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**A Decade of Racial/Ethnic Diversity in Theological Education:
The Continuous Challenge of Inclusion with Justice**

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During the first decade of the 21st century organizations such as the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and the Wabash Center for the Teaching and Learning of Religion (Wabash) carried out multiple consultations and colloquies on issues related to racial/ethnic diversity in

theological education.¹ These meetings certainly show a concerted effort by these organizations to foster institutional and pedagogical reflection concerning a reality theological institutions cannot ignore without damaging their alleged mission to the church and the world: an increasingly multicultural, multi-racial and multi-ethnic society. Early in the decade, theological educators reminded us that “[if] theological schools are going to succeed in the new century in North America, we will need to be broadly inclusive of racial/ethnic constituencies, and that will require new institutional effort and skill” (Aleshire and Boyd, 2002, vi).

¹ The following is a partial list of the meetings related to racial/ethnic diversity organized by these two organizations since 2002 (the * indicates events in which I participated):

2009-2010. Year-long colloquy for “Pre-tenure Religion Faculty of African Descent,” (Crawfordsville, IN), Wabash.

2009. Preparing for 2040: Enhancing Capacity to Educate and Minister in a Multiracial World. (Pittsburgh, PA; October 9-11), ATS.

2009. *Consultation C: Strategies for Enhanced Institutional Practices in Race/Ethnicity* (faculty ethos, power, and community). (Pittsburg, PA; March 27-29), ATS.

2008-2009. Year-long teaching colloquy for “Latino/a Faculty at Colleges, Universities and Theological Institutions”, (Crawfordsville, IN), Wabash.

*2008. Consultation “Hispanics/Latinos/as in Theological Education II”. (Pittsburgh, PA; October 24-26), ATS.

*2006-2007. Year-long colloquy “Teaching and Learning for Asian/Asian North American Faculty,” (Crawfordsville, IN), Wabash.

*2006-2007. Year-long colloquy on “Fostering Effective Teaching and Learning in Racially and Culturally Diverse Classrooms,” (Crawfordsville, IN), Wabash.

*2006. Consultation on “Black and Hispanic Dialogue: Examining Institutional Cultures, the School and the Classroom” (Pittsburgh, PA; October 13-15), ATS.

*2004-2005. Year-long Teaching colloquy on “Teaching Effectively in Racially and Culturally Diverse Classrooms,” (Crawfordsville, IN), Wabash.

*2004. Consultation for “Hispanics/Latinos (as) in Theological Education: The Present is Mestizo” (Pittsburgh, PA; October 22-24), ATS.

*2002. Consultation on “Racial/Ethnic Seminar: Black-Hispanic Dialogue” (Pittsburgh, PA; October 4-6), ATS.

The approach of these efforts has been oriented to enable dialogue mainly among and between racial and ethnic minority faculty² with the purpose of looking at the institutional policies, programs and pedagogical strategies that could foster racial/ethnic diversity in theological education. In the words of Daniel Aleshire (2008, 3), executive director of ATS,

[t]hese efforts have had several goals. One was to attend to the growing number of racial/ethnic faculty and administrators in ATS schools and encourage them in the contribution they are making. Another was to begin helping schools to enhance their capacity as employers of racial/ethnic faculty and staff. Over the past forty years, the ATS focus has changed from inclusion to institutional capacity. At the same time, the rhetoric has changed, at least the rhetoric I have been using. Rather than talk about justice and inclusion—both of which are central and, for the most part, agreed upon—I have been talking more about the demographic realities.

This approach is, therefore, characterized by a concern for “social inclusion”, namely, a basic concern for the representation and participation of people from racial/ethnic minority groups in theological institutions and divinity schools at colleges and universities. Undeniably this approach has born its fruits. This explains why the main reason to affirm what has been accomplished with regards to racial/ethnic diversity in theological education has to do with the increasing numbers of racial/ethnic minority faculty (REMF) and racial/ethnic minority students

² For the particular purpose of this article, I use “racial ethnic minority faculty” as a term with three usually converging and complementary meanings: (1) to refer to faculty members who belong to any of the main four racial/ethnic minority groups as defined by ATS and Wabash (African-Americans, Hispanic/Latinos/Latinas, Asian/Asian Americans, and Native Americans); (2) to refer to racial/ethnic minority faculty that is usually underrepresented in theological institutions in comparison to their relative numbers in the general population; and (3) to refer to faculty members from any racial/ethnic minority group who are usually discriminated against and/or considered inferior in predominantly white theological institutions.

in all ATS's member schools.³ However, as necessary as it may continue to be, this approach is not enough to foster real and substantial progress in the area of racial/ethnic diversity in theological education. For this approach continues to leave untouched other aspects of racial/ethnic diversity in theological education that has not been addressed with honesty and intentionality. One of them, the focus of this article, is the reality of the past and present racism experienced in predominantly white theological institutions (PWTIs) by faculty from racial/ethnic minority groups. Hence, in light of my own research with REMF, my interest now is to call for an approach to racial/ethnic diversity in theological education that goes beyond the concern for improving racial/ethnic demographics, or the concern for improving institutional capacity for "managing" faculty and student diversity, which seem to be the present and preferred approach by the power holders in theological institutions and organizations.

