

## P R E F A C E

During the current century, Islamic personal law relating to family rights and succession has formed the subject of legislation in several countries of North Africa and the West, South and South-East Asia. In some of these countries, the legislation has transformed the traditional personal law of the Islamic people into veritable codes, whereas in the rest of them it has introduced significant reforms into some of the locally prevalent legal principles of Islam. In this book I have presented an account of such legislation promulgated in all the aforesaid countries.

A few judicial reforms introduced, in some contemporary states, into certain traditional Islamic doctrines are equally important. However, in order to keep my account within reasonable limits, I have had to restrict myself to legislative reforms.

My study is essentially descriptive. The discussion of the nature, juristic basis and effects of the various reforms is not meant either to defend or to condemn any specific change adopted in any country. Nor is the study suggestive of any particular modalities regarding the controversial issue of the reform of Islamic personal law in India.

The book is concerned with a survey of only the recent legislation pertaining to Islamic law. The readers are expected to have a basic knowledge of the general principles of Islamic family law and succession, which have not generally been explained in it. However, in order to provide some help to the readers, reference has frequently been made to two prominent books of Islamic law, namely Asaf A.A. Fyzee's *Outlines of Muhammadan Law* (3rd ed. 1964) and Sir D. F. Mulla's *Principles of Muhammadan Law* (16th ed. 1968)\*. Further, an elementary note on the schools and sources of Islamic law has been given as an appendix to the Introduction, and a glossary added at the end of the book.

A word about the translated texts of the various foreign laws found in the book is necessary. The readers should not expect in them a meticulous English rendering. I do not claim perfection in the Arabic and Persian languages. Further, instead of a literal translation, I preferred simplicity of expression and use of legal terms familiar to us.

The transliteration of non-English words occurring in the book is that adopted in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Only in the texts of the Malay and

\*These works have been cited throughout the book as *Outlines* and *Principles* respectively.

Ceylonese laws, when reproduced in the book, the spelling of such words has been left unchanged.

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