



Reconstructing the Qibla Change through Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani's *Fath al-Bārī*: A Historiographical Analysis

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Abstract: This study reconstructs the chronology and historical context of the qibla change – the redirection of Muslim prayer from Baitul Maqdis to the Ka'bah – through a rigorous textual analysis of Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī's hadith commentary, *Fath al-Bārī*. While previous Islamic historiography has rarely treated hadith commentaries as viable primary sources, this study addresses that gap. Employing a qualitative framework that integrates historical-hermeneutic analysis with an interpretive-historical approach, it examines *Fath al-Bārī* to produce a chronologically precise and contextually grounded account. To reconcile conflicting reports on the date of the change, Ibn Hajar applied *al-jam' wa al-tawfiq* (compromise) by specifying the lunar count from Rabī' al-Awwal to Rajab, explaining the 16- versus 17-month discrepancy through inclusive and exclusive calculations. He then used *tarjih* (critical selection) based on *sanad* quality to establish mid-Rajab of the second Hijri year as the definitive moment of transition. The research also illuminates the socio-political climate of Madinah, including Muslim-Jewish relations, the Companions' role in transmitting the news, and the event's impact on consolidating early Muslim identity. The study concludes that *Fath al-Bārī* functions not merely as hadith exegesis but as a significant historiographical document, offering a methodological model for integrating hadith scholarship with historical inquiry.

Keywords: *Qibla Change, Historical Analysis, Ibnu Hajar al-'Asqalānī*

Abstrak: Studi ini merekonstruksi kronologi dan konteks historis perubahan kiblat – pengalihan arah salat Muslim dari Baitul Maqdis ke Ka'bah – melalui analisis tekstual yang cermat terhadap tafsir hadits Ibnu Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*. Meskipun historiografi Islam sebelumnya jarang memperlakukan tafsir hadits sebagai sumber primer yang layak, studi ini mengatasi kesenjangan tersebut. Dengan menggunakan kerangka kualitatif yang mengintegrasikan analisis hermeneutik-historis dengan pendekatan historis-interpretatif, studi ini meneliti *Fath al-Bari* untuk menghasilkan uraian yang tepat secara kronologis dan berlandaskan konteks. Untuk mendamaikan laporan yang saling bertentangan mengenai tanggal perubahan tersebut, Ibnu Hajar menerapkan *al-jam' wa al-tawfiq* (kompromi) dengan menentukan perhitungan bulan dari Rabī' al-Awwal hingga Rajab, menjelaskan perbedaan 16 dan 17 bulan melalui perhitungan inklusif dan eksklusif. Kemudian, ia menggunakan *tarjih* (seleksi kritis) berdasarkan kualitas *sanad* untuk menetapkan pertengahan Rajab tahun kedua Hijriah sebagai momen transisi yang pasti. Penelitian ini juga menjelaskan iklim sosial-politik Madinah, termasuk hubungan Muslim-Yahudi, peran para Sahabat dalam menyampaikan berita tersebut, dan dampak peristiwa tersebut terhadap penguatan identitas Muslim awal. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa *Fath al-Bārī* tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai penafsiran hadits tetapi juga sebagai dokumen historiografi yang signifikan, menawarkan model metodologis untuk mengintegrasikan kajian hadits dengan penyelidikan sejarah.

Kata kunci: *Perpindahan Kiblat, Analisis Historis, Ibnu Hajar al-'Asqalānī*

A. Introduction

Few events in the formative period of Islam carried as much significance as the qibla reorientation, the moment when the direction of Muslim prayer shifted from Baitul Maqdis to the Kaaba. This was not merely a physical adjustment in worship; it marked a watershed in the collective identity of a nascent religious community still defining its boundaries. A close reading of *Fath al-Bārī* reveals the multiple rationales behind this divine directive and



highlights the Prophet Muhammad's [ﷺ] deliberate effort to establish a spiritually autonomous Muslim polity. As enshrined in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 144,¹ the transition from Baitul Maqdis to the Kaaba extended far beyond a liturgical adjustment, it was an act of spiritual assertion that demarcated the Muslim community's heritage from that of the people of the scripture². By anchoring its doctrine exclusively in divine revelation, Islam declared independence from inherited external traditions.³ Viewed through this lens, the qibla shift was not simply a ritual milestone; it was the moment at which an Islamic civilization, possessing its own moral framework and theological worldview, began to crystallize as a distinct civilization.

Scholarly engagement with the qibla reorientation has proceeded along several distinct tracks. Aisyatur Rahmah Wiwana, for instance, examines the subject through thematic Qur'anic exegesis in Tafsir Al-Misbah⁴ while Subur Wijaya and Husnul Maab undertake a comparative tafsir study tracing how qibla-related verses have been interpreted across both classical and contemporary exegetical traditions.⁵ Mutmainnah situates the Qibla discourse within the broader arc of Islamic jurisprudential development⁶, Lady Eka Rahmawati probes the historical circumstances surrounding the revelation of related Qur'anic passages,⁷ and Elly Uzlifatul Jannah traces the astronomical dimensions of qibla history,⁸ Emyllia Fatmawati, meanwhile, focuses her inquiry on the hadith evidence underpinning jurisprudential qibla determination.⁹ The research of Naila Arifa et al. addresses the traditional astronomical methodology codified in Marāqil al-'Ubudiyah¹⁰, while Mau'idhatul Ridwan et al. investigate the integration of celestial calculations with Islamic jurisprudence in determining qibla direction across the

¹ A R Wiwana dan A Izroq, "Peristiwa Perpindahan Arah Kiblat Dalam Perspektif Al Quran Surah Al-Baqarah Ayat 142-145 Perspektif Tafsir Al-Misbah," *Gudang Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu*, 2 (2024), hal. 423–28 <<https://gudangjurnal.com/index.php/gjmi/article/view/569>>.

² Sayyid. Qutb, *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an*, I (Kairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 2003), (Tafsir Surah al-Baqarah: 142-147), [https://dn721609.ca.archive.org/0/items/00-muqaddimah/2 al-baqarah.pdf](https://dn721609.ca.archive.org/0/items/00-muqaddimah/2%20al-baqarah.pdf).

³ Lady Eka Rahmawati, "Asbab Al-Nuzul Surat Al-Baqarah Ayat 142 dan 144 (Kajian Analisis Historis tentang Perpindahan Kiblat)," *Sanaamul Quran: Jurnal Wawasan Keislaman*, 3.1 (2022), hal. 39–54, doi:10.62096/tsaqofah.v3i1.28.

⁴ Wiwana dan Izroq, "Peristiwa Perpindahan Arah Kiblat Dalam Perspektif Al Quran Surah Al-Baqarah Ayat 142-145 Perspektif Tafsir Al-Misbah.", 423.

⁵ Subur Wijaya dan Husnul Maab, "KIBLAT PERSPEKTIF MUFASSIRIN (Kajian Analitis Penafsiran Ayat-Ayat Kiblat dalam Tafsir Al-Thabari, Ibnu Katsir dan Tafsir Al-Mishbah)," *Hikami: Jurnal Ilmu Alquran dan Tafsir*, 2.1 (2021), hal. 66–80, doi:10.59622/jiat.v2i1.50.

⁶ Mutmainnah, "KIBLAT DAN KAKBAH DALAM SEJARAH PERKEMBANGAN FIKIH," *Jurnal Ulumuddin*, 7 (2017), hal. 57–69.

⁷ Lady Eka Rahmawati, "Asbab Al-Nuzul Surat Al-Baqarah Ayat 142 dan 144 (Kajian Analisis Historis tentang Perpindahan Kiblat).", 40.

⁸ Elly Uzlifatul Jannah, "Sejarah dan Hikmah Astronomis Peralihan Arah Kiblat umat Muslim," *International Conference on Sharia and Law*, 2022, hal. 237–42.

⁹ Emyllia Fatmawati, "Arah Kiblat Tanah Haram dengan Perspektif Hadis," *Jurnal Ilmu Falak dan Astronomi*, 3.1 (2021), hal. 60–76.

¹⁰ Naila Arifa et al., "A Methodological Study of Qibla Direction Determination in Marāqil Al-' Ubūdiyah: The Perspectives of Astronomical Science (Falak) and Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh) of Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani, AL – AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak dan Astronomi, no. 1 (2025): 104–23.



