

(Descartes on extension) and challenges a contemporary, John Haight, for an uncritical acceptance of contemporary science at the cost of making his theological view *ad hoc* and contentless. Murray endorses a view he calls constructive engagement, which does not involve an uncritical acceptance of scientific views (p. 247).

The final section looks at challenges to analytic theology. Eleonore Stump discusses the importance of narrative for understanding certain kinds of issue, arguing that all knowledge cannot be 'knowledge that' and holds that stories transmit a kind of knowledge of persons which is not reducible to 'knowledge that' (p. 259). Merold Westphal explores the place of phenomenology and hermeneutics in theology and thinks of them as complementary to analytical approaches. It seemed to me that the discussion of perspectivism and relativism in this paper would benefit from engagement with recent analytical work on contextualism, making more precise the exact nature of the claims. Finally Sarah Coakley examines Teresa of Avila, described in a memorable phrase as 'the favoured "pin up girl" of analytical philosophy of religion in its appeal to veridical religious experiences of a sporadic Jamesian sort' (p. 283). She offers a powerful corrective to that approach, emphasizing that Teresa tells about 'a transformed epistemic capacity in which affectivity, bodiliness and the traditional mental faculties are in some unique sense (through the long practices of prayer) aligned and made responsive to God' (p. 294).

Each essay repays close attention and several refer to the writer's other works for further inquiry. This collection is a fine manifesto for a new approach to theology.

PAUL O'GRADY

**THE POLITICS OF DISCIPLESHIP: BECOMING POST-MATERIAL CITIZENS** by Graham Ward, *Baker Academic, Grand Rapids MI, 2009, pp. 317, \$24.99 pbk*

The act of being a citizen often looks crass next to the polished acquiescence to consumerism and endless materialism peddled for us by much contemporary entertainment. But for the theologian, who is not a citizen of this world, Graham Ward's *The Politics of Discipleship* is a call to a radical kind of impoliteness, the scandal of the Christ, and the Kingdom that this scandal introduces and carries out through his disciples.

Ward's targets are twofold: the facile politeness of 'depoliticization' that emerges from the current post-democratic milieu, and the metaphysically adrift sentimentalities of post-materialism, resistances to the 'endless materialism' of capitalism that champion causes such as human rights, ecological responsibility, debt relief, and so on. The problem with these causes, for Ward, is that they all lack the ground of a metaphysical mindfulness. Can one defend human rights without first grasping what it means to be human? Especially in this case, Ward argues, the human body itself has been divested of meaning by the advocates for rampant materialism as well as by materialism's post-modern critics.

Part one, 'The World', outlines the decay of democracy into post-democracy, a depoliticized matrix characterized by the dominance of the market, where politics erodes into economics. 'I may choose a post-materialist option and not buy sportswear from Nike because of the charges of sweatshop exploitation, but my index-linked pension, the investments made by my mortgage company and my bank, my credit and debit cards, and online shopping all situation me very firmly in the global economy' (p. 97). One can swim to the left or right bank, but one cannot swim upstream without great difficulty. And the idea of leaving the stream altogether is unimaginable.

Ward accordingly describes a tectonic break: on one side, a genuine politics, which advocates contestation (Ward's impoliteness) as a civic responsibility; on the other, *laissez-faire* capitalism and consumerism, in which the sole discernible telos is the pleasure of the customer. But when pleasure becomes the end, as Ward (and Negri) notes, dialogue is lost. The customer, ironically, now provides the service. The all-important equivocation between citizen and customer empowers the hegemonic market place which had (erroneously) been thought to empower the citizen cum entrepreneur. Pleasure is no longer the goal of the marketplace, but rather (chapter 3) the means to an ever-expanding culture and religiosity of the corporation. The creation and maintenance of pliant zombies becomes the hidden 'good' of the undead city of commerce. The depoliticized world of post-democracy is not an apocalyptic nightmare for us to avoid, but the lived reality of the late-capitalist West.

Perhaps Ward's critics have in mind such examples when they accuse him of capitulating to a dark interpretation of modernity. Yet, in part two, 'The Church', Ward explains that it is the milieu of depoliticization which the church has been given to redeem. The church's job, and that of her disciples, is to 'repoliticize' the public space. Ward is at his most theological here as he introduces this program as one grounded in the church's triune origin. The body participates in the redemptive effects of the incarnation of God in Christ (chapter 5, especially p. 186). He connects politics and the church's life not merely by the concept of polity as such, but first through Aristotle's exposition in the *Politics* of *leitourgia* as simultaneously political, ethical, and aesthetic.

