

Religious Leaders' Understanding of Astronomy and Its Implications in Determining the Direction of the Qibla in Medang Daras District, Batubara Regency

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Abstract: *The direction of the qibla is a fundamental aspect of Islamic worship, as facing the Kaaba is a legal requirement for the validity of prayer. Errors in determining the qibla direction, therefore, have normative implications in Islamic law. This study examines the understanding and practice of religious leaders in Medang Daras District, Batu Bara Regency, in determining the qibla direction from both legal and astronomical perspectives. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the research explores primary data obtained through interviews and direct observation, complemented by secondary data from literature and scientific references related to astronomy and Islamic law. The findings indicate that the understanding of religious leaders regarding astronomical principles remains limited, resulting in practical methods that rely heavily on local traditions such as aligning with the direction of the sunset or following the guidance of elder community members. This practice shows a discrepancy between local customary understanding and the normative standards of Islamic law, which require accuracy in facing the qibla. Therefore, strengthening legal and astronomical literacy among religious leaders is essential to ensure the precision of qibla determination and the validity of worship practices in accordance with sharia principles.*

Keywords: *Astronomy; Perception; Religious Figures; Qibla Direction.*

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INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the development and progress of Islam, the need for the accuracy of the direction of the qibla has been crucial for Muslims. Therefore, this is in line with the practice of worship and serves as a safe guideline for Muslims who want to

perform prayers. One of the scholars of Islamic jurisprudence, Imam Shafi'i, emphasized that it is obligatory for Muslims to respect the Kaaba in accordance with the obligatory and sunnah that they carry out in their daily lives. If one understands the meaning of the Kaaba, they should pay

attention to it.¹ However, if they can't determine the right direction, they may be subject to an estimate. Accurate Qibla direction is very important to fulfill the obligations of Muslims when performing prayers. There is no dispute or controversy among academics regarding the validity of facing the qibla during prayer.

Therefore, Muslims must face the qibla when praying. Because facing the qibla is related to the determination of the heart before, during, or after the prayer, which is related to the validity of the prayer. must be sure which way to face before prayer.² This has been stated in the words of Allah in Q.S. Al-Baqarah verse 144:

قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

Meaning: "Indeed, We see your face (the Prophet Muhammad) often looking up to the sky. So We will surely turn you to the Qibla that you like. Then, turn your face towards the Masjidilharam. Wherever you are, turn your face towards it. Indeed, those who have been given the book know that it is the truth of their Lord. Allah is not careless about what they do."³

When Islam entered the archipelago. To determine the direction of the qibla, it is still necessary to estimate the direction of the cardinal or glance at the direction of the sunset. Because, as is known, the countries in the archipelago are located far to the east of the Arab countries. As a result, in those days, the cemeteries and places of worship of Muslims were usually different, even though

they all faced west.⁴

However, in practice, the determination of the qibla direction often raises legal and practical issues, especially when traditional estimation methods differ from astronomical calculations recognized by Islamic law and national regulations. In Medang Deras District, Batu Bara Regency, many religious leaders still rely on inherited local practices, such as aligning the qibla with the sunset direction or following the orientation of older mosques, without verification using modern instruments. This condition creates a potential discrepancy between local custom (*'urf*) and the normative standards established by Islamic jurisprudence and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. From a legal perspective, inaccurate qibla orientation can affect the validity of prayer (*ṣaḥīḥ al-ṣalāh*), making it not only a technical but also a jurisprudential issue. Therefore, it becomes important to examine how religious leaders in Medang Deras perceive and apply the process of determining the qibla direction within the framework of both Islamic law and astronomical science.

Regarding the problem of the direction of the qibla, it has happened in the construction of a mosque in the jami mosque in the village of medang. According to Mr. Anwar, as the administrator of religious leaders in the village, the determination of the direction of the qibla at that time was using the manual method only, namely by using the direction of the sunset to the west. This is contrary to the mui fatwa which states that the direction of the qibla must be based on the geographical location of the mosque. So this

¹ Shovan Arsy Putra, Dkk, *Analisis Pertimbangan Kemaslahatan Dalam Penentuan Arah Kiblat Pada Musholla Al-Qadar Surabaya*, Jurnal Pemikiran dan Pembaharuan Hukum Islam, Vol. 27, No.1, (2024), 105.

