

the protection of religious freedom on the international level, Islam and democracy, and biological regulation were amongst the subjects covered. Linked to the Law and Religion Programme, the University of Siena has created a new centre with specific courses on the law of biotechnologies (see www.biola.w.it).

The aim of the Summer School was to contribute to the creation of a meaningful international community for the study of Law and Religion. We believe that intense dialogue between young researchers coming from different countries and working in the same field represents a first step in the building of cross-national research networks that will continue their co-operation beyond the end of the Summer School.

At the first convening of the School, which took place in Siena from 28 August to 4 September 2005, about thirty students coming from different countries worked together with several experts sharing experiences on the issue of law and religion around the globe. Full details can be obtained from the School's website at www.unisi.it/lawrel/school. The second Summer School will take place in Siena from 27 August to 2 September 2006.

CHURCH AND STATE TOWARDS PROTECTION OF FREEDOM AND BELIEF

TOKYO, 2–4 SEPTEMBER 2005

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The Japanese Association of Comparative Constitutional Law, under the leadership of the distinguished Professor Hiroaki Kokayashi, ably assisted by Professor Eiichiro Takahata, both of Nihon University, devoted its Third International Conference to the subject of the differing approaches of Church and State to the protection of freedom and belief. In doing so they brought together distinguished scholars from throughout the world in the magnificent new auditorium at Waseda University. The conference, spread over three days, addressed three distinct subjects. The first session began with a stimulating commemorative speech by the Japanese Commissioner for Cultural Affairs, followed by papers by Professors Makoto Ohishi (Kyoto University) and Akira Momochi (Nihon University). The former touched on the renaissance of religion whereas the latter was a highly informative description of the relationship between the State and Religious Communities under the Constitution of Japan. This coincided with the culmination of five years work by the Research Commission of the Constitution, whose report was presented to the National Diet of Japan in April 2005.

The following day was both international and ecumenical. A provocative presentation on Islam and Religious Freedom by Professor Bassam Tibi (Göttingen) was followed by national papers on their countries of origin by Professors Francis Messner (Strasbourg), Silvio Ferrari (Milan), Gerhard Robbers (Trier), Rik Torfs (Leuven), Mark Hill (Cardiff), Cole Durham (Utah), Nathan Lerner (Tel Aviv), and Ergun Özsunay (Istanbul).

The final day engaged with the specific issues raised in Japan by Shinto (Professor Koremaru Sakamoto), Buddhism (Jun Hayashi), and Confucianism (Nobuyuki Jaji); all of which served to demonstrate that State Churches, such as the Church of England, are not unique, and may have a little to learn from the historic paradigm of the chrysanthemum throne.

As ever, on occasions such as these, the panel discussion at the end was lively and stimulating, admirably chaired in the light of the wide range of subjects raised. Although consensus was elusive, the points of convergence were of interest. The general trend is away from a strict separatist model of Church and State and towards respect for faith communities: collaboration rather than confrontation. The forthcoming publication of the papers of the conference will provide a valuable collection of source materials for further comparative work. The organisers are to be congratulated on their ambitious project, and the apparently effortless efficiency in which it was expertly brought to fruition.