But it is Paul who finally connects the *leitourgia* of the physical body to the ecclesial body politic. Liturgical service is both political and theological, for the body of Christ is poured out as a libation upon the world (p. 183). The body of Christ then manifests the quintessential marriage of the political and the theological in service. Discipleship as such is a process of being formed into Christ, with all its attendant locatedness and eschatological significance (chapter 6). Appropriately Ward thus renders the Christic body as the model for understanding all embodiment (p. 251). Such a move places Ward's work in direct dialogue with Badiou, Agamben, and Žižek. Yet, unlike those authors, Ward argues that the disciple's relation to Christ (*en Christo*) occurs precisely because of Christ's bodily advent and the disciple's being baptized into 'another level of ontological intensity available in this world but not concurrent with it' (p. 249). Discipleship is completely informed by a metaphysical politics, or theo-politics, of the body of Christ. Just as the Incarnation re-presents the physical body, those who now live corporately *en Christo* re-constitute the body politic, which is another way of saying that the resurrected body plays out on the stage of the political body, for resurrection implodes the logic of death in both micro and macro arenas. The church ushers in a different kind of politics, the politics of what Ward calls the eschatological remainder (in contrast to Agamben's remnant).

In the final chapter, Ward argues that discipleship alone offers the hope of repoliticization, the chance for viable political alternatives. Discipleship mitigates against the great danger of depoliticization precisely because Christ's embodiment in the world establishes an alternative kingdom, the Kingdom of the eschatological remainder. The disciple must gauge viability and success by another standard than the post-democratic measure of economic and materialist gain, which amounts to 'the prolongation of desire itself' (p. 267). Rather, success for the disciple must be understood as the triumph of love, which creates alternative power relations capable of overturning the present economies of desire (p. 275). Ward, therefore, looks to an ecclesiology of the Christic body politic wherein love amounts to participation in the triune life. The mutual love that flows between the Father and the Son generates and saturates the disciple's being as a participant in Christ, which is, ultimately, a political matter.

*The Politics of Discipleship* makes a valuable contribution to current conversation in political theology. Ward's fluid style of narrating places, stories, and parables, coupled with critical analyses that draw on critical studies makes for an enjoyable read, but one that will surely find a more likely audience with graduate students or above.

And while I am generally appreciative of his argument, I do have several reservations including Ward's generalized use of the term 'gnosticism' without clarifying its meaning in the context of his text (cf. pp. 152–53). Moreover, he weakens the theological power of his argument by postponing a definition of 'discipleship' until the final chapter. One significant ramification of this delay is that most of his discussion in part two focuses on the church as a whole; body politics are favored above physical body as agents of change, a consequence of the book's either/or division of World and Church. Similarly, there is an unnerving lack of attention to the literature on discipleship itself, such as Bonhoeffer's *Cost of Discipleship* (and the same could be said of his failure to treat Yoder's *Politics of Jesus*). It is highly unfortunate that he completely ignores Bonhoeffer's contribution, given that Bonhoeffer's case and text would seem to bolster many of Ward's points. Additionally, Ward's analysis of the global city suffers from many of the same unsupported generalizations for which thinkers of Radical Orthodoxy are regularly criticized. He does well to recall the megalithic architects of the global city (Le Corbusier and Robert Moses) and the utopian, globalizing legacy they bequeathed to city-dwellers (chapter 5). However, he hyperbolizes their impact in overlooking the visceral and successful resistance to their schemes. While it is certainly true that utopianism represents one notion of the good life, he fails to support his assertion that only one vision dominates the city. Better metaphors for the city, I suggest, might be patchwork or bricolage; that is, the city bears forth multiple ways of living.

Furthermore, he commits the same error that he would presumably blame the modern corporate machine for committing when he says that '(t)he various flows within the city are all basically flows of money, money as the constitutive rule of modernity's transcendental logic, its 'reality principle'' (p. 215). In so doing, he conflates corporations with real persons, thereby dismissing not only his own metaphysic of the body, but also city dwellers as retrograde consumers, interested in naught else but the aesthetic of their depoliticized, de-ethicized living rooms. I wonder what he makes of the mothers who gather at La Leche meetings, deeply invested in the (profoundly teleological and material) practice of breast-feeding. I suppose that he might lump this and similar practices, like the rise of farmers' markets and urban renewal in general, with the post-materialist reaction to capitalism and argue that they lack the theological foundation to resist depoliticization. And he may be right about that. However, he makes almost no attempt to substantiate his blatant generalization that city dwellers lack an ethical depth, that 'they cultivate lifestyles without conscience, beyond good and evil' (p. 215).

