

# AHMAD MARZUQI AL-BĀTĀWĪ'S THOUGHTS IN *FADL AL-RAḤMĀN* BOOK AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION ON DETERMINING ISLAMIC CALENDAR IN INDONESIA

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## Abstract

Criteria for the visibility of the new moon have been initiated by Betawi ulama, one of which is found in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* by Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī. Ahmad Marzuqi's criteria are very different from those used by the Indonesian Ministry of Religion, giving rise to several differences. Using literature research and interviews as a data collection method, this paper finds that Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī's thoughts in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* state that the minimum limit for *imkān al-rukyah* is 7° without using a telescope. This idea of *imkān al-rukyah* is still currently being implemented by the al-Marzūqiyah congregation in Cipinang Muara, East Jakarta, in determining the start of the lunar month so that if the height of the new moon is less than 7° it causes differences with the government.

**Keywords:** Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī; *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*; *Imkān al-rukyah*; 7° Criteria

## Abstrak

Kriteria visibilitas *hilāl* sudah digagas oleh ulama Betawi, salah satunya terdapat dalam kitab *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* karya Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī. Kriteria Ahmad Marzuqi jauh berbeda dengan kriteria yang digunakan Kementerian Agama RI dan memunculkan beberapa perbedaan. Menggunakan penelitian kepustakaan dan menggunakan wawancara sebagai metode pengumpulan datanya, tulisan ini menemukan bahwa pemikiran Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī dalam kitab *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* menyatakan bahwa batas minimal *imkān al-rukyah* adalah 7° tanpa

menggunakan alat bantu teleskop. Pemikiran *imkān al-rukyah* tersebut sampai saat ini masih diimplementasikan oleh jamaah al-Marzūqiyyah Cipinang Muara, Jakarta Timur dalam penetapan awal bulan kamariah, sehingga jika tinggi *hilāl* kurang dari 7° menyebabkan perbedaan dengan pemerintah.

**Kata Kunci:** Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī; Faḍl al-Raḥmān ; *Imkān al-rukyah*, Kriteria 7°

## A. Introduction

*Imkān al-rukyah* (the possibility that the crescent Moon can be rukyat) is a phenomenon of a certain height of the crescent Moon that, according to experience in the field, the crescent Moon can be seen.<sup>1</sup> The Government initiated this method through the Indonesian Ministry of Religion to bridge the gap between the calculation and rukyat methods.<sup>2</sup> The aim is to minimize the differences that have always been on the lips of the public, namely in determining the start of Ramadan, Shawwal and Zulhijah.<sup>3</sup> The *imkān al-rukyah* criteria used by the Indonesian Ministry of Religion follow the *imkān al-rukyah* Neo MABIMS criteria, which were mutually agreed upon at the forum of the Ministers of Religion of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore on December 8 2021, namely a minimum height of the crescent Moon of 3 degrees and a minimum elongation angle of 6.4 degrees.

The criteria for *imkān al-rukyah* have been mentioned in classical astronomy books in Betawi, such as in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* by Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī, which has standards that are not the same as those of the Government. Based on information from an interview with Ustaz Amir (grandson of teacher Marzuqi al-Bātāwī) on August 11, 2018 at the al-Marzūqiyyah Cipinang Muara Mosque, East Jakarta, the thoughts of *Imkān al-rukyah* Guru Marzuqi al-Bātāwī in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* are still followed today by the al-Marzūqiyyah Cipinang Muara congregation, East Jakarta. So based on the Notification Letter from the Shar'iyah Hukmiyyah Agency of the Jami' Al-Marzūqiyyah Mosque, Cipinang Muara, East Jakarta, regarding the Determination of the Eid Al-Fitr Holiday 1 Syawal 1438 H, there are often differences in determining the start of the lunar month between the Government and the al-Marzūqiyyah congregation. For example, in

<sup>1</sup> Muhyiddin Khazin, *Ilmu Falak Dalam Teori dan Praktik* (Yogyakarta: Buana Pustaka, 2004). 35.

<sup>2</sup> Ahmad Izzuddin, *Fiqh Hisab Rukyat* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2007). 176.

<sup>3</sup> Fahmi Fatwa Rosyadi Satria Hamdani, *Ilmu Falak* (Bandung: P2U-LPPM UNISBA, 2017). 63.

determining the start of the lunar month at the beginning of Shawwal 1438 AH, the Indonesian Government, in the *isbat* session, decided that the Eid al-Fitr holiday would fall on Sunday, June 25 2017. However, the Government's decision did not follow the al-Marzūqiyyah congregation, which determined that 1 Shawwal 1438 AH fell on Monday, June 26 2017.

As far as the author has observed and searched, no writing or research has been found that precisely and in detail discusses the thoughts of *imkān al-rukayah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*. However, based on researchers' searches, literature and previous studies, many articles and research related to *imkān al-rukayah* have been found to determine the beginning of the lunar month with different studies, so this research is a novelty with the focus and locus of research being *imkān al-rukayah*'s Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī and its implementation of the determination of the beginning of the lunar month. Thus, this paper differs from previous research, but there are still connections with the last study and writings.