² Khalifat Shalihah. *Pandangan Tokoh Agama Terhadap Tingkat Akurasi Arah Kiblat Masjid-*

Masjid Se- Kecamatan Batu Layar Kabupaten Lombok Barat Menggunakan Istiwaini, Jurnal Ilmu Falak Dan Astronomi, Vol. 2, No.2, (2020), 36

³ Kementerian Agama RI, *Mushaf Al Huda Kelompok Gema Insani*, (Jakarta: Al Huda, 2017), 22

⁴ Mohd.Kalam Daud, *Ilmu Falak Praktis Arah Kiblat Dan Waktu Shalat* (Aceh: Safahih, 2019), 67

is an interesting discussion to study further. The purpose of this research is to understand more clearly the history of determining the direction of the Qibla.

METHOD

This research method uses a qualitative approach with a type of field research combined with literature studies.⁵ Primary data was obtained through interviews and direct observation of religious leaders in Medang Deras District, while secondary data came from relevant literature, articles, and scientific works. All collected data is analyzed in a qualitative descriptive manner by organizing, grouping, and interpreting information⁶ so as to produce a complete and accurate picture of the understanding⁷ and the practice of religious leaders in determining the direction of the Qibla.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Medang Deras District, Batu Bara Regency, Geographical Location of the Region

Medang Deras District is one of the existing sub-districts located in Batu Bara Regency, which has an area of 3.94 km, while the community or indigenous people of Medang village are Malay ethnic groups and the area in Medang Deras District, Batu Bara Regency is 65.47 km.⁸ And it has latitude coordinates 3 25' 01" and longitude 99 18' 36".⁹ Residents of Medang Deras District, Batu Bara Regency have a livelihood as farmers, fishermen, traders, and so on.

Perception of Religious Leaders Towards the Direction of the Qibla in Medang Deras District, Batu Bara Regency Definition of Religious Leaders

Tokoh agama diartikan sebagai An individual who is a respected person and has a considerable influence on the development of religious education in this area. The position of religious leaders plays an important role in society because they are seen as individuals who have greater religious sensitivity and knowledge compared to other members of society. Therefore, religious leaders in general have behaviors that are often referred to as examples in the context of fostering the morals of adolescents and society. Because, human beings with noble character will be present in the construction of a peaceful society full of brotherhood.¹⁰

Religious leaders are sometimes called ulama because according to them, ulama is a person who understands and knowledge. Scholars refer to scholars or someone who has a deep understanding of religion. Scholars are people who have a deep understanding of Islam and can be an example for the general public in incorporating Islam into their daily lives. The impact of ulama on the general public is still quite significant in determining several things. Its participation in development can be described as something that can help its participants. This scholarly title can be attributed to anyone with the following characteristics: having knowledge of Islam and society.¹¹

Religious Leaders are people who

⁵ Abdul Fattah Nasution, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Harfa Creative, 2023), 35

⁶ Safrida Hafni Syair, *Metode Penelitian* (Jogjakarta: Kbm Indonesia, 2021), 6.

⁷ Dewi Kurniasih, Dkk, *Teknik Analisa* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2021), 3.

⁸ Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Batu Bara, *Luas Wilayah Kecamatan dan Rasio Luas Kabupaten*, 2019, <https://batubarakab.bps.go.id/diakses> pada tanggal 6 Mei 2025.

⁹ Google Maps

¹⁰ Risaldi Posu, Dkk, *Peran Kepemimpinan Tokoh Agama Dalam Meningkatkan Skap Keberagaman Masyarakat Di Desa Sangowo Kecamatan Morotai Timur Kabupaten Pulau Morotai*, *Jurnal Transdisiplin Budaya Tanaman, Perkebunan, Kehutanan, Peternakan, Perikanan, Sosial dan Ekonomi*, Vol.19, No.1, (2023), 702.

