Study Dimension and History of Ushul Fiqh Development

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dan konseptual. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ushul fiqh memainkan peran penting dalam memastikan hukum Islam tetap relevan ketika menghadapi berbagai isu zaman modern seperti perubahan sosial, kemajuan teknologi, dan perubahan kehidupan global.

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INTRODUCTION

The Science of Fiqh appeared before the Science of Ushul Fiqih. The knowledge of fiqh is the worship that is stipulated in Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah. When the companions found a problem or doubt about a law, Prophet Muhammad saw. then looked for an answer from the Al-Qur'an, if he did not find the answer, then the Prophet saw. jtihad. Due to the fact that many new problems that arise in this day and age do not have a solution from the Al-Quran, Sunnah, or the Prophet's ijtihad, the companions have realised this since the death of the Prophet. Because of that, they started a legal excavation based on the similarity of the cause of the new problem with the previous problem, or to see which is better for the benefit of the ummah.

This journal discusses the History of Ushul Fiqih and its evolution during the time of sahabat, tabi'in, and imam madzhab. The companions solve the problem based on Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah, and if they do not find an answer from both, they will do ijtihad again. Ijtihad that was carried out during the tabi'in period, however, was different because Islam was spreading more widely so that meetings between tabi'in could not decide the problem. During the time of the madzhab imam, four imams had been used as a reference to solve the problem. The opinions of each priest on how to solve the problem are different, sometimes the same. This is due to the fact that they live in different places, so they have to adapt to local traditions.

In addition, this journal discusses the streams that exist in the ushul fiqh, namely the mutakallimin stream, the fuqaha stream, and the combination stream between mutakallimin and fuqaha. The author will also discuss the books of ushul fiqh that come from these three schools. (Maulidia, 2024a, hlm. 167). In response to the emergence of various new legal problems that are not found explicitly in Al- Qur'an and As-Sunnah, the purpose of writing this article is to study and explain the history and development of Ushul Fiqih from the time of the companions, tabi'in, to imam madzhab. In addition, this article also aims to outline the differences in ijtihad methods used in each period and identify the main streams in Ushul Fiqih better.

RESEARCH METODS

This study employs a qualitative research approach using a library research method. This approach is considered appropriate because the object of the study consists of concepts,

ideas, and scholarly discourses related to Ushul Fiqh, particularly its dimensions of study and historical development. Qualitative library research allows for an in-depth understanding of the evolution of Ushul Fiqh through the analysis of authoritative texts, academic writings, and historical interpretations from classical to contemporary periods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The principal subject of study in uṣūl al-fiqh is the adillah sharʿiyyah, namely the legal evidences that form the foundation of Islamic law. The discussion within this discipline is not confined to the definition and status of these evidences, but also extends to the rules employed in deriving legal judgments from them. The outcomes of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) include categories such as obligatory (wājib), recommended (sunnah), permissible (mubāḥ), disliked (makrūh), and prohibited (ḥarām), along with other classifications like valid, invalid, correct, incorrect, rewardable, and sinful (Zaki, 2022, hlm. 199).

In the Islamic scholarly tradition, particularly within the discipline of Uṣūl al-Fiqh, the term *sources of law* is commonly referred to as Mashādir al-Aḥkām. Prior to the widespread use of this term, classical scholars predominantly employed the expressions Adillah al-Aḥkām or Adillat al-Sharīʿah, both of which denote the evidences or proofs of Islamic legal rulings. The adoption of the term *Mashādir al-Aḥkām* is relatively recent and became prominent in the mid-twentieth century, especially through the works of Abdul Wahhab Khalaf in *Ilm Uṣūl al-Fiqh* and Ali Hasballah in *Uṣūl al-Tashrīʿ*. This terminological shift reflects a conceptual development in Islamic legal studies, even though it does not alter the substantive foundations of Islamic legal sources.

The term "Islamic Law" represents a modern terminological construction that has gained wide usage in contemporary discourse, particularly in non-Arabic contexts. However, this expression is not explicitly found in classical Arabic legal literature nor in the textual language of the Qur'an. Within the traditional Islamic legal framework, the more commonly used term is *al-aḥkām al-sharʿiyyah*. In global academic and comparative legal studies, the term "Islamic Law" has been adopted as an equivalent expression to facilitate scholarly discussion and cross-cultural understanding.

