staat net als de Engelse kerken onder de bescherming van het Engelse vorstenhuis. Austin Friars heeft diverse pogingen gedaan een intensieve samenwerking met de Gereformeerde Kerk te bevorderen. Steeds stuitte dit op een afwerend houding van Gereformeerde zijde, die van mening was dat de grondslag van Austin Friars geen garantie bood dat deze kerk zich niet in vrijzinnige richting ontwikkelen kon. Na veertig jaar werd in 1979 de Gereformeerde Kerk in een speciale dienst (door de auteur nota bene als 'feestelijk' bestempeld) opgeheven. Toch zou het nog, zoals ik tijdens mijn consulentschap merkte, nog vele jaren duren, voordat leden van de Gereformeerde Kerk die naar Londen trokken van het Gereformeerde dienstencentrum in Leusden een positief advies ontvingen om aansluiting bij Austin Friars te zoeken. De auteur heeft deze gang van zaken met grote mildheid beschreven. Het heeft mij altijd verbaasd dat de Gereformeerde Kerken zo weinig begrip voor het unieke karakter van Austin Friars konden opbrengen. De angst voor vrijzinnigheid zal deze blinde vlek veroorzaakt hebben.

Auke Jelsma, Kampen


The essays in this collection evolved from a Leiden University Faculty of Theology Honours Class, which is held each term and that focuses on the broad field of religion and culture. Of particular interest are interdisciplinary approaches to questions of freedom of religion, religious tolerance, and identity in early modern and modern Europe. Among the invited specialists directing the class were Todd Endelman, Susannah Heschel, Paula Hyman, Steffi Jersch-Wenzel, Reinhard Rirup, David Sorkin, Khaled Abou el Fadl, Philip Lewis, and Muhammad Khalid Masud.

The essays in this volume address the relations between the Christian majority and religious minorities, primarily Jews since the eighteenth century (particularly the first four essays) and Muslims in the twentieth century (particularly the last three essays), in western Europe. Issues of legal structures and socio-political features developed by the majority religion/culture as well as conflicts of identity construction that affect both minority and majority are considered at length. One essay ('After Vaticanum II: Dignitatis Humanae and Nostra aetate — Pathways in Freedom of Religion and Interreligious Dialogue', by Karin Seijdell), for example, examines the meaning of recent and important Catholic Church decrees for their effects on freedom of religion, internal religious and liturgical transformation, and self-identity.

Discussions of the impact of larger external transformations on, and in tandem with, communal changes, are discussed in a number of places. In ‘Emancipation of English Jewry and the Absence of Religious Reform Movement’, Els Kootj-Bas offers a comparative study of English and German Jewry in the period of emancipation and reform, noting that in England a unique situation developed given a variety of factors, including: the relatively young nature of the community; the absence of an extensive network of traditional autonomous communities; the lack of strong church-based anti-semitism (though of course there was a pronounced secular or street anti-semitism); no Jewish Enlightenment movement; and, no “ideologically justified” assimilation through conversion and intermarriage.
After examining the legal position of women in traditional Jewish law (often viewed as handicapped), and the changes in that position in the nineteenth century, Marloes Schoonheim, in 'Feminism and the Shaping of a Female Jewish Identity', explores the influence of feminist movements on Jewish women's emancipation. It was the Second Feminist Movement and non-Jewish influences that Schoonheim finds significant, but for the emancipation of Jewish women as women not as Jewesses. Only since the 1970's does Schoonheim find a progressive improvement resulting in the recovery of the history of Jewish women and the ordination of female rabbis. Similarly, Ayman Shabana ('Modern Discussions of the Islamic Shari'ah Ruling on Apostasy and its Relevance to Muslim Minorities in the West') contextualizes discussions on apostasy and the punishments for apostasy in various historical and juridical developments, in views of modern scholars, and the effects of such discussions when translated within the context of Muslim minorities in the west.

The theme of religious freedom is pursued further in the final two essays. In 'Religious Freedom and Islam in Britain: The Muslim News in the Aftermath of the Rushdie Affair', Hanny Slootman traces the impact of the Rushdie Affair on attitudes toward Muslims and religious freedom in the United Kingdom. Integrating a variety of sources and traversing the history of the difficult position of Muslims in Britain, Slootman notes that slow, but important, steps are being taken in regard to the status of Muslims in Britain. In 'Freedom of Religion in the Netherlands: The Immigration Policy regarding Imams', Welmoet Boender explores the immigration policy regarding imams who want to work in the Netherlands temporarily. Boender concludes that the (perceived) peace of the public and national security have been more important than the interests of the imam and the Islamic community. This, she asserts, is due to the fear of fundamentalism and negative stereotyping; she notes that it is wrong to assume that all imams are orthodox and fundamentalist or that they are the only religious leaders who could mobilize the Muslim community in the Netherlands.

The individual contributions throughout the volume range widely in terms of sources, methods, and arguments. Many of the essays offer very broad historical information and interpretation. Modern issues are often read back to provide insightful discussions of the same issues in different historical contexts. In the first essay ('The Image of the Pharisees'), for example, Matthijs de Jong considers the meaning of the Pharisees as interpreted from early Christianity until the twentieth century. Using Geiger (who, the author claims, was the first theologian to discuss the Pharisees in a scholarly way, utilizing them as a model for contemporary reform) as a springboard, the article goes on to reassess the image of the Pharisees in modern writing as well as in Matthew and a number of other New Testament passages.

An important aspect of many of the essays is their comparative perspective. Anat Harel's article 'Huguenots and Jews in Eighteenth Century Berlin: A Matter of Religious Freedom?', for example, compares the treatment and success of two religious minorities in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Brandenburg, viz., Huguenots and Jews. Harel notes that although both groups were seen by ruling authorities as important catalysts for new economic activity, the preconception and treatment of each was rather different. Huguenots, for example, received lenient admissions, replete with tax exemptions, citizenship, and membership in professional guilds. Jews, by contrast, were granted limited admissions, had to pay Schutzgeld, and were denied permission to build synagogues and join the guilds. Despite the fact that both groups did initiate new economic activity — although neither group was ensured long-term success, nor did either spur more general interest in business, tending instead to create