



IKHTIYAT IN THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF ASTRONOMY FIQH: AN INTEGRATION OF CONSERVATISM AND CONTEXTUALISM

Ahmad Fauzi

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia
ahmad.fauzi@uin.suka.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The determination of the beginning of the Hijri month, especially in the context of Ramadan, Shawwal and Dhul Hijjah, is a crucial issue that often triggers differences of opinion among Indonesian Muslims. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), through its Falakiyah Institute, uses a unique approach in determining the beginning of the month, namely by prioritising the principle of *ikhtiyath* (prudence). This principle is not only rooted in technical astronomical considerations, but also relies strongly on the rules of ushul fiqh and considerations of public good. This study aims to examine the concept of *ikhtiyath* theoretically in the perspective of Islamic fiqh and analyse its application in the practice of determining the beginning of the month by Falakiyah NU contextually. This research uses a qualitative method based on literature study on relevant writings and uses descriptive analysis. The results of this study found that *ikhtiyath* is an important methodological basis in maintaining the validity of worship and social religious stability, especially regarding the determination of the beginning of the lunar month. This finding confirms that NU's Falakiyah approach is not merely conservative, but has epistemological and contextual relevance in responding to modern religious challenges.

Keywords: *Ikhtiyat*, LFNU, Hijri month, Hisab, Rukyat

A. Introduction

The determination of the beginning of the Hijriyah month, especially important months such as Ramadan, Shawwal and Dhul Hijjah, is a crucial issue that concerns the simultaneous and legal implementation of Muslim worship (Fauzi, 2017). In the Indonesian context, the dynamics of determining the beginning of the month often lead to differences of opinion, both between organisations and between organisations and the government. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), through its Falakiyah Institute (formerly Lajnah Falakiyah), plays an important role in the determination process with a distinctive approach based on fiqh rules and the principle of prudence (*ikhtiyath*) (Ulum, 2021). The concept of *ikhtiyath* is one of NU's methodological foundations in deciding when Muslims start and end fasting or Eid, not solely based on mathematical hisab, but also considering rukyat and aspects of the people's benefit.

The principle of *ikhtiyath* in determining the beginning of the month of NU can be seen that if the hilal is not visible during observation, NU tends to complete the month to 30 days (*istikmal*). The stipulation is to avoid the possibility of a lack of days in a month (28 days), which is considered not in accordance with sharia. For example, if the hilal is not seen at the end of the month of Dhulqadah, then Dhulqadah is increased to 30 days, and the next day is set as the beginning of the month of Dhulhijjah (Izzuddin, 2007). In addition, the National Deliberation of Alim Ulama of Nahdlatul Ulama stated that if the Government's determination of the beginning of Ramadan and the beginning of Shawwal is only based on hisab, then it is not obligatory to follow it. This is because according to the majority of salaf, the proof of the beginning of Ramadan and the beginning of Shawwal is only *birru'yah or itmamil adadi salašina yauman* (MUNAS NU, 1985). Nahdlatul Ulama's determination of the beginning of the lunar month, especially the beginning of Ramadan, Shawwal, and Zulhijah, as written by KH. A. Ghazalie Masroeri is through four stages, namely first, the stage of making hisab calculations; second, organising *ru'yah al-hilāl bil fi'li*; third, participating in the isbat session; fourth, *ikhbar* (Masroeri, 2011).

The baḥsul masāil ad-diniyah al-waqi'iyah Commission session of the NU XXXIV Congress in Lampung decided three important points: 1) *imkān al-ru'yah* can be a condition for accepting rukyat testimony when five different qaṭ'i astronomical methods determine that the hilal is visible. 2) When the moon is still below the horizon, the ruling of *ru'yah al-hilāl* is no longer farḍu kifayah or sunnah. 3) when based on the calculation of falak science *istikmal* results in the next month being only 28 years old, then falak science can be a reference to cancel or deny *istikmal* (LF-PBNU, 2022).

