
SHARIASOURCE STYLE GUIDE LAST UPDATED 15 NOV 2020

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GENERAL STYLE GUIDELINES

1.1 CITATION & FOOTNOTES

- **Bluebook or CMOS!** All elements of style and citations should generally adhere to *The Bluebook* [or analogous online [Indigo Book](#)] or to the [Chicago Manual of Style \(CMOS\), 17th edition](#). The rule is: be consistent internally. If you are consistent and use common sense, that is typically fine. Here are some examples:

Bluebook

Article: Roy P. Mottahedeh, *The Shu‘ûbîyah Controversy and the Social History of Early Islamic Iran*, 7 INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MIDDLE EAST STUDIES 161–82 (1976).

Book: ROY P. MOTTAHEDEH, *LOYALTY AND LEADERSHIP IN AN EARLY ISLAMIC SOCIETY* (1980).

Case: *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954) [See fuller model below for memos.]

NB: There usually is no Bluebook citation form for early Islamic law cases. You will typically cite a case by referring to a case name [which you may designate or enumerate] and/or citation of it in a book or larger work, as in the example below.

CMOS

Article: Roy P. Mottahedeh, “The Shu‘ûbîyah Controversy and the Social History of Early Islamic Iran,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 7, no. 2 (1976): 161–82.

Book: Roy P. Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980).

Case: *The Case of the Falsely Accused Butcher*, in Intisar Rabb, *Doubt in Islamic Law: A History of Legal Maxims, Interpretation, and Islamic Criminal Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 1–5.

NB: We adopt a few modifications to the above style guides, provided here as ‘exceptions’ and in the transliteration section below:

Exceptions

- **Foreign terms.** All Latin, Arabic, or other foreign language words and phrases, except for i.e. and e.g. [which are always followed by commas], and even those in regular legal use, such as *prima facie*, should be *italicized* when used (*contra* Bluebook Rule 7). This is true for *dicta*, *en banc*, *ḥadīth*, *sharī‘a*, etc. For Islamic law and history research, see guidelines on transliteration below. [*Contra* Bluebook Rules]
- **Emphasis.** Always indicate whether emphasis is added or in original source, through adding parentheticals: “(emphasis added)” or “(emphasis in original)” [*Contra* Bluebook Rule 5.2(d)(iii)]
- **Publisher information.** When a publisher gives multiple publication cities, provide all on draft documents; keep only the first for publication.

EX: (Leiden: Brill, 1998) [for publication] BUT (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1998) [for drafts/first submissions]

If there is no publisher, insert n.p., nd where there is no date of publication, insert n.d.

EX: (Leiden, n.d.) or (n.p. : 1998) or (n.p., n.d.)

- **Page range.** Provide inclusive page numbers for articles, book excerpts, other documents. Use a shortened form for a page number range with two or more digits within the same tens or hundreds or thousands range.

EX1: Roy P. Mottahedeh, “The *Shu‘ûbîyah* Controversy and the Social History of Early Islamic Iran,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 7, no. 2 (1976): 161–82 NOT ... :161

EX2: 334–38 NOT 334–338 and NOT 334–8
1034–38 NOT 1034–1038 and NOT 1034–8
334–438 NOT 334–38
34–38 NOT 34–8

- **Pin cites.** It is almost never appropriate to cite generally to a case. Use pincites and use parentheticals (giving a one-sentence description of the subject or argument for which you are citing the case or other source). This principle applies similarly to academic citations (articles, books, briefs) unless you mean to cite to the fact that an author has written the book or article cited.
- **Footnotes.** Use footnotes rather than endnotes, and include an alphabetized bibliography of sources cited at the end of any submission (even if you cite them in full in the footnotes).
- **Multiple citations in a footnote.** Please list multiple sources in a single footnote as follows:
 - List in reverse chronological order; and if published in the same year, in reverse order of source ‘weight’ (e.g., book then article then blog post) then by author last name
 - Separate each citation by a semi-colon followed by a single space.

