



## Negotiating Religious Authority: Patronage Networks and the Social Practice of Lunar Month Determining at Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran

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**Abstract:** *The criteria for determining the beginning of the hijri month in Indonesia continue to develop; however, Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran continues to maintain the use of classical method that does not significantly differ in outcome from the government's official determination. This study does not aim merely to examine the astronomical aspect; but rather to analyze the socio-religious practices that sustain its continued application within the community. Employing a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews, this study seeks to explain why the method remains authoritative and why the community tends to follow religious leadership rather than state-based decisions. The findings reveal that the practice of determining the beginning of the hijri month at Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran is shaped by long-established patron-client relationships between religious leaders and community members, grounded in the exchange of religious values, trust, and moral legitimacy. Furthermore, Pesantren Cokrokertopati's position as an independent institution, unaffiliated with any formal religious organization, reinforce its social credibility and authority in religious decision-making, including determination of the hijri calendar. This study therefore affirms that the determination of the beginning of the hijri month at Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran represents a form of social falak, in which social and religious dimensions play a more dominant role than purely technical-astronomical considerations.*

**Keywords:** Pesantren, Patronage, Social Falak, Hijri Month, Lunar Month Determination.

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**Abstrak:** *Kriteria penentuan awal bulan Hijriah di Indonesia terus mengalami perkembangan, namun Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran masih mempertahankan penggunaan metode klasik yang secara hasil tidak berbeda secara signifikan dengan ketetapan pemerintah. Penelitian ini tidak bertujuan menguji aspek astronomis semata, melainkan menganalisis praktik sosial-keagamaan yang melatarbelakangi keberlanjutan penggunaannya dalam kehidupan masyarakat. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif melalui wawancara mendalam, penelitian ini bertujuan menjelaskan mengapa metode tersebut tetap digunakan serta mengapa masyarakat lebih memilih mengikuti keputusan pemimpin keagamaan dibandingkan otoritas resmi negara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa praktik penentuan awal bulan Hijriah di Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran dipengaruhi oleh relasi patronase yang telah terbentuk secara historis antara pemimpin agama (patron) dan jamaah (klien), yang berlandaskan pada pertukaran nilai, kepercayaan, dan legitimasi moral. Selain itu, posisi Pesantren Cokrokertopati sebagai lembaga independen yang tidak berafiliasi dengan organisasi keagamaan tertentu memperkuat kepercayaan sosial masyarakat terhadap otoritas keagamaannya. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa penentuan awal bulan di Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran merupakan praktik falak sosial, di mana dimensi sosial dan Religius lebih dominan dibandingkan pertimbangan teknis-astronomis semata.*

**Kata Kunci:** Pesantren, Patronase, Falak Sosial, Kalender Hijriah, Penentuan Awal Bulan.

### A. Introduction

Indonesia is a country that gives freedom to its people in determining the beginning of the Hijri months. People are allowed to choose to follow the government or certain Islamic organizations.



Even though the discourse of single authority has been attempted by the government, almost all Islamic organizations have different methods so there are prominent differences in certain months such as the months of Ramadan, Shawwal, and Zulhijjah because in these months Muslims perform the obligatory worship, that is fasting, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha. The difference is based on the existence of two methods used, namely the method of *hisab* (reckoning) and *ru'yah* (observation). These two methods have created other differences, such as the understanding of *hisab 'urfi* (approximate reckoning) and *hisab haqiqi* (accurate reckoning) or *ru'yah* (observation) with various criteria. Other factors, as explained by Husna, the message of the kyai is not merely that of a practitioner of falak, but are the thoughts of local figures who still exist and manage of community legitimacy.<sup>1</sup>

Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran is a long-established Islamic boarding school (Pesantren) in Takeran Village, Magetan, East Java. Pesantren Cokrokertopati is part of history, starting from the history of education, the resistance against colonialists to the resistance against the rebellion of PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) in 1948. Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran has a different method of determining the beginning of the Hijri months, namely observing the moon during the third-quarter moon. This observation (*ru'yah*) is not included in the *ru'yah al-hilâl* classification method which has been agreed upon by the Falak scholars. However, the surrounding community and their students (Santri) followed Pesantren Cokrokertopati's decision to determine the 1st day of the Hijri months.

The method of determining the beginning of the Hijri month at Pesantren Cokrokertopati is relatively simple, namely observing the shape of the Moon on the 22nd night of the Hijri month. If the diameter line of the Moon looks more concave, then the number of days in that month is 29 days. But if the diameter line of the Moon looks more convex, then the number of days in that month is 30 days. Astronomically, this method has been examined, and observations conducted during the third quarter moon phase or on the 22nd night of Hijri month can be empirically correlated with the elongation value of the Moon's illumination.<sup>2</sup> However it is important to emphasize that the practice of third-quarter moon observation does not fall within the normative falak criteria commonly employed in the determination of the Hijri calendar, which generally rely on conjunction (*ijtima'*) hilal visibility, and standardized astronomical parameters. Instead, this method represents a localized socio-religious practice that continues to be maintained due to its traditional authority and communal legitimacy rather than its conformity with widely accepted astronomical standards.

