

The sources are a mixture of primary-source photographs and museum captions or text, and academic and journalistic studies, mostly in German. One of the strengths of the book is its rare collection of striking images of the Armenian genocide and of the two museums. The book also distinguishes itself from others by exploring theological and anthropological perspectives on memory-building initiatives after genocides.

The book is unique in offering a deep exploration of the meaning of genocide memorials and memory rituals from the standpoint of nationalism, religious and sectarian transmission, and literary and architectural culture. Aside from the central comparison of the Armenian genocide and the Shoah, the theoretical approach seems to be not as comparative or analytical as some other approaches in the field of genocide studies. Future works in this field might further develop Dr. Kirsch's analysis of the emergence of Armenian and Jewish memory of twentieth-century genocide to address the nineteenth century and the period before 1942 in the Jewish case, and the political and military contexts that shaped the place of memorials to great tragedies and triumphs in national and global cultures. The apparatuses of Armenian genocide memory and Armenian cultural transmission were arguably made possible, for example, by decisions and actions by the Russian, British, US, and French empires during the First World War, then by the Soviets and their allies especially prior to and during World War II, and finally by Soviet and post-Soviet leaders in the 1980s and 90s. While Dr. Kirsch describes the Zionist origins of Holocaust memory institutions in Israel, the foreign (US and Soviet, mainly) contributions to Israel's history are not analyzed. Arguably, the two major blocs of the Cold War shaped, alongside larger religious movements and national identities, the character and biases of our historical memory. Had the United States rather than the Soviet Union collapsed to end the Cold War, a different archipelago of museums would dot the earth, and a different outcome to the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 would have prevented the Halabja Museum and the Halabja Martyrs' Cemetery from taking their present form (Eccarius-Kelly, 2020).

Hannibal Travis 

Florida International University, Miami, Florida, USA

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## Reference

Eccarius-Kelly, Vera (2020). 'Do I Even Exist?' Kurdish Diaspora Artists Reflect on Imaginary Exhibits in a Kurdistan Museum', in Virginia Rey ed., *The Art of Minorities Cultural Representation in Museums of the Middle East and North Africa*, 241–267 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 247–49.

***Soldiers of God in a Secular World: Catholic Theology and Twentieth-Century French Politics.* By Sarah Shortall. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021. 352 pp. \$49.95 hardcover.**

*Soldiers of God in a Secular World* examines the theological phenomenon of the *nouvelle théologie* that proved decisive in reorienting Catholic thought in the years before the Second Vatican Council. It promises to relate the “return to the sources,” or *ressourcement*, exemplified by figures such as the Jesuit Henri de Lubac and the

Dominican Marie-Dominique Chenu, to both seismic changes in the Roman Catholic Church and a tumultuous century of political history that included three of France's five republics (the Third, followed by the authoritarian Vichy regime, then the Fourth and Fifth). Sarah Shortall aims to "show that the histories of modern theology and modern European thought are far more intertwined than previously imagined" (Shortall, 10), thereby demonstrating "the continuing political power of religion in a secular world" (11). To accomplish this goal, the author focuses on a handful of key Jesuit and Dominican theologians who sought to "carve out a public role for Catholicism in a secular, pluralist society" (257).

Shortall's book offers an insightful and original analysis of *ressourcement* that complements several recent studies on the fraught but productive relationship between Catholicism and modernity in the twentieth century. For example, Piotr Kosicki (*Catholics on the Barricades*, Yale University Press, 2018) has identified Chenu and his fellow Dominican Yves Congar not only as "promoting a return to early Christian practices," but also as representing "a radical vanguard of Roman Catholicism" (Kosicki, 193–194). Giuliana Chamedes (*A Twentieth Century Crusade*, Harvard University Press, 2019) has portrayed de Lubac as a "dissident" not only for his patristic turn but also for opposing "the Vatican's anticommunist crusade" (Chamedes, 203, 227). And James Chappel (*Catholic Modern*, Harvard University Press, 2018) has offered a schema for Catholic responses to totalitarianism based on "twin varieties of Catholic modernism [fraternal and paternal] forged in the 1930s" (Chappel, 145). But while Shortall is in conversation with these and other scholars, her monograph is distinctive both in substance and tone.

