

disappeared from the marital relationship—as exemplified in chronic spousal abuse—what remains of the marriage bond that prevents another valid marriage?”

Brief discussion followed each presentation. Although the papers were very different, conversation often returned to three common themes: the tension between the interpersonal and social responsibilities of families, the gap between the experience of married couples and official Church teaching in some areas, and the need for a dynamic concept of sacramentality to serve as the foundation of Christian family life.

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THE NEW AMERICAN RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

The New American Religious Pluralism as a Sign of the Times

Convener: Francis X. Clooney, Boston College/Oxford University

Moderator: Robert Schreiter, Catholic Theology Union

Presenters: Jeannine Hill Fletcher, Fordham University

Jonathan Tan, Catholic University of America

Edward Ulrich, University of St. Thomas

This panel presupposed the reality of an increasing ethnic and cultural pluralism in the United States, along with a greater religious diversity due to the arrival of increasing numbers of immigrants from Asia and Africa and other previously underrepresented areas of the world. The panelists also accepted that pluralism is theologically significant, a sign of the times. Finally, all used as a jumping off point Harvard professor Diana Eck's 2001 book, *A New Religious America: How the United States Became the World's Most Diverse Nation*, in which she reflects on a decade's research on the United States' changing religious scene. The three panelists were appreciative of the book and its portrayal of this new pluralism, but all highlighted issues not prominently featured in Eck's work, with respect to community and ecclesiology (Tan), the distinctive Christian command to love our "religious others" (Hill Fletcher), and the challenge of participation in other people's religious practices (Ulrich).

Reflecting on the East Asian immigrant community, Jonathan Tan proposed two major points in order to stress the complex meanings of the new immigration for religious America. First, Asian immigrants have contributed to religious diversity in the United States not only by bringing the major Asian religious faiths to the United States, but also by introducing Asian forms of Christianity and establishing new Asian immigrant churches apart from other mainstream Christian churches. Indeed, the two largest groups of Asian immigrants to the

United States (i.e., the Filipinos and the Koreans) are predominantly Christian, and both groups have contributed significantly to the diversity within Christian churches in the United States. Such Asian-American Christian churches thrive because they sustain immigrant identities and cultural traditions, and thus serve an important social role. Second, Tan noted that Eck tends to present immigrants as recipients of the encounter with the Christian majority, and so she appeals to European-American Christians to reach out to their non-Christian counterparts. But Asian-American immigrants too need to reach out to their religious others, thus becoming themselves agents in freely shaping this new America.

Jeannine Hill Fletcher searched for a constructive Christian theological interpretation of pluralism. She began by introducing Luke 10.25 ff. (on the 2 great commandments) as an injunction which, among other things, exhorts us to take the "religiously other" up into the love relationship flowing between humans and God. She assesses contemporary theologies of religious pluralism as promoting or blocking this aim, and critiques current theological constructions of pluralism (such as the exclusivist, inclusivist, pluralist paradigm and cultural-linguistic particularism) as unable to do justice to the "otherness of the other." Needed is a way of drawing the religiously other into the fundamental love relationship, and so our challenge centers on this question: How do we draw near to the "other" such that s/he might be drawn up into that fundamental love relationship without erasing the distinctiveness of their religious identity in the process? Following Eck, Hill Fletcher suggested that once we meet our new neighbors in friendship and as citizens in the same communities, we are also drawn into the religious dimensions of more accessible points of contact. Religious difference is not erased, but taken up into a richer, spiritual relationship. Ultimately, when we follow the Gospel injunction to take the religiously other up into our relationship with God, we are offered an invaluable glimpse of God's own mystery and complexity.

Ted (Edward) Ulrich, noting interesting examples given by Eck from her own experience, focused on the challenge posed by "the typically American" instinct to participate in other traditions not only culturally but religiously. He asks how we are to think of possible limits on participation amidst this American pluralism. Acknowledging Eck's comfort with participation, Ulrich suggested that Christians must carefully consider how far a sharing across religious boundaries can be taken. He was reluctant to agree with Eck's view that a Christian participation in Hindu worship can be founded simply on a consideration of God's transcendence. Christian particularity suggests that a Christian may well decide not to participate in others' practices, as a line is drawn between cultural respect and religious participation. Appreciating the need to attend to earlier Christian experience, Ulrich explored the pluralistic experience of the early Church, the arguments by some Church Fathers against participation in others' religious rites. While Patristic arguments cannot apply unmodified, many of their cautions pertain now.

In the ensuing discussion (chaired by Robert Schreiter), we made progress in exploring the papers more deeply, and raising an array of further questions. Nothing was resolved, but luckily these are young scholars with plenty of time to do the needed work.

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"RADICAL ORTHODOXY" AND CATHOLIC THEOLOGY

- Topic: "Radical Orthodoxy":
Reading the Signs of Pre/Post and Modern Times
- Convener: Philip Rossi, Marquette University
- Presenters: John Montag, Creighton University
David Burrell, University of Notre Dame
Philip Rossi, Marquette University
Anthony Godzieba, Villanova University

The theologians (J. Milbank, C. Pickstock, G. Ward, P. Blond) who call their critique of secular modernity and their program for theology in postmodern culture "Radical Orthodoxy" (RO) have drawn some sympathetic interest from Catholic theologians. Inclusion of theologies shaping Vatican II and emerging in its aftermath in RO's criticism of "secular reason," however, has hindered dialogue with Catholic theologians still working with issues limned by "modernity." The session sought to identify loci in RO for future dialogue with a wider circle of Catholic theologians.

Montag recounted the origins of RO in a 1997 Cambridge meeting that Milbank, Pickstock, and Ward convened. Their intent was to recover a confident sense that reason is ineluctably tradition-bound; their insight was that one must retrieve one's premodern roots to get through the impasse of modernity and its postmodern nihilistic fragments. The meeting discussed the influence of theologians/philosophers who go beyond apologetics from within a hostile secular academe (e.g., de Lubac, von Balthasar, Ong, de Certeau, Gilson, Chenu, D. MacKinnon, C. Taylor, Lash, F. Kerr, Hauerwas, MacIntyre, R. Williams, M. Buckley, and Burrell.) The discussion framed RO as an effort to read the signs of the times, and to consolidate these voices, not as a doctrinaire movement, but as participants in a rich *disputatio*, not stultifying late-modern academic discourse. While North American Catholic theologians still show little interest in RO and most criticism is from liberal quarters, Montag noted two sympathetic interlocutors with interesting, accurate critiques of Milbank's theology and RO's project: W. Hankey disputes Milbank's reading of Neoplatonism, worrying that,