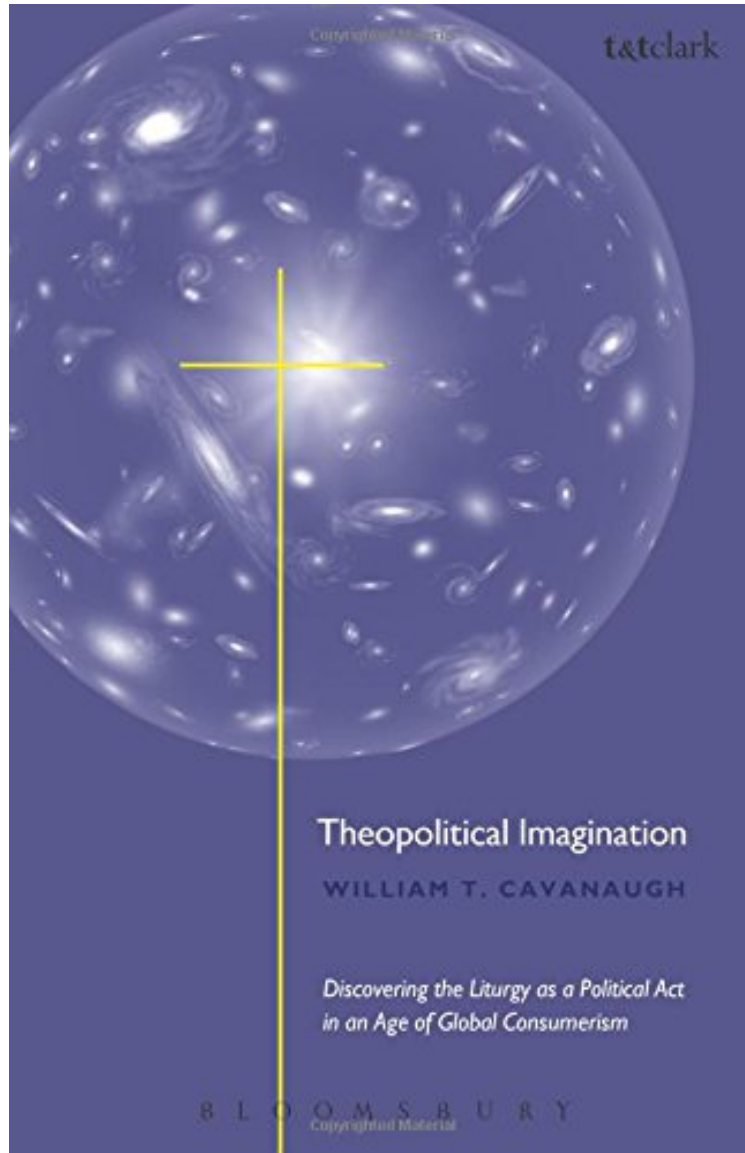


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Theopolitical Imagination: Christian Practices of Space and Time

William T. Cavanaugh

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#211613 in Books William T Cavanaugh 2003-02-01 2003-02-01Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 7.81 x .1 x 5.06l, .40 #File Name: 0567088774130 pagesTheopolitical Imagination Christian Practices of Space and Time | File size: 73.Mb

William T. Cavanaugh : Theopolitical Imagination: Christian Practices of Space and Time before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Theopolitical Imagination: Christian Practices of Space and Time:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. The Eucharist as a Political ActBy Benjamin A. SimpsonIt is always quite encouraging to visit and find well written reviews. And because this book has been reviewed quite well by

others, I will keep my remarks brief. William Cavanaugh has noted quite accurately that the church constitutes a unique politics in our world. And whereas many state that religion and politics are taboo subjects, or at least two realms which stand in opposing tension to one another, Cavanaugh busts this myth through both historical exposition and through the assertion of the Eucharist as a political, subversive act. As noted by others, this short book demonstrates the way in which the nation state has in no way squelched violence or made the world safer, for the liturgies guiding the practices of the state are inherently violent. Cavanaugh makes other astute critiques of public space, and how Christians navigate such space, in discussing the thought of John Courtney Murray (classically), and the contemporary work of Harry Boyte, noting the problems inherent in those approaches when the church submits itself to a certain conception of public reason that limits the usage of Christian speech. Lastly, and most compellingly, Cavanaugh explains the significance of the Eucharist as a truly catholic act, where we find the "world in a wafer." As noted by other reviewers, this book is quite expensive for what you will receive. This is why I obtained it through the library. However, because this book does provide a rather compelling account of the rise of the state and the "Wars of Religion", contra Rawls, and a rational and engaging argument for the importance of the church as an alternative polis centered on the practice of eucharist, it may nonetheless be worth your investment. As noted by another reviewer, there may be other ways to access this same material at less cost. While I didn't buy the book, I definitely found it well worth my time.