From the perspective of Uṣūl al-Fiqh, the concept of *law* carries a specific technical meaning. Abdul Wahhab Khalaf defines law as the *khithāb Allah*, namely the divine address or command of God that relates to the actions of morally responsible individuals (*mukallaf*). This divine address may take the form of obligations or prohibitions, permissions that allow choice, or legal determinations that establish causes, conditions, and impediments. Such a definition emphasizes that Islamic law originates from divine will and functions as a normative framework guiding human conduct (Arofik & Rohmah, 2023, hlm. 20–21).

For instance, the Qur'anic injunction "Awfū bil-ʿuqūd" (Fulfill your contracts) constitutes a divine command that obligates believers to honor agreements and commitments. Likewise, the prohibition stated in Surah al-Ḥujurāt (49:11), "Let not one people ridicule another," underscores the ethical imperative to avoid mockery and humiliation among individuals. These examples illustrate that Islamic law extends beyond ritual regulation, serving also to shape social order and ethical relations grounded in justice and respect for human dignity.

Studies on communication have developed extensively both within the tradition of modern communication science and in the intellectual heritage of Islamic scholarship. From the perspective of modern communication theory, communication is generally understood as a process of transmitting messages from a source to a receiver through specific channels that may generate certain effects (Alfazri, 2025). The classical model of Shannon and Weaver conceptualizes communication as a linear process with emphasis on the channel and the presence of noise, while Berlo, through the SMCR model (Source, Message, Channel, Receiver), highlights the importance of the communicator's competence, mastery of symbols, and understanding of the audience (Berlo, 1960). These approaches have made significant contributions to explaining the technical and psychological dimensions of communication; however, they tend to be descriptive and value-neutral in nature.

In contrast to these approaches, a number of studies within Islamic scholarship position communication not merely as a social phenomenon, but also as an epistemological and normative process. In this context, communication is understood as the mechanism through which revealed messages are comprehended, interpreted, and transmitted within human life. This perspective emphasizes that communication possesses a strong hermeneutical dimension, as it inevitably involves textual interpretation and the authority of meaning.

Ushul fiqh, as a methodological discipline in Islam, has a close relevance to the study of communication. Ushul fiqh examines the principles used to derive Islamic legal rulings from detailed evidences, with textual sources (al-nass) functioning as the primary medium of divine communication. Various classical studies indicate that the core activity of ushul fiqh essentially constitutes an act of communication, namely the process of understanding divine messages through linguistic tools, logic, and legal reasoning methodologies. Within this framework, concepts such as al-ma'na (meaning), al-dalalah (textual indication), and al-'ibarah (linguistic expression) serve as key instruments in bridging revealed texts and human understanding

Studies on meaning within ushul fiqh demonstrate that a single expression (lafaz) may contain multiple possible meanings, whether literal (haqiqi) or metaphorical (majazi), general ('amm) or specific (khass), absolute or restricted (muqayyad), as well as ambiguous (musytarak) or definitive (muhkam) meanings (Al- Zarkashi, 1994). This diversity underscores that communication within religious texts is neither singular nor simplistic; rather, it requires methodological precision in discerning the intended meaning of the speaker (al-murad al-mutakallim). In the context of the Qur'an and Sunnah, this entails responsibly understanding the intent of Allah and His Messenger in accordance with linguistic principles and Islamic legal methodology.

Beyond meaning, the concept of dalalah also constitutes a central focus in ushul fiqh studies that is relevant to communication theory. Dalalah explains the relationship between expression and meaning through various mechanisms, including dalalah al-'ibarah (explicit meaning), dalalah al-isyarah (implicit meaning), dalalah al-iqtiḍa' (logically necessitated meaning), and dalalah al-iltizam (consequential meaning). Several contemporary studies suggest that these forms of dalalah reflect a multi-level communication model, in which messages are not always explicitly presented but instead require inference and rational analysis. This highlights a fundamental distinction between communication in ushul fiqh and

secular communication models, which generally remain limited to denotative and connotative dimensions. A number of studies also emphasize the implications of communication from the perspective of ushul fiqh at hermeneutical, normative, social, and epistemological levels. Errors in understanding textual meaning and dalalah may result in distorted legal interpretations and social practices, whereas accurate comprehension contributes to the formation of collective awareness, legal order, and social justice. Accordingly, communication within ushul fiqh is not perceived as a neutral activity, but rather as a value- laden process imbued with legal responsibility (Maulidia, 2024a).

