

massive bodies will be systematically attracted to one another. In the functional biological case, this can be substantiated via the natural selection: flying confers an advantage on some organisms in certain environments and so wings sometimes develop to enable the creatures to fly. In the cosmological context, this is much harder to do, scientifically. But it cannot be ruled out either. Teleological explanations for the laws of nature are consistent with what is given scientifically, but not by any means indicated by the scientific data. From a philosophical or theological perspective they may be so indicated. But then we are beyond what the natural sciences can give.

Given the rich and complex nature of the presentations, most of the discussion concerned clarification.

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MISSION AND MISSION THEOLOGY

Topic: The *Humanum* in Christian Theology and in Various Cultures:

An Exercise in Theological/Cultural Anthropology

Convener: Carl F. Starkloff, S.J., Regis College, Toronto

Moderator: Lou McNeil, Georgian Court College, Lakewood, New Jersey

Presenter: Michael Steltenkamp, S.J., Wheeling Jesuit College

Michael Steltenkamp offered a challenging paper on Nicholas Black Elk, the Oglala Sioux holy man and Catholic catechist. Steltenkamp is a cultural anthropologist who has spent a considerable amount of time not only as an anthropological observer but also as a friend and missionary among native peoples (Oglala Sioux). His recent book, *Black Elk, Holy Man of the Oglala*, has received wide attention. His presentation centered on Black Elk studies and the interplay of native religion and Christianity in Black Elk's life.

Broad respect and interest developed late in North America for the traditions and experiences of the native peoples. An early example of this was the publication in 1932 of John Neihardt's *Black Elk Speaks*. Largely forgotten until the 1960s, the book has since received very wide attention. When Neihardt's book came to the attention of a much wider public, it also brought renewed attention as well to Joseph Brown's book, *The Sacred Pipe* which was written in 1953.

Steltenkamp's work in the 1980s and its publication in 1993 has attempted to bring a balance to the scholarship involved in Black Elk studies, and more broadly Native American religious traditions and Christianity. This latter is seen, more or less, in Nick Black Elk, who early in his life was an unambiguous leader in Oglala Sioux religion. Not uncommon for his generation, however, Nick Black

Elk became a Christian. Scholars, native American scholars in particular, have wrestled with the question of the relationship and balance in religious belief and expression which resulted after such a "conversion."

Steltenkamp asked his listeners some probing questions: "Why, for instance, did John Neihardt fail to communicate in his seminal work the fact that Black Elk, the native religious leader, had become a faithful catechist of the Catholic Church at Pine Ridge? Why do many scholars, if they refer to Black Elk's Christianity, do so within a context which usually relates his Christian beliefs in a one-on-one correspondence or relationship between Christian beliefs and those he held as a faithful Oglala Sioux practitioner? In such cases, Steltenkamp argued, Black Elk's embracing of Christianity is reduced and anything "new" in his acceptance of Christianity is overlooked or dismissed.

Steltenkamp recalled that he too had begun his study of Nick (his Christian name) Black Elk committed to the "truths" he read in the two previous studies of Neihardt and Brown. It was only in his field study and work with the native peoples that Steltenkamp began to discover another side to the Black Elk story. Speaking with relatives, friends, and family, Steltenkamp discovered that Black Elk's Catholicism was much more an integral part of his person than previously attested in the "professional" studies.

The point our presenter drove home with alacrity was that in joining a church or embracing a new institution, there is more than continuity. There is also a discovery of something "new." The continuity Black Elk saw with Lakota religion surely included the fact that "all are relatives," a people to one another, members of the same family. But Nick Black Elk did, in fact, embrace his Catholicism. Steltenkamp pointedly suggests that we do a disservice to him and others like him, if we presuppose that his joining Christianity was no more than superficial. In addition to seeing a continuity and consistency with his traditional beliefs, Steltenkamp argues that Nick Black Elk discovered new insights, also consistent with the Oglala traditions. His argument was that Black Elk found both "new wineskins and new wine."

It was argued by our presenter that the traditional Oglala religious use of the two roads methods is, in fact, traceable to the tool of two roads introduced by Christian missionaries. The "red road" was developed from the "second road" used in an old catechetical tool. This is not, by any means, to devalue traditional religion, but simply to point to the enrichment one tradition may receive from another. The romanticism of the recent past has suggested that religious rituals were either totally original to North American native religions or simply "contaminated" by Christian imperialism. Steltenkamp suggests that a close study of Nick Black Elk uncovers that native religions have met new religious expressions and have frequently embraced the new as enriching the traditional.

Nick Black Elk was a faithful and committed catechist during the latter portion of his life. Do we deprecate Nick Black Elk, and certainly ignore the witness of many of his contemporaries and family, if we too simply conclude that in those latter years as an active lay Catholic leader, Nick Black Elk was

only publicly Christian? Such arguments often rest upon the supposition that any embracing of Christianity was solely on the grounds that Christianity simply paralleled Oglala beliefs. Steltenkamp illustrated the difficulty with such a position by citing the Sacred Pipe Lady as a parallel to Mary the bringer of the Christ. Since as many, if not many more, Oglala and Lakota converted to Presbyterianism or Episcopalianism, neither of which provided a Mary parallel for the Sacred Pipe Lady, constructing an analysis of native and Christian traditions on such parallelisms is fragile.

The group gathered for the presentation focussed on the notions of the confluence, influence, and distinctions between old and new when religious cultures engage.

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EARLY CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

Topic: Spirit, Soul, and Body? Questions in Early Christian Anthropology
Convener: Alexis Doval, F.S.C., Saint Mary's College of California, Moraga
Presenter: Michael Slusser, Duquesne University

The seminar focused on the convention theme of "Theological Anthropology" by examining four texts illustrative of the way that pre-Nicene writers thought about what constitutes what it is to be a human being. Relevant to Christology the question is "what" must be "assumed" or "not" to be "saved." The texts discussed were Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 5.6.1; Tertullian, *De Anima* 10 and 12; Origen, *Dialogue with Heraclides* 7.

Slusser began the session by presenting a short paper. He pointed out that later patristic writers such as Augustine or Hippo thought of a human being as composed of three distinct components: soul, body, and mind. But this terminology arose in response to the Appollinarian controversy of the third century. The church at that time thought it necessary to assert strongly the completeness of Jesus' humanity. For, in the form given us by Nemesius of Emesa, "What is not assumed is not saved." This means asserting that the divine Logos assumed not only a human body and the lower psyche which animates it, but also a rational soul or intellect. Thus we have the beginning of the trichotomy of the person: body, soul, spirit, which became the basis of anthropological thinking upon which later Christian writers built their theology.

Slusser's purpose was to get back before Neoplatonism began to set the vocabulary and ask how did Christian thinkers up to Origen conceive of humanity? What was their anthropological thinking? How many components did