1.2 PUNCTUATION

- **Spacing.** Use one space (not two) between sentences, and after a colon or semicolon. No spaces before or after hyphens and dashes.
- **Hyphens vs. dashes.** Distinguish between a hyphen (-), an en-dash (–), and an em-dash (—) [two hyphens]. MS Word automatically creates an em-dash from two consecutive hyphens (and it creates an en-dash from a hyphen preceded and followed by a space).
 - Use a **hyphen** after definite articles in transliteration (e.g., al-kitāb) and compound words or phrases (e.g., pro-choice), broad-minded professors, hard-working students).
 - Use an **en-dash** to separate a span of numbers, as in a pinpoint cite or ‘pin cite’ (e.g., 711–12).
 - Use an **em-dash** for phrases interspersed in text, i.e., to offset a phrase—as a substitute for a comma.
- **Ellipsis.** No spaces between the three periods of an ellipsis, to avoid breaking it up. (Word automatically combines a series of three dots into a single, unbroken series of characters). Treat an ellipsis as a word (it is in fact a stand-in for a word or a series of words). Accordingly, at the end of a sentence, put a period after the ellipsis (resulting in four dots), but in the middle of sentence, do not.

1.3 FORMATTING FOR ALL SUBMISSIONS

- **Description.** For all submissions other than memos, fill out the submission form OR make the first few lines of the document a description of what the document is. This description should be no more than 1-3 lines. EX: This document provides a translation of a 12th-century fatwā by Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī from [provide citation].
- **Use track changes in Word,** when making modifications; otherwise, Google Docs [which may thus be preferable] tracks your changes. One caveat: Google Docs is typically not good for use for texts with diacritics (for Islamic law research).

1.4 FORMATTING FOR SUBMISSIONS

- **General formatting.** Any submission should be single-spaced, with 12 pt. font (of some standard Unicode type that accommodates diacritics; e.g., Times New Roman, Cambria, Arial, Gentium) in the text, 10 pt. font in the footnotes, and 1-inch margins.
- **Pagination.** Place page numbers on all submissions (except for the first page)
- **Sections.** Articles, commentary, policy briefs, etc. may be divided into subsections that should be titled accordingly. Use your best judgment.
- **Links!** A lot of research / sources are now online; wherever possible, include links that will make it easy for the reader to click through and see the source itself, whether that means to a database, task management tool, file collection on one of our platforms, or a database.
- **Attachments.** Provide any necessary attachments and list a content list of them on a separate page or as part of your bibliography if more than one.

1.5 STYLE: WRITING CONVENTIONS

- **Writing style.**
 - **Active voice.** Use an active, direct voice whenever possible, i.e., note who is doing what to whom or what, following a noun-verb-object format. (Avoid the passive!)
EX: “The Court held or decided ...”
NOT: “It was held that”
 - **Make sentences short and direct.** A sentence with more than two clauses, or over 2.5 lines can almost always be broken apart and thereby improved.
- **Capitalization:**
 - Capitalize “District Court” and “Court” when referring to a specific court. Do not capitalize either when referring generally to district courts or courts.
 - Capitalize “Plaintiff,” “Appellant,” “Respondent,” and the like when referring to a specific party in a case.
 - Capitalize “Government” when referring to the federal government.
 - Capitalize formal titles, e.g., “Minister of Justice,” “Attorney General,” or “Grand Muftī,” but not minister, attorney general, or muftī when referring simply to the role.

- Capitalize the first letter of a transliterated text or name when it comes at the beginning of a sentence in the main text, e.g., “Al-Subkī held that ...,” but not in citations, e.g., “al-Subkī, *Fatāwā*, 3:125.”
- **Party or author names:**
 - Full names on first mention. List the full party or author name in the introduction / short answer or upon first mention in memos or other papers.
 - Use “The Plaintiff” or “The Defendant” NOT “Plaintiff”, etc., in a sentence.

1.6 STYLE: COMMON TERMS AND USAGE

NB: When in doubt, use *Garner’s Modern American Usage*.