First, research by M. Rifa Jamaludin Nasir (2013) entitled "Imkān Al-Ru'yah Ma'sūm Ali (Konsep Visibilitas *Hilāl* dalam Kitab *Badī'ah Al-Miśāl* dan Aplikasinya dalam Penetapan Awal Bulan Hijriyah)".<sup>4</sup> This research describes the construction of *imkān al-rukayah* Maksum Ali's criteria from a modern astronomical perspective. Then, it represents the implementation and applicative contribution of *imkān al-rukayah* Maksum Ali's standards in determining the beginning of the Hijriah month in Indonesia. Second, research by Suhardiman (2013) entitled "Criteria for *Hilāl* Visibility in Determining the Beginning of the Lunar Month in Indonesia".<sup>5</sup> This research discusses the application of criteria for the visibility of the new Moon in Indonesia. Suhardiman stated that the criteria currently used by the Government still need to be revised for the visibility of the new Moon, according to astronomers. However, these criteria must still be adhered to, considering that these criteria are reliable and can be an alternative solution to differences of opinion and views that have occurred so far. The criteria used by the Indonesian Government so far are

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<sup>4</sup> M. Rifa Jamaludin Nasir, "Imkān Al-Ru'yah Ma'sūm Ali (Konsep Visibilitas *Hilāl* dalam Kitab *Badī'ah Al-Miśāl* Dan Aplikasinya dalam Penetapan Awal Bulan Hijriyah)" (Intitut Agama Islam Negeri Walisongo, Semarang, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Suhardiman, "Kriteria Visibilitas Hilal dalam Penetapan Awal Bulan Kamariah di Indonesia," *Khatulistiwa*, 2013.

the height of the crescent Moon of at least 2 degrees, the angular distance between the Moon and the Sun (elongation) of at least 3 degrees, or the age of the crescent Moon of at least 8 hours, with calculation data collected by the Rukyat *Hisāb* Team of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion.

Third, Ahmad Izzuddin's research (2015) with the title "*Hisāb Rukyat Klasik (Studi Atas Pemikiran Muhammad Mas Manshur Al-Bātāwī)*".<sup>6</sup> This research explains that Mas Manşur al-Bātāwī's thoughts on *hisāb* rukyat are thoughts on *hisāb* rukyat from the network of ulama with Saudi Arabian scholars (Haramayn), including Shaykh 'Abdurrahmān al-Miṣrī. Even though this idea uses Ptolemy's theory, which has geocentric principles (which, according to scientific history, has been overthrown by the heliocentric theory), it is still used by some Indonesian Muslim communities, including the extended family of the Jakarta al-Khairiyah al-Manşuriyyah Foundation and the Ploso Mojo Islamic Boarding School, Kediri. Fourth is Shofiyulloh's (2018) research titled "*Metode Hisāb Sullam al-Nayyirayn dalam Perspektif Astronomi*".<sup>7</sup> In this research, Shofiyullah explains astronomical reasoning in the calculation of the beginning of the lunar month, lunar eclipses and solar eclipses using the *Sullam al-Nayyirayn* method, then looks for similarities and differences in astronomical reasoning in the book of *Sullam al-Nayyirayn* with the ephemeris, finally the astronomical sense is corrected to increase the accuracy of the calculation *Sullam al-Nayyirayn*. Fifth, research by Nur Aida Athirah Sulaiman & Shahir Akram Hassan (2018), entitled "*The Application of Rukyah and Hisāb in Determining the Starting Dates of the Months of Ramadhan and Shawwal in Thailand*".<sup>8</sup> This research describes the application of the rukyat and calculation methods in determining the start of the months of Ramadan and Shawwal in Thailand. The findings in this research are that the accurate rukyat method is used to determine the start of Ramadan and Shawwal in Thailand by relying only on the

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<sup>6</sup> Ahmad Izzuddin, "Hisab Rukyat Klasik ( Studi atas Pemikiran Muhammad Mas Manshur Al-Bātāwī)," *Jurnal: Hukum Islam* Vol.13. No (2015): 575.

<sup>7</sup> Shofiyulloh, "Metode Hisab Sullam Al-Nayyirain dalam Perspektif Astronomi" (UIN Walisongo, 2018).

<sup>8</sup> Nur Aida Athirah Sulaiman and Shahir Akram Hassan, "The Application of Rukyah and Hisab in Determining the Starting Dates of the Months of Ramadhan and Syawal in Thailand," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 8, no. 4 (2018): 770-83, <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v8-i4/4060>.

human eye, without the help of observational tools. In addition, the essential rukyat method is practised without using the criteria for the visibility of the new Moon.

Based on the background description, objectives and literature review above, this article will examine and answer the problem formulation as follows-first, to find out the origins of *imkān al-rukayah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī. She was second, explaining how *imkān al-rukayah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī thought in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*. Third, explain how to implement *imkān al-rukayah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī's thoughts in determining the start of the lunar month.

## B. Method

Methodologically, this research uses a historical approach to analyzing a figure's thoughts, namely Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī. One type of historical research is biographical research, namely research into a person's life with society, their characteristics, the influence of their thoughts and ideas, and the formation of the character's personality.<sup>9</sup> The data search method in this research uses the library research method, namely by reading the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* by Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī as a primary source and writings related to the issue of *imkān al-rukayah* as a secondary source, as well as conducting interviews with al-Marzuqiyyah congregation in Cipinang Muara, East Jakarta. The data analysis used by the author uses descriptive analytical methods. The analytical descriptive method is a method of analyzing data by describing and analyzing it.<sup>10</sup> This method is used first to describe the thoughts of *imkān al-rukayah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī. The resulting picture is made into facts and then analyzed to conclude.

## C. Result and Discussion

### 1. The Intellectual History of Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī

Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī, usually called Guru Marzuqi, was one of the teachers of the Betawi ulama known as the "six prominent teachers" or "the six teachers" at the end of the 19th century to the beginning and middle of the 20th century. The six scholars include

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<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Nazir, *Metode Penelitian* (Jakarta: Ghalia Indonesia, 1988). 56.

