

FOREWORD

This book forms part of the Institute's programme of studies and research relating to comparative law. In the first phase of the programme, we brought out a monograph : *An Introduction to the Study of Comparative Law*. The present work begins the next phase which consists of intensive studies concerning specific areas and providing materials for comparative studies in various fields of the law.

Islamic personal law, as presently applicable in a large number of countries, is not uniform. A study of its divergent principles in contrast with the family law under some other legal system, both oriental and western, furnishes interesting materials for comparative study and research.

In the recent past, legislative changes have been introduced into Islamic law in several parts of the world. A comprehensive survey of the legislation undertaken for this purpose in about twenty countries forms the subject-matter of the present study. The outstanding reforms introduced in some of these countries have, of course, been analysed by certain European scholars, but the details of the laws enacted in many of these countries are not available in the English language. The author of this book has made an intensive survey of the newly enacted family laws applicable to Islamic people in the various countries. The book, therefore, fulfils the need for a compact volume giving an up-to-date account of the reform and codification of Islamic family law all over the world.

The study has special significance for India. In this country, Muslim personal law constitutes the family law of over sixty million followers of Islam. For a long time past, a controversy has been going on for its reform or replacement by a uniform civil code mentioned in article 44 of the Constitution. In this connection, a knowledge of how and to what extent Islamic personal law has been reformed in various other countries is extremely necessary.

The book has been written by Mr. **Tahir Mahmood**, *Associate Research Professor* of the Institute. The English translation of several Arabic and Persian enactments found in the book was also prepared by the author himself. I place on record my admiration for his very hard work.

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S. N. Jain
Acting Director