- “without merit” — to be “without merit” a case must be very, very weak. “Unpersuasive” is the preferred term.
- “whether” not “whether or not” — “whether” contains its own uncertainty; thus the “or not” is superfluous.
- “feel” — only use when associated with some emotion or tactile sense: i.e., rarely, if ever, in legal and historical writing outside of those contexts.
- “that” and “which” — use “that” to introduce a restrictive clause, i.e., one that is necessary to identify the person, things, or idea to which the clause refers. Use “which” to introduce a non-restrictive clause, i.e., one that is not necessary to identify the thing the sentence modifies. Separate “which” clauses with a comma. (Think of it this way: you can lose the ‘which’ clause and still have a complete sentence.)

EX: Here is the report that caused so much furor!

The report, which caused so much furor, is lost.

- Avoid ending one sentence with a name/noun and begin the next sentence with that same name/noun. Begin the new sentence with a word that describes or references the last-mentioned name instead.

EX: “Smith sued Cooper & Sully LLC. The firm removed the offending obstruction in an attempt to encourage Smith to settle instead.” OR “Ibn Jamā’a launched a campaign to convince Mālikī and Ḥanafī jurists in Damascus to prosecute Ibn Makkī. The latter insisted that he was innocent.”

NOT: “Smith sued Cooper & Sully LLC. Cooper & Sully LLC removed the offending obstruction in an attempt to encourage Smith to settle instead.” OR “Ibn Jamā’a launched a campaign to convince Mālikī and Ḥanafī jurists in Damascus to prosecute Ibn Makkī. Ibn Makkī insisted that he was innocent.”

- Use “clear/clearly”, “obvious/obviously”, or “rationally” only when a matter really is clear, obvious, or rational.
- It is fine to use “as” in place of “because,” and in some cases preferable. But avoid using “since” to mean “because.” Since better refers to time.
- Do not use “of” after “regardless.” Thus, “regardless whether” is correct. Irregardless is not a word.
- Do not use “of” after “myriad.” Thus “myriad developments” [or “a plethora of developments”] but NOT “a myriad of developments”

- Use on the correct verb or descriptor for the person or institutions issuing a decision.
 - In U.S. law, trial courts “find,” “hold,” “grant,” and “deny.” Appellate courts “decide,” “determine,” “conclude,” “affirm,” “reverse,” “vacate,” “uphold,” “remand,” and “hold;” they do not generally “find,” “grant,” “convict,” or “deny.”
 - In Islamic law, analogously: courts “find,” “hold,” “grant,” “deny,” “acquit,” “convict,” or “issue a decision [or judgment].” Jurists “decide,” “determine,” “conclude,” AND they “agree,” “announce,” or “provide an opinion.” Fatwā councils or jurists or scholars, medieval and modern, “conclude,” “determine,” “argue;” they do not “rule,” “hold,” or “decide.” They do not, unless acting as judges, “affirm,” “reverse,” “hold,” or “convict.”

SHARIASOURCE.COM OR ISLAMICLAW.BLOG STYLE GUIDELINES (FOR ONLINE POSTS)

1.6 Citation & Footnotes

- Rather than *id.* or *supra*, use a *full citation* upon first mention, and *short citation* with pincite (Author, Short Title, Page number(s)) on subsequent mention. For short citation authors, use the name by which scholars most commonly identify authors, and typically used in primary or secondary literature (*shuhra*). For short citation titles, use the commonly known short titles again from the literature or use your best judgment to choose the first word or a meaningful part “of the full title.

EX: **Full citation:** Zayn al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Ibn Nujāym, *al-Ashbāh wa’l-nazā’ir*, ed. Muḥammad Mutī’ al-Ḥāfiẓ (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1983).

Short Citation: Ibn Nujāym, *Ashbāh*, 536

- For citations to documents in the SHARIAsource ecosystem, provide a [link to the source](#) in the relevant text, and provide a footnote with a full citation.

EX: **Paul Lee, *Cost Benefit Analysis of Islamic Finance Models*, SHARIAsource (June 11, 2015).**

1.7 Summaries

- **Summaries.** Every primary source uploaded should have a summary, comprising no more than 3–10 lines. A summary for a primary source document should identify the issuing institution or person and provide a brief overview about the content, purpose, or effect of the document.

