

# CALL FOR PAPER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, 24-25 April 2018

Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL), Chair of Law and Religions  
Research Institute Religions, Societies, Cultures, Spiritualities (RSCS)

## RETHINKING HALAL: GENEALOGY, CURRENT TRENDS, AND NEW INTERPRETATION

### GENERAL BACKGROUND

The issue of halal sprang up in the early 1980s, but only in the past 10 years has it become a salient concern, especially in Europe and Asiatic non-Muslim countries, mainly for business purposes and other economic activities. Since then, halal has progressively encompassed all aspects of modern human life, including halal food-processing, halal hotel, halal sauna, halal cosmetics, halal drugs, halal fashion, halal taxi, halal airline, etc. From this halal phenomenon, many new things arose: halal certificate bodies (HCB), Islamic marketing, Islamic finance, and the like. Accordingly, halal has been continuously normalized and standardized by modern rationality that has turned it into a practice and policy for regulating Muslims in their whole daily life. These new practices in economy progressively required new kinds of scholars ('ulama) committees to deal with new discoveries in the food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries, in order to issue fatwas on such issues, which did not exist or were different in the past within classical-fiqh discussion.

In the same vein, halal creates a spirit of entrepreneurship based on ethics that claims to abide by Islamic law, arguing to serve the Muslim community. Consequently these economic practices lead to some extent to a "halal management model" which could be understood as a management based on Islamic values and norms. At the same time, this halal economy has been largely practiced by specific ethnic groups using their ethnic identity (Moroccan, Indian or Turkish for instance) for halal commerce. This reality unveils the relation between ethics and ethnic that is closely intertwined in Muslims' economic practices. Companies and firms are based upon an Islamic ethics and on ethnical identity and values in order to attract more consumers and clients. These interactions force the State to regulate and legislate on halal. In that respect, one may say that the State becomes an active 'agent' for halal. Once halal is regulated, it often creates legal and judicial conflicts. This phenomenon never happened in the past.

For this conference, we invite scholars and researchers to speak on the genealogy of halal since Muslim religious scholars started to instruct a written knowledgeable debate on 'halal' and to unravel Muslim social practices towards halal. We need also to discuss how the main stake holders in halal ('ulama, state, halal certificate bodies, scholars) are producing halal norms and standards applying to 'others'. This could lead us to rethink how they become moral agents (individually or institutionally) aiming to control, to guide, and to dictate what is lawful and unlawful for societies, industries, and companies. Eventually, we must explore the production of fatwas about halal interpretations of new discoveries and findings in science. This circle of 'halalness' is the result of a continuous, contingent process within Muslim communities and scholars. Keynote speakers and selected-speakers are, therefore, expected to write a paper based upon an original and high-quality research, which will be distributed during the conference for critical comments, suggestions, and feedbacks.

The conference will feature keynote speakers in the field for plenary session and invited scholars as discussants. This two-day conference offers a unique opportunity to share knowledge among specialists in the field and to contribute to a forthcoming publication. The conference will favor interdisciplinary discussion in the globalized world: law, politics, anthropology, sociology, education, history, philology, economics, food, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetic technologies. The conference will focus, but will not be limited to the following themes:

### 1. Halal Certification Bodies (HCB) and the "Imagined Standardized Norms" of Halal

This theme is dedicated to (i) the study of halal certification bodies around the world, both in Muslim majority and Muslim minority countries, and (ii) their supposed role to create "imagined" standards and norms in halal. The theme attempts to answer: Who are the actors in halal certification bodies? What are the standards? Do they make norms for halal? What is the role of ulama in the process of certification? Who is the authority in deciding the halalness of a product? Does the standardization of halal neglect traditional Islamic institutions? Does the HCB marginalize the role of 'ulama? Does the HCB become an enterprise primarily seeking profit as a multinational or national company rather than serving Muslim communities? What is the financial dimension in the halal certification process?

### 2. Glocalisation and Networks of Halal

The glocalization (combining global and local dynamics) of halal and its network are an important frame for halal research. It has to do with practices of the people of a country as a daily life routine. Local factors, cultures and traditions are at work within a general context of globalization. The interaction between the local and the global cannot be neglected. The issue of halal is much more complex than a mere "domino effect" mechanism. This theme attempts to answer the following questions: to what extent do the local factors determine the debate and the practices of halal? How do global and local factors interact in halal discussion and practices?

### 3. Historical transformation and development of halal

The theme is to explore the effects of the "naming" of halal. It tries to understand the formation of the halal appellation from the past to the future. In other words, how halal named and produced as a discourse (in the past) framed our actual conception. It leads us to re-think our current conceptions about halal (at the present). This gives one way to discuss the new conceptions of halal that would affect and influence the generations to come (in the future). The theme is looking for answers to questions like: how was the concept of halal thought of by Muslims in the past? What is our conception of halal at present? How will it influence people's concept of halal in the future?

### 4. Halal, Commodification of Islam, and Management

This theme is dedicated to the convergence between the ethic (halal), the ethnic (identity of a particular group), and the etiquette in halal economic practices. It also explores how halal market 'commodified' Islam and the impact it had on the management of Muslim workers. The session tries to answer the following questions: what are the cross-influences of Islamic ethics and normativity in commerce, trade, entrepreneurship and management in dealing with halal? What is the role of ethnic identity in halal commerce? What is the relation between 'the ethic' and 'the ethnic' in the Islam-inspired economy? Which kind of values/norms are the most efficient in commerce: ethic or ethnic? Then, what halal management is about.

