SHARIASOURCE/BLOG EDITORS' GUIDES 08.24.22 [AS/IR]

SHARIASOURCE EDITORS' GUIDE

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 guide 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 reach out to SHARIAsource staff 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 publication of primary source and out-of-publication materials related to that area for the SHARIAsource portal. 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 gain familiarity with content on our platforms in order to cross-reference and link related material to better scholarly insights and dialogue.

EDITORS CONTRIBUTIONS

In your capacity as SHARIAsource area or subject matter editor, you are encouraged to contribute to the Portal any relevant primary sources that you come across in your own work or otherwise. Primary source contributions may take many forms, including court records, fiqh excerpts, out-of-publication books, and more. [See here for source types.] We encourage editors to share, summarize, and translate (where relevant) such sources, thinking of the Portal as a landing place to share on one platform sources that may contribute to teaching, may be otherwise difficult to find, or that can contribute more generally to a clearinghouse for the scholarly community of Islamic law and society.

Editors may also propose four-post series as part of series of monthly guest editors on the Islamic Law Blog. This route offers a means to deepen your engagement with the sources and reach of your ideas on SHARIAsource platforms and beyond, which reach other scholars and tens of thousands of general readers every month. To propose a guest editor blog series, or other single-post contributions, see the contributor guidelines and use this submission form.

EDITING CONTRIBUTIONS

Content review and substantive editing are perhaps the most vital aspects of the editor's role, and they constitute the bulk of the required work of editors. Each editor is to solicit and/or review proposed SHARIAsource submissions from scholars working in his or her area who wish to contribute primary sources to the Portal or source comments on the Blog. We ask that editors

make an initial determination as to the quality of the proposed contribution, make a recommendation of acceptance or rejection to the coordinating editor using this [form](#), and work with the contributor to edit their piece and upload it to the Portal or the Blog. Here is a breakdown of the three steps.

a. Review and Recommend. SHARIAsource editors solicit or receive proposed primary source posts for the SHARIAsource Portal or source comments for the blog. After checking to ensure that the IP permissions enable publication for primary sources (see [IP policies](#)), and that the format and content meet the requirements for source comments, please make a recommendation to our coordinating editor to accept or reject the post using this [form](#).

b. Edit Contributions. Write (or work with the contributor to write) a brief, one-paragraph summary of the primary source's content. Edit source comments to ensure that the format and citations adhere to the [SHARIAsource Style Guide](#).

c. Upload Contributions. After editing, post any primary source(s) to the Portal, following the [SHARIAsource Portal posting instructions](#)—complete with metadata, author biography, and IP permissions. For the Blog, send any source comments to the coordinating editor for scheduling and posting using this [form.](#)

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, coordinating editor) if there are any changes in their circumstances that prevent completion of their editorial role by emailing shariasource@law.harvard.edu. The SHARIAsource and Islamic Law Blog editorial board reserves the right to terminate the relationship at any time.

ISLAMICLAWBLOG EDITORS' GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your involvement with Islamic Law Blog; 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 the Islamic Law Blog. If you have questions about this or any other matter, please feel free to reach out to the Coordinating Editor at pil@law.harvard.edu.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLES

Staff Editors

We have a group of staff editors working alongside our global editorial team who are hired by the blog to provide a variety of recurring commentary as well as review contributions from our broader community. Content creation and substantive editing are perhaps the most vital aspects of editor's role, and they constitute the bulk of the required work of the editorial position.

Associate Editors work alongside our Editor-in-Chief to publish weekly and special resource roundups, alongside reviewing content prior to publication.

Research Editors contribute commentaries on recent publications, Islamic law primary sources, current events, roundtables, and more, alongside reviewing content prior to publication.

Coordinating Editors maintain the production schedule, monitor progress, and keep stakeholders informed throughout the publication process.

Guest Editors and Contributors

Guest Blog Editors are featured monthly and are generally junior and senior scholars in the field of Islamic legal studies who publish snippets of their current research projects. Scholars are either invited or selected based on the rigor and interest of their proposal using the online submission form.

