

## FOOTWEAR: MANNERS, RITUALS, CULTURE AND FASHION IN EARLY ISLAM

**Abstract:** Footwear is a cultural issue, thus has its own aesthetics, function and symbols. The legal Muslim discussion of footwear in pre-modern Muslim societies is an example of the importance of one's outward appearance and its multi-meanings in past Muslim societies. According to medieval Muslim sources, footwear of different kinds of color, shapes and raw materials were in use for men and women as an integral part of their personal appearance as well as a manifestation of their socio-economic status. Footwear customs were aimed at improving daily practices and instructions regarding their use, as well as for the purpose of differentiating among different groups and even discriminating against some of them. In addition, footwear is related to two basic Islam rituals, namely prayer and *ḥaḡḡ*, as shoes must be taken off before prayer and during *ḥaḡḡ*, and male believers must wear only sandals to protect their feet on the one hand and be modest and close to earth, in more than one way, on the other.

**Key words:** Footwear, Islam, jurisprudence, personal appearance, adornment, gender, rituals

### I. Introduction: why footwear?

Feet are the necessary organ for locomotion, thus they connect us to the world and allow us to move through it. In addition, legs constitute an erogenous zone and have a unique importance in the erotic imagination, in particular women's feet which are perceived in many cultures as part of their sensual appeal and have long been associated with sexual pleasure (steele 1998a, 126; steele 2006b, 258; Bashan 2008, 15). In pre historic times, footwear was aimed at protection for locomotion as well as for adornment, but as cultures became

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more complicated and sophisticated footwear came to be used to mark socio-economic and cultural meanings.

Footwear operates in the liminal space between the body and the physical space surrounding it (Demello 2009, xx-xxi). Thus, it functions as a liminal object keeping people pure and separate from the ground, i.e. the physical dirt on the one hand and the ground's symbolic impurity on the other (Belk 2003, 33). Footwear is the mediator between our bodies and the world, and its main purpose is to intersect between body and physical space, thus navigating between them (Riello and McNeil 2006, 3). Social and religious rituals are related to the wearing of footwear, as it is perceived as a polluting agent (Bashan 2008, 5). The main purpose of footwear, separating the body from direct contact with the ground, has led to a whole range of metaphors and symbols. In other words, the metaphoric and symbolic meanings of footwear are based only partially on its physical aspects, as they were developed out of the perceptible to intangible perceptions based on time, place and beliefs.

Footwear carries the body's weight as well as symbolic, social and cultural weight, thus this article focuses on its cultural interpretations rather than its anatomical and technical demands and characteristics. The main purpose of the article is to present the legal medieval Muslim discussion of footwear, namely, shoes, boots and sandals, thus analyzing its social and metaphoric-symbolic meanings in everyday life and during different ceremonies. The sources for this study are medieval Muslim legal texts (*fiqh*) composed by authors of different schools of law, representing a wide geographical and chronological range. Although they were created over several centuries, they mostly reflect the stability of norms and practices in the urban societies of the Muslim *Mashriq*, side by side with local variations and tastes. This discussion is both hypothetical and practical, as Muslim jurists used to discuss daily questions and practices as well as theoretical and hypothetical issues and problems.

## II. Shoes and fashion

The Quranic discussion of adornment is proof of the importance of personal appearance at the eve of Islam in 7<sup>th</sup> century Arab peninsula. These Quranic statements have laid the foundation for the later legal discussion of these questions in the Hadith literature and jurisprudence texts. The legal discussion of personal appearance of Muslim men and women includes footwear issues. The common footwear for both men and women was the *na'al* (probably for men) or sandal (with one or two laces), which could be of palm fiber, smooth leather, or leather with animal hair, or alternatively *huff*, a sort of shoe or boot made of leather (Stillman 2000, 2). Following the conquest of Persia and Byzantium, different kinds of footwear were adopted by Muslim societies.