Indonesian archipelago.¹¹ Despite this rich body of work, a recurring limitation is evident: the majority of these studies lean heavily on Qur'anic textual analysis or the synthesis of classical jurisprudence with modern astronomical computation. Although hadith literature has long been central to Islamic historical and legal scholarship, hadith commentaries – such as *Fath al-Bārī* – have rarely been treated as primary historical sources for reconstructing early Islamic events, particularly in modern Western historiography. This study addresses that gap by positioning *Fath al-Bārī* by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī¹² at the center of its inquiry, applying a historical-hermeneutic methodology to yield a more nuanced and historically grounded reconstruction of the qibla transition.

Fath al-Bārī by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī¹³ occupies an unrivaled position among commentaries on *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Bukhari, and is widely recognized as an essential reference in both hadith studies and Islamic historical writing. Its scholarly distinction derives from Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī's rigorous application of historical-critical methodology, scrutinizing chains of narration (*sanad*), textual content (*matan*), and contextual circumstances (*siyaq*), to hadiths bearing on the qibla reorientation.¹⁴ Rather than restricting his analysis to textual commentary, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī regularly integrates the broader historical record and the positions of earlier scholars, transforming *Fath al-Bārī* into an exceptionally credible primary source through which the historical dimensions of the qibla event can be explored with depth and rigor.¹⁵ Its status as a canonical reference across multiple schools of Islamic thought lends any hadith-based scholarly inquiry an epistemological foundation that is both robust and broadly accepted.¹⁶ Centering analysis on *Fath al-Bārī* therefore serves the dual purpose of deepening historical understanding of the qibla shift and illuminating its continued relevance to Islamic astronomical studies.

This study aims to conduct a historically grounded examination of the qibla shift as treated in Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī's *Fath al-Bārī*, while simultaneously excavating the spiritual and social dimensions embedded in this momentous event. The classical historiographic methodology practiced by scholars such as Ibn al-Athīr and al-Mas'ūdī offers a productive conceptual framework for understanding how Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī read and interpreted the event within his commentary. The study aspires to expand the frontiers of hadith scholarship while contributing fresh perspectives to both Islamic astronomy and history. This study is guided by three objectives. First, it examines how Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī's discourse in *Fath al-*

¹¹ Hasanah Ridwan, Ahmad Izzuddin, dan Fatmawati Hilal, "The Concept of Qibla Direction in Sayyid Usman 's Tahrir Aqwa Al-Adillah Fi Tahsil ' Ain Al-Qiblah," *AL – AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak dan Astronomi*, no. 1 (2025): 124–37.

¹² Aḥmad ibn 'Alī Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1 ed. (Riyadh: Maktabah Darussalam, 1997), 1-481.

¹³ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1-481 .

¹⁴ Jonathan A C Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, ed. oleh Omid Safi, 2 ed. (Oneworld Academic, 2009) <https://turandoc.uz/media/books/2024/05/27/Brown_Jonathan_A_C_Hadith_Muhammads_Lega.pdf>.

¹⁵ Zulfarizal dan Alya Mardiyatul Ch, "Metodologi Syarah Hadis Nabi SAW (Telaah Kitab Fath Al-Bari' Syarah Shahih Al-Bukhari)," *Al-Isnad: Journal of Indonesian Hadist Studies*, 2.1 (2021), hal. 26–33 <<https://doi.org/10.51875/alisdad.v2i1.109>>.

¹⁶ Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Speaking In God ' S Name*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2001), 1-136.



Bārī reconstructs the chronology and historical facts surrounding the qibla shift. Second, it analyzes the ways in which the historical setting of the qibla reorientation can be understood through the hadith explanations contained in *Fath al-Bārī*. Third, it identifies the tangible social effects of the qibla change on the community of Madinah at that time. This topic deserves sustained scholarly inquiry, as it engages not only with the ritual dimensions of Islamic worship but also with a decisive episode in the development of the Muslim community, one that crystallized the boundaries separating Islam from other religious traditions. It is deeply intertwined with the history of astronomical science, the evolving discipline of qibla determination, and the long-term construction of Islamic theological thought. By approaching this subject through the lens of *Fath al-Bārī*, this article contributes to early Islamic historiography by offering a more complete reconstruction of a formative moment in the shaping of Muslim communal identity.

B. Method

This study employs a qualitative, library-based research design.¹⁷ Methodologically, it integrates two interrelated frameworks: a historical-hermeneutic framework¹⁸ and an interpretive-historical orientation.¹⁹ The historical-hermeneutic framework, adapted from classical Islamic hermeneutic traditions (e.g., Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah*) and modern hermeneutic theory as applied to Islamic texts by scholars such as Fazlur Rahman, is operationalized here to interpret *Fath al-Bārī*²⁰ not merely as a legal-theological commentary but as a text embedded in specific historical conditions. This framework involves three hermeneutic operations: (a) understanding the text in its original context (*sitz im leben*), (b) analyzing the author's interpretive strategies, and (c) reconstructing the historical event (the qibla change) through a dialectic between the commentator's explanations and the documented socio-political realities of 7th-century Madinah. The interpretive-historical orientation draws on classical Islamic historiography as practiced by al-Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Athīr, and al-Mas'ūdī, which prioritizes the critical examination of transmission chains (*asānīd*), the reconciliation of conflicting reports (*al-jam' wa al-tawfiq*), and the contextualization of events within broader social and political dynamics. This orientation is operationalized by treating each ḥadīth and its commentary as a historical report whose reliability must be assessed through external and internal criticism.

Operational procedures were conducted in three sequential stages. First, content analysis extracted all passages from *Fath al-Bārī* related to the qibla change (primarily in *Kitāb al-Ṣalāh* and *Abwāb al-Qiblah*), coding each for chronological indicators (month, year, event sequence), actors and their actions (the Prophet, Companions, Jews), and cited sources

¹⁷ Milya Sari dan Asmendri, "Penelitian Kepustakaan (Library Research)," *NATURAL SCIENCE; Jurnal Penelitian IPA dan Pendidikan IPA*, 6.1 (2020), hal. 41–53.

¹⁸ M Iqbal Abdurrohman dan Muhammad Adip Fanani, "Sejarah Dan Perkembangan Pendekatan Metode Hermeneutika Dalam Menafsirkan Al-Qur'an," *Intelek dan Cendekiawan Nusantara*, 1.1 (2024), hal. 211–23.

¹⁹ Zaahidah Aufaa A et al., "Kajian Historiografi Ibnu al-Atsir dalam al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh," *Tamadduna: Journal Peradaban*, 2.2 (2025), hal. 122–33 <<https://consensus.app/papers/almasudis-contribution-in-the-development-of-classic-lestari-hak/eadcc46eb9405512a5ef571f245585fc/>>.

²⁰ Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1-148.



(Qur'anic verses, ḥadīths, scholarly opinions). Second, critical evaluation of *sanad* and *matan* followed Ibn Ḥajar's criteria: verifying the continuity and trustworthiness of the *sanad* through *'ilm al-rijāl*, examining the *matan* for internal consistency and absence of irregularities (*shudhūdh*), and comparing multiple versions to identify the most authentic (*aṣaḥḥ al-asānīd*), prioritizing narrations from Anas ibn Mālik and al-Barrā' ibn 'Āzib. Third, historical reconstruction reconciled conflicting data (e.g., 16 vs. 17 months) using Ibn Ḥajar's *al-jam' wa al-tawfīq* – recalculating the lunar count from the Prophet's arrival in Rabī' al-Awwal to mid-Rajab of the second Hijrī year with inclusive/exclusive counting – and cross-referenced the timeline with Qur'anic *asbāb al-nuzūl*, *sīrah* literature, and modern historiography.

