Chaudry, 2020, has formed a committee consisting of astronomers and technology experts with the task of determining the calendar for the next five years using mathematical calculation methods (*hisāb*). This was done to end confusion in Pakistani society in determining the exact dates for Ramadan, *Eid al-Fitr*, *Eid al-Adhā*, and Muharram.⁷

⁵ Ahmad Izzuddin, *Ilmu Falak Praktis* (Semarang: Pustaka Rezki Putra, 2012), p. 148.

⁶ Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid. PP. Muhammadiyah, 'Himpunan Putusan Tarjih' (Suara Muhammadiyah, 2018), p. 253.

⁷ Deutsche Welle (DW), 'Bagaimana Pakistan Ingin Mengakhiri Polemik Hilal', *detiknews* <<https://news.detik.com/dw/d-4540294/bagaimana-pakistan-ingin-mengakhiri-polemik-hilal>>.

The use of different methods in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* month in turn gives rise to differences at the practical level. So, it often happens that according to one method, the beginning of the month falls on the following day, while according to another method the beginning of the month actually falls on the following day (the day after tomorrow). As a result, some groups will start/end their worship on the appointed day, while other groups will only start/end it the following day.

The differences in determination in carrying out worship as stated above in turn have an impact on the attitudes and behavior of Muslim citizens, some accept these differences gracefully, and some persist in the opinions they believe in, giving rise to an attitude of feeling that they are right while others are wrong. The phenomenon that arises due to differences in determining the beginning of this month then has the potential to create divisions among Muslim communities which, if not addressed, could very likely trigger internal conflicts within Muslim communities themselves.

Meanwhile, the government of Indonesia, through the Ministry of Religion, has set a minimum standard for the height of the crescent moon of 3° and an elongation of 6.4 degrees as a guideline in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* month.⁸ Apart from this provision, the government still opens up space for Islamic organizations to use other methods to determine the beginning of the month, such as that used by Persyarikatan Muhammadiyah with its "*wujūd al-hilāl*" concept.⁹ Unfortunately, the establishment of minimum standards has not been linked to the concept of religious moderation, so the emergence of diverse perceptions, attitudes, and tendencies in society become inevitable.

The study of social differences in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* months (lunar calendar) is nothing new in the study of

⁸ The provisions for the beginning of the *Hijriyah* month of at least 3 degrees and elongation of 6.4 degrees were determined by the Minister of Religion Mabims 2016, signed at the 2021 ad-referendum, and have come into effect in Indonesia since 2022. See Kemenag, 'Kemenag Mulai Gunakan Kriteria Baru Hilal Awal Bulan Hijriah', <https://kemenag.go.id> <<https://kemenag.go.id/nasional/kemenag-mulai-gunakan-kriteria-baru-hilal-awal-bulan-hijriah-vuiqwb>>.

⁹ H. Rohmat, 'Penentuan Awal Bulan Qamariyah Menurut Muhammadiyah', *Ijtima'iyya: Jurnal Pengembangan Masyarakat Islam*, 7.1 (2014): 127–48 <<https://doi.org/10.24042/ijpmi.v7i1.921>>.

astronomy. Several previous studies have discussed the same problem, as written by several researchers, including Irfan and Mahyuddin Latuconsina. The two researchers have pointed out that the differences in determining the beginning of the month of Ramadhan, Shawwal, and Zulhijjah, occur due to the absence of single criteria and concepts which then give rise to a dichotomy between the *hisāb* reckoning method and the *ru'yat* (observation) method. Even in the use of *hisāb*, there is no agreement regarding the criteria used.¹⁰ Sakirman, who also discusses the controversy over the use of the *hisāb* and the *ru'yat* methods in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* months in Indonesia, concludes that the emergence of the controversy was caused by the differences in understanding of the *Sharīa dalīl* (legal basis).¹¹ Whereas Wahidin and Nurul Wasilah who also study the same topic concluded that the problem of unifying the *Hijriyah* calendar in Indonesia is caused by differences in understanding the *fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) and astronomy as well.¹²

This research is different from previous studies. In this research, the author tries to offer a solution that can be used as a preventive measure to minimize the impacts that arise in society due to differences in methods/approaches in determining the start of the *Hijriyah* month. The solution in question is the promotion of religious moderation or in other terms is known as moderate Islam or Islamic moderation.