³ Between the academic years of 2001-02 and 2009-10, the increase in the enrollment of racial/ethnic students was approximately 3.6% for Asian Americans, 16.0% for African Americans, 16.9% for Hispanics and -14.1% for Native Americans. In the same period, the increase of racial/ethnic minority faculty was approximately 55.6% Asian American, 29.5% African American, 28.6% Hispanic and 0% Native American, although more than half of this increase happened during the first half of the decade. According to the most recent data, as a whole, racial/ethnic minority faculty (independently of their rank) represents 16.0% of the total number of theological faculty in ATS' schools. By groups, Asian American and Pacific Islander faculty represent 5.3%, Black non-Hispanic 7.1%, Hispanic 3.5%, and Native American 0.001%. During this same period, the increase of female faculty was 19.2%. Today, female faculty makes up 23.5% of the total number of theological faculty in ATS' schools. See Table 3.1-A and Table 2.12 (accessed March 25, 2010) at <http://www.ats.edu/Resources/Publications/Documents/AnnualDataTables/2009-10AnnualDataTables.pdf>. See also Daniel Aleshire's *Gifts Different: Race and Ethnicity in Theological Education* at <http://www.ats.edu/Resources/PapersPresentations/Aleshire/Documents/2008/CAOS-GiftsDiffering.pdf>.

Inclusion with Justice: a necessary and urgent approach

To be “included” is not the same as “being fully welcomed” or as being “equally treated and respected.” In the particular case of REMF, their increase in numbers at theological institutions in recent years doesn’t mean that their experience at PWTIs has been one of equal treatment or full acceptance “at the theological table.” The kind of struggles they have to go through to attain a place at the table, the kind of extra-effort it takes for them to keep a place at the table, and the kind of disadvantages they have to overcome to be fully “respected” as colleagues at the table, all are signs of the embedded racism very much alive in PWTIs in North America. I have already indicated in another article that many of the issues of racial/ethnic diversity in theological education have much to do with issues of race and racism. There I said that “[i]n North America theological education is still dominated by white-male, euro-centric perspectives which unconsciously, and sometimes consciously, mirrors in different degrees the still prevalent racism of the broader culture” (Cascante 2008, 22). I also expressed that lifting up the issues of race and racism in the conversation of racial/ethnic diversity in theological institutions is uncomfortable, painful but necessary.⁴

The issues of “inclusion and justice” for years have been considered “central” in the conversation on racial/ethnic diversity in theological education and “for the most part, agreed upon” (see Aleshire 2008, 3, above). Some of these issues were highlighted in a document made

⁴ However, my interest in that article was not to discuss how race and racism have impacted or continue to impact theological institutions and academic programs in general, or how they have impacted or continue to impact racial/ethnic minority faculty (REMF) and students at predominantly white theological institutions (PWTIs). What I did was to present a constructive model of institutional change for advancing racial/ethnic diversity in theological institutions, very much in line with institutional development efforts undertaken by ATS and Wabash.

available by ATS, early in 2002. Presented as a folio, *Diversity in Theological Education*⁵ is an excellent resource for theological institutions to address issues of race and ethnicity and to begin to understand the nature of the uneven playing field racial/ethnic minority faculty has to face in the academic world of theological education (the nature of this uneven playing field is implicitly assumed in the document but it is not explicitly addressed). It includes reflections and case studies that invite power holders at PWTIs to exercise equal treatment in some cases, and different value-judgments in other cases, in regards to the hiring, retention, scholarship standards, tenure, mentorship and the overall sense of belonging of REMF.

However, in the past decade, neither this folio nor the issues it raises have been used to evaluate the integrity and congruence of theological schools and their statements about racial/ethnic diversity and their actual institutional and academic practices. With few exceptions⁶, issues of *inclusion with justice* has not been a topic of analysis or used as criteria to assess the mission, vision and academic practices of theological institutions with regards to racial/ethnic diversity. Until now, there has been no effort by particular seminaries or theological organizations to study and systematize the experience of racial/ethnic minority faculty and

⁵ This folio is available at <http://www.ats.edu/Resources/Documents/DiversityFolio.pdf>.

⁶ See for instance James W. Perkison, *White Theology: Outing Supremacy in Modernity* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Mark Taylor, "Race and Racist Regime: Challenges for Anti-racist Theological Work" (paper presented at Union-PSCE, Richmond, VA, January 26, 2006); Laurie M. Cassidy and Alexander Mikulich, eds., *Interrupting White Privilege: Catholic Theologians Break the Silence* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007).

students involved in theological education.⁷ All of the contrary, some of the “don’ts” presented ten years ago in the folio *Diversity in Theological Education* continue to be part of the “dos” of many theological institutions today. Here are some examples:

- **DON’T** mistake rhetoric for action or segregate the issue of diversity from other institutional concerns and priorities.
- **DON’T** build (or continue to maintain) a monocultural theological curriculum and then assume one culture fits all cultures.
- **DON’T** foster tokenism, stereotype racial/ethnic faculty, or treat racial/ethnic faculty as “special” people.
- **DON’T** conceive of diversity as just a “numbers game.”

My Research with REMF

The realization of the need for an alternative approach to racial/ethnic diversity in theological education prompted me to engage in a research with the main goal of developing a model, an interpretative theoretical tool, that could help REMF (like myself) understand their past and present experiences at PWTIs. The overall purpose of this model would be twofold: (1) to offer REMF a theoretical framework to help process their experiences and define the personal, professional and institutional significance of their belonging to a particular racial/ethnic group while working in a PWTIs; and (2) to offer white faculty and seminary officers a theoretical tool

⁷ In 2008 I presented specific proposals to support this kind of research to three well-known theological organizations with no success. For a revealing study about the experience of racial/ethnic minority students in a theological institution see Chapter 7 in *Against all odds: The Struggle For Racial Integration in Religious Organizations* by sociologists B. Christerson, K. Edwards and M. Emerson (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2005).

to better understand the institutional and academic implications of having REMF at their institutions. I conducted this project between November 2007 and August of 2008.⁸

In what follows, I first explain the reasons for my engaging in this research and describe the basic methodology I followed to gather the quantitative and qualitative data for this study. Then, I present what I consider the most important general findings of my research and, in light of these findings, I conclude with a call for an approach to racial/ethnic diversity in theological education that need to be grounded on an understanding and practice of “inclusion with justice.”

