THE PARAMETERS OF AL-JTIHAD IN ZAKAT: THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

By: Tahir, N (Tahir, Ibrahim Mohamed); Chee G (Chee, Sapur)

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Abstract
Throughout the centuries the Muslims sought, and their scholars in particular, have faced questions and challenges about zakat. However, there is a vast difference between raising questions for the sake of seeking knowledge and making allegations based on mere assertion rather than on jihad. Jihad is the third pillar of Islam and it should therefore be realized that all the rulings and norms related to zakat are fixed by shariah texts which cannot be changed because of the limitation of time and space. To some people certain aspects of jihad seem irrelevant to our contemporary time and therefore they suggest revising the whole concept of jihad and applying it according to our modern era. However, anyone who ventures to challenge the established norms of zakat must at least be well-grounded in the major sources of shariah such as the Qur'an, sunnah, ijmā', ijtihād, etc., as well as in Islamic jurisprudence and the Arabic language. Otherwise what they pose are baseless claims rather than intellectual questions. The authors of this paper focus mainly on three aspects: concept and scope of jihad, discussion and responses to various allegations raised by Volker Nenthaus and textual evidences for the proper understanding of zakat. The paper has adopted historical and descriptive methods of analysis.

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Author Information
Reprint Address: Tahir, N (reprint author)
Address: 
[1] Islamic Univ Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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