



Reconstruction of the Theory of Legal Authority in Islam: A Dialectic between Revelation, Reason, and Social Reality

¹Manswab Mahsen Abdulrahman, ²Abdul Rahman, ³Muhammad Sopyan, ⁴Khairuddin Hasibuan

¹Departement of Sharia Islamic University in Uganda

²kabag Ops Polres Langkat

³Pegawai ASDP

⁴Universitas Labuhan Batu

E-mail: ¹manswab.mahsen.sheriff@gmail.com, ²rahmanabdul10@gmail.com,
³muhammadsopyan2610@gmail.com, ⁴khairuddinhasibuan88@gmail.com

Article Info

Article History

Received : 2026-04-23

Revised: 2026-04-29

Published: 2026-05-30

Keywords:

Reason; Law;

Contextual; Revelation

Abstract

This study reconstructs the theory of legal authority in Islam by examining the dialectical relationship between revelation, reason, and social reality as the three fundamental epistemological pillars of Islamic legal formation. The study is motivated by the inadequacy of classical hierarchical models of legal authority to fully explain contemporary legal challenges arising from technological advancement, globalization, and increasing social complexity. Accordingly, the research aims to develop a reconstructed theoretical framework that explains how Islamic legal authority is generated through the dynamic interaction of divine revelation, rational interpretation, and empirical social context. This research employs a qualitative library research method using historical, philosophical, and conceptual approaches. Primary sources include the Qur'an, Hadith, classical works of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, and contemporary scholarship on Islamic legal theory, which are analyzed through critical, comparative, and dialectical methods. The findings demonstrate that revelation remains the supreme source of normative legitimacy, reason functions as the epistemological mechanism for legal interpretation through *qiyās*, *istiḥsān*, and *maṣlaḥah*, while social reality serves as an empirical dimension that continuously shapes contextual legal reasoning through *ijtihād*. Beyond reaffirming these traditional roles, this study proposes a reconstructed Triadic Dialectical Authority Model, in which legal authority emerges from the continuous interaction among normative legitimacy, rational coherence, and contextual responsiveness rather than from a purely hierarchical relationship. This model offers a theoretical contribution by redefining Islamic legal authority as a dynamic epistemological system capable of preserving the primacy of revelation while remaining adaptive to contemporary legal and societal transformations. The study concludes that the future development of Islamic jurisprudence requires an integrative approach that strengthens collective *ijtihād*, interdisciplinary engagement, and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*-oriented legal reasoning to ensure both normative authenticity and practical relevance.

I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic law has since been understood as a normative system that comes from Divine revelation. The main sources are the Qur'an and Hadith, which are the fundamental foundation in the formation of legal norms for Muslims (Ritonga & Arfa, 2026). From a theological perspective, revelation is seen as the highest authority because it comes from God who knows the essence of truth and the benefit of man (Japri & Abbas, 2026). This is affirmed in the word of Allah in the Qur'an Surah An-Nisa verse 59 which commands the believers to obey Allah, the Messenger, and the legitimate authority among them, while returning every dispute to revelation. The verse shows that

the legitimacy of law in Islam is essentially rooted in the authority of revelation as the primary normative source.

However, in the practice of law-making, revelation does not always provide detailed provisions on all matters of human life. Many social problems that arise after the prophetic period require a process of reasoning and interpretation. Therefore, reason has an important role as an epistemological instrument in understanding, interpreting, and developing laws derived from revelation. The Islamic intellectual tradition shows that the use of reason in understanding law has gained legitimacy since the early days of Islam. This is reflected in the

history of the dialogue between the Prophet Muhammad and Mu'adz bin Jabal when he was sent to Yemen, where Mu'adz stated that if he did not find provisions in the Qur'an or Hadith, then he would have *ijtihad* with his intellect (Fahrul & Sa'diyah, 2024). This history is often used as a normative basis for the practice of *Ijtihad* in the Islamic legal tradition.

The role of reason then developed methodologically in the discipline of *Ushul Fiqh*, which is a science that discusses rules and methods in digging up laws from their sources (Dermawan, Syahnan, Khair, & Tanjung, 2025). Through this discipline, scholars formulate various reasoning methods such as *Qiyas*, *Istihsan*, and *Maslahah mursalah*. These methods show that reason serves not only as a tool of interpretation, but also as a means of connecting the principles of revelation with the ever-evolving realities of human life.