The problems that arise in determining the beginning of the Hijri month in Indonesia are not only astronomical technical in nature, but also touch the social realm. Differences in decisions between Islamic organisations such as NU and

Muhammadiyah, or even with government decisions, often cause confusion and potential divisions in the community (Fauzi, 2019). In this context, the *ikhtiyath* approach used by the NU Falakiyah Institute (LFNU) is interesting to be studied, because it prioritises the principle of prudence in order to maintain the validity of worship and the benefit of the people. However, there have not been many studies that deeply unravel the epistemological roots of *ikhtiyath* in the fiqh tradition and how this principle is practised in making falakiyah decisions contextually. Therefore, this research is important to bridge the understanding between classical fiqh reasoning and contemporary socio-religious dynamics, while strengthening the legitimacy of the LFNU's approach in the Indonesian Islamic public sphere.

The LFNU is an institution under the NU organisational structure that has authority in the field of hisab and rukyat, especially related to the determination of the beginning of the Hijri month (LFNU, 2006a). This institution functions as a centre for falakiyah studies and decision-making based on a combinative method between classical fiqh traditions and modern astronomical data. In practice, LFNU does not solely rely on the results of hisab calculations, but strongly emphasises the importance of rukyat (direct observation) of the crescent moon as a form of implementation of the principle of *ikhtiyath* (prudence). This approach is intended to maintain the validity of worship and avoid mistakes in determining the times of worship that are mahdhah (Masroeri, 2011). Therefore, LFNU plays an important role in maintaining NU's religious authority while providing accurate and maslahat religious guidance for Indonesian Muslims.

The concept of *ikhtiyath* according to LFNU is understood as the principle of prudence in determining the beginning of the Hijriyah month in order to maintain the validity of Muslim worship and avoid violations of Sharia. In the context of falakiyah, *ikhtiyath* is applied by not *rushing* to determine the entry of the new month based solely on mathematical hisab, but by waiting for confirmation of *rukyat bil fi'li* (direct observation of the hilal) in accordance with the tradition of the Shafi'i school of thought adopted by NU (LFNU, 2006b). If the hilal has not been sighted, even though it is above the horizon by hisab, then the determination of the beginning of the month is deferred as a form of *ikhtiyath*, with the aim of escaping the possibility of khilaf and error. For the LFNU, this approach not only has a fiqh dimension, but also reflects a commitment to the benefit of the ummah, maintaining social unity, and strengthening religious legitimacy in society.

The determination of the beginning of the Hijriyah month according to the LFNU is done through a combination of hisab and rukyat methods, with an emphasis on rukyat as the main basis in line with the principle of *ikhtiyath*. LFNU uses hisab to determine the possibility of sighting the hilal (*imkan rukyat*), but the final decision still depends on the results of direct observation in the field (LFNU, 2006b). If the hilal is not visible even though the hisab fulfils the criteria, then NU

still completes the month to 30 days, as a form of caution so that people's worship does not fall into the area of shubhat. This principle shows that NU considers not only astronomical technical aspects, but also fiqh values, shar'i prudence, and the social stability of the ummah. Thus, this approach places LFNU as a religious authority that maintains a balance between modern science and the principles of classical Islamic law in determining the time of worship.

According to the LFNU, hisab and rukyat are not two conflicting methods, but two complementary instruments in determining the beginning of the Hijriyah month. Hisab is used as a tool to predict the possibility of hilal sighting and determine the exact coordinates and time of observation, while rukyat remains the main method used as the basis for decision making. LFNU rejects the use of hisab hakiki or hisab imkan rukyat as the sole basis for determining the beginning of the month without direct rukyat verification, because it is considered contrary to the principle of *ikhtiyath* and fiqh rules adopted by the majority of Shafi'iyah scholars. In NU's view, rukyat provides stronger shar'i validity because it is based on the proposition of the nash and the practice of the Prophet SAW, while hisab serves as a reinforcement and support in ensuring the technical accuracy of hilal observation. This approach shows that LFNU is not anti-science, but places modern astrology within a fiqh framework that is cautious and benefit-orientated.