A. History of Ushul Fiqh

As for its history, although Usul Fiqh can be said to be a branch of the science of Fiqh, the science of Fiqh itself emerged from the use of the science of Usul Fiqh, which has existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his companions.

Ushul Fiqh in the Time of the Prophet ﷺ

Although Usul Fiqh was not yet recognized as a systematic discipline during the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, its principles were directly applied in the process of establishing Islamic law. During this period, revelation of he Quran was revealed gradually according to the circumstances and needs of the community. The manner in which this revelation was revealed demonstrates a focus on context, the causes of events, and the objectives of the law. This will be an important part of future Usul Fiqh research.(Zaki, 2022, hlm. 5)

Law comes from the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, in addition to the Quran. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ not only conveyed revelation but also explained the teachings of the Quran and how to apply them in daily life. The concept of Usul al-Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) regarding the Sunnah's function as an explanation (bayān), specification (takhṣīṣ), and limitation (taqyīd) of the Quranic text is established through his words, deeds, and approval of the practices of his companions.The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ performed ijtihad on several issues for which revelation had not yet provided direct rulings.(Afifianto, 2013) This ijtihad was then strengthened and corrected by revelation, demonstrating that Islamic legal rulings have a mechanism that safeguards their validity. This practice established the notion of ijtihad and legal authority in Usul al-Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and enabled reason to be used in understanding and applying sharia.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also acknowledged that his companions differed in their understanding of certain legal issues. If differences were not addressed, they were considered the Prophet's interpretation, legitimizing differences in ijtihad. (Basri dkk., 2024) This demonstrates that tolerance for differences in legal reasoning, as long as they remained within the framework of sharia, has existed since the beginning of Islam.

Many ushul fiqh concepts were used during the time of the Prophet ﷺ. These concepts have not yet become standards, but have only emerged as solutions to practical problems. The same as when Indonesian people used Malay in the 17th or 18th centuries. They use their habits and brain understanding to understand how to pronounce Malay correctly. However, the norms of the Malay language, which were later refined into the norms of the Indonesian

language, were only created and compiled after the language practice of the Malays.(Zulhamdi, 2018, hlm. 65)

Ushul Fiqh in the Era of Khulafaaur Raasyidin and Shahabah

After Rasulullah ﷺ died, the companions faced many new problems that were not yet clearly regulated in the Al-Qur'an and Sunnah. In circumstances like this, they use the ability of ijtihad which comes from rules derived from their understanding of the revealed text as well as maqasid, or the purpose of the law (Umar & Bafadhal, t.t., hlm. 50).

During this period, the Qur'an and Sunnah remained the primary sources of law, but as the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) died and the Islamic realm expanded, many new issues emerged that were not explicitly addressed in the texts (Maulidia, 2024b). Consequently, the caliphs and companions were compelled to engage in more rigorous ijtihad, making the principles of Usul al-Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) more relevant.

Ijtihad was carried out with great care during the reign of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. He always sought evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah. If he could not find any, he would consult with his companions (Ali Rusdi, 2017). In Usul al-Fiqh, the concept of ijma', or consensus of scholars, is based on this practice. Ijtihad grew increasingly dynamic during the reign of Umar ibn Khattab. Umar was renowned for his bold legal reforms for the benefit of the people (maslahah mursalah), such as postponing the punishment of amputating hands during famines and stopping the payment of zakat to converts after Islam became firmly established. These policies served as early models for the application of the maqasid al-shari'ah principle in legal determination.