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<sup>1</sup>Amirah Himayah Husna, dkk, (2021). "Penyatuan Kalender Hijriah Nasional dalam Perspektif Ormas Muhammadiyah dan Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)". *Al-Afaq: Jurnal Ilmu Falak dan Astronomi*. 3 (2), 171-188 <https://doi.org/10.20414/afaq.v3i2.4772>

<sup>2</sup>Asih Pertiwi (2019). "Rukyah Mbulan untuk Penentuan Awal Bulan di Pesantren Sabilil Muttaqien (PSM) Takeran dalam Tinjauan Astronomi Fiqih, dan Sosial". Magister. UIN Walisongo



The Qur'an has provided instructions regarding determining the beginning of the month by looking at the new moon in Surah Al-Baqarah verses 185 and 189.

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

*The month of Ramadhan (is that) in which was revealed the Qur'an, the guidance for the people, and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights (hilâl of) the month, let him fast it; and whoever is ill or in a journey then an equal number of other days. Allah intends for you hardship and (wants) for you to complete the period and to glorify Allah for that (to) which He has guided you, and perhaps you will be grateful. (Surah Al-Baqarah: 185)*

Imam Fakhruddîn al-Râzî explained that in *Tafsîr al-Râzî* the meaning of شَهِدَ in this verse is *ru'yah al-hilâl* because in Arabic, it has 4 (four) different meanings, that are: to witness or to inform, to see, to be present (not as a traveler) or to know.<sup>3</sup> The meaning of the word شَهِدَ to be *ru'yah al-hilâl* is the result of the Prophet's explanation in the hadith:

وَعَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا [ قَالَ ] : سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - يَقُولُ : - إِذَا رَأَيْتُمُوهُ فَصُومُوا، وَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُوهُ فَأَفْطِرُوا فَإِنْ غَمَّ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقْدَرُوا لَهُ - مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ

*From Ibn 'Umar radhiyallâhu 'anhumâ, he said, "I once heard the Prophet sallallâhu 'alaihi wa sallam say, "If you see (crescent moon), then fast. If you see it again, then have a feast day. If the crescent moon is covered, then complete it (the month of Sha'bân becomes 30 days)." (Muttafaq 'alaih).*

From the results of the description above, it can be understood that the start of the beginning of the Hijri month is established by a person witnessing it directly or by relying on the confirmed sighting of others. Another verse which explains the determination of the beginning of the Hijri month is in the following verse:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهِلَّةِ ۖ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ ۚ وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَى ۚ وَأَتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَاهَا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

*They ask thee, (O Muhammad), of new moons, say: They are fixed seasons for mankind and the pilgrimage. It is not righteousness that ye go to houses by the backs thereof (as do the idolaters at*

<sup>3</sup>Muhammad bin Umar bin Husein al-Razi, *Tafsie al-Razi*, Jilid III, Maktabah Syamilah al-Ishdar 3.44 Versi 50 GB, 135



*certain seasons), but the righteous man is he who wardeth off (evil). So go to houses by the gates thereof, and observe your duty to Allah, that ye may be successful.* (Surah Al-Baqarah:189)

The word “*mawâqîr*” in Arabic grammar is the plural nominal form of the word “*mîqât*” which means 'appointed time'. Imam Fakhruddîn al-Râzî explained that what is meant by the word “*mawâqîr linnâs*” is all human actions related to the benefit of religion or the world such as matters of pilgrimage, fasting, breaking the fast, debts, leasing, menstrual periods for women and others.<sup>4</sup>

From the explanation of the two verses above, he indirectly gives instructions to Muslims to make the Hijri month become a calendar based on the observation of the crescent moon (*hilâl*). As for Ibrahim, he then classified various criteria for determining the beginning of the Hijri month, *first*, adherents of the *Ijtima'* (Conjunction), that is if the conjunction of sun and moon (*ijtimâ'*) occurs before sunset, then since the sunsets, the new month starts without any further calculations. *Second*, the adherents of *Ufuq Haqiqi* (True Horizon), that the crescent moon (*hilâl*) must be visible above the horizon after sunset. *Third*, the adherents of *Ufuq Hissi* (Visible Horizon), that is, when the crescent moon (*hilâl*) is on the *Hissi* horizon, then from sunset begins a new month. *Fourth*, the adherents of *Imkan al-Ru'yah* take into account the possibility the *hilâl* can be sighted under various conditions.<sup>5</sup> Of these streams, all adhere to the same ideology, namely making *hilâl* a reference. No one uses the third quarter of the moon as a reference for determining the beginning of the Hijri month. This shows that the determination of the beginning of the Hijri month is not only based on astronomical issues, but also the existence of belief and social trust in the religious figure. Within the frame work of social authority and the legitimization of rukyat testimonies, a religious figure who commands the trust of their community can exert a substantial influence on the determination of the onset of the lunar month.<sup>6</sup>

This paper will focus on answering the question of why the people prefer to follow the determination of the beginning of the Hijri month from their religious leader which is not quite right compared to the determination of the beginning of the month issued by the government. Hasn't the government studied and discussed this matter with experts in the field of astronomy and religious experts? The author will answer these questions based on a sociological approach because religious life cannot be separated from social conditions. Because religion and society are a unity that cannot be separated.

