

## Book Reviews

### **Faithful Disobedience: Writings on Church and State from a Chinese House Church Movement**

*Wang Yi and others, edited by Hannah Nations and J. D. Tseng*

*Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press 2022, 264 + v. pp., ISBN 9781514004135,*

*US \$28.00*

For almost 20 years, Wang Yi has been one of the most active Chinese Christians on the Internet. He is also one of the best-known contemporary representatives of the non-state-approved Protestant churches in China. His arrest in December 2018 and the detention of the entire leadership and several members of the Early Rain Church in Chengdu, which he founded, attracted attention in the international press and criticism by North American and European diplomats.

Wang Yi represents a new generation of Chinese Christians in so-called “house churches” that meet openly, rather than underground, and publicly defend their stance against the government’s restrictive religious policy. In their theological argumentation, they draw on classical theologians of the West and seek dialog with global Christianity. It is therefore not only very welcome, but indeed high time that these texts have been made accessible in both English and German. The editors have done an excellent job of providing background explanations so that even readers with no particular prior knowledge of the church in China can understand the texts in their context.

The anthology begins with an introduction by the editor, which dedicates a substantial section to helpful clarification of the term “house church.” In contemporary China, this is not a synonym for small underground gatherings but refers to a specific theological tradition. The presentation of both the house churches and Wang Yi’s personality is differentiated, and the editors consciously distance themselves from uncritical heroization.

The introduction is followed by a timeline of important events in China’s political and church history.

The main part of the anthology contains 22 texts (sermons, lectures, excerpts of interviews and public statements), divided into three thematic sections. In addition to 15 texts by Wang Yi, we find contributions from four other church leaders and two important joint statements by pastors of influential house churches in China. Each text is preceded by a short introduction containing essential background information.

Part 1 (“Our House Church Manifesto”) presents the common ground of the various house churches, namely their historical and theological roots that lead

them to refuse to join the officially recognized umbrella organization of Protestant churches (the so-called Three-Self Patriotic Movement) because it is controlled by the government.

The texts in part 2 (“The Eschatological Church and the City”) convey an impressive picture of the challenging theological and pastoral issues that witnesses to the gospel must confront in the face of state repression. Wang sees the development of a healthy ecclesiology as the great need of the contemporary church. Like many other leaders of contemporary house churches in China, he draws on the two-regiment doctrine of the Reformation and particularly Calvinist theology to develop an ecclesiology that is characterized by a dualistic conflict between church and state.

This conflict becomes even clearer in part 3 (“Arrest and the Way of the Cross”), which deals with theological and pastoral questions of Christian life in the face of imminent arrest. It contains, among other things, very personal texts in which Wang reflects theologically on the limits of obedience to the authorities and offers a spiritual perspective on suffering.

A conclusion by the editor, a glossary with detailed explanations, references for further reading, and (only in the English edition) a general index and Scripture index conclude the anthology.

This book is an important contribution not only to a theology of persecution, but also to intercultural theology and political ethics in general. The texts can be read individually and provide challenging thoughts on church-state relations, persecution and suffering by theologians who write from personal experience.

One weakness of the book is that the editors do not comment on Wang Yi’s negative, even condemnatory attitude toward Chinese Christians who remain within the state-imposed Three-Self Patriotic Movement. His black-and-white portrayal of these churches over against house churches is not shared by all house church leaders and does not do justice to reality.

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## **Religious Appeals in Power Politics**

***Peter S. Henne***

*Cornell University Press, 2023, 208 pp., ISBN: 9781501770500, US \$130.00 (hardcover)*

For some time now, scholars have accepted the importance of religion as a relevant factor in international relations. In *Religious Appeals in Power Politics*, Peter Henne does not waste any time repeating this important point but constructively discuss-

es how religion manifests itself in a very specific area: the use of religious rhetoric by states. As Henne argues, religious appeals should be considered a strategic foreign policy tool at the same level as economic sanctions or the threat of military force, since they have the power to either cement or undo international coalitions, with decisive consequences. Along the way, he provides clarity on a phenomenon that had been largely taken for granted, filling a real knowledge gap.

