ISLAMIC LAW AND JURIPRUDENCE

# INTRODUCTION

# ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE

***“Fiqh*** (Arabic: فقه‎ [fiqh]) is Islamic jurisprudence. *Fiqh* is an expansion of the code of conduct (*Sharia*) expounded in the Quran, often supplemented by tradition (*Sunnah*) and implemented by the rulings and interpretations of Islamic jurists. *Fiqh* deals with the observance of rituals, morals and social legislation in Islam.”

# ISLAMIC LAW

**“Sharia** (Arabic: شريعة‎ also قانون إسلامي ) is the moral code and religious law of Islam. Sharia deals with many topics addressed by secular law, including crime, politics, and economics, as well as personal matters such as hygiene, diet, prayer, and fasting. Though interpretations of sharia vary between cultures, in its strictest definition it is considered the infallible law of God—as opposed to the human interpretation of the laws (*fiqh*).”

HISTORY AND IMPORTANT OF ISLAMIC LAW AND JURISPRUDENCE

The origin of sharia is the Qur'an, believed by Muslims to be the word of God, and traditions gathered from the life of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad (born ca. 570 CE in Mecca).

Sharia underwent fundamental development, beginning with the reigns of caliphs Abu Bakr (632–34) and Umar (634–44), during which time many questions were brought to the attention of Muhammad's closest comrades for consultation. During the reign of Muawiya b. Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, ca. 662 CE, Islam undertook an urban transformation, raising questions not originally covered by Islamic law.[23] Since then, changes in Islamic society have played an ongoing role in developing sharia, which branches out into fiqh and Qanun respectively.

The formative period of *fiqh* stretches back to the time of the early Muslim communities. In this period, jurists were more concerned with pragmatic issues of authority and teaching than with theory. Progress in theory happened with the coming of the early Muslim jurist Muhammad ibn Idris ash-Shafi'i (767–820), who laid down the basic principles of Islamic jurisprudence in his book *Al-Risala*. The book details the four roots of law (Quran, Sunnah, *ijma*, and *qiyas*) while specifying that the primary Islamic texts (the Quran and the *hadith*) be understood according to objective rules of interpretation derived from careful study of the Arabic language.

A number of important legal concepts and institutions were developed by Islamic jurists during the classical period of Islam, known as the Islamic Golden Age, dated from the 7th to 13th centuries.

Among the Muslims, tribal laws were adapted to conform to sharia "for they could not form part of the tribal law unless and until they were generally accepted as such." Additionally, Noel James Coulson, Lecturer in Islamic law of the University of London, states that "to the tribe as a whole belonged the power to determine the standards by which its members should live. But here the tribe is conceived not merely as the group of its present representatives but as a historical entity embracing past, present, and future generations." So, while "each and every law must be rooted in either the Qur'an or the Sunnah," without contradiction, tribal life brought about a sense of participation. Such participation was further reinforced by Muhammad who stated, "My community will never agree in error".

The Umayyads initiated the office of appointing *qadis*, or Islamic judges. The jurisdiction of the *qadi* extended only to Muslims, while non-Muslim populations retained their own legal institutions. The *qadis* were usually pious specialists in Islam. As these grew in number, they began to theorize and systemize Islamic jurisprudence The Abbasid made the institution of *qadi* independent from the government, but this separation wasn't always respected.

Both the Umayyad caliph Umar II and the Abbasids had agreed that the caliph could not legislate contrary to the Qur'an or the sunnah. Imam Shafi'i declared: "a tradition from the Prophet must be accepted as soon as it become known...If there has been an action on the part of a caliph, and a tradition from the Prophet to the contrary becomes known later, that action must be discarded in favor of the tradition from the Prophet." Thus, under the Abbasids the main features of sharia were definitively established and sharia was recognized as the law of behavior for Muslims.