In addition to revelation and reason, social reality also plays an irrecognizable role in the formation of Islamic law. People's lives are always undergoing changes influenced by cultural, economic, and political developments. In this context, Islamic law is not understood as a static system, but as a normative system that is able to interact with social dynamics. Classical and contemporary scholars recognize that the application of law must take into account the conditions of society in order for the goals of the law to be achieved effectively (Wahyudi & Solehudin, 2025). This principle is reflected in the concept *Maqasid al-shariah*, which emphasizes that Islamic law aims to protect religion, soul, intellect, lineage, and property. Thus, the existence of the law is not only intended to enforce normative texts, but also to realize the benefits of humans.

In the course of the history of Islamic thought, the relationship between revelation, reason, and social reality gave birth to various methodological approaches in Islamic legal theory (Wildan, 2026). Some thinkers emphasize the dominance of the revelatory text as the primary source of authority, while others leave a wider space for rationality and consideration of the benefits in the establishment of law. These differences show the existence of an intellectual dialectic in understanding the sources and authorities of Islamic law. The dialectic not only reflects the diversity of methodologies, but also shows that Islamic legal theory is a dynamic field and

continues to evolve along with the changing times and the needs of society.

Based on this background, the study of legal authority in Islam is important to understand how Islamic law is formed and developed in various social contexts. This research aims to analyze the construction of the theory of legal authority in Islam and examine the dialectical relationship between revelation, reason, and social reality in the process of Islamic law formation. By understanding the interaction of these three elements, it is hoped that a more comprehensive understanding of the epistemological dynamics of Islamic law and its relevance in facing the challenges of modern society can be obtained.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a library research approach, namely data collection and analysis through literature studies (Rukhmana et al., 2022). The analysis is carried out historically to trace the development of Islamic legal theory from classical to contemporary times, as well as conceptually to understand the construction of legal authority in Islam. Research sources include classical *Ushul Fiqh* literature, contemporary works of Islamic legal thought, the Qur'an, Hadith, as well as relevant academic documents. The data is analyzed through a critical and comparative approach, emphasizing the dialectical relationship between revelation, reason, and social reality in the formation of Islamic law.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Authority of Revelation as the Main Source of Islamic Law

In the epistemological perspective of Islamic law, revelation occupies a central position as the supreme authority underlying the entire legal system. The revelations reflected in the Qur'an and Hadith are a source of normative legitimacy as well as moral, ethical, and social guidelines for Muslims. The law derived from revelation is absolute in the sense that it marks moral and legal boundaries that must not be violated, while at the same time establishing the basic principles that guide the behavior of individuals and societies (Zaleha, Harahap, Ilham, Nasution, & Ramadhan, 2025). In this context, revelation becomes the epistemological foundation that distinguishes Islamic law from social norms or positive laws that are entirely based on human rationality.

It is important, however, to distinguish between the concept of the *source of law* and the *authority of law*. While revelation undoubtedly constitutes the primary source of Islamic law, legal authority refers to the legitimacy through which legal norms become binding upon individuals and institutions. In other words, revelation provides normative origin, whereas legal authority concerns the process by which that normative origin acquires practical legitimacy within legal reasoning and social implementation. This distinction is crucial because contemporary debates often conflate textual origin with legal authority, despite the fact that authority necessarily involves interpretation, institutional recognition, and contextual application.

For example, Surah An-Nisa verse 59 affirms the supreme authority of revelation in legal and social life:

"O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey His Messenger and ulil amri among you. Then if you have a dispute about something, return it to Allah (the Qur'an) and the Messenger (Sunnah)..." (QS. An-Nisa: 59).

This verse emphasizes three important things: first, obedience to Allah and the Messenger is the main foundation of legal legitimacy; Second, human authority (ulil amri) is delegative and must be in harmony with revelation; Third, in the face of conflict, revelation remains the last reference. Thus, revelation is not only normative, but also establishes an epistemological framework for law enforcement.

The distinction between divine authority and human legal authority represents one of the most fundamental dimensions of Islamic jurisprudence. Divine authority possesses absolute normative validity because it originates directly from revelation. Human authority, by contrast, remains derivative and interpretive, deriving its legitimacy only insofar as it faithfully translates divine principles into legal judgments. Consequently, no juristic opinion (ijtihad) possesses absolute authority; rather, its legitimacy remains contingent upon its coherence with revelation, rational consistency, and realization of justice.

