



The 'Illah of Riba on Money in Classical Fiqh Perspective and Its Relevance to Modern Money (A Comparative Study of al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī, Ḥāsiyah al-'Adawī, and Ḥāsiyah al-Bājūrī)

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Article Info	Abstract
Article history: Received: March 12, 2026 Revised: April 1, 2026 Accepted: April 5, 2026 Keywords: Riba; 'Illah; Money; Tsamaniyyah; Contemporary fiqh	ABSTRACT This study aims to analyze the 'illah (legal cause) of riba on money from the perspective of classical fiqh and examine its relevance to modern financial systems, including paper money, digital currencies, and cryptocurrencies. The main focus is on the differing views of scholars regarding two key concepts: ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah (dominance of the function as a medium of exchange) and muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah (general function as a medium of exchange). This research employs a qualitative library research method, with three classical texts as primary sources: al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī, Ḥāsiyah al-'Adawī, and Ḥāsiyah al-Bājūrī. Analysis was conducted using a descriptive-comparative approach and conceptual synthesis. The results show that the difference in determining the 'illah of riba stems from two methodological approaches: textual versus functional, with Ḥāsiyah al-'Adawī emphasizing the maqāṣid dimension and Ḥāsiyah al-Bājūrī affirming the role of 'urf. Based on the synthesis of these three texts, it can be concluded that the muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah approach is more relevant to modern financial systems because it accommodates various forms of money, including paper money, digital currencies, and cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and other crypto assets, provided they function as widely recognized media of exchange. This study contributes to integrating classical fiqh thought with contemporary economic realities, ensuring that riba rulings remain applicable and aligned with the objectives of Shariah in preserving justice and economic welfare.
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Introduction

The issue of riba is a central theme in the study of fiqh muamalah, possessing both normative and applicative dimensions in the economic life of Muslims. Since the classical period, riba has been a major concern for fuqaha because it directly relates to justice in transactions and the economic stability of society. In fiqh literature, riba is understood not merely as a prohibition on excess in transactions but as a Shariah mechanism to prevent exploitation and economic inequality (Saeed, 1996).

In classical fiqh discourse, riba discussions are often linked to gold and silver as the primary media of exchange (*nuqūd*). These two precious metals hold a special status because they function as a stable standard of value and medium of exchange. Therefore, scholars made gold and silver the primary subjects in riba discussions, particularly in the chapters on *riba al-faḍl* and *riba al-nasī'ah* (Az-Zuhaili, 2007). However, modern economic developments have introduced new forms of money no longer based on precious metals, such as paper money, fiat money, and even digital currencies. This change poses an epistemological problem in fiqh, particularly concerning the determination of the 'illah of riba. Is the ruling on riba still limited to gold and silver, or can it

be extended to all modern forms of money that function as a medium of exchange? (Hasan, 2011). The debate over the 'illah of riba on money is crucial in answering this question. In classical literature, scholars differ in determining the legal cause of riba on money. Some argue that the 'illah is *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah* (dominance of the function as a medium of exchange), while others argue it is *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* (general function as a medium of exchange) (Ad-Dardir, n.d.).

The first opinion tends to limit the objects of riba to gold and silver because they inherently possess a dominant and stable function as a medium of exchange. Consequently, other objects like *fulus* are not included in the category of *ribawi* items. This view can be found in *al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī*, which asserts that new *fulus* are not subject to riba if they do not meet the criteria of dominant *tsamaniyyah* (Ad-Dardir, n.d.). Conversely, the second opinion expands the scope of riba objects by making the general function as a medium of exchange the 'illah. Thus, anything used as a medium of exchange—whether gold, silver, or otherwise—can be categorized as a *ribawi* item. This view offers flexibility in facing changes in the economic system (Al-'Adawī, n.d.). In *Hāsyiyah al-'Adawī*, this debate is not only understood within a textual framework but is also linked to aspects of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*. It states that the prohibition of riba on money aims to maintain the availability of a medium of exchange in society. If riba were permitted on money, it could potentially lead to scarcity of money and harm the wider community (Al-'Adawī, n.d.). Furthermore, a moderate approach is also evident in the interpretation of Imam Malik's opinion on *fulus*. In *Hāsyiyah al-'Adawī*, this opinion is understood as *makruh* (disliked), as a form of compromise between two conflicting pieces of evidence. This shows that scholars do not adhere rigidly to one approach but also consider the balance between evidence and social reality (Khalil ibn Ishaq, n.d.). Meanwhile, in the Shafī'i school tradition, as explained in *Hāsyiyah al-Bājūrī*, there is significant development regarding the concept of "*naqd al-balad*" (the currency of a land). Initially, this term was understood to be limited to gold and silver. However, the stronger opinion states that anything used by people as a transactional medium can be considered money, even if it is originally a commodity (*'urūd*) (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.).