During the 19th century, the history of Islamic law took a sharp turn due to new challenges the Muslim world faced: the West had risen to a global power and colonized a large part of the world, including Muslim territories. In the Western world, societies changed from the agricultural to the industrial stage, new social and political ideas emerged, and social models slowly shifted from hierarchical towards egalitarian. The Ottoman Empire and the rest of the Muslim world were in decline, and calls for reform became louder. In Muslim countries, codified state law started replacing the role of scholarly legal opinion. Western countries sometimes inspired, sometimes pressured, and sometimes forced Muslim states to change their laws. Secularist movements pushed for laws deviating from the opinions of the Islamic legal scholars. Islamic legal scholarship remained the sole authority for guidance in matters of rituals, worship, and spirituality, while they lost authority to the state in other areas. The Muslim community became divided into groups reacting differently to the change. This division persists until the present day (Brown 1996, Hallaq 2001, Ramadan 2005, Aslan 2006, Safi 2003, Nenezich 2006).

* **Secularists** believe that the law of the state should be based on secular principles, not on Islamic legal doctrines.
* **Traditionalists** believe that the law of the state should be based on the traditional legal schools.
* **Reformers** believe that new Islamic legal theories can produce modernized Islamic and lead to acceptable opinions in areas such as women's rights.However, traditionalists believe that any departure from the legal teachings of the Quran as explained by the Prophet Muhammad and put into practice by him is an alien concept that cannot properly be attributed.

BASIC LAW OF ISLAMIC LAW AND JURISPRUDENCE

### Hygiene and purification

In Islam, purification has a spiritual dimension and a physical one. Muslims believe that certain human activities and contact with impure animals and substances cause impurity. Classic Islamic law details how to recognize impurity, and how to remedy it. Muslims use water for purification in most circumstances, although earth can also be used under certain conditions. Before prayer or other religious rituals, Muslims must clean themselves in a prescribed manner. The manner of cleansing, either wudhu or ghusl, depend on the circumstances. Muslims' cleaning of dishes, clothing and homes are all done in accordance with stated laws.

### Economic laws

All Muslims who live above the subsistence level must pay an annual alms, known as *zakat*. This is not charity, but rather an obligation owed by the eligible Muslim to the poor of the community. The amount is calculated based on the wealth of the Muslim. There is no fixed rate stated in Quran; but the generally practiced rate is 2.5 percent. Eligibility and total payable varies; depending on the type and quantity of wealth being assessed. If the Government wishes to create a comprehensive and robust welfare state, the rate can be increased. Wealth includes savings, jewelry and land. Classic Islamic law details the tax, how it is assessed, its collection, and its distribution.

Islamic law recognizes private and community property, as well as overlapping forms of entitlement for charitable purposes, known as waqf or trusts. Under sharia law, however, ownership of all property ultimately rests with God; while individual property rights are upheld, there is a corresponding obligation to share, particularly with those in need. The laws of contract and obligation are also formed around this egalitarian Quranic requirement, prohibiting unequal exchanges or unfair advantage in trade. On this basis, the charging of interest on loans is prohibited, as are other transactions in which risks are borne disproportionately to the potential returns between parties to a transaction. The limits on personal liability afforded by incorporation are seen as a form of usury in this sense, as is insurance. All these inequities in risk and reward between parties to a transaction, known collectively as riba, are prohibited. For this reason, Islamic banking and financing are partnerships between customers and institutions, where risk and reward are distributed equitably. Partnerships, rather than corporations, are the key concept in collective Islamic business. Financing and investments are accomplished in this manner, as purchases and resales, with equity shifting over time between the institution and the client as payments are made or returns are recognized. Conversely, no individual is shielded from the consequences of poor judgement or bad timing. The Islamic financial and investment models have taken root in the West and begun to flourish. Classic Islamic law details the manner of contracting, the types of transactions, the assignment of liability and reward, and the responsibilities of the parties in Islamic trade.

