

From Qibla Deviation to Social Cohesion: The Construction of Minority *Fiqh* at the Great Mosque of Makale, Tana Toraja

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Received: 23-01-2025 | Revised: 14-04-2025, 27-07-2025 | Accepted: 23-08-2025

Abstract

The determination of the qibla direction constitutes a normative obligation in Islamic law; however, in minority contexts, its practice often intersects with socio-cultural realities, architectural considerations, and interfaith negotiations—dimensions that remain relatively neglected in both Islamic law scholarship and contemporary legal studies. This article examines the case of the Great Mosque of Makale in Tana Toraja, whose orientation deviated by approximately 22° from the astronomical qibla between 1934 and 2020, to analyze the dynamics of minority *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) construction in a multicultural setting. Employing a qualitative socio-historical approach through observation, document analysis, and in-depth interviews with seven key informants, the study finds that the mosque's orientation was not solely determined by *fiqh* norms but emerged from a social compromise institutionalized through adat deliberations in the *tongkonan*, involving both Muslim and Christian leaders. This compromise was shaped by four interrelated factors: the pursuit of interreligious harmony; urban spatial aesthetics that aligned the mosque with the adjacent church; the internalization of Toraja local wisdom, such as *solata'* and the principle of *pa'daidi*; and an early theological interpretation that prioritized a general westward orientation. The article argues that Islamic law in minority contexts does not function as a rigid, normative system, but rather as an adaptive and responsive social construction grounded in the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (objectives of Islamic law). Accordingly, the qibla deviation in Makale should not be understood as a religious aberration but rather as an existential strategy through which Muslims sustain social cohesion and affirm collective identity within a predominantly non-Muslim society.

[Penentuan arah kiblat merupakan kewajiban normatif dalam syariat Islam, namun dalam konteks masyarakat minoritas praktik tersebut kerap berhadapan dengan realitas sosial-budaya, pertimbangan arsitektural, dan negosiasi lintas agama yang jarang disentuh dalam kajian fikih maupun studi hukum kontemporer. Artikel ini mengkaji kasus deviasi arah kiblat Masjid Agung Makale di Tana Toraja, yang sejak 1934 hingga 2020 menyimpang sekitar 22° dari presisi astronomis, dengan tujuan menganalisis dinamika konstruksi fikih minoritas dalam masyarakat multikultural. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan sosio-historis melalui observasi, analisis dokumen, dan wawancara mendalam terhadap tujuh informan kunci. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa orientasi masjid tidak semata-mata ditentukan oleh norma fikih, melainkan merupakan hasil kompromi sosial yang dilembagakan melalui musyawarah adat

di tongkongan dengan melibatkan tokoh Muslim dan Kristen. Kompromi tersebut terwujud dalam empat faktor utama: upaya menjaga kerukunan antar umat beragama, pertimbangan estetika tata ruang kota yang menyelaraskan masjid dengan gereja, internalisasi kearifan lokal solata' dan prinsip pa'daidi, serta pemahaman teologis yang fleksibel pada masa awal. Artikel ini berargumen bahwa hukum Islam dalam ruang minoritas tidak hadir sebagai sistem normatif yang rigid, melainkan sebagai konstruksi sosial yang adaptif, responsif, dan berorientasi pada maqāsid al-sharī'ah. Dengan demikian, deviasi arah kiblat di Makale tidak dapat dipahami sebagai penyimpangan keagamaan, melainkan sebagai strategi eksistensial umat Islam untuk merawat kohesi sosial sekaligus menegaskan identitas kolektif dalam struktur masyarakat yang didominasi kelompok non-Muslim.]

Keywords: Great Mosque of Makale; Local Wisdom; Minority *Fiqh*; Muslim Minority; Qibla Direction; Social Cohesion.

Introduction

The shift from traditional practices to the use of modern astronomical instruments for determining the qibla has not automatically replaced earlier methods. Instead, this transition has generated new tensions among scientific authority, religious authority, and social acceptance.¹ These tensions reflect a complex socio-religious phenomenon shaped by various dimensions, including *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), history, geography, technological development, and the epistemological frameworks that underpin the legitimacy of religious knowledge.² Across the Muslim world, variations in *ijtihad* (independent legal reasoning), limited access to astronomical tools such as GPS and theodolites, and low levels of public literacy in *'ilm al-falak* (Islamic astronomy) have resulted in significant discrepancies in qibla orientation.³ While modern technology enables precise qibla determination, resistance to correction persists, particularly within communities that regard tradition as the basis of legitimacy.⁴ Thus, the qibla cannot be reduced to a mere technical issue within *fiqh al-'ibādah* (jurisprudence of worship) but must also be understood as a site of authority, contestations of epistemic legitimacy, and the social construction of religious practice.⁵

In the Indonesian context, debates over qibla orientation carry significant implications for the validity and completeness of prayer, as facing the Ka'bah is one of the *shurūṭ al-ṣalāh*

¹ See: Hajar et al., "Determination of Qibla Directions According to Islamic Astronomic Science (Case Study of Qibla Directions in Indonesia)," *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 11, no. 4 (2020): 205–17; Reza Akbar et al., "Qibla Direction Calculation Methods in Islamic Astronomy References in Indonesia," *Abkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 22, no. 2 (2022): 385–410.

² See: Razieh S. Mousavi, "From Complex to Simple: The Example of Qibla-Indicators," in *Failed Historical Scientific Instruments*, ed. Sara J. Schechner and Sofia Talas (BRILL, 2024), 148–66; Saiful Aziz, "An Artificial Intelligence ChatGPT-Based Approach for Qibla Identification: Implementation and Analysis," *Asy-Syir'ab: Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah dan Hukum* 58, no. 2 (2024): 351–88.

³ Eva Kepplinger, "The Maqāsid Are the Qibla of the Jurists: A Critical Analysis of Contemporary References to and Usages of Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī's Dictum," *Religions* 15, no. 2 (2024): 165.

⁴ Ahmad Izzuddin, "The Problems of the Relationship between Science and Religion in Qibla Direction Calibration at the Great Mosque of Demak and Baiturrahman Mosque in Semarang, Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Law* 3, no. 2 (2022): 111–31.

⁵ Reza Akbar and Asman Asman, "Social Conflict Due to the Controversy of Mosque's Qibla Direction in Sejiram Village, Sambas Regency," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Syir'ab* 18, no. 1 (2020): 1–12.