This research uses a qualitative method with a *library research* approach and descriptive analysis, because the focus of the study lies on understanding the concept of *ikhtiyath* theoretically within the framework of ushul fiqh and its implementation in NU Falakiyah practice. The selection of this method is based on the characteristics of the object of research which is normative-conceptual and requires tracing classic and contemporary texts, such as ushul fiqh books, fatwas of NU Falakiyah, as well as official documents on the results of rukyat and hisab sessions. This approach also allows researchers to analyse the socio-religious dynamics behind the application of the principle of *ikhtiyath*, especially in the face of differences in determining the beginning of the month in society. With this method, it is hoped that the research will be able to capture in depth both the theoretical dimensions and contextual practices of the prudential attitude carried out by the NU Falakiyah Institute. The data collection technique in this research was carried out through documentation studies, namely by reviewing various relevant literature. The data analysis technique used is content analysis, namely by identifying, interpreting, and constructing meaning from various sources to find patterns, arguments, and the relevance of the concept of *ikhtiyath* in NU Falakiyah theory and practice.

Previous studies on the determination of the beginning of the Hijriyah month generally focus more on the comparison between the methods of hisab and rukyat, both in terms of astronomical technicalities and legal aspects of fiqh, such as studies conducted by (Rijal, 2019) which compares the methods of NU and

Muhammadiyah, and by (Qulub & Munif, 2023) which focuses on the role of the government in unifying the determination of the beginning of the month through the isbat session. In addition, there are also studies on the LFNU that discuss the history, structure, and methodology of the hisab-rukyat used, but not many have specifically raised the principle of *ikhtiyath* as the main focus of the study. This study is different because it highlights *ikhtiyath* not merely as an attitude of practical prudence, but as an epistemological and methodological foundation that shapes the characteristics of the LFNU's decisions. Using a theoretical and contextual approach, this research seeks to explore the normative roots of *ikhtiyath* in the khazanah of ushul fiqh and see how the concept is implemented in contemporary socio-religious reality in Indonesia.

Exploring the normative roots of *ikhtiyath* in the ushul fiqh literature shows that the principle of prudence has a strong basis in the classical Islamic legal tradition, especially in the context of ta'abbudi worship. *Ikhtiyath* is understood as an effort to get out of doubt (*syakk*) and avoid the possibility of falling into legal errors, as explained in fiqhiyah rules such as "*al-khurūj min al-khilāf mustahabb*" (getting out of differences is something that is recommended) and "*dar'ul mafāsīd muqaddam 'alā jalbil maṣāliḥ*" (rejecting damage takes precedence over achieving benefits). In the Shafi'i school of thought adopted by NU, *ikhtiyath* is strictly applied in time-related acts of worship, including the determination of the beginning of the fasting month and holidays. Therefore, in the context of determining the beginning of the Hijriyah month, *ikhtiyath* becomes a principle that is not only of practical value, but also theological, because it departs from the commitment to maintain the validity of people's worship and avoid violations of shar'i that can occur due to haste in determining the time of worship.

Research on the concept of *ikhtiyath* in determining the beginning of the Hijriyah month by the LFNU is important because it touches a fundamental aspect of Muslim religious practice, namely the timeliness of mahdhah and collective worship. In the midst of the development of a rational-modern approach in determining the Islamic calendar, this study aims to reaffirm the epistemological and normative basis of the prudential attitude held by NU, and show its relevance in responding to contemporary challenges, such as differences in hisab-rukyat methods and social dynamics. The purpose of this study is to reveal how *ikhtiyath* is formulated in the ushul fiqh framework, and how the principle is implemented contextually by the LFNU in making falakiyah decisions.

B. The Concept of *Ikhtiyath* in the Perspective of Ushul Fiqh and Jurisprudence of Worship

The concept of *ikhtiyath* in the perspective of ushul fiqh is the principle of prudence applied in law making, especially in conditions of doubt (*syakk*) or the potential for differences of opinion (*khilāf*) (Sholeh, 2024). In the rules of ushul fiqh, *ikhtiyath* functions as a preventive mechanism to maintain the validity of

worship and avoid violations of shar'i law, as confirmed in the rule "*al-khurūj min al-khilāf mustahabb*" (getting out of differences of opinion is something that is recommended) (Mahfudh, 2003). This principle is often used in matters related to the timing of worship, such as prayer, fasting, and Hajj, where punctuality is a condition of validity (Yani & Fahmy, 2019). The Shafi'i school of thought pays particular attention to *ikhtiyath*, especially in the context of mahdhah worship, and emphasises that in doubtful circumstances, it is safer to delay or avoid performance until legal clarity is obtained (Alimuddin, 2012). Therefore, *ikhtiyath* is not only a practical precaution, but also an ethical and jurisprudential approach that is deeply rooted in the ushul fiqh framework..