<sup>10</sup> Nyoman Kutha Ratna, *Metodologi Penelitian: Kajian Budaya dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial Humaniora pada Umumnya* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010). 335.

Guru Marzuqi-Cipinang Muara, Guru Mansur-Jembatan Lima, Guru Mughni-Kuningan, Guru Khalid-Gondangdia, Guru Majid-Pekojan and Guru Mahmud-Menteng.<sup>11</sup> Guru Marzuqi was born on the evening of Sunday, 16 Ramadan 1294 H, coinciding with September 23 1877 AD, at 19.00 Isha time in Rawa Bangke (Meester Cornelis, Batavia), now known as Rawa Bunga, East Jakarta.<sup>12</sup> Guru Marzuqi is a scholar who is productive in writing books. The books written by Guru Marzuqi include fiqh, akhlak, creed and astronomy, including: (1) *Zahrulbasātin fī bayān al-Dalā'il wa al-Barāhīn*, (2) *Tamrinulazhan al-'Ajmiyah fī Ma'rifati Tiraḥ Min al-alfāz al-'Arabiyah*, (3) *Miftāḥ al-Fawz al-Abadī fi 'Ilm al-Fiqh al-Muḥammadī*, (4) *Tuḥfah al-Raḥmān fī Bayān Akhlāq al-Nabī Ākhir al-Zamān*, (5) *Sabīl al-Taqlīd*, (6) *Siraj al-Mubtadi*, (7) *Al-Risālah Balaghah Al-Betawi Asīrudhdhunīb wa Ahqaral 'Isāwī wa al-'Ibād*, and (8) *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*.<sup>13</sup>

One of Guru Marzuqi's phenomenal works in the field of astronomy is the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*, which discusses *imkān al-rukyah* in determining the beginning of the lunar month. *Imkān al-rukyah* Guru Marzuqi's thoughts, as written in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*, are inseparable from the role of his teacher who taught him astronomy, namely Ḥabīb 'Uthmān Ibn 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Āqil Ibn Yaḥyā al-'Alawī (1822-1914 AD). Teacher Marzuqi studied with Ḥabīb 'Uthmān since he was 16. Young Marzuqi was known as one of the students who was very clever and had an intense memorization in studying all subject areas, such as monotheism, fiqh, tafsir, nahwu, mantiq, bayan, ma'ani, astronomy to various other religious disciplines. In the field of astronomy, Ḥabīb 'Uthmān compiled books entitled *Īqāz al-Niyām* (this book in detail and conventionally discusses issues relating to the new Moon) and *Tamyīz al-Ḥaqq* (this book is a shortened Malay version of *Īqāz al-Niyām* who speaks Arabic), these two books were taught to his students in the Jakarta area.<sup>14</sup>

In the book *Īqāz al-Niyām*, Ḥabīb 'Uthmān made a *taqwīm al-nayyirayn* schedule, which was mentalkhis (concluded) from the astronomical data of Zīj Ulugh Beik al-Samarqandi which 'Abdurraḥmān al-Miṣrī brought to Betawi.<sup>15</sup> This 'Abdurraḥmān figure

<sup>11</sup> Abdul Aziz, *Islam dan Masyarakat Betawi* (Jakarta: Logos, 2002). 49,69.

<sup>12</sup> Muhammad Baqir, *Fathu Robbi Al-Bāqi Fī Manākibi Syekh Ahmad Marzuqi*, n.d. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Rakhmad Zailani Kiki, *Genealogi Intelektual Ulama Betawi* (Jakarta: Pusat Pengkajian dan Pengembangan Islam, 2011). 87.

<sup>14</sup> Muhyiddin Khazin, *Kamus Ilmu Falak* (Yogyakarta: Buana Pustaka, 2005). 104.

<sup>15</sup> Usman bin Abdullah bin Aqil bin Yahya, *Īqādz al-Niyām* (Batavia: Al-Mubarakah, n.d.). 74-85

comes from Egypt and initially had business activities in Palembang and Padang; then, he bought several lands in Batavia and settled in Petamburan, where he built a mosque and began to study Islamic topics, especially astronomy. In a short time, 'Abdurrahmān managed to find a suitable rukyat place in Betawi, so he adjusted the data by changing the Samarkand longitude Markaz to Betawi longitude. The arrival of 'Abdurrahmān al-Miṣrī was the starting point for the development of astronomy in Indonesia. He taught astronomy with the *Zīj* he brought in Betawi City to several young scholars in Indonesia at that time, including Shaykh Ahmad Dahlan Tremas (authored the book *Tadhkirah al-Ikhwān, Natījah al-Mīqāt, Bulūgh al-Waṭār*, d. 1329 H/ 1911 AD), Ḥabīb 'Uthmān (wrote the books *Īqāz al-Niyām* and *Tamyīz al-Ḥaqq*, d. 1914 AD) and Abdul Hamid al-Damiri.<sup>16</sup>