(conditions for valid prayer).⁶ A notable case arose in 2010 involving the Great Mosque of Demak in Central Java, where a deviation of approximately 12° northward was discovered. After verification, the prayer rows (*saff*) were realigned according to the corrected orientation. However, some members of the congregation rejected the change and demanded a return to the original alignment.⁷ Similar disputes have occurred in other mosques across Indonesia,⁸ often stemming from the common assumption that “west” automatically indicates the qibla.⁹ In reality, Indonesia’s qibla direction points northwest, with variations depending on local latitude and longitude.¹⁰ These deviations raise not only jurisprudential concerns regarding the validity of prayer but also underscore the urgency of collective awareness and the internalization of corrective practices based on modern astronomical science.¹¹

Nevertheless, qibla deviations are not always the result of technical errors or limited instrumentation. The case of the Great Mosque of Makale in Tana Toraja illustrates a more complex social dimension. Since its establishment in 1934, the mosque has maintained an orientation deviating approximately 22° from the precise direction of the Ka‘bah. This deviation did not stem from technical ignorance but rather from social compromise and urban aesthetic considerations. According to interviews with the mosque’s imam, the orientation was deliberately aligned with the adjacent Pentecostal Church in Indonesia (GPdI) of Bethesda Makale as part of an effort to maintain harmony. The decision was reached through deliberations in the *tongkonan* (the traditional Torajan house), involving both Muslim and Christian leaders.¹² This collective agreement demonstrates that the mosque’s orientation was shaped not solely by *fiqh al-‘ibādah* but also by a broader social strategy for interreligious coexistence in a minority-Muslim context. This approach, however, contrasts with the Indonesian Ulema Council (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, MUI) Fatwa No. 5 of 2010, which requires the use of modern astronomical instruments to ensure qibla accuracy.¹³ Accordingly, the Makale case is significant because it highlights the intersection of Islamic legal norms, minority strategies, and the negotiation of social space in a multireligious society.

Previous studies on qibla deviation can be categorized into three main approaches. First, normative-jurisprudential research¹⁴ emphasizes the permissible extent of deviation

⁶ Riza Afrian Mustaqim and Reza Akbar, “Study on the Causes of Inaccuracy of Qibla Direction of the Great Mosque Baitul Makmur West Aceh,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Syir’ah* 19, no. 1 (2021): 30–45. See also: David A. King, *Astronomy in the Service of Islam* (Taylor and Francis, 2024).

⁷ Izzuddin, “The Problems of the Relationship between Science and Religion in Qibla Direction Calibration at the Great Mosque of Demak and Baiturrahman Mosque in Semarang, Indonesia,” 111–31.

⁸ Kusdiyana Kusdiyana et al., “A Comparative Study of Islamic Astronomy and Jurisprudence on the Qibla Direction of Historical Mosques in Cirebon Indonesia,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Mizani: Wacana Hukum, Ekonomi dan Keagamaan* 11, no. 2 (2024): 450–63.

⁹ Abdul Jalil and Hosen Hosen, “Qibla Jurisprudence: Deviation of Mosques’ Qibla in Pamekasan Madura,” *Islamuna: Jurnal Studi Islam* 7, no. 2 (2020): 143–65.

¹⁰ Hosen Elhas et al., “Tagyîr Mawdhî’ Inhirâf Qiblat al-Masjid fî Bamîkasân ‘alâ Asasi al-Tiknôlôjîyya al-Mutaqaddimah: Al-Tahlîla al-Ijtima’î wa al-Tsaqafî,” *AL-IHKAM: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 18, no. 2 (2024): 591–625.

¹¹ Akbar and Asman, “Social Conflict Due to the Controversy of Mosque’s Qibla Direction in Sejiram Village, Sambas Regency,” 1–12.

¹² GA, “Interview with Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale,” August 7, 2024.

¹³ “Fatwa of the MUI Fatwa Commission No. 5 of 2010 on the Orientation of the Qibla.”

¹⁴ See: Kusdiyana et al., “A Comparative Study of Islamic Astronomy and Jurisprudence on the Qibla Direction of Historical Mosques in Cirebon Indonesia,” 450–63; Shofwatul Aini, “Uji Akurasi Rasd al-

that remains valid both mathematically and theologically. Second, historical and technical studies focus on the accuracy and heritage value of ancient mosques or shrines, where imprecise orientations are tolerated as long as they fall within astronomical margins.¹⁵ Third, technical analysts attribute deviations to unintentional errors caused by the limitations of existing instruments or methods, which can be corrected with modern technology.¹⁶ These three approaches reveal that scholarly discourse has been dominated by legal-formal and technical-astronomical perspectives, reducing the qibla to a matter of ritual precision. In contrast, in specific contexts—particularly among minority Muslim communities—qibla deviation can be a conscious choice shaped by social negotiation, spatial aesthetics, and interfaith relations. This article argues that qibla deviation should not be understood merely as religious misalignment but as an existential strategy through which Muslim minorities preserve social cohesion and assert collective identity under conditions of non-Muslim dominance.

This article aims to address a gap by presenting a socio-legal analysis of qibla deviation at the Great Mosque of Makale as a case study in *fiqh al-aqalliyāt* (minority jurisprudence). The research employs a socio-historical approach, focusing on the Great Mosque of Makale in South Sulawesi, which, from 1934 until 2020, had never undergone official correction despite significant deviation. Data were collected through field observations (including mosque orientation, church positioning, and the arrangement of prayer rows), in-depth interviews with seven key informants (foundation board members, mosque leaders, Christian clergy, local officials, and the head of the regional MUI), and a review of historical documents, fatwas, *fiqh* texts, and relevant academic literature. For ethical reasons, all informants have been anonymized. The analysis draws on Mark Gottdiener's theory of social space,¹⁷ which emphasizes how religious spaces are produced through social negotiation, aesthetic considerations, and interreligious relations. In this context, the qibla is understood not only as a ritual orientation but also as a symbol of identity, harmony, and social cohesion strategy in pluralistic societies.

The Determination of the Qibla Direction from the *Fiqh* Perspective

Facing the qibla is one of the essential conditions for the validity of prayer, firmly grounded in the foundational texts (*naṣṣ*) of the Qur'an and hadith. Terminologically, the qibla refers

Qiblat Global sebagai Metode Penentuan Arah Kiblat," *Al-Abkam Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah dan Hukum* 7, no. 1 (2022): 57–71; Ismail Ismail et al., "Toleransi Pelencengan Arah Kiblat di Indonesia Perspektif Ilmu Falak dan Hukum Islam," *Al-Mizān* 17, no. 1 (2021): 115–38.

¹⁵ See: 'Alamul Yaqin and Iqbal Kamalludin, "Qibla Direction of the Historical Mosque in Pekalongan City: Accuracy and Tolerance," *AL-AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak dan Astronomi* 6, no. 2 (2024): 135–50; Arwin Juli Rakhmadi and Junaidi Junaidi, "Qibla Accuracy of the Mahligai and Papan Tinggi Tomb Complexes at Central Tapanuli," *Journal of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Societies* 6, no. 1 (2022): 30–54; Muhajir Muhajir et al., "Analysis of Qiblat Direction at Jami Al Iman Mosque Sunan Geseng Loano Purworejo," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Syir'ah* 20, no. 2 (2022): 251–62.

¹⁶ See: Mohamaddin Abdul Niri et al., "Analisis Komputasional Aplikasi Sun Compass dalam Penentuan Arah Kiblat Muslim," *Jurnal Fiqh* 20, no. 1 (2023): 1–32; Mustaqim and Akbar, "Study on the Causes of Inaccuracy of Qibla Direction of the Great Mosque Baitul Makmur West Aceh," 30–45; Izzuddin, "The Problems of the Relationship between Science and Religion in Qibla Direction Calibration at the Great Mosque of Demak and Baiturrahman Mosque in Semarang, Indonesia," 111–31.