In the perspective of the fiqh of worship, the concept of *ikhtiyath* (prudence) is understood as a vigilant attitude in carrying out worship so that its implementation does not go beyond the limits set by the Sharia, especially when there is doubt in fulfilling the conditions or pillars (Ayatullah, 2018). *Ikhtiyath* becomes important in *ta'abbudi* worship, such as prayer, fasting, and hajj, because these aspects of worship are very dependent on the time and accuracy of implementation which cannot be replaced by mere estimation (Masroeri, 2011). For example, in the case of fasting Ramadan, when there is doubt about the entry of a new month, the more cautious opinion is to complete the month of Sha'ban to 30 days, as taught in the Prophetic tradition. This approach is widely adopted by scholars of the Shafi'i school of thought, which is the main reference for fiqh in the Nahdlatul Ulama tradition. Therefore, *ikhtiyath* in the fiqh of worship is not only a form of personal prudence, but also a collective basis in maintaining the validity of the worship of the people at large, including in determining the beginning of the Hijriyah month (Ayatullah, 2018).

The concept of *ikhtiyath* in mahdhah worship is a form of caution in carrying out ritual worship that has strict time requirements and procedures, such as prayer, fasting, and hajj. The evidence that is the basis for this concept includes the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, "Leave what doubts you to what does not doubt you" (HR Tirmidzi and Nasa'i), which shows the recommendation to avoid doubts in religious matters. In practice, *ikhtiyath* is applied, for example, when there is doubt about the beginning of Ramadan, it is recommended to complete the month of Sha'ban to 30 days as a form of caution so that fasting is not done prematurely. Similarly, in prayer, if someone is in doubt about the number of rak'ahs, then he takes the least number as a form of *ikhtiyath*. This implementation shows that *ikhtiyath* functions as a shar'i protection so that the worship performed is not in vain or void, and reflects the principle of a Muslim's spiritual responsibility for the validity of his worship (Muslifah, 2020). The concept of *ikhtiyath* has a strong correlation with the *rukyat* method in determining the beginning of the Hijri month, especially in the context of time-related worship, such as fasting and holidays. *Ikhtiyath*, as the principle of

prudence in Islamic law, encourages not to determine the entry of the new month unless a strong conviction has been reached, one of which is through direct rukyat testimony of the hilal (ZUHRI, 2017). In this case, rukyat is considered the most valid form of implementation of *ikhtiyath*, because it has the basis of the Prophet's hadith which states, "Fasting you for seeing the moon and breaking your fast for seeing the moon" (HR. Bukhari and Muslim). Therefore, in the Nahdlatul Ulama tradition, although hisab is used as a technical predictive tool, the final decision still awaits the results of rukyat, as a form of shar'i prudence so that worship is not performed prematurely. This correlation shows that rukyat is not only a method of astronomical observation, but also an embodiment of the commitment of *ikhtiyath* to maintain the validity and harmony of people's worship.

C. Implementation of *Ikhtiyath* in the Practice of LFNU

The implementation of *ikhtiyath* in the practice of the LFNU is clearly reflected in their cautious attitude in determining the beginning of the Hijriyah month, especially Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhulhijjah. LFNU does not immediately determine the beginning of the month based only on the results of hisab, even though the hilal is above the horizon, but still awaits the results of rukyat *bil fi'li* (direct observation) as a form of shar'i prudence. If the hilal is not visible due to weather or other technical factors, then LFNU chooses to complete the current month to 30 days, as an *ikhtiyath* step so that there is no error in the implementation of worship. This practice is based on the principle of getting out of doubt and avoiding disputes, in accordance with the rule of *al-khurūj min al-khilāf mustahabb* and the Prophet's hadith about seeing the hilal. Thus, *ikhtiyath* in LFNU is not just a conservative attitude, but a methodological approach that maintains the validity of worship while upholding the principles of harmony and the benefit of the people.

