Al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhīyyah (Islamic Legal Maxims):
Concept, Functions, History, Classifications and
Application to Contemporary Medical Issues.

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Exeter
as a thesis for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Arab and Islamic Studies,
In February 2012.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses *al-qawāʿid al-fiqhiyyah* (Islamic legal maxims), one of the significant disciplines of Islamic legal thought. It aims to introduce the subject theoretically and practically. For the former, it introduces the principal abstract areas relating to the discipline: namely, definition, functions, types, sources, relationship with other disciplines of Islamic legal thought. It also traces the historical development of the discipline from the earliest stages to recent times. These areas are covered in the first two chapters, which comprise almost half of the whole thesis. For the practical element of the thesis, the discussion aims to present the various practical applications of *al-qawāʿid al-fiqhiyyah* through two means. First, examining the so-called *al-qawāʿid al-khams al-kubrā* (the five universal maxims) and *al-qawāʿid al-kulliyyah* (the general maxims), which have been seen as representative of the entire field, due to their large scope of application over the *fiqh* particulars. The discussion mostly contains the examples that jurists have adduced in the course of history. In some cases, however, examples of contemporary issues have also been added. The main focus is to show the significance of *qawāʿid* in categorizing the scattered and, sometimes, unmanageable *fiqh* cases into general principles. This is presented in two chapters: the third and fourth. Second, examining the use of *al-qawāʿid al-fiqhiyyah* in deducing legal determination for contemporary issues. Six medical issues have been selected to be study cases in this regard. The aim is to show the importance of *qawāʿid* in the area of *ijtihād* and finding out the legal status for the novel issues. This has been presented in the last chapter.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, all praise be due to Allah, the Almighty, for giving me the ability, health and knowledge to complete this work, for without Him, I would not have been able to start, let alone to finish it. And may His peace and blessing be upon the Prophet Muhammad, his Family and his Companions.

Based on a Prophetic tradition stating that, “He who does not thank people does not thank Allah”, I would like to acknowledge and thank those who have significantly contributed to the completion of this work.

My deep and sincere thanks go to all of my family members: to my father and my mother whose great support and prayer were crucial in the achievement of this work; my dearest and loving wife for her patience and endurance during the whole period of my study in Exeter; to my loving and adorable children: Muhammad and Aisha whose presence brings me so much solace and comfort; to my brothers and sisters; my nephews and nieces; and to my father-in-law, mother-in-law and their children.

My deep gratefulness, thanks and respect go to my supervisor Professor Robert Gleave for his patience, continuous help and support and for his diligent supervision. It is a privilege to complete this work under his supervision.

I would also like to thank my friends in Exeter, with whom I spent nice times: Suhayl, Ibrāhīm Mādī, Ibrāhīm al-Zuway, Faraj, Sha‘bān, Ayman, Aḥmad, Anas, ʿAyyād, Ramaḍān, Sāmiḥ, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and Mabrūk.
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