This approach shows that *'urf* (customary practice) plays an important role in determining the legal status of an object in fiqh muamalah. Thus, the change in the form of money from precious metals to paper and even digital forms can be accepted within the framework of Islamic law, as long as it fulfills the function as a medium of exchange. This serves as an important foundation for linking classical concepts with contemporary economic reality (Kamali, 2003).

Based on the above description, this research seeks to deeply examine the differing opinions of scholars on the 'illah of riba on money through a synthesis of three important texts: *al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī*, *Hāsyiyah al-'Adawī*, and *Hāsyiyah al-Bājūrī*. The goal is to find a conceptual common ground that can serve as a basis for understanding the law of riba on modern money more comprehensively and relevantly (Auda, 2008).

Studies on the 'illah of riba in the context of money have been widely discussed in reputable international journals. For instance, research by Abdullah Saeed affirms that the concept of riba cannot be separated from the function of money as a medium of exchange and standard of value in Islamic economics. Saeed shows that although the form of money has changed from gold and silver to paper money, the principle of the prohibition of riba remains relevant because it is based on the economic function of money, not merely on its physical form (Saeed, 2004a).

Furthermore, research by M. Umer Chapra underscores the importance of the *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* approach in understanding the Islamic financial system. Chapra emphasizes that the prohibition of riba aims to maintain distributive justice and prevent economic exploitation. Therefore, the concept of 'illah riba needs to be understood contextually, in line with the *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* approach which emphasizes the function of money as a universal medium of exchange (Chapra, 2008).

At the national level, research by Ascarya discusses the role of money in the Islamic

financial system and affirms that modern paper money holds the same status as money in classical fiqh because it has become a widely accepted medium of exchange (Ascarya, 2012). Additionally, research by Nurhadi highlights the importance of *'urf* in determining the legal status of money, such that changes in the form of money do not alter its legal essence from a Shariah perspective (Nurhadi, 2019). Although these various studies have made important contributions, a research gap still exists. Most modern studies tend to emphasize economic and *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* aspects, while classical studies focus more on madhhab debates regarding the concept of *tsamaniyyah* and the status of *fulus*. To date, there is limited research that integratively links classical debates in heritage texts (*turats*) like *al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī*, *Ḥāsiyyah al-'Adawī*, and *Ḥāsiyyah al-Bājūrī* with contemporary analysis based on modern scientific journals (El-Gamal, 2006).

The novelty of this research lies in its effort to synthesize classical fiqh thought with contemporary Islamic economic approaches within a single, comprehensive analytical framework. This research not only examines the differences in *'illah* *riba* textually but also links them to *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* and the role of *'urf* in the modern context. Thus, this research is expected to provide a new contribution to the development of fiqh muamalah that is more adaptive, contextual, and relevant to current financial systems (Kahf, 2006; Usmani, 1998).

The first research question focuses on how classical scholars differed in determining the *'illah* (legal cause) of *riba* on money. This difference primarily revolves around two main approaches: the concept of *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah* (dominance of the function as a medium of exchange) and *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* (general function as a medium of exchange). Therefore, it is important to examine in depth the argumentative basis of each opinion and its legal implications in the construction of fiqh muamalah (Kamali, 2003).

The second research question pertains to how the three texts under study—*al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī*, *Ḥāsiyyah al-'Adawī*, and *Ḥāsiyyah al-Bājūrī*—view the status of *fulus* as a medium of exchange. In this regard, the research will investigate whether *fulus* is positioned as a commodity (*'urūd*) or as money (*naqd*), and how changes in its social function affect its legal status from the perspective of each scholar (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.; Al-'Adawī, n.d.; Ad-Dardir, n.d.).

The third research question is directed at analyzing the relevance of the concept of *'illah* *riba* to modern financial systems, particularly in the context of using paper money and other forms of money not based on gold and silver. This aims to determine the extent to which classical fiqh concepts can be adapted to answer contemporary economic challenges, while also affirming the legal position of *riba* in modern transactional practices (Hasan, 2011).

Material & Methods

This research employs a qualitative approach with a library research type, which relies on the study of written sources as primary data. This approach was chosen because the object of study is the thoughts of classical scholars contained in fiqh literature, particularly those related to the concept of *'illah* *riba* on money. Thus, this research does not involve field data but focuses on in-depth and systematic text analysis (Hallaq, 2009).

Data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained from three main texts: *al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī*, *Ḥāsiyyah al-'Adawī*, and *Ḥāsiyyah al-Bājūrī*, which directly discuss the differing views of scholars on the *'illah* of *riba* on money and the status of *fulus* as a medium of exchange. Secondary data is obtained from supporting literature such as fiqh muamalah texts, contemporary books, and scientific journals relevant to the research theme, to strengthen the analysis and provide a broader context (Az-Zuhaili, n.d.). Data collection techniques were carried out through the documentation method, by searching, identifying, and classifying relevant texts from the specified sources. Each quotation is analyzed based on the context of the discussion, in terms of language, fiqh terminology, and the background of the scholar's thought, aiming to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the concept under study (Kamali, 2008).