Religious moderation has become a world issue and is one of the important programs of this century. In Indonesia, this concept has become the focus of attention of the Indonesian Government, especially the Ministry of Religion, to build an Indonesia that is peaceful, tolerant, respectful of fellow religious communities, and not fanatical or excessive in practicing religious teachings. The program to strengthen religious moderation was launched to suppress extreme currents and

¹⁰ Irfan Anwar and Mahyuddin Latuconsina, 'Studi Komparasi Kriteria Awal Bulan Kamariah Kalender Fazilet dan Kriteria Mabims', *ELFALAKY: Jurnal Ilmu Falak*, 7.1 (2023): 121–36 <<https://doi.org/10.24252/ifk.v7i1.36469>>.

¹¹ Sakirman, 'Kontroversi Hisab dan Rukyat dalam Menetapkan Awal Bulan Hijriah di Indonesia', *ELFALAKY: Jurnal Ilmu Falak*, 1.1 (2017): 1–14.

¹² Nurul Wasilah Wahidin, "Problematisa Penyatuan Kalender *Hijriyah*," *al-AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak dan Astronomi*, 4.2 (2022): 275–83.

religious fundamentalism, as well as to avoid social disharmony through moderate, inclusive, and open religious methods.¹³ In a broad context, the issue of religious moderation is in line with the determination of the United Nations which designated 2019 as the Year of International Moderation.¹⁴

Research Methods

This type of research is descriptive qualitative field research. The qualitative descriptive format is carried out through case studies which are explored by focusing on certain phenomena that allow for in-depth research. This research aims to obtain an overview of various social conditions or realities in society, especially in Sombaopu District, Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi Province in responding to the differences that occur in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* months. This research attempts to bring social reality to the surface to study the tendencies, nature, and character of a particular community group which has the potential to be divided due to differences in views regarding the determination of the Hijriah calendar, especially those related to the beginning of the month of Ramadhan and Dzul Hijjah.

In the data collection stage, this research uses observation, interview, and documentation techniques as primary data sources. Meanwhile, secondary data is obtained through books, journals, articles, and the like. In this research, there are several approaches that the author uses, namely: (a). normative approach (*shar'i*), namely analyzing problems using studies that are guided by the main sources of Islamic teachings, the Qur'an, and authentic hadiths. b). The astronomical approach is to analyze problems using astronomical terms as references. The approach and ephemeris data/astronomical data are used to carry out initial lunar calculations which have the potential to cause differences. The results of the calculations were then linked to the community's response in

¹³ Agus Akhmadi, "Moderasi Beragama dalam Keragaman Indonesia Religious Moderation in Indonesia's Diversity," *Jurnal Diklat Keagamaan*, 13.2 (2019): 45–55.

¹⁴ Kemenag, 'LHS dan Moderasi Beragama', <https://kemenag.go.id> <<https://kemenag.go.id/opini/lhs-dan-moderasi-beragama-lf0fyj>>.

responding to differences that occurred due to differences in methods for determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* months.

To obtain primary data, in the data collection stage, the researcher used observation, interviews, and documentation techniques, while for secondary data the author obtained it from books, journals, articles, and other similar sources. In this research, there are several approaches that the author uses, namely: (a). normative approach (*shar'i*), namely analyzing problems using studies that are guided by the main sources of Islamic teachings, the Qur'an, and authentic hadiths. b). The astronomical approach is to analyze problems using astronomical terms as references. The approach and ephemeris data/astronomical data are used to carry out initial lunar calculations which have the potential to cause differences. The results of the calculations were then linked to the community's response in responding to differences that occurred due to differences in methods in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* months.

Result and Discussion

Sources of Differences and the Impacts on Society

Astrology has a significant space in Islamic law. The object of astronomy which is related to time and place is one of the prerequisites for the validity of worship. The importance of astronomy has been recognized since the time of the Prophet Muhammad and the basics of its discussion are contained in the al-Qur'an and hadith.¹⁵ In the context of fiqh methodology, the position of astronomy can be placed in the legal position of "*fardhu kifāya*".