Reasons for my research

I have already indicated that, in spite of multiple consultations and colloquies on issues related to racial/ethnic diversity in theological education during the past decade, very little has been done to systematize the experiences of those who have participated in them. Neither has there been a regular institutional effort to offer clear and sound guidance to REMF about how to “navigate” in PWTIs from the perspective and from the experiences of REMF themselves. These are “external reasons” that justified my research. But there are also “internal reasons” for my engaging with this project. First, after listening to the experiences shared by the participants in those consultations and colloquies, I became aware of the need to do something about the subtle (and often overt) racism that still permeates theological institutions and the overall theological enterprise. I decided, therefore, to unite voices and collect stories, across the three major racial/ethnic groups within theological education (African American, Asian, and Hispanic/Latino), in

⁸ I was able to conduct this project thanks to a generous grant from Wabash.

order to document and make known how racism continues to impact REMF at the personal and professional levels. Second, as I studied some theories of racial/ethnic identity development as part of a course I teach on “Multicultural Religious Education,” I realized the importance of having a theoretical framework that could help REMF make sense of their experiences and, at the same time, to work through them in the most constructive possible way for there is still a need to find better ways to survive, live and serve with dignity and creativity as theological educators in the midst of a rather uneven playing field at PWTIs. Finally, because of their need to succeed as theological educators within their fields (e.g. they need to concentrate on their teaching, writing and research), REMF have had to put aside the necessary and important task of thinking about and/or acting upon the issues of *inclusion without justice*, those which they continue to face at their theological institutions. So, I decided to make this topic the main focus of my teaching, writing and research.⁹ The unexpected high number of participants in this research and the expressed support of others who, for academic commitments, could not participate were clear indicators that REMF are both eager to deal with their experiences of discrimination but many feel they have to prioritize their professional career as theological educators.

⁹ I am presently studying other aspects that prevent REMF to voice their experiences of discrimination at PWTIs. Arguably, one of them has to do with the constitutional “protection” seminaries enjoy as religious institutions in regards to the possibility of law suits against them for discriminatory reasons. For those interested, search in the web the terms “ministerial exception to Title VII”.

Research methodology

I designed my research in five phases. The following is a brief description of the work I did in each of them, which includes the changes that occurred during their implementation when compared with the original research project I proposed.

Preparation phase: November 2007 – January 2008. I gathered and organized data from all consultations and colloquies in which I have participated. I constructed a list of possible participants in the research, using the lists of participants in all ATS consultations for all three major racial/ethnic groups, and using the lists of participants in the colloquies on racial/ethnic diversity organized by Wabash. I sent a general email to 56 Hispanic/Latino/a faculty, 52 Asian American and Asian faculty, and 43 African American and Black faculty. In total, they represented 28% of all REMF working in ATS schools at that time.

Survey construction phase: February – March 2008. Based on my study of identity development theories (e.g. Cross, 1991; Tatum, 1997; Wijeyesinghe and Jackson III, 2001) and in light of the data I collected in the previous phase, I created an adaptation of Dr. William Cross's racial identity scale to be applied to the specific situation of REMF teaching at PWTIs.¹⁰ I sent a sample to Dr. Cross (at City University of New York) and to one of his collaborators (Dr. Frank Worrell, at University of California). After receiving input from both of them, I reviewed and produced the survey that was sent to each one of the participants during the last week of March

¹⁰ I contacted Dr. William Cross, creator of the *CROSS Racial Identity Scale (CRIS)* who send me copy of the scale and its *CRIS Technical Manual-2nd Edition, 2004*. With his permission I adapted it for my research. I used Dr. Cross's racial identity Nigrescence theory as the fundamental theoretical framework for my research. For the most recent explanation of his theory, and its applicability beyond adult Black identity development see chapter 10 in Wijeyesinghe and Jackson III, 2001.

(see Appendix 1 for a short description and a few samples of the items in the survey). More than fifty REMF volunteered to participate (three times more than the maximum expected in the original proposal). A total of 44 completed and returned the survey: 20 Hispanic/Latino/a faculty; 14 Asian American and Asian faculty, and 9 African American and Black faculty; 1 white European faculty. This represents 7.85% of all REMF presently teaching at ATS schools (see Appendix 2 for a summary of the general characteristics of the participants in the survey).

Data gathering phase: April –July 2008. During this phase, through individual emails, I contacted each participant to ensure confidentiality. I explained the nature and purpose of the project, responded to their questions, sent the survey and encouraged them to complete and return the survey. By the end of July I had 44 completed surveys that provided the data to be analyzed and evaluated in the next phase.

Data analysis phase: August – October 2008. My work during these months focused on printing each survey, organizing the data and entering the data from sections I and section II into spreadsheets. I transcribed into a document (forty pages long) all the answers given by each participant to the questions in Section III of the survey. All this work permitted the analysis of the data as a whole. From this analysis emerged the three main findings of this research which I will present in the next section.