¹⁷ Mark Gottdiener, *The Social Production of Urban Space*, 2nd ed (University of Texas Press, 1994), 110.

to the direction of the Ka‘bah in the Masjid al-Haram (Sacred Mosque) in Mecca, which serves as the orientation for Muslims when performing ritual prayer.¹⁸ The Qur‘an emphasizes this obligation in Sūrat al-Baqarah verse 144: “*fa-walli wajhaka shatira al-masjid al-harami*” (so turn your face toward the Sacred Mosque) and reaffirms it in verse 150 as a symbol of the collective unity of the Muslim ummah.¹⁹ A hadith narrated by Imām al-Bukhārī and Imām Muslim further reinforces this normative obligation: “*idhā qumta ilā al-ṣalāh fa-asbiḡ al-wuḍū’ thumma istaqbil al-qiblah fa-kabbir*” (when you stand for prayer, perfect your ablution, then face the qibla, and say the *takbīr*).²⁰ Thus, the requirement to face the qibla is not merely symbolic but a fundamental principle of the Shari‘ah (Islamic law) that embodies obedience to God and the transnational unity of the Muslim community.²¹

Since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the practice of determining the qibla has consistently evolved in response to changing geographical conditions and the development of new instruments. For those within direct sight of the Ka‘bah, orientation was established with certainty (*yaqīn*). Muslims living far from Mecca determined the qibla probabilistically (*ẓann*), relying on geographic estimations and natural indicators.²² Communities located at great distances employed *ijtihād* by observing the sun, moon, winds, or stars, which later evolved into the use of mathematical, astronomical, and technological instruments.²³ This continuity aligns with the view of Ali Moussa, who argues that anyone able to see the Ka‘bah must face it precisely, whereas those who cannot may rely on *ijtihād*.²⁴ It illustrates the historical continuity of efforts to maintain qibla accuracy, albeit through different methods shaped by spatial and temporal circumstances.²⁵

Divergent interpretations among the *fuqahā’* (Islamic jurists) demonstrate the flexibility of Islamic law in accommodating the geographical diversity of the Muslim world.²⁶ While all jurists agree that facing the qibla is a requirement for valid prayer, they differ regarding the precise object of this obligation. The Shāfi‘ī school and the Imāmīyah emphasize that one must face the actual structure of the Ka‘bah (*‘ayn al-Ka‘bah*), even if this is achieved only through estimation or technology. They interpret Sūrat al-Baqarah verse 144 as a specific and literal command, such that even minimal deviation may jeopardize the validity of prayer.²⁷ In contrast, the Ḥanafī, Mālikī, and Ḥanbalī schools argue that it suffices to face the general

¹⁸ Wahbah al-Zuhailī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islamī wa Adillatuh* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2010), 1:597–600.

¹⁹ Muhammad Taufiq and Muhammad Said, “Qur‘anic Interpretation among Sasak Muslims across Communities, Theologies, and Ideological Conflicts,” *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur‘an dan Hadis* 26, no. 2 (2025): 383–412.

²⁰ ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha‘rānī, *Al-Miẓān al-Kubr* (Dār al-Fikr, 1988), 178.

²¹ Ghazy Almakky and John Snyder, “Calculating an Azimuth from One Location to Another: A Case Study in Determining the Qibla to Makkah,” *Cartographica* 33, no. 2 (1996): 29–36.

²² Al-Zuhailī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islamī wa Adillatuh*, 1:587–98.

²³ Nada Putri Rohana, “Accuracy of Qibla Direction of the Mosque with the Qibla Shadows and Rashdul Qibla Methods,” *Al-Marshad: Jurnal Astronomi Islam dan Ilmu-Ilmu Berkaitan* 10, no. 1 (2024): 35–49.

²⁴ Ali Moussa, “Mathematical Methods in Abū al-Wafā’s *Almagest* and the *Qibla* Determinations,” *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 21, no. 1 (2011): 1–56.

²⁵ Ahmad S. Dallal, “Ibn Al-Haytham’s Universal Solution for Finding the Direction of the *Qibla* by Calculation,” *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 5, no. 2 (1995): 145–93.

²⁶ ABD Karim Faiz, “Fiqh Moderation on Qibla Direction Determination: Flexible Accuracy,” *Journal of Islamic Law* 1, no. 1 (2020): 83–99.

²⁷ Abū Ishāq, *Al-Muhadhdhab fī Fiqh al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2016), 3:193–4.

direction of the Ka‘bah (*jibah al-Ka‘bah*), based on the hadith “*mā bayna al-mashriq wa al-maghrib qiblab*” (between east and west is qibla), which is understood as a *rukhsah* (legal concession) for Muslims outside Mecca.²⁸ This view is reinforced by al-Ṣan‘ānī and al-Shawkānī, who maintain that the obligation is to face the general direction, not the precise point.²⁹ A principle of *uṣūl al-fiqh* (Islamic legal theory), “*mā qāraba al-shay‘a u‘ṭiya ḥukmuhū*” (that which approximates something may take its legal ruling), further legitimizes this interpretation.³⁰ Consequently, many Indonesian Muslims have come to understand the qibla in practical terms as simply “west,” despite significant geographical variations in its exact orientation.³¹

In the contemporary era, advancements in *‘ilm al-falak* and modern technology have prompted a reevaluation of the permissible deviation from the qibla. For instance, Thomas Djamaluddin highlights those instruments, such as GPS, trigonometric azimuth calculations, and astronomical devices, that now enable exact orientation. He suggests that a deviation of up to two degrees may still be acceptable, particularly for smaller mosques, whereas even minor deviations in large mosques can significantly affect the alignment of prayer rows.³² Thus, while *fiqh* allows some degree of tolerance, technological progress has raised expectations for greater accuracy to ensure the perfection of ritual practice.³³ In Indonesia, methods such as *ḥisāb* (astronomical calculation), *ru‘yah* (moon sighting), compasses, GPS, and advanced astronomical devices have become standardized at the national level.³⁴ It reflects a shift from *ẓannī* to *yaqīnī* approaches in qibla determination, underscoring the importance of following the *ijtibād* of contemporary experts in Islamic astronomy to safeguard ritual validity. In this way, *fiqh* remains relevant in the modern era by integrating Shari‘ah norms, legal flexibility, and the epistemic legitimacy of contemporary science.³⁵

Local Wisdom as a Mechanism for Social Cohesion in Tana Toraja

Tana Toraja Regency, located in South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia, is renowned for its distinctive cultural and religious diversity.³⁶ According to the 2023 report by the Statistics of

²⁸ Al-Zuhailī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islamī wa Adillatuh*, 1:598.

²⁹ Muḥammad bin Ismā‘īl al-Ṣan‘ānī, *Subul al-Salām* (Bayrūt: Dār al-Ma‘rifah, 1997), 135–7; Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Antār* (Damascus: Dār al-Kalim al-Ṭayyib, 1993), 95–9.

³⁰ Aḥmad ibn Idrīs al-Qarāfī and Muḥammad Aḥmad Sarraj, *Kitāb al-Furūq: Anwār al-Burūq fī Anwā‘ al-Furūq* (Dār al-Salām, 2001), 33–4.

³¹ Jalil and Hosen, “Qibla Jurisprudence,” 143–65.