Data sources; the primary source is Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī's *Fath al-Bārī* (1st ed., Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, 1997), specifically the volumes on prayer (*ṣalāh*) and qibla. Supplementary sources include Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (no. 399), other canonical ḥadīth collections, classical *sīrah* works (e.g., Ibn Hishām), and peer-reviewed articles retrieved from digital databases (Google Scholar, JSTOR, DOAJ) and physical libraries. This integrated methodological design enables *Fath al-Bārī* to be examined simultaneously as a work of ḥadīth exegesis and as a historiographical document, thereby facilitating a rigorous reconstruction of the qibla shift's chronology, context, and social impact.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Chronology of the History of the Change of Qibla according to *Fath al-Bārī*

a. Historical Methodological Basis *Fath al-Bārī*

In opening his commentary in *Fath al-Bārī*, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī underscores that the relocation of the prayer direction stands as one of the most consequential events in the formative period of Islamic history following the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ arrival in Medina.²¹ This position is articulated through Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhari hadith No. 399²² narrated from Barra' bin Azib as follows:

عَنِ الْبَرَاءِ بْنِ عَازِبٍ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ أَوَّلَ مَا قَدِمَ الْمَدِينَةَ نَزَلَ عَلَى أَجْدَادِهِ أَوْ قَالَ أَحْوَالِهِ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ وَأَنَّهُ صَلَّى قَبْلَ بَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ سِتَّةَ عَشَرَ شَهْرًا أَوْ سَبْعَةَ عَشَرَ شَهْرًا وَكَانَ يُعْجَبُهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ قِبْلَتُهُ قِبَلَ الْبَيْتِ وَأَنَّهُ صَلَّى أَوَّلَ صَلَاةٍ صَلَّاهَا صَلَاةَ الْعَصْرِ صَلَّى مَعَهُ قَوْمٌ فَخَرَجَ رَجُلٌ مِمَّنْ صَلَّى مَعَهُ فَمَرَّ عَلَى أَهْلِ مَسْجِدٍ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ فَقَالَ أَشْهَدُ بِاللَّهِ لَقَدْ صَلَّيْتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قِبَلَ مَكَّةَ فَدَارُوا كَمَا هُمْ قِبَلَ الْبَيْتِ وَكَانَتِ الْيَهُودُ قَدْ أَعْجَبَهُمْ إِذْ كَانَ يُصَلِّي قِبَلَ بَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ وَأَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ فَلَمَّا وُلَّى وَجْهَهُ قِبَلَ

²¹ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 79-81.

²² Imam Muhammad bin Ismā'il al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari, Milestone Documents of World Religions* (Damaskus: Dar Ibnu Katsir, 2002), <https://doi.org/10.3735/9781935306191.book-part-045>, Hadis no. 399, 110.



الْكَعْبَةِ أَنْكُرُوا ذَلِكَ. قَالَ زُهَيْرٌ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو إِسْحَاقَ عَنِ الْبَرَاءِ فِي حَدِيثِهِ هَذَا أَنَّهُ مَاتَ عَلَى الْقِبْلَةِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تُحَوَّلَ
رِجَالٌ وَقُتِلُوا فَلَمْ نَدْرِ مَا نَقُولُ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: (وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ)

From Barra', that the first time Rasulullah ﷺ came to Medina, he lived in the house of his grandfather or uncles from the Ansar. At that time the Prophet prayed facing Baitul Maqdis (Jerusalem) for approximately 16 or 17 months. In fact, the Prophet preferred Baitullah (the Kaaba in Mecca) to be his Qibla. The first time the Prophet ﷺ prayed facing the Kaaba was the Asr prayer which he performed in congregation. Then one of the people who followed the Prophet came out and went past a mosque while the congregation was bowing down facing Baitul Maqdis. Then the person said, "By Allah, I have just prayed with the Messenger of Allah facing the Baitullah in Mecca. So they immediately changed their direction to face Baitullah. The Jews were initially very proud when the Prophet and his followers prayed facing Baitul Maqdis and so did the People of the Scripture. But after the Muslims changed to Baitullah they denounced the change." Barra further stated in this hadith, "Many people who died while the Qibla was still going to Baitul Maqdis and many were killed after the Qibla was facing Baitullah. We don't understand what the ruling on prayer is." Then the verse came down, "Allah will not waste your faith." ²³

Ibn Hajar's treatment of the qibla hadiths in *Fath al-Bārī* reveals a distinctive historiographical method that blends ḥadīth criticism with historical reconstruction. Unlike earlier commentators who merely paraphrased *al-Bukhārī's ṣaḥīḥ*, Ibn Hajar subjects each narration to a tripartite examination: verification of *sanad* continuity, scrutiny of *matan* for internal coherence, and cross-referencing with Qur'anic chronology. For instance, in discussing the duration of prayer toward Baitul Maqdis, he does not simply report the 16 and 17 month variants but actively reconciles them through *al-jam' wa al-tawfīq*, a method that treats conflicting reports as complementary rather than contradictory. This approach, as I argue, transforms *Fath al-Bārī* from a passive commentary into an active historiographical inquiry, one that prioritizes chronological precision over mere transmission.

This hadith establishes with clarity that, during the earliest phase of the Madinah period, the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions maintained Baitul Maqdis (Al-Aqsa Mosque) as their prayer direction for a span of sixteen to seventeen months following the hijrah.²⁴ This initial orientation carried significant strategic meaning: it visibly affirmed the continuity between Islam and the preceding prophetic lineage, particularly the sacred traditions associated with the Prophets Ibrahim, Musa, and 'Isa. The eventual reorientation toward the Kaaba was therefore not simply a recalibration of physical direction during worship, it was an assertion of Muslim distinctiveness that explicitly marked the community as separate from the *Ahl al-*

²³ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*, Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, (2019), QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 143.

²⁴ Imam Muhammad bin Ismā'il al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 110.



*Kitab.*²⁵ Within this framework, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī connects this event to Surah al-Baqarah verses 142–145, particularly verse 144:

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

*Indeed, We saw your face (Prophet Muhammad) often looking up to the sky. So, We will definitely direct you to the Qibla that you like. Then, turn your face towards the Grand Mosque. Wherever you are, turn your faces towards it. Indeed, those who were given the book) truly know that (the transfer of the Qibla to the Grand Mosque) is the truth from their Lord. Allah is not unaware of what they do.*²⁶

This Qur'anic verse constitutes authoritative scriptural testimony that the qibla change was a direct divine command, conferring upon the Kaaba the supreme and uncontested status as the focal point of Muslim worship. The directive carried dual legal significance: it validated the Kaaba's centrality while simultaneously exemplifying the operation of *nasikh* and *mansukh* (abrogation and replacement) in Islamic jurisprudence, with this verse representing among the earliest known instances of a *nasikh* verse being revealed.²⁷ As a consequence, compliance with the Kaaba's direction is itself a marker of submission to divine authority.²⁸

The contribution of Syarah *Fath al-Bārī* to elucidating the *sanad* and *matan* of Bukhari's hadiths on the qibla shift is considerable. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī employs a multidimensional approach, scrutinizing both the chains of narration (*sanad*) and the textual content of the hadiths (*matan*) to arrive at a well-grounded interpretive conclusion.²⁹ In addressing hadiths specifically related to the qibla shift, he assesses the reliability of individual narrators (*rijāl al-hadīth*) and investigates the contextual circumstances that gave rise to each narration (*asbāb al-wurūd*), thereby fortifying the authenticity of the accounts and pre-empting the kinds of contradictory claims advanced by orientalist scholars.³⁰ As an illustrative example, he surveys the positions of various scholars and meticulously maps the chains of transmission to reinforce the evidentiary weight of the hadiths, ultimately identifying narrations transmitted through Anas ibn Malik and al-Barra' ibn 'Azib as the most unimpeachable (*ashahh al-asānid*).³¹

²⁵ Sayyid Qutb, *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an*, 147-153.

²⁶ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*, QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 144.

²⁷ Lady Eka Rahmawati, "Asbab Al-Nuzul Surat Al-Baqarah Ayat 142 dan 144 (Kajian Analisis Historis tentang Perpindahan Kiblat)", 41-42.

²⁸ Wiwana dan Izroq, "Peristiwa Perpindahan Arah Kiblat Dalam Perspektif Al Quran Surah Al-Baqarah Ayat 142-145 Perspektif Tafsir Al-Misbah", 428.

²⁹ Hairul Hudaya, "Metode Syarah Hadis dalam Kitab Fath Al-Bari (Kajian atas Hadis Shalat Sunnah Sebelum dan Sesudah Shalat Jum'at)," *Ilmu Ushuluddin* 16, no. 2 (2017): 121.

³⁰ Neny Muthi'atul Awwaliyah dan Idham Hamid, "KAJIAN HERMENEUTIKA DALAM KITAB FATH AL-BARI ' KARYA IBN Pendahuluan Biografi Ibnu Hajar Al-Asqalani (Analisis Hadist tentang Umroh)," *Citra Ilmu* XV, no. April (2019): 12.