The rules of inheritance under sharia law are intricate, and a female's portion is generally half the amount a male would receive under the same circumstances. Up to one third of a person's property may be distributed as bequests, or wasiyya, upon their death. After debts are settled, the remainder of the estate will be divided among the family of the deceased according to the rules of inheritance, or irth. In Islamic societies, inherited wealth and property do not easily accumulate to, or remain in, certain families. Large concentrations of property will be divided into smaller portions over time among male inheritors. Property will tend to flow to other families as female inheritors take their shares into their marriages. Classic Islamic law details the division of property, the shares family members are entitled to, adjustments and redistributions in the shares, orders of precedence among inheritors, and substitution among inheritors.

### Dietary laws

During the Islamic month of Ramadan, Muslims abstain from food and drinks between dawn and sunset. Exceptions to this obligation are made for children who are pre-pubescent, the infirm, travelers, and pregnant or menstruating women. During Ramadan, the daylight hours will often begin and end with a large meal. After dinner, many Muslims participate in special communal prayers held during Ramadan. The end of Ramadan fasting is celebrated with special prayers, gatherings of family and friends, and specially prepared meals. Muslims may also fast on other special days of the year, and to make up for missed days of fasting. Classic Islamic law details the exact definition of the fast, the times of fasting, how a fast may be broken, who must fast, and permitted exceptions to the fast.

Islamic law does not present a comprehensive list of pure foods and drinks. However, it prohibits:

* Swine, blood, the meat of already dead animals and animals slaughtered in the name of someone other than God.
* Slaughtering an animal in any other way except the prescribed manner of *tazkiyah* (cleansing) by taking God's name, which involves cutting the throat of the animal and draining the blood. Slaughtering with a blunt blade or physically ripping out the oesophagus is strictly forbidden. Modern methods of slaughter like the captive bolt stunning and electrocuting are also prohibited.
* Intoxicants

The prohibition of dead meat is not applicable to fish and locusts. Also hadith literature prohibits beasts having sharp canine teeth, birds having claws and talons in their feet, *Jallalah* (animals whose meat carries a stink in it because they feed on filth), tamed donkeys, and any piece cut from a living animal.

### Theological obligations

At least once in each Muslim's lifetime, they must attempt a visit to the Holy Places of Islam located in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The focus of this journey is the Kaaba, a small rectangular building around which a huge mosque has been built. This pilgrimage, known as the Hajj, begins two months after Ramadan each year. Dressed in symbolically simple clothing, Muslim pilgrims circle the Kaaba seven times, often followed by a drink from a special stream. Next, a symbolic search for water is performed by travelling back and forth between two nearby peaks. On the eighth day of the month, the pilgrims travel to Mina in the desert and spend the night in tents. The following day, over two million Muslims gather on the slopes of Mount Arafat, where the afternoon is spent in prayer. The Feast of Sacrifice, celebrated by Muslims worldwide, is performed by pilgrims in Mina the next day, and includes the slaughter of an animal. Finally, the pilgrims perform a ritual Stoning of the Devil by tossing pebbles at three pillars. Classic Islamic law details the manner in which the pilgrim dresses, behaves, arrives, departs and performs each of these rituals.

Muslims are enjoined to pray five times each day, with certain exceptions. These obligatory prayers, salat, are performed during prescribed periods of the day, and most can be performed either in groups or by oneself; although it is recommended to pray in a group. There are also optional prayers which can be performed, as well as special prayers for certain seasons, days and events. Muslims must turn to face the Kaaba in Mecca when they pray, and they must be purified in order for their prayers to be accepted. Personal, informal prayer and invocation is practiced as well. Classic Islamic law details many aspects of the act of prayer, including who can pray, when to pray, how to pray, and where to pray.

Muslims are encouraged to visit those among them who are sick and dying. Dying Muslims are reminded of God's mercy, and the value of prayer, by those who visit them. In turn, the visitors are reminded of their mortality, and the transient nature of life. Upon death, the Muslim will be washed and shrouded in clean, white cloth. A special prayer, Janazah, is performed for the deceased, preferably by the assembled Muslim community. The body is taken to a place which has ground set aside for the burial of Muslims. The grave is dug perpendicular to the direction of Mecca, and the body is lowered into the grave to rest on its side, with the face turned towards Mecca. Classic Islamic law details visitation of the ill, preparation of the dead for burial, the funeral prayer and the manner in which the Muslim is buried.