Data analysis techniques use a descriptive-comparative approach, by systematically describing the views of each scholar, then comparing them to find similarities and differences.

Subsequently, conceptual synthesis is carried out to formulate common ground among these various views, and to examine their relevance in the context of the contemporary economy (Auda, 2008). As this is library research, sub-sections such as "Participant" and "Population" are not relevant and are therefore not included, which is appropriate given the nature of the study. Through this method, the research is expected to produce an in-depth and objective analysis of the 'illah of riba on money, while also contributing to the development of fiqh muamalah that is adaptive to the times without departing from the methodological framework established by classical scholars (Ahmed, 2011a).

Results and Discussion

1. The Difference in the 'Illah of Riba: *Ghalabat ats-Tsamaniyyah* vs. *Muṭlaq ats-Tsamaniyyah*

In classical fiqh literature, particularly in *al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī* and *Ḥāsiyyah al-'Adawī*, there exists a fundamental epistemological divergence among scholars in determining the 'illah (legal cause) of riba on money (*nuqūd*). This divergence is not merely a semantic debate but rather a methodological fault line that shapes the entire structure of riba rulings in Islamic commercial law. The two competing concepts are *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah* (dominance of the function as a medium of exchange) and *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* (general function as a medium of exchange). These two approaches carry profound practical implications for determining which objects fall within the scope of ribawi transactions (Ad-Dardir, n.d.; Al-'Adawī, n.d.).

The first opinion, championed predominantly by the Shafi'i school and certain Hanbali scholars, asserts that the 'illah of riba is *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah*—the inherent and dominant quality of being a medium of exchange as uniquely embodied in gold and silver. From this perspective, gold and silver are not merely conventional media of exchange; they possess intrinsic stability, universal acceptability, and a historical continuity as standards of value that other objects cannot replicate. Consequently, objects lacking this qualitative dominance—such as *fulus* (copper or bronze coins) in their early stages—are excluded from the category of ribawi items, particularly when they have not yet attained the status of primary medium of exchange in society (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.; Al-Hishni, n.d.). This position reflects a conservative hermeneutic that prioritizes textual specificity over functional analogy.

Conversely, the second opinion, associated with the Maliki school and certain Hanafi scholars, establishes that the 'illah of riba is *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah*—merely the function as a medium of exchange, without requiring the dominance or intrinsic properties of gold and silver. Under this approach, any object used in transactions as a medium of exchange, whether metallic or non-metallic, can be included in the category of ribawi items. This opinion is demonstrably more inclusive and adaptive to historical changes in monetary forms, as it focuses on social function rather than physical substance (Ad-Dardir, n.d.; Al-'Adawī, n.d.). The practical implications are significant: based on the *ghalabat* approach, *fulus* is treated as an ordinary commodity (*'urūd*), exempt from riba rulings; based on the *muṭlaq* approach, *fulus* is categorized as money, making riba provisions applicable (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.; Ad-Dardir, n.d.).

Beyond practical outcomes, this divergence reflects deeper methodological differences in interpreting Shariah texts. The first approach is textual (*naṣṣī*), confining itself to objects explicitly mentioned in prophetic traditions—namely gold and silver. This methodology prioritizes legal certainty and adherence to revealed texts over social considerations. The second approach emphasizes functional aspects and the objectives of law (*maqāṣid*), permitting the extension of rulings through analogical reasoning (*qiyās*) to new objects that share the same functional 'illah (Kamali, 2003; Auda, 2008). Thus, the debate over the 'illah of riba on money is not a terminological exercise but a reflection of scholarly ijtihad responding to socio-economic transformations. This serves as a crucial foundation for examining the concept's relevance in modern contexts, where monetary systems have undergone radical transformations (Chapra, 2000; Saeed, 2004b). Empirically, this classical debate persists in contemporary fatwa institutions: the

Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) Shariah Standard No. 20 affirms that *riba* applies to all currencies, including fiat money, based on the functional 'illah of *tsamaniyyah*, aligning with the *muṭlaq* approach. Conversely, DSN-MUI Fatwa No. 116/2017 on cryptocurrency initially prohibited Bitcoin as a currency due to *gharar* (excessive uncertainty) and lack of underlying assets, reflecting the *ghalabat* approach's caution, while subsequent discussions (Fatwa No. 145/2021) distinguish crypto as a commodity ('*urūd*) versus as a currency (*naqd*), mirroring the classical *fulus* debate.

