

# The Treatment Of Issues Of Knowledge And Islamic Jurisprudence In Amir Shohmurod's "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara"

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the treatment of issues related to knowledge and fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) in the work "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara." It examines the methodology employed by Amir Shohmurod in issuing juridical rulings (fatwas), the manner of argumentation and use of evidence, as well as the socio-religious environment that developed among the scholars of Bukhara. The study explores attitudes toward knowledge presented in the work, the status of scholars, the detailed approach to juridical issues, and the principal sources of fiqh used in legal reasoning (the Qur'an, Hadith, and qiyas). Particular attention is paid to how the issues discussed in the work are connected with historical civil-law relations in the Bukhara region, including financial relations, personal status, inheritance, marriage, criminal matters, and punishment. The work "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara" is evaluated not only as a religious text but also as an important document regulating social and legal relations. This research aims to reveal the historical and jurisprudential significance of the work, to highlight the distinctive features of the Bukhara fiqh school, and to examine the practical approaches of scholars to issuing fatwas.

**Keywords:** Fatwa, ulama (Islamic scholars), Islamic law, fiqh methodology, socio-cultural environment, religious-legal sources, qiyas (analogical reasoning), Bukhara fiqh school.

**Introduction:** The role of the Bukhara region in the formation of Islamic thought and the jurisprudential (fiqh) heritage of Central Asia is incomparable. Particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, within the territory of the Bukhara Emirate, the science of fiqh played a significant role not only in the madrasa environment but also in state governance and social life. One of the most important sources from this period is the work "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara," which represents a collection of fatwas issued by Bukhara scholars in response to various jurisprudential questions concerning different social groups.

This work possesses not only a religious and advisory character but also deserves special attention as a source reflecting the socio-political and legal environment of its time. Through the fatwas presented in the text, the methodological approach characteristic of the Bukhara fiqh school becomes evident, including documentary reasoning, the issuance of legal judgments based on the Qur'an and Hadith, as well as the use of such juridical principles as qiyas, istihsan, and

'urf.

In addition, the work highlights the status of knowledge and scholars, the path to acquiring religious learning, the responsibility of the mufti in issuing fatwas, and the social significance of knowledge. These aspects allow "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara" to be analyzed not only as a jurisprudential text but also as a valuable spiritual and historical heritage.

The main objective of this study is to determine the place and significance of this rare work within the Islamic jurisprudential heritage and to achieve a deeper understanding of it by comparing its content with contemporary scholarly perspectives.

## METHODOLOGY

In writing this article, extensive use was made of the extant manuscript copy of "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara" authored by Amir Shohmurod as the primary source. The manuscript text was analyzed with particular attention to fiqh terminology, the structural organization of fatwas, methods of legal reasoning, and the author's juridical approach. The manuscript version

of the work provides valuable insight into the traditional fatwa-issuing practices characteristic of the Bukhara fiqh school, as well as the close connection between practical fiqh issues and real socio-legal problems of the period.

During the literature review, classical sources of Islamic law - including Qur'anic commentaries, hadith collections, and major works of Hanafi jurisprudence - were examined, along with modern historical and jurisprudential studies devoted to Central Asia and the Bukhara fiqh school. In particular, scholarly works addressing the formation of the fatwa institution, the role of the ulama in social life, and the significance of juridical decisions in state - society relations were reviewed through comparative analysis. This approach made it possible to identify the place of "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara" within the broader framework of Islamic legal tradition and to highlight its distinctive features.

The present study employs historical-analytical, source-critical, comparative-jurisprudential, and logical-systematic methods. The historical-analytical method was used to examine the fatwas presented in the work in connection with the socio-political and legal conditions of the Bukhara Emirate. The source-critical method facilitated an analysis of the manuscript's internal structure, terminology, and legal arguments.

Overall, the research methodology is aimed at a comprehensive examination of "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara" not only as a religious-legal source, but also as a practical legal document that regulated social relations within Bukhara society.

## RESULTS

The results of this study demonstrate that "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara" embodies deep and rich layers of the scientific heritage and jurisprudential approaches of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Based on the literature review, comparative analysis, and textual-critical methods applied in the course of the research, the following key findings were obtained:

- The scholars of Bukhara, in issuing their fatwas, did not rely solely on formal rules of Sharia, but also applied an ijtihami (independent) approach by taking into account time, circumstances, and the conditions of individuals. This indicates the flexibility and relevance of fatwas in addressing the socio-economic and moral challenges of their time;

- In the process of issuing legal judgments, great attention was paid to details; in cases of disagreement, the strongest evidence was selected, and in situations of necessity, the principle of maintaining balance and moderation was emphasized. Justice, prudence, and

the requirements of the time were taken into account in every ruling;

- Knowledge was understood not merely as information, but as an approach that necessarily includes ethical responsibility. By exposing the harm caused to society by immoral scholars, ignorant healers, and deceitful merchants, the inseparable link between knowledge and ethics was strongly emphasized;

- It was stressed that issuing fatwas is not a light responsibility and that hasty and superficial judgments may pose serious risks to society. True scholars were expected to act with patience and deep reflection;

- The work repeatedly emphasizes that acquiring knowledge alone is insufficient; knowledge must be applied in practice and should bring tangible benefit to life. True knowledge is not limited to theoretical understanding but must be manifested through action and integrity.

