

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

these early writers speak of in describing the human being? Are these components equal or unequal and are they able to stand alone? How much did these early writers borrow from their Greco-Roman neighbors?

Slusser posed three theses around which to structure the discussion: (1) Irenaeus does not hold a trichotomous view of a human being; (2) Tertullian rather discounts the idea that human beings have an immaterial component; and (3) when Origen does speak of a trichotomy in human nature he does so based on the interpretation of Scripture and not on Neoplatonic thought.

Lively discussion ensued on each of the texts. It was agreed that Irenaeus was not a trichotomist. He used an anthropology based on biblical ideas and imagery to explain who we are. Creatures are fashioned "through" the hands of God, that is, through the Son and Spirit," and therefore we are a part of a human being, the perfected human being is a mixture and union of the soul which takes on the Spirit of the Father and is mingled with that flesh which has been fashioned according to the image of God (AH 5.6.1).

In the treatise, *De Anima* 10, Tertullian reflects on the human soul, the *anima* and asks what is the relation between *anima* and *spiritus*. In *De Anima* 12, he examines the relation between *anima* and *animus*, or mind. For Tertullian the *anima* is not the soul we know from Thomistic theology, but is a very rarified material substance of a form congruent to its body. Human beings do not have an immaterial element but rather the *anima* is a dimension of the body. Seminar participants agreed with Slusser's theses that Irenaeus and Tertullian do not have a trichotomous understanding of who we are as persons.

Discussion on Origen's *Dialogue with Heraclitus* was cut short because of time. It was evident that Origen spoke of a human being as having three components, but these distinctions were drawn from his interpretations of Scripture texts and not from philosophical beliefs.

Seminar participants welcomed the opportunity to become involved in scholarly discussion. They expressed to Slusser the desire to continue such a format in the continuing seminar on Early Christian Theology.

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