### 5. Halal between Legislation and Judicial Practices

This theme is to study how judges adjudicated cases on halal. This is mainly about halal legislations and judicial practices in particular countries. The theme tries to answer the following questions: What does legislation tell us about halal (law in the book)? How has halal been codified? What are the judicial practices in court (law in action)?

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### 6. The State, Halal Marketing, and Islamic Finance

The theme will investigate the role of the State (governmental bodies), private actors (companies and enterprises) and civil society in “promoting” and “marketing” halal in a way that contributes to the emergence and the development of Islamic finance in either Muslim majority or Muslim-minority countries. In Muslim minority countries, for instance in Europe, the States have two concerns: at the international level, the States encourage companies and enterprises to export halal product to Muslim-majority countries for economic purposes, while at the national level, the States may be suspicious about halal market which, they think, potentially leads to communitarianism or to fundamentalism. This theme will attempt to answer the following questions: what is the role of States and civil society in halal economy? What role do ‘Islamic’ marketing agencies play in halal promotion? Does Islamic finance become an end in itself for the halal economy?

### 7. Halal’s Fatwa and Role of Ulama’s Committee

The theme will attempt to explore the development and the evolution of fatwas on halal in both classical and modern fiqh, as well as debates among organizations of ‘ulama and Sharia committees around the Muslim world, and their impact in non-Muslim countries and vice-versa. The theme tries to respond to such questions as: how has halal been interpreted in Islamic theology? How do halal practices of Muslim communities differ from discourses in Islamic theology? What are the new fatwas in the contemporary Islamic world (individual fatwa or institutional fatwa)? In what way do they differ from those in classical fiqh and why? How do various fatwa committees in different Muslim countries perceive halal differently? How do ‘ulama react to a rapidly growing halal economy? What are the differences in opinion pertaining to halal among the fatwa committees in the Muslim world? How do ‘ulama deal with the fast growing halal market in issuing halal fatwas on products?

### 8. Halal Development and New Discoveries in Food, Pharmaceuticals, and Cosmetics

The theme attempts to explain current developments and new discoveries on food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic sectors, for instance the use of gelatin and alcohol. This theme attempts to answer the following questions: How do the halal market and institutions react to new findings and discoveries? What are the main trends in halal reasoning regarding the transformations of these scientific and economic domains?

### REGISTRATION & PARTICIPATION FEE

Registration and participation are free for the speakers. People interested to attend the conference (2 days) should register to [halal.conference.ucl.2018@gmail.com](mailto:halal.conference.ucl.2018@gmail.com). Name, institution/affiliation, contact details and identity card must be included. Participation fees is as follows:

- University, lecturer and researcher : 150€
- Practitioner, entrepreneur, and company : 500€

No fee is applied for students, lecturers, and researchers of the UCL, but they must register.

### ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation, light lunch, and refreshments will be provided during the conference for the speakers. Traveling costs are not covered; and no financial assistance is offered. To reach Louvain-la-Neuve, please visit: <https://www.uclouvain.be/en-acces-lln.html>

### PUBLICATION

The selected-papers will be double blind peer-reviewed for publication by a reputable publisher in order to reach a wider audience. We have planned to launch the book before the end of 2019.

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### ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Name, institution/affiliation, short-biography, contact details (address, e-mail, and mobile phone with WhatsApp number) must be submitted along with the abstract (500-1000 words). All abstracts should be sent to: [halal.conference.ucl.2018@gmail.com](mailto:halal.conference.ucl.2018@gmail.com) latest by Monday, 8 January 2018, 07:00 am (CET). Please save the documents as follows: “your first name\_your last name\_abstract”, for example [ayang\\_yakin\\_abstract](mailto:ayang_yakin_abstract).

### FULL-PAPER SUBMISSION

Full paper must be in English, maximum 25 pages excluding the bibliography (in 12 Times New Roman, 1,5 space). Name, e-mail, institution, address, short biography with recent photo (passport size) should be enclosed. All notes must be endnotes and a bibliography must be included. All full papers must be sent in Word (ext. doc/docx) to: [halal.conference.ucl.2018@gmail.com](mailto:halal.conference.ucl.2018@gmail.com) latest by Monday 26 March 2018, 07:00 am (CET). Please save the documents as follows: “your first name\_your last name\_full paper”, for example [ayang\\_yakin\\_full paper](mailto:ayang_yakin_full paper).

### IMPORTANT DATES

Deadline for Submission of Abstract	: Monday, 8 January 2018, 07:00 am CET.
Abstract Notification acceptance	: Monday, 29 January 2018, 11:00 pm CET.
Deadline for Submission of full paper	: Monday, 26 March 2018, 07:00 am CET.
Conference dates	: Tuesday-Wednesday, 24-25 April 2018.

Keynote speakers and selected-papers speakers are required to be in Belgium on Monday, 23 April 2018 to attend the conference opening and official welcoming, and to actively participate in the whole conference (from 09:00 am to 06.30 pm) on Tuesday-Wednesday, 24-25 April 2018.

### ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Dr. Ayang Utriza Yakin  
Postdoctoral Fellow “MOVE-IN Louvain”, with the support of the European Commission (Marie-Curie Actions), at the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium.

Prof. Dr. Louis-Léon Christiaens  
Professor in Law and Religions and Chairman of the Research Institute Religions, Societies, Cultures, Spiritualities, at the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium.

Prof. Dr. Baudouin Dupret  
Research Director at the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), France and Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Law of the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium.

### CONTACT PERSON

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