In the book *Īqāz al-Niyām*, Ḥabīb 'Uthmān made a schedule and calculation *Taqwīm al-Nayyirayn* (in the form of jumali numbers) which is the astronomical data of *Zīj* Ulugh Beik al-Samarqandi that he got from 'Abdurrahmān al-Miṣrī. Then one of his students named Abdul Majid bin Abdurrahman bin Sulaiman (Teacher Majid Pekojan) translated the data by writing a book, *Taqwīm al-Nayyirain* in Malay by Ali Wardi bin Abdul Ghani, to make it easier for the Betawi people to calculate the beginning of the lunar month. The *Taqwīm al-Nayyirayn* model of calculation written by Ḥabīb 'Uthmān in the book *Īqāz al-Niyām* is almost the same as the book *Sullam al-Nayyirayn*.<sup>17</sup> Written by Mansur al-Bātāwī because they both take astronomical data from *Zīj* Ulugh Beik al-Samarqandi, only The difference in the minimum limit for the *hilāl* can be seen (*imkān al-rukyah*). Namely, *Īqāz al-Niyām* must be above 7 degrees, and *Sullam al-Nayyirayn* can be below 7 degrees, so the *hilāl* can be seen. The book *Īqāz al-Niyām* is widely developed in the Puteran Duri Hill area, Cikoko Pengadegan, South Jakarta, Cipinang Muara, Pisalo Basmol and around eighty lands of Klender, East Jakarta.<sup>18</sup> The truth about the existence of the book *Īqāz al-Niyām* before the book *Sullam al-Nayyirayn* in Betawi can be seen from the debate about the boundaries of *Imkān al-rukyah* between Abdul Hamid bin Muhammad al-Damiri and Ḥabīb 'Uthmān. Abdul Hamid stated that *rukyat* in *hilāl* conditions below 7 degrees is difficult,

<sup>16</sup> Arwin Juli Rakhmadi Butar-Butar, *Mengenal Karya-Karya Ilmu Falak Nusantara* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2017). 8.

<sup>17</sup> Muhammad Mansur Al-Bātāwī, *Sullam An-Nayyirayn* (Jakarta: al-Mansyuriyah, n.d.). 12.

<sup>18</sup> Asadurrahman, "Sistem Hisab dan Imkanurrukyah yang Berkembang di Indonesia," *Journal Hisab Rukyah, Depag RI*, 2000, 1-31.

not impossible (*istihālah*). Meanwhile, Ḥabīb ‘Uthmān thinks seeing the crescent Moon below 7 degrees or *istihālaturrukyah* is impossible.<sup>19</sup> The criteria for *imkān alrukayah* 7 degrees are based on the opinion of Shaykh Ali bin Qadli in his book entitled *Taqrīb al-Istidlāl*.<sup>20</sup>

According to Muhammad Mansur al-Bātāwī in the book *Mīzan al-I’tidāl*, it is explained that this difference of opinion arose due to differences in the basic *zīj* used, namely Abdul Hamid bin Muhammad al-Damiri used the basic *zīj* of Shaykh ‘Abdurrahmān al-Miṣrī. In contrast, Ḥabīb ‘Uthmān used the basis of *zīj* from his teacher, Shaykh Rahmatullah al-Hindi, in Mecca. Ḥabīb ‘Uthmān never met Shaykh ‘Abdurrahmān al-Miṣrī because Ḥabīb ‘Uthmān had left Betawi and settled in Arabia since childhood. The debate between Abdul Hamid and Ḥabīb ‘Uthmān above was told by Guru Mansur in the book *Mīzan al-I’tidāl* when there was a problem with the rukyat testimony carried out at the beginning of Ramadan 1299 H. At that time, the height of the new Moon on Sunday night was 2, 5 degrees. Then, one of Shaykh ‘Abdurrahmān al-Miṣrī’s students, Muhammad Shaleh bin Syarbini al-Bātāwī, stated that he could see the new Moon.<sup>21</sup> It seems that the differences in understanding the boundaries of *imkān alrukayah* in Betawi have continued to the next generation, even though the two scholars, namely Abdul Hamid and Ḥabīb ‘Uthmān, have died. This debate occurred again from an incident involving Rukyah al-*hilāl* Zulhijah 1350 AH (1931 AD). At that time, two men from Tangerang came to Muhammad Mansur; one of the two men was Mansur’s student. Both reported seeing the new Moon Zulhijah 1350 AH (1931 AD) on Thursday night after sunset, with a height of 5 degrees. Apart from Tangerang, the crescent Moon at an altitude of 5 degrees is also visible to the people of Serang, Semarang and others.

Based on the testimony of two people who claimed to have seen the new Moon, Muhammad Mansur believed their testimony and stated that their rukyat was true. Mansur interprets what Ḥabīb ‘Uthmān said that what is meant is that the crescent Moon can’t be visible below 7 degrees accurately, but only in that era, not throughout the ages. This is because the condition of the new moon changes according to the times. Thus, the *imkān*

<sup>19</sup> Muhammad Manṣur, *Mīzān Al-I’tidāl* (Jakarta: Madrasah Nahdlatul Ulama, n.d.). 18.

<sup>20</sup> Yahya, *Īqādz al-Niyām*. 52, 64.

<sup>21</sup> Izzuddin, “Hisab Rukyah Klasik ( Studi atas Pemikiran Muhammad Mas Manshur Al-Bātāwī)”, 577; Manṣur, *Mīzān Al-I’tidāl*. 18.

*al-rukyah* stipulation of 7 degrees, which Ḥabīb 'Uthmān said was dissatisfied by Mansur, became 5 degrees.<sup>22</sup> This is different from Ahmad Marzuqi's view. He rejected the testimony of two people who claimed to have succeeded in seeing the new Moon on Zulhijah 1350 AH (1931 AD) because the height of the new Moon was still 5 degrees, while Ḥabīb 'Uthmān's opinion stated that the *imkān al-rukyah* limit was 7 degrees. Ahmad Marzuqi's rejection of the testimony of two people who saw the new Moon was later expressed in his book entitled *Faḍl al-Raḥmān fī Radd Man Radd Al-Marḥūm Sayyid 'Uthmān*.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. Thoughts of *Imkān al-Rukyāh* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī in the Book of *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*

