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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your involvement with SHARIASource; we are grateful to have you on board and we look forward to a productive partnership.

This document provides details about your role and responsibilities as an editor, and is also intended to familiarize you with the administrative processes in place to facilitate your work on SHARIASource.

If you have questions about this or any other matter, please feel free to reach out to the Managing Editor at *shariasource@law.harvard.edu*.

OVERVIEW: THE EDITORIAL ROLE

The editor takes ownership of his or her geographical area (region, country) or subject matter for SHARIASource and facilitates production and accumulation of primary source and secondary source materials related to that area for the site. An area or subject matter editor is the site's designated expert on that topic. The editor serves as a lead contact for other contributors, and both (i) manages submissions of content and contributions, and (ii) conducts topical SHARIASource outreach to solicit contributions and to engage scholars who may want to contribute to special forums on the site. Editors are expected to possess a clear understanding of the relevant content on the site and be familiar with relevant primary and secondary sources in his or area of expertise.

1. Contributions from Editors

In your capacity as SHARIASource area or subject matter editor, you are encouraged to contribute any relevant sources that you come across in your own work. Contributions may take many forms, including primary legal sources, secondary sources in the media (that allow for reposting), secondary academic sources, and more. Primary source materials, even when disconnected from a particular commentary or post, are particularly encouraged. (*N.B.: Editors are not restricted to their own editorial topic area in making contributions. Please feel free to contribute in any area you wish.*)

You also have the opportunity to contribute your own commentary to the site as a means to deepen your engagement and collaboration with SHARIASource, and for a public platform to share your intellectual work. At the start of each editorial term, please liaise with SHARIASource staff to indicate the number of posts you intend to contribute over the course of your term and on what timeline. We suggest a minimum of four per year.

Editors who represent that a piece has been peer reviewed may have submissions published (but not for their own pieces). The common policy is that editors should submit posts for the blog or portal with a note identifying the peer reviewers, and editors are welcome -- but not required -- to report on the proceedings and their recommendations (accept, reject, revise/resubmit).

2. Soliciting Contributions

SHARIAsource is built on a collaborative, crowd-sourced model, and – to be successful – relies on interaction and engagement with as large a community of Islamic law scholars, practitioners, and commentators as possible. We therefore welcome would-be contributors to submit both primary source material and original commentary. Editors are encouraged to reach out to their own social networks in order to find peers who may be interested in contributing primary sources, secondary sources, or original commentary to the site, and to solicit contributions for that editor’s subject area. Solicitations may be made in a number of ways.

- a. *General Call.* One option is a general call for contributions. For a template note soliciting contributions from other scholars working in your field, please see Appendix A.
- b. *Call for Features.* Another option is to organize a symposium or forum on an article, case, historical legal document, or other source, where one scholar posts an article or other source, and 2-4 scholars offer short reviews, critiques, or commentary otherwise about it that engages the ideas or raises questions in short, accessible form.
- c. *Call for Debate Forum.* A third option is to organize a forum on a specific question about a specific document, set of documents, or case trends in policy or other arenas by 2-5 scholars. An example is the NYT Room for Debate (with the addition on SHARIAsource of a specific primary source about which the debate revolves). (See, e.g., <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2015/06/19/does-the-confederate-flag-breed-racism>.) For example, an Ottomanist might use one of the recent articles on law and economics in late Ottoman courts to organize a debate or solicit commentary from Ergene & Coşgel and Kuran & Lustig, possibly with invited participation from others. As convener, the editor would set up a few questions for these scholars to respond to or debate (drawing on their work where appropriate).

3. Editing Contributions

Content building and substantive editing are perhaps the most vital aspects of the editor’s role, and they constitute the bulk of the required work of the editorial position.

Each editor will provide an initial review of all SHARIAsource submissions in his or area. Editors should use their expertise to make an initial determination as to whether the contribution is of the quality expected and required by SHARIAsource.

- a. *Initial Review of primary and secondary sources.* SHARIAsource editors receive contributions of a range of documents, including both primary sources (judicial decisions, statutes, fatwās, etc.) and secondary sources (e.g., academic articles). To categorize submissions, editors should request and/or review a *brief* summary of the source’s content, and upload the source. Editors should check to ensure that the IP permissions enable publication (Instructions to be provided in a separate document that will be updated by the Harvard Law School Cyberlaw Clinic, which will conduct the IP analyses). If permitted, please publish the source. If not, please send a message indicating that the source is available and needs IP permissions to shariasource@law.harvard.edu, with “IP analysis needed” in the subject line.