However, revelation does not always provide detailed provisions for every social problem that arises after the prophetic era. Many norms are principled and require methodological development. For example, the Qur'an expressly prohibits the practice of usury (QS. Al-Baqarah: 275-279) and advocates justice in transactions (QS. An-Nisa: 29), but it does not regulate modern

banking mechanisms or international trade practices. This incompleteness raises the need for scholars to perform ijtihad, which is an attempt to reason the law using revelation as the main source.

In the practice of ijtihad, revelation remains the normative and ethical foundation, while reason serves to interpret these principles to be relevant to changing social and historical contexts (Nasrudin & Iman, 2026). The narration of the Prophet Muhammad which affirms that if a problem is not found in the Qur'an or Hadith, then Mu'adh bin Jabal was instructed to use reason to make decisions, becoming the historical legitimacy for ijtihad. This tradition shows that revelation and reason are not contradictory, but dialectical in nature, where revelation establishes basic principles and reason adapts its application to the conditions of society.

In addition, revelation also serves as an ethical framework and a legal purpose, which limits distortion of interpretation (Herawati, Ningrum, & Sari, 2024). The principles of justice, benefit, and prohibition of mudharat are clearly reflected in QS. An-Nisa verse 58, which requires that people uphold the trust and law fairly. This function shows that revelation not only establishes what is halal or haram, but also provides a value guide for the correct enforcement of the law, so that Islamic law remains bound by divine ethics and morals.

Furthermore, revelation forms a hierarchical structure of Islamic law, in which the text of the Qur'an occupies the highest position, followed by the Sunnah of the Prophet, and then the ijtihad and decisions of the scholars (Abubakar, 2022). This hierarchy emphasizes that the application of Islamic law is not arbitrary, but has a solid epistemological foundation. Laws that are applied without reference to revelation risk losing normative legitimacy, and may even lead to deviations from the goals of sharia (*Maqasid al-Shariah*).

Thus, the authority of revelation as the primary source of Islamic law is normative, universal, ethical, and hierarchical. Revelation establishes the basic principles that are the reference for the development of law, while detailed interpretation and practical application require the role of reason and ijtihad methods. This interaction ensures that the Islamic legal system remains adaptive to social dynamics, without losing its normative legitimacy. Thus, revelation is not only the source of law, but also the epistemological,

moral, and philosophical foundation that guides the entire practice of Islamic law.

B. The Role of Reason in the Legal Istinbath Process

In the tradition of Ushul Fiqh, reason (*al-'aql*) plays a strategic role in the legal istinbath process, which is the withdrawal or determination of laws from sharia sources. Reason is not an independent source of law that rivals revelation, but serves as a methodological instrument for understanding, interpreting, and adapting the normative principles of revelation to social dynamics (Wildan, 2026). In other words, reason is a means to extract detailed laws from the basic principles given by the Qur'an and Hadith, so that Islamic law can be applied contextually and adaptively.

From the perspective of legal hermeneutics, interpretation constitutes the bridge connecting immutable revelation with historically changing human experience. Every act of legal interpretation inevitably involves linguistic analysis, contextual understanding, and normative evaluation. Consequently, *ijtihad* should not be understood merely as deductive reasoning but as an ongoing hermeneutical engagement between sacred texts and evolving social realities.

The use of reason in ushul fiqh is realized through methodological tools such as *Qiyas*, *Istihsan*, and *Maslahah mursalah* / *Istislah* (Juda, 2025). *Qiyas*, for example, allows the mujtahids to develop new laws by drawing analogies from cases that have been explicitly set forth in the Revelation (Yogie & Qadraini, 2025). It is based on the principle of legal equality for cases that have the same 'illah (legal cause), as affirmed by Imam al-Shafi'i in al-Risalah. A classic example is the law of drinking khamar which is explicitly forbidden; with *Qiyas*, new substances or practices that have intoxicating effects are also punished as haram, even though they are not mentioned literally in the text of Revelation.

In addition to *Qiyas*, the *istihsan* method shows the flexibility of reason in upholding the principles of justice and benefit (Makruf, Mufti, Jalaludin, Ningsih, & Sururie, 2025). *Istihsan* allows decision-making to differ from the results of a strict analogy if applied literally will cause difficulties or injustice. For example, Imam Abu Hanifah allowed some form of *shirkah* contract in trade, albeit in a limited way. *Qiyas* Strict may be considered invalid, because welfare and social justice take precedence. This principle is in line

with the words of Allah in QS. Al-Baqarah verse 229, which emphasizes the importance of justice and not causing difficulties:

"And if you are worried that you will not be fair to orphans, then marry the women you like..." Al-Baqarah: 229)

Istihsan shows that reason is not just a tool of deduction, but also a tool of normative evaluation to ensure that the law is in accordance with the goals of sharia (*maqasid al-shariah*).