The rejection of the use of hisab results alone without being supported by rukyat in determining the beginning of the Hijri month by the LFNU is an integral part of the application of the principle of *ikhtiyath* (prudence) in worship. Although hisab is able to calculate the position of the hilal accurately, NU considers that hisab alone is not sufficient to achieve the level of confidence (*yaqin*) required in starting fasting or celebrating holidays. Therefore, rukyat as a form of direct observation is used as a shar'i verification of the results of hisab, in accordance with the Prophet's command to "fast because you see the hilal." In the context of *ikhtiyath*, rejecting the results of hisab without rukyat means avoiding the risk of premature entry of the new moon, which can cancel worship or violate the Shari'ah. This attitude reflects prudence in maintaining the validity of the time of worship and avoiding the area of shubhat, while showing respect for the fiqhiyah tradition that makes rukyat a legal-formal means of determining the time of worship collectively.

In the practice of the LFNU, the determination of the beginning of Ramadan and Shawwal does not only rely on direct sighting of the hilal, but also considers the concept of *imkan rukyat*, which is the possibility of the hilal to be seen objectively based on certain criteria. NU accepts the results of hisab as a tool to determine when the hilal *may be visible*, but still makes rukyat the final requirement in decision making. The *imkan rukyat* criteria used by NU generally follow the MABIMS parameters, namely a minimum hilal height of 3 degrees with an elongation of at least 6.4 degrees (Karim & Mahsun, 2024). However, even if the hisab shows that the hilal meets these criteria, LFNU still awaits the results of factual rukyat reports from various monitoring points in Indonesia. With this approach, LFNU tries to maintain a balance between acceptance of the advancement of astronomical science and commitment to the principle of *ikhtiyath* in the fiqh of worship, so that the decisions taken are not only scientifically valid, but also syar'i sound.

The use of the principle of *ikhtiyath* becomes very significant when there is a failure of rukyat or *ghayr tamakkun*, which is a condition where the hilal is hisabically above the horizon but cannot be seen due to weather or other technical factors. In this situation, the LFNU tends to take a precautionary step by completing the previous month to 30 days, instead of immediately setting the beginning of the new month based on hisab alone. This attitude is based on the *fiqhiyah* rule "*al-yaqin la yazulu bisy-syakk*" (belief cannot be eliminated by doubt), so as long as there is no valid rukyat testimony, the belief that the old month is still ongoing is maintained. This approach reflects NU's commitment to shar'i validity in determining the time of worship and at the same time prevents the practice of worship that is potentially invalid or invalid because of the entry of uncertain time. Thus, *ikhtiyath* in the context of *ghayr tamakkun* is a form of religious responsibility that is not only based on calculations, but also upholds the principle of prudence in maintaining the purity of people's worship.

D. A Contextual Analysis of the Decision of the NU Falakiyah Institute

Contextual analysis of the LFNU's decision shows that the application of the principle of *ikhtiyath* is not only based on fiqh legal considerations, but also takes into account the socio-religious dynamics in plural Indonesian society. In many cases, the decision to postpone the determination of the beginning of the month until there is a valid rukyat report, even though hisab hilal has met the imkan rukyat criteria, is an effort by the LFNU to maintain the unity of the ummah and avoid potential conflicts. This policy reflects sensitivity to social conditions, such as differences of opinion between religious organisations, media pressure, and public expectations of certainty in worship times. The LFNU positions the principle of *ikhtiyath* as a middle ground between scientific authority and social responsibility, so that its decisions are not only normatively relevant within the framework of

ushul fiqh, but also contextual in facing the challenges of the times (Royyani et al., 2023). This confirms that NU does not merely maintain tradition, but also actively responds to social realities with a prudential approach that is proportional and maslahat.