¹¹ Marissa Dwi Anjarahmi, Taufik Alamin, *Peran Tokoh Agama dalam Meningkatkan Spiritualitas*

have strong religious beliefs in providing explanations, guidance, and encouragement to the community through authority and respect. Religious leaders can be described as a group of intellectuals with a commitment to continuous reform, as well as providing information that highlights the differences between the old role of the kyai and the Muslim community.¹²

Religious figures in common or general discussions that are often mentioned are ulama. In Indonesian, the term "ulama" refers to people who are experts in their understanding of Islam. However, if we look at *Al-Mu'jam al-Wasith*, ulama is a type of jama' of the word "Alim" which refers to someone who has a lot of knowledge. Not only that, but there are also people who understand God's greatness and power.¹³

The Role of Religious Leaders

Roles are social functions performed by individuals when occupying a certain position in a social structure. Role is a term for actions related to status. It's a bit difficult to understand. Role is a characteristic of a certain position, therefore if a person performs a task that is in accordance with his position, then he has completed his task. Because of the social structure that has been formed, the role will not be able to stand alone without the help of others.¹⁴ Religious leaders or religious

leaders, such as Kyai, clerics, pastors, and pastors, have a significant influence on the general public because they act as role models and influence public opinion, especially on issues such as elections. They provide insight into the importance of participation in the process and provide examples of good behavior.¹⁵

The role of religious leaders in the midst of society plays a very important role in the process of religious development for all citizens. Good religious coaching will highlight the excellence of community behavior in carrying out the norms or humanity that apply in the community concerned. Compared to other things, the importance of religious leaders in fostering religious obedience in society cannot be overstated. The role of religious leaders cannot be balanced by the influence of social media and information technology. This is because morals and religious understanding are fundamental religious practices that cannot be done with information technology or similar means.¹⁶ Religious figures are urgent figures who are respected by the community and an important part of Indonesia's religion, social, politics and statehood.¹⁷

Masyarakat di Kabupaten Bojonegoro, *Jurnal Of Islamic and Social Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, (2023), 20.

¹² Nur Aini Setyaningtyas, Noor Alwiyah, Peran Tokoh Agama Dalam Menanamkan Nilai Pendidikan Islam Pada Karyawan Sritex Di Perum Sri Sejahtera Kenep Sukoharjo, *Jurnal Evaluasi Pendidikan dan Penelitian*, Vol.3, No. 2, (2022), 61.

¹³ M. Miftahul Huda, Luthfirrohman, Ulama Dalam Al-Qur'an, *Ayatuna : Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir*, Vol. 1, No.3, (2024), 48.

¹⁴ Marissa Dwi Anjarahmi, dan Taufik Alamin, Peran Tokoh Agama dalam Meningkatkan Spiritualitas Masyarakat di Kabupaten Bojonegoro, *Jurnal Of Islamic and Social Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, (2023), 19.

¹⁵ Haerul, Peran Tokoh Agama dalam Meningkatkan Partisipasi Masyarakat Pada Pemilihan Gubernur Sulawesi Selatan Pada Tahun 2018 Di Kota Makassar, *Jurnal Governance and Politiccs*, Vol. 2, No.1, (2022), 13.

¹⁶ Yuniarti Amalia, Dkk, Peran Tokoh Agama dalam Pembinaan Keagamaan Masyarakat Di Kelurahan Fookuni Kecamatan Katobu Kabupaten Muna, *Jurnal Mercusuar*, Vol.2, No. 2, (2022), 92-93.

¹⁷ Andini Nurrahman Dewi, Agus Machfud Fauzi, Peran Tokoh Agama Dalam Meningkatkan Religiusitas Warga Desa Giri, Kabupaten Gresik Di Masa Pandemi Covid-19, *Jurnal Majalah Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Pemikiran Keagamaan Tajdid*, Vol. 24, No.1, (2021), 66.