- b. *Initial Review of original commentary.* Editors should make an initial assessment as to the merits and form of the contribution. If your initial determination is negative, you may send a form letter that the submission is not accepted at this time (see Appendices C and D). If your initial determination is positive, please send the contribution on to a peer review board (comprised of two scholars in your area, cc'ing the editor-in-chief and managing editor), at which point a final decision will be made. Once a decision has been made, you should contact the contributor to inform her of the decision, and, when appropriate, to begin the editing process (see Appendix B).
- c. *Editorial Review Process.* Analytic submissions must go through a process of peer review prior to publication. The editor makes the initial determination on whether to send out the piece for peer review. That determination includes an assessment as to whether the piece meets basic standards of good writing and makes a scholarly contribution. If the piece meets these requirements, we ask editors to select one or two people in the field to review the piece. Reviewers should be advised that they are expected to give feedback on whether to *publish*, *reject*, or *revise and resubmit* the piece, together with basic comments about why. Reviewers should be assured that this is a blind review process; that is, reviewer names will not be shared with the author of the piece. One reviewer can suffice for short commentaries; two are necessary for pieces totaling at least 2000-2500 words. If the editor agrees with the reviewer(s)' assessment(s), he or she should communicate the results of that assessment to the contributor *blindly*, with *all* identifying information of the reviewer redacted.

The editor should set a schedule for first round revisions and proofs. The schedules will differ for longer pieces and must be sensitive to timely or urgent content. Longer pieces will typically require 4-6 weeks for revisions and an additional week for proofs. Timely and urgent pieces will require 1 week (or less) for revisions and 1-2 days for proofs – by agreement between author and editor. During first round revisions, editors should ask that all primary sources be submitted along with summaries for each piece. The editor should send regular reminders before expected deadlines to ensure timeliness. The editor will then take final proofs, together with the piece's summaries, and upload them to SHARIASource. The editor may also work with the SHARIASource Research Fellow to review and upload summaries, primary sources, commentaries, and other articles. To initiate this process, the editor should contact the Managing Editor at shariasource@law.harvard.edu.

Should a conflict arise between two peer reviewers, the editor may resolve the conflict by sending the piece to a third reviewer. Disputes with the author should be brought to the attention of the Managing Editor at shariasource@law.harvard.edu.

- d. *Editing Contributions.* If the committee renders a positive decision, you are expected to convey any comments and ask for any suggested revisions, working with the contributor to edit the piece into final form. It is your responsibility to notify the contributor, keep the contributor abreast of her status, and to work with her to finalize the submission. You are also expected to gather all source materials, either in scanned pdf form or as links to the relevant materials online, from the contributor at this phase. Once approved by peer review, typical commentary submissions should be finalized within one to four weeks. The finalization process includes: correcting all grammar mistakes; ensuring that sentences and

paragraphs are short and readable; ensuring that the author has provided citations, links, and primary courses where needed; ensuring all citations are in proper form; and providing – or having the author provide – a short summary of the source. Please see the *SHARIAsource Style Guide* for guidance on style-related questions.

- e. *Uploading Contributions.* Once you have determined that the post is in final form, it is your responsibility to upload the materials to SHARIAsource. For instructions on how to complete the upload process, please see the *SHARIAsource Uploading How-To* document and view the instructional video (*forthcoming*).

4. Responding to Contributors

Template response letters are provided in Appendices A-D to be edited and used as appropriate.

5. Length of Editorial Term

The standard editorial term is one academic year, renewable. Editors are expected to complete the full term, and are to inform the SHARIAsource editorial board (editor-in-chief, managing editor) if there are any changes in their circumstances that prevent completion of their duties. SHARIAsource editorial board reserves the right to terminate the relationship at any time.

**APPENDIX A:
SOLICITATION TEMPLATE**

Dear [XX]

I am writing to you in my capacity as an editor for SHARIAsource for [region or topic]. I am familiar with your work through [my study of the region/topic] and write to invite you contribute to SHARIAsource in the form of an article or commentary on one of the primary sources of Islamic law.

