

# Difference between Din and Mazhab (20)

~~1.3~~

## 1. Introduction: Difference between Din and Mazhab

The difference between Din and mazhab is of significant importance. Historically, Dr Issas points out, Mazhab was used to describe the Fiqhi schools (schools of jurisprudence). However, overtime people started to use it for Islam. Thus, contemporary scholars like Dr Issas, Allama Iqbal, and Maududi have tried to explain the difference between them.

Din refers to a complete way of life and is used in broader sense. It has its own political, economic and social system. Conversely, Mazhab, translated as "religion" is used in restricted sense and can be regarded as sub-set of Din. Din encompasses both private and public life as well as social and individual life.

## ~~2. Literal meaning~~

The term used for Islam in Quran and Hadith is "Din" as the Quran says-

"ان الدين عند الله الاسلام"  
 "Indeed, the Din in the sight of Allah is Islam" (5:3)

## 2. Literal meaning and historical context of term "religion".

Term "religion" appears in the text of Julius Caesar who used it to describe "obligation of an oath". Cicero used it to describe worshipping of Gods, but more well known meaning comes from Edward Tylor who describes it as "belief in spiritual beings".

### 2.1 Understanding the concept of religion.

Sociologist Durkheim gave the purpose of religion as "social control, social cohesion" and a means of gathering and communication.

A better concept is given by William James who argues that it is a belief in a supreme being and a belief that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting our lives thereto.

Thus, we can argue that religion is used in a narrower sense than Din. According to Dr. Isaac it has 3 composite factors.

- 1) Rituals
- 2) Faith
- 3) Social functions.

2.2

The absence of term "religion/Mazhab" in the primary Islamic text.

The term Mazhab does not appear in primary Islamic text, i.e., Quran and Hadith. The Quran uses term "Din" for completion of revelation.

(5:3) "اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم"

"This day I have perfected for you, your Din"

3.

Meaning of term Din

Maududi in his book "Four basic Quranic terms" defines the meaning of Din and argues that in Quran it has been used in following connotations.

- 1) Sovereignty and supreme authority
- 2) Obedience to such authority

As used in Surah Zumar: 2.

"Indeed, we have sent down to you [O Muhammad] this book so worship Allah sincere to Him in Din"

- 3) System of thoughts and action established through exercise of such authority.

- 4) Judgment pronounced by such authority. (109:6)

As "دينكم" has been used

in several places of Quran to describe day of judgment.

"and what do you know of day of Din"  
(83:17)

4. Wider scope of term "Din" vis-a-vis Mazhab.

Maududi in "Four basic Quranic terms" uses following verse to argue that Din encompasses entire way of living

"and said Pharaoh  
and then let him call upon his Rab  
for I am very afraid that he might  
change your Din or disturb the  
peace of land" (40:26)

Maududi argues that Pharaoh "by  
"change in Din" meant the ~~entire~~ revolutionary  
change in entire socio-political set-up and  
not just a change in religion.

5. Political, ~~economic~~ economic and social system  
in Din.

Islam, as a Din, or complete way of life  
has its own political, economic and social  
system. Example of each is produced  
below.

### 5.1 Political system in Islam.

Mawdudi in "Islamic law and constitution" cites the following verse to argue the basic principle of Islamic political system that no one has right to pass order in his own right.

"All authority to govern rests with Allah. He has commanded that you serve none but Him" (12:40)

### 5.2 Economic System in Islam

Dr. Hamidullah points out to the basic principle of economic system in Din, which is circulation of wealth.

"so that wealth may not circulate among solely rich among you" (59:7)

### 5.3 Social System in Islam.

The whole life, saying, and conduct of Prophet (SAW) is extemp exemplary for mankind. Prophet (SAW) has taught regarding social ethics and conduct as hadith states

"The best among you are those who have best manners"

and conduct." (Bukhari and Muslim")

### 6) Comparison between Mazhab and Din

6.1) Subjective experience; personal in nature	Objective reality that includes both <i>Huqooq Allah</i> and <i>Huqooq ul Ibaad</i> .
6.2) Does not provide guidance in most aspects of life	Provides guidance in all aspects of life.
6.3) Has been used to oppress people eg divine right to rule	Motivates to rise up against injustice and oppression eg "Allah loves not that evil should be noised in public except where injustice has been done" (4:148)
6.4) No practical action required	Motivates to take practical steps "Allah does not change the condition of people until they change what is in themselves" (13:11)
6.5) Man made, each civilization had its own religion	One Din from first prophet to last.
6.6) <del>Denouncing</del>	
6.6) Denounces innovation / Not for all times	Divine and immutable. For all times. Dynamic tools such as <i>ijtihad</i> .

7. Conclusion

Din when subjugated is reduced to religion. British dominated the subcontinent by attacking the Muslim identity and reducing Din to religion. Khalid rightly described the consequence of reducing ~~the~~ Din to Mazhab in the following Verse.

"Since the cleric in India is allowed to prostrate in prayer / He foolishly thinks it implies his freedom"