## **B. Methods**

This research is a field study employing a qualitative approach. This qualitative approach was used to describe empirically the facts observed in the field concerning the determination of the beginning

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<sup>4</sup>Muhammad bin Umar bin Husein al-Razi, ... , 135

<sup>5</sup>Abdullah Ibrahim, (2016). *Ilmu Falak: Antara Fiqih dan Astronomi*. Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 105

<sup>6</sup>Yuniar Wayuningsih, (2021), “Harmonisasi Metode Hisan dan Rukat dalam Penetapan Awal Bulan Kamariah: Analisis terhadap Rekomendasi Jakarta 2017” *Azimuth: Journal of Islamic Astronomy*, 2 (2), <https://doi.org/10.15642/azimuth.v2i2>



of the Hijri month using the third-quarter moon observation method. Data were collected through direct observation, unstructured interviews, and documentation, while the data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis. To avoid potential scientific misinterpretation, this study deliberately limits its scope of astronomical inquiry to a descriptive and contextual level, focusing on how astronomical knowledge is understood, interpreted, and practiced within the socio-religious framework of the community. Therefore, this research does not aim to evaluate the astronomical accuracy or normative validity of the method according to established falak or astronomical standards, but rather to examine its function, meaning, and continuity within local religious practice.

### C. Result and Discuss

#### 1. Existence of Patronage Relations in Pesantren Takeran

Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran is located in the southern part of Java Island, precisely in Magetan, East Java Regency. Takeran is the name of a village visited by K.H Hasan Ulama, the first person to build a civilization in the village. He is the spiritual teacher's son of Prince Diponegoro, a national hero who once led the Java War (1825-1830), named Prince Cokrokertopati, and had a scholar name Kyai Kholifah.<sup>7</sup> Kyai Kholifah is a follower of the Syattariyah Order.

In 1883, *Pesantren* which was built by Kyai Hasan ulama was a traditional pesantren called *Magersari*, namely the learning method used to educate students to be in the pesantren environment and required to serve even though they were no longer students (*Santri*). Because of its location in Takeran, people call it Pondok/Pesantren Takeran. The presence of *Pesantren* Takeran brought many changes because the Takeran people at that time were still strongly attached to *Kejawen*, which is a Javanese philosophy that combined customs and beliefs. They believe in shamans and magic. They also commit immoral acts.<sup>8</sup>

According to Zamakhsyari Dhofier, a *Kyai* needs to build a pesantren for several reasons; *First*, the fame of a *Kyai* and his deep knowledge of Islam will attract students from afar.<sup>9</sup> Kyai Hasan Ulama is known as a friendly and virtuous person, he is well-received by the community and is trusted as a knowledgeable person so someone who wants to study with him is willing to leave his home.<sup>10</sup> *Second*, almost all pesantren are located in rural areas where there is not enough accommodation available to accommodate students; thus it is necessary to have a special hostel for the students. *Third*, there is a reciprocal relationship between the *Kyai* and the *Santri*. The *Kyai* feels a responsibility towards the needs of *Santri* in terms of housing, food needs, and knowledge. In addition, on the part of *Santri*, there is a growing feeling of devotion to the *Kyai*, so the *Kyai* receives a reward in the form of a source of energy for the benefit of *Pesantren*.

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<sup>7</sup>Pertiwi (2019)... 63

<sup>8</sup>Zuhdi Tafsier, Personal Interview by Asih Pertiwi, October 7, 2019

<sup>9</sup>Zamakhsyari Dhofier (1994), *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 46

<sup>10</sup>Z. Tafsier,... 2019





After K.H. Hasan Ulama died, the leadership of the *Pesantren* is passed to his children. He has 7 children who will continue his mission. Each child is given the authority and duties of each. His first son, K.H. Imam Muttaqien bin K.H. Ulama, became a figure who continued the Syattariyah Order. Meanwhile, her second child, Nyai Masrifah binti K.H. Hasan Ulama and her husband K.H. Imam Tafsier bin Kyai Muhammad Irham Betri Siman Ponorogo, are continuing the education sector, likes boarding schools and mosques. However, K.H. Imam Tafsier only led from 1886-1923 due to death. The leadership of *Pesantren* was passed to K.H. Imam Muttaqien from 1923-1936. After K.H. Imam Muttaqien died, he was continued by his son, Kyai Imam Murshid Muttaqien bin K.H. Imam Muttaqien in 1940-1948.<sup>11</sup>

As a young leader and *murshid*, at that time he was still 28 years old but he carried out many revolutionary actions against *pesantren*. One of the major breakthroughs he made was to make the development of the *Pesantren* method into an organized institution which was named "Pesantren Sabilil Muttaqien" (PSM). It was confirmed at a large *pesantren* meeting at the Jami Mosque of the Takeran Islamic Boarding School on 9 Shawwal 1362 H/16 September 1943". In that meeting, Kyai Imam Mursyid announced the existence of integrated management and development of Islamic boarding schools through a system of organizational mechanisms with complete structures and functions.<sup>12</sup> However, the system must maintain the basic soul of *Pesantren* even though there have been several updates.<sup>13</sup> From this perspect, it is eviden that as a traditional education system, *pesantren* have made significant positive contribution tho the Indonesian nation, particularly in religons where they are established. The role of *pesantren* extendend beyond raligious to is not only in religious matters, but also cultural, socio-economic, and even political. Kyai become a media for Muslims in national interests. This insfluence is rooted in the social standing lead the community to pay close attention to and follow their guidance, includinnng in determining the beginning of Ramadan and Shawwal.<sup>14</sup>