Hadith literature and legal sources mention different types of shoes for men and women with a variety of patterns, raw materials and colors according to climate, tastes, production techniques and fashions (Abū Dā'ud 1988, 792; al-Buḥārī 1985, 295; Ibn Bassām al-Muḥtasib 1968, 129; 'Ibn Sa'd 1905–1918, 166–167; Al-Nasā'ī 1988, 206; Ibn al-Uḥūwa 1937, 149). The prophet Muhammad prohibited the believers from acting with arrogance, indulgence and exaggeration in their appearance, thus he recommended that his followers go barefoot from time to time. “The prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, prohibited us of too luxurious life. [Someone] have asked him [the prophet] why I don't see shoes on you [wearing them], [the man] have answered: the prophet, peace be upon him, orders us to go barefoot sometimes” (Abū Dā'ud 1988, 141). The purpose of this tradition is to educate the believers and guide them towards modest behavior as opposed to indulgence and exaggeration. We can assume that this tradition was aimed at a didactic guidance towards modesty and did not mean that the believers will actually walk barefoot.

Muslim jurists define the role of shoes through an interesting comparison between the need to cover the pubis and the need to cover the legs, although legs are only part of women's pubis: “It is an obligation that the shoes will conceal from the bottom and from the sides but not from the top and as for the pubis [it must be concealed] from the top and from the sides but not from the bottom” (al-Nawawī 1966, 502). Thus the pubis must be concealed from the top and the sides while the legs must be concealed from the bottom and the sides. Although according to the legal definition legs are only part of women's pubis, they must be concealed for the sake of modesty, and at the same time they must be separated from the ground for the sake of protection from weather and injuries.

### III. Shoe customs

Jurists from different schools of law agree that the basic rule regarding the wearing of shoes is the prohibition to wear only one shoe for fear of changing basic human balance: “The prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, has said: no one should walk with one shoe. He shall wear them both or take them off” (Ibn Anas 1992, 88). Another proof of the importance of the balance between both legs is reflected in the instruction regarding a situation where the lace of one shoe was cut off. In this case, one should not walk with the lace of one shoe until he gets the second lace repaired.

The jurists also recommend that shoes not be worn while standing. It seems that the explanation for this instruction is not because it is more appropriate, but rather because it is easier physically, and for fear of falling down while wearing the shoes. The instruction to sit down and use the hands to help put the shoes on reflects the jurists' practical point of view, aimed at creating behavior norms and customs which are helpful and logical for every day practices.

Another basic demand is the need to put on the right shoe first and then the left: “The prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, preferred to begin with the right side whenever he could [such as] purification, personal hygiene and shoes” (Abū Dā’ud 1988, 780). The fact that most people’s dominant side is the right is probably the explanation for the various faiths which prefer the right side in different aspects of life. In ancient times in Europe and the Middle East, walking with one shoe on was perceived as one of the symbols of deviation from the norm. Carlo Ginzburg has named this phenomenon of walking with one shoe monosandalism (Ginzburg 1991, 233). Furthermore, he adds that this mannerism was usually ascribed to women and demons. Islam was influenced in this direction by earlier cultures, especially the Zoroastrian religion which contains some prohibitions regarding the demonic behavior of humans, such as wearing one shoe only. As Stillman adds, many customs regarding Muslim clothes have their roots in ancient Near Eastern superstition. Some are also found in the Talmud, and in the Muslim tradition they are ascribed to Muhammad (Stillman 2000, 27). The same order of wearing and taking off shoes was prescribed later in *Šulkḥan Aruḥ*, a codification of Jewish law composed by Joseph Caro in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century (Bashan 2008, 3).

Shoes, which are basically a means of locomotion aimed at separating the feet from the ground and its pollution, are also used as an instrument of punishment, humiliation and insult; i.e., they are transformed into a tool of violence. The same shoes that were aimed at protecting the feet from the outdoors and its dirt are thrown at someone as a representation of the lowest of all, namely the street and its pollution. According to Hadith traditions, when someone came to the Prophet drunk, the Prophet ordered to beat him with palm branches and shoes. The tradition of hitting with shoes is an example of a practice rooted in cultural norms, thus related to hygiene and pollution more than to sacred rituals. Hitting someone with a shoe is considered one of the most demeaning acts in Arab culture to this day. It is interesting to note that in Judaism, during the *halitza* ceremony, a shoe is used to release the widow from having to marry her unmarried brother-in-law. The use of a shoe together with a spit and the announcement “So shall it be done unto the man that doth not build up his brother’s house” is aimed at humiliating and shaming the brother-in-law for not marrying the widow and keeping his brother’s name (Berenbaum and Skolnik 2007, 725–729).

