

UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS

- Topic: There are many rooms . . . recent developments
in underrepresented theologies and their relationship to the CTSA
- Convener: Alejandro García-Rivera, Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley
- Presenters: Michelle Gonzalez, Loyola Marymount
Jonathan Tan, Xavier University of Ohio
Anthea Butler, Loyola Marymount

Michelle Gonzalez began the panel presentations by reviewing recent trends in Latino and Latina theology that give promise of significant development in the future. Dr. Gonzalez identified theological aesthetics, popular religion, feminist Latina theologies, and intersections between African-American and Latino/a theologies as important developments among Hispanic/Latino theologians. Theological aesthetics, Dr. Gonzalez reported, seems to be a strong and significant trend among Hispanic theologians. Works like *The Community of the Beautiful* by Alejandro García-Rivera of the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, *Caminemos con Jesus* by Roberto Goizueta of Boston College, and articles published by Peter Casarella of Catholic University of America have contributed significantly to an approach neglected by mainstream theology but finding surprising strength in the Latino/a community. Attempts by these theologians have a wider significance for Latino/a theology in that they are engaging thinkers outside of the Hispanic/Latino context demonstrating the vitality of Latino/a theology to address the wider theological world. Popular religion also continues to be a powerful and significant topic for Latino/a theologians. Works by Orlando Espín, Miguel Diaz, and Ana Maria Pineda continue to expand and develop a theological approach to popular Catholicism. In the field of feminist Latina theology, Dr. Gonzalez sees a new generation of Latina theologians providing new paradigms of Latina feminist thought that builds upon the groundbreaking work of Maria Pilar Aquino and Ada Maria Isazi-Diaz. Finally, Dr. Gonzalez sees a badly needed dialogue beginning to start between African-American and Latino/a theologians.

Dr. Tan began his presentation by describing a variety of Asian theologians doing significant work in the U.S. Among these, Asian Protestant theologians have been among the most vigorous. Theologians such as Song Choan-Seng (C.S. Song) of the Graduate Theological Union (Berkeley) and Kosuke Koyama of Union Theological Seminary (New York City) began a tradition of Asian theological thought that new generations are just now beginning to build upon. In biblical studies, Seow Choon-Leong (C.L. Seow) at Princeton, Yeo Khiok-Khng (K.K. Yeo) at Garret-Evangelical Seminary, and Jeffrey Kuan at the Graduate Theological Union have published on cross-cultural hermeneutics, ancestor worship, and spirituality. Asian Feminist theology has also developed among Asian Protestant theologians. Chung Hyun-Kyung at Union Theological

Seminary and Kwok Pui-Lan at Episcopal Divinity School (New Haven) have contributed significantly to Asian feminist theology. Dr Tan also mentioned several important ecumenical organizations that are significant for Asian theologians. Among these are PACTS (Pacific and Asian American Center for Theologies), and APARRI (Asian and Pacific Americans & Religion Research Initiative), PANA (Institute for Leadership and Development & Study of Pacific & Asian North American Religion) and CPAT (Council for Pacific Asian Theology). CPAT also collaborates in publishing the *Journal of Asian and American Theology* (JHAAT). Dr. Tan sees a big disparity between Asian Protestant and Asian Roman Catholic theologians. One can count on the fingers of one hand the number of Asian Roman Catholic theologians. These include Peter Phan, himself, and Faustino "Tito" Cruz, S.M.. The CTSA can do quite a bit in encouraging Asian Americans to begin and finish their theological education. The CTSA could initiate ecumenical contacts with existing Asian theological organizations such as those mentioned above. The CTSA could identify and recruit as members young Asian American Catholic theologians such as Faustino Cruz. The CTSA could also establish a theological initiative such as the Hispanic Theological initiative.

Dr. Butler began her presentation by recounting the frustrating and, at times, tragic journey of her theological education. A lack of sensitivity, ignorance of Black culture and history, and meager library resources on Black theology all made up for a difficult and discouraging experience. Part of the challenge for mainstream Roman Catholic theology, she feels, is the broadening of the ecclesial context of theology. African American theologians, for example, cannot ignore the Baptist and Pentecostal ecclesial experiences that have shaped African-American religious culture. To do so would mean reneging on the African-American context itself. Thus, she encourages members of the CTSA to also include a broader ecumenical vision as they pursue their own theological projects. We have much to learn from the Pentecostal and Protestant experience, especially as African-Americans have known it. Finally, Dr. Butler warns us that the CTSA is in danger of becoming isolated from its grassroots worshipping community and the wider community of the United States unless it begins to take some initiative in acknowledging and incorporating the context of African-Americans.

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