From a historical perspective, the *pesantren* represents an educational institution with a distinctly holistic and integrative character. Troughout its development, the *pesantren* has played a crucial role in cultivating and internalizing moral and character values within the wider community. It is widely recognized as a comprehensive education institution with a strong emphasis on character formation. As one of oldest, most deeply rooted, and authentically Indonesian educational institutions, the *pesantren* maintains a distictive adn traditional system of learning.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Z.. Tafsier, ... 2019

<sup>12</sup>M. S. Ramadhan, (2023) "Pemrakarsa Pesantren Sabilil Muttaqien (Studi Biografi dan Peran K. H. Imam Mursyid Muttaqien di Takeran)", Magister UIN Raden Massaid Surakarta.

<sup>13</sup>Z.. Tafsier, ... 2019

<sup>14</sup>Cecep Suryana, dkk (2024), *Sang Kiai Bicara Agama & Politik: Perspektif KH Nurul Ain Akyas*, Bandung: Gunung Djati Publishin, 80-100

<sup>15</sup>Susanti Mutiara Annisya dan Galuh Gery Resty (2025), "Pembentukan Karakter Generasi Berakhlak Islami Sesuai Manajemen Pendidikan Pesantren", *JSP: Jurnal Studi Pesantren*, 5 (1), 28-37 <https://doi.org/10.35897/studipesantren.v5i1.1546>



After the leadership of Kyai Imam Mursyid, the PSM was led by K.H. Hamim Tafsier bin Imam Tafsier until 1986. At that time, the PSM was no longer based on a tarekat, but some tarekat teachings were still being practiced and taught to their students.<sup>16</sup> K.H. Hamim Tafsier has a son named K.H. Zuhdi Tafsier, since he was young he had made a big contribution to Pesantren Cokrokertopati. His biggest contribution in 1977 was that he started building a Junior High School (SMP) in which he paid for the school's operational costs, teachers' salaries, and other things himself. Even though at that time he was still a student at IAIN Sunan Kalijaga. Because of his love for PSM, he preferred to participate in building PSM. He earned it by selling *Brem*, traditional Javanese food. Then he continued his Bachelor's degree at the Indonesian Islamic University (UII) Madiun. In just 3 years, K. H Zuhdi Tafsier was able to make this junior high school the most popular Junior High School in Takeran. After obtaining the School Identification Number (NIS), he named the school SMP PSM (Pesantren Sabilil Muttaqien Junior High School).

When K.H. Zuhdi Tafsier replaced his father, in 1990 he also built a private *Madrasah Tsanawiyah*, which became a formal school under PSM. Now there are many levels of schools under the PSM foundation, such as Tarbiyatul Athfal (TA) equivalent to Kindergarten, Takeran State *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (MTsN), Junior High School, Vocational High School (SMK) 1, Vocational High School (SMK) 2, *Madrasah Aliyah* (MA), and Special Needs Schools (SLB). Now, PSM has branches with a total of 158 institutions spread across several areas in East Java, Central Java, and West Java. It appears that *Pesantren* and the formal schools under *Pesantren* can compete and will continue to show their existence.

In some literature, the famous Kyai's Takeran name can also be determined by how many students and followers there are from a wider variety of places. In this way, the *Kyai* in Takeran *Pesantren* can be seen as supralocal *Kyai*. Popularity becomes very important. Through kinship relations and knowledge transmission networks, *Kyai* builds relationships with other *Pesantren* as part of an important mechanism for maintaining the exclusivity of *Kyai*'s position. Therefore, PSM is increasingly developing its popularity by increasing quality and innovation in the field of education.

According to Turmudi, two factors continue to perpetuate the relationship between *Kyai* and the community which are very much in line with the situation of Pesantren Cokrokertopati at that time.<sup>17</sup> First, it is important to look at the culture of *Pesantren* where *Kyai* provide Islamic studies to their students. *Kyai* at Takeran *Pesantren* are charismatic in cultivating emotional bonds with their students which are strengthened by a culture of subordination. This relationship does not only take place in *Pesantren* but until the students become members of society, therefore the spread and continuity of such culture are increasingly guaranteed.

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<sup>16</sup>Z.. Tafsier, ... 2019

<sup>17</sup>Endang Turmudi, (2006), *Struggling for the Ummah : Changing Leadership Roles of Kiai in Jombang, East Java*, Singapura: ISEAS, 110.



*Second*, the existence of *Kyai* and *Santri* in Pesantren Takeran ties with certain religious rituals such as *tahlilan*, *yasinan*, doing *zikir* together, commemorating the *Haul* of Pesantren clerics, or commemorating a certain day for example on September 16 is an important sign because a large madrasah is being built and will be used for all kinds of teaching activities. The historical commemoration of Takeran Pesantren which is very binding to this day is the anniversary of the 1948 PKI tragedy on October 1.<sup>18</sup> This relationship in terms of social science is called patronage.