As mentioned earlier, two terms in astronomy are used as a reference in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* months, namely *hisāb* (calculation/reckoning) and *ru'yat* (observation). The *hisāb* method is a way to determine the existence of the *Hilāl* (a young crescent moon that can be seen for the first time right after the new moon phase (*ijtimā*)). In

¹⁵ Sayful Mujab and M. Rifa Jamaludin Nasir, 'Ilmu Falak (Dimensi Kajian Filsafat Ilmu)', *al-AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak dan Astronomi*, 2.2 (2020): 1–18 (p. 3) <<https://doi.org/10.20414/afaq.v2i2.2915>>.

contrast to the *hisāb* method, the *ru'yat* method relies more on observing the circulation of the moon as an effort to prove the presence/absence of the new moon. If the crescent moon is successfully seen, then on that night it is determined that the next day will be the beginning of the month (first day) and if you fail to see the new moon then the start of the month will be determined the next day (*istikmāl*).¹⁶

A question that often arises related to this issue is whether the "*hisāb* and *ru'yat*" are provisions of *sharīa* (law) or just a method (*manhaj*). This kind of question arises because of three things. *First*, public knowledge and belief that fasting is a religious obligation (*arkān al-Islām*) that must be carried out in the holy month of Ramadhan. *Second*, People have great hopes to achieve forgiveness, rewards and other virtues that come with the arrival of the holy month of Ramadhan. So, certain attention and preparation is needed to welcome and carry out the obligations of that month. *Third*, there are often differences in determining the start or end of Ramadhan. If the "*hisāb* and *ru'yat*" is seen as *sharīa*, then there is no choice but to implement the existing provisions. But if it falls into the category of method then there is open space for people to use/choose any method. It has become a consensus among the 'ulama that reckoning and rukyat are methods, not *sharīa*. This provision also shows evidence of the breadth of Islamic teachings, that *ru'yat* or reckoning is not the only method, but both can be applied.

Furthermore, two things that cause differences in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* month. Firstly, the differences in *manhaj* or methods. Secondly, the differences in approaches or understanding of the texts (al-Qur'an and Hadith) relating to the beginning of the month of *Hijriyah*. Thomas Jamaluddin, as quoted Yulia Ramadhani dan Rahma Amir, another factor causing differences, namely differences in criteria.¹⁷

¹⁶ Misbah Khusurur, 'Perpaduan Hisab dan Rukyat Sebagai Metode Penentuan Awal Bulan Hijriyah', *Jurnal al-Wasith: Jurnal Studi Hukum Islam*, 5.2 (2020): 150–61 <<https://doi.org/10.52802/wst.v5i2.76>>.

¹⁷ Yulia Rahmadani Hidayah and Rahma Amir, 'Pandangan MUI Terkait Perbedaan Penetapan 1 Syawal 1444 H di Indonesia', *ELFALAKY: Jurnal Ilmu Falak*, 7.1 (2023): 89–104 (p. 100) <<https://doi.org/10.24252/ifk.v7i1.37768>>.

To provide a clear picture of how the differences in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* month occur, the author presents an example of calculating the beginning of the *Hijriyah* month using the *hisāb haqīqī* method which is based on the concepts of *wujūd al-hilāl* and *imkān al-ru'yat*.

Calculation of the Hilal's Height on 1 Ramadhan 1444 H/2023 AD in Makassar

1. *Ijtima'* on March 22, 2023, at 01.26.45 WITA

a. Location Data:

- 1) Latitude of place (p) = -50 8' S
- 2) Regional Longitude (BD) = 120⁰
- 3) Longitude of place (Bt) = 119⁰27' T
- 4) Height of Markaz (TM) = + 20 M
- 5) Sun Height (h) = -1⁰

b. Astronomical Data:

- 1) Declination (d) of the sun = 00 36' 08"
- 2) Time leveler (e) = -00 6' 57"

2. Time angle of the Sun at sunset

Formula : $\text{Cos } t = -\tan p \cdot \tan d + \sin h : \cos p \cdot \cos d$

$$= -\tan -50 \text{ 8}' \times \tan 00 \text{ 36}' \text{ 08}'' + \sin -10 : \cos -508' \\ : \cos 00 \text{ 36}' \text{ 08}''$$

$$= -0.016579395$$

$$t = 90^{\circ}56'59.9''$$

3. Sunset

a. $90^{\circ}56'59.9'' : 15$ (converted into hours) = $06^{\circ} 03' 47.99''$

b. Culmination of the sun

$$12 - e = 12 - (-0^{\circ} 6' 57'') = 12^{\circ} 06' 57''$$

c. Adjustment with WITA (kwd)

