

Rahnerian reconstruction leads West to conclude that Jesus both definitively expresses and secures the personal act-center that is his Sonship. For West this is a way of understanding the person of Jesus that does justice to the way a human person becomes a person.

Roger Haight presented the outline of an orthodox pluralist Christology. He defined a pluralist Christology as one that affirms Jesus as the Christ in a way that does not construe Christianity as the one and only true faith and way of salvation, uniquely superior to all others. An orthodox Christology is one that meets the criteria of being faithful to the normative teaching of the New Testament and the classical Christological councils of Nicea and Chalcedon. Haight's intent was to offer a positive, constructive pluralist Christology that is orthodox. His outline included remarks on foundational considerations (for example, plurality of New Testament Christologies), the logic of Christology (from soteriology to the dialectical character of orthodox Christology), and the new expanded horizon for interpreting Jesus today (for example, a new vision of the universe and interdependence of all peoples). Haight concludes that the conviction that Christianity is not absolute, but that other religions contain salvific truth not formally contained in Christianity, is entailed in the teaching of Jesus. Because this Christology affirms the humanity and in a noncompetitive way the true divinity of Jesus, it is orthodox in preserving the basic experience and conviction of Christians.

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#### COMPARATIVE THEOLOGY

- Topic: Seeking Egyptian Gold:  
A Theological Response to Úântideva's *Bodhicaryâvatâra*
- Convener: Paul J. Griffiths, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Moderator: Paul J. Griffiths, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Presenter: Terrence W. Tilley, University of Dayton
- Respondent: Daniel Arnold, McGill University, Montréal

This session was the second part of a two-year project designed to address a particular Buddhist text (named above), and to ask what significance it might have for Catholic theology—moral, systematic, pastoral, and so forth. The session's title mentions a patristic trope (taken from Exodus 3 and 12) for the enterprise of reading alien texts. The text—a Sanskrit work composed in India in the eighth century—had been made available in English translation to participants beforehand. The first half of the text had been discussed in 2002; the second half was discussed in 2003.

Tilley's paper identified three issues as arising for Catholic theologians from the second half of the *Bodhicaryâvatâra*. The first had to do with the idea of the "terminal quest"—of a search for an answer to a set of questions beyond which no further question is thought necessary. Tilley noted that Buddhists and Christians identify the terminus of the conceptual question about origins differently: Buddhists (or at least this text) by asserting the beginninglessness of the causal series, and Christians by asserting God as *causa sui*. The second issue was that of the relation between bodiliness and mindfulness, with specific attention to the fact that dualism between mind and body was not a problem for Ūântideva, but is a difficulty for many Christian theologians. The third issue was that of the relation between *ûûnyatâ* and *pleroma*: does the Buddhist affirmation of emptiness entail or suggest that extinction is the proper end of the human?

Dan Arnold provided a response to Tilley in which he addressed all of Tilley's concerns from the perspective of an expert in Buddhist Studies. He acknowledged the importance of Tilley's concerns, and, for the most part, the accuracy of his understanding of the text. But he emphasized that the affirmation of emptiness has nothing to do with nihilism or extinction, but rather with a distinction between the two truths, according to which the ultimate truth about particulars is that they are as they seem—which is the same as to affirm emptiness of them.

The lively discussion that followed focused upon the questions raised by Tilley and Arnold, and also upon the methodological question of how a Christian theologian's work and approach to work might be altered by serious reading of an alien text like the *Bodhicaryâvatâra*. It was agreed that there would be such alterations (as Aquinas's work and approach to work was altered by serious reading of Aristotle), but that the nature of such changes could not easily be known in advance.

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#### SACRAMENTAL AND LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

- Topic: Practicing Liturgical Scholarship: Liturgical Theology as Vocation  
 Convener: Bruce T. Morrill, Boston College  
 Presenters: Martin Connell, Saint John's University, Collegeville  
 Judith M. Kubicki, Fordham University  
 Richard McCarron, Catholic Theological Union  
 Susan K. Roll, Christ the King Seminary

Martin Connell considered the vocation of the liturgical theologian in the context of the United States culture. The paper had three parts. Part one considered the aversion to ritual in canonical nineteenth-century American literature as the foundation for contemporary suspicion of ritual experiences. The