The frequent use of religious rhetoric by states, both domestically and internationally, is widely acknowledged. Through carefully selected case studies, Henne shows under what conditions religious appeals, whether connected to a specific religion or concerning religious values in general, can influence key international events. He distinguishes between expected and unexpected effects of religious appeals. The expected effects are the mobilization of domestic publics and the persuasion of leaders, which are more likely to be successful if the wielder of the religious appeals has credibility (understood as moral authority) and if the appeal is accompanied by material incentives for the target, within the context of ideological crises. However, playing the religious appeal card can also be dangerous. The unexpected effects may be more diffuse, redirecting back on the wielder, increasing tensions in crisis situations, and creating uncertainty regarding policy initiatives.

Henne's message is nuanced. He acknowledges the role of religion and its complexity, and he is very transparent about the limitations of his research design. He emphasizes the relevance of considering religious appeals in foreign policy, finding evidence that they are important, though he does not quantify their use or impact. Henne strikes a balance between those who deny religion's influence and those who exaggerate it. Rather, he discusses under what conditions religious appeals are likely to be successful or have an impact. His nuanced findings may be challenging for readers unaccustomed to such balanced arguments. Ultimately, the impact of religious appeals is uncertain but real and often disruptive.

Some assumptions may seem obvious, but Henne does a masterful job of validating them through three larger case studies (Saudi Arabia and the "Islamic Pact," the US and the global war on terrorism, and Russia in what it considers the "Russian world") and a selection of smaller ones. The purpose of the book is theory-building and advancing understanding, but each case study is valuable in itself, combining primary and secondary sources, including archives and interviews. In each one, Henne carefully addresses potential counterarguments from skeptics of his theory, thereby strengthening his claims.

The main contribution of *Religious Appeals* is to provide useful language for nuanced analysis of each case. In doing so, Henne advances the discipline, offering nuances, complements, and even correctives to mainstream theories of international relations. He argues that religious appeals should be incorporated

into research and scholarship on international relations, suggesting that religion should be considered a factor in security studies and recognized as a foreign policy tool rather than merely a belief or motivation. This work encourages a dialogue between the fields of political science and international relations, bridging research on religious moral authority and its translation into foreign policy.

The book, which presupposes an expert level of understanding of international relations theory, explores the niche of religious appeals in crisis situations, but the scope of Henne's theory extends beyond crises. Of particular interest, at the end of his book, he reflects briefly on the use of religious freedom by the US Administration. Trump emphasized building broad coalitions to defend religious freedom, but his harsh rhetoric against Muslims and the focus on aid to Middle East Christians led to credibility issues, exacerbating tensions internationally. Domestically, it made religious freedom an increasingly partisan issue, which Henne expects will hinder future coalitionbuilding.

In an excellent section on policy recommendations, which deserves to be longer, Henne raises the issue of policymakers' lack of religious literacy, a concern this journal also addresses.

Overall, Henne's book is an excellent contribution that sheds light on an understudied dimension of foreign and religious diplomacy. It could have devoted more attention to the role of non-state actors, particularly faith-based groups, in domestic and international arenas, but this gap can be addressed in future work.

Peter Henne is not only an original scholar but also an excellent writer. I wish more political science books were written so eloquently.

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## **Freedom of Religion and Religious Pluralism**

*Md Jahid Hossain Bhuiyan and Carla M. Zoethout (eds.)*

*Leiden: Brill, 2023. 311 pp., ISBN: 978-9004504974, €171.00*

Protecting both the freedom of religion and belief (FoRB) and social cohesion in an age of widening religious and non-religious pluralism has become a key concern for politicians, researchers and representatives of religious communities in both Western and Asian societies. Increasing political tensions and geo-political conflicts in the modern era demand careful, sober approaches to protect the rights of people who espouse various traditions, values and beliefs.

Bhuiyan and Zoethout's edited volume sheds light on various contexts and thematic fields in which religion, politics, law and jurisprudence intersect. The editors are renowned scholars of international, constitutional and public law.

Bhuiyan is a Humboldt Postdoctoral Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law in Germany; he earned his PhD in Australia and previously taught law in Bangladesh. Zoethout is head of the Department of Constitutional Law and Jurisprudence at Open University in the Netherlands and also teaches at the University of Amsterdam. Of the 17 authors represented in the book's 14 chapters, six are from Asian or Australian contexts, six from Europe and five from the US.

