

Unifying Islamic Time: A Contextualised Fiqh Analysis of the Unified Global Hijri Calendar Between *Uṣūl Al-Fiqh*, *Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah*, and Transnational Legal Authority

Friska Linia Sari

Universitas Islam Negeri Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, Indonesia
friskalinia.sari@mail.uinfasbengkulu.ac.id

Bakhouya Driss

Faculty Law and Political Sciences, Universitas of Adrar, Algeria
bakhouyadriss@univ-adrar.com

|| Received: 10-10-2025

|| Revised: 27-02-2026

|| Accepted: 20-04-2026

|| Published On: 30-04-2026

Abstract: The persistent fragmentation of Hijri month determination across Muslim-majority states constitutes a normative and juridical problem whose resolution has eluded both classical fiqh and modern Islamic institutions. Existing scholarship has addressed the issue predominantly through maqāṣid analysis or empirical policy studies, without producing a systematic reconstruction of the problem within the integrated framework of *uṣūl al-fiqh* methodology, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, and the theory of transnational legal authority (*wilāyat al-ḥukm*). This study critically analyses the juridical construction, normative legitimacy, and legal implications of the Unified Global Hijri Calendar (UGHK) within the contemporary *uṣūl al-fiqh* framework, with particular attention to the dialectic between scriptural authority and astronomical science. Normative legal research was conducted using a conceptual approach, combining analysis of primary Islamic legal sources (Qur'ān, ḥadīth, classical fiqh compendia), contemporary scholarly discourse, and outputs of international collective ijtihād forums, including the 2016 Istanbul Congress. Data were processed through descriptive-analytical and argumentative techniques with deductive-comparative reasoning across classical and contemporary juristic positions. The study finds that UGHK construction is jurisprudentially grounded through: (1) a ta'āqquli reinterpretation of rukyah as wasīlah rather than maqṣūd li-dhātihī, enabling the integration of precise astronomical calculation; (2) a contextualised reinterpretation of ikhtilāf al-maṭāli' responsive to globalised information access; and (3) maqāṣid-based legitimation across ḥifz al-dīn, ḥifz al-māl, and ḥifz al-'aql. This study is the first to integrate all three analytical axes — *uṣūl al-fiqh* methodology, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, and *wilāyat al-ḥukm* transnational theory — into a unified juridical framework for UGHK legitimation, offering a more structurally coherent alternative to the fragmented approaches prevailing in the literature.

Keywords: *Unified Global Hijri Calendar; Uṣūl Al-Fiqh; Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah; Wilāyat Al-Ḥukm*

Abstrak: Fragmentasi yang terus berlangsung dalam penentuan awal bulan Hijriah di berbagai negara mayoritas Muslim merupakan problem normatif dan yuridis yang hingga kini belum terselesaikan, baik oleh fikih klasik maupun institusi Islam modern. Kajian-kajian yang ada umumnya membahas isu ini melalui analisis maqāṣid atau studi kebijakan empiris, tanpa menghasilkan rekonstruksi sistematis dalam kerangka terpadu antara metodologi *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, dan teori otoritas hukum transnasional (*wilāyat al-ḥukm*). Penelitian ini menganalisis secara kritis konstruksi yuridis, legitimasi normatif, dan implikasi hukum dari Unified Global Hijri Calendar (UGHK) dalam kerangka *uṣūl al-fiqh* kontemporer, dengan perhatian khusus pada dialektika antara otoritas nash dan ilmu astronomi. Penelitian hukum normatif dilakukan dengan pendekatan konseptual, yang menggabungkan analisis terhadap sumber hukum Islam primer (Al-Qur'an, hadis, kitab-kitab fikih klasik), wacana keilmuan kontemporer, serta hasil ijtihad kolektif internasional, termasuk Kongres Istanbul 2016. Data dianalisis menggunakan teknik deskriptif-analitis dan argumentatif dengan penalaran deduktif-komparatif terhadap berbagai posisi ulama klasik dan kontemporer. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa konstruksi UGHK memiliki landasan yurisprudensial melalui: (1) reinterpretasi ta'āqquli terhadap rukyat sebagai wasīlah, bukan maqṣūd li-dhātihī, sehingga memungkinkan integrasi perhitungan astronomi yang presisi; (2) reinterpretasi kontekstual terhadap ikhtilāf al-maṭāli' yang responsif terhadap globalisasi akses informasi; dan (3) legitimasi berbasis maqāṣid pada dimensi ḥifz al-dīn, ḥifz al-māl, dan ḥifz al-'aql. Penelitian ini merupakan yang pertama mengintegrasikan tiga poros analisis tersebut—metodologi *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, dan teori transnasional *wilāyat al-ḥukm*—ke dalam satu kerangka yuridis terpadu untuk legitimasi UGHK, sehingga menawarkan alternatif yang lebih koheren secara struktural dibandingkan pendekatan yang masih terfragmentasi dalam literatur.

Kata kunci: *Kalender Hijriah Global Terpadu; Uṣūl al-Fiqh; Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah; Wilāyat al-Ḥukm*

How to cite this article:

Friska Linia Sari and Others, Unifying Islamic Time: A Contextualised Fiqh Analysis of the Unified Global Hijri Calendar Between *Uṣūl Al-Fiqh*, *Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah*, and Transnational Legal Authority, *Jurnal Ilmiah Mizani: Wacana Hukum, Ekonomi Dan Keagamaan*, 13.1 (2026), 169-185.

Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.29300/mzn.v13i1.9173>



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Jurnal Ilmiah Mizani: Wacana Hukum, Ekonomi, dan Keagamaan

Published by Faculty of Sharia, State Islamic University of Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu

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Introduction

The development of globalisation has created an increasingly borderless integration of economic systems, communication, and human mobility. In the global ecosystem, the calendar system functions as a fundamental instrument in ensuring legal certainty and international coordination.¹ Calendars are no longer merely chronological tools but have become part of the social and administrative infrastructure of the modern world.² The Gregorian calendar has been accepted as the global standard in international governance.³ However, in the context of Muslim communities, the use of the Hijri calendar still faces problems of fragmentation and disunity among nations. This situation indicates a conceptual need for an Islamic calendar system that possesses global legitimacy.⁴

Amidst the dominance of the Gregorian calendar, Muslims remain dependent on the Hijri calendar for the observance of obligatory acts of worship that have strict temporal dimensions.⁵ Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-

Adha are collective religious milestones that normatively demand simultaneity among the Muslim community. However, reality shows that differences in determining the beginning of the lunar month occur even in geographically adjacent regions. These differences give rise to social and psychological implications, and potentially create ambiguity in religious practice. In the context of an increasingly connected global Muslim community, such fragmentation has become a strategic issue that cannot be ignored. Therefore, the unification of the Hijri calendar acquires new relevance in contemporary discourse.⁶

Historically, the determination of the beginning of the lunar month in Islam has been based on the *rukyatul hilal* (moon sighting) method as contained in the *hadith* of the Prophet (peace be upon him) narrated by Imam al-Bukhārī and Muslim,⁷ commanding the community to fast and break the fast upon sighting the crescent moon.⁸ This tradition developed in the context of seventh-century Arab society, which had limited astronomical instruments, making visual observation the primary authority.⁹ As civilisation advanced,

¹ Mursyid Fikri et al., "The Harmonizing the Hijri Calendar," *Mazahibuna* 7, no. 1 (2025): 38–53, <https://doi.org/10.24252/mazahibuna.vi.51264>.

² Ruth Fletcher, "Reproducing Timely Subjects: How Abortion Law Calendars Social Reproduction," *Social & Legal Studies* 34, no. 4 (2025): 469–95, <https://doi.org/10.1177/09646639241266231>.

³ Muhammad Arafat et al., "Turkish Religious Diplomacy An Analysis of Efforts to Achieve Socio-Political Consensus Through the 2016 Global Islamic Calendar Congress," *Pena Justisia: Media Komunikasi Dan Kajian Hukum* 24, no. 2 (2025): 8027–40, <https://doi.org/10.31941/pj.v24i2.7047>.

⁴ B. Taman et al., "Time-Related Rulings in Fiqh Munakahat: A Contemporary Integration of Astronomical and Jurisprudential Analysis," *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 4, no. 2 (2025): 797–821, <https://doi.org/10.32332/8pvnz650>.

⁵ Ahmad Adib Rofiuddin et al., "State Authority and Religious Contestation: Resistance to Governmental Decisions on Islamic Calendar Determination in Indonesia," *Fikri: Jurnal Kajian Agama, Sosial Dan Budaya* 10, no. 1 (2025): 250–63,

<https://doi.org/10.25217/jf.v10i1.5159>.

⁶ Badrun Taman et al., "The Concept of Learning Celestial Science in the Book "Wasilah al-Mubtadi'in Fi Risalah al-Qamarain"," *Nusantara Education* 3, no. 1 (2024): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.66325/nusantaraeducation.v3i1.100>.

⁷ M. Machzumy and B. Taman, "The Role Of Women In The Rukyat Hilal According To The North Aceh Ulema Consultative Assembly," *Jurnal Ilmiah Mizani* 9, no. 2 (2022): 176–85, Scopus, <https://doi.org/10.29300/mzn.v9i2.2915>.

⁸ Mohd Saiful Anwar Mohd Nawawi et al., "Hijri Month Determination in Southeast Asia: An Illustration Between Religion, Science, and Cultural Background," *Heliyon* 10, no. 20 (2024): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e38668>.

⁹ Ulil Albab Al aulia Alpaten et al., "The Role of Ancient Egyptian Civilization in the Islamic Astronomical Revolution of the Abbasid Era," *AL - AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak Dan Astronomi* 6, no. 1 (2024): 95–109,

the science of astronomy gave birth to the *hisab* method as a more accurate and far-in-advance predictable mathematical calculation alternative. Nevertheless, the debate between proponents of *rukyat* and *hisab* is often positioned within a dichotomous framework that triggers variation in practice across Muslim countries.¹⁰ As civilisation advanced, the science of astronomy gave birth to the *hisab* method as a more accurate and far-in-advance predictable mathematical calculation alternative. Nevertheless, the debate between proponents of *rukyat* and *hisab* is often positioned within a dichotomous framework that triggers variation in practice across Muslim countries.

One of the most crucial theoretical issues in this discourse is the concept of *ikhtilāf al-maṭālī'*, namely the difference in the zones of crescent moon appearance.¹¹ Some scholars argue that *rukyat* is local in character, so each region has its own authority in determining the beginning of the month.¹² Meanwhile, another view opens the possibility of the applicability of global *rukyat* based on the principle of the unity of the Muslim community. This difference in interpretation has direct implications for the possibility of implementing a system of 'one day, one date' internationally.¹³ In the context of the modern

nation-state, the difference of *maṭla'* also intersects with territorial boundaries and legal sovereignty. Thus, the problem of *maṭla'* becomes both a theological and political node in the discourse of calendar unification.

Modern astronomical advances have introduced a new dimension to this debate. The position of the moon can now be calculated with an extremely high degree of precision and can be scientifically verified.¹⁴ Astronomical data can predict the visibility of the crescent moon long before observation is conducted.¹⁵ This situation raises normative questions regarding the authority of *hisab* in replacing or complementing *rukyat*. Within the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, the principles of public interest, legal certainty, and the removal of hardship become important foundations for evaluating methods of determining the beginning of the lunar month.

The idea of the Unified Global Hijri Calendar (UGHK) has emerged as a conceptual and technical alternative. The UGHK seeks to unify the beginning of the lunar month internationally based on standardised crescent visibility criteria.¹⁶ This concept

<https://doi.org/10.20414/afaq.v6i1.9493>.