Model construction phase: November 2008-April 2009. The model I created (CRIS-REMF) draws from Dr. Cross's model (CRIS) but differs in significant ways. In addition to adapting the items of his survey to the particular situation of REMF, I expanded the number of items in the survey, added one more stage and increased the number of subscales in my model. I also gave

different names to the stages and some of the subscales proposed by Dr. Cross (see Table 1 below for a comparison). Each stage represents a certain kind of attitude that can change as a new self-understanding emerges on the part of the REMF and/or as institutional circumstances vary in a PWTI. Rather than an invariant progressive movement, the different stages reflect a restructuring in the cognitive and affective approach to self and the institutional context by the REMF. Within each stage, each subscale represents an attitude and/or belief of REMF regarding their experiences and perceptions of the particular context at a PWTI. The goal of the model is not to offer a global score but to offer scores only for the attitudes that the subscales refer to within each of the stages. These scores result from calculating the average of the values given to the questions related to each particular subscale. These questions are located in a non-consecutive fashion throughout the survey. Thus, in Table 1, the numbers in parenthesis next to each of the subscales indicate the number the different questions have within the survey used in the study.

CRIS (Dr. Cross's Racial Identity Scale)	CRIS-REMF (Dr. Cascante's Racial Identity Scale for REMF)
Pre-Encounter Assimilation Miseducation Self-Hatred Immersion-Emersion Anti-White Internalization Afro-centricity Multiculturalist Inclusive	Pre-Incorporation/Incorporation Religiosity (11, 27) Race/ethnicity at Hiring (41, 44) Pre-encounter/Encounter Assimilation (2, 9, 34, 42, 51) Miseducation (3, 12, 18, 28, 36) Self-debasement (4, 10, 17, 25, 39) Discrimination (54, 56, 57, 58, 61) Immersion/Emersion I. Rejecting "whiteness" (6, 14, 23, 30, 38) I. Focus on "ethnicity" (8, 19, 29, 32, 35) E. Self-affirmation (7, 13, 22, 31, 37) Integration Multicultural Inclusivity (5, 16, 24, 33, 40)

Table 1. Comparison between CRIS and CRIS-REMF models

Stage I, *Pre-incorporation/incorporation*, aims at describing the level of awareness of REMF about the role their race/ethnicity played at the time of being hired by a PWTIs. Two subscales are considered under this stage: a. religiosity (the theological grounding of their self-understanding as a racial/ethnic minority and as a theological educator) and b. race/ethnicity at hiring (awareness of its impact in the hiring process). Stage II, *Pre-encounter/Encounter*, seeks to describe the ways REMF try to "fit in" in their new place of work as they face different forms and levels of discrimination. I list four subscales under this stage, the first three taken directly from Dr. Cross's model: a. assimilation, b. miseducation, c. self-debasement (I change the name of this category), d. discrimination. It is in this stage where I make the most significant changes of Dr. Cross's model. I put greater emphasis on describing the different ways in which REMF

“encounters” racism as they try to function and develop as theological educators in a PWTI. Also, I am moving the first three categories from Stage I in the Cross’s model to this Stage II in my model. Stage III, *Immersion/Emersion*, describe the different attitudes REMF assume when facing discrimination and the personal struggles they have to overcome in order to, hopefully, affirm their value and place as theological educators in PWTIs. I am suggesting three subscales, the first two related to an immersion phase within this stage and the third related to an emersion phase: a. rejecting “whiteness”, b. focus on “ethnicity”, c. self-affirmation. Finally, Stage IV, *Integration*, describes ways REMF seek to transcend the particularity of their own racial/ethnic group in their work as theological educators. I propose only one subscale for this stage which I call multicultural inclusivity.

Certainly, there is more that needs to be said about the theoretical framework for each stage and the meaning of each of the respective subscales I am proposing. But this reflection goes beyond the main purpose of this article, which is to show how the findings of my research support the call for a different approach to foster racial/ethnic diversity in theological education.

Research General Findings

In this section I want to present what I consider the most important general findings of my research so far and to describe three general conclusions that I derived from them. I contend that, together, these general findings and conclusions express a collective voice from REMF that clearly cry out for a different approach to racial/ethnic diversity in theological education.

About the CRIS-REMF Model

In terms of the CRIS-REMF model I created several observations can be made. First, more than half of the participants explicitly indicated that they found valuable the survey and expressed open support to the overall purposes of the project. Twenty percent of the participants made explicit their desire to collaborate with a chapter if a book could be planned as a result of this project. This also demonstrates how important it was for a self-selected group of REMF to find a venue to express and process their experiences as well as to find an academic and confidential space to make them known. Second, the results of the data from the survey shows a strong similarity with the results found in recent studies and research about the situation of faculty of color in general Higher Education. This gives an ‘external validation’ both to the concern this study addresses in the particular case of theological education and to the need to rethink what is being done so far with regards to hiring, retention, mentoring and development of REMF in PWTIs. Third, the fact that the survey I used was a closed adaptation of a scientifically validated and now widely used racial identity theory across racial/ethnic groups, contributed enormously to the theoretical value and reliability of the model and tool I am proposing. All these, together, are good indicators of the usefulness of both the theoretical model and the survey as its practical interpretative tool.

About the Scores of the CRIS-REMF Model and their Interpretation

In Table 2 below, I summarize the overall average scores for the participants in the study, based on their answers to the questions in Section II of the survey. The average scores are

grouped separately for males, females, and general (both males and females) with basic statistical values general to help with their interpretation.