1.8 Formatting

- **General formatting.** Each new post will generally follow the above formatting parameters: single-spaced, 12 pt. font. On the SHARIAsource [or Blog] interface, the font type and style is automatic.
- **Footnotes.** While footnotes are automatic on the Blog, on the SHARIAsource portal, you must enter footnotes for each post manually. Please consult further documentation or Training Video for instructions.

1.9 Style

- **Style.** Follow that of the general style guidelines. See above.

COLLECTING & SAVING FILES

Please accompany all submissions with all (relevant) sources on which you relied to create it. The best practice is to upload any sources on which you rely to the SHARIASource portal, to which you link in your analysis.

1.8 FILE SAVING / SHARING: DROPBOX, G-DRIVE

- **File Saving & sharing File Platforms.** We use Dropbox [or GoogleDrive] to save and share files. If you are working on PIL or SHARIASource projects, you will receive an invitation to join the folder relevant to the work you are doing; if you have not already, you should set up a Dropbox account (free) at dropbox.com or a gmail account, and test it to ensure that you can view and save files to the shared folder from your computer.
- **File Saving / Scanning Format: Primary and Secondary sources.** Often, you will be collecting primary sources (legal documents, court records, contracts, *fatwās*, etc.) and secondary sources (articles, commentary) in connection with your research. Whenever possible, you should obtain and save electronic, PDF versions (and/or JPGs for manuscripts). If you have to obtain a hard copy (as in book collections or cases copied from reporters that are not online), please scan the case or article in hi-res PDF format (300dpi or higher). Hi-res is important as it will allow Arabic OCR tools (in development) to process the document and convert into readable text.
 - For Islamic law primary sources, esp. Arabic-language works, please consult the [Open-ITI Corpus](#) [for plain text] and for other sources and formats, use the finding aids provided in the Harvard online guides for remote research in [Islamic law](#), [Middle East and Islamic Studies](#), and [Arabic monographs](#). NB: *When scanning or otherwise creating PDFs excerpts from books, always scan the title page [with volume number, where relevant] and copyright page, and append them (in that order) to the front of the excerpt.*
 - For Islamic law secondary sources, good go-to places include the databases [HeinOnline](#) or [J-STOR](#) and now [HathiTrust](#) [with Pandemic temporary access to many sources, w/an HUID login]. If articles do not appear on these databases, you may have to look for a specialized database (e.g., [IngentaConnect](#), which has *Islamic Law and Society* articles), and sometimes SSRN also has articles as they appear in the printed edition.
 - For U.S. law, good go-to places for cases are [Caselaw Access](#), [Westlaw](#), and [SCOTUSblog](#). For article or case collections (and other legal documents, such as briefs, etc.), always obtain PDFs of the original source as it appeared in the published/printed edition. For that purpose, the preference for US cases is the “West Reporter Image” on Westlaw, and if not, PDFs of slip opinions. The same is true for analogs on Islamic law databases. [For public / portal postings, please obtain the slip opinion from the court or a non-copyright protected opinion. Westlaw PDFs are copyrighted protected, because of the addition of proprietary case headers and notes.]

1.9 SAVING FILES: FILE NAMES

- **Cases & Primary Sources.** Save **cases** and other legal documents (e.g., petitions, amicus briefs, case briefs, etc.) in the following filename format

YEAR Court - PartyX v. PartyY (Type of File)

EX:

2011 10th Cir - Awad v. Ziriax et al. (Plaintiff-Appellee Response Brief)

1987 US - O'Lone v. Shabazz (opinion) [US = US Supreme Court]

1978 S. Ct. India – Mohd. Ahmed Khan v. Shah Bano Begum

- **Books.** Save books or book excerpts from contemporary and medieval primary sources following a general format that provides the author name + the death date for medieval authors or author name + publication date for modern authors; the title; and adds the publication year separately for medieval authors and page numbers for excerpts, as follows:

Monographs [Medieval / Primary Sources]

Ibn Nujaym d. 970 – Ashbāh – 1983

[author short name + d. <death date> – short title – year of publication]

Monographs [Contemporary]

Rabb 2015 – Doubt in Islamic Law [author last name + year of publication – Short Title]