That said, Ward is certainly correct that the city has become the locus of an epic struggle of corporate titans that use the city as a base for their financial (mis)exploits versus the denizens who live in the neighborhoods at the periphery. In the face of this, Ward argues, the church must become, as it has so often in the past, a vehicle of cultural change, promoting charity and hospitality, and combating the social imaginaries that prop up purposeless materialism without which production of these goods could never happen, thereby opposing the social, economic and racial boundaries that make ghettos possible.

*The Politics of Discipleship* is a challenging but highly rewarding read whose clarion call to theologians to enter the public fora and reassert the church's theological voice amidst the warring factions of materialism and post-materialism seems to have already excited constructive conversation. This I am sure it will

continue to do given the fact that, as Ward clearly demonstrates, both sides feed from the same consumer trough and so are not going away anytime soon.

DANIEL WADE McCLAIN

**THEOLOGY ON THE MENU: ASCETICISM, MEAT AND CHRISTIAN DIET** by David Grumett and Rachel Muers, *Routledge*, London, 2010, pp. 224, £75 hbk, £21.99 pbk

Avoiding meat, however discreetly, provokes questions: ‘What is wrong with it?’, ‘Where do you draw the line?’ For the questioners, it often seems, the issues are black and white: either meat is murder or we should be carnivores without limit or discrimination. It is enormously refreshing to encounter instead the nuanced and subtle approach of David Grumett and Rachel Muers in this thoughtful and readable volume. They are constantly attentive to the moral, social and religious complexity of the question of abstinence, and to the multiple meanings that such a practice can carry.

The book is packed with details that reveal the breathtaking diversity of Christian attitudes to ascetical eating. At one end of the spectrum were the desert fathers, such as Abba Or, who took his pickled vegetables just once a week. At the other, those clergy of Reformation England who agreed to regulate their appetites according to hierarchy: archbishops would not take more than six meat or fish dishes at one sitting, bishops five, and deans and archdeacons four. Some Protestant reformers, including John Wesley, promoted abstinence from meat for the sake of both physical and spiritual health (one result of this was the invention of Kellogg’s cornflakes). By contrast, the Men and Religion Forward Movement prided itself on its hearty meat-eating and associated vegetarianism with spiritual as well as physical weakness.

The early chapters provide a historical overview, which identifies key moments of change. Jewish food laws were definitively, but not wholly, rejected by the apostles and elders at the Council of Jerusalem. It was not long before the desert hermits were taking fasting to new extremes. Coenobitic monasticism, tended at first to regulate fasting in order to moderate rather than increase the ascetical impulse. The close relations between the monasteries and secular society encouraged relaxations and dispensations, which then provoked restrictive regulation. Meanwhile, of course, the whole population followed the Church’s calendar of feasting and fasting, including the long Lenten abstinence from meat and certain other foods. The Reformation signalled a shift from ecclesial to civic control of communal fasting; the Long Parliament, for example, attempted, without great success, to replace the traditional cycle of fasting with a single monthly fast day, the purpose of which was largely political. It was not until 1856 that the statute for ‘fish days’ was repealed, ‘on grounds of disuse’ (though it is notable that some secular institutions even today continue the tradition of serving fish on Fridays). The end of legislation signalled the shift from a communal to an individualistic understanding: ‘fasting and abstinence’ were succeeded by ‘vegetarianism’ and ‘dietary preferences’.

The specific themes that Grumett and Muers explore bring out the tensions and paradoxes within their subject. The strictness of both eremitical and communal fasting did not remove the need to honour guests, which meant that the Christian tradition of abstinence always included a distinctive element of flexibility. Thus Cassian found the Egyptian monks readily postponing their fasting at the arrival of a guest, while the Rule of St Benedict prescribes a separate kitchen for the abbot and his guests. Similarly, the rhythm of alternate fasting and feasting allowed food to be used to represent both the Creator’s generous abundance and his creatures’