

and in his lecture 'The Ineffable Godhead' Dr Anthony Kenny, as a philosopher, asks how we can describe and so encompass the idea of God. These are two lectures which cannot be summarised but are learned and distinguished contributions towards the solution of that contemporary problem: how can we Christians explain ourselves and our faith in a sceptical world?

Dr Sacks, Bishop Baker and Lord Coggan examine from differing points of view the interaction of law, morality and religious belief.

So widely have these ten lecturers interpreted the terms of the trust that this reviewer cannot find a theme common to all. What can be said of them is that together they form a collection of learned, readable and, in the main, penetrating dissertations on topics which occur to lawyers who believe in, or are searching after, God.

The basis of law, morals, religious language, the intellectual arguments for belief, all are discussed. This book will leave any lawyer wiser and, what is more, any reader who has it on his shelves will return to it for quotations again and again.

*RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW IN EUROPE* by MALCOLM D. EVANS. Cambridge University Press, 1997. xxxi + 394pp (hard-back £45) ISBN 0-521-55021-1.

A review by Chancellor Rupert Bursell QC

'The freedom of religion is one of the oldest and most controversial of the claims that are now recognized as forming part of the corpus of human rights.'

The opening sentence of this most instructive book is reason enough for reading the whole: far too often religious freedom is taken for granted, just because we believe we have enjoyed it in the British Isles for so long. Nevertheless, that word 'believe' may have given the reader pause for thought. What is a 'religion'? For example, is Scientology a religion? And, if so, has it been accorded real freedom within the United Kingdom? Moreover, article 9(1) of the European Convention on Human Rights states:

'Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance.'

What, therefore, is the difference (if any) between a 'religion' and a 'belief'? If you are interested in legal (and political) responses to these problems, this book is for you.

Malcolm Evans, a lecturer at the University of Bristol, commences by pointing out that the idea of a state tolerating religious beliefs and practices of other communities would have appeared irrational in ancient days. However, the growth of the sovereign state in Europe led to the proposition that what takes place within the boundaries of a state is ultimately governed by domestic laws. In practice this has not proved satisfactory, as persecution, for example, of the Jews has proved. Therefore, as Evans says (at p. 2), 'In essence, the last 300 years have seen the international community attempting to resile [from this position].'

Nevertheless, interference by other states in the domestic policies of another could only be justified by force, political negotiation or the treaty obligations of the state concerned. To what extent religious freedom may now be enshrined within international law apart from treaty only time will tell. It is therefore necessary to be aware how the international protection of religious freedom arose within its historical context. That context can both inform and distort the interpretation of the various international treaties involved.

Evans manages the detailed examination of the political and legal preliminaries to those treaties with insight and clarity, although for most readers the most interesting aspects are likely to be the application of the wording of those treaties to individual circumstances. In the unlikely event of an insular Briton finding himself a member of the Ecclesiastical Law Society he might even be surprised at how many cases concern the United Kingdom!

Although not within the direct scope of this book itself, perhaps the most interesting question for ecclesiastical lawyers is what effect the direct application of the European Convention on Human Rights into our national law may have on the practice of ecclesiastical law. For example, does article 9(1) permit a cleric to ignore the canonical duty to use authorised services in private devotions? (No! Article 9(1) permits the adoption of a religion of choice; once the choice is made, the cleric is bound by the regulations of that Church). When such problems arise — and they will — this book will prove an excellent starting point for those who have to find the answers.

*ACCESS TO THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: MEETING THE NEEDS OF DISABLED PEOPLE* by LISA FOSTER. Donhead Publishing Ltd, 1997. xi + 124 pp (hardback £32) ISBN 1-873394-18-7

*ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF ARCHITECTURAL TERMS* by JAMES STEVENS CURL. Donhead Publishing Ltd, 1997. xii + 352 pp (hardback £47.50) ISBN 1-873394-04-7; (paperback £19.95) ISBN 1-873394-25-X

A review by Chancellor Rupert Bursell QC

I always look forward to reviewing books from these publishers: their books are always beautifully produced, well designed and attractively set out. Neither of these two books proved a disappointment, different though they most certainly are.

Meeting the needs of disabled persons is, of course, a matter of concern for all churches at the present time, but many will need a timely reminder that there are disabled persons to consider who are not wheelchair bound. As Foster says (at p. xi):

‘wheelchair users are not the only disabled people and access should not just be about ramps and handrails. Changing the definition of who are disabled has affected the design approach in a fundamental way. Designing for wheelchair users alone can lead to separate routes and dedicated lift devices like the wheelchair platform lift, a device generally not usable by other disabled people.’

Foster states —

‘... I was interested in countering the perception that good access provision for disabled people, primarily level access for wheelchair users, poses a threat to historic buildings and is irreconcilable with the conservation objectives.’

However, there is always a tension between those concerned to grant access to all and the conservation of a historic environment. Indeed, an illustration of a platform lift in Winchester Cathedral is described as having ‘the least impact on the historic fabric’. It must all be a question of balance. Would such a lift ever be permitted in the mediaeval stair going up to the old Chapter House at Wells? The principle, however, is not only important for the disabled: if the needs of the present day may be catered for in a historic environment, that logically brings in consideration of the worshipping needs of a present day congregation as well. Once again, it should be a matter of balance.

The book itself is well documented with photographs, sketches and plans. The