

So, with exact scholarship and speculative brio, the minutely local, the resonantly national, and the international dimensions of the Four Masters' work are set out. As in her earlier study of another leading Catholic historian in seventeenth-century Ireland, Seathrún Céitinn (Geoffrey Keating), Cunningham has cut away the thickets of luxuriant verbiage that have grown up to obscure these influential but complex histories. Now, thanks to her efforts, anachronism and nationalist mythologizing are banished. In the clearer light, the achievements of the Four Masters, so far from being diminished, are enhanced, as is Cunningham's reputation as the foremost expositor of these Irish historical traditions.

TOBY BARNARD

**ANALYTIC THEOLOGY: NEW ESSAYS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF THEOLOGY**  
 edited by Oliver D. Crisp and Michael C. Rea, *Oxford University Press*, 2009,  
 pp. x + 316, £50 hbk

This is a challenging, rich and stimulating book. Michael Rea's 'Introduction' clarifies the meaning of analytic theology and offers an extended meditation on possible objections to it, objections addressed by later contributions. The book divides into four sections. The first presents the project of analytic theology, the second examines historical cases relevant to this project, the third discusses data for theology (scripture, reason and experience), while the final section returns to addressing objections.

Rea notes that much contemporary theology, insofar as it engages with philosophy, uses philosophy from the continental tradition. He also notes that philosophers of religion in the analytical tradition have turned their attention to theological topics. Indeed, 'analytical theology is just the activity of approaching theological topics with the ambitions of an analytical philosopher' (p. 7). He wants the collection to stimulate an interdisciplinary discussion about the value of such an approach. He charts the typical features of analytical style – write in a manner that is formalizable, prioritize clarity and coherence, avoid metaphor, use well understood primitive concepts and concepts analyzable in terms of these, and think of conceptual analysis as having an evidential function (p. 5). He notes that many think analytical philosophers are substantively committed to the epistemological position of foundationalism and the metaphysical position of metaphysical realism. While this is not so, it is true that the tasks of clarifying the scope and nature of knowledge and of providing true explanatory theories of phenomena are generally shared. But there are no substantive philosophical theses which separate analytical philosophers from their rivals. Objections to an analytical approach include the charge that it is ahistorical, is committed to ontotheology (which makes God an explanatory posit and removes any sense of mystery), undermines the life of faith with its rationalism, treats issues only amenable to this style, and avoids richer, messier topics, producing mere simulacra (intellectual creations which mimic the true theological topics).

Rea believes these objections can be answered, but that they deserve sympathetic attention. Oliver Crisp's chapter 'On Analytic Theology' covers much of the same territory and he is sympathetic to the view that the kind of work done by the great theologians of the past is now being done by philosophers. William J. Abraham's 'Systematic Theology as Analytic Theology' is punchier in its criticisms of contemporary theology. The most provocative essay in this respect is Randall Rauser's 'Theology as a Bull Session'. This employs Harry Frankfurt's celebrated conceptual analysis of bullshit as a kind of discourse which doesn't care about truth, further distinguishing between kinds which are intentionally

produced (insincere talk) and those which aren't (nonsense) and then indicts Sally MacFague and Jürgen Moltmann of producing such.

Given that analytical theology faces the challenge of being ahistorical, the section on historical perspectives is exceptionally good. John Lamont's 'A Conception of Faith in the Greek Fathers' includes a discussion of the epistemology of testimony (defending a non-reductionist view), links this to the Thomist view of faith (believing God's word does not rest on inference from something else), and diagnoses a tension between Aquinas's earlier and later views on faith. Among other things he presents Philo of Alexandria's anticipation of scholastic philosophical theology, discusses the Indian Nyaya school on testimony, and the recapitulation of the Thomist view on faith by the 17th century Puritan, John Owen. Andrew Chignell's "'As Kant has shown ...' Analytical Theology and the Critical Philosophy' is a careful study of the impact of a certain reading of Kant on contemporary theology and an argument that Kant did nothing of the sort. Chignell carefully and persuasively distinguishes Kant's views on belief (*Glaube*) and knowledge (*Wissen*) noting that much theological material operates in the realm of belief and that it can have theoretical underpinnings. He argues that hard-line readings of Kant which present him as a proto-verificationist (Strawson, Bennett, Kemp-Smith) go way beyond what the text licences. Nicholas Wolterstorff's 'How Philosophical Theology Became Possible Within the Analytical Tradition' continues this march from the perceived influence of Kant and situates it in a broader discussion of the trajectory of epistemology, from the classical foundationalism of the Enlightenment to the current situation of 'extraordinary epistemological pluralism' (p. 161). He gives a very useful analysis of the much-mentioned term 'ontotheology' and an argument that it does not apply to analytical theology. Andrew Dole engages with the ahistorical charge by discussing 'Schleiermacher's Theological Anti-Realism'. He discusses the historical context of conflict between religious orthodoxy and free inquiry and notes a tension between Schleiermacher's reductive approach to theology, which on one side makes it a projection of feelings and intuitions while on the other having a kind of transcendental deduction of the truth of religious claims. An important lesson from Schleiermacher is that religious doctrines do more than report truth-claims – and that analytical theologians ought to be cognisant of the inner-worldly impact of these doctrines.

There are two essays on the inspiration of scripture. Thomas McCall examines Karl Barth's critique of the view that scripture simply is the word of God (the classical view), and his own proposal that scripture becomes the word of God in an event. McCall looks at the case for the Barthian view but is ultimately critical of it. Thomas Crisp examines the epistemological justification of the belief that scripture is inspired and discusses three options – an argument from natural theology, an argument from testimony, and finally the idea of something like 'the internal instigation of the Holy Spirit'. His technically sophisticated discussion of Swinburne's use of Bayesian probability theory serves as a detailed case-study for those antecedently dubious of the possibility of using non-arbitrary values in such a context. He endorses a view where accepting the testimony of certain licensed authorities confers justification on the belief that scripture is inspired (the authoritative testimonial doxastic practice, p. 209). This confers justification, while leaving it open whether knowledge ensues. Michael Sudduth discusses the contribution of religious experience to dogmatic theology. His view is that religious experience and natural theology are closely intertwined and both feed into dogmatic theology. Michael Murray examines the relationship of science to religion using the metaphor of different possible kinds of marriage (most of which he deems dysfunctional). He particularly focuses on 'doormat love' where one partner uncritically accepts the whims of the other. He points out an historical case where theology accepted the wrong scientific views

(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.