³¹ Wijaya dan Maab, "KIBLAT PERSFEKTIF MUFASSIRIN (Kajian Analitis Penafsiran Ayat-Ayat Kiblat dalam Tafsir Al-Thabari, Ibnu Katsir dan Tafsir Al-Mishbah).", 78-79.



b. Initial Period: Practice Facing Baitul Maqdis (16-17 Months)

وَأَنَّهُ صَلَّى قِبَلَ بَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ سِتَّةَ عَشَرَ شَهْرًا أَوْ سَبْعَةَ عَشَرَ شَهْرًا وَكَانَ يُعْجِبُهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ قِبَلَهُ قِبَلَ الْبَيْتِ

*At that time the Prophet prayed facing Baitul Maqdis (Jerusalem) for approximately 16 or 17 months.*³²

Reading the Bukhari hadith through the lens of *Fath al-Bārī* as rendered by Imam Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, it becomes clear that the qibla transition from Baitul Maqdis to the Kaaba represents a historically rich episode laden with lasting lessons for the Muslim community. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī establishes that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions maintained their prayer orientation toward Baitul Maqdis for sixteen to seventeen months after the migration to Madinah, until the divine command arrived directing them toward the Grand Mosque. The variation in this duration reflects differences across narrations: certain accounts report sixteen months, as in the narration transmitted by Abu Awanah from Ammar bin Raja', while others record seventeen months, as per the accounts of Bazzar and Thabrani via Amru bin Auf.³³

وَالْجَمْعُ بَيْنَ الرَّوَايَتَيْنِ سَهْلٌ بَأَنَّ يَكُونَ مَنْ عَدَّ سِتَّةَ عَشَرَ لَمْ يُعَدَّ شَهْرَ الْقُدُومِ وَشَهْرَ التَّحْوِيلِ، وَمَنْ عَدَّ سَبْعَةَ عَشَرَ عَدَّهُمَا. وَمَنْ اشْتَبَهَ عَلَيْهِ الْأَمْرُ كَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ... وَإِنَّمَا الْخِلَافُ فِي طَرِيقِ الْعَدِّ... وَبِهِ جَزَمَ الْحَافِظُ... وَرَوَاهُ الْحَاكِمُ بِسَنَدٍ صَحِيحٍ عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ

*"And the compromise between the two narrations is easy, namely that the one who counts with sixteen months does not include the month of arrival and the month of the change (of Qibla). While the one who counts with seventeen months includes both. And the one who is in doubt about this matter, then his calculation is between the two... This difference is only in the method of calculation... And this is the opinion affirmed by Al-Hafiz (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī)... And (this opinion) was narrated by Al-Hakim with a ṣaḥīḥ sanad from Ibn Abbas".*³⁴

The discrepancy between narrations reporting sixteen versus seventeen months is not a mere scribal error but reflects two distinct methods of chronological reckoning. Ibn Hajar clarifies that the seventeen-month figure includes both the month of the Prophet's arrival (*Rabī' al-Awwal*) and the month of the change (*Rajab*), whereas the sixteen-month figure excludes both. This reconciliation, which Ibn Hajar attributes to a ṣaḥīḥ chain from Ibn 'Abbās, is significant for two reasons. First, it demonstrates that apparent contradictions in ḥadīth can be resolved through mathematical precision, not textual emendation. Second, it privileges inclusive counting (*al-'add al-shāmil*) as the standard for historical chronology, a choice that subsequent scholars (e.g., al-Nawawī, Ibn Kathīr) adopted without critical examination. What remains unasked in Ibn Hajar's analysis, however, is whether the Companions themselves

³² Imam Muhammad bin Ismā'il al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 110.

³³ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānīyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 79.

³⁴ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānīyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 79.



would have calculated durations in this way, a question that points to the limitations of retrojecting later scholarly conventions onto the 7th century.³⁵

d. Historical Turning Point: Transition to the Kaaba in Mid Rajab 2 H

Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī conclusively established that this watershed moment occurred in the middle of the month of Rajab during the second year of the Hijrah, a determination that rests on the preponderance of scholarly opinion, itself founded on exhaustive evaluation of authentic narrations.

وَكَانَ التَّحْوِيلُ فِي نِصْفِ شَهْرِ رَجَبٍ مِنَ السَّنَةِ الثَّانِيَةِ عَلَى الصَّحِيحِ

*And the change (of the Qibla) occurred in the middle of the month of Rajab in the second year according to the correct opinion (ash-ṣaḥīḥ).*³⁶

Ibn Hajar's conclusion that the qibla change occurred in mid-Rajab of the second Hijrī year rests on a preference for narrations transmitted through Anas ibn Mālik and al-Barrā' ibn 'Āzib, which he deems *aṣaḥḥ al-asānīd*. However, a critical reading reveals that this dating is not beyond dispute. Al-Ṭabarī, for instance, records a minority opinion placing the event in *Sha' bān*, while modern scholars like Watt have suggested that the precise month may have been retrospectively constructed to align with the Qur'anic revelation of Q. 2:144. Ibn Hajar's dismissal of these alternatives, based solely on *sanad* strength, exposes a potential circularity: the very *sanad* he privileges are those transmitted through Companions closely associated with the event, whose memories may have been shaped by later communal identity formation. Nevertheless, his insistence on mid-Rajab remains the most coherent reconstruction given the available evidence, and it has become the consensus position in subsequent Islamic historiography. What is analytically valuable is not the date itself but Ibn Hajar's method of arriving at it: prioritizing *tarjīḥ* (critical selection) over mere compilation, and treating *sanad* criticism as a legitimate tool for historical chronology.

With respect to the first prayer performed after the qibla change, Ibn Hajar cites a *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith from Imam Bukhari confirming that the *Asr* prayer was the first congregational prayer led by the Prophet facing the Kaaba. From a historiographical perspective, the identification of a specific prayer (*Asr*) serves a crucial function: it anchors an otherwise abstract divine command in a concrete, verifiable moment of communal worship. This temporal precision, unusual in early Islamic narratives, suggests that the Companions were acutely aware of the need to preserve not only that the change occurred but when and in which prayer. Such attention to chronological detail indicates an early historiographical sensibility among the first Muslim community.

بِأَنَّ يُصَلِّيَ الْمَفْعُولُ صَلَّى وَالْعَصْرُ... أَوَّلُ صَلَاةٍ صَلَّاهَا الْمُتَوَجِّهُ إِلَى السَّكِينَةِ (قوله وَأَنَّهُ صَلَّى أُولَى) صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ

³⁵ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 79.

³⁶ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 80.



That what is performed (prayer) is the Asr prayer... The first prayer performed by the person facing the Kaaba (as-Sakinah) (Ibn Hajar's words: 'and that he prayed the first prayer') is the Asr prayer.³⁷

Ibn Hajar further specifies that this historic event unfolded at the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, while noting a secondary opinion attributing the first qibla-oriented prayer to the Banī Salamah Mosque (later known as Masjid al-Qiblatain):

وَالْتَحْقِيقُ أَنَّ أَوَّلَ صَلَاةٍ صَلَّاهَا فِي بَنِي سَلَمَةَ صَلَاةَ الظُّهْرِ حِينَ مَاتَ بَشْرُ بْنُ الْبَرَاءِ بْنِ مَعْرُورٍ، وَأَوَّلَ صَلَاةٍ صَلَّاهَا
فِي الْمَسْجِدِ النَّبَوِيِّ الْعَصْرِ

However, what is true is that the first prayer that he (the Prophet) performed in Bani Salamah was the Dhuhr prayer, namely when Bisyr bin Al-Bara' bin Ma'rur died, and while the first prayer that he performed (facing the Baitullah) in the Prophet's Mosque was the Asa prayer.³⁸

The existence of two locations (Prophet's Mosque and Banī Salamah Mosque) raises an important historiographical question: why would Ibn Hajar preserve this ambiguity rather than simply asserting one authoritative account? The answer lies in his commitment to *al-jam' wa al-tawfiq*, he does not suppress divergent reports but integrates them by assigning different prayers (*Dhuhr* vs. *Asr*) to different locations. This approach reveals that for Ibn Hajar, historical truth is not monolithic but can accommodate multiple authentic transmissions as long as they are not mutually exclusive.

The hadith also records a dramatic episode of communal responsiveness. A Companion who had just prayed with the Prophet facing the Kaaba passed by another congregation still bowing toward Baitul Maqdis and announced the change, whereupon the entire congregation pivoted their direction of worship simultaneously.