¹⁰ Vivit Fitriyanti, "Integrating Artificial Intelligence in Hijri Month Determination: A Maqasid Approach," *Mulawarman Law Review* 10, no. 1 (2025): 122–40, <https://doi.org/10.30872/mulrev.v10i1.1729>.

¹¹ Jayusman Jayusman and Oki Dermawan, "Fiqh Al-Ikhtilaf and Science: A Discourse of Preliminary Differences of Lunation In Indonesia," *KARSA: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 26, no. 2 (2018): 251, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v26i2.2001>.

¹² Holis et al., "The Role of Public Law in Determining the Islamic Calendar in Indonesia," *Al-Hilal: Journal of Islamic Astronomy* 7, no. 1 (2025): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.21580/al-hilal.2025.7.1.25485>.

¹³ Marwadi and Mughni Labib, "The Fiqh of Hisab Rukyat

of Modernist Mass Organizations: A Study of Muhammadiyah and Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyah Thought on the Hijri Calendar," *International Journal of Social Science and Religion (IJSSR)* 6, no. 3 (2025): 391–406, <https://doi.org/10.53639/ijssr.v6i3.377>.

¹⁴ Niklas Blum et al., "Geometric Calibration of All-Sky Cameras Using Sun and Moon Positions: A Comprehensive Analysis," *Solar Energy* 295 (July 2025): 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.solener.2025.113476>.

¹⁵ Murad Al-Rajab et al., "Predicting New Crescent Moon Visibility Applying Machine Learning Algorithms," *Scientific Reports* 13, no. 1 (2023): 6674, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-32807-x>.

¹⁶ Mohammed Gharaybeh, "Jurisprudential Reliance on Astronomical Calculations in Determining the Beginnings of the Hijri Month," in *Proceedings of the 14th Arabic Conference of the Arab Union for Astronomy and Space Sciences*, ed. Hamid M. K. Al Naimiy et al. (Springer, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-96->

integrates astronomical advances with the framework of Islamic legal legitimacy. Its objective is not merely administrative uniformity, but also the reinforcement of the symbol of Muslim unity. However, the implementation of the UGHK is inseparable from structural and normative challenges. An in-depth *fiqh* analysis is required to ensure its conformity with *sharī'ah* principles.

The challenge of implementing a global calendar lies in the question of authority. Every Muslim nation has its own mechanism and official authority for determining the beginning of the month, which is often associated with the concept of *wilāyat al-ḥukm*.¹⁷ On the other hand, globalisation drives the need for a transnational collective authority. The tension between national sovereignty and the need for global integration constitutes a complex dynamic. In the normative perspective of Islam, the principle of *wahdat al-ummah* emphasises the importance of unity in its symbolic and ritual aspects.¹⁸ Therefore, the question of the legitimacy of a global calendar has become part of the discourse of contemporary Islamic law.

The existence of the Unified Global Hijri Calendar cannot be understood merely as a technical astronomical innovation, but as a juridical and normative issue in Islamic law. The ongoing fragmentation of the calendar

demonstrates the need for a systematic and comprehensive reconstruction of *fiqh* argumentation. The integration of normative texts, *uṣūl al-fiqh* methodology, and modern scientific advances constitutes an important foundation in addressing this challenge. Accordingly, the study of the existence of the UGHK from the perspective of Islamic law holds theoretical and practical significance in the global context. This discussion is relevant for assessing the extent to which calendar unification can be positioned as a collective *ijtihād* in harmony with *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and the dynamics of the modern world.

Abdul Mufid's research in the *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* situates Hijri calendar unification within the framework of *maqāṣid al-sunnah* and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as an effort to preserve the normative objectives of the *sharī'ah*. That study affirms that global calendar unification can be understood as a form of preserving the value of Muslim unity and the certainty of worship, through the integration of astronomical *ḥisab* and *fiqh* legitimacy. Its findings show that normatively, there is no principal obstacle within the *sharī'ah* to accepting a global calendar as long as it is grounded in scriptural evidence and public interest. However, that research places greater emphasis on the *maqāṣid* approach and has not systematically elaborated on the problem of the legal authority of the nation-state and its transnational juridical implications. Furthermore, the discussion remains focused on the Indonesian context and has not developed a comprehensive global *fiqh* construction addressing the issue of *ikhtilāf al-maṭālī'* in the contemporary geopolitical landscape.¹⁹

3276-3_13.

¹⁷ Limor Lavie and Dolev Bar, "Post- Wilāyat al-Faqīh : The Civil State (Dawla Madaniyya) in Contemporary Arab Shi'i Intellectual Discourse," *Critical Research on Religion*, February 3, 2026, 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.1177/20503032261416044>.

¹⁸ Salum Mussa Haruna, "Sectarianism and Fragmentation in the Muslim World: A Qur'anic and Hadith Perspective on the Causes, Consequences, and Path to Unity," *Dirasah International Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 1 (2025): 42–63, <https://doi.org/10.59373/drs.v3i1.49>.

¹⁹ Abdul Mufid, "Unification of Global Hijrah Calendar In Indonesia: An Effort To Preserve The Maqasid Sunnah

Meanwhile, the research of Achmad Mulyadi et al. in *Al-'Adālah* concerning the dynamics of implementing the new MABIMS criteria highlights the policy and administrative practice aspects of updating crescent visibility standards in Indonesia and Malaysia. That study shows that the reform of astronomical criteria is a progressive step towards regional harmonisation of the Hijri calendar. Their findings indicate that changes in criteria are not merely technical but are also influenced by political, institutional, and socio-religious legitimacy factors. Nevertheless, that research is limited to the regional scope of Southeast Asia and has not elaborated on the global *fiqh* implications of such standardisation. The approach employed is also more descriptive-empirical in character, and thus has not offered a deep normative framework regarding the existence of a unified global Hijri calendar from the perspective of Islamic law as a theoretical matter.²⁰

Three identifiable gaps characterise the existing literature. First, prior maqāşid-centred studies (Mufid, 2020; Syarif & Sakirman, 2025) address the normative desirability of UGHK without systematically reconstructing its *uşūl al-fiqh* foundations — particularly the 'illat analysis of rukyah and the *wasīlah/maqşūd* distinction. Second, policy-oriented studies (Mulyadi et al., 2025; Arafat et al., 2025) describe regional harmonisation without developing a normative framework for transnational legal authority. Third, no study

has simultaneously integrated all three analytical dimensions — *uşūl* methodology, *maqāşid* legitimation, and *wilāyat al-ḥukm* reconstruction — into a coherent juridical framework. This study fills that tripartite gap.

