

messianism can also be found in the first attempt by the German philosopher, Romano Guardini, to offer a post-war political theology for Germany: *Der Heilbringer in Mythos, Offenbarung und Politik* (1945), which had as a subtitle ‘a theological-political reflection’.

I mention these interbellum and early post Second World War-traditions not to be fussy but because I think these theologies are honest attempts to wrestle with the questions of nationalism, populism, and exclusion that the editors say that they want to engage with.

Thirdly, like every theology, Political Theology has to set boundaries about who is included and who not. This publication has chosen to focus on Christian political theologies. But what about those authors writing in the margins of Christian theology, such as Hannah Arendt, who as a Jewish philosopher had studied Christian theology and had written her PhD on St. Augustine? Or the great mystic Simone Weil? And where are the political-theological voices of the post-war European project for peace and cooperation, such as Jean Monnet, Alcide de Gasperi, and Robert Schuman? Or is it too soon after Brexit for this kind of political-theological reconciliation?

Nevertheless, the *Reader* is an excellent resource, and it offers annotated suggestions for further reading to encourage students to follow up on the *Reader*’s issues. The editors should be congratulated on finishing this difficult task amid our fast-changing political circumstances.

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BEING HUMAN: BODIES, MINDS, PERSONS by Rowan Williams, SCM Press, London, 2018, pp. x + 128, £9.99, pbk

The third of ‘an unintended trilogy’ with earlier volumes, *Being Christian* and *Being Disciples*, Rowan Williams’s book, *Being Human*, aims to address some of the cultural confusions affecting our notions of what it is to be *fully* human. These confusions should concern us all. Lacking their coherent resolution, which for Williams inevitably depends on an understanding of the person of Jesus, ‘we shall continue to be at sea over how we teach, how we vote, how we save and buy and sell, how we entertain ourselves, how we think about the beginning and end of life.’ (p. x). Our view of ourselves as flourishing human beings in the world is at stake, in other words.

Being Human comprises five short chapters and a brief epilogue. In each the focus is on one of the confusions. Starting with consciousness, or more accurately perhaps, the embodied, situated mind, Williams adroitly

rejects mind-as-machine metaphors, with their reductive, dualist overtones, in favour of a view of mind spanning culture and nature that involves consciousness for someone, somewhere, related to others, making sense through narratives, and which respects the meaning of the material as it ‘bump(s) into signs’ (p. 9). All of this will be music to the ears of any readers who might themselves have moved through the first generation, functionalist, information-processing models of mind to the more congenial resting place of embodied cognition, where mind, world, body, and symbol are no longer cast asunder but are in sympathetic resonance. The argument is soundly expressed with only the occasional infelicity. I did wince a little, for instance, when I read that the ‘brain is an organism’ (p.4), as this over promotes an *organ* involved in but certainly not the overall controller of the processes of thinking, feeling, acting, and loving – just as the stomach is but one part of the integrated processes of digestion, say. But the overall contrast between biological mind and physical mechanism is well made.

Persons in their uniqueness and irreducibility are the next port of call. The familiar contrast between individuals and persons is usefully spun through a personalism ultimately grounded in God. Fundamental limits on our personhood are noted, and an unfashionable possibility raised that needs to be respected: not everything is possible, we cannot be everything we might want to be, the human condition is variously constrained. The challenge is can we find a language for this sort of respectful life for ‘neither the “machine language” nor the “independent soul” language will do the job’ (p. 46). At this point ‘theology comes into its own’ (p. 47).

Chapter 3 returns us to our psychological nature and provides a simple summary of the influential work by Iain McGilchrist on two modes of attending or attuning to the world. I say ‘simple’, as readers with appetites whetted might be well advised to read McGilchrist’s book for their main course as it offers a more rounded treatment than is obviously possible in so short a space. One observation worth noting and repeating, however, is ‘how we think knowledge affects how we approach our environment...’ (p. 66). *Laudato Sí* fans take note: the links between our embodiment, our ways of attending, and environmental and cultural affordances are here to be unpacked in this one pithy phrase.

A chapter on ‘Faith and human flourishing’ heads off misreadings of religion next and addresses the following topics: the false attractors of either over dependence on an infantile faith or the myth of complete autonomy; the education of the passions; taking time; accepting mortality. Again, there is much to think on and develop here, as there is, too, in the gem of a final chapter on silence. We learn that ‘Silent being is not [necessarily] silenced being’ (p. 94). And ‘when we let ourselves be silenced by the mystery of God, we become a ‘place’ where the mystery of God happens’ (p. 96), a mystery which the epilogue on the Ascension neatly completes.