$$\text{BD} - \text{Bt} = 120^{\circ} - 119^{\circ}24' = 0^{\circ}36' : 15 = 0^{\circ} 02' 24'' +$$

$$\text{Total} = 18^{\text{h}} 13^{\text{m}} 8.99^{\text{s}}$$

4. GMT Hour Difference = $\frac{8^h}{10^h 13^m 8.99^s}$ -
5. Right Ascension (AR) of the Sun and the Moon (Apparent Right Ascension)
- a. AR. Sun: at 10 o'clock GMT = $1^0 23' 22''$
 Interpolation; at 11 o'clock GMT = $1^0 25' 38''$
 at 10 o'clock GMT = $1^0 23' 22''$ -
 $0^0 2'16'' \times 0^0 13'8.99''$ = $\frac{0^0 0' 29.81''}{1^0 23' 51.81''} +$
- b. AR. Moon, at 10 o'clock GMT = $10^0 44' 49''$
 Interpolation; at 11 o'clock GMT = $11^0 16' 37''$
 at 10 o'clock GMT = $10^0 44' 49''$
 $0^0 31'48'' \times 0013'8.99''$ = $\frac{0^0 6' 58.16''}{10^0 51' 47.16''} +$
6. Time Angle (t) and Moon Declination
 Formula; t month = AR.Sun - AR Bualn + tSun
 = $1^0 23' 51.81'' - 10^0 51' 47.16'' + 90^0 56' 59.9''$
 t = $81^0 29' 4.55''$
7. Declination of the Moon
 Interpolation; at 11 o'clock GMT = $2^0 38' 53''$
 at 10 o'clock GMT = $2^0 22' 09''$
 $0^0 16' 44'' \times 0^0 13'8.99''$ = $\frac{0^0 3' 40.04''}{2^0 25' 49.04''} +$
8. Real Height/True Hilal
 Formula; Sin h = sin p. sin d + cos p. cos d. cos t
 = $\sin -508' \times \sin 20 25' 49.04'' + \cos -50 8' \times \cos$
 $20 25' 49.04'' \times \cos 810 29' 4.55''$
 = 0.143554697
 h = $8^0 15' 12.94''$

The calculation results of the *hilāl's* height carried out using the astronomical calculations above show the height of the *hilāl* at a position

of 8° above the horizon. The result of this calculation contains two important things. *Firstly*, the position of the *hilāl* meets the criteria for the *wujūd al-hilāl* which requires that the position of the *hilāl* must be above the horizon. *Secondly*, the position of the *hilāl* at that time also met the *imkān al-ru'yat* criteria which requires that the new moon can be seen if its minimum height is 3° above the horizon. Because these two requirements are met, the beginning of the month of Ramadan in 1444 H/2023 AD can be determined to be the following day (March 23, 2023). In this way, Ramadhan fasting can be carried out simultaneously by all Muslims in Indonesia.

A different picture, however, occurs in the second calculation, namely in determining the beginning of the month of Shawwal 1444 AH/2023 AD which also marks the end of the fasting month/Ramadan. The results of astronomical calculations for the beginning of the month of Shawwal 1444 AH/2023 AD show the following picture.

Calculation of the *Hilāl's* height for Shawwal 1, 1444 H / 2023 AD in Makassar

1. Ijtima to the end of Ramadhan 1444 H on April 20 2023 M., at 12.15.48 WITA
 - a. Location Data:
 - 1) Latitude of place (p) = $-50^{\circ} 8'$ S
 - 2) Regional Longitude (BD) = 1200
 - 3) Longitude of place (Bt) = $119027'$ T
 - 4) Height of Markaz (TM) = + 20 M
 - 5) Sun Height (h) = -10
 - b. Astronomical Data:
 - 1) Declination (d) of the sun = $110^{\circ} 29' 48''$
 - 2) Time leveler (e) = $00^{\circ} 1' 1''$
2. Time angle of the Sun at sunset

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Formula: } \cos t &= -\tan p. \tan d + \sin h : \cos p. \cos d \\ &= -\tan -50^{\circ} 8' \times \tan 110^{\circ} 29' 48'' + \sin -10 : \cos -50^{\circ} 8' : \cos 110^{\circ} 29' 48'' \end{aligned}$$

$$= -0.0003900492367$$

$$t = 89058'39.55''$$

3. Sunset

a. $89^{\circ} 58' 39.55''$: 15 (converted into hours) = $5^{\circ} 59' 54.64''$

b. Culmination of the sun
 $12 - e = 12 - 00' 1' 1''$ = $11^{\circ} 58' 59''$

c. Adjustment with WITA (kwd)
 $BD - Bt = 120^{\circ} - 119024' = 0^{\circ} 36' : 15$ = $\frac{0^{\circ} 02' 24''}{10^h 1^m 17.64^s}$ +
 Total = $18^h 1^m 17.64^s$