Duties and Positions of Religious Leaders

The following are the duties and positions of religious leaders, which are as follows;

1. Control, conserve and supervise, as well as convey the behavior of community members in the environment they lead.
2. Provide a clear and easy-to-understand main framework so that it can be used as a guideline for participants. Because of the aforementioned main framework, it is possible to discuss a certain level of importance related to the decision that should be considered as a solution to the problem at hand.
3. Act as a group representative to the outside world of the group represented in a certain area.
4. Religious leaders as leaders are able to influence and mobilize others to want to work together more constructively.
5. Religious leaders as educators, namely educating others to become good and virtuous human beings.
6. As mediators, religious leaders play the role of mediators in various community problems so that they can be solved effectively.
7. Religious leaders as enablers, namely as a source of support in order to succeed in various religious activities in the community.¹⁸

Religious leaders are people who do not have official status as leaders, but because

of the many superior qualities they possess, they are seen as people who can influence the psychological and behavioral conditions of a group or the general public. In general, the Indonesian people's understanding of religious figures is defined as any individual who is considered to have religious understanding, have followers, and is referred to as a *kyai* or *ustadz*.¹⁹

The Meaning of Philosophy

According to the language, the word "*falak*" comes from the Arabic word *al-falak*, which means orbital or the trajectory of celestial bodies. Astronomy refers to the study of the orbit or trajectory and movement of particular celestial bodies (earth, moon, and sun) in their circulation, which is taught in relation to the needs of humanity. In other words, astronomy is defined as the knowledge that teaches about different types of celestial bodies from different angles, including shapes, sizes, physical characteristics, positions, and movements that are very closely related to each other. Especially in Islam, *falak* is very helpful in determining the time of worship. This is because worship can be compared with the position of celestial bodies, which is very relevant, and can be taught very carefully in astronomy of the sun, moon, and earth, especially regarding the position as a result of its movement.²⁰

The discussion of the subject of astronomy can be seen from the terminology used is rather long because it is not really related to time and seasons, but to the changes that occur on the earth's surface. Due to the

¹⁸ Nur Aini Setyaningtyas, Noor Alwiyah, Peran Tokoh Agama Dalam Menanamkan Nilai Pendidikan Islam Pada Karyawan Sritex Di Perum Sri Sejahtera Kenep Sukoharjo, *Jurnal Evaluasi Pendidikan dan Penelitian*, Vol. 3, No.2, (2022), 62.

¹⁹ Halimatussakdiyah, Maya Semiasri, Peran Tokoh Agama Dalam Meningkatkan Kesadaran Terhadap

Pandemi Covid-19, *Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling Islam*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (2021), 68

²⁰ Nur Hijriah, Muhammad Anis, Peran Eksistensi Ilmu Falak Dalam Penentuan Arah Kiblat Kuburan Studi Pemahaman Desa Labokong Kabupaten soppong, *Jurnal Hisabuna*, Vol. 2, No. 3, (2021), 119.

seriousness of the astronomers (falaki) studying and researching the celestial (sun, moon, and stars), the science of astronomy experienced rapid growth and progress in the Islamic era. From the results of their research, they found new theories on astronomy that are beneficial to humans. The discussion of astronomy also has a strong connection with the needs of Muslims' worship, such as determining the position or direction of the qibla of various parts of the region, determining prayer times, either through hisab with relevant formulas or through observation (rukyat), and determining the beginning of the month of Kamariah (Ramadan and Shawwal) to emphasize the importance of fasting Ramadan and Lebaran. Therefore, the teaching of astronomy has two important components. First, to study astronomy for the mastery and development of astronomy in the field of astronomy, thus producing world-renowned astronomers (Muslim astronomers). They developed astronomy by studying astronomy books written by previous experts in various languages, and conducting research on celestial bodies (sun, moon and stars). The results of their research resulted in new theories as a contribution to the development of science (astronomy), both in the East and in the West.²¹