Method *Maslahah Mursalah* Or *istislah* emphasizes more consideration of the benefit of the community as a legal basis when Wahyu does not provide explicit provisions (Pane, Syahnan, & Adly, 2025). This concept prioritizes *Hifz al-Masalih* (maintenance of the public interest) and emphasizing that Islamic law aims to protect the five principles of *maqasid*, namely religion, soul, intellect, descent, and property (Ridlo & Muhajirin, 2022). For example, the regulation of modern transportation or the contemporary banking system, although there are no explicit provisions in the Qur'an or Hadith, can be established by law through *istislah*, as it aims to safeguard the public interest and prevent losses.

Philosophically, the role of reason in ushul fiqh is also strengthened by hadith that emphasizes the importance of thinking and weighing the law. The Prophet Muhammad said:

"Ask those who are knowledgeable before making decisions, because any decision taken without knowledge has the potential to be misleading."

This hadith affirms the legitimacy of rationality in the process of legal istinbath, where reason becomes an instrument for understanding, assessing, and applying the law of revelation appropriately.

Nevertheless, reason should not merely be viewed as an auxiliary instrument serving revelation. Rather, it performs an indispensable epistemological function by enabling legal texts to communicate meaning across changing historical circumstances. Without rational interpretation, legal texts risk becoming historically confined, whereas unrestricted rationality detached from revelation risks undermining normative certainty. The legitimacy of Islamic legal reasoning therefore depends upon maintaining a balanced dialectic between textual fidelity and rational inquiry.

Thus, reason in the context of ushul fiqh serves as a connecting tool between the normative principles of revelation and social reality.

Through *qiyas*, *istihsan*, and *maslahah*, reason ensures that Islamic law is not only normative and universal, but also relevant, adaptive, and able to respond to new challenges without diminishing the legitimacy of revelation as the primary source. This interaction confirms that Islamic law is a dynamic and dialectical legal system, where revelation provides basic principles and reason to interpret and develop them according to the context.

C. The Influence of Social Reality on the Development of Islamic Law

In addition to revelation and reason, social reality plays an important role in the formation and development of Islamic law. People's lives are always undergoing changes influenced by economic, political, cultural, and technological dynamics. These changes often present new problems that are not explicitly regulated in the text of the Qur'an or Hadith, thus requiring scholars to develop *ijtihad* methods so that the law remains relevant and can answer the needs of society.

History shows that Islamic law has always been adaptive to social conditions. The adaptive character of Islamic law should not be interpreted as evidence that law simply follows society. Rather, Islamic legal development reflects a reciprocal relationship in which legal norms simultaneously shape society while being informed by changing social conditions. This reciprocal interaction illustrates that legal authority is constructed through continuous dialogue between normative commitments and empirical realities rather than through unilateral textual determination.

For example, in early Islamic societies, the forms of buying and selling and ownership were relatively simple. However, along with economic development and the emergence of international trade practices, scholars developed the law of *muamalah* through *Qiyas* and *Maslahah Mursalah* to adapt normative principles to new conditions (Fathurrahman, 2024). This confirms that *ijtihad* did not arise purely theoretically, but was born in response to the complexity of the ever-changing social reality.

Nevertheless, social reality should not be understood merely as an external stimulus prompting legal adaptation. Rather, it functions as an epistemological source of legal experience that enables jurists to evaluate the practical consequences of legal norms. In this sense,

empirical reality does not generate legal authority independently of revelation; instead, it provides the contextual knowledge necessary for reason to translate universal normative principles into effective legal solutions. This perspective transforms social reality from a passive object of legal regulation into an active participant within the dialectical formation of Islamic legal authority.

Concept *Maqasid al-Shariah* provides a normative framework for legal adaptation to social realities. This principle emphasizes that Islamic law aims to protect the five basic human needs, namely religion, soul, intellect, descent, and property (Rock, 2025). When social realities pose a risk to one of the five goals, Islamic law can be developed through *ijtihad* to address those challenges. For example, the emergence of modern banking, insurance, or electronic transactions is not explicitly mentioned in the text of the revelation, but the principles of *maqasid* can be used as a basis for establishing laws that suit contemporary needs, while still maintaining the normative value of revelation.