Contributors to the blog are invited to contribute posts to a thematic roundtable organized by our blog.

Student Editors contribute posts after spending a semester doing a dive deep into a subject of their choice based on new or historical cases, fatwās, or other sources of law, under the supervision of the Editor-in-Chief Professor Intisar Rabb.

RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Review, editing, peer-review. Research editors will be assigned to review blog contributions. Editors should use their expertise to make an initial determination as to whether the contribution is of the quality expected and required by the Islamic Law Blog.

Editors should make an initial assessment as to the merits and form of the contribution. If your initial determination is negative, contact the coordinatingIf your initial determination is positive, please send on the contribution to a peer review board (comprising two scholars in your area, cc'ing the editor-in-chief and managing editor), at which point a final decision will be made

Editor's Contributions. In your capacity as editor, you are encouraged to contribute any relevant sources that you come across in your own work. [N.B.: You are not restricted to making contributions in your editorial topic area; please feel to contribute in any subject you wish.]

Primary source materials, even when disconnected from a particular commentary or post, are particularly encouraged: primary legal sources, secondary sources in the media (that allow for reposting), out-of-publication secondary academic sources, and more.

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 the coordinating editor 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.

Soliciting contributions. Editors should please reach out to networks or to those whom you believe may be interested in contributing primary sources, secondary sources, or their commentary in your area or subject matter, in order to solicit contributions for the site. The success of SHARIAsource relies on a collaborative, crowd-sourced model that actively encourages engagement of as many scholars, practitioners, and commentators working on matters of Islamic law. We therefore welcome would-be contributors to submit both primary source material and original commentary.

> 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 1.

> 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 one to four scholars offer short reviews, critiques, or commentary otherwise

about it that engages the ideas or raises questions in short, accessible form. For a template invitation for scholars to propose an article, case, historical legal document or other source to review or debate, see Appendix 2.

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 two to five scholars. An example is the New York Times 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). For a template invitation to scholars proposing such a debate, see Appendix 2.

Please feel free to use or edit all templates as appropriate.

OVERVIEW: THE EDITORIAL ROLE

CLIFF NOTES FOR THE ISLAMIC LAW BLOG
- The Blog is built on a customized WordPress site.
- The name of the blog is stylized as *ISLAMICLAWblog*.

BLOG TECH SPECS
The blog's font is hard-coded to display diacritics without uneven spacing and character height.

BLOG SOLICITATION PROCESS

Research Editors find guest blogger possibilities, and coordinate with the EIC Professor Intisar Rabb on the scholarly guest bloggers for the semester. Guest and student editors are invited for month-long guest editorships. Editor coordinates submissions and posting schedule with Student Editor.

1. Authors submits all posts two weeks before their month.
2. Guest Blog Editor receives their drafts and sends them feedback.
3. Editor reviews the drafts.
4. Student Editor completes edits.
5. If needed, Student Editor creates an author profile page.
6. Monthly guest editors are scheduled for four Thursday's each month.
7. One introductory post by the blog precedes the blog pieces.
8. A thank you post from the Blog follows the four blog pieces.

BLOG REVIEW PROCESS
1. Drafts must be completed *two weeks* before their publication date.

2. Once submitted, they undergo review by a staff editor.
3. Following review and final edits, they are scheduled for publication by the coordinating editor.
4. Sent to EIC Prof. Initsar Rabb for final approval by the Friday before publication at noon EST.

BLOG PUBLICATION PROCESS

1. Each article should be published as a post, *not a page*. A page is static, and won't show up in the home page automatically.
2. Each author should have a *guest user* account made for them and a *page* made for them. When a guest user page is created a slug is automatically generated. This usually takes the form of first name-last name.
3. The *page* is where the author's bio goes. The slug should be pasted into the "slug" field at the bottom of the page. This step is critical to connecting articles to the author's bio.
4. Copy and paste the article's content into the post. Tag the post appropriately.
5. Format the citations.
6. Preview.
7. Publish.