The book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* is the work of Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī in the field of astronomy written in Malay. Guru Marzuqi completed this book on Sunday, 26 Syakban 1351 AH, then published it on 2 Ramadan 1351 AH, coinciding with December 30 1932 AD. At the end of this book, it is explained that he has confirmed the existence of this book of *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*, among others, al-Haj Abdul Muthalib ( head of Mester), al-Haj Muhammad Hasan (director of Betawi), al-Haj Muhammad Muktar (kadi of Mester) and al-Haj Muhammad Thohir (kadi of Mester).<sup>24</sup> Unlike other astronomical books which provide astronomical data and specific calculation algorithms, the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* does not explain this. As described above, this book was compiled based on differences of opinion in determining the start of the lunar month in Betawi at that time. The issue of differences in determining the beginning of the months of Ramadan, Shawwal and Zulhijah in Betawi is not something new. As explained above, these differences have existed since the time of Ḥabīb 'Uthmān and Abdul Hamid. In the 1930s and even today, Betawi people were divided into two primary schools of thought, namely the Ḥabīb 'Uthmān (Betawi's mufti) school, whose prominent figure was Guru Marzuqi Cipinang Muara and Guru Majid Pekojan with the Abdul Hamid school, whose central figure was Teacher Mansur Jembatan Lima. Ḥabīb 'Uthmān's school of thought is that it is impossible to rukyat if the crescent Moon is below 7 degrees, while Abdul Hamid's school of thought is

<sup>22</sup> Manṣur, *Mīzān Al-'tidāl*. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Ahmad Marzuqi Al-Bātāwī, *Faḍl al-Raḥmān fī Radd Man Radd al-Marḥūm Sayyid 'Uthmān* (Batavia: Toko Kitab Harun bin Ali Ibrahim, 1933). 2-6.

<sup>24</sup> Al-Bātāwī. 7-8.

that the *hilāl* can be rukyat even if it is less than 7 degrees. While they were still alive, when the beginning of the month was determined, Betawi people would flock to them to find out the results of the ngeker Bulan or rukyah al-hilāl that had been done.<sup>25</sup>

Something is fascinating about the differences in rukyat al-hilāl between the two groups, namely how they argue for different methodologies and results of rukyat. They follow the tradition of previous scholars, a tradition of debate that educates the people through writing (minutes). One of the treatises on this debate was written by Guru Marzuqi with the title *Faḍl al-Raḥmān fī Radd Man Radd al-Marḥūm Sayyid ‘Uthmān*. In general, in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*, Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī criticizes people who reject the fatwa of Ḥabīb ‘Uthmān, who is one of the students and also the grandson of ‘Abdurraḥmān Ibn Aḥmad al-Miṣrī. The following are several essential points of Ahmad Marzuqi's rebuttal from the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*, as follows:<sup>26</sup>

**First**, the determination of the start of Ramadan, Shawwal and Zulhijah, which has been taking place in Betawi, is carried out by the kadi (judge) with the sighting of the month *imkān al-rukyah* (the possibility of the new Moon being seen) or with *istikmāl* (filling in thirty days). According to teacher Marzuqi, if the Moon on a 30-day night is less than 7 degrees, it will be impossible to see. This provision has been in effect in Betawi for a very long time, up to nearly 100 years. Teacher Marzuqi explained that this decree complied with and followed the fatwa of Ḥabīb ‘Uthmān.

**Second**, after the death of Ḥabīb ‘Uthmān, a cleric named al-Hajj Muhammad Mansur Kampung Sawah Betawi (Teacher Mansur) held a gathering (committee) in 1933, which resulted in several decisions including (1) The Moon (*hilāl*) must still be seen even though the height is less than 7 degrees and (2) Must accept witnesses who claim to see the Moon on the night of 30 days, even though the Moon is less than 7 degrees unconditionally 'is (just) and muru'ah (noble morals). This is the main issue of the dispute between these two parties, namely at the *imkān al-rukyah* level, with each having hujjah (proof) and burhan (evidence).

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<sup>25</sup> Rakhmad Zailani Kiki, "Dua Hilal di Langit Betawi," Jakarta Islamic Centre.in Betawi Corner, 2012, <http://islamic-center.or.id/dua-hilaldi-langit-betawi>.

<sup>26</sup> Al-Batāwī, *Faḍlu ar-Raḥmān fī Raddi Man Radda Al-Marhum Sayyid Uṣman*. 2-6.

**Third**, the first Burhan from Ḥabīb 'Uthmān's side. This burhan comes from the opinion of the Betawi Penghulu, namely Haji Muhammad Hasan, who stated two burhan, namely aqli and naqli. For Burhan Aqli, namely the figure and expertise of Ḥabīb 'Uthmān in the field of religion, including falakiyah.

*“Ḥabīb 'Uthmān is one half of the family of Rasulullah SAW, who has extensive knowledge and many essays by Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah. His teachers' great scholars have confirmed this and also confirmed scholars who were not his teachers, such as the scholars of Egypt, Mecca, Beirut and Hadramaut. And they praised him and prayed for him. And those who have good behaviour from tawadu', syuja'ah, fatonah and husnussiyasah until the deceased receive glory for this reason from the King and people accept his fatwa and all his laws throughout the country. So, every pious person with such a character is undoubtedly far from giving a fatwa or punishing ignorantly or with lust. So every believer and Muslim must help him, love and respect him and adhere firmly to all his fatwas, and it is never appropriate to change his fatwas and laws. So the person who blames him and adjusts it as if he is blaming Islamic scholars even blames Rasulullah SAW and blames Allah SWT.”*

As for Burhan Naqli, Muhammad Hasan stated that the *Imkān al-rukyah* limit of at least 7 degrees is *istiqrāu tām*, which gives certain benefits. Because people have never seen the Moon (*hilāl*) below 7 degrees, and people in Betawi have never seen it with valid vision. So if someone accuses them of seeing the Moon (*hilāl*) even though it is less than 7 degrees, that is simply a lie. Or it may be true if you see it with two extraordinarily sharp eyes or binoculars. Still, the *Shar'ī* does not confirm (teach) these two visions and does not cancel with certainty the impossible rukyat of the Moon, which is less than 7 degrees which is known by *istiqrā'u tām*. However, if the Moon is less than 7 degrees, it is not obligatory or sunnah because it is 'abats, namely in vain, while the Sharia does not command anything that is in vain.