By way of background, SHARIAsource is designed to be an online research portal to collect and house primary sources and commentary on Islamic law. For more details, here is a short write up about the portal published recently in the *Harvard Magazine*: <http://harvardmagazine.com/2015/05/debating-sharia-law-digitally>.

We hope that your participation will provide both a public platform to share your work and an opportunity to engage with other scholars or students doing similar work at the intersection of Islamic law in your area of expertise and in related fields. Your contribution can take on multiple forms, and could closely track the work that you are already doing, which we hope to amplify through SHARIAsource. Here are the basics:

- We invite you to contribute any relevant sources that you may come across in – but not restricted to – your area of focus (even if disconnected from commentary), including primary legal sources and secondary sources in the media or in academic journals that you may wish to summarize or review.
- We hope you will contribute your own commentary to the site – an article, an opinion piece, a “in plain English” summary of a historical or recent court case – as a way of engaging in broader conversations, offering an outlet for publication, and sharing your work.

For more details, please see the attached Contributor’s Handbook to SHARIAsource.

We do hope you will consider participating in SHARIAsource and contributing your expertise. As an initial matter, would you consider being a Guest Contributor during the [XX semester] (for which we would ask you to contribute at least twice per month). Thereafter, we would be happy to have a contribution at least once per semester on an ongoing basis. Please let me know if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[XXX]

SHARIAsource Editor for [XXX]

**APPENDIX B:
ACCEPTANCE TEMPLATE**

Dear [XXX]:

Thank you for your recent submission to SHARIAsource. I am pleased to inform you that your piece has been accepted for publication on the site. We are impressed by your innovative analysis and we appreciate the thoughtfulness of your commentary.

A few steps remain before your piece is publication-ready. First, I will work with you over the coming weeks to edit the commentary, both substantively and for grammar, so as to present the most polished piece possible. Second, as a policy, a main contribution of SHARIAsource is to provide both analysis and the primary sources on which it is based. Accordingly, I also ask that you identify all primary source materials on which your piece relied, and forward any that you have on hand. We have a research assistant who can help you procure any items that you do not have available for upload. Third, we ask that you help write a one to two-sentence simple summary of each source that specifies what the source covers.

SHARIAsource adheres to a publication schedule to ensure a regular stream of content. This schedule also serves to ensure each published piece receives due attention and prominence on the site. Our current schedule of publications allows us approximately [time in weeks or a final date] to finalize your commentary. Thereafter, we will notify you when the piece is published (which may not be as soon as you submit it, unless you mark it as time-sensitive, in which case we will work with you to expedite the editing and publication schedule).

Please respond at your earliest convenience, indicating whether you foresee any problems with this editing and publication timeline. We look forward to working with you on this piece!

Sincerely,

[XXX]

Editor for [XXX]

**APPENDIX C:
INVITATION TO REVISE AND RESUBMIT TEMPLATE**

Dear [XXX]:

Thank you for your recent submission to SHARIAsource. We regret to inform you that we cannot accept the piece in its current form. However, given the potential substantive contribution of your work, we encourage you to revise and resubmit, after consulting the attached submission guidelines.

Although SHARIAsource welcomes submissions from all Islamic law-related disciplines, all articles selected for publication go through a process of peer review. For further information about that process, please see the attached Contributor's Handbook. In addition, we encourage you to continue reading SHARIAsource to learn more about what we choose to publish.

Thank you for your work with SHARIAsource. We look forward to your continued engagement.

Sincerely,

[XXX]

Editor for [XXX]

**APPENDIX D:
SOFT (BUT FIRM) REJECTION TEMPLATE**

Dear [XXX]:

Thank you for your recent submission to SHARIAsource. Unfortunately, we cannot accept your piece for publication at this time.

Although SHARIAsource welcomes submissions from all Islamic law-related disciplines, all articles selected for publication go through a process of peer review. For further information about the process, please see the attached Contributor's Handbook. In addition, and we encourage you to continue reading SHARIAsource to learn more about what we choose to publish.

Thank you, and we look forward to your continued engagement with SHARIAsource.

Sincerely,

[XXX]

Editor for [XXX]