BLOG POST PRE-PUBLICATION CHECKLIST

Are all bios and photos properly included?

Are photos for the article's featured image included?

Does the author have a masthead entry?

Is the author's article linked to their bio?

Are the appropriate tags entered?

Do the diacritics appear normal?

Has the EIC given final approval?

ISLAMIC LAW BLOG POSTS

Islamic Law Blog editors and contributors are scholars of Islamic law and history, and related fields, who are invited or petition to contribute essays that focus on primary sources or resource-roundups. As a blog dedicated to content and context surrounding Islamic law and history with a data science bent, our basic requirement for blog contributions is that—rather than philosophical inquiries—scholars contextualize and comment on the following types of work:

- primary sources of Islamic law or history (e.g., cases, contemporary or historical fatwās, excerpts from fiqh works, court records, or other Islamic legal texts),
- recent books, articles, and other scholarly contributions to the field
- data science tools and methods related to or applied to Islamic law

Where contributors are practitioners from law, policy, and other institutions, we encourage focus on primary source content and comment that highlights their particular expertise (e.g., presenting samples of and commentary on trends regarding financial instruments from a law firm or banking practitioner). The Islamic Law Blog provides space for creative and innovative resource sharing and commentary. We ask that editors and contributors adhere to the SHARIAsource Style Guide. This guide provides models of common Blog post types, and prompts to scholars interested in submitting their own posts for publication on the blog. To submit a post, click here.

BLOG POSTS BY TYPE

1   Source Comments. Source comments, aka 'short posts,' summarize and comment on one or more primary sources of Islamic law or history. Short posts typically highlight and contextualize texts related to cases, fatwās, fiqh works, and the like, providing citations and any available links to primary sources online (whether on existing sites or as uploads on the SHARIAsource Portal for primary sources [see access/posting instructions]. Contributors can also propose short posts that offer an alternative view to short posts by another scholar who has offered an initial set of comments on a source or set of sources. We welcome discussion, dialogue, and even disagreement. All Blog editors and contributors are to adhere to basic rules of civility and academic dialogue. For examples of this type of post (common to the guest editor series, by invitation), see x, y, z.

2   Case Notes: Case Notes refer to comments on cases, whether historical or modern, that a contributor provides a link to on the SHARIAsource Portal [see access/posting instructions] and comments on via the Islamic Law Blog. For this type of post, contributors summarize the case or recent development on the Portal, and are encouraged to translated it, if relevant. 'Case' notes may also refer to recent statutes, regulations, fatwās and related legal documents. For an example, see this document on the Portal and the related post on the Blog.

3   Scholarship Reviews. Contributors may produce reviews or commentaries of recent books, articles, or other publications on Islamic law and history (provided they focus on one or more of the sources used in them), that expand or reflect on the book's content. For an example, see this review.

4   Data Science / CnC Posts. Contributors interested in taking part in data science methods for Islamic law research can petition to create a project on our Courts & Canons (CnC) platforms for constructing corpora and searching early Islamic texts using digital and AI tools. CnC leverages data science tools to explore questions in Islamic law and society historically through mapping the controversies and values reflected in courts (from *taʾrīkh* and *ṭabaqāt* works) and through legal canons literature (*qawāʿid fiqhiyya*). Those taking part in the CnC Working group or those with accepted project proposals can experiment with using the data science tools we are developing at SHARIAsource to aid in new research methods for Islamic law. We ask those with accepted projects to write about their experiments, and share notes on methodology and/or results. We also welcome project that pursue a similar theme using related tools. For examples, see posts

on the [CnC Qayyim Mecelle Flow Tool](#), the [Google Tool for semantic similarity searches on classical Arabic texts](#), and on the [use of advanced search to uncover new insights for early Shīʿī law](#).