The book is a tremendous resource on often-neglected aspects of FoRB, such as the function of public legislation on religions and the need for more training of politicians, judges and advocates in both religious and legal literacy. It will be useful to scholars specializing in religion, citizenship, and migration studies and also as a reference volume for courses on law, religion and human rights. The book has three parts: "Religious Freedom from the Perspective of Religions," "Concepts and Dimensions in Religious Freedom and Religious Pluralism," and "Issues in Religious Freedom and Religious Pluralism."

Part one includes three detailed studies of FoRB as understood within major religious traditions: Neelima Shukla-Bhatt on Hinduism, Muhamad Ali on Islam and S. Mark Heim on Christianity. Although Ali's essay does review, in great detail and very accurately, the different lines of thought and teaching within the Quran and in subsequent Muslim tradition, it surprisingly omits discussion of more recent Muslim initiatives related to FoRB, such as the 2017 Marrakesh Declaration on the protection of religious minorities in Muslim-majority societies, which was formulated by 300 Sunni and Shia leaders from all over the world. The Muslim saying that "there's no compulsion in religion" remains an unresolved issue in many Muslim-majority societies today. This issue could have been further discussed with regard to the interpretation of the 1990 Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam.

One very interesting though potentially controversial chapter is on "Religious Freedom as a Human Right" by Swedish professor Göran Gunner. His main point of departure is the observation that FoRB entails people's right to express *any belief*; therefore, he rightly argues for keeping in view the broad spectrum of understandings and convictions to which individuals may subscribe. Gunner also rejects the negative interpretation of freedom of religion that prevails in secularist circles, which would imply "freedom *from* religion in the sense of not having to encounter religious expressions in the public life. All this indicates a deviation from the international interpretation and entails a violation of the right" (87). In the light of recent, provocative Scandinavian cases, such as those related to burning the Quran, Gunner's discussion of the relationship between the issues of defamation of religion and FoRB is of value. He stresses, on one hand, that "the

right to freedom of religion or belief, as enshrined in relevant international legal standards, does not include the right to have a religion or belief that is free from criticism or ridicule,” while on the other hand “any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law” (87).

The book includes two other chapters that address the tension between free expression and civil discourse: Luca Farrow and Paul Hedges on “Protection against Religious Hatred” and Peter Cumper and Tom Lewis on “The European Court of Human Rights and the Challenge of Balancing the Rights to Freedom of Expression and the Protection of Religion/Belief under the ECHR.”

The volume offers a wide range of insights on the historical and current relationships between human rights and FoRB. It expresses critical views of some states’ requirement that religious communities must become registered, because of a conviction that freedom of religion should not be made dependent on state recognition of a religion. The articles are well-written and readily understandable by non-experts; therefore, the volume can be recommended to a broad audience.

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## **Law and religion in a secular age**

**Rafael Domingo**

*Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2023, 332 pp., ISBN: 978-0813237299, US \$75.00*

As stated on the dust jacket, this book “aims to be a valuable antidote against the dominant legal positivism that has cornered public morality, the defiant secularism that has marginalized religion.” To that end, the chapter titled “Law and Morality: One Hundred Years of Solitude” alone is an intellectual tour de force, critiquing all the major thinkers from the last 100 years and culminating with a summary of where they all stand. This chapter alone is a must-read.

Which brings me to an interesting issue. All the chapters in this book have been previously published elsewhere. It is therefore a compilation of Domingo’s scholarship in recent years. But who is Rafael Domingo, and why buy the book if you can get the articles elsewhere?

Domingo is a Spanish legal historian and law professor at the University of Navarra. He wrote some of the articles in the book when he was a visiting professor at the Emory Law and Religion Center, and he counts John Witte Jr, the faculty director of that center, among his mentors.

The book's purpose is to bring together in one collection articles that were originally written for different publications in a variety of contexts. The first section contains chapters on the relationship between spirituality and law. The second section presents six biographies of people Domingo finds interesting in the realm of law and religion. These include Oscar Romero and Pope John Paul II, so they are not all lawyers.

The author clearly writes from a Roman Catholic perspective. Though I am a Protestant, I find the Roman Catholic tradition rich with writings on topics of interest to lawyers, including social justice. The Catholic Church has produced many thinkers on the relationship between religion and the state, some of whom are covered in this volume.