The principles of caution, deliberation, striving for truth, and adherence to honest and sound knowledge in issuing fatwas and legal rulings have not lost their relevance today. Especially in an era characterized by an overwhelming flow of information and the proliferation of pseudo-knowledge, the necessity of relying on accurate knowledge and trustworthy sources has become increasingly urgent.

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara" demonstrates that the fatwas issued by the scholars of Bukhara served as an important instrument for addressing the pressing social, economic, and moral problems of their time. The fatwas presented in the work reflect a high degree of legal adaptability, as they were based not only on the application of Sharia norms but also on the implementation of an ijtihami approach that took into account existing conditions and customary practices.

The discussion reveals that issuing legal judgments occupies a central place in fiqh and legal thought, and the significance of this process is evident. In delivering rulings, it is essential to consider time, circumstances, and the condition of individuals. Legal issues may at times be complex; therefore, careful attention to details is required in juridical reasoning. Wisdom is necessary in order to discern the truth and arrive at the most correct decision. Through fiqh-based reasoning, it becomes possible to clearly distinguish truth from falsehood and good from evil, which is of great importance.

In certain cases, differences of opinion in legal judgments may arise, making it necessary to proceed with caution. When disagreement occurs, the strongest

evidence should be selected and the most appropriate decision adopted. Where necessity demands, certain legal concessions may be applied; however, excess and abuse must be avoided. The most appropriate legal path lies in issuing correct judgments and avoiding unnecessary conflict. Furthermore, ethical conduct and proper behavior are essential in the process of adjudication, and adherence to judicial etiquette is considered mandatory [1, p.25].

This work addresses the issues of legal reasoning, ijtihad, and the necessity of caution in issuing legal judgments, and elucidates the following key concepts:

- Jurisprudential reasoning and the issuance of legal rulings constitute one of the most fundamental matters, as they directly affect human life. Therefore, when delivering judgments, consideration must be given to time, circumstances, and the conditions of individuals. Jurisprudential issues may at times be complex, which makes careful attention to details essential.
- In issuing rulings, it is necessary to distinguish truth and to arrive at correct decisions through wisdom. Jurisprudential reasoning should serve to differentiate between right and wrong, and between good and evil. Differences in legal judgments may occasionally arise; however, reliance on the strongest evidence is required. This reinforces the principle that fiqh-based reasoning must be grounded in evidence rather than personal opinion.
- In certain situations, legal concessions and facilitation may be applied, but they must not exceed proper limits.
- It is important to avoid unnecessary conflict in issuing judgments and to choose the most appropriate and correct legal path.
- Judges must adhere to proper ethical conduct and judicial etiquette, as their rulings serve as a fundamental guideline for society. This demonstrates that the Islamic legal system is based not only on scholarly principles, but also on strong ethical foundations [2, p.25].

This work once again emphasizes the inseparable relationship between knowledge and ethics. True knowledge should be grounded not only in learning, but also in integrity and responsibility. The knowledge of a person with poor moral character or lacking piety may bring harm to society rather than benefit. This principle should apply not only in the issuance of religious fatwas, but in all fields of human activity.

- The text also highlights that issuing fatwas is inherently linked to responsibility. A fatwa is not merely an expression of opinion; it is a legal judgment

that affects people's lives, their worldly affairs, and their ultimate well-being in the Hereafter. Therefore, relying on unqualified individuals or accepting careless and superficial fatwas may lead people into error.

- Furthermore, the text stresses the impropriety of seeking fatwas from hypocrites, as such individuals either lack a deep understanding of religion or may exploit it for personal gain. This, in turn, can lead people astray. Even today, in any field of knowledge — whether religious, academic, or legal — individuals must carefully choose their sources of information. Incorrect sources or misleading forms of knowledge can distance a person from the path of truth.
- For this reason, in making any judgment or decision, personal integrity and scholarly responsibility play a crucial role [3, p.28].

Furthermore, the work elucidates the causes of moral and intellectual crises within society. In fact, throughout human history, three major sources of social disorder can be identified: scholars who misuse knowledge, ignorant physicians, and deceitful merchants. These three groups contribute significantly to moral and intellectual corruption in society.

- **Immoral scholars.** Scholars who use knowledge for personal gain inflict the greatest harm upon society, as people tend to trust their words and may consequently be led in the wrong direction. A true scholar must not only possess knowledge but also uphold integrity and justice.
- **Ignorant physicians.** Claiming to practice medicine without proper medical knowledge is equivalent to gambling with human lives. Such individuals may administer incorrect treatments, thereby endangering the lives of patients.