5   "In Plain English." Contributors can add to this series providing resources for understanding aspects of Islamic law in "plain English." Post summarize common and/or complex terms and topics from the scholarly literature written by senior scholars in the field, in ways that make their works more accessible to a broader readership. For examples, see posts on [Imposed Constitutionalism](#), [the Prophet as Lawgiver and Legal Authority](#), and the [beginnings of Islamic law](#).

6   Resource Roundups. These roundups collect various resources, in the form of primary sources, short posts, articles, or videos addressing common, controversial, or otherwise noteworthy areas of Islamic law to help inform and frame pertinent discussions on Islamic law today, often surrounding current events. These resources collectively point to diverse approaches within a 1400-year-old legal tradition, spanning the globe, comprised of multiple approaches to law that are equally authoritative and all trying to determine how best to order society. For examples, see the [2022 roundup on abortion in Islamic law](#) and the [2021 roundup on Islamic law in Afghanistan](#).

7   Occasional Roundtables: Contributors may propose a collection of posts as a "roundtable" that revolves around a thematic issue, recent development, or books on Islamic law, where 3 or more scholars engage in constructive dialogue with one another. Previous roundtables have features various scholars discussing and debating the [translation of Mālik's Muwattaʾ](#), the [treatment of plagues and pandemics in Islamic societies historically](#), recent [family law cases in the UK and Europe](#), and a [state-of-the-field review of Islamic legal history and historiography](#). To submit a proposal with topic, timeline, and proposed contributors, use our [submission form](#). Such dialogue can take the form of iterative, responsive posts, a series of letters between scholars, a transcript of a conversation, etc. If a contributor wishes to connect with another scholar on the site, please contact the Coordinating Editor to arrange.

Dear [NAME],

I am writing on behalf of the Islamic Law Blog at Harvard Law School's Program in Islamic Law with an exciting opportunity. We would like to invite you to submit a proposal to our blog.

Our Islamic Law Blog provides a space for scholars, practitioners, and students to gather and debate all the news, scholarship, and recent developments in Islamic legal studies in one place. We host occasional roundtables where scholars weigh in on recent cases and controversies in Islamic law courts or other arenas, provide weekly roundups of Islamic law scholarship and news, and provide a running list of all known events and opportunities in the field – from conferences and fellowships, to jobs and post-docs.

Islamic Law Blog contributors produce work of the highest intellectual caliber and come to the project from across numerous fields: academia, government, public and private practice, and more. As such, contributors are encouraged to produce commentary that highlights their particular expertise and points of view. In both substance and form, our Blog endeavors to provide space where contributors feel free to produce creative and innovative commentary

You can propose a series of short posts that take a position on an issue relevant to the community of Islamic law scholar, respond to a recent post or development in Islamic law, short posts as a good vehicle to test-drive early, less-formed ideas that may serve as a spring board for later full articles, a roundtable or forum topic, or more..

All proposals can be made through this proposal form, which covers the Portal and Blog.

Please let us know if you are interested in developing sources for reading Arabic documents, data visualization, or joining our online community of Islamic law scholars interested in the Digital Humanities and data science, and we will follow up with more details.

Please let me know if you have any questions!

Best,
[NAME]

Dear [NAME],

I am writing on behalf of the Islamic Law Blog at Harvard Law School's Program in Islamic Law with an exciting opportunity to contribute research and analysis on the topic of [INSERT TOPIC] for our forthcoming [FORUM/FEATURE TITLE].

Our Islamic Law Blog provides a space for scholars, practitioners, and students to gather and debate all the news, scholarship, and recent developments in Islamic legal studies in one place. We host occasional roundtables where scholars weigh in on recent cases and controversies in Islamic law courts or other arenas, provide weekly roundups of Islamic law scholarship and news, and provide a running list of all known events and opportunities in the field – from conferences and fellowships, to jobs and post-docs.

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You can propose a [insert details].

All proposals can be made through this proposal form, which covers the Portal and Blog.

If you intend to accept this offer, please notify us by [DATE] and we will provide further information.

Please let me know if you have any questions!

Best,
[NAME]