One crucial aspect in determining the sources of Islamic law was the standardization of the Quranic manuscripts, which was highly prioritized during the reign of Uthman ibn Affan. In terms of the authenticity of the texts, this step strengthened the foundation of Usul Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence). Furthermore, ijtihad continued to address increasingly complex administrative and governmental issues (Muhsan Syarafuddin, 2018). Legal differences of opinion among the Companions became increasingly apparent during the reign of Ali ibn Abi Talib. This was primarily due to political conflict. Ali faced many new legal issues that required in-depth reasoning and significant justice. The principle of tolerance for disagreement and the strengthening of the legal istinbath method emerged as a result.

Ushul Fiqh in the Age of Imams 4 Madzhab

This is where the principles of Usul Fiqh were formulated and generally applied by the four imams of the Islamic school of thought, although not all of them wrote them down in a single book. Among the four imams of the Islamic school of thought, Imam Abu Hanifah lived in 150 AH. He is widely known for his use of ra'yu (rational reasoning), qiyas (inferiority), and istihsan (inferiority) in establishing law, especially since the number of hadith in Iraq was less than in Medina. Although he did not write a book on Usul Fiqh, his way of thinking became the basis for the Usul Fiqh of the Hanafi school of thought developed by his students (Supriyanto, t.t., hlm. 17).

Imam Malik bin Anas (d. 179 AH) created a unique legal method by making "amal al-

Madinah, or the practices of the people of Medina, as the main source of law, along with the Qur'an and Sunnah. He also used maslahah murrasa and sadd adz-dzari'ah. These principles later became an important part of the Ushul Fiqh of the Maliki madzhab. His approach was influenced by the strict customs of the people of Medina ('amal ahl al-Madinah'). If he felt that the hadith was wrong or not in accordance with Medina traditions, he would reject it. In addition, he criticized the hadith that contradicted the general principles of Islam or the Qur'an. For example, Imam Malik rejected the concept of khiyar majlis - the right to cancel the sale and purchase before leaving the place of the contract - and the hadith about washing the dog's licks seven times. his ijtihad. Al-Muwatta' is a famous hadith book written by Imam Malik (Maulidia, 2024b, hlm. 171).

And Imam Muhammad bin Idris asy-Syafi'i (died 204 AH) was the most important person in compiling the science of Ushul Fiqh systematically. In his book Ar-Risala, he for the first time compiled Ushul Fiqh as a separate scientific discipline, discussing Arabic language rules, legal sources (Al-Qur'an, Sunnah, ijma', qiyas), and how to understand propositions. As a result, Imam Syafi'i is called the "Father of Ushul Fiqh". The book al-Risala was then discussed thoroughly by ushul fiqh scholars, especially in the form of in-depth syarh (explanation of the book) put forward by Imam al-Syafi'i. In the sharh, they discuss Imam al-Shafi'i's theories and opinions thoroughly, pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of their theories, and sometimes expressing opinions that contradict them (Afifianto, 2013, hlm. 236).

Meanwhile, Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (d. 241 H) placed great emphasis on the texts (Al-Qur'an and hadith) and the atsar of friends. Even though he did not write the Ushul Fiqh book, his istinbath method became the basis for the Ushul Fiqh of the Hanbali school of thought which was then formulated by subsequent scholars. And an example is if there is a difference of opinion regarding the fatwa of the companions, Ushul Hambali will prefer which of these opinions is closer to the Koran and Hadith. If different opinions among the companions could not be compromised, ibn Hambal's attitude would be to acknowledge that and not require it as a basis for istinbat (Muhsan Syarafuddin, 2018, hlm. 157).

Ushul Fiqh in the age of Imam Al-Ghazali and Al-Syatibi
Al-Ghazali's Contributions and Thoughts

Al-Ghazālī's most important contributions to Ushul Fiqh is found in his work al-Mustasfā min ʿIlm al-Uṣūl, which is generally considered one of the most organized and philosophically thorough treatments of the subject within classical Islamic jurisprudence. In al-Mustasfā, al-Ghazālī combines elements of legal theory, logical reasoning, and theological thought, which illustrates his comprehensive intellectual foundation in kalām and philosophy. He uses Aristotelian logical frameworks to explain legal reasoning, especially when discussing knowledge types such as certain (qaṭʿī) and probable (ẓannī) knowledge, the process of inference, and the method of analogy (qiyās). This strict logical approach represented a major advancement in the accuracy and methodology of uṣūl al-fiqh (Ridha, t.t., hlm. 139).