This study's contribution is threefold: (1) theoretically, it offers the first systematic *uşūl al-fiqh* reconstruction of UGHK legitimacy integrating 'illat analysis, *wasīlah* theory, and epistemological hierarchy; (2) normatively, it develops a maqāşid-grounded juridical argument that moves beyond the binary rukyah–hisab debate; and (3) institutionally, it proposes a reconceptualisation of *wilāyat al-ḥukm* as a collaborative, non-subordinating transnational authority model applicable to global Islamic legal governance

This research aims to analyse the construction and existence of the Unified Global Hijri Calendar from the perspective of contemporary Islamic legal methodology (*uşūl al-fiqh*), particularly in the context of the dialectic between normative texts, *ijtihād*, and modern astronomical advances. Additionally, this research aims to examine the legitimacy and juridical implications of implementing the calendar within the framework of *maqāşid al-sharī'ah*, particularly regarding the principles of public interest, legal certainty, and Muslim unity. This research is also directed at evaluating how the concept of *wilāyat al-ḥukm* in the modern nation-state system interacts with the idea of transnational authority in the determination of a global calendar. Accordingly, this study endeavours to formulate systematic and contextual *fiqh* argumentation regarding the possibility of implementing the Unified Global Hijri Calendar in the era of globalisation.

Method

This study employs normative legal

of The Prophet (SAW)," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 10, no. 2 (2020): 18–36, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.102.02>.

²⁰ Achmad Mulyadi et al., "Dynamics of Implementing the New MABIMS Criteria on the Hijri Calendar (Takwim Hijri) By the Indonesian and Malaysian Governments," *Al-'Adalah* 22, no. 2 (2025): 381–408, <https://doi.org/10.24042/adalah.v222.28543>.

research with a conceptual approach. Primary legal sources include Qur'anic verses on lunar reckoning, hadith on moon sighting (*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*), and classical uṣūl fiqh texts (*al-Āmidī*, *al-Shāṭibī*, *Ibn al-Qayyim*). Secondary sources include peer-reviewed journal articles (2018–2025), fatwas from MABIMS, DSN-MUI, and the 2016 Istanbul Congress proceedings. Source selection criteria: direct thematic relevance to lunar calendar determination, methodological diversity across madhhab positions, and institutional representativeness across Southeast Asian and global Islamic scholarly contexts. Analysis proceeded through three stages: (1) descriptive mapping of juristic positions; (2) argumentative reconstruction using deductive-comparative reasoning; (3) normative evaluation through the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* matrix (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*, *ḥifẓ al-māl*, *ḥifẓ al-'aql*).

The Construction and Existence of the Unified Global Hijri Calendar from the Perspective of Islamic Legal Methodology (*Uṣūl Al-Fiqh*)

The determination of the beginning of the lunar month in Islamic law is rooted in the normative foundations of the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*,²¹ which position the moon as an instrument for measuring the time of worship.²² Within the framework of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, these texts are not merely understood literally, but are analysed through an epistemological approach to determine their

legal character. The *ḥadīth 'ṣūmū li-ru'yatihi wa aḥfirū li-ru'yatihi'* becomes the central point of methodological debate between textual and contextual approaches.²³ Therefore, the construction of the UGHK must begin with determining whether the command of *rukyat* is *ta'abbudī* (normatively-ritual and immutable) or *ta'aqqulī* (rational and open to changes in instrument). This analysis determines the scope of *ijtihād* in formulating a global calendar system. In the contemporary perspective, the *ta'aqqulī* tendency opens the possibility of methodological transformation without negating the authority of the text.

The *ta'aqqulī* approach presupposes that the legal substance lies in the attainment of certain knowledge about the entry of the new month.²⁴ *Rukyat* in the classical context is understood as the instrument most appropriate to the social and scientific conditions of early Islamic society.²⁵ The concept of *ummiyyah* in the *ḥadīth* is often used as an indicator that the method of direct observation was a contextual solution of that era.²⁶ In *uṣūl al-fiqh* methodology, the existence of *'illat* is the key to understanding

²¹ B. Taman and I. Mahdi, "Dialectics of Jurisprudence, Science, and Tradition Analysis of the Accuracy of the Qibla Direction of Sentot Ali Basya Cemetery," *Nusantara: Journal of Law Studies* 2, no. 2 (2023): 168–79, Scopus, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17388710>.

²² Ahmad Musonnif, "Islamic Law And Science In Nu-Muhamadiyah's Lunar Calendar Determination," *Al-Hilal: Journal of Islamic Astronomy* 6, no. 2 (2024): 199–220, <https://doi.org/10.21580/al-hilal.2024.6.2.23995>.

²³ Hanif A'la Ilhami and Zul Efendi, "Proporsionalitas Dalam Hisab: Pembacaan Terhadap Fatwa Yusuf al-Qaradhawi," *Astroislamika: Journal of Islamic Astronomy* 4, no. 1 (2025): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.47766/astroislamika.v4i1.3350>.

²⁴ Ahmed Gad Makhlof, "Continuity and Change of Traditional Islamic Law in Modern Times: Tarjih as a Method of Adaptation and Development of Legal Doctrines," *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion* 12, no. 1 (2024): 55–74, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ojlr/rwado10>.