One case study that reflects the application of the principle of *ikhtiyath* by LFNU can be seen in the difference in the determination of the beginning of Ramadan and Shawwal between NU and Muhammadiyah, as happened in 2023 AD/1444 H. At that time, Muhammadiyah set 1 Shawwal to fall on Friday, 21 April 2023, based on hisab hakiki wujudul hilal, which is sufficient for the position of the hilal to be above the horizon, without waiting for the factual sighting of the hilal. Meanwhile, NU through its Falakiyah Institution set Eid al-Fitr to fall on Saturday, 22 April 2023, because rukyat did not confirm the sighting of the hilal even though it met the criteria of imkan rukyat. (Media, 2023) In this situation, LFNU continued to complete the month of Ramadan to 30 days as a form of implementation of *ikhtiyath*, promoting confidence based on rukyat testimony. This case shows the difference in epistemological approach between NU and Muhammadiyah, where NU holds the precautionary principle by waiting for visual confirmation, while Muhammadiyah prioritises hisab certainty. This difference often causes public debate, but for NU, this attitude is a fiqh commitment to maintain the validity of worship and avoid violating the time that is still shubhat.

The potential for differences between Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah in determining the beginning of the Hijri month has increased with the implementation of the Single Global Hijriyah Calendar (KHGT) initiated by Muhammadiyah. KHGT uses the hisab hakiki approach with the criteria of wujudul hilal and global unification based on international date lines, without considering the geographical boundaries of local rukyat as applied by NU (Suwarno, 2023), (Suwarno, 2023). With this approach, the beginning of the month can be determined simultaneously globally, even though the hilal has not been sighted in Indonesia. On the other hand, NU still adheres to the principles of local rukyat and prudence (*ikhtiyath*), so it continues to wait for visual reports of the hilal in the Indonesian jurisdiction before determining the entry of the new month. This has the potential to create differences in worship times, such as fasting and holidays, between NU and Muhammadiyah that are getting sharper, especially when the hilal has been realised by hisab but has not been factually observable in Indonesia. For NU, KHGT is considered not to have a strong shar'i basis in the context of local rukyat and the principle of *ikhtiyath*, because it has the potential to eliminate aspects of prudence and damage the continuity of worship fiqh that has been maintained based on empirically verifiable rukyat.

Public responses to differences in the determination of the beginning of Ramadan or Shawwal between NU, Muhammadiyah, and the government often vary, ranging from tolerance to confusion and social tension. In such situations,

Nahdlatul Ulama plays a strategic role in reducing potential divisions by emphasising the importance of *ukhuwah islamiyah* and respecting the ijtiḥad of other organisations, while explaining the fiqh basis of decisions taken through the principle of *ikhtiyath*. NU actively educates the public through official media, religious lectures, and its leaders, that differences in the determination of the beginning of the month are part of the treasures of legitimate ijtiḥad in Islam, as long as they are based on accountable methods. This approach not only reflects NU's commitment to prudence in worship, but also shows its contribution in maintaining social harmony and strengthening the brotherhood of Muslims amid the reality of methodological differences. Thus, NU not only acts as a determinant of worship times, but also as a guardian of the unity of the ummah through a moderate and inclusive approach to fiqh.

More specifically, NU's role in maintaining *ukhuwah* is evident when there are differences in holidays between NU and Muhammadiyah, such as on Eid al-Fitr 1444 AH, when some people celebrate Eid on Friday and some on Saturday. In this condition, NU through the Falakiyah Institute and its kiai asserted that this difference is not a reason to blame each other, but part of the diversity of ijtiḥad that must be respected. Even in a number of regions, NU urges its citizens to maintain social harmony by not holding excessive travelling takbir in honour of those who are different. In addition, many NU mosques remain open to Muhammadiyah worshipers who want to pray Eid earlier. This attitude shows that the principle of *ikhtiyath* in determining worship is not to impose uniformity, but is part of a religious ethic that upholds togetherness, tolerance and unity of the people in the midst of legitimate methodological differences.

In the modern astronomical era characterised by advances in observation technology and the accuracy of hisab, the principle of *ikhtiyath* in determining the beginning of the Hijriyah month has not escaped criticism, especially from those who prioritise efficiency and certainty in worship. The criticism states that reliance on rukyat, which is often hampered by weather and limited observation locations, is no longer relevant, especially when modern astronomical hisab has been able to predict the position of the hilal with great precision. However, Nahdlatul Ulama still maintains the principle of *ikhtiyath* as a form of shar'i responsibility to ensure the validity of worship time, as well as an approach that is in accordance with the rules of fiqh and the Prophet's words which require "seeing the hilal" as a basis for determination. NU's justification in defending *ikhtiyath* is that technology is only a tool, while the decision to worship must still be based on legitimate beliefs in shari'i, not merely mathematical certainty. Therefore, the principle of *ikhtiyath* is not a form of shackling to tradition, but rather a reflection of a moderate attitude that combines fiqhiyah prudence with openness to modern science in a proportional and responsible manner.