The term 'patron' comes from a Spanish expression that etymologically means someone who has power, status, authority, and influence. While 'client' means 'subordinate' or people who are ordered and ordered. The patron-client relationship can be understood as a form of partnership between two individuals or social status, authority, and economic capacity create an asymmetrical relationship, whereby the client assumes a dependent and subordinate role, while the patron holds a more influential and dominant position.<sup>19</sup>

The patron-client relationship is an exchange of relations between the two roles that can be described as a special case of bond involving instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socio-economic status (patron) uses his influence and resources to provide protection, as well as benefits to someone with perceived lower status (client). Then The client reciprocates by offering general support and assistance including personal services to the patron. As a dispersed pattern of exchange, services and goods exchanged by patrons and clients reflect the needs that arise and the resources owned by each party.

While the flow from the client to the patron is: services or personnel in the form of technical expertise for the benefit of the patron. These services are in the form of basic work/agriculture services, additional services for households, private domestic services, and periodic feeding. For clients, the key element that influences the level of dependency and their legitimacy on patrons is the comparison between the services they provide to the patron and the results/services they receive. When the value of benefits obtained from the patron outweighs the obligations or services the client must return, the patron-client relationship is perceived as increasingly justified and legitimate.

Kyai is a patron because he is considered someone who has *karomah* or is described as *Waliyullah* and heir of the prophet, so the students place him as a 'supernatural' human figure. As a result, this relationship strengthens *Kyai* and his power is condensed through the patronage system. Meanwhile, *Santri* are clients who accept and acknowledge this position and influence consciously or voluntarily

As a result, this relationship strengthened the '*Kyai*'s position' and his power was increasingly condensed through the patronage system. The superiority of *Kyai* in the field of religion, their position as village intellectuals, and the public's view that they are people who have spiritual

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<sup>18</sup>Ramadhan,.... 2023.

<sup>19</sup>James C., Scott, (1972) "Patron Client Politics dan Political Change in Southeast Asia", The America Political Science Review 66, 14.





strength and virtue beyond the average person put the *Kyai* apart from being teachers and religious experts, as well as part of the leading people in the countryside.<sup>20</sup> The role of the *Kyai* extends beyond conveying and providing interpretations of Islamic sources, he also serves as spiritual mediator who guides the *santri* in their connection in the devine.<sup>21</sup> His charisma causes *Kyai* to occupy a leadership position in his environment. They are respected, honored, obeyed, and become a source of knowledge and guidance for *Santri* or the community. The *Kyai*'s position as such, is an actual patron, a place to depend on *Santri*.

The relationship between *Santri* and *Kyai* in Takeran is very close, especially since it is based on the justification of religious teachings, such as the student-teacher relationship within the *Tarekat* environment. Because of the authority of the *Kyai*, a student never (reluctantly) disputes what the *Kyai* does. The position of *Santri* is a client for him. Usually, *Kyai* as a patron is not only limited to the life of *Santri*, but also members of the surrounding community and the parents of *Santri*.<sup>22</sup> This *Kyai-Santri* relationship is usually strengthened by an institutionalized value system, namely *sami'na wa atho'na* tradition among *Pesantren*. Consequently, the reverence shown by *santri* toward their *kyai* often develops into a form of personal veneration.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. Cokrokertopati dan Ru'yah on 22<sup>nd</sup> Night

On May 1 2009, K.H. Zuhdi Tafsier experienced anxiety in his heart, then he invited religious leaders and community leaders to discuss the condition of the Muslim generation who were starting to be less proficient in matters of religion, especially reading *kutub al-Turats*. From the results of that deliberation and with the support and enthusiasm of religious leaders and community leaders, the Cokrokertopati *Pesantren Salafiyah* was founded which is still led by K.H. Zuhdi Tafsier to this day.<sup>24</sup>

The Cokrokertopati *Pesantren* is still in the same location as Pesantren Cokrokertopati. The grounds of the Cokrokertopati *Pesantren* are even closer to the Pesantren Cokrokertopati mosque which is considered the oldest mosque in Takeran. The Cokrokertopati *Pesantren* has added to the prestige of Pesantren Cokrokertopati as a *Pesantren* that teaches *kutub al-Turats*. Even though it is named Cokrokertopati, people usually call this *Pesantren* as Pesantren Sabilil Mttaqien (PSM). Because Cokrokertopati *Pesantren* is also still in the same environment as PSM.

At Cokrokertopati *Pesantren*, the method of third-quarter moon observation is used to determine the beginning of the Hijri months. K.H. Zuhdi Tafsier said that this method has been around for a long time, and it was inherited by previous *Pesantren* leaders in determining the

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<sup>20</sup>Pradjarta Dirdjosanjoto, (1999), *Memelihara Umat: Kiai Pesantren-Kiai Langgar di Jawa*, Yogyakarta: LkiS, 216.

<sup>21</sup>Steenbrink, (1994), *Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah: Pendidikan Islam dalam Kurun Modern*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 146.

<sup>22</sup>Sukanto, (2003), *Kepemimpinan Kiai dalam Pesantren*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 78.