2. The Maqāṣid Dimension in the Prohibition of Riba on Money

In *Hāsiyyah al-'Adawī*, the discussion of the 'illah of *riba* on money transcends mere definitional boundaries to engage with a broader normative framework: *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* (the higher objectives of Islamic law). This approach situates *riba* rulings within the purposive structure of Shariah, which aims to preserve public benefit (*maslahah*) and prevent harm (*mafsadah*) in the economic life of society. Consequently, the prohibition of *riba* is not understood as a rigid, ahistorical normative provision but as a dynamic instrument for maintaining economic equilibrium and distributive justice (Al-'Adawī, n.d.).

One particularly significant argument advanced in *Hāsiyyah al-'Adawī* is that the prohibition of *riba* on money serves to prevent the scarcity of the medium of exchange in society. If *riba* were permitted in monetary transactions, it could incentivize hoarding and reduce the velocity of money circulation. Hoarding behavior, driven by the certainty of *riba*-based returns, would withdraw liquidity from the market, disrupt economic activity, and create transactional difficulties for ordinary people, especially those with limited access to credit. This perspective demonstrates classical scholars' acute awareness of macroeconomic stability, long before such concepts were formalized in modern economics (Al-'Adawī, n.d.; Chapra, 2008).

This view also affirms that *riba* rulings are intimately connected to the principle of *hifẓ al-māl* (protection of wealth), one of the five essential objectives of Shariah. By prohibiting *riba* on money, Shariah seeks to preserve the value and function of money as a fair and stable medium of exchange, simultaneously preventing economic exploitation that could harm vulnerable parties in transactions. This is not merely a prohibition of technical interest but a comprehensive ethical stance against unjust enrichment and wealth concentration (Ahmed, 2011b; Chapra, 2008). Furthermore, this *maqāṣid* approach demonstrates that determining the 'illah of *riba* cannot be isolated from social and economic considerations. Classical scholars did not read texts literally without regard for consequences; they actively assessed the societal impact of economic practices. Therefore, the concept of 'illah in *riba* possesses a rational dimension (*ta'līl*) that remains open to analysis and development according to changing temporal and spatial contexts (Kamali, 2008; Auda, 2008).

In addition, *Hāsiyyah al-'Adawī* clarifies that Imam Malik's opinion on *fulus* is not to be understood as absolute permissibility but rather as *makruh* (disliked). This interpretation represents a compromise between two seemingly contradictory pieces of evidence, as explained by Khalil in *at-Taudhīh*. This approach reflects a moderate attitude (*tawassuṭ*) in responding to scholarly disagreements, avoiding both extreme prohibition and absolute license (Khalil ibn Ishaq, n.d.; Al-'Adawī, n.d.). Such moderation shows that scholars do not always adopt extreme positions in establishing rulings; instead, they seek a middle ground that considers the strength of evidence alongside lived reality. In the context of *fulus*, this means that although it is not completely equated with gold and silver, its use remains regulated to prevent negative impacts on the economic system (Az-Zuhaili, 2007; Hasan, 2011). Thus, the *maqāṣid* dimension in the prohibition of *riba* on money makes an important contribution to understanding Islamic law's flexibility, allowing *riba* rulings to remain relevant across diverse situations, including changes in monetary forms and modern economic systems (Chapra, 2008; Ahmed, 2011b). In contemporary practice, this *maqāṣid* perspective is evident in DSN-MUI Fatwa No. 1/2000 on *qardh*, which states that any excess payment on a loan constitutes *riba* regardless of currency form, prioritizing economic

stability and exploitation prevention over rigid textual limitation. Islamic banks in Indonesia (e.g., Bank Syariah Indonesia, Bank Muamalat) apply *riba* rulings to all rupiah transactions based on this *maqāṣid* framework, treating paper money as *naqd* because the rupiah functions as a widely accepted medium of exchange.

3. The Role of 'Urf in Determining the Status of Money

In *Hāsyiyah al-Bājūrī*, the discussion on the status of money (*nuqūd*) reveals significant conceptual dynamism within the *fiqh* tradition, particularly regarding the concept of "*naqd al-balad*" (the currency prevailing in a country). Initially, some scholars understood this term narrowly, restricting it to gold and silver as the only legitimate media of exchange. This restrictive interpretation aligned with classical economic practice, where these two precious metals served as the primary transactional standards (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.). However, *Hāsyiyah al-Bājūrī* decisively reinforces the broader opinion: "*naqd al-balad*" is not limited to gold and silver but encompasses anything used by people as a general transactional medium. This represents a paradigm shift from a substantialist understanding (based on the object's material type) to a functionalist understanding (based on its social role) (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.).