4. GMT Hour Difference = $\frac{8^h}{10^h 1^m 17.64^s}$

5. Right Ascension (AR) of the Sun and Moon (Apparent Right Ascension)

a. AR. Sun: 10 o'clock GMT = $27^{\circ} 58' 44''$

Interpolation: at 11 o'clock GMT = $28^{\circ} 01' 04''$

at 10 o'clock GMT = $27^{\circ} 58' 44''$ -

$0^{\circ} 2' 20'' \times 0^{\circ} 1' 17.64'' = \frac{0^{\circ} 0' 3.02''}{27^{\circ} 58' 47.02''}$ +

b. AR. Moon, 10 o'clock GMT = $30^{\circ} 56' 38''$

Interpolation: at 11 o'clock GMT = $31^{\circ} 28' 30''$

at 10 o'clock GMT = $30^{\circ} 56' 38''$ -

$0^{\circ} 31' 52'' \times 0^{\circ} 1' 17.64'' = \frac{0^{\circ} 0' 41.24''}{30^{\circ} 57' 19.24''}$ +

6. Time Angle (t) and Moon Declination

Formula: t month = AR. Sun - AR Moon + t Sun

= $27^{\circ} 58' 47.02'' - 30^{\circ} 57' 19.24'' + 89^{\circ} 58' 39.55''$

t = $87^{\circ} 0' 7.33''$

7. Declination of the Moon

Interpolation: at 11 o'clock GMT = $12^{\circ} 43' 35''$

at 10 o'clock GMT = $12^{\circ} 28' 59''$ -

$0^{\circ} 14' 36'' \times 0^{\circ} 1' 17.64'' = \frac{0^{\circ} 0' 18.89''}{12^{\circ} 29' 17.89''}$ +

8. Real Height of the True *Hilāl*

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Formula: } \sin h &= \sin p. \sin d + \cos p. \cos d. \cos t \\
 &= \sin -508' \times \sin 120 29' 17.89'' + \cos -50 8' \times \cos \\
 &\quad 120 29' 17.89'' \times \cos 870 0' 7.33'' \\
 &= 0.031510412 \\
 h &= 1^\circ 48' 20.57''
 \end{aligned}$$

From the results of the calculations above, it can be seen that the height of the *hilāl* on the date of determination (April 20, 2023, at 12.15.48 WITA) was at position 1° above the horizon. The height of the *hilāl* at that position, according to the *wujūd al-hilāl* proponents, has met the requirements to be designated as a sign of the beginning of the new month. In other words, the position of the *hilāl* is above the horizon means the month of Ramadhan ended and tomorrow will be 1st day of Shawwal (*Eid al-Fitr*).

For the group that adheres to the *imkān al-ru'yat*, however, the height of the *hilāl* at the position of 1° makes it impossible to observe; because the moon can only be seen when it is at a minimum height of 3° above the horizon. As a result, for groups who adhere to *ru'yat*, this situation requires the number of days in the month of Ramadhan to be added to 30 days (*istikmāl*), which means that the next day Muslims still have to fast, and only stop after the following day. This situation then results in differences among Muslims, where one group celebrates *Eid al-Fitr*, while the other group is still fasting.

The responses of the people of Sombaopu, Gowa Regency, and South Sulawesi, especially among ordinary people, to the differences in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* month vary. It does not stop at the cognitive level only but also touches on the level of attitudes and behavior that take the form of fanaticism and group chauvinism. Each group believes that their position is correct, while the others are wrong, thus creating barriers between one community group and another. One party felt that his peace of worship was disturbed because the people around him were eating/drinking freely, while the second party did this because they believed that fasting on holidays was *harām* (forbidden).