<sup>23</sup>Fatima Mernissi, (1995), *The Forgotten Queens of Islam*, Minnesota: Universitas of Minnesota Press.

<sup>24</sup>Z.. Tafsier, ... 2019



beginning of the Hijri months. In a direct interview, he said there was no written history of this method. Records in the form of notes were never made. He only saw previous *Pesantren* leaders also do this. Then he was taught to do that. As Zuhdi Tafsier said, *“I have taught this knowledge to my students, but I don't make it mandatory. For those who want to come with me if you don't, that's okay”*. Even though he stated it, in reality, the community and his students (*Santri*) were very loyal and followed his decisions.

K.H. Zuhdi Tafsier claims that he is not part of the Nahdlatul Ulama or Muhammadiyah organizations, he is neutral. This claim is not only stated by Zuhdi Tafsier as a *Kyai*, but all students of the *Pesantren Cokrokertopati* will say that they are not part of NU (Nadlatul Ulama) or Muhammadiyah or other mass organizations but they are *Pesantren Cokrokertopati*.<sup>25</sup> This was later also conveyed by Nyai Hj. Afifah that in terms of the implementation of *'ubudiyah* in *Pesantren Cokrokertopati* is similar to NU. But in an organizational system, *Pesantren Cokrokertopati* is similar to Muhammadiyah.<sup>26</sup>

The Method he used to determine the beginning of the Hijri month is very simple, when the moon is in the third quarter phase, precisely on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the Hijri month. He will climb the minaret of the mosque at 03.00 Western Indonesian Time (UTC+7) to observe the moon's diameter line. If he sees that the diameter of the moon is convex, then the number of days in that month is 29 days, but if the diameter of the moon is concave, then the number of days is 30 days. Although this method differs from the government, it is often the same.



Image. 1<sup>27</sup>



Image. 2<sup>28</sup>

One method to identify the very thin convex and concave lines is by determining the elongation value. This requires data such as the declination of the Sun, the declination of the Moon,

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<sup>25</sup>Z.. Tafsier, ... 2019

<sup>26</sup>Z.. Tafsier, ... 2019

<sup>27</sup>The phase in which the Moon appears convex. The image was analyzed by the author using the *Sun, Moon, and Planets* application.

<sup>28</sup>The phase in which the Moon appears concave. The image was analyzed by the author using the *Sun, Moon, and Planets* application.



the right ascension of the Sun, and the right ascension of the Moon. These data can be obtained from ephemerides. The formula used to calculate the elongation value is as follows:

$$\cos = \sin \delta^{\circ} \times \sin \delta^{\prime} + \cos \delta^{\circ} \times \cos \delta^{\prime} \times \cos (\alpha^{\circ} - \alpha^{\prime})$$

Description:

- $\delta^{\circ}$  (Solar Declination)
- $\alpha^{\circ}$  (Solar *Ascencio Recta*)
- $\delta^{\prime}$  (Lunar Declination)
- $\alpha^{\prime}$  (Lunar *Ascencio Recta*)

Elongation is defined as the angular distance between the Moon and the Sun. To determine whether the Moon appears concave, the value of  $360^{\circ}$  is reduced by the calculated elongation. If the resulting elongation value exceeds  $270^{\circ}$ , the Moon is considered to appear concave; however, if the value is less than  $270^{\circ}$ , the Moon is considered to be convex. When the Moon appears convex, eight (8) days are added to determine the total number of days in the lunar month, whereas if the Moon appears concave, seven (7) days are added.

The author has analyzed and synthesized data from the past seven years as follows:

Hijri Year	Results of the Third Quarter Lunar Observation at Pesantren Cokrokertopati	1 Shawal		
		Pesantren Cokrokertopati	The Government	difference
1447	Convex	31 Maret 2025	31 Maret 2025	-
1446	Convex	10 April 2024	10 April 2024	-
1445	Concave	22 April 2023	21 April 2023	1 Day
1444	Convex	2 Mei 2022	2 Mei 2022	-
1443	Convex	13 Mei 2021	13 Mei 2021	-
1442	Concave	24 Mei 2020	23 Mei 2022	1 Day
1441	Concave	5 Juni 2019	4 Juni 2019	1 Day

The occurrence of a one-day difference does not create a dispute in the community. The local community, especially *Santri*, always comes to participate in the Eid al-Fitr commemoration at Pesantren Cokrokertopati and they can even be seen filling the outer courtyard of the mosque. No records were found regarding the determination of 1 Shawal at Pesantren Cokrokertopati, meaning that no one knows for sure in what year Pesantren Cokrokertopati differed from the government in the determination of Eid al-Fitr. Relying only on the memory of several sources who were



questioned had been different from the government. *"It used to be different, I forgot about which year it was, so it's still full."* Description of a native of Takeran.<sup>29</sup>

Nyai Lailatus Sa'adah the wife of *Kyai* Zuhdi Tafsier recounted:

*"During the Suharto era, there was a difference with the government, but yes, we still pray Eid al-Fitr here. The pilgrims pray together in the field. Before being transferred to the mosque, the worshipers who take part in the Pesantren Cokrokertopati will carry out Eid al-Fitr prayers in the field. Kyai Zuhdi Tafsier then moved the pilgrims to return to the mosque for the benefit and sanctity of the place for prayer. The Takeran Masjid Jami' is the oldest mosque in Takeran"*.<sup>30</sup>

The community knows that Pesantren Cokrokertopati is a *Pesantren* that has been established for a long time in Takeran. This *Pesantren* has produced many students and founded many branch *Madrasahs*. Many Takeran alumni have now occupied government institutions. Takeran's position, like other *Pesantren* in general, occupies high social strata, especially in Java.