Furthermore, the principle of *ikhtiyath* applied by the LFNU also has a deep pedagogical and spiritual value, namely educating people not to be hasty in matters of worship and always be careful in determining something that has an impact on the validity of charity. Amidst the onslaught of modernisation and the demand for a uniform global Islamic calendar, NU has chosen to maintain the integrity of its method of determining times of worship based on a combination of astrological accuracy and shar'i authority. Although criticism of this method continues to emerge, NU remains consistent in the principle that worship requires not only scientific precision, but also deep shar'i legitimacy and prudence as a form of taqwa. Therefore, the principle of *ikhtiyath* is not an obstacle to progress, but rather a bridge between tradition and modernity in maintaining the purity of worship while caring for the togetherness of the people. This research confirms that *ikhtiyath* is a principle that is contextual, relevant and still needed in the complex dynamics of contemporary religion

E. Conclusion

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that the concept of *ikhtiyath* (prudence) in determining the beginning of the Hijriyah month by the Nahdlatul Ulama Falakiah Institute is a principle that is deeply rooted in the treasures of ushul fiqh and fiqh of worship. This principle is not just a technical choice, but a methodological foundation that reflects NU's commitment to maintaining the validity of worship, avoiding areas of shubhat, and upholding careful and responsible religious ethics. The application of *ikhtiyath* in the context of rukyat, especially when there is a failure of hilal observation, shows a proportional attitude between the textual approach and the progress of modern astrology. NU still uses hisab as a tool for scientific prediction, but does not make it the sole basis without shari'i validation in the form of direct rukyat. This attitude provides space to maintain the continuity of classical scientific traditions, without closing itself off from the development of observation technology.

On the other hand, in the social and religious context in Indonesia, *ikhtiyath* also serves as a means to maintain ukhuwah and reduce the potential for conflict due to differences in the determination of the beginning of the month. Although often criticised as less adaptive to the modern astronomical era, this principle actually displays the moderate face of NU that is able to maintain a balance between scientific certainty and shar'i vigilance. Therefore, this research confirms that the principle of *ikhtiyath* remains relevant in answering contemporary challenges, both in terms of fiqhiyah and social. NU through its Falakiah Institute not only acts as the authority to determine the time of worship, but also as the guardian of religious stability and the glue of community harmony. Thus, *ikhtiyath* is not a symbol of delay, but a form of wisdom in religion that needs to be maintained and contextualised in every era.

