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PREFACE

This edition marks an unusual year for the International Society of Family Law, in which the Executive had to postpone the triennial World Congress due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While this loss was a sad one for us, it of course does not compare with the tremendous loss of life and great suffering that have affected so many worldwide. The pandemic also struck the authors of this Survey, disrupting their research activities and even hospitalizing some.

Nevertheless, the 24 chapters from all over the globe remind us of our rich intellectual heritage, our many similarities, and deep friendships. As is typical, the chapters discuss matters ranging from assisted conception, adoption, and surrogacy to treatment of the elderly and inheritance. Several chapters deal with international or regional conventions and treaties and others are of a more comparative nature. As is customary, some authors hold leadership positions within the Society or their own countries; others are completing their graduate studies.

This edition also marks the last for which I will serve as General Editor, since I have retired and wish to ‘pass the baton’ to a younger generation of scholars. The 2022 edition will be edited by my compatriots June Carbone of the University of Minnesota and Robin Wilson of the University of Illinois. For 2023, the aim is to highlight the developments in family law over the 50 years our Society will have been organized. My thanks and admiration go to the scores of authors who have contributed such fine work over the years, as well as to the fine people at Intersentia who turn the manuscripts into such lovely volumes. And, of course, Christine Bidaud and Dominique Goubeau have been invaluable and patient with their translations of the abstracts.

One of the things I did not expect when I agreed to serve as General Editor was the extent to which I would come to know these many talented people. Over the years, I have been party to their triumphs, both personal and professional, and their struggles. I have come to know not only about career successes, jealousies and failures, but about births and deaths, child and marital problems, and illnesses both physical and mental. Perhaps this isn’t strange for an editorial position, but I am convinced that it stems from who we are as a Society. I am very grateful for the trust the members have placed in me.

Margaret Brinig
September 2021

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	v
<i>List of Contributors</i>	xv

Africa

The African Children's Charter at 30: What Implications for Child and Family Law?

Julia SLOTH-NIELSEN	1
1. Introduction	1
2. The Role of Parents and Families vis-à-vis Children	3
3. Specialised Structures for Family and Child Law-Related Matters	6
4. Domestic Violence and Other Forms of Family Violence	8
5. Minimum Age of Marriage	9
6. Intercountry Adoption	11
7. Parental Corporal Punishment	13
8. Conclusions	15

Albania

Domestic Violence Law in Albania

Ledina MANDIJA	17
1. Introduction	18
2. History of the Legal Framework and Recent Legal Developments on Domestic Violence	20
3. Definition of Domestic Violence under Albanian Legislation	24
4. The Responsible Authorities for Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence	26
5. Measures against Domestic Violence	29
6. Emergency Protection Orders and Protection Orders under the Domestic Violence Law in Albania	32
7. Conclusions	35

Australia

Taking Family Violence Seriously: Adjusting the Court Process to Improve Access to Justice

Grant T. RIETHMULLER and Lisa O'NEILL 37

1. Overview of Australian Family Violence Provisions 38
2. Identifying and Managing Family Violence Cases in the Court System 47
3. Improving Protections in Family Law Trial Processes 54
4. Conclusions 59

Belgium

Defederalisation of Youth Protection in Belgium

Elisabeth ALOFS and Sofie DE BUS 61

1. Introduction 62
2. Youth Protection: Terms and Scope 63
3. Division of Powers Regarding Youth Protection in Belgium. 64
4. Evolution of Youth Protection Law in Belgium. 67
5. Evaluation: A Uniform Youth Protection Law is a Thing of the Past 80

Brazil

The Regulation of Homeschooling in Brazil

Antonio Jorge PEREIRA JÚNIOR and Nardejane Martins CARDOSO. 87

1. Introduction 88
2. What is Homeschooling? 90
3. Homeschooling in Brazil 92
4. Proposals for the Regulation of Home Education in Brazil. 96
5. Conclusion 100

Canada

Cross-Border and Retroactive Child Support

Martha BAILEY 103

1. Introduction 103
2. Cross-Border Child Support 104
3. Retroactive Child Support 107
4. Conclusion 113

China**Marriage and Family Law in China in the Civil Code Era**

Zhu FAN and Lu XIAOBEI	115
1. Family Laws in China before the Civil Code	116
2. Important Issues Relating to the Absorption of the Marriage and Family Laws into the Civil Code	120
3. Revisions and Legislative Reasons thereof in the Marriage and Family Part of the Civil Code	123
4. The Supreme People's Court's Repeal, Amendment and Addition of Judicial Interpretations	129
5. Conclusion	131

China**The Adult Guardianship System in the Civil Code Era of China**

Xia LI and Junchao ZUO	133
1. Major Progress of the New Adult Guardianship System	135
2. Issues Relating to the New Adult Guardianship System	138
3. An Investigation under the Comparative Law	144
4. The Outlook of the Adult Guardianship System in China	148
5. Conclusions	153

England and Wales**Treatment for Children Suffering from Gender Dysphoria:
A Polarised Debate**

Mary WELSTEAD	155
1. Definitions	158
2. Diagnosis of GD in Children in the Jurisdiction	159
3. The Gender Identity Development Service for Children with Gender Dysphoria	159
4. Gender Identity Development Service Treatment of Gender Dysphoria	160
5. The Purpose and Effects of Puberty Blockers and Cross-Sex Hormones	161
6. The Permanence of Gender Dysphoria	163
7. Criticism of the Approach to Gender Dysphoria at the Tavistock Centre	164
8. The Legal Decisions Relating to Children and Gender Dysphoria	167