Such is the picture of what is happening among the Muslim community of Sombaopu, Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi,¹⁸ a social phenomenon that repeats itself every time differences arise in deciding the beginning of the *Hijriyah* months. Even though so far there has never been an open conflict among local communities due to the differences. It requires a solution so that the tension/separation among internal Muslims can be ended. If this gap continues to occur, one day it may develop into conflict. Thus, an appropriate solution should be found to prevent the confusion from developing into an unmanageable situation. In this context, preventive measures are needed that can suppress or even eliminate potential conflicts. Related to this interest, the author offers an alternative solution known as religious moderation; a concept, according to one Sombaopu community leader, is believed to be effective in preventing conflict as well as suppressing radicalism among Muslim communities.¹⁹

The term moderation comes from the Latin *moderateio* which means moderate attitude. In English, the word moderation is used in several meanings, including average, standard, core, and impartial. In the Big Indonesian Dictionary, the word moderation is defined as avoiding violence or avoiding extremes.²⁰ In Arabic, the word usually used to mean moderation is *wast* or *wasathiyyah*.²¹ This word has equivalent words with the words *ta'adul*, *tawāsuth*, and *tawāzun* which means a balance or a middle way between two different things.²² In the Qur'an the word *wasathiyyah* can be found in surah al-Baqarah (2): 143.

According to Rasyid Rida, moderation can be translated as "a middle way between two options".²³ Meanwhile, Sheikh Raghīb al-Ashfahani calls moderation the middle point, not too far to the right (*ifrāth*) and

¹⁸ Muhlis Dg. Tojeng, determining the beginning of the Hijriyah month vary, Interview, 2022.

¹⁹ Yusuf Hakim, effective in preventing conflict, Interview, 2022.

²⁰ See Shagan, Ethan H. *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England*. (Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 73-149.

²¹ Quraish Shihab, "Wasathiyyah Wawasan Islam Tentang Moderasi Beragama," *Tangerang Selatan: Lentera Hati*, 2019, p. 112.

²² Yūsuf al-Qarādhāwī, *Kalimat Fi Al-Wasathiyyah al-Islāmiyyah Wa Maālimihā* (Kaherah: Dār al-Shuruq, 2011), p. 5

²³ M.R., Ridha', *Tafsīr al-Manār* (Beirūt: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1999), p. 134.

not too far to the left (*tafrīth*) which contains the meaning of priority, equality, and justice.²⁴ By referring to the meanings above, moderation can be understood as a middle perspective, attitude, and behavior by showing a balance between individual religious experiences and other people's beliefs.

Furthermore, the concept of religious moderation has emerged in the world of Islamic thought over the last two decades and has become an important issue among Muslims, especially in Indonesia. The emergence of the term moderation has become a new approach to understanding and implementing religious teachings or messages, as well as an antithesis to radical tendencies that perceive religious teachings through an extreme approach.²⁵ The understanding can also be understood as the formation of a paradigm and attitude of tolerance within the framework of nationalism.

As Nur Syam emphasized, every religion teaches the value of moderation, because religion is a teaching of goodness that promises balance in life for its adherents as well as harmonious relationships with the people around them. Every religion upholds the values of equality, justice, honesty, and compassion. No religion teaches or encourages its adherents to be violent and excessive in their behavior.²⁶ In line with this statement, Quraish Shihab emphasized that differences are inevitable but meeting and unity must still be realized.²⁷ He further explained that humans are given the freedom by God to choose and determine the course of their lives, including the religion they adhere to. But freedom does not mean being free to choose which teachings to implement and which to abandon/reject, because God did not reveal a religion to be discussed by humans to accept teachings that are

²⁴ Raghīb al-Ashfahani, *al-Mufradāt Fi Gharīb al-Qurān*, (Kairo: Dār al-Jauzi, 2012), p. 653.

²⁵ Amin Rauf, *Konstruksi Islam Moderat*, Cet. 1 (Yogyakarta: ICATT Press, 2012), p. 45.

²⁶ Nur Syam, 'Islam Nusantara Berkemajuan: Tantangan dan Upaya Moderasi Beragama' (unpublished Pidato Pengukuhan Guru Besar, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel, Surabaya, 2022), p. 5.

