

Translator's Preface

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

May Allah send His blessings upon Muhammad and his progeny.

Writing the manuals of Islamic laws for use by Muslims is an evolutionary process, reflecting the change in lifestyles and the relevance (or the lack of it) of certain problems and issues that vary from time to time and place to place. The spirit and the purpose remain constant but the style and the format change.

In the present century we first saw the widely used Tawdihu 'l-Masa'il in Persian (also known as risala-e 'amaliyya), and then came the Minhaju 's-Salihiyn in Arabic by the late Ayatullah al-Hakim (which was later expanded by the late Ayatullah al-Khû'i and even further improved by Ayatullah as-Sistani). In mid seventies, the late Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr brought about a completely new style in his al-Fatawa al-Wadiha.

The present book, al-Fiqh lil Mughtaribin by Hujjatul Islam Sayyid 'Abdul Hadi al-Hakim, is a further development in the same line of change and continuity. Sayyid 'Abdul Hadi's distinction is that he has focused on the problems and issues faced by the Muslims in the West, formulated those questions, and compiled their answers without going into details that can be easily obtained from other commonly used sources of Islamic laws. And so it was indeed a great pleasure when I was asked to undertake the translation of this book into English.

A Note on Translation: I have been quite liberal while translating the author's Introduction but had to strictly abide by the wording and expressions as they appeared in the original in the latter and the major part of the book. This was done to ensure the accuracy in conveying the views of the Grand Ayatullah as-Sistani.

This translation is based on the first Arabic edition of 1998 but with quite a few changes and amendments done by the Fatwa Committee of the Office of Ayatullah as-Sistani in Qum. And so those who would compare this translation with the first Arabic edition should keep this fact in mind. The changes were of various length and nature: in some instances, words, phrases and sentences were

changed or added to further explain the problem;^{[1](#)} in some cases, the rulings have changed;^{[2](#)} and in three cases, the items were deleted completely.^{[3](#)}

Moreover, in some instances I had asked for further elaboration that was kindly provided by the Committee.^{[4](#)} I have also taken the liberty of changing the placement of certain rulings so that similar issues are found in the same section. For the same reason, in Part Two, I have switched the sequence of two chapters: Chapter 8 ("Youths' Issues") and Chapter 9 ("Women's Issues") since women's issues are much closer to issues of Chapter 7 on "Marriage". Interestingly this is the order that the author himself has listed pages 31 and 136 of the Arabic but has somehow changed it in the final printing. I have written some footnotes to clarify the meaning and have also added a short list of "Frequently Used Terms" at the beginning of each chapter.

I pray to Almighty Allah to accept this work as a humble attempt in simplifying His laws for the Muslims in non-Muslim societies, and may He reward the author and grant long life to the Ayatullah as-Sistani on whose expert opinion this book is based.

Toronto

Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi

Shawwal 1419 / February 1999

^{[1](#)}. See for example items 16m 20, 23, 29–30 on p. 37–39; item 11, p. 56; item 96, p. 100; item 178, p. 149; item 301, p. 203; item 383, p. 251. All page numbers in this note refer to the first Arabic edition.

^{[2](#)}. See, for example, item 114 on p. 110 on sighting of the new moon.

^{[3](#)}. See item 218 (p. 168), item 285 (p. 191), and item 269 (p. 187) in the first edition.

^{[4](#)}. See item 115 in this translation on the criterion of following the moon sighted in a city west of your own city.

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