

employment law, claims against religious organisations and community rights in relation to sacred places. In this respect, the book guides the reader through a series of case studies, which identify the most typical examples of tensions between law and religion emerging in the above areas in a number of common law jurisdictions (and Russia, which, in the context of the book, is used as a particularly striking contrast of registration regime). Finally the book provides a systematic bibliography on the topics discussed.

Edge's style is focused, informative and well illustrated with cases without being too technical or 'visionary', which makes the work appealing to a larger audience. He makes a convincing pragmatic case about the reasons the relationship and tensions between law and religion have to be taken on board, without adopting a particular worldview within which this relationship is to be accommodated. His main focus is on where these tensions and interactions occur and why we should watch for such occurrences and take them seriously for what they are rather than pretending that they are something else.

This book will be an extremely helpful tool for lawyers, journalists, human rights advocates, policy makers and scholars with backgrounds in humanities and social sciences who wish to learn about the interaction between religion and law and its impact on their own disciplines. The book does not develop a particular thesis on the relationships between law and religion; rather it introduces the different ways we think about categories such as law and religion and how such categories are employed in legal, political and theological discourse.

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El Reino Unido: Un Estado de Naciones, una Pluralidad de Iglesias

JAVIER GARCÍA OLIVA

Comares, Granada, 2004, xxviii + 371 pp (€22.00) ISBN 978-84-8444-862-4

This work examines the relationship between the state and the churches in the United Kingdom from the perspective of a Spanish lawyer who has studied the subject whilst developing an academic career in British law schools. Dr García Oliva considers this relationship in terms both of the *established* churches in England and Scotland, and of the *disestablished* churches in Wales and Northern Ireland. He approaches the subject by examining ecclesiastical law from the perspective of British public law and, in particular, from the angle of British constitutional law. As he demonstrates, the legal, social and historical development of the British churches makes their study an essential component

of any in-depth analysis of British constitutional law. Dr Oliva offers an analysis of the theoretical and conceptual framework necessary for a proper understanding of his work by readers approaching the subject from the perspective of Spanish ecclesiastical law. The author thus contributes to the understanding of the legal reality of the United Kingdom, which constitutes a complex object of study for those in continental legal systems.

The book is divided into six chapters on the United Kingdom, England, Wales, the legal regulation of other religions in England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. The first chapter is devoted to an analysis of the British legal order, including its territorial organisation. In particular, the author offers his analysis of the United Kingdom as a state composed of different nations, namely, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. This position determines his approach to the division of powers in the state and the consequences thereof for the legal relations between the state and the churches in the United Kingdom. He further analyses the impact of the 1998 Human Rights Act on the internal organisation of the established churches and their relationship with the state.

Chapter two focuses on the Church of England, including its historical development and the debate on the establishment, its relationship with the Crown and with Parliament, its internal structure and legal system, its tribunals, the hierarchy, church property and rituals. Of particular interest is Dr Oliva's treatment of the impact of the European Union and its legislation on the Church of England. Chapter three examines the historical background and nature of the Church in Wales, its sources, internal structure, tribunals, hierarchy, religious education in state schools, property and rituals.

Chapter four constitutes a brief note on the legal regulation of other religions in England and Wales. The author addresses the incorporation of the right to freedom of religion (rather than mere tolerance) resulting from the adoption of the Human Rights Act in 1998. Dr Oliva believes that the current legislation, despite considering the different religions as charities (and therefore allowing them to benefit from specific tax benefits), is insufficient to ensure that the right to freedom of religion be properly protected.

Chapter five examines the Church in Scotland, including the historical background of the constitutional arrangement between England and Scotland, the Church of Scotland's relations with Parliament and with the Crown, its duties to Scottish citizens, its internal legislation and tribunals, and the situation of other religious groups in Scotland. Chapter six studies the Church in Northern Ireland, including the historical background to its legal and political situation.

Dr Oliva concludes that the relationship between the state and the different religious groups in the United Kingdom is of a different nature in each of the national territories (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales). In particular, he concludes that two forms of official attachment between the church and the state exist in the United Kingdom, namely, the Anglican Church in England

and the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. However, the United Kingdom remains one of the most pluralistic states in Europe and the protection of different religious faiths has been strengthened by the 1998 Human Rights Act. In relation to the church in Northern Ireland and Wales, the author concludes that they cannot be considered established churches, although certain features of the establishment remain in their respective legislations.

On the basis of the position that he takes in his first chapter, the author concentrates on the major Christian denominations in each of the components of the United Kingdom. This is doubtless appropriate, as these may be considered national churches. It would have been interesting, if it had been possible, to include fuller consideration of the contrast between those national churches and other Christian denominations, notably the Roman Catholic Church. Nevertheless, the author is clearly aware of the variety of other religious denominations and faiths in the United Kingdom and he deals in one section with the peculiarities of the established churches within the context of the EU.

As a final note, while the author acknowledges the existence of arguments in favour of the establishment, he argues in favour of a further detachment between the state and the Church of England, allowing the Crown to retain a symbolic role that would best reflect the current plural composition of English society.

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The four-yearly International Congresses on Medieval Canon Law bring together a high proportion of those concerned with the topic, and provide a splendid opportunity to survey the direction of current work, or to imagine new perspectives for research. As they alternate between Europe and North America, and are held in a different centre on each occasion, they all have their distinctive local accent. Surprisingly, Catania in 2000 was the first to be held in Italy, and it is a strength of this volume that Italian scholarship and Italian canonists are particularly well represented; equally, the special interest of the Catania faculty, under the direction of Manlio Bellomo, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is more fully treated than is usually the case. Since Catania was the birthplace of the great Panormitanus, it is only fitting that he is a powerful presence in the