

Appendix 2

REPORT ON CUERG'S ACTIVITIES

Present were Shawnee Daniels-Syke, Gemma Cruz, Carmen Nanko-Fernández, Jon Nilson, Jean-Pierre Ruiz, Tracy Tiemeier, Jamie Phelps, and Peter Phan (Chair).

The Committee on Underrepresented Ethnic and Racial Groups (CUERG), as reconstituted by President Margaret O'Gara, met on Friday, June 6, 1-2:30. All the members, whose names are listed above, were present.

1. Jamie Phelps and Jon Nilson, who are past chairs of CUERG, gave a brief history of the committee: its origin, its name, and its mission. It started a couple of decades ago when Jamie Phelps and Orlando Espín were members of the Board of Directors. At the end of their term, then-President Anne Patrick asked them for suggestions on how to make the presence and work of Black and Hispanic theologians better recognized by CTSA. They came up with the idea of a committee for underrepresented groups (the word "minority" was intentionally avoided). Since then there have been four chairs of the committee: Jamie Phelps, Alejandro Garcia Rivera, Jon Nilson, and Peter Phan.
2. The committee acknowledged the significant progress CTSA had made in the last two decades in raising the visibility and representation of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in the society. Four members of these groups have been presidents and many have been members of the Board of Directors. Also, the convention program has given space to Black, Latino/a, and Asian theologies. Members of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups have been active in leading and giving papers in other sessions of the convention as well. CTSA has also underwritten receptions for members of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.
3. It was agreed that the committee should focus its work on ethnic and racial underrepresented groups rather than expanding its concerns to include, e.g., gender and sexual orientation.
4. It was agreed that members of the society should be given the opportunity and respectfully invited to identify themselves as members of the underrepresented racial and ethnic groups rather than being classified as such on the basis of their colors or names.
5. With regard to the mission and tasks of CUERG, Jon Nilson pointed out that in her letter appointing him as chair of CUERG, President Shawn

Copeland mentioned two tasks: raising the visibility of the scholarship of the members of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups within CTSA and encouraging, recruiting, and mentoring graduate students of racial and ethnic groups.

6. With regard to the first task, Jon Nilson initiated the “book display” of the writings of members of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in the area of Book Exhibits. The goal of the book display is to draw the attention of CTSA members to the theological works produced by members of the underrepresented groups and to encourage them to make use of these works in their teaching. Several publishers, particularly Orbis Books, have been very helpful in providing copies of these writings for display.
7. With regard to the second task, Jon Nilson produced a color brochure about CUERG and sent copies of it to chairs of departments of theology. He also initiated the holding of a luncheon for graduate students in the area where the convention took place.
8. Given his time and energy limitations, Peter Phan has asked Carmen Nanko-Fernández to work with him in chairing the committee, and she has graciously agreed.

To continue fostering these two goals, it was recommended that:

1. Though special sessions on Black, Latino/a, and Asian theologies in the convention program should be continued, care should be taken not to “pigeonhole” and confine theologians of underrepresented ethnic and racial groups to those sessions. Also, care should be taken to avoid scheduling these sessions at the same time.
2. Members of these groups should have the opportunity to be actively involved in organizing and participating in the other sessions of the convention.
3. A page should be given to CUERG on the Web site of CTSA. This page could be used to post such items as new publications of members of underrepresented ethnic and racial groups (in lieu of the book display), bibliography, teaching resources, activities, etc. Perhaps a member of CUERG should be responsible for this page.
4. It was noted that “mainstream” theologians have not yet made full use of the writings of underrepresented ethnic and racial groups in teaching “regular” courses, by incorporating them into the list of required readings. Jean-Pierre Ruiz suggested that CUERG could submit a proposal to Wabash in the name of CTSA requesting funding for seminars on how to incorporate the writings of underrepresented ethnic and racial theologians into the syllabi of “standard” courses. These seminars could be held in conjunction with CTSA conventions or separately from them. Peter Phan agreed to work with Jean-Pierre on this proposal.

Besides the meeting of the committee, a luncheon was held on Saturday, June 7, at 1-2:30 for theology graduate students in Miami. Mary Joe Iozzio had kindly contacted the chairs/deans of the Theology departments/schools at Barry University, St. Leo University, St. Thomas University, and St. Vincent de Paul Seminary and asked them to encourage their students to attend. Over 40 people attended the luncheon. Phan began by introducing President O’Gara, who welcomed the attendees, especially the graduate students. Phan then introduced the other members of the Board of Directors, including Past-President Dan Finn, President-Elect Terrence Tilley, and Vice-President Bryan Massingale. Then the graduate students were introduced. The most important part of the luncheon was the talks given by three members of the underrepresented ethnic and racial groups, Drs. La-Reine Marie Mosely (Black), Michael Lee (Latino), and Tracy Tiemeier (Asian). The speakers recounted their experiences as graduate students, as job applicants, as faculty members, and as members of CTSA. It was an eye-opening and deeply moving experience. It was suggested that an opportunity be given to all the members of CTSA to hear these speakers. Phan will look into how to make this possible next year.

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