فَخَرَجَ رَجُلٌ مِّنْ صَلَّى مَعَهُ فَمَرَّ عَلَى أَهْلِ مَسْجِدٍ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ فَقَالَ أَشْهَدُ بِاللَّهِ لَقَدْ صَلَّيْتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَبْلَ مَكَّةَ فَدَارُوا كَمَا هُمْ قَبْلَ الْبَيْتِ

Then one of the people who followed the Prophet came out and went past a mosque while the congregation was bowing down facing Baitul Maqdis. Then the person said, "By Allah, I have just prayed with the Messenger of Allah facing the Baitullah in Makkah." So they immediately changed the Qibla to face the Baitullah.³⁹

According to Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, the companion who passed by the mosque was 'Abbād bin Bisyr bin Quttā, and the congregation he encountered belonged to the Bani Salamah:

...هُوَ عَبَّادُ بْنُ بَشْرٍ بْنِ قُطَيْطَى كَمَا فِي إِرْوَاءِ ابْنِ مَنْدَهٍ مِنْ حَدِيثِ ثَوَيْلَةَ بِنْتِ أَسْلَمَ (قوله خرج رجل)...

³⁷ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānīyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 80.

³⁸ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānīyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 80.

³⁹ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānīyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 80.



...وَأَهْلُ الْمَسْجِدِ الَّذِينَ صَلُّوا مَعَهُ مِنْ بَنِي سَلَمَةَ

('Then a man came out') He was 'Abbād bin Bisyr bin Quṭṭā, as found in the book Al-Irwā by Ibn Mandah from the hadith of Thawīlah bint Aslam... And the people of the mosque who prayed with him were from Bani Salamah ⁴⁰

A secondary opinion holds that the person who brought news of the qibla change to the people of Quba was 'Inād bin Bisyr, who did so during the Fajr prayer:

وَقِيلَ هُوَ عِنَادُ بْنُ بَشْرِ الَّذِي أَحْبَرَ أَهْلَ قُبَاءٍ فِي صَلَاةِ الصُّبْحِ كَمَا سَيَأْتِي بَيَانُ ذَلِكَ فِي حَدِيثِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ حَيْثُ ذَكَرَ الْمُصَنِّفُ كِتَابَ الصَّلَاةِ

And some say that he was 'Inād bin Bisyr who preached to the people of Qubā at the time of the Fajr prayer, as will be explained later in the hadith of Ibn Umar when the author (Imam Bukhari) mentioned it in the Kitāb Ash-Shalāh (Chapter of Prayers) ⁴¹

Ibn Hajar identifies the companion as 'Abbād bin Bisyr and the congregation as belonging to Banī Salamah. Critically, this narrative is not merely a colorful anecdote. It serves three historiographical functions: (a) it demonstrates the speed of information transmission in early Madinah, (b) it underscores the authority of a single eyewitness report (*khobar al-wāḥid*) as sufficient for communal action, a principle with profound implications for Islamic legal theory, and (c) it preserves a moment of collective obedience that reinforced communal solidarity precisely at a moment of potential confusion. The instantaneous compliance of the Banī Salamah congregation contrasts sharply with the Jewish reaction that follows.

Ibn Hajar records the Jewish community's response as one of rejection and denial.

كَانَ الْيَهُودُ قَدْ أَعْجَبَهُمْ أَنْ يُصَلِّيَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَصْحَابُهُ نَحْوَ بَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ، فَلَمَّا حَوَّلَ اللَّهُ الْقِبْلَةَ إِلَى الْكَعْبَةِ أَنْكَرُوا ذَلِكَ وَجَحَدُوهُ

The Jews were initially very proud that the Prophet ﷺ and his companions prayed towards the Baitul Maqdis. When Allah changed the direction of prayer to the Kaaba, they denied and rejected the change. ⁴²

From a critical historical perspective, Ibn Hajar's inclusion of the Jewish reaction is not neutral reportage. It functions rhetorically to validate the qibla change by showing that the very community which had previously approved of Muslim prayer now opposed it, thereby positioning the Jewish stance as irrational and obstructionist. Moreover, the Qur'an itself preserves the Jewish objection as a divine test (Q. 2:142), suggesting that Ibn Hajar is not

⁴⁰ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 80.

⁴¹ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 80.

⁴² Ibn Hajar al-Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 81.



merely transmitting history but participating in a scriptural hermeneutic that interprets historical events through a theological lens.⁴³

The change also raised urgent questions among Muslims regarding the validity of prayers offered before the qibla shift, including the fate of those who had passed away while still facing Baitul Maqdis:

قَالَ زُهَيْرٌ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو إِسْحَاقَ عَنِ الْبَرَاءِ فِي حَدِيثِهِ هَذَا أَنَّهُ مَاتَ عَلَى الْقِبْلَةِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تُحَوَّلَ رِجَالٌ وَقْتَلُوا فَلَمْ نَدْرِ مَا نَقُولُ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: (وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ)

Zuhair said: Abu Ishaq related to us from Al-Barra' in this hadith, that some men died (martyrdom) while facing the Qibla (of Jerusalem) before it was turned (to the Kaaba). And there were also some who were killed (in battle). So we did not know what to say about them. Then Allah Ta'ala revealed the verse: "And Allah will not let your faith go to waste..."^{44 45}

Ibn Hajar's treatment of this anxiety reveals a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between law and history. The Companions' confusion was not merely theological but profoundly historical: they did not know how to narrate the past (the validity of earlier prayers) in light of a changed present. The Qur'anic response (Q. 2:143) resolves the dilemma by affirming continuity of faith despite change of practice. Ibn Hajar, by preserving this exchange, demonstrates that *Fath al-Bārī* functions as a historiographical document that records not only events but also the evolving legal and existential questions they generated.

Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī further elaborates on scholarly disagreements regarding which direction the Prophet ﷺ had faced during prayer while still in Mecca, as recorded in *Fath al-Bārī*:

وَاحْتَلَفُوا فِي الْجِهَةِ الَّتِي كَانَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَتَوَجَّهُ إِلَيْهَا لِلصَّلَاةِ وَهُوَ بِمَكَّةَ، فَقَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ وَعَبْرَةٌ: كَانَ يُصَلِّي إِلَى بَيْتِ اللَّهِ الْحَرَامِ. وَقَالَ آخَرُونَ: كَانَ يُصَلِّي إِلَى بَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ وَلَكِنَّهُ لَا يَسْتَدِيرُ إِلَيْهَا اسْتِدَارَةً كَامِلَةً بَلْ يَجْعَلُهَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ بَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ. وَأَطْلَقَ آخَرُونَ أَنَّهُ كَانَ يُصَلِّي إِلَى بَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ، فَلَمَّا أُخْرِجَ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ اسْتَقْبَلَ بَيْتَ الْمُقَدَّسِ. وَهَذَا ضَعِيفٌ وَيَلْزَمُ مِنْهُ الْقَوْلُ بِنَسْخِ اسْتِقْبَالِ بَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ بَعْدَ أَنْ كَانَ بِوَحْيٍ، وَالْأَوْلَى أَنْ لَا يُجْمَلَ عَلَى النَّسْخِ مَا أَمْكِنَ الْجَمْعُ بَيْنَ الْقِرَاءَتَيْنِ. وَقَدْ أَحْسَنَ الْبُخَارِيُّ الْإِشَارَةَ إِلَى الْجَمْعِ بَيْنَ (الظَّاهِرِ) مِنْ أَنَّ الصَّلَاةَ لَوْ كَانَتْ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ كَانَتْ إِلَى بَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ، وَاقْتِصَارُهُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ لِلْأَوْلَوِيَّةِ؛ لِأَنَّ صَلَاتَكُمْ إِلَى غَيْرِ جِهَةِ الْبَيْتِ إِذَا كَانَتْ لَا تُضَيِّعُ فَأُخْرِجَ أَنْ لَا تُضَيِّعُ إِذَا كَانَتْ عِنْدَهُ. فَقَدْ بَانَ الْكَلَامُ فِي صَلَاتِكُمْ الَّتِي صَلَّيْتُمُوهَا عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ إِلَى بَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ

⁴³ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*, QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 142.

⁴⁴ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*, QS. Al-Baqarah: 143.

⁴⁵ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānīyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 81.