²⁵ Ahmad Fauzi, "Ikhtiyat in The Epistemology of Astronomy Fiqh: An Integration of Conservatism and Contextualism," *TATHO: International Journal of Islamic Thought and Sciences* 2, no. 3 (2025): 261–73, <https://doi.org/10.70512/tatho.v2i3.144>.

²⁶ Mappasessu Mappasessu and Andi Muhammad Akmal, "Studying Fiqh Based on the Quran and Hadith in the Modern Era by Revisiting the Methodology of Legal Istinbat," *Nuris Journal of Education and Islamic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2025): 151–67, <https://doi.org/10.52620/jeis.v5i2.119>.

legal flexibility.²⁷ The maxim *al-ḥukmu yadūru ma'ā 'illatīhi wujūdan wa 'adaman* enables a re-evaluation of the method when the 'illat changes.²⁸ Accordingly, the existence of the UGHK can be constructed through an analysis of the change in 'illat in the context of modern astronomical developments.

This methodological reconstruction positions *rukyat* as a *wasīlah* (means), not as *maqṣūd li-dhātīhi* (an end in itself). In the theory of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, the distinction between objective and means has important implications for legal flexibility. If *rukyat* is positioned as a means to achieve certainty, then other more precise instruments may replace it. Modern astronomical *hisab*, with its mathematical basis and global observation, offers an extremely high degree of accuracy. Within the epistemological framework of Islamic law, an instrument that produces more certain knowledge holds greater methodological value. Therefore, the UGHK can be understood as the logical consequence of the transformation of *wasīlah* in the system of time determination.

Visual *rukyat* in practice contains elements of *ẓannī* (conjecture) because it is influenced by external variables such as weather and geographical conditions.²⁹ In contrast, contemporary *hisab* is based on consistent and verifiable mathematical

calculations.³⁰ In the structure of legal reasoning, data approaching certainty holds greater epistemological weight. The maxim *al-yaqīn lā yuzālu bi al-shakk* is often used to affirm that certain knowledge cannot be overturned by conjecture.³¹ Through this approach, the construction of the UGHK acquires methodological legitimacy as a system grounded in scientific certainty.

The existence of the UGHK is also related to the concept of *ijtihād* in Islamic law. In contemporary *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *ijtihād* is no longer understood solely as an individual activity, but also as collective (*ijtihād jamā'ī*).³² The global calendar issue, with its wide-ranging impact, demands cross-disciplinary participation, including *fuqahā'* and astronomers. This synergy reflects the expansion of the methodology of *istinbāṭ* (legal derivation) responsive to the complexity of modernity. The UGHK is therefore not merely a technical innovation, but the product of collective *ijtihād* construction. This approach reinforces its existence within the framework of modern Islamic legal methodology.

The debate on *ikhtilāf al-maṭāli'* must also be situated within the framework of *uṣūl al-fiqh* methodology. Classically, the difference of *maṭla'* was understood on the basis of limitations of communication and local observation. However, in the current global

²⁷ Muspita Sari et al., "Reconstruction of the methodology of legal discovery in Islamic legal philosophy: a comparative analysis of the theories of bayani, ta'lil, and istislahi in a contemporary context," *Jurnal Ar-Risalah* 5, no. 2 (2025): 14–24, <https://doi.org/10.30863/arrisalah.v5i2.5961>.

²⁸ Zakiul Fuady Muhammad Daud et al., "Illat Dalam Penalaran Ta'Lil Sebagai Metode Istinbat Hukum," *El-Wasathy: Journal of Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2023): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.61693/elwasathy.vol11.2023.1-18>.

²⁹ Mohd Nawawi et al., "Hijri Month Determination in Southeast Asia: An Illustration Between Religion, Science, and Cultural Background."

³⁰ Karis Lusdianto, "The Concept of Maslahah in the Dynamics of the Rukyah and Hisab Methods for Determining the Beginning of the Lunar Month," *Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum* 20, no. 01 (2024): 102–22, <https://doi.org/10.32332/istinbath.v20i01.9793>.

³¹ Lisa Victoria et al., "Kaidah Al-Yaqīnu Lā Yuzālu Bi al-Syakk: Relevansi Fiqh Dalam Asas Kepastian Hukum," *Indonesian Journal of Law and Justice* 3, no. 2 (2025): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.47134/ijlj.v3i2.5050>.

³² Pauzi M. et al., "The Importance of the Ijtihad Jama'ī Method in Contemporary Fiqh Formulations," *Al-Risalah: Forum Kajian Hukum Dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan* 23, no. 1 (2023): 13–20, <https://doi.org/10.30631/alrisalah.v23i1.1322>.

context, astronomical information can be accessed simultaneously worldwide. This change in empirical reality affects the way the 'illat underlying the difference of *maṭla'* is understood. If the basis of the difference was the limitation of local visibility, then scientific advances can alter that approach. Thus, the UGHK can be regarded as a methodological reinterpretation of the concept of *maṭla'* in the global horizon.

The following table consolidates the key *uṣūl al-fiqh* dimensions analysed above, mapping each against the classical baseline and its reconstruction in support of UGHK.