³² Imam Baihaqi, “Analisis Sistem Perhitungan Awal Waktu Salat Thomas Djamaluddin” (Thesis, UIN Walisongo, 2017), 61.

³³ Yaqin and Kamalludin, “Qibla Direction of the Historical Mosque in Pekalongan City,” 135–50.

³⁴ See: “Fatwa of the MUI Fatwa Commission No. 5 of 2010 on the Orientation of the Qibla;” Hamdan Mahmud et al., “Understanding Qibla Orientation through the ‘Nagara’ Artificial Compass: A Falak Legal Perspective,” *Syariah: Jurnal Hukum dan Pemikiran* 23, no. 1 (2023): 78–91.

³⁵ See: Faiz, “Fiqh Moderation on Qibla Direction Determination,” 83–99; Rahmi Hidayati Al Idrus et al., “Flexibility of Women’s Inheritance Distribution in Jambi Malay Society: Compromising Islamic and Customary Law,” *El-Ushab: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 7, no. 1 (2024): 42–61; Muflikhatul Khoiroh and Abd Syakur Syakur, “The Flexibility of Islamic Law in the Ganjur Tradition in Lamongan, Indonesia,” *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam dan Kemanusiaan* 23, no. 2 (2023): 139–59; Astrid et al., “Transformasi Nilai Tradisi Besaprah dalam Budaya Sambas di Era Globalisasi,” *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial Indonesia* 2, no. 3 (2025): 115–25.

³⁶ Anthonius Michael et al., “Exploring the Gradual Islamization of Tana Toraja in South Sulawesi: History, Development, and Challenges,” *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 24, no. 2 (2023): 134–3.

Tana Toraja Regency (BPS), the regency has a population of 294,311 people spread over an area of 2,043.62 km².³⁷ The religious composition is predominantly Christian, with 222,423 adherents (182,165 Protestants and 40,258 Catholics), followed by Muslims (31,187), Hindus (4,049), Buddhists (225), and adherents of other religions (27).³⁸ Administratively, Tana Toraja comprises 19 districts, including Makale. As the administrative center, Makale is home to both the Great Mosque of Makale and the GPdI Bethesda Makale. Situated adjacent to each other, these two prominent houses of worship stand as tangible symbols of interfaith coexistence in a predominantly non-Muslim region.³⁹

Toraja society has historically been structured through a traditional stratification system transmitted matrilineally, comprising nobles (*puang*), commoners, and slaves (*kaunan*).⁴⁰ Cultural identity is deeply reflected in the traditional *tongkonan* houses, which serve as both symbols of kinship ties and central sites for communal deliberation. Similarly, the ritual of *rambu solo* (funerary ceremony) carries not only spiritual significance but also strengthens collective solidarity.⁴¹ Philosophically, Torajan life is grounded in the principle of balance among humans, nature, and ancestors, as articulated in the indigenous belief system *aluk todolo* (the way of the ancestors). This cosmology emphasizes maintaining cosmic harmony through reverence for one's ancestors.⁴² Although the majority of Torajans converted to Christianity due to Dutch missionary activity in the early twentieth century, and a segment of the population had already adopted Islam as early as 1858 through Bugis-Sidrap migrants, the cosmological values of *aluk todolo* remain deeply ingrained. These values continue to shape social practices, including religious life.⁴³

Religious plurality in Tana Toraja is sustained through local wisdom that serves as a mechanism for social cohesion. For example, the value of *solata* emphasizes mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. Consequently, religious diversity is not viewed as a potential source of conflict but rather as an opportunity to enrich social solidarity.⁴⁴ In practice, *solata* often underpins conflict resolution between groups through dialogue and consensus.⁴⁵ Another important philosophy, *padaidi*, emphasizes collective responsibility across religious boundaries and promotes the understanding that communal interests must take precedence

³⁷ BPS - Statistics of Tana Toraja Regency, *Tana Toraja Regency in Figures*, 1102001.7318 (BPS - Statistics of Tana Toraja Regency, 2024), 4.

³⁸ BPS - Statistics of Tana Toraja Regency, *Tana Toraja Regency in Figures*, 147.

³⁹ KD, "Interview with Pastor of GPdI Bethesda Makale," August 31, 2024. See: Raisatul Mufahamah et al., "Migration, Balik-Islam, and Identity Formation of Muslims in Palawan of the Philippines," *Al-Albab* 14, no. 1 (2025): 3–22.

⁴⁰ Hasbi et al., "Compromise in Traditional Ceremonies: A Case Study of the Rambu Solo' Ceremony in Toraja Regency," *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews* 7, no. 6 (2019): 286–91.

⁴¹ Halim Wiryadinata, "Aluk Todolo: The Journey of Puang Matua's Wisdom from Dormancy to Revival," *The International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society* 15, no. 2 (2024): 263–77.

⁴² Hadi Pajarianto, "Interreligious Relation: Position of Women in Strengthening Christian and Muslim Bonds," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (2022): 7.

⁴³ Pratama Yoland Suryamodjo et al., "Customary Sanctions in Resolving Violations of the 'Aluk Todolo' of the Tana Toraja Community," *Jurnal Cakrawala Hukum* 13, no. 2 (2022): 214–23.

⁴⁴ Sudarmin 'Tandi Pora' et al., "Menguak Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Toraja dalam Menjaga Toleransi," *PUSAKA* 11, no. 2 (2023): 299–312.

⁴⁵ Ma'fiyah Ma'fiyah et al., "The Role of Religious Education in Forming Social Consciousness," *Rinayat: Educational Journal of History and Humanities* 7, no. 1 (2024): 295–301.

over narrow group interests.⁴⁶ This concept promotes practical collaboration in areas such as infrastructure development, land management, and social events, involving Christians, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists on an equal footing. Furthermore, the Torajans uphold the value of *sanduk langi*’ (holding onto the sky), which asserts that all human beings are under the sovereignty of a single divine power.⁴⁷ This principle cultivates a spiritual awareness that religious differences should not divide but rather serve as the foundation for strengthening fraternity and humanity. *Sanduk langi*’ thus functions as a moral compass that rejects exclusivism and sectarian fanaticism while reinforcing an inclusive ethos in interfaith relations.⁴⁸

Taken together, these strands of local wisdom coalesce to shape an inclusive and harmonious social order in Tana Toraja.⁴⁹ *Aluk todolo* emphasizes cosmic balance through ancestral reverence; *solata*’ fosters mutual respect and peaceful coexistence; *padaidi* reinforces collective social responsibility; and *sanduk langi*’ instills spiritual awareness that all humans are subject to one divine authority. These values enable the Muslim minority community to practice their faith freely and equally within a predominantly Christian society.⁵⁰ Grounded in such indigenous philosophies, Torajan society not only safeguards interfaith harmony but also demonstrates that local wisdom functions as an effective socio-cultural instrument for sustaining peace and managing religious pluralism.⁵¹ In this regard, Torajan local wisdom plays a strategic role in shaping an open, inclusive, and tolerant social space while affirming its relevance to contemporary discourses on the intersection of law, religion, and culture.⁵²

Qibla Orientation and Negotiation of Social Space in the Great Mosque of Makale

The Great Mosque of Makale is a historic mosque and the central hub of Muslim religious activity in Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi. Established in 1934 at Jl. Merdeka No. 44, Bombongan Subdistrict, Makale District—which also serves as the regency’s administrative center—the mosque was constructed on 750 m² of waqf land, with a building area of 988 m² accommodating over 200 worshippers.⁵³ Its foundation is closely tied to the role of Haji Muhammad Daeng Pawero, a Muhammadiyah leader and pioneer of modern Islamic proselytizing (*da’wah*) in Tana Toraja during the 1930s. The establishment of this mosque not only signaled the growth of the Muslim community in a predominantly non-Muslim

⁴⁶ Yunus Yunus and Mukoyyaroh Mukoyyaroh, “Pluralitas dalam Menjaga Toleransi di Tana Toraja,” *DINAMIKA: Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan dan Keislaman* 7, no. 1 (2022): 49–74.