#### IV. Shoe differentiation

Differentiations through a material object, namely shoes which are the main subject of this article, reflect the importance of personal appearance in general and shoes in particular. In the following passages some examples of the use of shoes for differentiation are discussed.

## *Gender differentiation*

According to medieval legal sources, the differences between men's and women's appearance and behavior are clear and irreversible. Hadith traditions, many of which are ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad, curse men who behave like women or resemble women's appearance, and vice versa. "God curses women who resemble men and men who resemble women" (Abū Dā'ud 1988, 773).

Men's footwear should be functional and comfortable, allowing them to move easily from place to place and to engage in various activities, while women's footwear is created and worn primarily for aesthetic reasons, to adorn the female body, but not to allow her mobility and even to impede her mobility and opportunities (Riello and Mcneil 2006, 5). Men's footwear was associated with being outdoors and being active, while women's footwear was associated with indoor living and inactivity, thus were made of delicate fabrics. The appropriate shoes for women should hide the legs, must not be decorated with adornments which make sound while used, and may be made of silk, silver or gold. Men's shoes, on the other hand, should emphasize the legs, may be decorated with adornments which make sounds, and may not be made of those raw materials allowed for women.

When Aisha, the beloved wife of the prophet Muhammad, was asked about a woman who wears shoes, her answer was: "God's messenger, peace be upon him, cursed the women who behaved like men" (Abū Dā'ud 1988, 780). Although shoes are not specifically mentioned in this tradition, this was the tradition chosen to deal with the issue of women's shoes. According to an even more interesting tradition, Aisha used to walk with one shoe only. We can assume that these traditions are not a reflection of existing reality, rather being aimed at establishing the perception that women are not equal to men, even with regards to shoes. In reality, even if women did not leave the domestic sphere frequently, they probably used to wear shoes out of their homes and did not go barefoot or wear one shoe only. This assumption is based on two arguments: women's feet were perceived as hidden parts of the female body, thus they had to be concealed in the public male sphere, together with the need to protect the feet from injuries while walking.

Proof of the existence of women's shoes in the legal literature, as a reflection or at least as a partial reflection of reality, is found through mention of the prohibited kinds of shoes for women. For example: women are prohibited from wearing shoes which make a sound while walking, such as shoes adorned with beads, as this is an exaggeration and the sound of the beads is considered to be the song of the devil which seduces men (al-Wanšarīsī 1981–1983, 420; al-Šayzari 1969, 73). According to Ibn Taymiya (died 1328), at the dawn of Islam women did not wear *ḥifaf* and *aḥdhiya* (two types of men's shoes), but they adopted this custom later on when they wanted to hide their legs while leaving their homes (Ibn Taymiyya 1983a, 37; Ibn Taymiyya 1965b, 307). The hidden

criticism in Ibn Taymiya's words is that women moved away from accepted traditional female customs towards a resemblance of men in appearance, including shoes. As clothing and appearance are an aspect of gender relations, crossing the known, familiar borders between the sexes threatens the patriarchs, their hegemony and the familiar, accepted hierarchy. However, men were prohibited from wearing shoes made of silver, gold and silk, all permitted materials for women's shoes, clothing and adornment.

The following tradition: "shoes are men's anklets" (Kister 1999, 187) is ascribed to the prophet Muhammad, thus we can assume that shoes were accessories of adornment in addition to their practical use as foot protection. This tradition, phrased in masculine form, implies that women's shoes were not aimed at adorning their legs, as it was inappropriate for them to be adorned in the public male sphere. Furthermore, women's shoes were aimed at concealing a private hidden part of the female body. Thus, even the discussion of shoes contributes to the definition of the gendered spheres – the public sphere is the natural one for wearing shoes, thus this duty is firstly aimed at men but also at women who enter this sphere. This does not mean that women become equal to men, but that they are required to conceal their hidden private parts even more strictly in public. Ibn Taymiya explains that women wear wide shoes for the purpose of concealing the size of their feet, while men wear tight shoes as manifestation of their big feet (Ibn Taymiyya 1983b, 43). It seems that in pre-modern Muslim societies, as in many other societies past and present, big feet were perceived as inappropriate for women thus must be hidden, while big feet are a part of men's appropriate appearance.