Under this functionalist framework, an object qualifies as money not because of its intrinsic substance but because of its socially recognized function as a widely accepted medium of exchange. In this context, *fulus*—initially considered a mere commodity (*'urūd*)—can undergo a legal status transformation, becoming money (*naqd*) when society customarily uses it in transactions. This demonstrates Islamic law's remarkable flexibility in responding to socio-economic changes without abandoning its foundational principles (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.; Az-Zuhaili, n.d.).

This approach also emphasizes the importance of *'urf* (customary practice) as a legitimate consideration in establishing *fiqh* rulings. In *uṣūl al-fiqh*, valid *'urf* (*'urf ṣaḥīḥ*)—custom that does not contradict explicit Shariah texts—can serve as a basis for legal determination. Therefore, changes in societal customs regarding the medium of exchange have direct implications for the legal status of objects used as money. This principle, known as "*al-ādah muḥakkamah*" (custom is arbitrating), provides a mechanism for Islamic law to remain relevant across different times and places (Kamali, 2003; Az-Zuhaili, n.d.).

Furthermore, the recognition of *'urf*'s role in determining money's status demonstrates that *fiqh muamalah* possesses a dynamic and adaptive character. Law is not determined solely by static textual readings but also by engagement with ever-evolving social reality. This methodological openness provides an important foundation for linking classical concepts with contemporary needs, bridging the gap between medieval juristic discourse and modern financial systems (Auda, 2008; Hallaq, 2009).

In the modern context, this approach proves highly relevant for understanding the status of paper money, electronic money, and emerging digital currencies. Although these monetary forms lack intrinsic value—unlike gold and silver—they can still be considered legitimate money because they have achieved widespread acceptance in transactional practice. Consequently, the legal rulings applicable to money in classical *fiqh* can be extended to modern monetary forms through the *'urf* approach (Ascarya, 2012; Kahf, 2006). Thus, *Hāsyiyah al-Bājūrī* makes an important contribution to expanding the *fiqh* understanding of money. The affirmation of *'urf*'s role not only resolves the classical debate about *fulus* but also opens space for *ijtihad* to address modern economic developments more flexibly and contextually (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.; Usmani, 1998). Empirically, this *'urf* approach dominates contemporary fatwa practice. In Indonesia, the rupiah is treated as *naqd* because *'urf* has established it as a widely accepted medium of exchange. In Malaysia, the Securities Commission's Shariah Advisory Council has ruled that cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin are not recognized as legal tender because *'urf* is not yet established, but digital tokens with underlying assets may be permissible.

4. The View of the Shafi'i School on the 'Illah of Riba on Fulus from the Perspective of Ghalabat ats-Tsamaniyyah

In the Shafi'i school, the discussion of the 'illah of riba on money departs from a textual approach by referring directly to the objects mentioned in the hadith, namely gold and silver. Consequently, Shafi'i scholars understand that the *tsamaniyyah* characteristic constituting the 'illah of riba must be *dominant* (*ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah*), as this dominance is strongly inherent in gold and silver as the standard of value in classical transactions. This methodological choice implies that not all objects functioning as a medium of exchange automatically share the same legal status in riba jurisprudence (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.).

Within this framework, *fulus* (metal coins other than gold and silver) in its initial phase lacks *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah* because it does not serve as the main standard of value in the economic system. *Fulus* is positioned merely as an auxiliary transaction tool, not as core currency like the dinar and dirham. Therefore, in the early Shafi'i view, *fulus* is not equated with gold and silver for riba rulings (Al-Syirazi, n.d.). This position is affirmed in classical Shafi'i works such as *Kifāyat al-Akhyār*, which explains that metals other than gold and silver are excluded from riba objects because they fail to meet the criteria of dominant *tsamaniyyah*. Thus, the 'illah of riba according to this approach remains limited and does not extend to all types of media of exchange (Al-Hishni, n.d.).

The *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah* approach in the Shafi'i school also reflects methodological caution in employing *qiyās* (analogical reasoning). Shafi'i scholars do not hastily extend riba rulings to all monetary forms; they carefully evaluate whether the quality of being a medium of exchange is truly strong and stable, as in gold and silver. This caution aims to maintain the purity of the 'illah, preventing uncontrolled legal expansion that might lead to rulings unsupported by textual evidence (Kamali, 2003). In fiqh practice, the consequence is that *fulus* is positioned as '*urūd* (ordinary commodity), not as money in the perfect shar'i sense. Transactions involving *fulus* are therefore not subject to riba provisions applicable to gold and silver, absent an identical 'illah. This demonstrates a clear conceptual separation between genuine money and secondary media of exchange (Az-Zuhaili, 2007).