29 of 29 people found the following review helpful. Eucharistic Ecclesiology By Tedd Steele In this very short text, Cavanaugh presents an argument that the church, when it properly celebrates the Eucharist, confronts oppressive political structures as a counter-politics. Through the sacrament, the church embodies an alternative to nationalism, civil society, and globalization. In the first chapter, Cavanaugh outlines the way the emergence of the nation-state created an individualized religion. This is because the state presents a narrative of salvation. The church, on the other hand, presents a true story of salvation as it participates in the Eucharist. In the second chapter, Cavanaugh outlines the contention of some Christians that the church should participate in civil society, since it is a "free space" and the means of reform. However, the church is a free and public space, in the best senses of the terms, as it gathers around the Lord's table. Here Christians can truly engage in acts that can transform the world. Finally, in the third chapter Cavanaugh takes on globalization. As he presents it, globalization is an extension of the project of the nation-state. Globalization allows the universal to dominate the local, to a greater degree than nation-states do. The church is a counter-politics in that the Eucharist allows for a spacial relations to be reconceived. The universal/local dichotomy is collapsed as the universal is encapsulated in the local. This is a great collection of essays. The only problem is that the book is too short. Cavanaugh promises more to come on these topics. I hope that he is true to his word. This is a must read for those interested in the church and politics.

5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. The Eucharist Refracts Space and Time By Jacob Cavanaugh gives a theological critique of democratic capitalism and the modern state. He reworks the notion of "time" and "space" around the Eucharist, in that the Eucharist, the body of Christ, gives new time and new space for the acting out of public life. He begins with his famous essay on the so-called Wars of Religion. Contra the established myth, says Cavanaugh, the wars were not wars about religion, but came after the creation of the modern state and were tools of the modern state to fight against religion. The state's goal was to mask its own violence by cloaking the wars as "religious." Cavanaugh, while likely an anabaptist in terms of politics (I realize he is a confessional Roman Catholic), gives an unusually astute analysis of different political options. Most anabaptists incompetently rail at "Constantinianism" (note this term is almost never defined), usually with some heretical "fall of the church from the apostles" garbage, and then package that off as "a new and bracing political theology." Cavanaugh is much more mature than that. He notes the Church using the sword is not an option, but realizes that most alternatives to this are either neo-conservatism or privatism. Anabaptists have not been consistently able to give a good alternative to Constantinianism without going into pietism. Cavanaugh's discussion is worth reading on this point.

Per the Eucharist: The Eucharist is the public acting out of the Christian story. Salvation is the restoring of unity through the participation in Christ's body (13). The body of Christ is the locus of participation between God and man. The Eucharist overcomes the dichotomy between local and universal (113). It takes scattered communities and re-focuses them towards a center. The whole body of Christ is present in each Eucharistic assembly. The Eucharist "bends" space; the more I am tied to the local the more I become aware of the universal. Conclusion: In many ways this book is simply magnificent. Unlike other pacifistic and anabaptist thinkers, Cavanaugh is able (with varying degrees of success) to offer a critique of modern liberal society. The critique of the State as mythos is beautiful. His discussions on globalism and the Eucharist offer much food for thought. Cons: Is this 120 page book worth the \$50 selling price? No. This is partly why I despise academia. They are largely irrelevant to the rest of humanity because of stuff like this. But, reader cheer up, one can easily get Cavanaugh's "word for word" arguments by buying two other books that will cost around \$40. He writes the same essays in **Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology** and **Being Consumed.** So in a sense, **TheoPolitical Imagination** can be avoided. Also, I am not quite sure he fully rejects modernity's values. One instance is when he refers to the medievals using the Eucharist to exclude Jews (116). Is he honestly saying that we should include Jews at the table? To be fair, he doesn't actually say that, but it's hard to draw any other conclusion. This is the Lord's table for Christians. Excluding Jews isn't bigotry. It is simply a corollary of the definition of what it means to be a Christian, something a Jew would agree with!

A critique of modern Western civilization, including contemporary concerns of consumerism, capitalism, globalization, and poverty, from the perspective of a believing Catholic. Responding to Enlightenment and Postmodernist views of the social and economic realities of our time, Cavanaugh engages with contemporary concerns--consumerism, late capitalism, globalization, poverty--in a way reminiscent of Rowan Williams (*Lost Icons*), Nicholas Boyle (*Who Are We Now?*) and Michel de Certeau. "Consumption of the Eucharist," he argues, "consumes one into the narrative of the pilgrim City of God, whose reach extends beyond the global to embrace all times and places." He develops the theme of the Eucharist as the basis for Christian resistance to the violent disciplines of state, civil society and globalization.

His retelling of the so-called Wars of Religion, his performative understanding of the eucharist, and his analysis of space and time render his book vital not only in theology but also in philosophy, political theory, and sociology. Cavanaugh rightly imagines the church as political; this places us in his debt. Anglican Theological