**Fourth**, another Burhan is about the kadi's obligation to reject witnesses who see the Moon at less than 7 degrees even though the witness meets the requirements as a witness, namely 'is and muru'ah. This is related to the general ulamā' muḥaqqiqīn who adheres to the *qawl* of Shaykh al-Subkī, who says to reject witnesses who accuse of seeing the Moon on a night where it is impossible to be rukyat and that is the *qawl rājiḥ* which is obligatory for the kadi to punish by rejecting witnesses who see the *hilāl* less than 7 degrees. Likewise, the mufti must also issue a fatwa. Meanwhile, the *qawl* of Shaykh al-Zarkashi and the *qawl* of Shaykh al-Ramlī said that it was accepted by witnesses who had sufficient conditions who

claimed to see the Moon (*hilāl*) on a night that was impossible to be rukyat even though it was al-Hasanat al-Qath'iy, so the *qawl* was considered dhaif. The number of muhaqqiqin ulama gave his wisdom. So the kadi or mufti who sentenced or issued a fatwa with al-Zarkashi's *qawl* is wicked and unjust, because the *ijmā'* of the ulama does not condemn and pass a fatwa with a weak *qawl*.

The existence of the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* shows that Guru Marzuqi was one of the Betawi scholars who was an expert in the field of astronomy at that time, although in general, the content of the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* is Guru Marzuqi's rebuttal against people who rejected Ḥabīb 'Uthmān's fatwa.<sup>27</sup> Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the initial determination of the lunar month in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* uses the *imkān al-rukayah* method with the 7-degree criteria, which follows Ḥabīb 'Uthmān's fatwa in the books *Īqāz al-Niyām* and *Tamyiz al-Haqq*. To find out the height of the new Moon, Teacher Marzuqi uses *Taqwīm al-Nayyirain ḥisāb*, as found in the book *Īqāz al-Niyām*. However, in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*, astronomical data or examples of calculations for determining the beginning of the lunar month are not explicitly presented.

Thus, the thoughts of *Imkān al-rukayah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* which is guided by the *ḥisāb Taqwīm al-Nayyirain* are included in the classification of *ḥisāb ḥaqīqī taqrībī*. This is because the calculation still uses data from *Zīj Sulṭani* by Ulugh Beik. It should be noted that *Zīj Sulṭani* is still based on geocentric theory. This is because the *Zīj* is still heavily influenced by Ptolemy's thoughts, which stated that the Earth is the centre of the circulation of the planets and the Sun. As for finding the height of the crescent Moon, it is calculated from the centre of the Earth, not from the surface of the Earth, and is guided by the average motion of the Moon, which is 12 degrees to the East every day, so the operation is to take into account the difference between the time of *ijtima* (conjunction) and the time of sunset—then divided by two. The consequence is that if *ijtimā'* occurs before the Sun sets, then when the Sun sets, the Moon (*hilāl*) will practically be above the horizon.

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Ustaz Amir (Grandson of teacher Marzuqi al-Bātāwī) on August 11, 2018, at the al-Marzuqiyyah Cipinang Muara Mosque, East Jakarta.

### 3. Implementation of *Imkān al-Rukyah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī's Thoughts on Determining the Beginning of the Lunar Month

In the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*, Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī believes that the new Moon can only be seen with the naked eye without using binoculars or other tools if the height of the new Moon is at least 7 degrees. *Imkān al-rukayah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī's thoughts in the Book of *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* are what are still followed and adhered to by the al-Marzūqiyah congregation in Cipinang Muara, East Jakarta in determining the start of the lunar month. The name al-Marzūqiyah was originally an Islamic boarding school founded by Guru Marzuqi in the month of Rabiul Awal 1340 AH to coincide with September 1921 AD. With patience and sincerity, Guru Marzuqi and his students, who were brought from Rawa Bangke, founded an Islamic boarding school and prayer room for teaching and learning activities. Like other Islamic boarding schools, the initial establishment of the al-Marzūqiyah Islamic boarding school faced many challenges and violence from residents, whether in direct physical contact or damage to the Islamic boarding school building, which is used as a residence for the students.<sup>28</sup>

On 25 Rajab 1353 H or 2 November 1934 AD, Guru Marzuqi was called by Allah SWT. After the death of Teacher Marzuqi, based on the agreement of his students, the construction of the Islamic boarding school was continued by his student and son-in-law, KH. Muhammad Tohir bin Ja'man (1898-1957). During his leadership, Tohir prioritized building a prayer room at the al-Marzūqiyah Islamic boarding school. He even advised the next generations to turn the prayer room into a mosque after the death of KH. Tohir, al-Marzūqiyah experienced a slight setback; some students even started leaving the Islamic boarding school. Despite this, construction of the prayer room continued until finally, in 1960, the prayer room was designated as a mosque, which was named the Jami' al-Marzūqiyah Mosque. Even though Guru Marzuqi has died, all his fatwas and teachings are still followed by the al-Marzūqiyah congregation, including determining the start of the lunar month. Jamaah al-Marzūqiyah adheres to the thoughts of Guru Marzuqi in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* and Ḥabīb 'Uthmān in the books *Īqāz al-Niyām* and *Tamyīz al-Ḥaqq* regarding the limits of *imkān al-rukayah* which states that the *hilāl* can only be seen by the

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<sup>28</sup> Latiful Khuluq, *Fajar Kebangunan Ulama: Biografi KH. Hasyim Asy'ari* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2000). 30-31.

ordinary eye without using binoculars and other tools is 7 degrees, not less than that. Meanwhile, to support the process of rukyat activities, the al-Marzūqiyyah congregation uses the *Taqwīm al-Nayyirain ḥisāb* contained in the book *Iqadz al-Niyam*.