SCALES AND SUBSCALES	AVERAGE Male	AVERAGE Female	AVERAGE General	MODE General	MEDIAN General	STANDEV General
Pre-Incorporation/ Incorporation						
1. Religiosity	6.04	5.94	6.00	7.00	6.50	1.46
2. Race/ethn. at Hiring	3.00	3.22	3.09	1.50	2.50	1.77
Pre-encounter / Encounter						
3. Assimilation	3.57	3.31	3.47	3.20	3.50	1.84
4. Miseducation	2.54	2.06	2.23	2.00	2.00	1.13
5. Self-debasement	3.45	3.56	3.49	3.00	3.60	2.00
6. Discrimination	4.63	4.35	4.52	5.80	5.00	1.99
Immersion/Emersion						
7. Rejection of whiteness (I)	4.07	4.31	4.17	4.00	4.20	1.61
8. Focus on "ethnicity" (I)	5.22	5.44	5.30	5.30	5.50	1.49
9. Self-affirmation (E)	5.20	5.56	5.34	5.80	5.80	1.59
Integration						
10. Multicultural Inclusivity	6.04	6.30	6.14	6.80	6.20	0.82

Table 2. CRIS-REMF Overall Average Scores for participants in the study

As mentioned above, each score in the table represents the average score of the several items related to each subscale. This particular table makes up the profile of the racial/ethnic identity development of the participants in the research as a whole, allowing for the interpretation of the different scores for each of the subscales within the different stages. Similar tables exist for each participant, which provide profiles that would vary according to the nature of the experiences REMF have within their particular PWTI.

In order to interpret the scores for each of the subscales, it is important to understand that answers to questions in Section II of the survey were given using numbers that reflect the level

of acceptance or rejection of a particular statement by the respondents. As indicated in the numeric scale below, the higher the score the stronger the acceptance and, similarly, the lower the score the stronger the rejection of a statement.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly disagree	disagree	somewhat disagree	neither agree or disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree

Table 3. Numeric Scale used in Section II of the Survey

As an example of the use of this model for understanding the experiences of REMF in PWTIs, and based on the theoretical grounding for the stages and their subscales, I present the following initial interpretation of the average scores shown in Table 2. This interpretation characterizes the overall profile of the participants in this study who, *on average*, reflect the following attitudes or beliefs:

1. A strong value of the theological and biblical basis for their self-understanding as theological educators belonging to a racial/ethnic minority.
2. Some disagreement with the statement that their race/ethnicity was not a factor in either their first or present appointment.
3. Acceptance of their self-perception as more related to being an academic theological educator than being part of a particular racial/ethnic minority group.
4. Disagreement with the belief that racial/ethnic minority faculty place too much importance on issues of cultural diversity and not enough on good teaching, scholarly research and publications.
5. Some disagreement or neutrality towards the idea that at times they feel inadequate and like an impostor at their theological institutions.
6. Partial agreement with the fact that during their years of working at a PWTI they have experienced significant events or situations that made them feel or think they were discriminated against because of being a racial/ethnic minority.

7. Ambivalence or neutrality towards the statement they strongly resist White-dominated theological education and all it represents.
8. Some agreement with the statement that when walking into a room they always take note of the racial/ethnic makeup of the people around.
9. Some agreement with the statement that they see, teach and think about their theological disciplines through their own racial/ethnic perspective.
10. A consistent belief about the importance of having their own racial/ethnic identity connected with a multicultural perspective.

As I worked in the creation of this model and began to interpret the results of the survey, I became aware that the model I am proposing is not so much about the ‘development of the racial/identity of minority faculty’ but rather a model about the ‘development of the professional identity of REMF working in PWTIs.’ In other words, it is an interpretative tool not about how they develop their identity as part of a particular racial/ethnic group, but about how their self-concept as theological educators belonging to particular racial/ethnic minority develops in the context of a PWTI.

Three General Conclusions from the Findings

The following conclusions are drawn from the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the surveys and the consideration of similar studies in Higher Education. Because of the statistical significance of this research (e.g. the size of the sample, the demographic diversity of the participants and the varied nature of the institutions they represent), I claim that these conclusions fairly reflect a reality common to most of the REMF serving at PWTIs in North America.

Conclusion 1. *Across denominational, geographical, and institutional categories, the data unequivocally shows that discrimination based on race and ethnicity, increased when gender and age are factored in, is very much part of the past and present experience for the majority of racial/ethnic minority faculty members teaching at predominantly white theological institutions in North America.*

According to the data collected from the surveys, expressions of this discrimination include but are not limited to the following situations:

- Lack of mentoring
- Being perceived as a token
- Lack of recognition of their teaching and research
- Discrediting of research and teaching that address racial/ethnic issues
- Unequal payment
- Expected to be knowledgeable and/or in charge of minority issues
- Questioning of academic credentials both by faculty colleagues and students
- Isolation
- Having few or no racial/ethnic minorities on campus to relate to
- Multicultural insensitivity from people outside and inside the institution
- Being expected to work harder in order to prove oneself
- Denial of tenure or promotion due to racial/ethnic bias
- Feeling disrespected by high rank officials at the institution

The number, combination and gravity of these situations vary from individual to individual. Some of them play a greater role in certain racial/ethnic groups and in groups with certain personal characteristics (e.g. gender, age, or seniority). Whatever the case, the data from the surveys show that racial/ethnic discrimination has been and still is part of the experience of

approximately 90% of REMF who participated in this study. The data also substantiates each of the forms of discrimination listed above.¹¹

Conclusion 2. In spite of the extra emotional and professional effort they have to invest in order to cope with institutional and academic racial/ethnic discrimination, REMF stay in PWTIs and/or succeed as theological educators for the same reasons all faculty do (no matter their race/ethnicity): their love for teaching and/or the intellectual freedom they have to research topics of their interest, including topics related to racial/ethnic diversity.