Importantly, al-Ghazālī did not elevate reason above revelation; rather, he emphasized that rational tools serve to interpret, systematize, and apply textual evidence, not to override

it. This balanced synthesis strengthened the internal coherence of legal theory while preserving the primacy of scriptural sources. Another significant part of al-Ghazālī's contribution is his discussion on legal obligation and moral responsibility. Influenced by Ashʿarī theology, he highlights divine command as the primary basis for what is considered normative, while also recognizing the part that human reason plays in understanding the meanings and consequences of legal principles. This balance shows his larger effort to bring together reason and revelation, a topic that appears throughout his works on law, theology, and ethics. Within the principles of jurisprudence, this synthesis emphasizes that legal reasoning should stay rooted in revelation while employing methods that can be understood through rational analysis (Zulhamdi, 2018, hlm. 7).

The lasting influence of al-Ghazālī on the principles of Islamic jurisprudence is clearly seen in the organization and themes of subsequent legal theories. His strict approach to methodology, clear differences in knowledge and belief, and the use of logical reasoning became common elements in later Sunni legal works across the major schools. In addition, his understanding of maṣlaḥah laid a crucial basis that later scholars, especially al-Shāṭibī, used to develop more comprehensive ideas about the goals of Islamic law. Therefore, al-Ghazālī holds a key role in the development of Islamic legal thought, acting as both a preserver of traditional ideas and a driver of new approaches in legal methodology (Ridha, t.t., hlm. 12).

Al-Syatibi's Contributions and Thoughts

A defining feature of al-Shāṭibī's methodology is his reliance on inductive reasoning (istiqrāʾ) as a means of establishing legal certainty. Rather than deriving legal principles from isolated textual evidences, he examines a broad corpus of Qurʾānic verses and Prophetic traditions to demonstrate recurring patterns and consistent legislative intent. Through this cumulative process, al-Shāṭibī argues that the objectives of the Sharīʿah attain a level of epistemic certainty (qaṭʿiyyah) comparable to that of explicit scriptural texts. This epistemological theory is significant, as it allows maqāṣid al-sharīʿah to function as authoritative legal proofs rather than assumptions-based moral considerations. Consequently, legal interpretation becomes an exercise in harmonizing textual meaning with established objectives, rather than adhering to literal readings that may undermine the spirit of the law (Hamam Hamam, 2024, hlm. 15).

Al-Shāṭibī's theory also includes a careful evaluation of legal duty and the ability of humans to fulfill it. He stresses that the Sharīʿah does not assign obligations that go beyond a person's capability and that the legal decisions are naturally designed to promote ease and eliminate difficulties (Maidawa et al., 2024). This principle strengthens the ethical aspect of Islamic law and highlights its ability to adapt to changing social condtions. In this regard, al-Shāṭibī criticizes strict legal formalism and contends that ignoring the broader goals of the law can result in decisions that go against its intended purposes. At the same time, he carefully avoids unrestricted rationalism by ensuring that all reasoning based on objective principles is firmly rooted within the framework of revelation.

Although al-Shāṭibī's ideas did not immediately become the main influence in the post-classical period, they have had a significant and lasting impact on Islamic legal thought over

time. Modern scholars often use his theory of Maqāṣid Al-sharīʿah to deal with current legal and ethical issues, such as governance, economic fairness, ethical questions in medicine, and the protection of human rights. His work is now widely seen as a link between classical principles of Islamic jurisprudence and contemporary reformist methods that aim to maintain traditional consistency while allowing for adjustments based on current circumstances. By carefully combining text, logic, and intent, al-Shāṭibī developed a method of legal reasoning that is still intellectually strong and morally persuasive, ensuring his position as one of the most significant thinkers in the history of Islamic law (Hamam Hamam, 2024, hlm. 21).