### Criminal jurisprudence

The concept of justice embodied in sharia is different from that of secular Western law. Muslims believe the sharia law has been revealed by God. In Islam, the laws that govern human affairs are just one facet of a universal set of laws governing nature itself. Violations of Islamic law are offenses against God and nature, including one's own human nature. Crime in Islam is sin. Whatever crime is committed, whatever punishment is prescribed for that crime in this world, one must ultimately answer to God on the Day of Judgement.

Many consider the punishments prescribed by some countries' interpretation of Islamic law to be "barbaric and cruel". Islamic scholars argue that, if implemented properly, the punishments serve as a deterrent to crime. In international media, practices by countries applying Islamic law have fallen under considerable criticism at times. This is particularly the case when the sentence carried out is seen to greatly tilt away from established standards of international human rights. This is true for the application of the death penalty for the crimes of adultery, blasphemy, apostasy and homosexuality, amputations for the crime of theft, and flogging for fornication or public intoxication.

Muhammad is reported to have said: "He who plays with dice is like the one who handles the flesh and blood of swine." Abd-Allah ibn Amr reported that Muhammad prohibited all games of chance and card playing that caused financial gain or loss.

#### Penalties

The punishment depends on whether the criminal was convicted of qesas, hudud or tazir.

In a tazir crime, the penalty would be usually a prison sentence, corporal punishment in some countries, or an execution in a very serious case. Since hudud crimes are extremely hard to punish, this is the usual route that would be taken. Stoning and amputation would certainly not be carried out in a tazir sentence, and the punishment would not be fixed, but discretionary.

In the rarest of rare case when a person is convicted of a hudud crime, the punishment is much harsher.

In accordance with the Quran and several hadith, theft is punished by imprisonment or amputation of hands. Several requirements are in place for the amputation of hands, they are:

* There must have been criminal intent to take private (not common) property.
* The theft must not have been the product of hunger, necessity, or duress.
* The goods stolen must: be over a minimum value, not haraam, and not owned by the thief's family.
* Goods must have been taken from custody (*i.e.*, not in a public place).
* There must be reliable witnesses.

All of these must be met under the scrutiny of judicial authority.[Quran 5:38

In accordance with hadith, stoning to death is the penalty for married men and women who commit adultery. In addition, there are several conditions related to the person who commits it that must be met. One of the difficult ones is that the punishment cannot be enforced unless there is a confession of the person, or four male eyewitnesses who each saw the act being committed. All of these must be met under the scrutiny of judicial authority. For unmarried men and women, the punishment prescribed in the Quran and hadith is 100 lashes. However, Islamists in northern Mali, citing shariah law, stoned an unmarried couple who allegedly had children together to death in 2012.

The "four witness" standard comes from the Quran itself, a revelation Muhammad announced in response to accusations of adultery leveled at his wife, Aisha: "Why did they not produce four witnesses? Since they produce not witnesses, they verily are liars in the sight of Allah."[Quran 24:13]

Punishments are authorized by other passages in the Quran and hadiths for certain crimes (*e.g.*, extramarital sex, adultery), and are employed by some as rationale for extra-legal punitive action while others disagree:

“The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication—flog each of them with hundred stripes: Let no compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by God, if ye believe in God and the last day.”[Quran 24:2] “Nor come nigh to adultery: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils).”[Quran 17:32]

Rape is punishable by death in sharia law. However there is some dispute as to which crime it is a part of. In some countries, like Pakistan, rape is considered to be a part of adultery (zina). This has led to some cases where rapists were unable to be punished due to the rape victim lacking 4 witnesses. However, in most countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, rape is considered a part of armed robbery (hiraba), making it easier to convict rapists. However, in most cases, rape is punished as a tazir crime, which could still be the death penalty. Many rape cases are settled out of court, with the rapist paying monetary compensation (jirah) to the victim, and in some cases they pay diyya for injuries inflicted.