The majority of REMF continue to find enough joy and motivation in their teaching and research to continue their work as theological educators in PWTIs. What makes REMF feel and think that their experience “hasn’t been really bad” are the positive experiences they have with their teaching, the professional satisfaction they find in their research and the opportunity they have to advance and promote multicultural issues. This sense of satisfaction and achievement is enhanced when REMF receive from students affirmative feedback about their courses and experience respect and support from other colleagues within their fields of study. This respect and recognition are essential for minimizing and even eliminating the negative effects of the varied forms of discrimination REMF usually experience in PWTIs.

¹¹ In Appendix 3 I offer an example of the kind of analysis I did with a cluster of the items from Section II of the survey in order to draw this conclusion.

Conclusion 3. *The types of discrimination and disadvantages that exist for racial/ethnic minority faculty in predominant white theological institutions are basically the same that exist for the same racial/ethnic minority faculty in most institutions of Higher Education in North America.*

In order to probe the validity of the two previous conclusions of my research, I compared them with similar studies done in colleges and universities in the United States. The following three quotations from such studies seem to support conclusions 1 and 2 above:

Challenges to the successful recruitment, retention, and development of faculty of color include significant barriers within academia itself that discourage people of color from becoming productive and satisfied members of the professoriate. Our findings and analysis show that the predominant barrier is racial and ethnic bias resulting in unwelcoming and unsupportive work environments for faculty of color (Viernes Turner and Myers 2000, x.).

For faculty of color, the general academic angst is aggravated by the dynamics of race and gender. The sense of being expected to work harder and achieve more weighs heavily, often leading to despair and diminished self-confidence; having colleagues and students pay more attention to color than to credentials is wearing; being held forth as an example of institutional benevolence engenders feelings of anger and resentment; rarely—if ever—receiving support or full recognition for research on minority issues not only devalues that research but undermines the will to achieve excellence in that research or in other academic pursuits. Feelings of isolation are reinforced by a scarcity of other minorities at an institution. And, finally, the issue of tenure—problematic for all faculty in higher education—is exacerbated for faculty of color by the suspicion that race or ethnicity may figure prominently (if subtly) in this very subjective decision (Ibid, 213).

[There are] important ways in which majority faculty are usually privileged and favored at majority colleges and universities—at the same time that minority faculty are usually disadvantaged and disfavored. . . . What must be seen as a *whole* is the elaborate and interlocked *system* of disadvantages/advantages that favor some and disfavor others. Institutional discrimination, as we have seen, “involves patterns of resource allocation, selection, advancement, and expectations” that perpetuate higher status and likely success for the favored group but have just the opposite effect for all other (Moody 2004, 38).

This third conclusion has an aggravating component: the expectation that theological institutions, because of their explicit Christian beliefs and mission, are institutions that promote, teach, and practice equality for all people, no matter their race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical ability, etcetera.¹² Any form of discrimination in an Christian context inevitably adds a theological and spiritual dimension to the personal and professional anxiety and pain experienced by REMF in PWTIs.

Conclusion: A Different Approach for a New Decade

Theological education began the first decade of the 21st century with a call and with concerted efforts by their leaders and organizations to pay attention to issues of racial/ethnic diversity. That call and those efforts produced hopeful results particularly in terms of increasing the number of students and faculty from racial/ethnic minority groups at theological schools. It is undeniable that more room has been made at the table of theological education for those still under-represented groups. But as my research shows, at least for the particular case of REMF, there is a reality that calls for a different, though not necessarily new, approach to foster diversity at that theological table, namely, one of social inclusion with concern for justice.

My hope is that this “lived data”, the experiences and stories of persons and human groups, has the potential to generate the transformation of realities of injustice into realities grounded in justice, compassion and solidarity. These realities need to be addressed by all who

¹² This expectation is supported by data from the survey that shows the significant role faith plays in the identity of REMF.

are involved in theological education, especially by those of us concerned for and interested in promoting racial/ethnic diversity as central to the vision and mission of theological institutions in North America.

In sharing the reasons, purposes, methodology, major findings, and conclusions of this research project, I wanted to make known the “untold story” of a representative number of REMF that requires an approach to diversity in theological education that should work for more than better demographics and greater multicultural and institutional competence. If the findings and conclusions presented here are taken seriously even by a few of those who have decision-making power in theological institutions (e.g. white faculty, deans and presidents, boards of trustees) there may be a change to move toward greater equality for racial/ethnic minority faculty in theological education in this new decade, as well as for students from racial/ethnic minority groups. For my ultimate goal is to provoke the kind of reflection and action that could lead to the elimination of practices of discrimination and exclusion that, as in society, still take place in the church and the theological institutions that continue to train her leaders. In the words of R.A. Olson (quoted by Viernes Turner and Myers [2000, 112]), “we can address prejudice only when we make ourselves open to the truth of other people’s experience and when we join hands to eliminate it.”

What is at stake is too serious to keep this reality concealed or unaddressed. For discrimination, of any kind at any level, questions at its roots the theological and pastoral integrity of theological institutions and of the communities of faith they serve. Therefore, whether as a concern for greater social inclusion or a prophetic concern for greater social justice

in the church and society, theological institutions have an imperative to improve and expand their efforts to fully embrace racial/ethnic diversity; and to do so with the awareness of the inherent connections of the theological enterprise in North America with the cultural and social constructions of race and the varied manifestations of their academic and institutional racism.