Lukmanul Hakim (Al-Marzūqiyyah Mosque Hukmiyyah Agency) added that the congregation of the Cipinang Muara Al-Marzūqiyyah Mosque, East Jakarta, often have differences in determining the start of the lunar month with the Indonesian Government, this is due to differences in the *imkān al-rukyah* criteria used. Jamaah al-Marzūqiyyah uses the *imkān al-rukyah* criteria from Teacher Marzuqi al-Bātāwī, namely a minimum height of the crescent Moon of 7 degrees.<sup>29</sup> Meanwhile, the Indonesian Government uses the *Imkān al-rukyah* Neo MABIMS criteria, which were mutually agreed upon at the forum of the Ministers of Religion of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore on December 8 2021, namely a minimum height of the crescent Moon of 3 degrees and a minimum elongation angle of 6.4 degrees.

According to Busthomi (Administrator of the Jami' al-Marzūqiyyah Mosque, Cipinang Muara, East Jakarta), he explained that the main reason the al-Marzūqiyyah congregation continues to adhere to the *imkān al-rukyah* criteria of Teacher Marzuqi al-Bātāwī is as a form of obedience and respect for Teacher Marzuqi. Guru Marzuqi is a scholar with extensive scientific knowledge, so all his fatwas and decrees must be followed, including determining the start of the lunar month.

For example, the difference between the al-Marzūqiyyah congregation and the Indonesian Government determines the beginning of the lunar month on 1 Shawwal 1438 AH. The Indonesian Government, through the Indonesian Ministry of Religion, in the isbat session, decided that the Eid al-Fitr holiday falls on Sunday, June 25 2017. This is based on data. The calculation at the end of Ramadan is that the height of the new Moon is 3.88 degrees, the elongation angle is 5.06 degrees, and the age of the Moon is 8 hours 15 minutes 24 seconds. Apart from that, it was also reported that six people managed to see the new Moon, including Muhammad Moa, Abdullah Said Sajran, Tri Umaryadi Wibowo, Rahmat Setyo Yuliatmoko in Kupang, NTT and also Inwanuddin, Ahmad Azhar in Gresik,

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<sup>29</sup> Interview with Ustad Lukmanul Hakim (Al-Marzūqiyyah Mosque Hukmiyyah Syar'iyah Agency), on August 11 2018, at the al-Marzūqiyyah Mosque Cipinang Muara, East Jakarta.

East Java.<sup>30</sup> However, the Government's decision was not followed by the Jakarta al-Marzūqiyah congregation, which determined that 1 Shawwal 1438 AH fell on Monday, June 26 2017. This decision was taken because it was based on the results of *Taqwīm al-Nayyirain*'s calculations that the height of the new Moon at the end of Ramadan is 4 degrees, so it does not meet the *imkān al-rukayah* criteria of 7 degrees.

Knowing the differences between 1 Shawwal 1438 H above, as published on the viva.co.id news page, it is reported that the Indonesian Minister of Religion, Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, appealed to the al-Marzūqiyah congregation to follow the Government's decision in carrying out the celebration of Eid al-Fitr 1438. "I think as a minister, religion urges all Indonesian Muslims to obey and comply with our mutual agreement," said Lukman at the Indonesian Ministry of Religion office on Saturday, June 24 2017.<sup>31</sup> Based on the attitude of the al-Marzūqiyah congregation, which is still guided by the 7 degree *imkān al-rukayah* criteria in determining 1 Syawal 1438 AH above, the author explains the potential for togetherness or the potential for differences based on the use of the 7 degree *Imkān al-rukayah* criteria in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*. The following are the results of the initial calculations for Shawwal from 1424-1450 AH based on the *Taqwīm al-Nayyirain ḥisāb* (used in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*), the criteria for the form of al-*hilāl* (used in the Muhammadiyah calendar), the Neo MABIMS criteria for the height of the crescent Moon of 3 degrees and the elongation angle 6.4 degrees (used in the NU calendar and Standard Taqwim of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion), and also international date line criteria (Odeh criteria).

**Table 1**  
Comparison of the calculation of the beginning of Shawwal 1424-1450 H

No.	Hijri Calendar	The Beginning of Shawwal			
		<i>Faḍl al-Raḥmān</i>	<i>Wujūd al-Hilāl</i>	Neo MABIMS	Odeh
1	1424	26/11/2003	*25/11/2003	*25/11/2003	26/11/2003
2	1425	14/11/2004	14/11/2004	14/11/2004	14/11/2004
3	1426	4/11/2005	*3/11/2005	*3/11/2005	4/11/2005
4	1427	24/10/2006	24/10/2006	24/10/2006	24/10/2006
5	1428	13/10/2007	13/10/2007	13/10/2007	13/10/2007
6	1429	31/9/2008	31/9/2008	31/9/2008	31/9/2008
7	1430	20/9/2009	20/9/2009	20/9/2009	20/9/2009
8	1431	10/9/2010	10/9/2010	10/9/2010	10/9/2010

<sup>30</sup> Decree of the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 501 of 2017, concerning the Determination of the Date 1 Shawwal 1438 H.

