THE BEGINNINGS OF ISLAMIC LAW

The Beginnings of Islamic Law is a major and innovative contribution to our understanding of the historical unfolding of Islamic law. Scrutinizing its historical contexts, the book proposes that Islamic law is a continuous intermingling of innovation and tradition. Salaymeh challenges the embedded assumptions in conventional Islamic legal historiography by developing a critical approach to the study of both Islamic and Jewish legal history. Through case studies of the treatment of war prisoners, circumcision, and wife-initiated divorce, she examines how Muslim jurists incorporated and transformed “Near Eastern” legal traditions. She also demonstrates how socio-political and historical situations shaped the everyday practice of law, legal education, and the organization of the legal profession in the late antique and medieval eras. The book highlights the unending process of legal change that is inherent to all legal traditions. Aimed at scholars and students interested in Islamic history, Islamic law, and the relationship between Jewish and Islamic legal traditions, this book’s interdisciplinary approach provides accessible explanations and translations of complex materials and ideas.

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THE BEGINNINGS OF ISLAMIC LAW

Late Antique Islamicate Legal Traditions

LENA SALAYMEH
for amjad,
whose absence is painfully ever-present
and whose ephemeral presence was my supreme
lesson in the essence of being
# Contents

**Acknowledgments**  
**Note on the text**  

## Introduction: Genealogies of Islamic Law  
- Contours  
  - Conventional Historiography's Limitations: Developmentalism and Essentialism  
  - Countering Developmental and Essentialist Approaches  
  - Beyond Contextualization  
- Synopsis  
- Remarks  
- Visualization  

1. Legal-historical Beginnings – Outlining Late Antique Islamic Law  
   - Metaphors for Historical Theory: Origins/Conception  
   - Positivism and Linearity: Source-criticism  
   - Documentary Sources for Late Antique Islamic Historiography  
   - Narrative-historical Sources for Late Antique Islamic Historiography  
   - Source-criticism's General Rules  
   - Politics and Ideology: Textual Criticism and Subaltern Critique  
   - Alternatives: Late Antique Beginnings and Historical Sources  
   - Implications and Applications
Contents

2 Legal Historiography – a Case Study in International Law
   Prisoners of War in Islamic History: The Prophetic Period
   Late Antique Qur’ānic Exegesis
   Late Antique Islamic Law (up to 800 CE)
   Medieval Exegesis
   Representative Medieval Jurists (c. 800–1400 CE)
   Silent Authority and Precedents of Professional Jurists
   Qur’ān and Precedents in “Professional” Islamic Legal Discourse
   A Presumed Precedent: A Historical “Execution” of War Prisoners?
   Slippage: The Complexity of Legal-historical Categorization
   Another Possibility
   Conclusion

3 Legal-historical Hybridity – Tracing Islam in its Islamicate Context
   Metaphors for Historical Theory: Borrowing/Parentage
   Aryan Birth Father
   Semitic Birth Father
   Aryan/Semitic “Origins”
   Positivism and Linearity: Comparative Philology
   Politics and Ideology: Authenticity, Ethnicity, and “Religion”
   An Aryan/Secular Methodology
   Alternatives: Hybrid Law in Islamicate Societies

4 Legal Custom – a Case Study in Ritual Law
   Ritual Comparisons
   Ritual Meaning
   Ritual Genealogy: Late Antique Circumcision
   Ancient and Arabian Circumcision
   Near Eastern Circumcision: Biblical, Rabbinic, and Christian
   Islamicizing Circumcision
Contents ix

Beyond Abraham: Ritualizing Customary Practice 120
Legalizing an Islamic Ritual 123
Ritual Precedent 124
Ritual Obligation or Recommendation? 126
Ritual Performance 128
Ritual Conversion 130
Ritual Implications 132
Gender of Ritual 133
A Ritual of “Conclusion” 134

5 Legal Historicizing: Moments in Macro-histories 136
Metaphors for Historical Theory: Maturity/Formative 137
Linearity: From Progress and Decline to Orthodoxy 139
Orthodox Stories 142
Politics and Ideology: Scholarly Orthopraxy 145
Alternatives: Contingent Historical Moments 146
Moments in Islamic Legal History 147
Moments in Islamicate Legal History 157
Implications and Applications 161

6 Legal Comparisons – a Case Study in Family Law 163
Defining Wife-initiated Divorce 164
A Judaic Chronology of Wife-initiated Divorce 165
Rabbinic (70–620 CE) 165
Geonic Era (620–1050 CE) 168
Era of the Rishonim (1050–1400 CE) 170
An Islamic Chronology of Wife-initiated Divorce 172
Legal Circles (610–800 CE) 172
Professionalization of Legal Schools (800–1000 CE) 175
Consolidation (1000–1200 CE) and Technocratization (1200–1400 CE) 178
Disenchanting the Orthodox Narratives 179
Reevaluating Causal Influence 181
Giving Voice to the Geonim 185
Which Context? 186
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Interwoven Narrative of Wife-initiated Divorce</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antiquity and Late Antiquity (up to 800 CE)</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medieval Era (800–1400 CE)</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speculating on the Interwoven Narrative</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Orthodoxy and Islamic Jurisprudence</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Historiography and Sources</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Culture and Islamicate Society</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Moments and Periodization</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtexts</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Directions</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Cited</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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