### *Differentiation between Muslims and non-Muslims*

According to Muslim political perception, non-Muslims, namely Jews and Christians, are allowed to live in Muslim territories as protégés (*ahl al-dimma*) with duties and privileges (Cahen 1991, 227). The need to establish the status of Islam, the youngest of the three monotheistic religions, caused Muslim jurists to define exclusive norms in various fields, including personal appearance. The discriminative laws of appearance discussed even footwear and walking barefoot which were at times imposed on Jews as part of a dress code aimed at marking their differentiation and humiliation (Bashan 2008: 16). In a famous document known as "Omar's pact" we find the oldest legislation concerning *ahl al-dimma* discriminating Jews and Christians in various aspects of life, including personal appearance and even shoes (Cohen 1999, 100–158; Stillman 2005, 205–207; Thomas, Roggema and others 2009, 360–364; Astern 2010, 70–72; Friedmann 2007, 87–92). The discrimination of non-Muslim men was manifested in headdress colors and in their way of wearing robes and belts, all being upper garments seen in public, the male sphere. On the other hand,

non-Muslim women's discrimination was manifested in both public and private spheres, and the restrictions imposed on them were even more humiliating, as they were obliged to wear shoes of two different colors.

According to Abu Yusuf (died 798) who was the chief *qadi* under the *ḥalifa* Harun al-Rašid, non-Muslims are prohibited from resembling Muslims in their dress and adornment, thus they are discriminated against in their appearance from hair to shoes, including the decree to wear shoes with two laces (Abū Yūsuf 1961, 166–167). *Hisba* manuals discuss the personal appearance of non-Muslims as part of the *muḥtasib*'s duties of supervising the markets and public morals (Ghaben 2000, 396; Cahen & Talbi 1971, 486; Buckley 1992, 104–106). In his manual the *muḥtasib* Al-Šayzari (died 1193) mentions that non-Muslim women, although it is not clear if he means Jews, Christians or both, must wear one black shoe and one white shoe: "If she was a woman she must wear shoes in both colors: one black and one white" (al-Wanšarīsi 1981–1983, 256; al-Šayzari 1969, 162). During the *Mamlūk* regime non-Muslims' discrimination through colors was even harsher; a blue piece of cloth on the upper garment was forced on Christians and a yellow piece for Jews, in addition to shoes in two colors for all non-Muslim women (Mayer 1938, 162).

### *Differentiation in prize and punishment in the Day of Judgment*

The principals of Muslim eschatology phrased in the Qur'an are didactic, and are aimed at giving the believers motivation and legislation to god's justice and mercy (Taylor 1968, 66). The symbolic world of the Quranic eschatology is based on human earthly experience, its values and conceptions, including food, clothing and sex, and it is inspired by earlier eschatological descriptions of Persians, Jews and Christians (Rippin 1996, 126, 134–135; Gardet 1960a, 448). According to Muslim tradition, the true believers to be rewarded in paradise will enjoy an enormous abundance of material pleasures, including clothing and adornment (Quran: Sura 18: 31, sura 35: 33, sura 44: 53, sura 76: 21, sura 22: 23). On the other hand, the sinners who will be punished in hell will wear clothes and shoes made of fire (Bosworth 1986, 957; Gardet 1960b, 382; Chirstian 2010, 143–148). As a result of wearing shoes of fire in hell, the sinners' brain will boil due to the shoes' heat: "The least punishment of the people of fire (hell) is wearing shoes of fire that will boil their brain" (Abū Bakr al-Hayṭamī 1968, 395). The use of the physical idiom of dress and shoes made of fire aims at demonstrating the continuous physical pain that the sinners will feel, all meant to frighten the believers so they will not deviate from the right path in this world. The conclusion is that garments of clothing and adornment, including shoes, are used in two contradictory ways: on the one hand they are part of the reward in heaven and on the other a part of the punishment in hell, as dress and shoes made of fire will burn the sinners' bodies forever.