References

- Alimuddin. (2012). PERSPEKTIF SYAR'I DAN SAINSAWAL WAKTU SHALAT. *Ad-Daulah*.
- Ayatullah, H. (2018). STUDI ANALISIS FAJAR KAZIB DAN FAJAR SHADIQ (Awal Waktu Shubuh di Kabupaten Bone). *ELFALAKY: Jurnal Ilmu Falak*, 2(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.24252/ifk.v2i1.14160>
- Fauzi, A. (2017). Pemikiran Kalender Muhammad Basil ath-Tha'i Dalam Kitab "Ilm al-Falak wa at-Taqawim." *Al-Marshad: Jurnal Astronomi Islam Dan Ilmu-Ilmu Berkaitan*, 3(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.30596/jam.v3i1.1075>
- Fauzi, A. (2019). Almanak Menara Kudus: Study of Hisab Results in 1990 until 2019. *Al-Ahkam*, 29(1), 109–134.
- Izzuddin, A. (2007). *Fiqh Hisab Rukyat: Menyatukan NU & Muhammadiyah dalam Penentuan Awal Ramadan, Idul Fitri, dan Idul Adha*. Erlangga.
- Karim, M. F. R., & Mahsun, M. (2024). Kriteria Baru Mabims 3-6,4: Upaya Penyatuan Kalender Hijriah di Indonesia Dalam Perspektif Maqāsid Al-Syarī'ah. *Astroislamica: Journal of Islamic Astronomy*, 3(1), 51–75. <https://doi.org/10.47766/astroislamica.v3i1.2735>
- LFNU. (2006a). *Lajnah Falakiyah Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Laporan Lajnah Falakiyah Kepada PBNU Tentang Penyelenggaraan Rukyat Untuk Idul Fitri 1427 H*. LF PBNU.
- LFNU. (2006b). *SK PBNU NO. : 311/A.II03/I/1994 tentang Pedoman Oprasional Penyelenggaraan Rukyat Bil Fi'li di Lingkungan Nahdlatul Ulama dalam Lajnah Falakiyah PBNU, Pedoman Rukyat dan Hisab Nahdlatul Ulama*. LF PBNU.
- LF-PBNU. (2022). *Instruksi Rukyah Ramadan 1443 H No. 012*. Lembaga Falakiyah PBNU.
- Mahfudh, K. H. M. A. S. (2003). *Nuansa Fiqh Sosial*. Lkis Pelangi Aksara.
- Masroeri, A. G. (2011). *Penentuan Awal Bulan Kamariah Perspektif NU*. Lajnah Falakiyah Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama.
- Media, K. C. (2023, April 20). *Beda Lebaran Pemerintah dengan Muhammadiyah dan Pesan Saling Menghormati...* KOMPAS.com. <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2023/04/21/04321601/beda-lebaran-pemerintah-dengan-muhammadiyah-dan-pesan-saling-menghormati>
- MUNAS NU. (1985). *Keputusan Musyawarah Nasional Alim Ulama Nahdlatul Ulama Nomor I/MAUNU/1404/1983 tentang Hukum atas Beberapa Masalah Diniyah dalam Hasil Muktamar NU ke 27 Situbondo Nahdlatul Ulama Kembali ke Khittah Perjuangan 1926*. Sumber Barokah.
- Muslifah, S. (2020). Upaya Menyikapi Perbedaan Penentuan Awal Bulan Qamariyah di Indonesia. *Azimuth: Journal of Islamic Astronomy*, 1(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.15642/azimuth.v1i1.788>

- Qulub, S. T., & Munif, A. (2023). Urgensi Fatwa dan Sidang Isbat dalam Penentuan Awal Bulan Kamariah di Indonesia: The Urgency of Fatwa and Isbat Assemblies in Determining the Beginning of the Month of Kamariah in Indonesia. *Jurnal Bimas Islam*, 16(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.37302/jbi.v16i2.929>
- Rijal, P. (2019). *Hisab dan Rukat menurut Nahdlatul Ulama dan Muhammadiyah dalam penetapan awal bulan Qamariyah* [Diploma, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung]. <https://digilib.uinsgd.ac.id/27443/>
- Royyani, M. A., Kibtyah, M., Adeni, A., Rofiuddin, A. A., Machzumy, M., & Kholis, N. (2023). Religious Dialogue and Astronomy from the Perspective of Indonesian Muslim Scholars. *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam*, 7(1), 261–280.
- Sholeh, Z. Z. (2024). MAQOSYID SYARI'AH DALAM PANDANGAN MAHMUD HAMDY ZAQQUQ. *Launul Ilmi : Jurnal Keislaman dan Peradaban*, 2(2 Juni), Article 2 Juni.
- Suwarno, R. W. (2023). *Kalender Hijriah Global Tunggal (KHGT) dalam Mukhtamar Muhammadiyah Ke-47, Mukhtamar Muhammadiyah Ke-48 dan Mukhtamar Turki 2016*. MTT PP Muhammadiyah.
- Ulum, M. (2021). FATWA ULAMA NU (NAHDLATUL ULAMA) DAN MUHAMMADIYAH JAWA TIMUR TENTANG HISAB RUKYAT. *Jurnal Keislaman*, 1(2), 244–272. <https://doi.org/10.54298/jk.v1i2.3369>
- Yani, F., & Fahmy, S. R. (2019). Program Digital Prayer Time Dalam Penentuan Waktu Salat. *Ulul Albab: Jurnal Studi dan Penelitian Hukum Islam*, 2(2), Article 2.
- ZUHRI, S. (2017). *UPAYA PENENTUAN AWAL BULAN KAMARIAH DENGAN RUKYAT BULAN SABIT TUA*. UIN Walisongo.