#### Leaving Islam (apostasy)

In most interpretations of sharia, conversion by Muslims to other religions or becoming non-religious, is strictly forbidden and is termed apostasy. Many Islamic countries legally impose capital punishment as the penalty for apostasy.

The accusation of apostasy may be used against non-conventional interpretations of the Quran. The severe persecution of the famous expert in Arabic literature, Nasr Abu Zayd, is an example of this. Similar accusations and persecutions were famously leveled against the author Salman Rushdie

### Customs and behaviour

Practitioners of Islam are generally taught to follow some specific customs in their daily lives. Most of these customs can be traced back to Abrahamic traditions in Pre-Islamic Arabian society. Due to Muhammad's sanction or tacit approval of such practices, these customs are considered to be Sunnah (practices of Muhammad as part of the religion) by the Ummah (Muslim nation). It includes customs like:

* Saying "*Bismillah*" (in the name of God) before eating and drinking.
* Using the right hand for drinking and eating.
* Saying "*As-Salaam Alaikum*" (peace be upon you) when meeting someone and answering with "*Wa 'alaikumus salam*" (and peace be upon you).
* Saying "*Alhamdulillah*" (all gratitude is for only God) when sneezing and responding with "*Yarhamukallah*" (God have mercy on you).
* Saying the "*Adhan*" (prayer call) in the right ear of a newborn and the Iqama in its left.
* In the sphere of hygiene, it includes:
  + Clipping the moustache
  + Cutting nails
  + Circumcising the male offspring
  + Cleaning the nostrils, the mouth, and the teeth and
  + Cleaning the body after urination and defecation
* Abstention from sexual relations during the menstrual cycle and the puerperal discharge,[Quran 2:222] and ceremonial bath after the menstrual cycle, and *Janabah* (seminal/ovular discharge or sexual intercourse).[Quran 4:43][Quran 5:6]
* Burial rituals include funeral prayer of bathed and enshrouded body in coffin cloth and burying it in a grave.

#### Rituals

There are two festivals that are considered Sunnah.

* Eid ul-Fitr
* Eid al-Adha

Rituals associated with these festivals:

* Sadaqah (charity) before Eid ul-Fitr prayer.
* The Prayer and the Sermon on Eid day.
* Takbirs (glorifying God) after every prayer in the days of *Tashriq*. (Normally these days are considered to be the ones in which pilgrims stay at Mina once they return from Muzdalifah *i.e.*, the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th of Dhu al-Hijjah.)
* Sacrifice of unflawed, four legged grazing animal of appropriate age after the prayer of Eid al-Adha in the days of *Tashriq*.

#### Dress codes

The Quran also places a dress code upon its followers. The rule for men has been ordained before the women: “say to the believing men to lower their gaze and preserve their modesty, it will make for greater purity for them and Allah is well aware of all that they do.”[Quran 24:30] The text continues, “And say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts and do not display their ornaments except what appears thereof, and let them wear their *khumūr* over their bosoms, and not display their ornaments except to their husbands...”[24:31] All those men in whose presence a woman is not obliged to practise the dress code are known as her *mahrams*. Men have a more relaxed dress code: the body must be covered from knee to waist. However, under sharia law, women are required to cover all of their bodies except hands and face. Covering the face is the subject of some divergence of opinion amongst the scholars – some consider it to be compulsory since the face is the major source of attraction, whilst others consider it to be highly recommended. The rationale given for these rules is that men and women are not to be viewed as sexual objects. Men are required to keep their guard up and women to protect themselves. In theory, should either one fail, the other prevents the society from falling into *fitna* (temptation or discord).