<sup>31</sup> Hardani Triyoga, "Ada Jemaah Masjid Lebaran 26 Juni, Ini Respons Menag," 2017, <https://www.viva.co.id/berita/nasional/929394-ada-jemaah-masjid-lebaran-26-juni-ini-respons-menag>.

9	1432	31/8/2011	*30/8/2011	31/8/2011	31/8/2011
10	1433	19/8/2012	19/8/2012	19/8/2012	19/8/2012
11	1434	8/8/2013	8/8/2013	8/8/2013	*9/8/2013
12	1435	29/7/2014	*28/7/2014	*28/7/2014	29/7/2014
13	1436	18/7/2015	*17/7/2015	*17/7/2015	18/7/2015
14	1437	6/7/2016	6/7/2016	6/7/2016	6/7/2016
15	1438	26/6/2017	*25/6/2017	*25/6/2017	26/6/2017
16	1439	15/6/2018	15/6/2018	15/6/2018	15/6/2018
17	1440	5/6/2019	5/6/2019	5/6/2019	5/6/2019
18	1441	24/5/2020	24/5/2020	24/5/2020	24/5/2020
19	1442	13/5/2021	13/5/2021	13/5/2021	13/5/2021
20	1443	2/5/2022	2/5/2022	2/5/2022	3/5/2022
21	1444	22/4/2023	*21/4/2023	22/4/2023	22/4/2023
22	1445	10/4/2024	10/4/2024	10/4/2024	10/4/2024
23	1446	31/3/2025	31/3/2025	31/3/2025	31/3/2025
24	1447	21/3/2026	*20/3/2026	21/3/2026	21/3/2026
25	1448	10/3/2027	10/3/2027	10/3/2027	10/3/2027
26	1449	27/2/2028	27/2/2028	27/2/2028	27/2/2028
27	1450	15/2/2029	15/2/2029	15/2/2029	15/2/2029

From the results of the comparison of the beginning of Shawwal for 27 years above, it can be seen that the use of the *imkān al-rukyah* criteria of 7 degrees in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* when compared with the results of the calculation of the form of *al-hilāl*, there are eight differences (in 1424, 1426, 1432, 1435, 1436, 1438, 1444, 1447). Then, if compared with the Neo MABIMS criteria, the height of the crescent Moon is 3 degrees, and the elongation angle is 6.4 degrees; there is a five times difference (years 1424, 1426, 1435, 1436, 1438). However, if it is compared with international date line criteria (Odeh criteria), there is only one difference (1434 AH).

Based on the explanation above, according to the author, the *imkān al-rukyah* criteria of 7 degrees in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* are optimistic *imkān al-rukyah* criteria (because the position of the new Moon is relatively high), thus allowing the new Moon to be easily seen. As for the use of the *imkān al-rukyah* 7 degrees criterion in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān*, if it is compared with several of the requirements above, the results are close to the international date line criteria (Odeh criteria). This is because Odeh also provides high parameters in the crib visibility criteria. However, the results differ from other standards, such as *wujūd al-hilāl* and Neo MABIMS.

According to the author, the differences between the beginning of Shawwal in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* and other criteria are not only due to differences in the standards used but also the database used also influences the results of the calculation. As explained above, the book *Faḍl al-*

*Raḥmān* uses *Taqwīm al-Nayyirayn ḥisāb*, which takes data from the *Zīj Ulugh Beik al-Samarqandi* table, so it is categorized into the type of *ḥisāb ḥaqīqī taqībī*. As for the criteria for the form of *hilāl*, Neo MABIMS and Odeh are included in the category of contemporary *ḥisāb*, which has a high level of accuracy.

Therefore, other elements are needed to achieve uniformity in the established Hijri calendar, not only equalizing the criteria for the visibility of the new Moon. This is as stated in the 2017 Jakarta Recommendation that the implementation of global calendar unification is based on three prerequisites that must be fulfilled at once, namely: (1) the existence of a single criterion, (2) the existence of an agreement on the deadline, and (3) the existence of a single authority.<sup>32</sup>

#### D. Conclusion

Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded as follows: First, the origins of *imkān al-rukyah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī's thoughts are the result of the ideas of his teacher, namely Ḥabīb 'Uthmān Ibn 'Āqil Ibn Yaḥyā al-'Alawī, who taught *Zīj Ulugh Beik al-Samarqandi* from 'Abdurraḥmān al-Miṣrī in Betawi. Second, *imkān al-rukyah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī's thoughts written in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* essentially criticize those who reject Ḥabīb 'Uthmān's fatwa. Teacher Marzuqi stated that the minimum limit for *imkān al-rukyah* is 7 degrees without using a telescope. This provision has been in effect in Betawi for a very long time, up to nearly 100 years. Third, the thoughts of *imkān al-rukyah* Ahmad Marzuqi al-Bātāwī in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* are still implemented by the Cipinang Muara al-Marzūqiyyah congregation, East Jakarta in determining the start of the lunar month, so that if the height of the new Moon is less than 7 degrees, it often causes differences with the Government using the *imkān al-rukyah* Neo MABIMS criteria. If compared with several criteria, the *imkān al-rukyah* criteria of 7 degrees in the book *Faḍl al-Raḥmān* are close to the international date line criteria (Odeh criteria).

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<sup>32</sup> Thomas Djamaluddin, "Rekomendasi Jakarta 2017," in *Seminar Internasional Fikih Falak "Peluang dan Tantangan Implementasi Kalender Global Hijriah Tunggal"* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama RI, 2017).

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