The first three chapters offer excellent insights into how and why spirituality is important for law. As Domingo shows, spirituality animates law and gives it force and legitimacy. He also presents a robust discussion of understanding God and his importance for humans, and therefore for legal systems. Those looking for ways to express a rich understanding of how spirituality, God and morality can infuse law will find it in the Body-Soul-Spirit metaphor explicated in chapter 2.

Chapters 4 and 5 focus on protecting freedom of religion or belief. Chapter 4 addresses the challenge presented by secularists that religion does not require special protection but is sufficiently protected by other human rights such as freedom of association. In chapter 5, Domingo counters arguments by Ronald Dworkin and Brian Leiter that religious freedom should not be privileged in secular democracies. These, along with chapter 6 (which is the intellectual tour de force mentioned above), provide rich theoretical arguments against aggressive secularism.

Natural law is the focus of chapter 7. There has been a significant resurgence of interest in natural law in the law over the last several decades, as a counter to the abuses inherent in positive law. It remains to be seen whether natural law can be an antidote to legal positivism or if it will be marginalized to religious theorists.

Chapter 8 treats canon law, a Roman Catholic legal system, and is thus of limited relevance to non-Roman Catholics. The biography chapters constitute the remainder of the book.

I recommend this book to lawyers, legal academics and those engaged in politics. It is imperative for Christians to have an arsenal of arguments to counter secularism. I have been writing about the secular West for many years and have not seen much argumentation that can gain traction in the face of the relentless push to marginalize religious arguments in the public square. Unless Christians can make arguments that resonate in society, they will find their religious perspectives excluded.

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## **Blood Entanglements: Evangelicals and Gangs in El Salvador**

**Stephen Offutt**

*Oxford University Press, 2023, 235 pp., ISBN: 9780197587300, US \$125.00  
(hardcover)*

*Blood Entanglements*, which at times reads like a novel in the travel memoir genre, is a unique and fascinating book that crosses disciplinary boundaries. It could have been written only by an author comfortable in two very different fields – religious studies and organized crime – that are usually not in conversation with each other. Offutt arrives at several counterintuitive conclusions, such as finding that evangelicals and gangs in El Salvador share many commonalities in terms of internal organization, funding, rituals, and transnational networks.

Offutt builds on previous studies showing that conversion to evangelical Christianity, if genuine, is the only way for gang members to disengage from their gang. The author convincingly shows that there is much more to the relationship between evangelicals and gangs than this “morgue rule exception,” which he affirms is waning a little. Offutt shows that both evangelicals and gangs have grown rapidly in El Salvador while sharing the same social environment characterized by poverty, disintegrating families, a failing state, and many other types of vulnerabilities. Moving beyond the haven thesis, which describes how evangelicals traditionally isolate themselves from society, Offutt proposes that religions don’t evolve in a vacuum but are influenced by their surroundings, which they also act upon. Offutt calls this “the entanglement thesis,” which he applies to describe the multiple interactions between Evangelicals and gangs in the poorest areas of El Salvador.

After a comprehensive and very informative overview of both the history of Protestantism and gang violence in El Salvador, Offutt describes the structural socio-economic conditions that make churches and gangs attractive to the people of struggling lower-class communities in El Salvador. This is only the beginning of the entanglement he describes.

Offutt goes on to show that churches and gangs also share many organizational parallels, the same cosmology, which contains elements that go back to the pre-colonial era that have shaped the worldviews of both social groups, as well as similar rituals. This claim may seem counterintuitive, but both evangelicals and gangs are shaped by the same socio-political context and have common beliefs in God, the battle between good and evil, angels and demons, miracles and witchcraft. The entanglement between evangelicals and gangs is also part of almost all families, since they have members in both groups, and some individuals are even in both groups at the same time. Evangelicals and gangs further share many economic ties as a result of inhabiting the same neighborhoods and engaging the same marketplaces.



Offutt further argues that both evangelicals and gangs play leadership roles in their communities, and that they compete for local authority. He shows that when evangelicals stand in the way of the gangs, they become vulnerable to threats. This includes any effort to keep youths away from gangs or to get people to convert out of a gang. In my own fieldwork in Mexico, Colombia, and El Salvador, I identified similar patterns. I have argued that these kinds of threats constitute religious freedom violations because they effectively restrict the freedom of religious groups to conduct their ministries. Offutt never uses this term, but he does refer to persecution.