Relevant normative postulates can be found in QS. Al-Hajj verse 78, which emphasizes the importance of fighting for the good and upholding justice:

"And wage jihad in the cause of Allah with true jihad. He has chosen you and He has not made for you in religion a narrowness."

This verse shows that Islamic law is not rigid or burdensome, but rather provides room for adaptation and adjustment according to the needs of society. In addition, the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad also emphasizes the importance of considering the condition of the *ummah* in determining the law:

"Verily, the benefit is the guidance of Allah, and there is no benefit where the harm is greater than it."

This hadith is the basis for the concept of *maslahah mursalah*, where scholars assess social conditions to establish laws that balance benefits and harms, so that the law remains relevant without violating normative principles.

Social change also drove the development of contemporary *fiqh* methodologies, including the collective *ijtihad* approach (*ijtihad jama'i*), which allows for legal decision-making based on scientific studies and observations of social realities (Supriatna, 2024). In sociological jurisprudence, legal norms are frequently understood as socially constructed institutions that derive legitimacy through continuous

interaction with collective human experience. Islamic law similarly demonstrates that although revelation remains immutable, legal understanding evolves as societies confront new moral, economic, and technological realities. Thus, legal authority should be viewed as a living epistemological process rather than as a static doctrinal product.

For example, legal arrangements related to e-commerce, financial technology, or new social practices, can be adapted through this approach, showing that Islamic law is dynamic and responsive to changing times.

Thus, social reality is not only the background for the establishment of law, but also a determining factor in the evolution of Islamic law. Social change triggers the emergence of new problems, which then encourage the use of reason and *ijtihad* methodology to produce laws that are contextual, relevant, and still based on revelation. The integration of revelation, reason, and social reality is what makes Islamic law an adaptive, dialectical legal system that is able to respond to the challenges of modern society.

D. Reconstruction of Islamic Legal Theory in Contemporary Thought

The development of modern society requires Islamic law to adapt without losing the normative legitimacy that comes from revelation. This effort gave birth to contemporary thinking that emphasized the reconstruction of Islamic legal theory, which is a methodological process to balance between the authority of the text of revelation, the rationality of reason, and the contextual needs of society (Sultan & Rahmatiah, 2026). This reconstruction is a response to social, economic, political, and technological complexities that are not explicitly regulated in the Qur'an and Hadith, but still require valid legal certainty.

Despite its remarkable contribution to preserving the coherence of Islamic jurisprudence, the classical theory of legal authority remains largely structured upon a hierarchical epistemology in which revelation occupies the highest normative position, reason functions primarily as an interpretive instrument, and social reality is treated merely as the object of legal application. Such a framework successfully maintained doctrinal stability throughout classical Islamic civilization; however, it was developed within relatively homogeneous socio-political environments that differ significantly

from the complexity of contemporary global society.

The principal challenge facing contemporary Islamic legal thought is therefore not the authority of revelation itself, but the adequacy of the classical epistemological structure for addressing increasingly complex legal realities. Emerging issues such as digital finance, artificial intelligence, bioethics, environmental governance, and transnational legal interaction demonstrate that legal authority can no longer rely solely upon literal textual interpretation or isolated juristic reasoning. Rather, legal legitimacy increasingly depends upon the capacity of Islamic legal methodology to integrate normative commitment with empirical understanding.

Consequently, reconstructing the theory of Islamic legal authority should not be understood as revising divine revelation, which remains immutable, but as reformulating the epistemological relationship through which revelation, reason, and social reality continuously interact in producing legal judgments. This reconstruction therefore represents a methodological transformation rather than a theological modification.

In this reconstruction, revelation remains the normative foundation. The basic principles given by the Qur'an and Hadith are the reference point for the development of law. However, this normative text must be understood through the social context and purpose of sharia, so that its application is relevant to the changing times.

From an epistemological standpoint, legal authority should not be perceived as an intrinsic characteristic of legal texts alone. Rather, authority emerges through the interaction of three complementary forms of knowledge: revealed knowledge (*al-'ilm al-naqli*), rational knowledge (*al-'ilm al-'aqli*), and empirical knowledge generated from lived social experience (*al-waqi'*). Each of these epistemic domains performs a distinct function. Revelation establishes immutable normative principles, reason constructs coherent legal interpretation, and empirical reality evaluates the practical adequacy of legal norms within changing historical contexts. Consequently, Islamic legal authority should be understood as an epistemological process rather than merely a textual attribute.