## V. Rituals

Purification is the opposite of pollution in two complementary aspects. The first and most important one is related to religious sacredness, which means that purification of pollution is a religious ceremony which connects between the body and the soul; while the second aspect is related to esthetics and hygiene, although the roles are changeable based on time and place (Douglas 1966, 7). Religious purification is a ceremony aimed at preparing the believers to perform the rituals, thus its roles do not determine that pollution is a crime, or that men are pure or that women are polluted.

Purification in Islam as a ritual act which must be performed before prayer is mentioned in the Qur'an, with later jurisprudence adding more formal aspects side by side with various solutions for everyday problems (Reinhart 2007b, 99). Like other rituals in Islam, such as *ḥağğ* and fasting, purification of different kinds (*nağas* and *ğanaba*) (Reinhart 1990–1991a, 8–15; Maghen 1999a, 354–362) is a ceremony identifying the individual believer with the community of Islam and defining Muslim exclusiveness over other religions (Maghen 1999b, 224; Maghen 2005c). Purification is an obligatory duty serving as an entrance ticket to the religious status of prayer and the religious place of the mosque or any other place suitable for prayer. It purifies the believers both physically and symbolically of everyday life and its pollutions, symbolizing a stage of passage that enables one the pass from the vain pleasures of this world to the worship of god through prayer.

Two rituals in Islam are related to purification and shoes (Denny 1985: 104).

### *Prayer*

Shoes in the Bible symbolizes the earthy in contrast with the holy, thus removing one's shoes signifies taking off something profane, obligatory upon those who approach the holy as the command to Moses (Exod. 3: 5) "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground". This association of sacredness and shoelessness explains the custom prevalent in some Jewish communities until the late Middle Ages according to which no one entered the synagogue with shoes on (Nacht 1915, 1; Bashan 2008, 7). Shoes were perceived as polluted objects, as they are the means of locomotion which separate sacred and polluted spaces. Only one place in the Qur'an (20: 12) refers to shoes, when god commands Moses to remove his shoes in recognition of His revelation to him in the sacred valley: "I am thy lord; put off thy shoes thou art in the holy valley, Towa". The discussion of the materials Moses' shoes are made of is reflected in the exegesis which claims that the decree to take the shoes off was based on the fact that they were made of a dead donkey's unpurified skin (al-Ğasās 1928, 49; Ibn al-'Arabī 1957, 1244; al-Harāsi 1983, 273).

The switch between wearing shoes and going barefoot was dictated by the custom of taking shoes off before entering a house or a mosque. Shoes must be removed before entering a mosque and before praying as a sign of respect and humility toward the sacred place of practicing the ritual of prayer. It is also a practical issue, as shoes touch the dirt and keeping dirt out of sacred spaces is common practice. In addition, Muslims must wash their feet and several other organs before praying. The purification of shoes for prayer is a subject under discussion in legal sources which reflect contradicting traditions regarding the need to take shoes off before prayer. At the dawn of Islam the prophet Muhammad used to pray with his shoes on, thus the need to purify them for prayer was a legal question later phrased as a duty for both men and women: “The cleanliness of everything that is worn on the legs which means those things that are permitted to be worn and reach over the heels (i.e. different kinds of shoes) is a desirable manner of the Prophet.” (Ibn Ḥazm 1969, 80). The sources do not mention when the custom of taking off one’s shoes became an obligatory duty replacing their purification, but it was imposed upon both men and women, as prayer is a religious duty for every Muslim. Some of the common explanations for this duty are the traditions regarding the need to differentiate the Jews and the instructions of Gabriel to Muhammad not to pray with dirt on his shoes (al-Nawawī 1966, 58; Ibn Sa’d 1905–1918, 168–169).

