

Scholarly Consensus

- U.W. professor Clark Lombardi [explains](#) (p. 402):

"Classical jurists believed, however, that the islamic community was divinely protected from error, and thus would never agree on an incorrect legal conclusion. Because of the doctrine of collective infallibility, classical theory held that juristic consensus was the 4th source of God's law. It meant that a particular interpretation of islamic law that had once been considered merely "probable" was definitively correct and no longer subject to question. The vast majority of legal thinkers accepted that the consensus of all scholars in a single generation was sufficient to establish the truth of a legal proposition. Some scholars, however, accepted that only the consensus of the first generation of Muslims could be trusted without question".

- [Reliance of the Traveller](#) is a 14th century manual of Islamic law whose content and english translation was approved by al-Azhar University in Egypt in 1990,

“scholarly consensus is legally binding.”

"Scholarly consensus (ijma') is the agreement of all the mujtahids (def o22.19d) of the Muslims existing at one particular period after the Prophet's death about a particular ruling regarding a matter or event... When the four necessary integrals of consensus exist, the ruling agreed upon is an authoritative part of Sacred Law that is obligatory to obey and not lawful to disobey. Nor can mujtahids [scholars] of a succeeding era make the thing an object of new ijihad [Islamic legal opinion], because the ruling on it, verified by scholarly consensus, is an absolute legal ruling which does not admit of being contravened or annulled." ([b7.1](#), [b7.2](#))