Principle *Maqasid al-Shariah* which emphasizes the five main goals, namely religion,

soul, intellect, heredity, and property as the main normative framework (Pertiwi & Herianingrum, 2024). Thus, contemporary Islamic law is not only literal, but also holistic and goal-oriented, as affirmed in QS. Al-Maidah verse 2:

"And help yourselves in goodness and piety, and do not help each other in sin and enmity."

This verse emphasizes that Islamic law not only regulates behavior formally, but also emphasizes social collaboration for the benefit, so that the adaptation of law to contemporary contexts remains within the normative corridor.

Contemporary thought emphasizes contextual *ijtihad*, which is the withdrawal of laws through the integration of normative principles of revelation with the socio-economic and cultural conditions of modern society (Zulki, 2025). For example, the regulation of Islamic banking, insurance, fintech, e-commerce, and digital transactions is carried out through collective *ijtihad*, where sharia principles are applied flexibly while maintaining legal objectives (*Maqasid*). This method continues the tradition of classical *ijtihad* *Qiyas*, *istihsan*, and *maslahah* but complemented by empirical, social, and economic analysis to ensure legal decisions are relevant, fair, and beneficial to the wider community (Firdaus & Achmad, 2024).

Similar developments can also be observed within contemporary legal philosophy. Ronald Dworkin argues that legal legitimacy depends not merely upon the existence of legal rules but upon interpretive integrity capable of harmonizing principles and institutional practice. Likewise, Jürgen Habermas emphasizes communicative rationality as the foundation of legitimate legal norms, while H.L.A. Hart distinguishes between legal validity and social recognition through the concept of the rule of recognition. Although these theories originate within secular jurisprudence, they demonstrate that legal authority is continuously mediated through interpretation, rational justification, and social acceptance. The reconstruction proposed in this study does not adopt these theories wholesale but establishes a dialogue with them by positioning revelation as the supreme normative foundation while recognizing the indispensable roles of reason and social reality in generating legitimate Islamic legal authority.

Contemporary thinkers, such as Mohammad Hashim Kamali, emphasized that *ijtihad* must maintain a balance between text and context, so that law can answer modern problems without

diminishing the authority of revelation (Gofar, Amina, & Fajrin, 2025). Kamali emphasized that rigidity in interpretation can lead to injustice, while flexibility accompanied by the principle of *maqasid* ensures that the law remains authentic and ethical. Tahir Mahmood also emphasized that contemporary Islamic law must integrate the social, political, and international law dimensions, so that Islamic law is able to answer global problems without losing its normative identity.

Contemporary legal reconstruction also emphasizes the importance of the collective participation of scholars, academics, and legal practitioners. This approach is similar to the principle of *shura* where deliberation is used as an instrument to produce legal decisions that are in accordance with the needs of the community and remain valid in sharia (QS. Ash-Shura verse 38). This mechanism ensures that Islamic law is not only born from individual interpretation, but through a deliberative process that takes into account social facts and sharia goals.

Building upon these considerations, this article proposes a conceptual framework referred to as the Triadic Dialectical Authority Model. Within this framework, Islamic legal authority is neither exclusively textual nor purely contextual. Instead, legal authority emerges through the continuous dialectical interaction among three inseparable dimensions: revelation as the source of normative legitimacy, reason as the instrument of epistemological interpretation, and social reality as the arena for empirical verification. Each dimension continuously influences, evaluates, and refines the others, thereby producing legal judgments that remain faithful to divine revelation while simultaneously responsive to contemporary societal transformation.

Unlike classical hierarchical models that position social reality merely as the object of legal application, the proposed model recognizes social reality as an active epistemological component contributing to the continuous refinement of legal understanding. Consequently, legal authority becomes dynamic rather than static, dialogical rather than unilateral, and adaptive without compromising the normative supremacy of revelation.

The reconstruction proposed in this study operates on three interconnected levels. First, it reconstructs the epistemological foundation of legal authority by replacing hierarchical legal reasoning with a dialectical interaction among revelation, reason, and social reality. Second, it

reconstructs legal methodology by integrating classical instruments of *ijtihad* with interdisciplinary empirical analysis. Third, it reconstructs the practical understanding of legal legitimacy by recognizing that effective legal authority depends not only upon textual authenticity but also upon rational coherence and societal responsiveness.