### *Ḥağğ*

The pilgrimage to Mecca is marked by leaving routine life and moving into a special religious and spiritual world, thus the entrance to the city itself is allowed only in the sacred status of *iḥram*<sup>1</sup> (Delaney 1990, 512). The Qur’an does not mention the pilgrims’ personal appearance, except the decree not to shave their head hair until the *ḥağğ* ends. It appears from late legal sources that the pilgrims’ personal appearance during *ḥağğ* is discussed from hair to shoes.<sup>2</sup> During the liminal stage of the *ḥağğ*, called *iḥram*, all pilgrims wear the same minimal dress signifying their equality and humility before god, with no socio-economic or religious differences.

The gendered definition of pubis and its connection with shoes and *ḥağğ* might be illustrated through the legal discussion of men’s shoes during *iḥram*. Men must wear *ni’al* (Matlūb 1995, 126; Ibrāhīm 2002, 498–499) (sandals), and those who only have *ḥuff*<sup>3</sup> (Lane 1980, 770–771; Ibrāhīm 2002, 152–153)

1 Physical *iḥram* means changing of one daily clothing while avoiding wearing of jewelry and using perfumes, whereas spiritual *iḥram* means the avoidance of improper behavior.

2 Many of *fiqh* and *Hadith* collections have a chapter that is dedicated to the pilgrimage to Mecca (*ḥağğ*), including all aspects of personal appearance.

As for example: al-Buḥārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḥārī*; Ibn Anas, *al-Muwatta’a*; Abū Dā’ud, *Sunan*; al-Wanṣarīsī, *al-Mi’yār*; Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*; al-Nawawī, *Ṣarḥ al-Muḥaḍḍab*; Ibn Sa’d, *Kitāb al-Ṭabakāt*; Abū al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥağğ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

3 A kind of shoes that covers the whole feet and a part of the leg.

must cut them off under the heels (thus the *huff* will resemble *ni'al*) which must be revealed. The permission to use *huff* and *ni'al* hints at the shoes' value, thus the believers were allowed to change their shape and their original form so they can be used during *hağğ*. Some jurists even claim that there is no necessity to cut the *huff* off; probably based on their high economic value and the fact that walking becomes harder as the shoes will fall off the feet<sup>4</sup> (al-Nawawī 1966, 420). The purpose of wearing sandals during *hağğ* is to be as close as possible to being barefoot, thus being humble before god, but with a minimum of protection on the organ of locomotion. However, women's shoes during hajj must fulfill their basic purpose, which is hiding the legs as part of women's pubis, thus no change is allowed in their shoes and it is permissible for them to wear *huff*.

The following section discusses two customs related to *hağğ* and shoes, although they are not a part of the ceremony itself or related to the pilgrims' personal appearance. According to medieval jurisprudence in pre-Islamic times, when men took an oath they used to throw their whip, bow or shoes in the *Ka'ba* (al-Buḥārī 1987, 187). The importance of the *Ka'ba* as a central place of worship before Islam is known and demonstrated through the fact that the oaths were dedicated to it. In addition, the objects thrown into the *Ka'ba* symbolize masculinity (whip), military power (bow) and shoes which symbolize locomotion and freedom of action in the public male sphere. After the prophet Muhammad purified the *Ka'ba* of idols, this custom was probably prohibited as the *Ka'ba* became a place of worship of god only, with no sharing of idols or beliefs in worship of material objects.

The other custom refers to the use of shoes to mark the sacrificed animal by tying two sandals around its neck and announcing the *ṭalbiya*<sup>5</sup> for the pilgrimage (Ibn Anas 1992, 20; al-Nawawī 1966, 420). A possible explanation is that tying sandals to the sacrifice's neck was a sign of ownership and wealth, as the owner could buy sandals not for personal use but for marking ownership. Another explanation might be that this custom was a declaration of sacredness, as the animal was intended for sacrifice at the end of the *hağğ* and the beginning of *Id al-Adḥa* (the big festival).

## VI. Conclusion

Components of personal appearance were aimed at adorning the body as well as serving as a declaration of socio-economic status, culture, religion and gender relations. Footwear is cultural issue, thus has its own aesthetics, function

4 There are jurists that permit to use the leather of the sacrifice for shoes, another proof of the high value of leather as a raw material for shoes.