²⁷ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Misbah (Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian al-Qur'an*, IV (Ciputat Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2005), p. 648.

considered appropriate and reject those that are not appropriate. Religion is a complete package, rejection of one part results in rejection of the entire package.²⁸

According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2010 as quoted by Rusydiah at the Research and Development and Training Agency of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion, the total number of tribes and sub-tribes in Indonesia was recorded at 1,331 tribes.²⁹ This fact also indicates that the Government and society need to construct a tolerant and elegant way of religious life so that all components of the nation can live in a harmonious, peaceful, and harmonious atmosphere within the framework of national unity and unity. For the Indonesian people, diversity of religions, ethnicities, languages, and customs must be accepted as destiny, not asked for but a gift from God the Almighty Creator to be accepted and not to be bargained for. That is why efforts have been made in the world of education to instill a spirit of moderation, starting from the lowest level of education, kindergarten. from childhood³⁰ to higher education to familiarize students with implementing religious moderation policies.³¹

Religious moderation builds an attitude of mutual understanding, mutual respect and not doing things that are normatively contrary to basic religious instructions or regulations.³² This principle is important, considering that the unity of the Ummah is the pillar of strength of the Muslim community. As part of the Indonesian people, Indonesian Muslims must foster an attitude of tolerance, mutual understanding, cooperation, and help among fellow components of the nation to create

²⁸ M. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Mizan, 2000), p. 368.

²⁹ Mhd Abror, 'Moderasi Beragama dalam Bingkai Toleransi: Moderasi Beragama dalam Bingkai Toleransi', *RUSYDIAH: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 1.2 (2020): 143–55 <<https://doi.org/10.35961/rsd.v1i2.174>>.

³⁰ Abdul Qowim, Yuni Suprpto, and Dany Miftah M. Nur, 'Upaya Guru dalam Menanamkan Nilai-Nilai Moderasi Beragama di Tangerang Tambakromo-Pati', *Tunas Nusantara*, 2.2 (2020): 242–48 <<https://doi.org/10.34001/jtn.v2i2.1507>>.

³¹ Abdul Rosyid, 'Moderasi Beragama di Lingkungan Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan', *Tarbawi: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Pendidikan Islam*, 5.2 (2022): 101–10 <<https://doi.org/10.51476/tarbawi.v5i2.388>>.

³² Ilham Hamid, Policy of Implementing Religious Moderation, interview, 2022.

an atmosphere of peace, harmony, and harmony within the framework of the unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Moreover, religious moderation can also be used as a solution to prevent the emergence of radical and extreme thoughts in understanding religious teachings. Through this program, all components of the nation are directed to build unity and brotherhood among the nation's children and open space for dialogue amidst ethnic and religious plurality and diversity. As a form of perspective in religion, religious moderation is believed to be able to educate people to become Muslims who are patient, wise, and tolerant, who believe in the absolutism of their religion but do not despise or demean the religious beliefs of others. Thus, the idea of realizing religious moderation is very important as an effort to mobilize social forces to maintain harmony in society.

In the context of responding to differences in methods in determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* month, religious moderation can also direct each individual to respect each other and understand each other's choices in carrying out religious commands with a comprehensive, not partial, understanding. Islamic Sharia has made it easy for people to carry out various rituals of worship and *wasilah* according to their level and context. The differences in determining the start of the *Hijriyah* month, especially the months of Ramadhan, Shawwal, and Zulhijjah for the Sombaopu Muslim community, Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi, must be accepted as part of the dynamics of the religious life of the local community. However, unity, brotherhood, and harmonious social relations must remain the main concern and must take priority. Maintaining unity over diversity of opinions, beliefs, and social status must remain a top priority collectively and comprehensively. In this atmosphere, differences in society will not hinder the realization of peace, unity, brotherhood, and harmonization of national and state life.

Finally, it must be acknowledged that exemplary factors, fair attitudes, and wisdom from policymakers will have a major influence on the success of enforcing the principles of religious moderation in society. The Government, therefore, the government must base every policy on the principles of truth, justice, equality, and togetherness.

Conclusion

The reality of religious life in Indonesia creates many differences, both in the context of social relations (*mu'amalah*) and in matters of worship. One of these differences is related to the way of determining the beginning of the *Hijriyah* month, especially at the beginning of the months of Ramadhan, Shawwal, and Zulhijjah. The people of Sombaopu District respond to these differences in different ways, ranging from passive to extreme (fanatic). To prevent the emergence of social conflict, it is necessary to find an alternative solution so that unity, brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*), and tolerance between fellow Muslims can be maintained amidst differences in the implementation of worship. In this context, the concept of religious moderation, which is currently becoming a priority program of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, can be an alternative solution to realize a conducive, safe, harmonious, and mutual respect in national life among Indonesian.

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