In practice, the reconstruction of Islamic legal theory combines four dimensions, namely, first, normative adherence to revelation; second, the rationality of reason to interpret principles; third, responsiveness to social realities; and fourth, collective involvement in the decision-making process. These four dimensions form a dynamic contemporary Islamic legal model that is dynamic, adaptive, and based on *maqasid*, while being able to respond to modern global challenges such as digital technology, cross-border transactions, and new socio-economic issues.

The proposed reconstruction extends existing Islamic legal theory by shifting the analytical focus from legal sources toward the epistemological formation of legal authority itself. Rather than treating revelation, reason, and social reality as isolated variables, this study conceptualizes them as mutually constitutive dimensions within a unified dialectical framework. This perspective contributes to contemporary Islamic jurisprudence by providing an analytical model capable of explaining how legal legitimacy can remain theologically authentic while simultaneously responding to complex contemporary realities. Beyond Islamic legal studies, this framework also contributes to comparative legal theory by demonstrating that religious legal systems are capable of developing adaptive mechanisms without sacrificing normative certainty.

The reconstruction advanced in this study fundamentally redefines Islamic legal authority as a dynamic epistemological system rather than a fixed hierarchical structure. Within this reconstructed framework, revelation continues to function as the supreme source of normative legitimacy, reason serves as the interpretive mechanism translating divine principles into applicable legal norms, and social reality operates as the empirical environment through which legal conclusions are continuously evaluated and refined. Consequently, legal authority is generated not merely through textual conformity but through the successful integration of theological legitimacy, rational coherence, and

contextual relevance. Theoretically, this reconstruction contributes a new conceptual model for understanding Islamic legal authority as an adaptive yet normatively grounded system capable of responding to contemporary global legal challenges without compromising its foundational commitment to revelation.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

This study shows that Islamic legal theory is a dynamic and dialectical normative system, in which revelation, reason, and social reality interact with each other in the process of law formation. Revelation remains the normative foundation that establishes basic principles, provides ethical and epistemological legitimacy, and becomes the main reference in the establishment of law. Reason serves as a methodological instrument that enables the development of law through *qiyas*, *istihsan*, and *maslahah*, so that the principle of revelation can be translated into a more complex and contemporary context. Social reality encourages the law to be responsive to changes in society, giving rise to new problems that require legal adjustment through *ijtihad*. Contemporary thought emphasizes the reconstruction of Islamic legal theory that balances between textual authority and the needs of modern society, through *maqasid al-shariah* approaches, contextual *ijtihad*, and collective deliberation. The integration of these three elements shows that Islamic law is able to maintain normative authenticity while being adaptive to the challenges of the times, forming a legal tradition that is lively, relevant, and socially just. Thus, Islamic law is not only a system of rules, but also an interpretive process that harmonizes divine principles, human rationality, and social conditions, making it a comprehensive and sustainable source of law.

B. Suggestions

Efforts to develop Islamic law should emphasize a holistic approach that considers revelation as a normative foundation, reason as an interpretive tool, and social reality as a contextual factor. Academics, scholars, and legal practitioners can strengthen the process of legal reconstruction through literature review, collective *ijtihad*, and empirical research that adapts *sharia* principles to the challenges of modern society. This approach will ensure that

Islamic law remains relevant, responsive, and equitable, without compromising the legitimacy and authority of the text.

