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Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Religious Perspectives

Mike Mauseth

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mechanisms offer an opportunity to enforce and perhaps prevent mass expulsion. Henckaerts concludes that the framework required to prohibit mass expulsions already exists, needing only the initiative of human rights experts, diplomats, U.N. representatives, and leaders worldwide to investigate when questionable situations arise.

Julie Jackson

JOHN WITTE, Jr. AND JOHAN D. VAN DER VYVER (Eds.), RELIGIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES; Martinus Nijhoff Publishers; The Hague, Netherlands (1996); (\$350.00); ISBN 90-411-0178 (Set of 2 volumes); 597 pp. (Vol. 1 hardcover); 670pp. (Vol. 2 hardcover).

This two volume collection contains forty essays examining the place of religious freedom, as it pertains to human rights, within historical and present day frameworks. The essays limit their scope to Judaism, Christianity and Islam and present a variety of human rights topics related to these religions in both a comparative and a case study method. As John Witte Jr. hopes, the books facilitate an understanding of what religious human rights mean through discussing various view points on the topic and attempts to "exorcise the demons of religious intolerance."

The authors of the essays include preeminent legal and religious scholars whose focus, especially in the first volume, breaks the topic down into three general areas: historical and theoretical inquires that lay differing standards of rights; rights and the structure of religious communities and traditions; and inconsistencies of religious leadership in view of theoretical climate. Within these areas the authors give equal voice to the three religions and their respective interpretations of history, textual foundations, roles of women, and present day applications of religious human rights.

The second volume of the book focuses on the modern day, global application and interpretation of religious human rights. Found within all three religions is the concept of humans deriving all power and form from God, thereby creating personal freedoms derived from this equality. The essays detail a ground swell of support for the notion of religious autonomy, through the activities of the General Assembly and several non-governmental organizations, and attempt to justify a legal foundation within the international arena. The second volume takes on area studies that seek to discern the present day status of religious freedoms from the theoretical standard. The areas scrutinized for these individual case studies include: Middle East, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa, U.K., Central America, and the U.S.

The candid and balanced nature of the essays allow for a thorough discussion of the various issues related to religious human rights. Each religion is given proportional space and the authors do not use the pages as a forum for public perception, but instead deal with the objective nature of their topics. One essay of particular interest was that of the draft model on freedom of religion. The model, by Dinah Shelton and Alexandre Kiss, ambitiously proposes the religious human rights the world community should codify. The detailed model includes the following elements: freedom of religion and belief (including those of atheists); protection against compulsion of belief; manifestations of religion or belief (including the right to criticize another's belief system); a secular state; equal rights and no discrimination due to religion; religious organizations given non-profit organization treatment; and civil action enforcement against violations of the code.

The two volume collection spares nothing in making itself an exhaustive and impressive study of the growing area of religious human rights. Theory and application were applied to a societal timeline in a most effective manner.

Mike Mauseth

ANNE E. PLATT, *INFECTING OURSELVES: HOW ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DISRUPTIONS TRIGGER DISEASE*, Worldwatch Paper 129, Worldwatch Institute, Washington, D.C. (1996); (\$5.00); ISBN 1-878071-31-9; 62 pp. (pbk).

In *Infecting Ourselves*, Anne Platt details the increasing spread of communicative diseases, its sources, and potential solutions. Focusing on the renewed emergence of infectious diseases, Platt addresses society's inadequacy in dealing with their cause—microbes. As well as including several, very detailed charts, Platt dedicates the first five chapters to the causes and aggravating factors of infectious disease. She concludes by proposing several ways to alleviate the effect of these diseases.

In the first two chapters of the book, Platt briefly summarizes the historical background to, and widespread effects of communicative diseases and asserts that prevention is the key to solving this problem. The author suggests that the decline in the level of public health services, such as cutbacks in education, water supply, hygiene, and preventative medicine contributes to the increasing dilemma of the "infectious killers." She further notes that although communicative diseases take their greatest toll in developing countries, they are increasingly occurring in industrialized countries, such as the United States. Platt argues that much of this increase can be attributed to a lack of understanding of the microbes' life cycles, and their ecology. Accordingly, all