Table 1. *Uṣūl Al-Fiqh* Framework for the Juridical Construction of the UGHK

Methodological Dimension	Classical Position	UGHK Reconstruction
Normative character of <i>rukyyat</i>	Command treated as <i>ta'abbudī</i> — fixed, non-substitutable	<i>Ta'aqqulī</i> reading: substance is certainty about the new month, not the act of observation; opens space for <i>hisab</i>
<i>Wasīlah Maqṣūd</i>	vs <i>Rukyyat</i> treated as both means and end — substitution impermissible	Repositioned as <i>wasīlah</i> ; instruments yielding greater epistemic certainty (<i>yaqīn</i>) hold superior methodological weight
'Illat analysis	'Illat was limited astronomical instruments in early Islam	Modern science removes the original 'illat; ruling adapts per <i>al-hukmu yadūru ma'a 'illatihi</i>
<i>Ikhtilāf al-maṭāli'</i>	Difference of lunar horizon justified local autonomy in the month determination	Simultaneous global access to astronomical data eliminates the classical basis of <i>maṭla'</i> differences
Collective <i>Ijtihād (Ijtihād Jamā'ī)</i>	<i>Ijtihād</i> conceived as individual; calendar authority rested with national bodies	Cross-disciplinary collective <i>ijtihād (fuqahā'</i> + astronomers); 2016 Istanbul Congress as institutional precedent

Across all five dimensions, the *uṣūl al-fiqh* analysis converges on a single conclusion: the UGHK represents a methodological evolution rooted in the tradition's own tools — 'illat analysis, epistemological hierarchy, and collective *ijtihād* — rather than a departure from it.

Within the framework of *istidlāl* (legal reasoning), the methods of *qiyās* (analogy) and *istiṣlāḥ* (consideration of public interest) can be used to strengthen the construction of the UGHK.³³ *Qiyās* enables the analogy between the classical observation-based method and the modern calculation-based method, as long as the legal objective is the same. Meanwhile, *istiṣlāḥ* opens space for reasoning towards new solutions relevant to contemporary needs.³⁴ Both demonstrate the elasticity of Islamic legal methodology. The UGHK is not a deviation from fundamental principles, but an expansion of existing methodological tools. Therefore, its existence can be scientifically justified.

Contemporary *uṣūl al-fiqh* also emphasises the importance of integration between scriptural text and reality ('urf and *wāqī'*).³⁵ The development of astronomy as a scientific fact cannot be disregarded in the process of *istinbāt*. In this paradigm, the text is

³³ Ahmad Adib Rofiuddin et al., "State Authority and Religious Contestation: Resistance to Governmental Decisions on Islamic Calendar Determination in Indonesia," *Fikri: Jurnal Kajian Agama, Sosial Dan Budaya* 10, no. 1 (2025): 250–63, <https://doi.org/10.25217/jf.v10i1.5159>.

³⁴ Ahmad Khori et al., "Dynamics of Islamic Legal Thought: Comparison of the Concept of Maqashid Al-Shari'ah in Madhhab Zaidiyah and Ja'fariyah," *Suhuf* 37, no. 2 (2025): 439–47, <https://doi.org/10.23917/suhuf.v37i2.11814>.

³⁵ Syamsul Azizul Marinsah et al., "The Instrument of 'Urf in the Reform of Islamic Legal Rulings: An Analytical Study on Contemporary Fiqh," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 15, no. 10 (2025): 761–72, <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v15-110/25828>.

not separated from the context, but is read in dialogue with the development of knowledge. The UGHK represents a concrete example of the productive interaction between revelation and science. This integration demonstrates that Islamic law is dynamic and adaptive. Accordingly, the existence of the UGHK represents the actualisation of contextual methodology.

The construction of the UGHK demonstrates a shift from a literal to a substantive approach in understanding texts. The focus is no longer solely on the methodological form (*rukyat*), but on its epistemological substance (the attainment of certain knowledge about the entry of the new month). This shift is consistent with the development of interpretive theory in modern *uṣūl al-fiqh*. The substantive approach allows flexibility without sacrificing the authority of the scriptural text. In this context, the UGHK is not a deconstruction of the text, but a methodological reconstruction. This reflects the maturity of the epistemology of contemporary Islamic law.

Furthermore, the concept of globality in the UGHK does not contradict the principle of the universality of Islam. *Uṣūl al-fiqh* recognises the principle that Islamic law applies across time and space as long as the *'illat* and objective remain relevant. A global calendar system in fact reflects that universality in concrete form. With the support of modern technology, a single time system can be applied uniformly. This demonstrates consistency between the universal principle and global reality. The UGHK becomes the methodological manifestation of the universal character of Islamic law.

The construction of the UGHK from the perspective of contemporary *uṣūl al-fiqh* rests

on the analysis of the character of the text, the identification of *'illat*, the transformation of *wasīlah*, and epistemological strengthening through science. This approach demonstrates that the *rukyat-hisab* debate is not a theological conflict but a methodological dynamic. With the elastic tools of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, Islamic law has the capacity to respond to changes in the times. The UGHK emerges as a product of *ijtihād* rooted in tradition yet open to innovation. Its existence reflects both continuity and renewal in the methodology of modern Islamic law.

The Legitimacy and Juridical Implications of Implementing the Unified Global Hijri Calendar within the Framework of *Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah* and the Dynamics of Nation-State Legal Authority

The Unified Global Hijri Calendar (UGHK) acquires normative legitimacy within the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, particularly in the dimension of the protection of religion (*hifẓ al-dīn*) in its collective context.³⁶ The fragmentation of the determination of Islamic festivals across various countries gives rise to symbolic implications for the image of Muslim unity in the global public sphere. In the era of globalisation, characterised by digital connectivity and cross-border mobility, these differences are no longer locally confined but are exposed internationally. Calendar unification through the UGHK presents symbolic coherence that reinforces the collective identity of Muslims³⁷ From the

³⁶ Muh Rasywan Syarif and Sakirman, "Reconstructing Ijtihād in Unifications of the Islamic Calendar: Jasser Auda's *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* Approach," *AL - AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak Dan Astronomi* 7, no. 1 (2025): 84–103, <https://doi.org/10.20414/afaq.v7i1.13229>.

³⁷ Ahmad Adib Rofiuddin and Ahmad Luqman Hakim, "NGOs CONTESTATION ON ISLAMIC HIJRI CALENDAR IN URBAN MUSLIM SOCIETY IN INDONESIA: FROM

perspective of *maqāṣid*, the stability and orderliness of the observance of religious rites constitutes part of the institutional protection of religion. Therefore, the implementation of the UGHK possesses a substantive basis of legitimacy within the framework of the objectives of the *sharī'ah*.