The pattern I described in the previous paragraph is in reality much more nuanced. Offutt describes scenarios where gang members, out of deference to God, intentionally leave churches alone or ask evangelical ministries to help in educating their children. Some gang members are sensitive to pleas by pastors not to harm certain people. Offutt devotes extensive discussion to the very elaborate coping mechanisms, based on their soft power and moral authority, employed by church leaders to respond to the threats posed by gangs.

Offutt devotes a chapter to the ways in which both gangs and evangelicals take on traditional roles of the government, such as guaranteeing security, establishing and enforcing rules, or providing basic social services, which cause restrictions on Christian ministry. My own research in northeast Mexico yielded similar findings: criminal organizations hinder church activities through the robbery of church property, extortion, protection rackets, boundary-crossing restrictions, and curfews, all of which has the practical consequence of restricting Christian ministry, and therefore also constitute religious freedom violations in my view.

Cynics may argue that the parallels between gangs and churches that Offutt presents are based on a confirmation bias. But the empirical evidence he produces is the result of a research project that stretched over eight years, in which the author conducted a total of 143 interviews, 74 different ethnographic activities, and had countless informal conversations and personal observations. The depth of Offutt's fieldwork gives his findings a robustness and nuance rarely found in similar work. The evidence establishes persuasively that there is much more to the relationship between gangs and evangelicals than is commonly assumed.

As a scholar, Offutt isn't afraid to offer policy recommendations. He calls for a more informed and religiously literate approach to churches, so as to engage them effectively in addressing the gang issue while also protecting them. His argument makes the implicit point that secular organizations and most gang experts cannot fully address the gang problem because they don't grasp the religious intricacies exposed in his book.

In 2019, hardliner Nayib Bukele was elected president of El Salvador on a platform that included a promise to eradicate gangs. However, Bukele's policies are

not likely to make this book obsolete. Offutt doesn't seem convinced that Bukele's headline strategy has worked, even though the incarceration rate of supposed gang members has increased dramatically. Offutt acutely observes that the social conditions that were favorable to the growth of gangs are still present. Moreover, Bukele's policies have created a new problem: churches and evangelical NGOs reaching out to gang members are increasingly viewed with suspicion by the state security apparatus and are readily seen as collaborators with the gangs, creating yet another religious freedom challenge because it effectively snuffs out an important part of Christian ministry. (This is reminiscent of the suspicions surrounding the work of faith-based groups in Colombia with FARC and other guerrillas.)

El Salvador may be a very extreme case. Many patterns identified by Offutt will be applicable to other similar contexts, but others won't. What is groundbreaking about Offutt's book is that it provides a transferable framework that should inspire similar studies in other contexts. It can also spark reflections on how evangelicals interact with their social environment, as Offutt himself suggests. I wholeheartedly recommend this book to anyone interested in the complex relationship between religion and organized crime in Latin America.

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## **Beyond a Reasonable Doubt: Did the Islamic State commit genocide against Christians in Iraq?**

***Aquila Mazzinghy***

*Bonn: VKW, 2023, 404 pp., ISBN 978-3-86269-267-5. Available at: DOI: 10.59484/VRPI5861*

In *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*, Áquila Mazzinghy evaluates whether the actions committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, or *ad-Dawlah al-Islāmiyah fi'l-Trāq wa-sh-Shām* (ISIL/DAESH), against Christians in Iraq between 2014 and 2017 constituted genocide and/or persecution as a crime against humanity as these crimes are understood in the Rome Statute. The book seeks to interpret ISIL/DAESH's actions against Christians in Iraq from a legal, as opposed to a political/policy or sociological, point of departure.

The book reflects its genesis as a doctoral thesis. Consequently, the introduction contains explicit sections detailing the problem statement, significance, main and subordinate research questions, study objectives and a separate literature review.

Before canvassing various violations perpetrated by ISIL/DAESH, chapter 1 considers the origins and subsequent power of ISIL/DAESH in Syria and Iraq, as well as its eventual defeat by a global coalition comprised of various actors. ISIL/DAESH's

transformation “from a proto-State structure into a [global] terrorist network” is addressed next (97-98). The discussion also considers international efforts to hold ISIL/DAESH fighters accountable, including Security Council Resolution 2379 establishing an investigative team to this effect. An impressive volume of empirical evidence is collected. Notably, this evidence is not limited to genocide and persecution nor are the identified crimes always shown to have specifically targeted Christian victims. In several cases, the discussion ostensibly includes a victim group broader than the research question purports. Such evidence thus reveals neither genocidal intent nor the targeting of Christians as a protected group. The discussion of the harassment of children with apparent links to ISIL/DAESH in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Iraq can be read (contrary to the study’s focus on ISIL/DAESH as perpetrators) as casting ISIL/DAESH affiliates as victims.