*Pesantren* which is led by *Kyai* has advantages in the field of religion. The position of the *Kyai* as a village intellectual and the community's view that they are people who have spiritual strength and virtue more than most, places *Kyai* apart from teachers and religious experts, also as part of prominent people. That's why the community voluntarily follows Pesantren Cokrokertopati's decision in determining the beginning of the Hijri months.

### **3. The Impact of the Existence of a Patronage in Pesantren Cokrokertopati on the Determination of the Beginning of the Hijri Month**

K.H. Zuhdi Tafsier continued the leadership of his father, K.H. Imam Tafsier, to manage and prosper the Takeran mosque. K.H. Zuhdi Tafsier was entrusted with the mandate to manage the mosque and *Pesantren* because the heirs to the first leadership were all sons who were considered competent and fit to become *Kyai*, both in terms of scientific standards and other considerations.<sup>31</sup> As someone who is active in *Pesantren* and the community, K.H. Zuhdi Tafsier is widely followed by the community, including in determining Ramadan and Shawal.

The beginning of the Hijri month at Pesantren Cokrokertopati is decided by the *Kyai* because the *Kyai* determines when to perform the moon observation and the *Kyai* sees for himself whether the moon is convex or concave. But this knowledge has been taught to his students. This knowledge has existed since the founding of *Pesantren* and is still practiced today. The charisma that K.H. Zuhdi Tafsier possesses is not solely because he is a *Kyai*, but rather the spirit of Pesantren Cokrokertopati that is inherent in him. So that if he dies, this knowledge will continue to exist as the will of *Kyai* Hasan Ulama to preserve what has been arranged by the elders. As articulated in

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<sup>29</sup>Muhammad, Personal Interview by Asih Pertiwi, July 16, 2019

<sup>30</sup>Lailatus Sa'adah, Personal Interview by Asih Pertiwi, July 15, 2019

<sup>31</sup>Halim Soebahar, (2013). *Moderenisasi Pesantren: Studi Transformasi Kepemimpinan Kyai dan Sistem Pendidikan Pesantren*. Yogyakarta: LkiS, 127



Alfan's work, the kiai serves not only as a technical transmitter of Islamic Astronomical knowledge but also as an authoritative religious figure who constructs socio-religious legitimacy in the practices of hisab and rukyat within the wider community.<sup>32</sup>

In the Indonesian social context, *Kyai* typically occupy a higher position within the social hierarchy, as they are perceived as religious authority endowed with extensive knowledge and wisdom. The status position then as primary sources of guidance for community members seeking counsel or direction. In contemporary society, the role of the *Kyai* extends beyond religious authority, encompassing psychological and emotional support for their communities. Normatively, the title 'Kyai' is associated with those who lead a *pesantren*; however, in practice, religious figures without *pesantren* may also be referred to as *Kyai*, depending on their personal influence, social legitimacy, and the local dynamics that shape their authority.<sup>33</sup>

The role of the *Ulama* or *Kyai* as *Waratsât al-Anbiyâ* has an important and strategic role, especially to strengthen the ethical, moral, and spiritual foundations of national and state life. No matter how modern society is, the roles, functions, and responsibilities of *Kyai* will not be replaced.<sup>34</sup> It is on their shoulders that moral development and ethics are determined. The role of *Pesantren* and *Kyai* in social life is not only involved in creating and instilling a system of Islamic values (Islamic religious teachings) to create a more religious Indonesian society, but *Kyai* are also role models for society who have great influence both in social structure, politics, economics, culture and law.<sup>35</sup>

Based on the perspective of the *Kyai* as a patron in *Pesantren*, he has taught the students to be able to learn the determining method of the beginning of the Hijri months using moon observation on the 22<sup>nd</sup> night, then he will convey the results of the decision to the community. This decision will be obeyed by the congregation because both *Santri* and the community need someone who makes decisions, especially in terms of determining 1 Ramadan and 1 Shawwal. One resident who is close to the *Pesantren* environment said, "We join *Kyai Zuhdi* because he is the *Kyai* here. He's the one who understands. We obey the *Kyai*". As loyal members of society, of course, they will follow the *Kyai* because they have interacted for a long time not only with the *Kyai* but also with *Pesantren*.

It is the *Pesantren* background that has the strongest influence on the community or congregation. *Kyai Zuhdi Tafsier* is a figure who brings *Pesantren* background to the community and also carries the names of *Pesantren* elders who have long interacted with the Takeran

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<sup>32</sup>Alfan Maghfuri, 2021, Kontribusi Kiai Ahmad Dahlan Al-Samarani Dalam Perkembangan Kajian Ilmu Falak Di Indonesia, *Jurnal Al-Afaq: Jurnal Ilmu Falak dan Astronomi*, 3 (2), 89-108 <https://doi.org/10.20414/afaq.v3i2.4768>

<sup>33</sup>Iwan Kuswandi dan M Ridwan, (2023), "Kepatuhan Terhadap Kiai Pesantren dalam Tinjauan Psikologi Pendidikan", *Jurnal Tinta: Ilmu Keguruan dan Pendidikan*, 5 (1), 42-52.