⁴⁷ Hetty Nooy-Palm, *The Sa’dan-Toraja: A Study of Their Social Life and Religion* (BRILL, 1986), 145–8.

⁴⁸ Rede Roni Bare et al., “Competitive Advantage of Local Potential-Based Tourism Destinations: Evidence from Indonesia,” *PalArch’s Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology* 17, no. 6 (2020): 16567–80.

⁴⁹ Wiryadinata, “Aluk Todolo,” 263–77.

⁵⁰ KD, “Interview with Pastor of GPdI Bethesda Makale,” August 31, 2024.

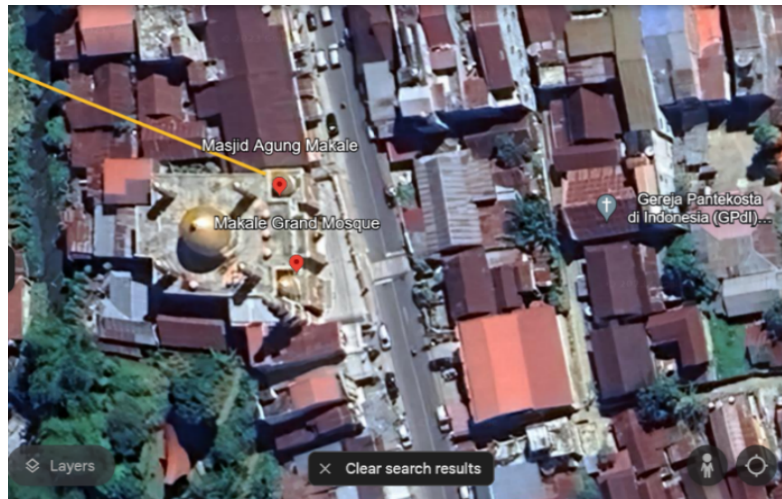
⁵¹ See: Hasbi et al., “Compromise in Traditional Ceremonies,” 286–91; Azharuddin Azharuddin, “Harmonization of Islamic Inheritance Law and Indonesian Customary Law Regarding the Acceleration of Inheritance Distribution: Legal Philosophy Study,” *Jurnal Mediasas: Media Ilmu Syari’ah dan Abwal Al-Syakhsyiyah* 8, no. 2 (2025): 428–39.

⁵² See: Riyantino Yudistira et al., “The Role of Linguistics and Local Wisdom on Knowing Harmony between Religions at Tana Toraja,” *Muslim Heritage* 7, no. 2 (2022): 409–31; Irawan et al., “Negotiating Legal Pluralism: Syncretism of Islamic Law and Balinese Adat in Pegayaman Village,” *El-Mashlahah* 15, no. 1 (2025): 149–64.

⁵³ Portal Informasi Masjid Indonesia, “Masjid Raya Makale,” accessed August 20, 2025, <https://dkm.or.id>.

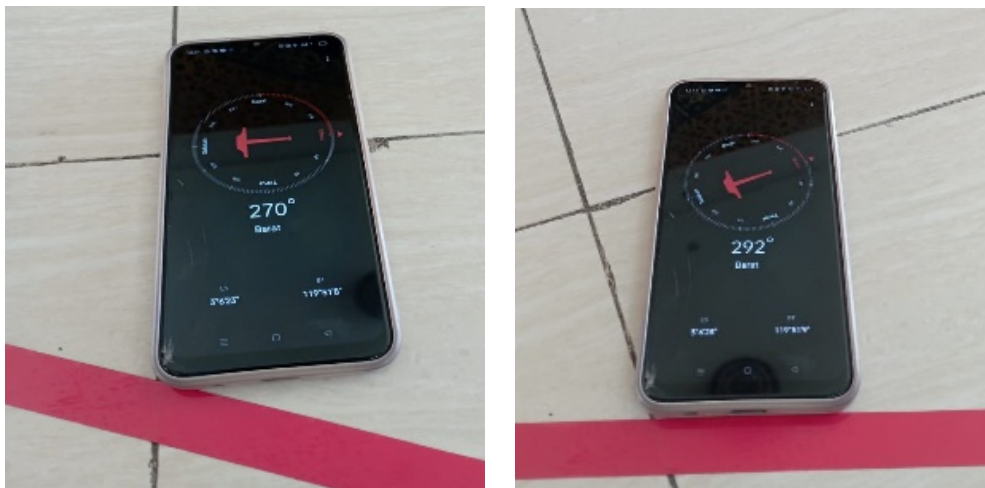
region but also underscored the mosque's dual role as a center of worship and a socio-educational institution.⁵⁴

Figure 1
Location of the Great Mosque of Makale and GPdI Bethesda Makale



Source: Google Earth, 2024.

Figure 2
Qibla Direction and Prayer Rows at the Great Mosque of Makale



Source: Field Observation, May 2024.

From the outset, the orientation of the Great Mosque of Makale was not determined using astronomical methods. Instead, it was aligned to the west, parallel to the GPdI Bethesda Makale located directly in front of it (see Figure 1). The mosque was constructed facing west, with an azimuth angle of 270° from north (see Figure 2), whereas the true qibla direction from Makale is 22° 17' 59.66" north of west. It resulted in a deviation of approximately $\pm 22^\circ$ from the Ka'bah.⁵⁵ Since its establishment, this orientation has served

⁵⁴ GA, "Interview with Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale," August 7, 2024.

⁵⁵ "Observation of the Qibla Orientation and Prayer Rows at the Great Mosque of Makale," May 2024.

as the primary reference for arranging prayer rows. The Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale explained:⁵⁶

“This mosque was originally constructed facing west because the Islamic leaders of Tana Toraja sought to respect the sentiments of others and uphold tolerance, thereby avoiding any stark contrast between the mosque and the church situated opposite it (the GPdI Bethesda Makale).”

This statement indicates that the mosque’s orientation was not merely a technical religious decision but also the result of social negotiation and a symbol of tolerance. In this study, the determination of the qibla at the Great Mosque of Makale is conceptualized as a site of compromise involving interreligious interests in the construction of public space in Makale.⁵⁷

Awareness of the qibla deviation only emerged in 2020, following a training session on astronomical qibla determination conducted by the Falakiah Team of IAIN Parepare, in collaboration with the Islamic Community Guidance Office (*Bimbingan Masyarakat Islam*) of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Tana Toraja.⁵⁸ The calculations revealed a deviation of approximately 22° from the Ka’bah. This discovery unsettled some congregants, who subsequently proposed correcting the direction of the prayer. However, rather than altering the mosque’s orientation, the solution adopted was to adjust the alignment of the prayer rows—a change that was implemented in 2023. The Board Member of the Great Mosque of Makale explained:⁵⁹

“The mosque’s orientation does deviate from the Ka’bah, but from the beginning, this was the result of deliberation among the founders, which also involved the leaders of GPdI Bethesda Makale. The correction we made concerned only the prayer rows, as the building itself has become part of our shared history and agreement.”