Those already familiar with his thinking will recognise many themes which surface elsewhere in Rowan Williams's work, especially *The Edge of Words*, including a non-dualist, anti-reductionist stance; the centrality of 'language' (writ large as symbolic communication); the materiality of signs; relationality; the unbidden and apophatic; participation through Christ in the Divine life; in short, a consistent, orthodox, catholicity.

While there are some theological forays in the earlier chapters, the main theological turn occurs later on, in chapters 4 and 5. For a catholic this is a sensible and attractive way to proceed. It permits secular reason a long run so that it can genuinely discover its limits, meeting faith-seeking-understanding on its own terms in mutual, learned ignorance before the ultimate mystery. Apologetics like these are also far more likely to persuade the thoughtful agnostic that there are still questions to be asked than closure through too fast or fideistic an evangelical argument strategy.

An obvious feature of the book is that it is a compilation of loosely connected talks given originally to different audiences. This means there is no single, clear, easily stated, or unequivocal theme developed throughout. To some extent this does not matter, as the individual chapters invite further reflection. It is a short meditation, after all, and there are prompts for discussion at the end of each one. So, this could be a good book to read jointly or simply to meditate on alone. That said, a longer and fuller treatment might have allowed themes raised and confusions addressed to be more explicitly connected and further implications uncovered. For example, how might the engaged, experiential way of approaching reality contrasted with the detached, reflective stance, discussed in chapter 3, relate to the primary religious response followed by its doctrinal articulation, and hence, perhaps, with J.H. Newman's real *versus* nominal assent? Or how might recent work on the *living* body connect with our need to be attuned to the world's affordances? And how exactly does the materiality of signs enter into this? Or think about temporal rhythms, more the province of the 'right hemisphere', and the cancelling of weekends by late capitalism's, 'left hemisphere', with its techno-rational treatment of time. But, again, readers interested in following up these thoughts will be encouraged to do so themselves or perhaps explore other writings by Williams.

Is *Being Human* hard to grasp? I must confess I, too, once found Williams' prose a little obscure, but perhaps over the years either I have marinated in and matured into his arguments or his style has deliberately been simplified for the general reader, or both. Whatever has happened, I found this an accessible and engaging read; at times I even heard echoes of C.S. Lewis or Herbert McCabe. I expect, nevertheless, that those with some background in the human sciences, as well as philosophy and theology, will spot more immediately why Williams picks out the targets he does and at what he is driving. As always, he wears his learning lightly, and it is possible to miss some of the depths and subtleties. The subtext is there to be excavated.

While primarily aimed at Christians, according to the publisher's blurb, this is a book for readers of all religious persuasions. But to suggest the target audience is restricted to the 'religious' is, I think, unfortunate. This is a book that *should* be of interest to thoughtful scientists, philosophers, secular thinkers, and, indeed, the much celebrated, educated general reader. Or rather, it would be, publisher's hype notwithstanding, were it not for the rampant, reductive scientism of our culture, and the misconstrual by so many of what religion, at best, entails, and which may well keep them away. More's the pity, as a wider dissemination of the lessons in *Being Human* is long overdue.

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A CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO CORPORATE RELIGIOUS LIBERTY by Edward A. David, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, Switzerland, 2020, pp. xxiii + 264, £79.99, hbk

Does a corporation have a right to religious liberty? In the 2014 case of *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that closely held, for-profit corporations were 'persons' entitled to exemption from laws which substantially burdened their exercise of religion. The court's decision was based not on the U.S. Constitution, but on a federal statute, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). In many ways, the case raised as many questions as it answered. Most fundamentally, how are we to understand the 'religious freedom' of a corporation? Edward David has made a substantial contribution to answering this question in his recent book, *A Christian Approach to Corporate Religious Liberty*.

The central goal of David's book is to present a philosophically coherent account of corporate personhood that can serve to bear the weight of a notion of religious liberty. In doing so, he seeks to navigate between two extremes. On the one hand, he wants to avoid an 'eliminationist' account of corporations that would vest religious rights solely in individual, physical persons, making any 'corporate' rights merely the aggregation of the voluntary actions of individuals. On the other hand, he also wants to avoid a so-called 'strong group realism', an approach to corporate personhood that would see a real ontological reality to that legal personality, even wholly apart from the individual members.

Before discussing David's theory, one cautionary note should be raised regarding David's rejection of strong group realism. In the current *Code of Canon Law*, the Catholic Church makes a fundamental distinction between types of corporate persons, namely 'juridic persons' and 'moral persons'. Within the Church, most corporate persons—dioceses, religious orders,