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Appendix 1

An abbreviated version of the Survey for REMF in PWTIs

Introduction and General Instructions

Goals and Nature of the Survey

This survey is a critical component of a project that seeks, in a systematic and critical way, to give voice to the present plight and past experiences of under-represented racial/ethnic minority faculty in theological education, whether at seminaries or at theology schools or religion departments in colleges and universities...

In this survey the statements in Section II and the few questions of Section III provide you with an opportunity to *recall, process and share your past and present experience as a theological educator in a mostly white theological institution and in a mostly white social context...*

The survey has three sections. Section I is made up of ten items that ask for general “demographic” information that should take about 5 minutes to answer. Section II is a list of 62 statements that ask you to indicate in a scale of 1-7 the degree they reflect your own thoughts and feelings.* This section can be completed in about 30 minutes. Lastly, Section III is a short list of questions meant to guide a more “autobiographical” look at and description of the events and experiences you have had as a URMF in theological education. Because the reflective and narrative nature of this section, time to complete it will vary according to your own personal style, but it can be done in less than 1 hour.

General Instructions

It will be ideal if you could dedicate a block of time to complete the survey all at once (it should not take more than 2 hours). If this is not possible, you can designate a time to complete Section I and Section II together, and later complete Section III at your earliest convenience. You can either save this file into your documents and work from there, or you can print a hard copy of the survey. You can send the survey through email, as an attachment (send to fcascante@union-psce.edu) or you can mail the hard copy to: Dr. Fernando A. Cascante-Gómez, 3401 Brook Road, Richmond-VA 23227.

As you complete the survey, please be mindful of the following:
The survey is not a test, and there are no such thing as “right answers.”
Respond to the questions as written.
Your answers should reflect your honest thoughts and feelings.
If no answer is identical with your thoughts or feelings, choose the answer that comes closest.
Answer all questions.

Dr. Fernando A. Cascante-Gómez
March 2008.

* For this section I have adapted Section II of the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS), developed by Dr. William E. Cross Jr. and others and based on Dr. Cross’s Theory of Black identity development. This theory has been broadly researched and tested across multiple racial/ethnic lines. To the original 40 items, 22 items were added for the specific purpose of this survey.

THANKS FOR MAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY AND TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT!

Section I

Instructions: Mark with an “x” the information that reflects or best applies to your situation. When necessary, fill in the blanks with the appropriate information.

1. Gender:
a. Male ___ b. Female ___

2. Racial/ethnic background (choose only one):
a. African ___ b. African-American ___
c. Asian ___ d. Asian-American ___
e. Hispanic ___ f. Black Hispanic ___
f. Mixed (please indicate): _____
g. Other (please indicate): _____

3. Place of birth:
a. born in the U.S.A. ___ b. foreign-born ___

4. Legal status:
a. United States citizen ___ b. permanent resident ___ c. legal alien ___

5. Age:
a. 25-35 ___ b. 35-45 ___ c. 45-55 ___ d. over 55-65 ___ e. over 65 ___

6. Title of present position
a. Assistant Professor of _____
b. Associate Professor of _____
c. Professor of _____
d. Other _____

7. Place of work:
a. free standing seminary ___ c. school of theology at a university ___
b. denominational seminary ___ d. religion department at a university ___
e. other: _____

8. Number of years at present institution:
a. 0-5 ___ b. 5-10 ___ c. 10-15 ___ d. 15-20 ___ e. more than 20 ___

9. Number of institutions (including the present one) where you have served as a theological educator:
a. 1 ___ b. 2 ___ c. 3 ___ d. 4 ___ e. other ___

10. What religious affiliation do you hold? _____

Section II

Instructions: Read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects your own thoughts and feelings, using the 7-point scale below. There are no right or wrong answers. Base your responses on your opinion at the present time. To ensure that your answers can be used, please respond to the statements as written, and place your numerical response on the line provided to left of each question. The term “theological institution” is used in a generic form to include seminaries, schools of theology or religion departments at colleges and universities.

1	2	3	4	5	
6	7				
Strongly strongly Disagree	disagree	somewhat disagree	neither agree or disagree	somewhat agree	agree

- ___ 1. The experience of being a racial/ethnic minority faculty in a mostly White theological institution and context has been good for me.
- ___ 2. I think of myself primarily as a theological educator, and seldom as member of a racial/ethnic group.
- ___ 3. Too many racial/ethnic minority faculty complain too much about their situation and fail to see the opportunities they have at their theological institutions.
- ___ 4. I go through periods when I feel depressed because of my position and experiences as a racial/ethnic minority at my institution.
- ___ 5. As a racial/ethnic minority multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanic, Asian-Americans, African-Americans, Native Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.)
- ___ 6. I have strong feelings of resentment and frustration against White faculty at my theological institution.
- ___ 7. I see, teach, and think about my theological discipline through my own racial/ethnic perspective.
- ___ 8. When I walk into a room, I always take note of the racial make-up of the people around me.
- ___ 9. I see myself not so much as a racial/ethnic minority faculty, but as an academic theological educator.
- ___ 10. I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being racial/ethnic minority faculty working in a mostly White theological institution and context.
-
- ___ 53. Most of my students value what I have to offer as racial/ethnic minority faculty.
- ___ 54. During my years working in theological institutions, I have experienced significant events or situations that made me feel/think I was discriminated against because of being a racial/ethnic minority.
- ___ 55. There have been times during my years of work in theological institutions when I felt depressed and hurt for what I perceived to be racist attitudes from faculty colleagues.
- ___ 56. There have been occasions when I experienced unfair or unequal treatment from high-ranking officials at my institution (e.g. dean, president).
- ___ 57. In times of evaluation conducive to or for academic promotions (e.g., tenure), I felt I have been scrutinized far more than White majority faculty.
- ___ 58. At times, I have felt undervalued academically by White colleagues.
- ___ 59. There have been times when I felt students did not value my academic credentials.