REFERENCES

- Abubakar, A. (2022). The authority of Sunnah law as a revelation. *El-Usrah: Journal of Family Law*, 5(1), 88–101.
- Dermawan, H., Syahnan, M., Khair, N., & Tanjung, D. (2025). The Epistemology of Ushul Fiqh and Its Relevance in the Determination of Sharia Law'. *Al-Zayn: Journal of Social & Legal Sciences*, 3(6), 11795–11802.
- Fahrul, K. M., & Sa'diyah, F. (2024). The Spread of Hadith in Yemen as well as History and Development. *Journal of Academic Media (JMA)*, 2(12).
- Fathurrahman, H. (2024). Maslahah Mursalah Imam Malik's Analysis in Fair Pricing in the Sharia Market from the Perspective of Economic Balance and Social Justice. *Journal Of Syntax Literate*, 9(12).
- Firdaus, S., & Achmad, M. (2024). An Epistemological Study of Islamic Law in the Context of the Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council. *Heritage Journal*, 14(1), 44.
- Gofar, A., Amina, S., & Fajrin, N. (2025). Reconstruction of the concept of maslahah mursalah as the basis of contemporary ijthad in answering the challenges of modernity. *Tamaddun*, 10(1), p. 9.
- Scott, A., Ningrum, U. D., & Sari, H. P. (2024). Revelation as the Main Source of Truth in Islamic Education: A Critical Study of Its Implementation in the Modern Era. *Morals: Journal of Islamic Education Studies*, 1(4), 109–126.
- Huda, Z. (2025). The Position of Istihsan and Maslahah Mursalah in Sharia Economic Ijtihad: A Methodological Analysis and Contemporary Application. *Tashfir Terateks: Journal of Sharia Economics and Business*, 1(2), 106–116.
- Japri, M., & Abbas, N. (2026). The Relationship of Reason and Revelation in the View of Muktaizilah. *Mazalat: Journal of Islamic Thought*, 7(1), 52–70.
- Makruf, S., Mufti, R. A., Jalaludin, D., Ningsih, L. D., & Sururie, R. W. (2025). Analysis Of Methods Of Discovery Of Islamic Law: A Critical Study Of Qiyas, Al-Maslahah Al-Mursalah, Istihsan, And Al-Urf In A Contemporary Context. *Al-Afkar, Journal For Islamic Studies*, 8(4), 57–67.
- Nasrudin, I., & Iman, M. T. (2026). The Relationship of Reason and Revelation in Fazlur Rahman's Thought: A Hermeneutic Study. *Journal of Learning Inspiration*, 7(1).
- Pane, K., Syahnan, M., & Adly, M. A. (2025). The contribution of Istihsan and Maslahah Mursalah to the development of contextual and responsive Islamic law. *Mudabbir Journal Research And Education Studies*, 5(2), 4828–4838.
- Pertiwi, T. D., & Herianingrum, S. (2024). Exploring the Concept of Sharia Maqashid: The Perspective of Islamic Leaders' Thoughts. *Scientific Journal of Islamic Economics*, 10(1), 807–820.
- Ridlo, M. R., & Muhajirin, M. (2022). The idea of sharia maqashid and sharia economics in the view of Imam Ibn Taymiyah and Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyah. *Taraadin: Journal of Islamic Economics and Business*, 2(2), 65–86.
- Ritonga, M., & Arfa, F. A. (2026). Sources and Principles of Islamic Law: Principles of Islamic Law. *Alwaqfu: Journal of Economic Law and Waqf*, 4(01).
- Rokade, Y. (2025). Maqashid al-Syariah according to Imam al-Ghazali: A Philosophical Study and the Relevance of Contemporary Islamic Law. *Journal of Education and Educational Literacy*, 6(3).
- Rukhmana, T., Darwis, D., Ip, S., Alatas, A. R., Se, M. M., Tarigan, W. J., ... S St, M. M. (2022). *Qualitative Research Methods*. Cv Rey Graphic Media.
- Sultan, L., & Rahmatiah, H. L. (2026). Methodological Reconstruction of Islamic Legal Philosophical Thought: Multidisciplinary Integration as the Foundation of Islamic Law's Response to the Challenges of the Contemporary Era. *Al-Zayn: Journal of Social and Legal Sciences*, 4(1), 82–90.
- Supriatna, A. (2024). The Development of Fiqh in the Digital Era: A Study of the Ijtihad Method in Understanding Contemporary Problems. *As-Syar'i: Journal of Family Guidance & Counseling*, 6(1), 717–734.
- Wahyudi, W., & Solehudin, E. (2025). Ijma' as a source of law: between the consensus of scholars and the dynamics of the times. *Equality: Journal Of Islamic Law (Ejil)*, 3(2), 47–64.
- Wildan, D. (2026). *Islamic Philosophy of Law Critical and Analytical Approach*. Cv. Literacy and Research Publisher (Pilar).

- Yogie, A., & Qadraini, S. A. (2025). Qiyas in Ushul Fiqh: Definition, Significance, and Contemporary Application. *Al-Mashlahah Journal of Islamic Law and Social Institutions*, 13(01), 11–22.
- Zaleha, Z., Harahap, E., Ilham, A., Nasution, R., & Ramadhan, F. (2025). The Relationship of Reason and Revelation in the Formation of Islamic Law: A Study of the Philosophy of Islamic Law. *Scientific Journal of Advocacy*, 13(4), 1617–1629.
- Zulki, A. (2025). Reconstruction of Sharia Law in the Contemporary Era: Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah's Analysis of Modern Social Dynamics. *Al-Qanun: Shari'ah and Law Studies*, 1(1), 1–12.