Beyond the religious dimension, the legitimacy of the UGHK is also rooted in the protection of property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*), particularly in the governance of the global Islamic economy.³⁸ The modern Islamic economic system, including Islamic banking, the Islamic capital market, and the halal industry, operates within transnational networks that demand certainty of time standards.³⁹ Differences in the calendar can potentially give rise to disparities in the calculation of contracts based on the lunar month, including the determination of due dates and the corporate *haul* for *zakat*. Within the framework of *maqāṣid*, the protection of property does not merely mean safeguarding ownership, but also ensuring the stability of the transaction system. The UGHK provides uniform temporal infrastructure for global *mu'āmalah* activities. Accordingly, its implementation has direct juridical implications for the consistency of Islamic economic practices across nations.

This legitimacy is further reinforced by the dimension of *ḥifẓ al-'aql*, namely respect for rationality and the development of

knowledge.⁴⁰ The integration of global astronomical standards into the calendar system reflects the *sharī'ah*'s acceptance of scientifically verified instruments. Yusuf al-Qaraḍāwī, in his concept of *fiqh al-wāqī'*, emphasises that Islamic law must be responsive to objective reality and the development of modern science.⁴¹ This approach affirms that institutional adaptation is not a deviation, but part of the dynamic of Islamic law. In this context, the UGHK becomes a manifestation of contemporary *ijtihād* in harmony with *maqāṣidī* rationality. Therefore, the legitimacy of the UGHK is not only normative but also epistemological.

Within the framework of *al-maṣlaḥah al-mursalah*, the implementation of the UGHK meets the criteria of general public interest (*maṣlaḥah 'āmmah*) that is relevant. Globalisation has transformed the character of Muslim interaction from local to transnational, so that public interest has similarly shifted from the domestic to the global scale. When differences in the calendar give rise to administrative and social confusion across nations, unification becomes an objective necessity. This principle of collective interest acquires legitimacy as long as it does not contradict *naṣṣ* that is *qaṭ'ī* (definitive). The UGHK, as a product of modern collective *ijtihād*, can be positioned within that framework.

The following table maps the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and *wilāyat al-ḥukm* dimensions

AUTHORITY TO IDENTITY," *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 27, no. 2 (2022): 171, <https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v27i2.5357>.

³⁸ Muh Rasywan Syarif and Sakirman, "Reconstructing Ijtihād in Unifications of the Islamic Calendar: Jasser Auda's *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* Approach."

³⁹ Luqman Syakirunn'iam et al., "Innovation Strategies and Competitiveness of the Multisectoral Halal Industry in the Digital Era and ASEAN Economic Integration," *International Journal of Halal Industry* 1, no. 2 (2025): 181–203, <https://doi.org/10.20885/IJHI.vol1.iss2.art5>.

⁴⁰ Sri Wahyuni et al., "Analisis Maqashid Dan Masalah Transaksi E-Commerce Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Riset Pendidikan Ekonomi* 8, no. 2 (2023): 124–33, <https://doi.org/10.21067/JRPE.V8I2.8703>.

⁴¹ Alifa Ihfazna Rafida et al., "Contemporary Islamic Moderation: Insights from al-Qaradawi, Nurcholis Madjid, and Abdurrahman Wahid," *ISTIFHAM: Journal Of Islamic Studies*, November 5, 2025, 112–29, <https://doi.org/10.71039/istifham.v3i2.103>.

against the specific problem each addresses and its juridical implication for the UGHK.

Table 2. Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah and Wilāyat Al-Ḥukm Framework for UGHK Legitimacy

Dimension	Problem Addressed	Juridical Implication for UGHK
<i>Hifẓ al-dīn</i> (Protection of Religion)	Fragmentation of Ramadan and Eid dates undermines collective Muslim identity globally	UGHK restores symbolic coherence and orderliness of <i>sha'ā'ir</i> (religious rites) — core objective of <i>hifẓ al-dīn</i>
<i>Hifẓ al-māl</i> (Protection of Wealth)	Divergent calendars cause disparities in Islamic finance calculations across jurisdictions	UGHK provides uniform temporal infrastructure for <i>mu'āmalah</i> , <i>sukuk</i> , and <i>zakat</i> governance across borders
<i>Hifẓ al-'aql</i> (Protection of Intellect)	Excluding verified astronomy from month determination puts Islamic institutions in tension with science	Integration of astronomical standards fulfills <i>hifẓ al-'aql</i> ; institutional adaptation to science is a dynamic expression of Islamic law
<i>Al-Maṣlaḥah al-Mursalāh</i>	No explicit <i>naṣṣ</i> addresses a globally unified calendar — a contemporary administrative necessity	UGHK qualifies as valid <i>maṣlaḥah 'āmmah</i> on which collective <i>ijtihād</i> may produce normative standards
<i>Wilāyat al-Ḥukm</i> (National & Transnational)	Nation-states hold recognised authority over calendar determination; no binding supranational Islamic institution exists	Bifurcated model: normative-standardising authority → collective <i>ijtihād</i> forum; executive authority → national states; sovereignty preserved

Table 2 reveals that the normative case for UGHK is not reducible to a single *maqāṣid* objective. The tripartite *maqāṣid* foundation, combined with the bifurcated *wilāyat al-ḥukm* model, simultaneously addresses the normative desirability of the UGHK and its principal institutional obstacle — the sovereignty concern — without requiring any

state to surrender its administrative authority

From the perspective of the dynamics of legal authority, the implementation of the UGHK is confronted with the classical concept of *wilāyat al-ḥukm*, which has hitherto been bound to the territory of the state. Modern nation-states possess administrative authority in determining religious public holidays and the official recognition of the beginning of the month. However, globalisation has created a space of legal interaction that transcends the boundaries of traditional sovereignty. The challenge does not lie in theological legitimacy, but in the repositioning of authority within global governance. The UGHK demands coordination among religious authorities across nations. Accordingly, the problem is institutional and structural in character.