- **Deceitful traders.** Those who deceive others in trade or other spheres for the sake of personal benefit contribute to both economic and moral degradation within society. In this context, the text cites a wise statement attributed to Imam Abu Hanifa, emphasizing that if a knowledgeable person fails to act responsibly toward his knowledge, he may cause harm to the entire community. Moreover, an ignorant individual in a high position may lead society toward ruin through misguided decisions.

These observations remain highly relevant today. Moral crisis, distorted knowledge, misinformation, and irresponsible medical practice pose serious threats to modern society. Therefore, alongside acquiring knowledge, the correct and responsible use of knowledge constitutes a fundamental moral obligation for every individual [4, p.28]. At the same time, the text provides an in-depth discussion of the responsibility

inherent in knowledge and in issuing fatwas, particularly by revealing the dangers of haste and superficial judgments. Knowledge is not merely the possession of information; it also entails the ability to remain silent and to engage in deep reflection. It is not without reason that the early scholars, despite their profound learning, often preferred silence. True knowledge emerges when a person becomes aware of the limits of their own understanding. Rapid and superficial responses may lead a person toward oversimplification and even toward falsehood and error. For this reason, the text may be regarded as a timeless piece of profound moral instruction, relevant in every era.

A scholar should not hasten to issue a fatwa, but must first attain a clear understanding of the truth. A person of knowledge should not rely on mere imitation, but rather on independent reasoning and sound evidence. The early generations of scholars (the salaf) maintained silence in difficult situations and responded only when questioned. They - may God have mercy upon them - did not speak unless asked, and when asked, they first sought the correct path before responding. Even when they felt obliged to give an answer, they would reflect deeply before doing so. In all matters, they avoided haste and pursued the path of understanding the truth through contemplation and restraint.

Imam A'zam Abu Hanifa - may God have mercy upon him - also exemplified this approach: when faced with a difficult issue, he would reflect upon it and remain silent for a long period. His calmness and patience assisted him in arriving at the truth. In such cases, he would maintain silence until he was able to determine the correct answer to the question posed.

The work emphasizes that people of knowledge must act with patience and reflection. Knowledge is not merely the accumulation of information; it also entails using that knowledge correctly, comprehending it deeply, and feeling the weight of responsibility it carries. Issuing fatwas or expressing opinions on important matters is not a light responsibility. True scholars first engage in silent contemplation, avoid haste, and speak only after they have correctly grasped the truth. Great scholars such as Imam A'zam Abu Hanifa did not express their views immediately; rather, they sought to understand the essence of an issue thoroughly before responding. Even today, specialists, scholars, and leaders in all fields should apply this lesson to themselves. Rapid and superficial conclusions lead a person to error, whereas silence and reflection bring one closer to the truth.

In "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara," Amir Shohmurod underscores the depth and responsibility inherent in

knowledge, reminding readers that knowledge should not be approached superficially but must be understood through reflection and patience. Using knowledge not for the sake of truth but for worldly interests leads a person toward ruin. Devotion and obedience to God represent the most virtuous path. The work relates that Shaykh Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Sakkof was known for frequent supplication. During his final illness, shortly before death, he is reported to have said: "O God, I ask You for even a single moment in which I may repent" [5, p. 28]. After uttering these words, he passed away. This account demonstrates that knowledge and practice must be inseparable. It is not sufficient merely to acquire knowledge; it must be applied in life. Imam al-Shafi'I — may God have mercy upon him - expressed a similar view when he said: "I wish that knowledge would benefit people and that humanity would derive benefit from it." [6, p. 29].

## CONCLUSION

The analysis of "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara" demonstrates that jurisprudential reasoning and the process of issuing legal judgments require not only the application of Sharia rulings, but also a deep assessment of time, circumstances, and the condition of individuals, as well as caution, attention to detail, and wisdom. Through this work, it becomes evident that the scholars of Bukhara implemented an ijtihadi approach and legal flexibility in accordance with the urgent needs of their era.

The work strongly emphasizes the necessity of avoiding haste in fiqh and legal reasoning, relying instead on silence and reflection, and carefully considering every judgment. Principles such as selecting the truth, preferring the strongest evidence in cases of disagreement, and maintaining necessity and balance constitute the foundations of Islamic legal thought. In particular, the moral integrity, piety, and responsible attitude toward knowledge of the person issuing judgments play a crucial role in ensuring social stability and justice.

In "Fatavai Ahli Bukhara," immoral scholars, ignorant physicians, and deceitful merchants are presented as major factors contributing to social crisis, once again underscoring the inseparability of knowledge and ethics. Even today, in any field — whether scholarly or legal — responsibility, integrity, and reflective reasoning remain fundamental values.

Thus, this work serves not only as a source relevant to its own period, but also as an important repository of lessons and moral guidance for the present day. Its central message is that knowledge and the issuance of fatwas must be grounded not only in learning, but also in integrity, patience, reflection, and God-

consciousness. The work calls on readers to make every judgment and decision with careful consideration, justice, and responsibility.

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