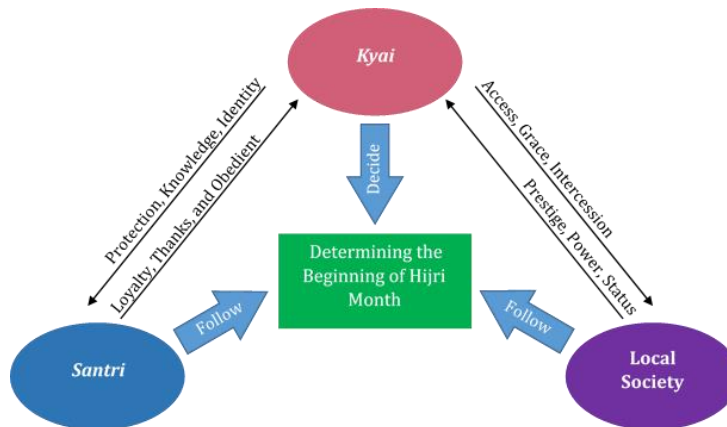
<sup>34</sup>Ali, Suryadharma Paradigma (2013) *Pesantren; Memperluas Horizon Kajian dan Aksi*, Malang: UIN-Maliki Press.

<sup>35</sup>Ali... 2013



community, *Kyai* Zuhdi Tafsier never forces his congregation to join but it is the congregation's trust in him that makes the congregation follow the decision

The dual position of a *Kyai* as caretaker and owner of *Pesantren* and the assumption that the *Kyai* has a magical power causes *Santri* inevitably to become very trusting of the *Kyai*. In addition, life in *Pesantren*, which is colored by asceticism (the *Kyai*'s cult), combined with the willingness to carry out all the *Kyai*'s orders to obtain his oratory, will always leave an imprint on the soul of a *Santri*.<sup>36</sup> So that in turn, *Santri* will shape their lives based on the formations brought from *Pesantren*. This is the beginning of the emergence of a commitment to always be bound in a relationship with *Kyai*, especially because of the role of *Kyai* who are considered as the parents of *Santri*.



**Image 3. Patronage Relationship Patterns at Pesantren Cokrokertopati Takeran**

The relationship between the community-*Santri-Kyai* is patron-client which causes a status hierarchy, dependency, and respect for the *Kyai* from the community and *Santri*. It leads to the cult of *Kyai*'s figure. *Santri* accept the leadership of *Kyai* because they believe in the concept of *barokah* which is based on the Sufi emanation doctrine. The *Santri* community sees *Kyai* as a continuation of the lineage of the scholars inheriting knowledge from the Islamic golden age. Some of the great *Kyai* are often considered important to know the genealogical order which absolutely must be respected because they are considered to have supernatural powers that can bring good luck. One of the characteristics of the community and *Santri* is their attachment to *Kyai* in a pattern of teacher-student and leader-follower relationships.

The support given by *Santri* and the community is a form of social exchange as a client to a patron, namely *Kyai*. Scott suggests that this patron-client relationship involves instrumental friendship, in which an individual with a higher social status (patron) uses his influence and

<sup>36</sup>A. Wahid, (1980) *Bunga Rampai Pesantren*, Jakarta: CV. Dharma Bakti.



resources to give it to a lower person (client) so that the client will provide support and assistance including personal services. to patrons.<sup>37</sup> Even though it is only a support, it is very important for the religious elite. *First*, *Kyai* who already has charisma in society will have greater support. The greater the support, the greater the name he will get. *Second*, the interest of *da'wah*. The greater the support, the easier it is to do *da'wah*. The community of *Pesantren* will seriously consider aspects of *da'wah* as a vision and mission in spreading *Amar Ma'ruf Nahī Munkar*. *Third*, facilitating the process of educating the public, especially religious education.

#### **D. Conclusion**

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that the pattern of patronage relationships between the *kyai*, *santri*, and the wider community is characterized by a deeply rooted sense of obedience that carries almost sacred value. The *kyai* is perceived as a central figure who fulfills various communal needs, including religious guidance, leadership, moral authority, and social direction. In return, the *kyai* receives support in the form of loyalty, obedience, and sustained trust from the community. This reciprocal relationship exerts a significant influence on religious practices, particularly in determining the beginning of fasting, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha, as the *kyai* is regarded as a primary moral and religious reference. Consequently, the *santri* and the broader community tend not to question the methods employed in determining these religious dates, as their trust in the *kyai* transcends technical or methodological considerations. In this context, the continuity of such practices is shaped not by the scientific or astronomical validity of the methods used, but rather by the strength of socio-religious authority and collective belief embedded within the community. Thus, differences in determining Islamic feast days in Indonesia are strongly influenced by social trust and religious authority rather than purely astronomical calculations.

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<sup>37</sup>Scott, .... 15



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