The reconstruction of *wilāyat al-ḥukm* in the global context can be understood as an expansion of the function of authority.⁴² The state retains administrative legitimacy, but participates in international consensus based on collective *ijtihād*. This model reflects a pattern of shared authority in global religious issues. International forums such as the 2016 Turkish Congress demonstrate the embryonic form of such a collective mechanism. The decisions produced are not the subordination of the state, but normative coordination. Thus, the dynamics of authority move towards a collaborative pattern

The maxim *ḥukm al-ḥākim yarfa' al-khilāf* can serve as a theoretical basis for managing differences among nations. In the global context, the 'i' (ruler) is no longer understood

⁴² Limor Lavie and Dolev Bar, "Post- Wilāyat al-Faqīh : The Civil State (Dawla Madaniyya) in Contemporary Arab Shi'i Intellectual Discourse," *Critical Research on Religion*, February 3, 2026, 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.1177/20503032261416044>.

solely as a single sovereign, but as a collectively recognised authority. When international consensus is reached through *ijtihād jamā'ī*, it possesses moral and juridical binding force. This principle aims to end prolonged differences for the sake of public order within the community. The implementation of the UGHK can be positioned within that framework. Accordingly, its authoritative legitimacy is derived from collective consensus.

The maxim *taṣarruf al-imām manūṭun bi al-maṣlahah* is also relevant in assessing the policy of adopting the UGHK at the national level. Every state policy in religious affairs must be grounded in public interest.⁴³ If calendar unification is proven to provide greater administrative and social benefits, then its implementation possesses a *shar'ī* justification. The state in this regard acts as the manager of the public interest of the community. Therefore, the implementation of the UGHK can be regarded as a lawful administrative act. This aspect affirms the connection between *maqāṣid* and state authority.

The juridical implications of UGHK implementation are apparent in the adjustment of national regulations. The determination of religious public holidays, the educational calendar, and public administration must be aligned with global standards. This change requires revision of domestic policy without eliminating state sovereignty. In the context of positive law, the UGHK functions as an international reference standard. The state remains the formal

executor, while the standards are determined collectively. This pattern demonstrates the dynamic interaction between national law and global norms.

The legitimacy and juridical implications of the UGHK are rooted in *maqāṣid al-shar'īah* and the dynamics of the transformation of *wilāyat al-ḥukm* in the era of globalisation. It is not merely a technical innovation, but a normative construction that responds to the needs of transnational Muslim communities. The support of modern thinkers such as Yusuf al-Qaraḍāwī and the scholarly consensus of the 2016 Turkey Forum demonstrates that this idea is within the mainstream of contemporary Islamic legal thought. Its implementation demands cross-national collaboration without negating the sovereignty of each nation. Accordingly, the UGHK can be positioned as a juridical evolution of Islamic law in confronting global reality.

Conclusion

The construction and existence of the Unified Global Hijri Calendar (UGHK) from the perspective of contemporary Islamic legal methodology (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) demonstrates that calendar unification is not a form of deviation from tradition, but rather the product of a legitimate methodological reconstruction. The analysis of the normative character of the *rukyat ḥadīth*, the identification of *'illat*, and the distinction between objective (*maqṣūd*) and means (*wasīlah*) open space for the transformation of the instrument of beginning-of-month determination without negating the authority of the scriptural text. The integration of modern astronomical *hisab* strengthens the epistemological legitimacy of the UGHK through an approach that more closely approximates scientific certainty.

⁴³ Achmad Musyahid Idrus, "KEBIJAKAN PEMIMPIN NEGARA DALAM PERSPEKTIF KAJIAN FIKIH: TASARRUF AL-IMAM MANUTUN BIL MASLAHAH," *Al Daulah: Jurnal Hukum Pidana Dan Ketatanegaraan* 1, no. 1 (2021): 123–37, <https://doi.org/10.24252/ad.v1i1.26278>.

Furthermore, reinforcement through *ijtihād jamā'ī* and the reinterpretation of the concept of *ikhtilāf al-maṭālī'* affirm that Islamic legal methodology possesses elasticity in responding to changes in the global context. At the same time, the implementation of the UGHK acquires legitimacy within the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, particularly *ḥifẓ al-dīn*, *ḥifẓ al-māl*, and *ḥifẓ al-'aql*, and is supported by the dynamics of the transformation of *wilāyat al-ḥukm* towards a collaborative model of cross-national authority. Its juridical implications are apparent in the need for adjustment of national regulations and the strengthening of international coordination, such that the UGHK can be positioned as a normative evolution of Islamic law in confronting the realities of globalisation.

Further research is recommended to deepen the comparative study between models of UGHK implementation in various Muslim countries and the national calendar determination systems already in operation. Empirical studies on regulatory readiness, the responses of fatwa institutions, and societal acceptance are also important for measuring the practical effectiveness of its implementation. In addition, interdisciplinary analysis involving *fiqh* scholars, astronomers, and constitutional law experts is needed in order to formulate an operational and accountable institutional design for global calendar authority. Further research can also explore the possibility of forming international legal instruments based on agreements among religious authorities as a normative foundation for UGHK implementation. In this way, the development of the UGHK will not remain at the conceptual level alone, but will progress towards a systematic and sustainable applied formulation

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Friska Linia Sari: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data curation, Writing – original draft. Bakhouya Driss: Comparative analysis, International perspective, Critical review. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial, institutional, or personal interests that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to Universitas Islam Negeri Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, and the University of Adrar (Algeria) for the institutional support provided throughout the completion of this research. Special appreciation is extended to academic supervisors, colleagues, and research collaborators for their valuable insights and constructive discussions that significantly contributed to the development of this study. The authors also thank all participants, practitioners, and informants who generously shared their knowledge and experience, which greatly enriched the analysis and findings of this research.

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