There are many different opinions, however, as to whether the veil or headscarf is a real Quranic obligation. Some scholars such as Mohammed Arkoun, Soheib Bencheikh, Abdoldjavad Falaturi, Gamal al-Banna claim it is not. The Muslims brotherwood's spiritual leader, the sheikh Yusuf\_al-Qaradawi, states the 19 th december 2003 (Qatar), that the veil is compulsory. However, the first group appears dominant: "Jamal al Banna has been for a number of years one of the few mainstream Muslim scholars to argue that the Muslim headscarf, or hijab, is not an Islamic obligation."

SOURCE OF ISLAMIC LAW AND JURIPRUDENCE

Various **sources of sharia** are used by Islamic jurisprudence to elucidate the sharia, the body of Islamic law.[1] The primary sources, accepted universally by all Muslims, are the Qur'an and Sunnah. The Qur'an is the holy scripture of Islam, believed by Muslims to be the direct and unaltered word of God. The Sunnah consists of the religious actions and quotations of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad and narrated through his Companions and the Imams.

### Qur’an

The Qur'an is the first and most important source of Islamic law. Believed to be the direct word of God as revealed to Muhammad through angel Gabriel in Mecca and Medina, the scripture specifies the moral, philosophical, social, political and economic basis on which a society should be constructed. The verses revealed in Mecca deal with philosophical and theological issues, whereas those revealed in Medina are concerned with socio-economic laws. The Qur'an was written and preserved during the life of Muhammad, and compiled soon after his death.

The verses of the Qur'an are categorized into three fields: "science of speculative theology", "ethical principles" and "rules of human conduct". The third category is directly concerned with Islamic legal matters which contains about five hundred verses or one thirteenth of it. The task of interpreting the Qur'an has led to various opinions and judgments. The interpretations of the verses by Muhammad's companions for Sunnis and Imams for Shias are considered the most authentic, since they knew why, where and on what occasion each verse was revealed.

### Sunnah

The Sunnah is the next important source, and is commonly defined as "the traditions and customs of Muhammad" or "the words, actions and silent assertions of him". It includes the everyday sayings and utterances of Muhammad, his acts, his tacit consent, and acknowledgments of statements and activities. According to Shi'ite jurists, the sunnah also includes the words, deeds and acknowledgments of the twelve Imams and Fatimah, Muhammad's daughter, who are believed to be infallible.

Justification for using the Sunnah as a source of law can be found in the Qur'an. The Qur'an commands Muslims to follow Muhammad. During his lifetime, Muhammad made it clear that his traditions (along with the Qur'an) should be followed after his death. The overwhelming majority of Muslims consider the sunnah to be essential supplements to and clarifications of the Qur'an. In Islamic jurisprudence, the Qur'an contains many rules for the behavior expected of Muslims but there are no specific Qur'anic rules on many religious and practical matters. Muslims believe that they can look at the way of life, or *sunnah*, of Muhammad and his companions to discover what to imitate and what to avoid.

## Secondary sources

All medieval Muslim jurists rejected arbitrary opinion, and instead developed various secondary sources, also known as juristic principles or doctrines, to follow in case the primary sources (i.e. the Qur'an and Sunnah) are silent on the issue.

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|  |  | |  |  |  | [Al-Shafi‘i](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Shafi%E2%80%98i) | | | | |  | | [Ismail ibn Ibrahim](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ismail_ibn_Ibrahim) | | | | |  | |  | [Abu Yusuf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu_Yusuf) | | | | | |  | | [Muhammad al-Shaybani](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad_al-Shaybani) | | | | |  | | |  | |  | |  | |  |
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|  |  | |  |  |  | [Ahmad ibn Hanbal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmad_ibn_Hanbal) | | | | | [Muhammad al-Bukhari](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad_al-Bukhari) Travelled every where collecting hadith | | | | | [Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim_ibn_al-Hajjaj) Travelled around collecting hadith | | | | | [Muhammad ibn `Isa at-Tirmidhi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad_ibn_%60Isa_at-Tirmidhi) Travelled around collecting hadith | | | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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