Chapter 2 details impugned acts that became the basis for trials at the main international criminal law (ICL) tribunals and courts, including the Nuremberg International Military Tribunals (Tokyo is omitted without explanation), the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Criminal Court (ICC). This represents a shift of topic away from ISIL/DAESH and from Christians as victims of atrocities and Iraq. However, this chapter lays the groundwork for the relevant legal positions on genocide and persecution (covered in chapter 3) and subsequent analysis (in chapter 4) thereof against the ISIL/DAESH atrocities (presented in chapter 1). The atrocities from other locations (identified in chapter 2) are not clearly linked, through analogy, to the classification of ISIL/DAESH atrocities against Christians in Iraq. As in chapter 1, the outlined crimes far exceed possible acts relevant for genocide and/or persecution.

Chapter 3 analyses the case law from the ICTR, ICTY, SCSL and the ICC dealing with genocide and persecution as a crime against humanity. The genocide analysis here is isolated from the ISIL/DAESH/Iraq context; connections between the two are reserved for chapter 4. Regardless, the overview of the legal position pertaining to genocide is extensive. One addition, perhaps, could have been the “four corners” approach to identifying groups to be targeted for genocide.<sup>1</sup> With regard to crimes against humanity, the chapter again comprehensively presents the legal elements involved. This section is the only portion of the chapter wherein the discussion is limited to those material acts that are most salient for the broader ISIL/DAESH conduct under review.

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<sup>1</sup> *Prosecutor v Kršić* (Judgment) IT-98-33-T (2 August 2001), paras 555-556; *Prosecutor v Rutaganda* (Judgment) ICTR-96-3-T (6 December 1999), para 56; Robert Cryer, Darryl Robinson and Sergey Vasiliev, *An Introduction to International Criminal Law and Procedure*, 4th edition (Cambridge University Press, 2021), 211-212.

Chapter 4 applies the general legal analysis of genocide and crimes against humanity (from chapter 3) to the acts perpetrated by ISIL/DAESH (identified in chapter 1). The analysis of whether the actions constituted genocide is, however, essentially reduced to whether the requisite special genocidal intent could be identified. The study suggests that there is insufficient evidence for such special intent and that, therefore, genocide by ISIL/DAESH against Christians in Iraq cannot (yet) be proved. The other elements of genocide are dealt with in a more cursory manner.

In contrast, with its more encompassing consideration of general, mental and material legal elements, the study argues that the impugned acts constitute persecution as a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute. Although justifiable as a matter of study design, it seems that other crimes against humanity could also have been proved from the presented material.

This book especially contributes to legal scholarship through its empirical work and elucidation of possible legal classifications of the violations ISIL/DAESH committed in Iraq. Its appraisal of the various atrocities committed by ISIL/DAESH in Iraq and of the legal positions pertaining to genocide and persecution before the most significant ICL tribunals and courts is exemplary. Particularly eye-catching is the sheer volume of primary sources consulted. The study's conclusion considers possible ways to pursue holding the perpetrators accountable for their atrocities. Although the concrete implementation of the suggested procedures will be challenging – and the book concedes as much – it usefully outlines measures for circumventing the existing constraints that accompany ICC involvement, as well as measures beyond the ICC framework. Other, non-judicial measures are also considered as part of a broader objective to establish national reconciliation in Iraq.

Legal researchers looking for an overview of genocide and persecution as a crime against humanity in ICL jurisprudence will likely benefit from the empirical work done here. Due to its structure, this book will also assist doctoral supervisors and students. The reflections, presented in the conclusion, on the evolution of the various research questions provide valuable insights regarding how research projects develop from conception to conclusion. The book also illustrates the difference between a literature review that simply summarizes the content of other books and one that is substantively embedded in the overarching argument.<sup>2</sup> These elements of the research craft could serve as useful didactic tools for doctoral supervisors and as valuable examples for doctoral students.

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<sup>2</sup> See pp. 47-81 versus chapters 1-4.