Monograph Excerpts

Sezgin 1974 excerpt – Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums vol 5 – pp 10-11 [author + year – title + vol – pages]

Edited Volumes

Fadel and Monette eds 2019 - Muwaṭṭa'

[editor name(s) + “eds” + year of publication – short title]

- **Articles.** Save *articles* files in the following format:

AuthorLastName YEAR –DATE – Short Title [Feel free to shorten to something recognizable]

EX: Jackson 2011 – On Jihad in Islamic Law

Gluck and Posner 2018 – Statutory Interpretation on the Bench

TRANSLITERATION & ADDITIONAL STYLE GUIDELINES FOR ISLAMIC SOURCES

In addition to the conventions that apply above, there are a few stylistic conventions to follow for all submissions or posts referring to Islamic law or legal history, especially where it involves foreign languages or special terminology. Arabic and other foreign language terminology should adhere to the SHARIAsource transliteration system, which is a modified version of a combined IJMES and Library of Congress (LOC) set of citation styles (i.e., without diacritics if you don't know them; but if you do know them, follow the LOC style)—as provided below.

Arabic and other foreign language terminology should generally adhere to the Library of Congress (LOC) transliteration style or, with special exceptions for those who don't know Arabic, to a modified LOC citation style (i.e., without diacritics)—as provided below, with the following modifications.

1.10 Dates

- **AH/CE Dates.** Follow the AH/CE style for citing death and publication dates (for example, 941/1534 or 941/1534–5 and 2nd/8th century). Where only singular dates are available or necessary, they should be to CE. We also adopt the following conventions:

- use one digit for alternative years given as date ranges, that is, successive CE years representing the span of possible years for a definitive Hijrī year, and vice-versa; but use two digits for the second in a series of page ranges.
- provide AH and CE death dates upon first mention in each chapter in the format AH/CE, and typically refer to CE whenever dates appear alone.

1.11 Chains of Transmission

- **Use the following format:**

"According to Mālik, Nāfi' [reported] from / that 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb wrote to his governors..."

Where "from" is used after the first bracketed text for however many narrators there are in the chain. And that way we largely retain the editors' use of "from" — changing only the first to "According to", and inserting only one bracketed "[reported]", and leaving all other verbs used as-is to retain a sense of the original Arabic as well as the ambiguity in mu'an'an attributions in most isnads.

1.12 [SHARIASource Transliteration Style Guide](#)

For transliteration, [we all articles should](#) adhere to the [following SHARIASource style guide, which is a modified form of the International Journal for Middle Eastern Studies \(IJMES\), which departs somewhat from the American Library Association and Library of Congress \(ALA-LC\) transliteration conventions, and from the Encyclopaedia of Islam transliteration conventions. see IJMES transliteration chart](#):

- **Fully translate all technical terms** from languages using non-Roman alphabets with diacritics, following the diacritical conventions below, which typically exclude vowel endings (except for Qur'ān and poetry). This includes names of persons, places, and titles of books. The only exceptions to this rule are common place-names such as "Mecca" (NOT Makka) or "Iraq" (NOT 'Irāq); or people with Arabic names that already have English renderings such as Mohammad Fadel (NOT Muḥammad Fāḍil). Authors are responsible for the consistency and accuracy of their transliteration.
- **Definite articles and names**
 - Omit the initial definite article from proper names or places when mentioned alone except when that article is a commonly known part of the proper name (thus, al-Mutawakkil, but Balādhurī)
 - Use a lower case "b." for ibn or bin ("son of") and "bt." for bint ("daughter of"), but write out each when beginning a name or when a part of the name by which a figure is best known (thus, Ibn Ḥanbal or Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal or Bin Bayyah; but Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī)
 - Inflect the word "Abū" when it follows "ibn" or "bin," as the resulting name spellings without the inflection (e.g., 'Alī b. Abū Ṭālib instead of the correct 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib) will likely irk specialist readers and hamper nonspecialists' efforts to locate the names in reference works and other sources.
 - Connect the definite article al- to what follows with a hyphen. Note the exceptional treatment of prepositions: li-, wa-, ka-, and bi-, but not fa- [because it does not normally connect to nouns].