In general, the science of Falak consists of two types of science. The first is etymologically derived from the word "Falak" which means "the trajectory of celestial bodies" and in English is called "orbit". The second term of Astronomy is the science that teaches about celestial bodies, such as the Moon, Sun, stars, and celestial bodies, with the aim of understanding the position of celestial bodies and their position.²²

History of Falak

Astronomy is also known as a science that has existed for a long time, starting in the time of Aristotle, around 384–322 BC, to the time of Ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Mesopotamia, and even to the Chinese period, which is estimated to have begun to develop around 28 BC. In Ancient Egypt, belief in Falak was used to support their religious beliefs, such as their worship of Osiris, Isis, Ammon, Ashtaroth, Baal, and others. According to a literary work by Falak, the determination of the day in this period has been around for at least 5000 years. It is historically referred to as the sign of the days of the week in the division of days in one week. During this time, its names were based on stars or celestial bodies, such as the Sun for Sunday, the Moon for Monday, Mars for Tuesday, Mercury for Wednesday, Jupiter for Thursday, Venus for Friday, and Saturn for Saturday. Astronomy began to appear to be in demand during its journey, and as it developed in the scientific scene, it flourished and experienced rapid progress in the 12th century BC. Currently, Falak education is promoted throughout the state of China by highlighting significant advances in the field, such as eclipse journeys and the passing stars.²³

The discussion of the falak of knowledge is closely related to the issue of worship. This is because the main topics discussed in the philosophy of science include eclipses, the direction of the qibla, the beginning of the month of Qamariyah, and the determination of the beginning of prayer times. As part of Islamic religious activities, knowledge about Islam was also brought to Indonesia. The discussion of the early years of falak education in Indonesia is found in

²¹ Wulan Syaputri, dan Dhiauddin Tanjung, Peran Ilmu Falak Dalam Menentukan Arah Kiblat, *Jurnal Al-Ahwal As-Syakhsyah*, Vol.6, No. 1, (2021), 2.

²² Taufiqurrahman Kurniawan, *Ilmu Falak dan Tinjauan Matlak Global* (Yogyakarta: MPKSDI, 2010), 1.

²³ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

almost the same falak education books. All of them state that the early development of astronomy in the archipelago, the hijri system into the Javanese calendar was practiced by Sultan Agung. Sultan Agung's hard work in spreading Islam on the island of Java, within the framework of Mataram, began in 1625 and involved a decree to help the Saka people. Currently, the Javanese version of the Mataram calendar still uses the Qamariyah calendar system or lunar calendar.²⁴

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that the history of astronomy has a long history in its development until the present day where astronomy is very important in daily life such as determining the beginning of prayer, determining the day and month. Thus, astronomy is very influential in every natural phenomenon that occurs.

Mui Fatwa Regarding the Direction of the Qibla

In the MUI fatwa No. 03 of 2010 concerning the Qiblah, it is stated that for those who are able to observe the Kaaba, it is obligatory to point to the building itself (Ainul Ka'bah), but for those who are unable to observe it, it is obligatory to respect the Kaaba (Jihadul Ka'bah). Since Indonesia is located before the Kaaba in the east, the Qibla in question is west-oriented. Whenever a mosque or prayer room is located in the Qibla area, it does not need to be replaced, dismantled, or handled in any other way. However, based on astronomical and astronomical research, this fatwa presents a criticism of the Shafi'i school, which argues that the qibla should be in the northwest. They

stated that the MUI turned out to be in Africa, Somalia, Kenya, and Tanzania. The correct direction is the west sea with different types of angles or slopes based on the geography of the mosque. According to the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), the direction of the qibla of prayer in Indonesia must be determined based on the geographical location of the mosque, not only based on *ijma'* and faith. The MUI changed Fatwa Number 3 of 2010 to Fatwa Number 5 in the same year.²⁵ Therefore, the Fatwa Commission of the Indonesian Ulema Council issued fatwa Number 5 of 2010 concerning the Direction of the Qibla as a revision of the fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council Number 3 of 2010 concerning the Qiblah, Indonesian Ulema decided that:

1. The Qibla for those who pray and can see *the Kaaba* is facing the Kaaba building (*'Ain Al-Ka'bah*).
2. The Qibla for those who pray and cannot see *the Kaaba* is the direction of the Kaaba (*Jihah Al-Ka'bah*).
3. The mecca of Indonesian Muslims is facing northwest with positions varying according to the location of each region. The Fatwa Commission of the Indonesian Ulema Council also recommends that the buildings of mosques or qibla mushallas need to be rearranged without dismantling the buildings.²⁶

Determination of Qibla Direction

The word "*qibla*" is derived from the Arabic word "*al-qiblat*." It is mentioned four times in the Qur'an. This word comes from the word "*qabala-yaqbulu*" which is implied to be

²⁴ Watni Marpaung, *Pengantar Ilmu Falak* (Jakarta: Kencana , 2015), 19-20.

²⁵ Shovan Arsyia Putra, Dkk, Analisis Pertimbangan Kemaslahatan Dalam Penentuan Arah Kiblat Pada Musholla Al-Qadar Surabaya, *Jurnal Pemikiran dan*

Pembaharuan Hukum Islam, Vol .27, No. 1, (2024), 108-109.

²⁶ Ahmadin Amri Roki, Realisai Pelaksanaan Fatwa Mui No.5 Tahun 2010 Tentang Arah Kiblat di Masjid Kecamatan Medan Tembung, *Jurnal Media Hukum Indonesia*, Vol.2, No. 1, (2024), 725.

deceit. The al-Munawwir Dictionary is referred to as the Kaaba, while the Great Indonesian Dictionary is referred to as the direction to the Kaaba in Mecca (during prayer time). According to Falak, the qibla is the direction that the Kaaba passes through a large circle when praying. The Kaaba, also known as the baitullah, is a holy building that serves as a venue for various Muslim worship events held in Mecca. It consists of cubes known as muka'ab in Arabic. Hence the term Ka'bah.²⁷

The problem of the Qibla is none other than the direction, especially the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca. The qibla aspect is an important part of Islamic practice, for example, prayer. The direction can be determined through calculations and measurements from locations on the earth's surface. Therefore, the calculation of the direction of the Qibla in essence is determining the direction of the Kaaba from a certain location for the validity of all prayer movements to be the same as the direction of the Kaaba as well as standing, prostration, or prostration.²⁸ Regarding the direction of the qibla, it is necessary to measure it so that the direction is more precise. In this case, in determining the direction of the qibla, there are several tools that can be used, namely :

1. *Miqyas*
2. *Tongkat Istiwa*
3. *Rubu' Mujayyab*
4. *Compass*
5. *Gps*
6. *Theodolite*²⁹

The discussion of falak is closely related to the issue of worship. This is because the main topics discussed in the philosophy of science include eclipses, the direction of the qibla, the beginning of the month of Qamariyah, and the determination of the beginning of prayer time.³⁰ The discussion of astronomy also has a strong connection with the needs of Muslims, such as determining the position or direction of the qibla of various parts of the region, determining prayer times, either through hisab with relevant formulas or through observation (rukyat), and determining the beginning of the month of Kamariah (Ramadan and Shawwal) to emphasize the importance of fasting Ramadan and Lebaran.³¹

In this case, the researcher will not discuss the calculation, but the researcher will discuss the understanding of religious leaders about the science of astronomy which is used in determining the direction of the qibla. In the study of the understanding possessed by religious leaders of Medang Village regarding astronomy, the researcher has conducted interviews with resource persons, namely Mr. Anwar, Mr. Audio Tara and Mr. Abdul Rahman which the researcher can know and represent from religious leaders in Medang Village.