Usul Fiqh in the Contemporary Era

Usul fiqh emerged in response to the increasingly complex issues of modern life. Usul fiqh must evolve in line with social, economic, political, and technological changes, but in modern times, it focuses more on creating rules and methods for extracting law from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Strengthening the maqāṣid al-sharīʿah approach is a key characteristic of modern ushul fiqh. Islamic law is understood from the perspective of sharia, such as safeguarding religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property, as well as from its text and formal form. This method makes the ijtihad process more substantive and contextual. As a result, the resulting laws have the capacity to realize welfare and justice in the dynamic modern world (Abdulah Pakarti dkk., 2023).

Furthermore, modern ushul fiqh combines the approaches of bayānī (textual), burhānī (logic and rationality), and consideration of empirical reality. Scholars and academics frequently consider contemporary social, economic, and scientific data in addition to referring to textual evidence and qiyās. This is evident in studies of bioethics, public policy, and Islamic economics, which require multidisciplinary analysis (Maulidia, 2024a, hlm. 13).

However, the Islamic world underwent massive transformations as a result of European imperialism and colonialism during the 19th and 20th centuries. The development of the science of ushul fiqh was also influenced by these significant social, political, and economic changes. Some of the issues faced during this period include:

a. Decline of Traditional Islamic Power: Colonialism and occupation in many Islamic countries led to the decline of the influence of traditional Islamic scholars and legal systems. Often, colonial rulers influenced lawmaking and the implementation of Western legal systems, hindering the true development of ushul fiqh.

b. Influence of Western Thought: Some Muslim intellectuals began to doubt the traditional methods of ushul fiqh due to the influence of Western thought in their attempts to adapt to the times. Some even proposed replacing ushul fiqh with contemporary social sciences.

c. Identity Crisis: Some Muslim communities are experiencing an identity crisis in the face of modernity. This crisis includes debates about what Islam truly is and how to apply it to the modern world. This is also evident in the development of ushul fiqh, where people debate whether Islamic law is relevant to modern life.

d. Globalization and Technology: Globalization and technological advances bring new challenges to the development of Islamic law. This is because globalization exposes Muslim communities to a variety of legal systems and social norms, raising questions

about how Islamic law can remain relevant and competitive in an increasingly connected world (Abdulah Pakarti dkk., 2023, hlm. 93).

That is why Ijtihad is one of the ways in which Usul Fiqh develops to face modern challenges, Ijtihad then strengthened collectively through scientific institutions and fatwas. Ijtihad is now conducted collectively with the assistance of scholars, economists, legal experts, and experts in relevant fields. Therefore, the legal decisions made are broader, more useful, and more relevant to the needs of modern society.

CONCLUSION

Based on the entire discussion in the article, it can be understood that ushul fiqh is a basic science that functions as a methodological foundation for the formation and development of Islamic law. Conceptually, ushul fiqh consists of a collection of rules and principles used to dig up the law from Al-Qur'an and Sunnah; the main object of ushul fiqh research is the legal istinbath method, which produces legal classifications such as obligatory, sunnah, mubah, makruh, and so on. In addition, as shown in this article, ushul fiqh is closely related to the aspect of communication because the process of understanding the law is basically the process of understanding the message of revelation through the analysis of language, meaning (ma'na), and dalalah. Therefore, to avoid misinterpretation of the law that has an impact on social practice, methodological accuracy is required.

From a historical perspective, the principles of ushul fiqh have been applied since the time of Prophet Muhammad SAW through revelation, Sunnah, and ijtihad; however, after the death of the Prophet, the companions developed ijtihad, deliberation, and consideration of benefits in dealing with new problems, which later became the basis of concepts such as ijma' and maqasid al-shariah. Ushul fiqh began to be compiled systematically during the time of imam madzhab with various methodologies used, especially thanks to the contribution of Imam Syafi'i, who built ushul fiqh systematically in Al-Risalah.

The thought of Al-Ghazali, which combines logic and revelation, and Al-Syatibi, who emphasizes maqasid al-shariah as the main goal of Islamic law, encourage further development. Ushul fiqh continues to develop contextually in the modern era by combining textual, rational, and empirical approaches to answer modern challenges such as social complexity, globalization, and technology. Thus, ushul fiqh is not only a legacy of classical science, but also a dynamic method that maintains the relevance of Islamic law to remain flexible, fair, and focused on the benefit of the people in every era.

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