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The Relationship between Religion and State: Sharia Law in the Israeli Legal System Compared to “Religious Law” in the German Legal System

Over the last decade, Islamic law has become an important field of research in numerous universities around the world, including in Israel. Academic interest in Islamic law has stemmed from the growing Muslim communities in Western countries and the strengthening of many Muslim movements in the Muslim and Western world. These movements have begun to see Islamic law as an inseparable part of the Muslim identity and have begun to call for Islamic law to be enforced in all areas of Muslim life. Social and political developments in Muslim countries inspired Arab countries to also regard Islamic law as the source for their legislation. Likewise, in the State of Israel, the Islamic Movement and the Sharia courts began urging the enforcement of Islamic law in social issues outside the realm of personal status. In the State of Israel indigenous non-Jews – Muslims, Druze and Christians – comprise approximately 22% of the population.