The first interview that the researcher conducted was with Mr. Anwar as a religious figure of Medang Village, where he said that according to his understanding, he explained that Falak is the science of astrology or the science that explains the trajectory of celestial

²⁷ Jayusman, *Ilmu Falak Fiqh Hisab Rukyah Penentuan Arah Kiblat dan Awal Waktu Sholat* (Banten: Media Edu Pustaka, 2022), 3-4.

²⁸ Shovan Arsy Putra, Dkk, Analisis Pertimbangan Kemashalatan Dalam Penentuan Arah Kiblat Pada Musholla Al-Qadar Surabaya, *Jurnal Pemikiran dan Pembaharuan Hukum Islam*, Vol. 27, No. 1, (2024), 108.

²⁹ Achmad Mulyadi, *Ilmu Falak Hisab Arah Kiblat dan Awal Waktu Salat* (Sumenep : Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia Institut Agama Islam Negeri Madura, 2022), 42.

³⁰ Watni Marpaung, *Pengantar Ilmu Falak* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2015), 19-20.

³¹ Wulan Syaputri, Dhiauddin Tanjung, Peran Ilmu Falak Dalam Menentukan Arah Kiblat, *Jurnal Al-Ahwal As-Syakhsyah*, Vol .6, No. 1, (2021), 2.

bodies. According to him, the benefits of astronomy in daily life are such as determining the beginning of the fasting month of Ramadan and determining the direction of the Qibla.

Mr. Anwar's remarks were in line with the statement of Mr. Audio Tara S.pd who explained that astronomy is a science of astrology which studies the motion and position of the direction of the sky and focuses on the sun, moon and stars. And as for his opinion from the philosophy of falak in daily life, such as in terms of determining the time of prayer, determining the beginning of the fasting month of Ramadan and determining the direction of the Qibat.

From the results of the researcher's interviews with Mr. Anwar and Mr. Audio Tara, we can tell from the statement above that the two of them know and understand at least a lot about astronomy and its benefits in daily life. However, in terms of understanding the two of them in terms of the philosophy of philosophy, it is still not so deep because it is only limited to understanding which in its application is still rarely implemented in the field.

Next, the researcher conducted another interview with the treasurer of the mosque, namely Masjid Jami, who was in the village of Medang, namely with Mr. Abdul Rahman. At the time of the interview, Mr. Abdul Rahman did not really understand astronomy, all he knew was that astronomy was astronomy. In terms of its uses and benefits, I don't know. He said he had forgotten about the astronomy. Based on what the researcher did from the results of the interview with the resource person above regarding the understanding of religious leaders in Medang Deras District regarding

astronomy, it can be concluded that they do not really understand the science of astronomy. The understanding of religious leaders about astronomy is still general. Likewise in terms of its uses and benefits.

Perception of Religious Leaders on the Direction of the Qibla in Medang Deras District

In Indonesia, it is generally believed that facing the Qibla means facing the West, because Indonesia is geographically located to the East of the city of Makkah. It is different with Muslims who are west of the city of Makkah, so when praying, of course, it is generally facing the East like in Suriname Latin America. Therefore, before a person wants to pray, they must first meet the requirements, both the mandatory requirements and the legal requirements. One of them is to be sure and aware that the direction of the Qibla is correct. The belief and understanding of the direction of the Qibla in society today cannot be separated from the teachings that live and develop in society. Where the majority of Indonesian people are adherents of the Shafi'i maddzhab, so the effort to really face the qibla (kaaba) is a must.³²

The problem of the Qibla is none other than the direction, especially the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca. The qibla aspect is an important part of Islamic practice, for example, prayer. The direction can be determined through calculations and measurements from locations on the earth's surface. Therefore, the calculation of the direction of the Qibla in essence is to determine the direction of the Kaaba from a certain location for the validity of all prayer movements to be the same as the direction of

³² Muhammad Awaludin, Ahmad Saifulhaq Almuhtadi, *Arah Kiblat Dialektika Fiqh, Sains dan Tradisi* (Mataram: Sanabil, 2020), 6.

