

**THEORIES OF ISLAMIC LAW**  
The Methodology of *Ijtihād*

Imran Ahsan Khan Nyazee

Advanced Legal Studies Institute

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Major Themes</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1	<i>Ijtihād</i> through a grundnorm . . . . .	12
2.2	Is there a common theory of interpretation? . . . . .	12
2.3	Separation between theory and practice? . . . . .	15
2.4	The problem of rights . . . . .	22
2.5	Disciplines related to <i>uṣūl al-fiqh</i> . . . . .	22
<b>3</b>	<b>The Meaning of <i>Uṣūl al-Fiqh</i></b>	<b>25</b>
3.1	<i>Uṣūl al-fiqh</i> defined . . . . .	26
3.1.1	The meaning of <i>fiqh</i> . . . . .	27
3.1.2	Analysis of the definition . . . . .	30
3.1.3	<i>Uṣūl al-fiqh</i> . . . . .	35
3.1.4	The final definition . . . . .	38
3.2	Comparison with legal theory . . . . .	39
<b>I</b>	<b>The Concept of Islamic Law</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Law as the <i>Hukm</i> of Allāh</b>	<b>47</b>
4.1	The grundnorm . . . . .	48
4.2	The interest of Man . . . . .	54
4.3	<i>Sharī'ah</i> and natural law . . . . .	57
4.4	Laws in cases where the <i>sharī'ah</i> is silent . . . . .	60
4.5	The limits of Islamic law . . . . .	63

4.6	Law as a growing tree . . . . .	66
<b>5</b>	<b>Law and its Classification: The <i>Hukm</i></b>	<b>71</b>
5.1	Classification of primary rules . . . . .	74
5.1.1	Obligations arising from primary rules . . . . .	77
5.2	The <i>ḥukm waḍ'ī</i> or secondary rules . . . . .	84
5.2.1	' <i>Azīmah</i> and <i>rukḥṣah</i> . . . . .	86
5.3	The purpose of the classification . . . . .	87
<b>6</b>	<b>The Act and the Subject</b>	<b>89</b>
6.1	The nature of the act ( <i>maḥkūm fih</i> ) . . . . .	91
6.1.1	The conditions of obligation ( <i>taklīf</i> ) . . . . .	91
6.1.2	The nature of the act and the right involved . . . . .	93
6.2	The subject ( <i>maḥkūm 'alayh</i> ) . . . . .	95
6.2.1	<i>Ahliyah</i> or legal capacity . . . . .	96
6.2.2	Causes of defective capacity . . . . .	115
<b>7</b>	<b>The Union of Primary and Secondary Rules</b>	<b>131</b>
7.1	The union of rules . . . . .	133
<b>8</b>	<b>Doctrines of <i>Hadd</i> and the Spheres of Law</b>	<b>137</b>
8.1	The spheres of Islamic law . . . . .	140
8.2	A legal basis for the spheres . . . . .	143
8.3	Interaction of the spheres . . . . .	146
8.4	The spheres of law and <i>ḥudūd</i> penalties . . . . .	149
8.5	Advantages of visualizing two spheres . . . . .	156
<b>II</b>	<b>Theories of Interpretation</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Common Features of Interpretation</b>	<b>165</b>
9.1	Interpretation in general . . . . .	168
9.1.1	The law is always the <i>ḥukm</i> of Allāh . . . . .	171
9.1.2	The <i>ḥukm</i> of Allāh and literal methods . . . . .	173
9.1.3	<i>Qiyās</i> and the <i>ḥukm</i> of Allāh . . . . .	178

