Husain, S. Athar. *Muslim Personal Law: an Exposition*. Lucknow: All India Muslim Personal Law Board, 1989, 230pp.

**ABSTRACT**

**Muslim Personal Law: an Exposition**

This book is primarily concerned with Muslim personal law; however other themes are also dealt with. The book has three parts, the first of which is a long introduction in which S. Athar Husain briefly discusses the historical development of Muslim personal law, the status of women and the role of human rights within Islam. The two last sections of this part are devoted respectively to the *jihad* and the *zakat*. The holy war and almsgiving are not technically part of Muslim personal law, but Husain has presented them here as crucial aspects of the evolution of Islamic jurisprudence.

The second part, the longest, deals with the principal Muslim institutions: marriage, divorce, *hiba*, *wasiyat* and *wakf*. The third and concluding part is a short essay on Islam’s contribution to the present-day world.

This book is written for a general readership, but the constant references to Qur’anic verses may present a challenge to non-specialised readers. Moreover, the book has some flaws in its explanation of Muslims law in the Indian context, which is characterised by the co-existence of different communities. For instance, Husain fails to provide a convincing explanation of why Muslim law in India should not be reformed. Also, Husain’s tone is sometimes apologetic rather than explicative; this undermines the objectivity of the work and its intention to elucidate some aspects of Muslim law.

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