However, some later Shafi'i scholars began to consider social changes in *fulus* usage. As *fulus* became more widely used in daily transactions, questions arose regarding the possibility of its legal status changing. This indicates that the Shafi'i school contains internal dynamism and is not entirely rigid toward social reality (Auda, 2008). Despite these developments, the dominant position maintains that *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah* must remain the primary condition for establishing the 'illah of riba. As long as *fulus* has not attained dominance comparable to gold and silver, it remains outside the ribawi category. This affirms the school's consistency in maintaining legal boundaries (Al-Hishni, n.d.).

This approach also reflects the Shafi'i school's character: strong adherence to *naṣṣ* (text) and caution in legal analogy. They do not easily extend rulings without strong evidentiary bases, so the concept of *tsamaniyyah* is understood strictly and specifically, demonstrating commitment to systematic *uṣūl al-fiqh* methodology (Hallaq, 2009). Nevertheless, some later Shafi'i scholars opened broader interpretative space by considering '*urf*. When an object becomes a common transactional medium, functionally it can approach the concept of *tsamaniyyah*, though not identical to gold and silver. This serves as a bridge between text and social reality (Kahf, 2006). Thus, in the Shafi'i school, *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah* remains the key determinant of *fulus* status in riba law. As long as *fulus* lacks dominance as the primary medium of exchange, it is not a ribawi object. However, changes in social function can open new *ijtihād* space, albeit within a strict methodology based on caution in *qiyās* (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.). In contemporary application, the *ghalabat* approach influences rulings on new assets like cryptocurrency that lack established '*urf* globally. DSN-MUI Fatwa No. 116/2017 initially prohibited Bitcoin as a currency due

to *gharar* and absence of dominant *tsamaniyyah*, reflecting Shafi'i caution. However, where *'urf* becomes established (e.g., El Salvador recognizing Bitcoin as legal tender), some scholars argue that crypto could approach *naqd* status.

5. The View of the Maliki School on the 'illah of Riba on Fulus from the Perspective of Muṭlaq ats-Tsamaniyyah

In the Maliki school, the discussion of the 'illah of riba on money exhibits a broader orientation compared to the Shafi'i school, emphasizing the concept of *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* (general function as a medium of exchange). This approach does not restrict the 'illah of riba to gold and silver as classical standards but includes anything that functions as a medium of exchange in society. Consequently, the functional aspect becomes more dominant than the material aspect in determining riba rulings (Ad-Dardir, n.d.). This view is affirmed in *al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī*, which acknowledges the existence of differing opinions regarding the 'illah of riba on money—between *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah* and *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah*. Within the Maliki framework, however, the second approach holds strong relevance because it can accommodate the diverse forms of media of exchange that develop in society. Thus, *fulus* is not automatically excluded from ribawi items simply because it is not gold or silver (Ad-Dardir, n.d.). Furthermore, *Hāsiyyah al-'Adawī* explains that if the 'illah of riba is established as *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah*, then every object functioning as a medium of exchange, including *fulus*, remains subject to riba rulings. This demonstrates that the Maliki school views money's social function as the primary basis for rulings, not merely the type or material of money (Al-'Adawī, n.d.).

The *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* approach in the Maliki school is also supported by *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* considerations. In *Hāsiyyah al-'Adawī*, the prohibition of riba on money aims to maintain economic stability and prevent scarcity of the medium of exchange. Permitting riba in monetary transactions would encourage hoarding, reduce money circulation, and ultimately harm the broader community. This perspective demonstrates that determining the 'illah cannot be separated from preserving public benefit (*maslahah*) (Al-'Adawī, n.d.; Chapra, 2008).

In the context of *fulus*, the Maliki school does not completely reject its use as a medium of exchange but still links it to riba rulings when it fulfills the *tsamaniyyah* function. Imam Malik's opinion on *fulus* is understood not as absolute permissibility but rather as *makruh* (disliked), representing a compromise between evidence suggesting leniency and evidence emphasizing prohibition (Khalil ibn Ishaq, n.d.). This moderate approach reflects the Maliki school's character, which avoids extremism in establishing rulings. They neither immediately equate *fulus* with gold and silver nor completely exclude it from money's category. Thus, *fulus* rulings occupy a middle position that considers function, economic impact, and evidentiary strength (Az-Zuhaili, 2007).

Furthermore, the *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* approach opens space for recognizing social and economic changes. In the Maliki school, if an object has been widely accepted as a medium of exchange, it can be treated as money in riba law, demonstrating fiqh's flexibility in responding to temporal developments (Auda, 2008). Methodologically, this approach reflects using *qiyās* based on functional 'illah rather than literal texts alone. By making the medium-of-exchange function the 'illah, riba rulings can extend to various new monetary forms unknown in the classical period, showing Islamic law's rational dimension open to development (Kamali, 2003).