<b>10</b>	<b>Theories of General Principles</b>	<b>185</b>
10.1	Background . . . . .	186
10.1.1	Approaches to legal theory . . . . .	189
10.1.2	Developments in the law after al-Shāfi‘ī . . . . .	192
10.2	The earlier jurists and their methodology . . . . .	200
10.3	Main features of Ḥanafī theory . . . . .	217
<b>11</b>	<b>Theories of Strict Interpretation</b>	<b>223</b>
11.1	Modification of existing legal theory by al-Shāfi‘ī . . . . .	225
11.1.1	The <i>Sunnah</i> governs the meaning of the Qur’ān . . . . .	226
11.1.2	The general word and the general prin- ciple . . . . .	227
11.1.3	The need to strengthen the <i>khābar wāḥid</i> . . . . .	228
11.1.4	The opinion of a Companion . . . . .	229
11.1.5	Al-Shāfi‘ī’s views on analogy . . . . .	231
11.2	Zāhirī and Ḥanbalī theories . . . . .	234
<b>12</b>	<b>The Theory of the Purposes of Law</b>	<b>239</b>
12.1	Probable reason for evolving a new theory . . . . .	242
12.2	Strict theories and the texts . . . . .	243
12.3	The design of traditional legal theory and the extension of the law . . . . .	245
12.4	Al-Ghazālī’s theory of the purposes of law . . . . .	247
12.4.1	Al-Juwaynī’s proposals . . . . .	248
12.4.2	Legal theory and the purposes of law . . . . .	250
12.4.3	<i>Qiyās</i> and the formation of principles . . . . .	251
12.4.4	The concept of the <i>munāsib</i> or <i>maṣlahah</i> . . . . .	254
12.4.5	The structure of the attributes and the <i>aḥkām</i> . . . . .	257
12.4.6	<i>Mu’aththir</i> , <i>munāsib</i> , and <i>mulā’im</i> . . . . .	263
12.4.7	The broader principle of <i>maṣlahah</i> . . . . .	267
12.4.8	The purposes of Islamic law . . . . .	269
12.5	The new theory and the methodology of the jurist . . . . .	272
12.5.1	The theory in simple terms . . . . .	273

12.5.2	General propositions, principles of policy, and moral norms . . . . .	274
12.5.3	The new theory and the principles employed . . . . .	277
12.5.4	The new theory and analogy . . . . .	282
12.6	The new theory and the development of the law . . . . .	288
<b>13</b>	<b>The Refinement of the Purposes of Law</b>	<b>291</b>
13.1	Tying the strands together . . . . .	293
13.2	<i>Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah</i> and the texts . . . . .	297
13.3	The nature and structure of the <i>maqāṣid</i> . . . . .	303
13.3.1	Primary purposes in the service of the Hereafter . . . . .	303
13.3.2	The two faces of the <i>maqāṣid</i> . . . . .	305
13.3.3	Primary and secondary purposes . . . . .	306
13.3.4	Priorities within the <i>maqāṣid</i> . . . . .	308
13.4	Tracing the logic of the <i>maqāṣid</i> . . . . .	311
13.4.1	<i>Nasl</i> or the family unit? . . . . .	312
13.4.2	Public and private interests? . . . . .	313
13.5	<i>Maqāṣid</i> and the Muslim community . . . . .	315
13.5.1	The Muslim community as a living organism . . . . .	315
13.5.2	The <i>maqāṣid</i> and the political system . . . . .	321
13.5.3	The <i>maqāṣid</i> and the economic system . . . . .	330
13.5.4	The <i>maqāṣid</i> and the legal system . . . . .	334
13.6	Priorities: Islamic and Western . . . . .	336
<b>III</b>	<b><i>Ijtihād</i> Today</b>	<b>339</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Lessons From Legal History</b>	<b>345</b>
14.1	A theory of Islamic law . . . . .	345
14.2	The principles of Islamic law . . . . .	356
14.3	The Scope of <i>Ijtihād</i> . . . . .	362

15	<b>The Modes of <i>Ijtihād</i></b>	<b>367</b>
15.1	Strategies of Islamization . . . . .	369
15.1.1	The general approach in Pakistan . . . . .	369
15.1.2	Codification . . . . .	373
15.1.3	Applying the unwritten Islamic law . . . . .	373
15.2	<i>Ijtihād</i> and the rule of recognition . . . . .	374
17	<b>Select Bibliography</b>	<b>385</b>
18	<b>Glossary</b>	<b>391</b>