


# Human Rights under State-Enforced Religious Family Laws in Israel, Egypt and India (Cambridge Studies in Law and Society)

*By Yüksel Sezgin*

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About one-third of the world's population currently lives under pluri-legal systems where governments hold individuals subject to the purview of ethno-religious rather than national norms in respect to family law. How does the state-enforcement of these religious family laws impact fundamental rights and liberties? What resistance strategies do people employ in order to overcome the disabilities and limitations these religious laws impose upon their rights? Based on archival research, court observations and interviews with individuals from three countries, Yüksel Sezgin shows that governments have often intervened in order to impress a particular image of subjectivity upon a society, while people have constantly challenged the interpretive monopoly of courts and state-sanctioned religious institutions, re-negotiated their rights and duties under the law, and changed the system from within. He also identifies key lessons and best practices for the integration of universal human rights principles into religious legal systems.

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Review
"Professor Sezgin has produced a definitive account of how the legal and judicial systems dealing with family law affect fundamental rights ... This is an important book for students of comparative government and comparative law."
Martin Edelman, Law and Politics Book Review

"... an insightful and meticulous qualitative analysis ... an important contribution to research on a matter that is not only of academic but also of significant public concern."
Nadia Sonneveld, International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family

"This detailed comparison of systems in which religious principles and/or authorities share in the authoritative resolutions of family disputes is a welcome addition to a more general literature on religion/regime relations. As such, this volume is worthy of the attention of a wide range of scholars interested in the interactions between the sacred and the secular."
Ted G. Jelen, Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion

"Sezgin's work makes an important contribution to the growing dialogue on the best way to reform the inequities created by the imposition of religious norms in state legal systems. His book coherently and systematically contextualises the developments in three countries which continue to grapple with this challenge, and he gives the lay reader and scholarly community important information and comparative analysis of those efforts."
Susan Weiss, Israel Law Review

About the Author
Yüksel Sezgin is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, where his research and teaching interests include legal pluralism, informal justice systems, comparative religious law, and human and women's rights in the context of the Middle East, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

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