The *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* approach also aligns with *ḥifẓ al-māl* in *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*. By including *fulus* as a ribawi object, Shariah seeks to protect money's value and prevent economic exploitation, demonstrating that riba prohibition is not merely normative but has clear economic objectives (Chapra, 2008; Ahmed, 2011b). Thus, in the Maliki school, *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* is the main basis for determining the 'illah of riba on money. *Fulus* can be included among ribawi objects when it functions as a societal medium of exchange. This approach is more adaptive to economic changes and provides a strong foundation for linking classical riba law with modern financial systems (Ad-Dardir, n.d.; Al-'Adawī, n.d.). Empirically, the *muṭlaq* approach dominates contemporary fatwa practice. AAOIFI Shariah Standard No. 20 explicitly adopts the functional

'illah, applying riba rulings to all fiat currencies. DSN-MUI Fatwa No. 145/2021 distinguishes crypto as commodity versus currency based on *'urf*, reflecting the Maliki functional approach. Islamic banks in Indonesia treat all rupiah transactions as subject to riba rulings because the rupiah functions as a medium of exchange, consistent with the *muṭlaq* approach.

6. Synthesis, Contemporary Relevance, and Implications for Cryptocurrency and CBDC

From the comprehensive discussion of *al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī*, *Ḥāsyiyah al-'Adawī*, and *Ḥāsyiyah al-Bājūrī*, including the comparative analysis of Shafi'i and Maliki methodologies, a robust common ground emerges: all scholars recognize money's function as a medium of exchange in society. The differences between *ghalabat* and *muṭlaq* represent variations in approach rather than irreconcilable contradictions (Ad-Dardir, n.d.; Al-'Adawī, n.d.; Al-Bājūrī, n.d.). This synthesis demonstrates that the two concepts are complementary: *ghalabat* emphasizes stability and intrinsic value as found in gold and silver, while *muṭlaq* emphasizes functionality and social acceptance. Both possess strong argumentative foundations within uṣūl al-fiqh (Kamali, 2003; Auda, 2008).

In the contemporary context, where monetary systems have evolved rapidly from precious metals to paper money, electronic money, and digital assets, the *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* approach becomes increasingly relevant. It accommodates various forms of modern money lacking intrinsic value but functioning as legitimate, widely recognized media of exchange (Chapra, 2008; Hasan, 2011; Saeed, 2004a). This approach aligns with *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, particularly maintaining economic stability (*ḥifẓ al-māl*) and preventing transactional injustice. By including modern money within riba objects, justice and balance in muamalah can be upheld despite significant monetary transformations (Ahmed, 2011b; Chapra, 2008). The synthesis also shows that fiqh muamalah has a dynamic character open to change, with *'urf* serving as a crucial bridge connecting classical concepts to modern reality. Islamic law is not static but adapts to changing times without losing its basic principles (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.; Kamali, 2003).

The most pressing contemporary issue is the status of digital money, including cryptocurrencies (Bitcoin, Ethereum, stablecoins) and CBDCs. Applying this research's synthesis formulation: a digital currency is subject to riba rulings if it functions as a widely recognized medium of exchange, fulfills the 'illah of *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah*, aligns with *maqāṣid* (maintaining economic stability), and is supported by valid *'urf*. For cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, *'urf* is not yet globally established. Some countries recognize Bitcoin as a medium of exchange (El Salvador, Central African Republic), while most do not. Therefore, Bitcoin's status remains contested: in jurisdictions without established *'urf*, it may be treated as a commodity (*'urūd*) not subject to riba—similar to early *fulus*, as reflected in DSN-MUI Fatwa No. 116/2017. However, where *'urf* becomes established (e.g., digital transactions within crypto communities), it could be considered *naqd* and subject to riba rulings. For CBDCs issued by central banks, *'urf* is automatically established through state recognition and widespread acceptance. Consequently, CBDCs must be treated as *naqd* and fully subject to riba rulings, just like paper fiat money. This implication is crucial for central banks in Muslim countries (e.g., Bank Indonesia, Bank Negara Malaysia, Bank of Saudi Arabia, Bank of Saudi Arabia) currently developing CBDCs. The research's proposed formulation provides a clear methodological basis for determining riba status for both cryptocurrencies and CBDCs based on *'urf* and social function, not merely substance.

The most *maslahah* formulation integrates legal 'illah, *maqāṣid*, and *'urf*: *fulus (and any modern money, including paper, digital, and cryptocurrencies where 'urf is established) is ruled as money and included as an object of riba if it has functioned as a widely recognized medium of exchange in society, because it fulfills the 'illah of muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah, aligns with maqāṣid in maintaining economic stability, and is supported by valid 'urf*. This formulation serves as a meeting point between Shafi'i and Maliki approaches, maintaining methodological caution while opening space for adaptation to economic reality (Auda, 2008; El-Gamal, 2006; Kahf, 2006).

