multidisciplinary analysis of some of the common legal issues thrown up by increasing religious diversity, accompanied by an attempt to find imaginative and legally coherent solutions to the problems identified. The intellectually stimulating debate reflected in the subsequent chapters also helps to expand one’s understanding of the subject. That said, this formulation also has its drawbacks: the attempt to find common themes and practical common solutions, and then to throw open the debate to those who may not share the report’s conclusions, has to some extent led to a rather muddled picture, raising as many new questions as the book tries to answer.

Having read the book, one is certainly left with a greater understanding of the tensions in the relationship between religious diversity and a largely secular state, with some useful tools to help approach the subject. The RELIGARE project was an important development and will no doubt continue to provide invaluable information for international researchers and help inspire further collaborative work on law and religion. But is this a book which will merit re-reading by the more general reader, and regular dipping into its contents? Perhaps not.

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The Changing Nature of Religious Rights under International Law
Edited by MALCOLM EVANS, PETER PETKOFF AND JULIAN RIVERS

In this collection Malcolm Evans, Peter Petkoff and Julian Rivers draw together 15 essays by academics and practitioners on the changing nature of international human rights law’s engagement with religious belief and practice. The collection does not package these contributions into thematically linked sections but, as it unfolds, the early chapters frame the right of freedom of religion or belief, the main body of essays provides cases studies of the operation of the right in particular national jurisdictions or in the work of international/supranational organisations and the collection closes with two contributions which examine the operation of the right in the corporate sphere.

In the short first chapter Mary Ann Glendon casts freedom of religion as a right under acute threat, in terms of both the rise in religious persecution around the world and the tendency within liberal democracies to limit the value attached to religion and consequently to religious freedom. Much of her
scene-setting contribution is devoted to the latter threat, and to her prescription that liberal democracies must foster ‘a culture of mutual respect and genuine tolerance’ (p 7, emphasis in original) even if they adopt radically distinct positions on the role of religion in public life. Heiner Bielefeldt then proceeds to explore the trend in public discourse in many countries to set religious freedom against human rights rather than treating the former as intrinsic to the human rights project. Bielefeldt explains the place of religious freedom within human rights as a means by which to ‘empower human beings’ to maintain their own beliefs (p 24), taking issue both with rights scepticism among many religious conservatives and with accounts of liberalism which minimise the importance of religious freedom.

Malcolm Evans contributes an extended chapter which switches the focus to preventative approaches for addressing threats to religious freedom by crafting a new international convention which operates in a ‘domestically driven dialogical fashion’ (p 49) modelled on elements of the UN Convention Against Torture. Michael Wiener and Natan Lerner thereafter deliver two chapters which address the operation of the UN General Assembly’s Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. Weiner provides a brief commentary on the 1981 Declaration, as employed by successive UN Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Religion or Belief, whereas Lerner considers that the Declaration should be interpreted as supporting limitations to freedom of association and expression where they involve incitement to hatred on the basis of religion or belief.

Elizabeth Cassidy and Cathy Cosman open a series of case-study chapters with an analysis of the efforts by the United States to promote freedom of religion or belief by bilateral and multilateral channels. They build a compelling case that, despite two decades of activity under the auspices of the International Religious Freedom Act, US policy demonstrates ‘a lack of sustained commitment’ to promoting the right (p 122). Not that Thomas Krapf is any more positive, in Chapter 7, about the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe’s record on freedom of religion or belief, which he considers to have been subordinated to broader tolerance and non-discrimination agendas. As a result the OSCE has lost its focus on many aspects of the operation of the right within Europe (p 139). Knox Thames returns to the theme of how freedom of religion or belief is promoted through diplomatic activity, explaining the European Union’s fledgling efforts to promote this right. The following chapter, by Cornelis de Jong MEP, shifts the focus from the EU’s foreign relations policy to the European Parliament’s contribution to (and oversight of) such activity through the Working Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief.

Coming in the middle of these case studies, Cristopher McCrudden’s account of the increasing prominence of faith-based non-governmental organisations within public discourse initially seems out of place but, given the attention...
that he devotes to the activity of these organisations in lobbying UN organs (pp 187–189), his study provides a necessary foil to the activities of states and supranational organisations. His chapter also creates a bridge to Peter Petkoff’s account of religious exceptionalism, as promoted by the Holy See, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation, and its development as a ‘parallel legal culture’ (p 232) to mainstream human rights discourse within public international law. This parallel culture is vividly demonstrated by David-Maria Jaeger’s subsequent assertion of the Holy See’s perspective upon religious freedom. Gary Wilton continues the theme of church diplomacy, bringing his experience as the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Representative to the EU to bear on the tendency of freedom of religion and belief to be marginalised within secularised human rights debates.

The collection is rounded off by a pair of essays on current touchstone issues with freedom of religion or belief. Elisabeth Clark and W. Cole Durham’s contribution on corporate religious freedom maintains that ‘To say that the beliefs of owners must not be “imputed” to corporations makes no sense’ (p 258). Ilias Bantekas also asserts the need to ‘infuse elements of religious freedom in a field which is largely thought of as neutral to religion’: transnational contract and commercial transactions (p 305).

The collection as a whole perhaps suffers from including these chapters as something of an afterthought, when readers would undoubtedly benefit from further contributions upon these pressing issues for the development of religious rights. In short, some of the essays stand on their own, while others slot together, providing a rich dialogue over the direction of religious rights. But even where this collection does not consistently amount to more than the sum of its parts, many of the standalone contributions retain their capacity to shape current debate.

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The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Law
Editor-in-Chief BRENT A STRAWN

This encyclopaedia – the latest instalment in the Oxford Encyclopedias of the Bible series – should come with a government health warning. There are 115 notable scholars contributing some 139 essays on a variety of topics ranging