the Kaaba as well as standing, prostration, or prostration.³³

As explained above, astronomy is a science that deals with the stars. Next, the researcher interviewed another religious leader who had previously been interviewed about the understanding of religious leaders regarding the direction of the qibla, then the researcher interviewed the direction of the qibla or the perception of religious leaders regarding the direction of the qibla, namely to Mr. Audio Tara S.pd, he said that according to him, facing the direction of the qibla is important, especially in matters of prayer, but in the measurement or determination to face the direction of the qibla, he said he lacked understanding to determine the direction of the qibla, Which at that time the determination of the direction of the Qibla was still using manually.

Furthermore, the researcher interviewed Mr. Anwar, he said that he thought that praying facing the qibla was mandatory in the matter of prayer and facing the direction of the qibla was very important, but he said that he did not understand the direction of the qibla, because at the time of the construction of the mosque in his village he still entrusted the elders to determine the direction of the qibla beforehand. If there is a re-measurement carried out later, he said he is ready to change the direction of his shaf.

And the last researcher interviewed was Mr. Abdul Rahman who is one of the treasurers of the Mosque in Medang Deras District, he said that his baahwaswas facing the direction of the Qibla was a very important thing in terms of worship, but in this case he said that he did not really know whether it was appropriate or not to face the direction of the Qibla because at that time he said that at the

time of the construction of the mosque he entrusted only the parents which could be considered As little as you know and understand the construction of the mosque to know the direction of the Qibla at that time.

The Practice of Determining the Qibla Direction in Medang Deras District

Previously, we already knew together in the above discussion of the previous interview, namely how religious leaders understand astronomy and how religious leaders perceive the direction of the qibla, so the practice carried out in determining the direction of the qibla by several religious leaders in Medang Deras District located in Batu Bara Regency can be concluded as follows:

From the results of interviews conducted previously, the practice carried out by several religious leaders in Medang Deras sub-district, Batu Bara Regency, in terms of determining the direction of the qibla, there are several opinions, the first is to use the manual method, namely by using a method that is carried out following the direction of the sunset, namely west, because at that time the knowledge of the community or religious leaders at that time was still limited in determining the direction of the qibla and then The practice carried out in determining the direction of the Qibla is to entrust the parents to determine the direction of the Qibla in other words, at the time of the construction of the mosque at that time it was still using manual methods which were also based on being entrusted to older people.

CONCLUSION

In this study, the understanding of religious leaders in Medang Deras District

³³ Shovan Arsy Putra, et al., Analysis of Considerations of Benefit in Determining the Direction of the Qibla at the Al-Qadar Mosque in

Surabaya, *Journal of Islamic Law Thought and Reform*, Vol. 27, No.1, (2024), 108.

regarding astronomy shows that their knowledge is still general and limited, especially in terms of the benefits of astronomy for daily life, such as determining the direction of the qibla and prayer times. The practice of determining the direction of the qibla in Medang Deras District still relies on the manual method, which is to follow the direction of the sunset, and people tend to entrust this determination to parents who are considered more experienced. Although there is awareness of the importance of facing the qibla in the implementation of prayer, the understanding and application of falak among religious leaders is still lacking. This shows that people's beliefs and understanding of the direction of the qibla are greatly influenced by the teachings that develop in their environment. Therefore, it is necessary to increase knowledge and understanding of astronomy among religious leaders so that they can provide better guidance to the community in determining the direction of the qibla and the time of worship. Further training and education on astronomy will be very useful to increase accuracy in determining the direction of the qibla, so that the worship practices of Muslims can be carried out more appropriately and in accordance with existing provisions.

SUGGESTION

The construction of the judge's thinking in examining and deciding the case based on the indictment and making legal considerations based on the facts revealed in the trial. So that the verdict given does not contain any hesitation. Judges' decisions are expected to provide (justice, certainty and usefulness) Research on judges' decisions is recommended to be an alternative research for law students and other legal circles.

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