And they (ulama) disagreed regarding the direction the Prophet ﷺ faced for prayer when he was in Mecca. Ibn Abbas and others said: "He prayed facing Baitullah Al-Haram (Kaaba)." Some others said: "He prayed facing Baitul Maqdis, but did not face it completely, but put the Kaaba between him and Baitul Maqdis." Others stated absolutely that he prayed facing Baitul Maqdis, and when he emigrated to Medina, he faced Baitul Maqdis. This opinion is weak and implies that there is a nasakh (abolition) of the law facing Baitul Maqdis after it was previously established through revelation, even though it should not stipulate a naskh as long as it is possible to combine the two opinions (jama' baina al-qira'atain). And Al-Bukhari was kind in indicating the clear combination that the prayer performed near the Kaaba (in Makkah) is facing Baitul Maqdis, and he suffices it for reasons of priority (aulawiyah); because your prayer facing a direction other than the Kaaba (away from it) is not in vain, so it is more important that the prayer performed near it (the Kaaba) is not in vain. So the discussion regarding your prayer that you perform near the Kaaba facing Baitul Maqdis is clear.⁴⁶

Building on the above, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī delineates three scholarly positions regarding the Prophet's ﷺ prayer direction while in Mecca prior to the hijrah:

- 1) First Opinion (narrated from Ibn Abbas etc.): The Prophet ﷺ prayed directly facing the Kaaba.
- 2) Second Opinion: The Prophet ﷺ prayed facing Baitul Maqdis, yet positioned himself such that the Kaaba fell between himself and Baitul Maqdis, effectively incorporating both directions.
- 3) Third Opinion: The Prophet ﷺ prayed completely facing Baitul Maqdis during his time in Mecca and continued to do so upon arriving in Medina, until the divine order to face the Kaaba was issued.⁴⁷

Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani favored the position that prayers offered near the Kaaba, whether in Mecca or Medina, are certainly not rendered void. If prayers performed far from the Kaaba, as in Medina, are divinely guaranteed not to go to waste, then prayers performed in proximity to the Kaaba carry an even stronger assurance.⁴⁸ Critically, this line of reasoning is not historical but analogical (*qiyās*). Ibn Hajar prioritizes theological coherence over empirical reconstruction, revealing the limits of his historiographical method: when historical data are ambiguous (as with the Prophet's Meccan prayer direction), he defers to legal reasoning rather than insisting on a single factual narrative. The Qur'anic verse in question⁴⁹ directly addressed the anxiety of the companions regarding the spiritual standing of deceased brothers who had prayed facing Baitul Maqdis, while simultaneously providing a framework for navigating the

⁴⁶ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 80.

⁴⁷ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 80.

⁴⁸ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 80-81.

⁴⁹ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*, QS.Al-Baqarah (2): 143.



legal dynamics of a changing early Muslim community. It offered concrete reassurance regarding the validity of prior worship while helping to stabilize the social conditions of a community facing this historic transition.

2. The Impact of the Qibla Change Event

a. *The Context of Identity and Change in the Muslim Community of Medina*

In *Fath al-Bārī*, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī reads the shift of the qibla from Jerusalem toward the Kaaba as an expression of communal self-definition, demarcating the Muslim identity from that of other religious communities in Madinah. By designating the Kaaba as the singular focal point of Muslim devotion, the event established an independent devotional center untethered from the preceding religious heritage. This transition thus transcended the geographical, functioning as a declaration that Islamic law operates within its own distinct terms, free from the cultic traditions of either the Jewish or Christian communities.⁵⁰ This reading is corroborated by *Fath al-Bārī* itself: Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī recounts that the Jewish community had initially prided themselves on the shared orientation of Muslim and Jewish prayer toward Jerusalem. Yet when the command to face the Kaaba arrived, the Muslims complied immediately and without hesitation.⁵¹

Beyond identity, the qibla reorientation also enshrines a vital lesson about the principle of *nasakh* (legal abrogation and replacement) in Islamic jurisprudence, as evidenced through the revelation of Surah Al-Baqarah verse 144. Far from merely redirecting the body during prayer, this verse simultaneously demonstrates that Islamic law contains an organic mechanism for legal adaptation in response to evolving historical realities.⁵² Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī highlighted that the event served as a test of Muslim obedience, demanding from believers an unreserved embrace of this sweeping change even after long years of practicing a different orientation. The verse thereby encodes the principle of unconditional surrender to divine revelation as a foundational element of Muslim religious life.

b. *Socio-Political Dimensions Related to the Qibla Shift Event*

The initial divine directive to pray toward Jerusalem was laden with diplomatic purpose, it functioned as a conciliatory gesture toward the Jewish and Christian communities residing in Madinah.⁵³ By aligning Muslim prayer with the direction of the Ahl al-Kitab, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was actively cultivating a basis for dialogue and building bridges across religious communities, a particularly resonant gesture given Jerusalem's sacred standing in all Abrahamic traditions.⁵⁴ The underlying aim was to generate goodwill by highlighting the shared

⁵⁰ W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961) 89-91.

⁵¹ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalāniyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 79.

⁵² Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*, Q.S. Al-Baqarah: 144.

⁵³ Sayyid Qutb, *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an*, 151-152.

⁵⁴ Lady Eka Rahmawati, “Asbab Al-Nuzul Surat Al-Baqarah Ayat 142 dan 144 (Kajian Analisis Historis tentang Perpindahan Kiblat)”, 45.



spiritual heritage between communities, easing the socio-political integration of the Muslim newcomers into the established social fabric of Madinah.⁵⁵ However, growing tensions between the Muslim community and the Jewish tribes of Madinah, fueled by the Jewish refusal to recognize the prophethood of Muhammad and their attempts to undermine Muslim political standing, rendered this conciliatory posture increasingly untenable.⁵⁶ However, growing tensions between the Muslim community and the Jewish tribes of Madinah — fueled by the Jewish refusal to recognize the prophethood of Muhammad and their attempts to undermine Muslim political standing — rendered this conciliatory posture increasingly untenable.⁵⁷ By establishing the Kaaba as the universal direction of Muslim prayer, the community constituted itself as a self-governing religious polity, liberated from the hierarchical claims of other faith communities and united by a distinctly Islamic worldview.

3. Critical Analysis and Historical Significance

a. Methodology of Historical Criticism in *Fath al-Bārī*

In scrutinizing the hadiths related to the qibla shift, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī subjected each narration to exacting *sanad* criticism, assessing the reliability of every narrator in the chain. As documented in *Fath al-Bārī*, while affirming the essential soundness of Imam al-Bukhārī's *sanad*, he also acknowledged textual variations that call for careful scholarly reconstruction. A prime example is his treatment of the divergent narrations concerning the duration of prayer toward Baitul Maqdis (variously recorded as 16 or 17 months), for which he offered the following reconciliation:

وَالْجُمُعُ بَيْنَ الرَّوَايَاتِ سَهْلٌ بِأَنْ يَكُونَ مِنْ جِهَةٍ... وَمِنْ جِهَةٍ

*Reconciliation between the various narrations is easy by understanding that from one point of view... and another point of view...*⁵⁸

Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī clarified that the seventeen-month figure derives from counting from the hijrah through to the month of Rajab in the second year, whereas the sixteen-month figure emerges from a different counting methodology. Rather than constituting a contradiction, this divergence enriches the historical record by revealing the living dynamics of hadith transmission across generations.⁵⁹

Beyond *sanad* analysis, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī in *Fath al-Bārī* also deploys a linguistic and socio-historical lens on the hadith text itself. He unpacks key terms — including qiblah and

⁵⁵ Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) Jawa Timur, “Nisfu Sya’ban dan Sejarah Pemindahan Kiblat dalam Islam,” website, 2025, <https://muijatim.or.id/2025/02/12/nisfu-syaban-dan-sejarah-pemindahan-kiblat-dalam-islam>, diakses pada tanggal 19 September 2025.

⁵⁶ Lady Eka Rahmawati, “Asbab Al-Nuzul Surat Al-Baqarah Ayat 142 dan 144 (Kajian Analisis Historis tentang Perpindahan Kiblat)”, 48.

⁵⁷ Yudi Prayoga, “Sejarah Pindahnya Kiblat Muslim ke Ka’bah di Bulan Sya’ban,” NU Lampung, 2025, <https://lampung.nu.or.id/keislaman/sejarah-pindahnya-kiblat-muslim-ke-ka-bah-di-bulan-sya-ban-15w8I>, diakses pada tanggal 19 September 2025.

⁵⁸ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānīyy, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 79-81.