9.	Concluding Comments.....	178
10.	A Final Reminder	182
11.	Postscript.....	182

France

A Chronicle of French Family Law: 2020

Christine BIDAUD (Dir.)
 Hugues FULCHIRON, Massilia AMZAL, Bastien BARET,
 Claire BRUNERIE, Aurore CAMUZAT, Éric FONGARO,
 Guillaume KESSLER, Guillaume MILLERIOUX, Taylène MOREIRA DE SÁ,
 Mathilde MOSIEK-BRASSET, Margot MUSSON and Richard VESSAUD ... 185

1.	Entry into Force of Reforms to the Proceedings Applicable to Contentious Divorces.....	187
2.	Fight against Domestic Violence in Times of Pandemic	189
3.	New Law on Depicting Children on Video-Sharing Platforms.....	191
4.	Adoption Reform: An Expected Development Offset by a Lack of Precision and Ambition	193
5.	Bill No. 3292 Strengthens the Right to Abortion.....	195
6.	The Opening-Up of Medically Assisted Procreation to All Women.....	197
7.	French Law Recognises Marriage by Proxy if the National Law of the Person Represented Allows it	198
8.	Legal Capacity and Consent: Useful Reminders.....	200
9.	Law Prohibiting the Establishment of Filiation Outside Marriage and International Public Policy	201
10.	The Parentage of Children Born Abroad by Surrogacy: Stabilisation Time?	202
11.	Medically Assisted Procreation: Ruling According to the Child’s Best Interests.....	204
12.	The Right to be Become Grandparents Post-Mortem	206
13.	Filiation and Transidentity.....	207

Hong Kong

Desperately Seeking Legislative Reform

Anne SCULLY-JOHNSON..... 211

1.	Introduction	212
2.	Are We Married? Depends on the Context!.....	216
3.	Adopting the Child’s Best Interests?	225
4.	Conclusion	231

Ireland**The Impact of COVID-19 on Children's Rights in Ireland**

Louise FORDE	233
1. Introduction	234
2. Children's Rights in Ireland	235
3. Conclusion	260

Israel**The Judicial Parental Order as a Means of Recognising Same-Sex****Parenthood**

Noy NAAMAN	265
1. Introduction	266
2. Becoming a Parent	267
3. Formalising the Parental Status of the Non-Biological Parent	270
4. Current Legal Trends	276
5. Concluding Remarks and Future Directions	285

Italy**New Rules for New Grandparents**

Maria Donata PANFORTI	287
1. The Family as a Composite Unit	288
2. Grandparents Come onto the Stage of the Civil Code	289
3. In the Parents' Place	292
4. Grandparents of Our Time	294

Japan**Recent Family Law and Succession Law Reform in Japan**

Fumio TOKOTANI	295
1. Introduction	297
2. Lowering the Adult Age to 18	298
3. Amendments to the Inheritance Law in 2018	299
4. Revision of the Special Adoption System	306
5. The Act on Special Cases of the Civil Code on Assisted Reproductive Medicine	310
6. Prospects for Further Revision of the Family Law	312

Kenya

Kenyan Kadhis’ Courts and their Application of the Islamic Law of Divorce and Distribution of Property at the Dissolution of Marriage

Jamil Ddamulira MUJUZU 315

1. Introduction 316
2. Divorce in Islamic Law, as Approached by Kenyan Courts 317
3. Distribution of Property at the Dissolution of a Marriage 333
4. Conclusion 337

Korea

Allocation of Parental Authority after Divorce in Korean Family Law

Dongjin LEE 339

1. Introduction 340
2. Allocation of Parental Authority after Divorce, in General 341
3. Joint Parental Authority and Custody after Divorce 348
4. Conclusion 355

New Zealand

How New Zealand Courts Approach Difficult Hague Convention Cases

Mark HENAGHAN and Christian POLAND 357

1. Introduction 358
2. Hague Convention Proceedings in New Zealand 359
3. *Simpson v. Hamilton* 359
4. *LRR v. COL* 370
5. Conclusions 379

Norway

The New Norwegian Inheritance Act

John ASLAND 381

1. Introduction 382
2. Succession Based on Family Relations 383
3. *Uskifte* 387
4. Contracts of Inheritance 389
5. Testaments and Testamentary Dispositions 390
6. Choice of Law 392
7. Transitional Provisions 393

Poland**The Reform of the Civil Status Records Act in Poland and Discussion of Directions of its Amendments**

Małgorzata BALWICKA-SZCZYRBA and Anna SYLWESTRZAK 395

1. Introduction 395
2. Digitisation of the Civil Status Records System 398
3. Selected Problems with the CSRA 401
4. Summary and Closing Remarks 406

Puerto Rico**A New Civil Code and the Revision of Family Law**

Pedro F. SILVA-RUIZ 407

1. The Puerto Rico Legal System 407
2. The Revision of Family Law in the Civil Code of 2020 409

Serbia**Legal Aspects and Challenges of Intentional Parenthood in Serbia**

Melanija JANČIĆ 419

1. Introduction 420
2. Biomedical Assisted Fertilisation in Serbia: Definition and Indications 421
3. Surrogate Motherhood in Serbia: Legal and Ethical Controversy or Real-Life Necessity? 429
4. Conclusion 433

Slovenia**The Role of the Slovene Public Notary in Property Relations between Partners under the (New) Family Code**

Suzana KRALJIĆ 435

1. Introduction 436
2. Contract on Regulation of Property Relations 437
3. Other Powers of the Notary under the FC 444
4. Final Thoughts 449

Trinidad and Tobago

The Reform of Child Justice in Trinidad and Tobago: From an Oxymoron to Child Justice Principles

Hazel THOMPSON-AHYE	451
1. Introduction: Setting the Stage	452
2. The Caribbean 2000 Consensus on Juvenile Justice (2000 Consensus).....	454
3. On the Road to Law Reform	455
4. Conclusion	470
<i>Index</i>	471

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