This perspective emphasizes that the spatial configuration of worship cannot be understood solely as an expression of religious devotion but also as a historical product reflecting the relation of power, compromise, and social solidarity.⁶⁰ Accordingly, the orientation of the Great Mosque of Makale has become a symbol of tolerance embedded in the collective memory of Torajan society, serving as a means of sustaining social cohesion.⁶¹

A similar view was expressed by the Deputy Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale, who emphasized that adjusting the prayer rows was a collective decision aimed at safeguarding both the sanctity of worship and social harmony.⁶² The Chairman of the Great Mosque Makale Foundation added:⁶³

⁵⁶ GA, “Interview with Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale,” August 7, 2024.

⁵⁷ Khairudin Aljunied, “‘Not Just a House to Honour God’: Mosques in the Malay World as Cosmopolitan Spaces,” *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah* 8, no. 1 (2018): 43–55.

⁵⁸ GA, “Interview with Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale,” August 7, 2024.

⁵⁹ NJ, “Interview with Board Member of the Great Mosque of Makale,” June 7, 2025.

⁶⁰ Elhas et al., “Tagyir Mawdhi’ Inhirâf Qiblat al-Masjid fi Bamikasân ‘alâ Asasi al-Tiknôlôjiyya al-Mutaqaddimah,” 591–625.

⁶¹ M. I. Jamail et al., “Sustainable Mosque Designs from the Perspectives of Social Inclusion: Comparisons of Four Mosques in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia,” *International Journal of Sustainable Construction Engineering and Technology* 14, no. 5 (2023): 328–35.

⁶² PCT, “Interview with the Deputy Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale,” August 8, 2024.

⁶³ JM, “Interview with Chairman of the Great Mosque Makale Foundation,” June 7, 2025.

“If there is indeed a deviation, the adjustment should be made to the prayer rows, not the building. The orientation of this mosque is not merely a technical matter but a shared historical legacy, constructed together with our brothers and sisters from the church.”

This statement reinforces the finding that the issue of qibla orientation is not merely a matter of ritual validity but also encompasses sociological and historical dimensions.⁶⁴ The alignment of the mosque with the church illustrates how aesthetic, political, and theological compromises are enacted simultaneously. Thus, worship spaces in Tana Toraja should not be viewed solely as autonomous expressions of religion, but rather as the outcome of a dialectic among Shari‘ah norms, local wisdom, and a lived ethos of tolerance internalized by interfaith communities.⁶⁵

Qibla Deviation as a Negotiation of Shari‘ah, Aesthetics, and Local Wisdom

The determination of the qibla direction constitutes a normative obligation in *fiqh al-‘ibādah*, firmly grounded in the Qur‘an and hadith, and reinforced by MUI Fatwa No. 5 of 2010 on the Qibla Direction. Accurate orientation toward the Ka‘bah is regarded as a prerequisite for the perfection of prayer.⁶⁶ However, field findings reveal that from 1934 until 2020, the qibla direction of the Great Mosque of Makale deviated by approximately 22° from the precise orientation toward the Ka‘bah. This deviation cannot be attributed merely to a technical error arising from limited *‘ilm al-falak*.⁶⁷ Instead, it must be understood as the outcome of a complex social compromise. Therefore, the issue of qibla orientation in Makale cannot be examined solely through a normative legal framework but must also be understood as an expression of social, cultural, and theological negotiations that have shaped the configuration of Muslim sacred space within a predominantly non-Muslim society.⁶⁸

The primary factor underlying this deviation was the intention to preserve interreligious harmony. In the context of Tana Toraja, where the majority of the population is Christian, the establishment of a grand mosque in the city center served not only ritual purposes but also symbolic functions, affirming the presence of the Muslim minority. The mosque’s orientation was determined through deliberations involving both Muslim and Christian leaders. The Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale recalled:⁶⁹

“The mosque faces west because, at the time of its construction, Muslim and Christian religious leaders met in the tongkonan to deliberate and ultimately agreed on this orientation.”

This testimony demonstrates that the mosque’s construction was not a unilateral decision but rather a cross-religious consensus, involving even the leadership of the GPdI Bethesda

⁶⁴ Ahmad Zayyadi et al., “Understanding of Legal Reform on Sociology of Islamic Law: Its Relevance to Islamic Family Law in Indonesia,” *Al-Manabij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 17, no. 2 (2023): 249–62.

⁶⁵ Abdul Muhaya et al., “The Syncretic Architecture of the Menara Kudus Mosque as an Expression of Sufistic Tawhīd,” *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam* 14, no. 2 (2025): 195–220.

⁶⁶ “Fatwa of the MUI Fatwa Commission No. 5 of 2010 on the Orientation of the Qibla.”

⁶⁷ Elhas et al., “Tagyīr Mawdhī’ Inhirāf Qiblat al-Masjid fī Bamīkasān ‘alā Asās al-Tiknôlôjiyya al-Mutaqaddimah,” 591–625.

⁶⁸ See: Aljunied, “Not Just a House to Honour God,” 43–55; Vikry Reinaldo Paais, “Interreligious Engagement Between Indigenous Religion and Christianity Within the Huaulu Community in Maluku,” *Al-Albab* 14, no. 1 (2025): 65–86.

⁶⁹ GA, “Interview with Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale,” August 7, 2024.

Makale, which is located opposite the mosque.⁷⁰ Thus, the mosque's orientation was not merely a matter of *fiqh* but also a social agreement intended to promote harmony in the public sphere. Ultimately, the Great Mosque of Makale serves as a tangible symbol that both fosters interfaith relations and affirms the legitimacy of the Muslim presence in Tana Toraja.⁷¹

The second factor was aesthetic consideration and architectural alignment with the surrounding environment. The mosque was intentionally constructed parallel to the GPdI Bethesda Makale to create visual symmetry within the cityscape. This spatial alignment was deemed essential for maintaining urban harmony and aesthetic balance in Makale's public space.⁷² This decision suggests that the deviation was made deliberately, rather than negligently, as a response to social and symbolic imperatives within a multicultural context. While precision in qibla orientation holds central importance in Islamic law, architectural aesthetics and urban harmony were also regarded as significant factors. For some, this may appear to be a compromise of religious principles; for others, it represents the embodiment of local wisdom in accommodating social, aesthetic, and multicultural values without undermining the essence of worship.⁷³

The third factor was the internalization of the Torajan local wisdom of *solata*, a principle emphasizing harmonious relationships among humans, nature, and spirituality.⁷⁴ This value was expressed through deliberations held in the *tongkonan*. This traditional space not only symbolizes kinship⁷⁵ but also serves as a forum for interreligious communities to make collective decisions. A pastor from GPdI Makale explained:⁷⁶

"Torajans have long been taught to respect one another (solata'). A small example of this is the tongkonan. What is its function? It serves as a place to sit together without barriers. Within a family, people of different religions must sit together in the tongkonan. From there, all problems are resolved. I can assure you that it is challenging to pit Torajans against each other over religion. Since childhood, we have been taught to respect various faiths and religions. Our mentality has been shaped to address different issues at the tongkonan, and that is how we solve our problems."