⁵⁹ Awwaliyah dan Hamid, “KAJIAN HERMENEUTIKA DALAM KITAB FATH AL-BARI ’ KARYA IBN Pendahuluan Biografi Ibnu Hajar Al-Asqalani (Analisis Hadist tentang Umroh)”, 8.



masjid al-ḥarām — reading them in conjunction with Qur'anic verses⁶⁰ in order to situate the discussion within a richer theological framework. This approach effectively counters claims of contradiction among the qibla-related verses, demonstrating that the shift from Baitul Maqdis to the Kaaba represented a purposeful and internally coherent development within Islamic legal history.⁶¹ This line of reasoning is reinforced through Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī's deployment of the muqāran (comparative) method, by which he systematically surveys competing scholarly views to arrive at the most defensible conclusion (rājih).⁶²

To further substantiate this analysis using the muqāran method, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī invoked the following Qur'anic verse in response to orientalist claims of contradiction:

قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا

*"Indeed, We see your face often turning towards the sky, so We will surely turn you to the Qibla that you like."*⁶³

Grounding his analysis in this verse, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī argued that the qibla change was nothing more than a direct divine response to the Prophet's heartfelt desire, and could in no way be construed as evidence of internal contradiction or tension within Islamic doctrine.⁶⁴ He further cross-examined various narrations regarding the precise location and identity of the first prayer performed following the reorientation, drawing on the following hadith:

أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَلَّى أَوَّلَ صَلَاةٍ حِينَ وَجَّهَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى الْكَعْبَةِ بِالْمَدِينَةِ صَلَاةَ الْعَصْرِ

*"Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ performed the first prayer after Allah directed him to the Kaaba in Medina, which was the Asr prayer"*⁶⁵

Through this comparative examination of narrations, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī concluded that the Asr prayer was the first to be performed in the new qibla direction, and that the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah was the site where this landmark event took place. He also acknowledged a secondary opinion attributing it to the Banī Salāmah Mosque (Qiblatain Mosque), while noting the presence of minor discrepancies among related narrations.⁶⁶ This scholarly performance exemplifies his considerable mastery in resolving *mukhtalif al-ḥadīth* (apparently conflicting narrations). *Fath al-Bārī* thus serves not only as an authentication of Bukhari's *sanad* and *matan*, but equally as an intellectually sophisticated response to orientalist critiques.

⁶⁰ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*, QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 144.

⁶¹ Wijaya dan Maab, "KIBLAT PERSFEKTIF MUFASSIRIN (Kajian Analitis Penafsiran Ayat-Ayat Kiblat dalam Tafsir Al-Thabari, Ibnu Katsir dan Tafsir Al-Mishbah)", 78.

⁶² Zulfarizal dan Mardiyatul Ch, "Metodologi Syarah Hadis Nabi SAW (Telaah Kitab Fath Al-Bari' Syarah Shahih Al-Bukhari)", 30-31.

⁶³ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*, QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 144.

⁶⁴ Wiwana dan Izroq, "Peristiwa Perpindahan Arah Kiblat Dalam Perspektif Al Quran Surah Al-Baqarah Ayat 142-145 Perspektif Tafsir Al-Mishbah", 427.

⁶⁵ Imam Muhammad bin Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari*, 110.

⁶⁶ Zulfarizal dan Mardiyatul Ch, "Metodologi Syarah Hadis Nabi SAW (Telaah Kitab Fath Al-Bari' Syarah Shahih Al-Bukhari)", 30.



Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī demonstrated that the qibla-related hadiths are mutually reinforcing and fully coherent with the overarching narrative of Islamic history, affirming the epistemic authority of hadith as a trustworthy foundation for Islamic law. His integrative methodology, weaving *sanad* criticism, linguistic analysis, and contextual interpretation, provides an enduring methodological model for contemporary hadith studies.⁶⁷

b. Interpretive historiography model in Ibn Hajar al- 'Asqalānī's analysis of the Qibla Movement Event

The manner in which Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani approaches the qibla shift betrays an interpretive historiographical sensibility deeply rooted in the classical Islamic tradition of historical writing, echoing the methodology of Ibn al-Athīr and al-Mas'ūdī.⁶⁸ He does not treat the hadith as a simple factual record; instead, he reads it as a document embedded in the social evolution and communal development of the Muslim polity during the era of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.⁶⁹

In doing so, he transforms the hadith commentary into a vehicle for historical inquiry, forging meaningful connections between the documentary content of the narrations and the social conditions within which they were produced.

Ibn Ḥajar's prioritization rests primarily on *sanad* quality, but not exclusively. In determining the date of the qibla change (mid-Rajab 2 H), he gives precedence to narrations transmitted through Anas ibn Mālik and al-Barrā' ibn 'Āzib, which he deems *aṣaḥḥ al-asānīd* (the most authentic chains). However, his preference is also shaped by two additional criteria: (a) chronological proximity – both Companions were present in Madinah during the event, making them direct eyewitnesses; (b) consistency with Qur'anic chronology – the chosen narration aligns with the established order of *asbāb al-nuzūl* for Q. 2:142-145. When faced with conflicting reports (e.g., 16 vs. 17 months), he prioritizes the narration that includes both the month of arrival and the month of change (seventeen months) because it is supported by a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain from Ibn 'Abbās and reflects a broader scholarly consensus. This reveals that Ibn Ḥajar's prioritization is not mechanical but layered: *sanad* strength is the primary filter, followed by internal coherence and external corroboration⁷⁰.

Ibn Ḥajar was a Shāfi'ī jurist, and his madhhab affiliation subtly influences his treatment of the qibla hadiths in at least two ways. First, his emphasis on *al-jam' wa al-tawfīq* (reconciliation of conflicting reports) over *tarjīḥ* (outright preference) reflects the Shāfi'ī legal principle that apparent contradictions in sacred texts should be harmonized whenever possible, rather than declaring one abrogated (*nāsikh*) or abandoned. This is evident in his

⁶⁷ Hudaya, “Metode Syarh Hadis dalam Kitab Fath Al-Bari (Kajian atas Hadis Shalat Sunnah Sebelum dan Sesudah Shalat Jum'at)”, 122.

⁶⁸ Zaahidah Aufaa et al., “Kajian Historiografi Ibnu al-Atsir dalam al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh”, 124.

⁶⁹ N Rustina, “PERBANDINGAN DUA KITAB SYARAH Ş A ḤĪḤ AL- BUKHĀRĪ:FATH AL-BĀRĪ DAN'UMDAT AL-QĀRĪ,” *Studi Islam* 10, no. 2 (2021): 209–34, <https://consensus.app/papers/perbandingan-dua-kitab-syarah-ṣaḥīḥ-albukhārī-fath-albārī-n/d1e5f2040e605b7eb27d492366305401/>, 21.

⁷⁰ Abid Nurhuda, Aurizan Himmi Azhar, dan Nur Muhammad Lathif, “Hadith Criticism in Islam : Basic Concepts , Definitions , and Historical Development,” *International Journal of Religion, Humanity and Cultural Heritage*, 1.4 (2025), hal. 158–72 <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/380134318> >.



handling of the 16 vs. 17 months discrepancy: he does not reject either version but integrates them as two valid methods of counting. Second, his discussion of the validity of prayers offered before the qibla change – concluding that Allah would not waste the believers' faith (Q. 2:143) – aligns with the Shāfi'ī position that prior acts of worship are not invalidated by subsequent legal changes (*lā i'ādah*). However, it would be an overstatement to claim that madhhab affiliation dictates his historical conclusions. When historical data conflict with Shāfi'ī preferences (e.g., the minority opinion placing the change in *Sha'bān*), he does not suppress it but records it transparently⁷¹. This suggests that for Ibn Ḥajar, historiographical integrity took precedence over madhhab loyalty – a notable feature of his scholarly identity.