li- followed by a definite article: li-l-Shirbīnī NOT li-al-Shirbīnī or li al-Shirbīnī

wa- followed by a definite article = wa'l-nazā'ir NOT wa-al-nazā'ir or wa al-nazā'ir

bi- followed by a definite article = bi'l-shubahāt NOT bi-al-shubahāt

ka- followed by a definite article = ka'l-ma'rūf NOT ka-al-ma'rūf

BUT fa- : fa-man, li-faqīh, wa-yabqā

- **General conventions for Arabic and Persian**, following IJMES and unlike ALA-LC, *EI*, or *Encyclopedia Iranica*:
 - qāf = q, not k
 - jim = j not dj
 - Do not underline Roman double-letter equivalents: use dh not dh
 - Do not assimilate the l of al- into the following consonant: use al-naẓā`ir NOT an-naẓā`ir
EX: **al-shams**, NOT **ash-shams**; **al-qamar** is fine
 - Render diphthongs as aw (not au) or ay (not ai).
- **Special Notes on Transliteration from Persian and Turkish**
 - Transliterate Persian using the IJMES system, not that of the *Encyclopedia Iranica*, so use i and u, not e and o.
 - Render the Persian *izāfat* as –i or –yi (after words ending in vowels).
 - For Ottoman Turkish, use modern Turkish orthography.
- **Departures from ALA-LC Guidelines**, for those familiar with it, for Arabic follow:
 - Render tā` marbūta as “a” not “ah” in both Arabic and Persian.
 - Render the adjectival yā` followed by tā` marbūta (or the “nisba”, which is Arabic-based) as –iyya in Arabic and Persian [NOT –iya or iyah or -iyyah].
 - Connect inseparable prepositions, conjunctions, and other prefixes to what follows with a hyphen. EX: wa-ma`ahu, la-amla`anna but NOT lā khilāf. Note the special exception: bihi NOT bi-hi
 - When combining a vocalized short vowel with a consonant w or y that would otherwise render the combination a long vowel [what LOC calls ‘combining a long vowel with a consonant’], follow normal rules of transliteration. EX: `aduww NOT `adūw; quwwa NOT qūwa; and Mişriyya NOT Mişriya
 - Only fully vowel Qur`ānic verses and poetry.
 - Normally disregard tanwīn in transliteration, but provide it where necessary to the context, or in transliteration of Qur`ānic verses.
 - Normally disregard case endings in transliteration, but provide them when transliterating Qur`ānic verses, and poetry, nouns followed by a pronoun or suffix (e.g, kitābuh), and verbs even if they come at the end of a line (kataba).
 - Disregard vocalic endings on pronominal suffixes unless they are part of the suffix itself. EX: ḥayātuh NOT ḥayatuhu, but ḥayātuhā
 - Preserve vocalic endings on pronouns and stand-alone prepositions and conjunctions. EX: huwa, hiya, anna (أَنْ), annahu, annahā, bayna. Note the special cases: mimmā (مِمَّا) and mimman (مِمَّن)
 - Don’t use the prime ‘ [apostrophe] to separate letters representing distinct consonantal sounds. EX: Qal`ahji NOT Qal`ah`ji or Shaykhzada NOT Shaykh`zada

For further details and examples in Arabic, see the [ALA-LC Arabic transliteration guide](#), esp. Rules 23–26 for rules about uncommon Arabic orthography. We follow all but the following LOC rules: Rules 6a [for alif maqṣūra], 7a-b [for tā` marbūta], 11a-b [‘combining a long vowel with a consonant’], 15 [pronouns, pronominal suffixes, demonstratives], 16 [prepositions and conjunctions], Rule 17 [we follow it for definite articles, but add special treatment for wāw and bi- in addition to the special treatment for lām], Rule 20c [use of hyphen with *bin* and proper names, also mentioned as an exception to Rule 25c], Rule 21 [use of the prime / apostrophe]. Modifications to those rules are included above. For all other language see the full [ALA-LC Romanization Tables site](#).