⁷⁰ MZ, "Interview with Chairman of the Majelis Ulama Indonesia of Tana Toraja," August 8, 2024.

⁷¹ Izak Y.M. Lattu, "Beyond Interreligious Dialogue: Oral-Based Interreligious Engagements in Indonesia," in *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Giuseppe Giordan and Andrew P. Lynch, vol. 10 (BRILL, 2019), 70–90.

⁷² GA, "Interview with Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale," August 7, 2024.

⁷³ See: Simon Naylor and James R. Ryan, "The Mosque in the Suburbs: Negotiating Religion and Ethnicity in South London," *Social & Cultural Geography* 3, no. 1 (2002): 39–59; Richard Gale, "Representing the City: Mosques and the Planning Process in Birmingham," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 6 (2005): 1161–79; Hovhannes Sargsyan et al., "Beyond Anthropocentrism: Reinterpreting Islamic Legal Ethics through Transspecies Rights and Ecological Jurisprudence," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Law* 8, no. 1 (2025): 92–112; Fatum Abubakar and Mohammad Salim Salim, "Inheritance Rights in Cases of Euthanasia: Analyzing Legal and Ethical Complexities," *Antmind Review: Journal of Sharia and Legal Ethics* 1, no. 2 (2024): 60–71; Muhammad Abror Rosyidin et al., "Multicultural Values in the Concept of Islamic Brotherhood: A Study from the Hadith Perspective," *Nabawi: Journal of Hadith Studies* 6, no. 1 (2025): 35–91.

⁷⁴ Markus Kudeng Sallata et al., "Bamboo Forest Inanagement Practices and Local Wisdom in Tana Toraja and North Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi," *AIP Conference Proceedings* 3001, no. 1 (2024): 030045.

⁷⁵ Aris Kaban Sendana et al., "Interpreting Socio-Cultural Values in Toraja: The Symbolism of Garonto' Sura' in Kada Tomina," *Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology* 9, no. 4 (2025): 2835–44.

⁷⁶ KD, "Interview with Pastor of GPdI Bethesda Makale," August 31, 2024.

This testimony demonstrates that the deviation in qibla orientation was not merely an architectural choice but also a cultural mechanism that integrates religious symbols into the social logic of harmony deeply rooted in Torajan society.⁷⁷

The fourth factor was theological reasoning, which developed alongside the community's understanding. In the early period, mosque administrators believed that simply facing west was sufficient, without the need for precise alignment with the Ka'bah. The Imam of the Great Mosque explained:⁷⁸

"In the past, our understanding was simple—facing west was sufficient. It was only in 2020 that we received 'ilm al-falak training, after which we adjusted the prayer rows without altering the building's orientation."

Internal corrections were carried out in 2023 by adjusting the prayer rows, while preserving the building's original orientation as a historical symbol of interreligious consensus. This phenomenon is further exemplified by social practices surrounding the mosque, such as Christian leaders contributing to its maintenance and even donating sacrificial animals during the Eid al-Adha.⁷⁹ These instances highlight the mosque's role beyond a ritual space—as a living symbol of tangible interfaith solidarity.⁸⁰

Accordingly, the qibla deviation at the Great Mosque of Makale reflects a negotiated interpretation of Islamic law embedded within a pluralistic social context. While the validity of congregational prayer remains preserved under Shari'ah, the mosque's physical orientation has been reinterpreted as a symbol of social cohesion, urban aesthetics, and local wisdom. The Head of Makale Subdistrict emphasized this point:⁸¹

"The Great Mosque of Makale and the GPdI Bethesda Makale stand as symbols of interreligious harmony in our district. Muslims and Christians consistently support one another and actively participate in the construction and maintenance of their respective houses of worship. This harmony is sustained by mutual respect and solidarity, which have become deeply ingrained values in the daily life of Makale's community."

Therefore, the imprecise qibla orientation should not be viewed as a religious violation, but rather as a socio-religious strategy that highlights the role of religion in fostering social cohesion in a multicultural society.⁸²

The Construction of Minority *Fiqh*: Qibla, Culture, and Social Cohesion

The existence of the Great Mosque of Makale since 1934 should not be understood merely as an expression of Muslim ritual piety, but also as a manifestation of the socio-political position of the Muslim community within the predominantly Christian context of Tana Toraja. The mosque serves a dual function: as a place of worship and as a symbol of minority

⁷⁷ See: Muhaya et al., "The Syncretic Architecture of the Menara Kudus Mosque as an Expression of Sufistic Tawhīd," 195–220; Aljunied, "Not Just a House to Honour God," 43–55.

⁷⁸ GA, "Interview with Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale," August 7, 2024.

⁷⁹ KD, "Interview with Pastor of GPdI Bethesda Makale," August 31, 2024.

⁸⁰ Aljunied, "Not Just a House to Honour God," 43–55.

⁸¹ MF, "Interview with Subdistrict Head (Camat) of Makale," August 8, 2024.

⁸² See: Jamail et al., "Sustainable Mosque Designs from the Perspectives of Social Inclusion," 329–35; Anselmus Dore Woho Atasoge et al., "Lilen San Juan: The Light of Social Cohesion and Religious Moderation," *Al-Albab* 14, no. 1 (2025): 87–114.

identity, continuously negotiating with local culture.⁸³ Therefore, the approximately 22° deviation of its qibla from astronomical precision cannot be attributed simply to limitations in *‘ilm al-falak*,⁸⁴ rather, it must be interpreted as the product of social compromise embedded in the power dynamics among religious communities. In this sense, the qibla in Makale represents a legal construction shaped by historical interactions, interfaith deliberations, and symbolic calculations aimed at sustaining social cohesion in the public sphere.

The involvement of interfaith leaders and the internalization of local wisdom are evident in the case of the Great Mosque’s qibla deviation. From the outset, the mosque’s founders were aware of the social sensitivities involved in constructing a monumental Islamic structure within a predominantly Christian region.⁸⁵ Interfaith deliberations held in the *tongkonan* provided a forum where the mosque’s orientation was determined not solely by *fiqh* prescriptions but through negotiated consensus.⁸⁶ The deliberate alignment of the mosque with the GPdI Bethesda Makale reflects the embodiment of Torajan cultural values, prioritizing visual harmony within the urban landscape over astronomical precision. Thus, the mosque’s orientation was not merely a technical decision but an expression of minority Islamic law negotiated within the broader social context.⁸⁷ The mosque itself became a tangible symbol of compromise, striking a balance between fidelity to Shari‘ah and the necessity of coexistence.⁸⁸

The testimony of a pastor from GPdI Bethesda Makale reinforces this finding. He emphasized that Christian involvement in the mosque’s construction was not a unilateral gesture of accommodation but rather a collective practice rooted in the Torajan principle of *pa’daidi* (mutual respect). This interreligious relationship demonstrates that sacred space is never neutral; it is imbued with symbolic meaning, embodying consensus, solidarity, and simultaneously serving as a minority strategy of resistance against potential marginalization.⁸⁹ Accordingly, the Great Mosque of Makale serves a dual purpose: as a place of worship and as a symbolic arena that mediates interfaith relations within the local cultural context.⁹⁰ From this perspective, Islamic law in minority contexts serves not only as a guide for ritual compliance but also as an existential strategy to ensure the continuity of Muslim life within a social structure dominated by another religious community.⁹¹

The statement by the Chairman of MUI Tana Toraja Regency further emphasizes that the implementation of Islamic law in minority contexts cannot be separated from the

⁸³ Lattu, “Beyond Interreligious Dialogue,” 70–90.