Three factors are particularly salient. Intellectually, Ibn Ḥajar was heir to the 14th-century revival of ḥadīth criticism championed by scholars like al-Dhahabī and al-'Irāqī. His teacher, al-'Irāqī, had already begun applying *sanad* criticism to historical narratives, not just legal traditions. Ibn Ḥajar systematized this approach, transforming *Fath al-Bārī* into a work where historical reconstruction is achieved through the same rigorous tools developed for ḥadīth authentication. His extensive training in 'ilm al-rijāl (biographical evaluation) enabled him to assess the reliability of transmitters not merely for legal validity but for historical accuracy – a distinction that earlier commentators rarely made. Socially, Ibn Ḥajar wrote in 15th-century Cairo, a time when Mamluk patronage of religious scholarship created an environment conducive to encyclopedic commentary. The social demand for authoritative syntheses – works that could serve as definitive references across madhhab lines – encouraged Ibn Ḥajar to present multiple opinions while clearly indicating his own preference (*al-rājiḥ*). His relative independence from political pressure (unlike court historians) allowed him to prioritize scholarly consensus (*ijmā'*) over political convenience⁷². Historically, Ibn Ḥajar was writing nearly eight centuries after the qibla event itself. This temporal distance had both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it gave him access to a vast corpus of earlier scholarship, allowing him to compare and evaluate competing claims. On the other hand, it rendered him vulnerable to what modern historiographers call "retrospective construction" – the tendency to project later legal and theological concerns onto the 7th century. His assumption that the Companions calculated months in the same inclusive/exclusive manner as later scholars exemplifies this risk. Nevertheless, his awareness of this distance – evident in his careful documentation of divergent opinions – demonstrates a more self-critical historiographical consciousness than many of his predecessors.

What Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalani's analysis makes transparent is that the qibla reorientation carried a dual significance: on one level, it was a divinely mandated ritual command; on another, it functioned as a social catalyst marking a decisive turning point in the collective life of the Madina's Muslim community. Within his interpretive framework, the qibla shift was not

⁷¹ Edinburgh University, *Hadith Commentary Continuity and Change*, ed. oleh Joel Blecher dan Stefanie Brinkmann, I (Edinburgh University Press, 2023), h. 1-322 <edinburghuniversitypress.com/series/esist>.

⁷² Nawir Yuslem dan Muhammad Qomarullah, "Ibn Ḥajar 's Thoughts On Criticism Of Hadith Narrators : A Study Of The Book Lisān Al - Mizān," *El-Ghiroh : Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 22.1 (2024), hal. 87–102, doi:https://doi.org/10.37092/el-ghiroh.v22i1.722.



a superficial adjustment but a transformation with tangible consequences for the social fabric and collective trajectory of the community, a reading that anchors the hadith within a living historical context rather than treating it as a static normative text.⁷³

Viewed from this perspective, *Fath al-Bārī* occupies a distinctive scholarly position: simultaneously a work of hadith exegesis and a document of historiographical value, illuminating how the Muslim scholarly tradition made sense of social transformation through the lens of religious events. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī's discursive style reflects clear methodological continuity with classical Islamic historians who understood history as an ongoing dialogue between scriptural text and lived social reality.⁷⁴ A historically informed reading of *Fath al-Bārī* thus enables appreciation of the qibla shift as an integral chapter in the social journey of the Muslim community, not merely a liturgical episode, but a testament to the dynamic interplay between Islamic teaching and the lived experience of the people of Madinah.

c. *Significance for the Development of Astronomy*

The qibla shift carries considerable contemporary relevance, particularly in relation to the role of astronomical science in determining prayer direction with precision. The concept of *rashdul qiblah*, the solar zenith method for observing the qibla direction, as developed and applied by modern Muslim astronomers, represents the practical realization of a scientific principle deeply consonant with the Qur'anic spirit: "And it is He who made the stars for you, that you may use them as guides in the darkness of land and sea."⁷⁵ This method exploits the astronomical moment when the sun passes directly over the Kaaba, causing the shadows of any vertical object on Earth to align toward Makkah.⁷⁶ The approach resolves practical qibla determination challenges in geographically remote regions, and stands as a testament to the harmonious synthesis of religious obligation and scientific inquiry within the Islamic scholarly tradition.⁷⁷

The qibla shift also serves as a paradigmatic illustration of how sacred texts and social conditions interact to shape the development of Islamic jurisprudence. As Muhammad al-Ghazali demonstrates in his study *Fiqh al-Sīrah* (1999), the Prophet Muhammad's responsiveness to the evolving socio-political landscape of Madinah illustrates a productive dialectic between divine revelation and its historical moment of reception and application.⁷⁸ Watt's scholarship⁷⁹ further argues that the reorientation from Jerusalem to the Kaaba was not

⁷³ Agusni Yahya, "PENDEKATAN HERMENEUTIK DALAM PEMAHAMAN HADIS (Kajian Kitab *Fath al-Bārī* Karya Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalani)," *Ar-raniry: International Journal of Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2014), 365.

⁷⁴ Agung Danarto, "METODE SYARAH HADIS KITAB FATH AL-BARI (Sebuah Upaya Rekonstruksi Metodologi Pemahaman Hadis)," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 2, no. 1 (2015), 97-99.

⁷⁵ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*, QS. Al-An'am (6): 97.

⁷⁶ Bashori Alwi, "MATAHARI MELURUSKAN ARAH KIBLAT," *Al-Qawaid: Journal of Islamic Family Law* 2, no. 1 (2023): 45–59, 51.

⁷⁷ Khalid Shafaruddin, Rudi Piliang, dan Agus Sucipto, "Menentukan Arah Kiblat dengan Metode *Rashdul Kiblat*," *Jurnal Pelita Nusantara: Kajian Ilmu Sosial Multidisiplin* 3, no. 3 (2025): 133–46, <https://doi.org/10.59996/jurnalpelitanusantara.v3i3.948>, 139.

⁷⁸ Eltigani Abdelgadir Hamid, "The Politics of the Two Qiblahs and the Emergence of an Alternative Islamic Monotheism," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 33, no. 1 (2016): 67–91, 78-79.

⁷⁹ Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 89-90.



merely religious but also a deliberate political statement, a strategic assertion of Muslim communal distinctiveness, independent of the religious frameworks of the Jewish and Christian traditions.⁸⁰ These observations resonate with the broader sociological theory of the social construction of religious law, which holds that jurisprudential norms emerge through the ongoing reciprocal engagement between canonical texts and the conditions of human society⁸¹

D. Conclusion

Fath al-Bārī demonstrates a sophisticated pre-modern historical consciousness: Ibn Ḥajar reconciles conflicting reports, prioritizes *sanad* strength, and contextualizes the qibla change within Madinah's socio-political dynamics. In these respects, it transcends mere hadith exegesis and functions as a classical historiographical work. However, from a modern critical perspective, three limitations emerge. First, Ibn Ḥajar's method remains internal to the Islamic tradition – assuming *sanad* continuity guarantees historical accuracy – without interrogating the tendency or possible retrojection of later concerns into the 7th century. Second, this paper's own analysis has been predominantly descriptive, rarely evaluating Ibn Ḥajar's conclusions against archaeological or astronomical evidence (e.g., early mosque orientations). Third, engagement with contemporary scholarship on sacred geography (King, Crone, Sinai) is still lacking; such works question whether the Jerusalem orientation itself is historically reliable or a later theological construction. Thus, this study offers a modest contribution: it demonstrates that *Fath al-Bārī* can be read historiographically, but future research must move toward genuinely critical analysis. Recommendations include: (a) testing the hadith-based chronology against archaeological and astronomical data; (b) critically comparing manuscripts of *Fath al-Bārī*; and (c) investigating how modern Muslim communities negotiate between traditional qibla determinations and scientific methods like *rashd al-qiblah*.

This study makes three academic contributions. First, it challenges the neglect of hadith commentaries as primary sources in modern Islamic historiography by demonstrating that *Fath al-Bārī* contains a coherent historical methodology (*al-jam' wa al-tawfiq, tarjīh, sanad* criticism applied to chronology). This opens new avenues for re-examining other formative events through classical hadith commentaries. Second, it addresses the growing disconnect between traditional Islamic chronology and modern scientific methods (archaeology, astronomy). By recovering Ibn Ḥajar's own historiographical reasoning, the study shows that pre-modern scholars engaged in chronological reconstruction, not mere transmission – a bridge that informs contemporary debates on qibla accuracy beyond naïve traditionalism or dismissive modernism. Third, the study has urgent relevance for Muslim-majority societies, especially Indonesia, where qibla controversies periodically surface. By situating the qibla change within its original socio-political context, this research equips religious educators and policymakers with historically grounded narratives that transcend legalistic polemics. Future research should

⁸⁰ Ahmad Luthfi Choirullah dan Muhammad Shibghatullah, "Qibla Direction and Congregational Prayer At the Mosque When Muslims Are Minority," *Al-Risalah* 13, no. 2 (2022): 444–66, <https://doi.org/10.34005/alrisalah.v13i2.1916>, 447.

⁸¹ Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (London: Lowe & Brydone, 1965), 207.



investigate, through sociological and anthropological methods, how Indonesian Muslims negotiate between traditional hadith-based determinations and modern astronomical calculations.

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