5 The *ṭalbiya* is a ceremonial call of obedience appointed at God that is a part of the *hağğ* ceremonies.

and symbols. As part of one's personal appearance, they aim at separating the feet from the ground and protecting them from weather and injuries in addition to their symbolic meanings and roles. The legal Muslim discussion of footwear in pre-modern Muslim societies is an example of the importance of one's outward appearance and its multi-meanings in past Muslim societies. Together with the often hypothetical theoretical discussion, these sources reflect the community's practices, since the written texts dealt with existing reality in their determination of standards for what was or was not permitted according to legal norms.

According to medieval Muslim sources, footwear of different kinds of color, shapes and raw materials were in use for both men and women as an integral part of a person's appearance and a manifestation of their socio-economic status. Shoe customs were aimed at improving daily practice, but at the same time they reflect pre-Islamic popular beliefs such as the prohibition of walking with one shoe or the demand to put on the right shoe first and then the left one.

The instructions regarding the wearing of footwear were also used to differentiate among and even discriminate against some groups. According to the patriarchal Muslim differentiation, women's shoes should hide the legs, must not be adorned with adornments which make sounds while walking, and may be made of silk, silver or gold. However, men's shoes should emphasize the legs, may be decorated with adornments that make sounds, and must not be made of the raw materials allowed for women. From a gendered perspective, this accessory was aimed at establishing and preserving the patriarchal gender-based hierarchy, thus revealing the nature of the relations between sexuality, gender and appearance. Another group discriminated through footwear are the non-Muslim protégés against whom discriminating laws were aimed, creating a clothing code for the purpose of restraining and humiliating them. They were allowed to wear only a few types of footwear, and their women were obliged to wear shoes of two different colors. The last group differentiated by footwear is defined by the reward in the world to come. The true believers will be rewarded in paradise with precious clothing, jewelry and shoes, as opposed to the sinners who will be punished in hell by wearing shoes of fire forever.

Footwear is related to two basic rituals of Islam, namely prayer and *ḥaḡḡ*. Shoes must be taken off before prayer, as they are perceived as a polluted object, thus reflecting the separation between the daily sphere and the sacred sphere, in addition to the hidden educating message of esthetics and hygiene. During *ḥaḡḡ*, male believers must wear only sandals both to protect the feet and to be modest and close to earth, in more than one way. The use of shoes for marking the sacrificed animal and as the object of an oath is rare, and seems to be an adoption of pre-Islamic customs. To sum up, the discussion of the juristic principles regarding footwear is important as a small contribution to the understanding of pre-modern Muslim traditional societies in which footwear serves as a criterion of socio-economic status, discrimination, gender relations and even pollution, hygiene and esthetics.

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## **Obuća: maniri, obredi, kultura i moda u ranom islamu**

**Apstrakt:** Obuća je deo kulture i samim tim ima svoju estetiku, funkciju i simboliku. Pravne diskusije na temu obuće u tradicionalnim muslimanskim društvima jesu primer važnosti spoljnog izgleda pojedinaca i njegovih višestrukih značenja u muslimanskim društvima u prošlosti. Prema srednjovekovnim muslimanskim izvorima, muškarci i žene su obuću različitog dizajna, boja, oblika i sirovina primenjivanih za njenu izradu, koristili kao integralni deo njihovog ličnog izgleda i kao pokazatelje njihovog socio-ekonomskog statusa u društvu. Svrha običaja vezanih za obuću bila je da unaprede svakodnevne prakse i upute za njihovu upotrebu, kao i da posluže kao marker diferencijacije između različitih grupa, pa čak i diskriminacije u okviru nekih od njih. Pored toga, obuća je skopčana sa dva bazična muslimanska obreda, naime molitvu i hadžiluk, budući da molitva podrazumeva obavezu izuvanja, odnosno da su muški vernici tokom hadžiluka imali obavezu da nose samo sandale kako bi zaštitili svoja stopala i iskazali skromnost i bliskost sa zemljom.

**Ključne reči:** obuća, islam, jurisprudencija, lični izgled, ukrašavanje, rod, obredi.