⁸⁴ Elhas et al., “Tagyir Mawdhi’ Inhirâf Qiblat al-Masjid fi Bamikasân ‘alâ Asasi al-Tiknôlôjiyya al-Mutaqaddimah,” 591–625.

⁸⁵ MF, “Interview with Subdistrict Head (Camat) of Makale,” August 8, 2024.

⁸⁶ GA, “Interview with Imam of the Great Mosque of Makale,” August 7, 2024.

⁸⁷ Fawaizul Umam et al., “Dialectics Between Islam and Local Culture in Wetu Telu Lombok Muslims’ Merariq Tradition: An ‘Urf Perspective,” *AL-IHKAM: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 19, no. 1 (2024): 104–25.

⁸⁸ Aljunied, “Not Just a House to Honour God,” 43–55.

⁸⁹ See: KD, “Interview with Pastor of GPdI Bethesda Makale,” August 31, 2024; Mohamad Sobirin, “The Ritual Agency and Living Tradition of aḍ-Ḍamm ‘alâ Qalb al-Qur’ân in Local Islamic Communities of Banyumas,” *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur’ân dan Hadis* 26, no. 2 (2025): 469–97.

⁹⁰ Lattu, “Beyond Interreligious Dialogue,” 70–90.

⁹¹ Moh Wahib Aziz et al., “Harmony in Diversity: The Role of Minority Jurisprudence in Realizing Religious Harmony in Jayapura, Papua,” *Justicia Islamica* 21, no. 2 (2024): 313–34.

principle of *maṣlaḥah* (public interest), which aligns with the *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* (objectives of Islamic law).⁹² Although the orientation of the Great Mosque of Makale deviates from the precise astronomical qibla, it is understood as a contextual *ijtibād*, aimed at preserving religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) while simultaneously protecting human life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*). By maintaining the historical symbol of interfaith consensus while adjusting the prayer rows in 2020, the Makale Muslim community has practiced a form of Islamic law that is both adaptive and responsive to changing spatial and temporal realities.⁹³ This dialectic demonstrates that Shariʿah norms are not confined to the private domain of ritual but are reinterpreted as instruments of social inclusion.⁹⁴

Accordingly, the construction of minority *fiqh* in determining the qibla at the Great Mosque of Makale reveals three interrelated layers of legal reality. First, the internalization of local cultural values, particularly the principles of social cohesion and interfaith respect. Second, the material embodiment of these values through the mosque's alignment with the church, symbolizes urban harmony. Third, religious legitimacy achieved through the reinterpretation of Shariʿah, emphasizing *maṣlaḥah* and the *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*.⁹⁵ This dialectic yields a configuration of Islamic law that is not rigid but continually reconstructed in response to social needs.⁹⁶ Thus, the deviation of the qibla in the Great Mosque of Makale is not a deviation in the sense of religious transgression but rather an articulation of Islamic law shaped through social negotiation. This phenomenon demonstrates that sacred space emerges as the outcome of a dynamic interaction among text, culture, and social structure.⁹⁷

Conclusion

The qibla deviation of the Great Mosque of Makale in Tana Toraja is not merely a technical issue of Islamic astronomy (*ʿilm al-falak*) but rather the result of a complex social compromise. From its establishment in 1934 until 2020, the mosque's orientation—approximately $\pm 22^\circ$ off from the precise qibla—was determined through deliberations in the *tongkonan* (the traditional Torajan house) involving both Muslim and Christian leaders. This decision reflects the minority Muslim community's strategy to preserve harmony with the Christian majority while simultaneously creating a visual symbol of urban cohesion through architectural alignment with the GPdI Bethesda Makale. Several interrelated factors shaped this deviation: (1) the need to maintain interreligious harmony; (2) aesthetic considerations in urban spatial planning; (3) the internalization of local wisdom such as *solata'* and the

⁹² MZ, "Interview with Chairman of the Majelis Ulama Indonesia of Tana Toraja," August 8, 2024. See: Nasruddin Yusuf et al., "Sadd al-Dzari'ah's Strategy in Maintaining Social Integrity and Sharia of Muslim Minorities amid Religious Plurality in North Sulawesi," *International Journal of Syariah and Law* 1, no. 1 (2025): 41–58.

⁹³ Faiz, "Fiqh Moderation on Qibla Direction Determination," 83–99.

⁹⁴ Jamail et al., "Sustainable Mosque Designs from the Perspectives of Social Inclusion," 329–35.

⁹⁵ Hasani et al., "Kelakat and Cultural Identity in Marriage Rituals: A Maqasid al-Shari'ah Approach in Loloan Timur Muslim Traditions," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Law* 7, no. 2 (2024): 83–104.

⁹⁶ See: Faiz, "Fiqh Moderation on Qibla Direction Determination," 83–99; Inna Fauziatal Ngazizah et al., "Localizing Islamic Law: Marriage Practices and the Pak Ponjen Tradition in Kudus," *El-Mashlahah* 15, no. 1 (2025): 59–78.

⁹⁷ See: Jamail et al., "Sustainable Mosque Designs from the Perspectives of Social Inclusion," 329–35; Muhaya et al., "The Syncretic Architecture of the Menara Kudus Mosque as an Expression of Sufistic Tawḥīd," 195–220.

principle of *pa'daidi* (mutual respect); and (4) an early theological understanding that prayer orientation toward the general westward direction was sufficient without astronomical precision. These findings demonstrate that Islamic law in minority settings is not rigid, but rather adaptive, responsive, and continually evolving through a dialectic between Shari'ah norms, local culture, and socio-political realities.

Conceptually, this study expands the understanding of Islamic legal practice in minority contexts, where Shari'ah norms are reinterpreted through the framework of *maqāṣid al-shari'ah* (objectives of Islamic law) to safeguard *maṣlaḥah* (public interest), strengthen social cohesion, and ensure the community's existential continuity. The findings are relevant not only to the development of contemporary *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) but also to interfaith studies, multicultural urban planning, and socio-legal discourses on how Islamic law is socially produced through interaction and negotiation. However, this research has limitations, as it is based on a single case study in Tana Toraja. Therefore, generalizing its findings to other Muslim minority contexts should be approached with caution. Future comparative studies—both across Muslim minority regions in Indonesia and within broader global contexts—will enhance our understanding of how Islamic law is negotiated, reinterpreted, and articulated within plural social spaces.

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