Shortall's narrative begins with an explanation of how the progenitors of the *nouvelle théologie* spent their formative years as seminarians in exile in Belgium and the island of Jersey. She devotes particular attention to Jesuits such as de Lubac, Gaston Fessard, Yves de Montcheuil, and others who sought "to elaborate a theological vision capable of overcoming the growing gulf between the Church and French society" (Shortall, 20) by "reconnect[ing] the natural and supernatural orders" (40). The young theologians perceived a striking parallel in "the opposition between Catholicism and modernity that animated both neo-scholasticism and secular republicanism" (41). These Jesuits and their Dominican counterparts faced continual ecclesial censorship and silencing between the 1930s and 1950s, emerging from enforced obscurity only on the eve of Vatican II. In the meantime, they witnessed the dark years of World War II, the Nazi occupation, and the Holocaust. The story of spiritual resistance (e.g., the underground paper *Témoignage chrétien*) has been told elsewhere, but Shortall very evocatively depicts figures like de Lubac, Fessard and Pierre Chaillet as priests who envisioned themselves as "something like spiritual directors of the nation" (110), "transform[ing] the eschatological vision of the Church into a kind of critical counter-politics designed to do battle with totalitarian ideologies" (107).

Most of the above makes for an edifying story, but Shortall also makes important distinctions and sometimes untangles disagreements among key actors. For example, she explains at length the tension between the totalizing "mystical body of Christ" theology of de Lubac et al. and the "Thomist personalism advanced by [philosopher Jacques] Maritain, with its clear-cut distinctions between the spiritual and temporal planes" (82). One likewise finds an excellent exposition of the rift within the *ressourcement* camp itself, as a Dominican emphasis on incarnational theology led Chenu and others to embrace the postwar left, while the eschatological tendency of de Lubac, Fessard, etc. . . expressed itself more in a wariness regarding mundane

politics. As for the rehabilitation of these theologians and their role in Vatican II, Shortall finds it unsurprising that “significant fissures began to emerge among the partisans of the *nouvelle théologie* at the council. . . in many ways the logical extension of the divisions that had emerged between the Dominican and Jesuit *nouveaux théologiens* after the war” (240). The author’s keen analysis and judicious tone are evident when she argues that “de Lubac’s critique of the ‘progressive’ interpretation of Vatican II looks less like a conservative backlash than the product of a much earlier turn from incarnation to eschatology, which emerged from the crucible of wartime occupation” (245).

This first-rate work of historical theology serves as an excellent introduction to key currents in French Catholic thought in the last century. The full title of this monograph also might lead the reader to expect a continual intertwining of theological and political history throughout its pages. In *Soldiers of God in a Secular World*, the attention to “twentieth-century French politics” is somewhat more episodic. The episodes Shortall narrates at length can be quite rewarding, particularly the early twentieth-century drama of laicization and the exile of religious congregations, as well as *les années noires* of the Occupation. Other crucial periods, for example the politically polarized Thirties, could have received more, deeper attention. That said, this is a finely crafted book that both contextualizes the *nouvelle théologie* and stakes a claim for its larger historical relevance. Shortall makes an essential and lasting contribution to our understanding of how in the middle of a tortured century Catholicism and modernity managed to arrive at, if not a perfect mutual understanding, at least a promising working relationship.

Richard Francis Crane  
Benedictine College, Atchison, Kansas, USA  
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***Sincerely Held: American Secularism and Its Believers.* By Charles McCrary. New Studies in Religion. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2022. 296 pp. \$95.00 cloth; \$30.00 paper.**

Over the past couple decades, there has been much theorizing about secularism by academics in literature and religious studies departments, a fair amount of it more intent on jousting with other theorists than illuminating history. Charles McCrary’s *Sincerely Held* enters the lists: it begins by galloping into the bog of Herman Melville’s *The Confidence-Man* (1857) and concludes by being (nearly?) unhorsed by the quest for a coherent “postsecular” position. Throughout, however, McCrary manages to offer both theoretical sophistication and keen insights into the historical permutations of American “religious freedom.”

McCrary opens with a Supreme Court case decided in 1944—*United States v. Ballard*—that expanded the concept of religious freedom. The decision took the veracity of belief off the table and focused on whether the belief was “sincerely held” or not. This sincerity test took root in U.S. religion law and in the culture more broadly. The sincere religious believer emerges as “a protected class whose rights are to be secured and defended” (3), an emergence resting on a tangle of incoherent attempts to determine “sincerity,” define “religious,” and designate the appropriate way that