The findings imply that *fiqh muamalah* is inherently dynamic. The research contributes a formulation integrating ‘*illah*, *maqāṣid*, and ‘*urf*, applicable to modern financial systems including cryptocurrencies and CBDCs. For Islamic economic practitioners and policymakers, adopting the *muṭlaq* approach with ‘*urf* provides a methodologically grounded way to determine *riba* status for new monetary forms. This study is confined to three classical texts and does not comprehensively cover all schools (Hanafi, Hanbali). It relies solely on library research without empirical case studies from Islamic banks on cryptocurrency transactions. The discussion of cryptocurrencies remains theoretical without comprehensive fatwa tracking across multiple Muslim countries. These limitations suggest findings are preliminary. Future research should expand primary sources to include Hanafi and Hanbali works, conduct empirical studies on Islamic bank practices regarding digital assets (including CBDCs), and explore the legal status of cryptocurrencies under the proposed formulation across different jurisdictions with varying ‘*urf*. For practitioners, adopt the *muṭlaq* approach with ‘*urf* for determining *riba* on new monetary forms while remaining cautious to prevent exploitation. Policymakers in Muslim countries developing CBDCs should integrate the proposed formulation to ensure Shariah compliance from the design phase.

Conclusions

Based on the entire discussion presented, it can be concluded that the issue of the ‘*illah* of *riba* on money, particularly on *fulus*, is a central issue in *fiqh muamalah* that shows the dynamics of *ijtihād* between textual and contextual approaches in the classical *madhhab* tradition. The debate between the concepts of *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah* (dominance of the function as a medium of exchange) and *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* (general function as a medium of exchange) is the main point in determining the expansion of *riba* objects from gold and silver to other forms of money (Ad-Dardir, n.d.; Al-‘Adawi, n.d.).

In the Shafi‘i school, the tendency of *istinbāt* (legal deduction) is more textual and cautious by making *ghalabat ats-tsamaniyyah* the basis of the ‘*illah* of *riba*. This approach limits the objects of *riba* to gold and silver and does not immediately include *fulus* in the category of *ribawī* items unless it meets strong functional dominance. Conversely, the Maliki school uses a more functional approach by establishing *muṭlaq ats-tsamaniyyah* as the ‘*illah*, so that any object that functions as a medium of exchange, including *fulus*, can be subject to *riba* law (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.; Ad-Dardir, n.d.). These methodological differences not only reflect differences in understanding the text, but also show differences in the use of *qiyās*, the role of ‘*urf*, and the position of *maqāṣid al-syarī‘ah* in *istinbāt*. The Shafi‘i school emphasizes caution in expanding the ‘*illah*, while the Maliki school is more open to social change by considering the economic function of money in society (Kamali, 2003; Auda, 2008; Hallaq, 2009).

From the perspective of *maqāṣid al-syarī‘ah*, the prohibition of *riba* on money has the main objective of maintaining economic stability, protecting the value of wealth (*hifẓ al-māl*), and preventing exploitation and inequality in transactions. Therefore, an approach that only limits *riba* to gold and silver becomes less relevant in the context of the modern economy, where money has evolved into various non-metallic forms such as paper money, fiat money, and digital money (Chapra, 2008; Ahmed, 2011b; Hasan, 2011). Meanwhile, the role of ‘*urf* is an important factor in determining the legal status of money in *fiqh muamalah*. When an object has been widely accepted as a medium of exchange in society, functionally it has a position as money (*naqd*), so that the legal consequences of *riba* can also be applied to it. The principle of *al-‘ādah muḥakkamah* reinforces that changes in societal customs have significant legal implications (Al-Bājūrī, n.d.; Az-Zuhaili, n.d.; Kamali, 2003).

Thus, the synthesis of the three approaches—legal ‘*illah*, *maqāṣid al-syarī‘ah*, and ‘*urf*—produces a more comprehensive formulation that *fulus* is ruled as an object of *riba* if it has functioned as a widely recognized medium of exchange in society. This approach represents a meeting point

between the Shafi'i and Maliki schools, namely combining methodological caution with contextual flexibility (Auda, 2008; El-Gamal, 2006).

In the end, it can be affirmed that riba law in fiqh muamalah is not only normative-textual but also has a dynamic dimension capable of adapting to the development of modern economic systems. Therefore, an integrative approach between text, *maqāṣid*, and *'urf* becomes the most *maslahah* basis for understanding and applying riba law to contemporary money in a relevant, fair, and sustainable manner (Chapra, 2008; Kamali, 2008; Kahf, 2006).

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MR (Muhammad Royyan Faqih Azhary): Conceptualization, validation, formal analysis, investigation, writing – original draft, writing – review & editing, supervision, funding acquisition (if none, state "not applicable").

AN (Advan Navis Zubaidi): Methodology, software, validation, formal analysis, investigation, data curation, writing – original draft, writing – review & editing, visualization.

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