- ___ 60. During my years at work in theological institutions, I have experienced discriminatory practices by some members of the staff.
- ___ 61. I have experienced unfair evaluations from students, which I have perceived as based on racial/ethnic biases and stereotypes.
- ___ 62. My academic pursuits and achievements are usually well recognized and celebrated at my current institution.

Section III

Instructions. This final section is intentionally “autobiographical” in its design. The few questions provided below are meant to guide meaningful “sketches” of your experience as a racial/ethnic minority faculty in theological education. As indicated in the presentation of the survey, you can expect complete confidentiality about any information you are willing to disclose as well as a commitment to safeguard your identity and that of your institution in the use of this information. You may choose to answer the questions one by one, or use a narrative style that integrates answers to all of the questions. There are no limits to neither the content nor length of your answers.

1. When looking back at your first and present appointment (if applicable) as a theological educator, do you think your race/ethnicity was a factor in your being hired at your theological institution? Please, explain your answer both in terms of your initial feelings/thoughts “then” and your feelings/thoughts “now.”
2. Can you remember an event or series of events at your first or present theological institution that made you realize you were treated or perceived differently because of your race/ethnicity? In which ways that event or events related to your role as a teacher/scholar? If any, what kind of impact did those events have in your personal life? List as many events as you consider appropriate and share as many details as you feel comfortable.
3. If you ever found the need to do so, what kind of attitudes, skills or actions have you implemented or developed in order to affirm your place as racial/ethnic minority faculty within your institution?
4.
 - a. Do you have any contact with other racial/ethnic minorities within your institution or in other theological institutions? What is the nature of that contact?
 - b. Are there among white faculty members at your institution a few you would consider “allies”? If so, what makes them your “allies”?
 - c. Do you find yourself enjoying your teaching/research now more than, let us say, two or three years ago? Why?
 - d. Are you presently involved in any effort to promote racial/ethnic diversity at your institution? If yes, what is it about? If not, Why not?
 - e. Does your present teaching and/or research reflect in a significant way your perspective as a racial/ethnic minority theological educator? Please explain

Appendix 2

General Characteristics of Participants in the Survey

Gender and Racial/Ethnic Background

Hispanic/Latina(o)		Asian /Asian Am.		African/ Afr.Am.		Other	Sub-TOTAL		TOTAL
Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male	
5	15	7	7	4	5	1	17 (39%)	27 (61%)	44(100%)

Age Range

	Hisp./Lat	As/As.Am	Afr/Af.Am	Other	TOTAL
25-35		1			1 (2%)
35-45	3	5	4	1	13 (30%)
45-55	9	5	5		20 (46%)
55-65	7	2			9 (20%)
over 65	1				1 (2%)

Academic Rank

	Hispanic/Latina (o)		Asian/Asian Am.		African/ Afr.Am.		Other	Sub-TOTAL		TOTAL %	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male		
Assistant	1	2	2	1				3	3	6	14%
Associate	1	6	2	3	2	1		5	10	15	36%
Professor	1	7	2	3	2	3	1	5	13	18	43%
Other **	2		1			1		2	1	3	7.00%

Institutional Context

Hisp/Lat	As/AsAm	Af/Af.Am	Other	Total (%)
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Denominational Seminary	9	7	5		21 (48%)
Free Standing Seminary	2	3	3	1	8 (18%)
Divinity School	5	4	1		9 (20%)
Religion Department	3				4 (9%)
Other	1				2 (5%)

Number and Denominational Nature of Institutions Represented

		%
Catholic Seminaries	1	3%
Schools of Theology	8	21%
Baptist Seminaries	3	8%
Southern Baptist Seminaries	1	3%
Presbyterian Seminaries	4	10%
Evangelical Seminaries	5	13%
Religious Departments	4	10%
UMC Seminaries	4	10%
Episcopal	1	3%
Reformed	1	3%
Cumberland Presbyterian	1	3%
Christian Church	1	3%
Disciples of Christ	1	3%
Lutheran	1	3%
Free-Standing Seminaries	2	5%
TOTAL	38	

Institutions From Canada	3	8%
Institutions From the USA	35	92%

Theological Disciplines of Participants

	Hispanic Latino/a	Asian/Asian American	African/African American	Other	Total (%)
Theology	3	1	1		5 (11%)
Practical Theology	4	4	1	1	10 (23%)

History	1	2	1	4 (10%)
Bible	5	2	3	10 (23%)
Mixed (Fac. & Adm.)	3	3	1	7 (16%)
Religious Studies	1			1 (2%)
World Christianity	2	3	1	6 (13%)
Social Ethics	1		2	3 (7%)
Relig. Education	3	2		5 (11%)

Religious Affiliation of Participants

	Hispanic	Asian	African-A	Other	Total (%)
CATHOLIC	6				6 (14%)
PRESBYTERIAN	4	6	2		12 (27%)
BAPTIST	2	2	1		4 (9%)
SOUTH. BAPTIST	5				6 (14%)
UMC	1	3	2		6 (14%)
DISCIPLES			2		2 (5%)
EVANGELICAL		2			2 (5%)
CHRIST. MISS. ALLIANCE		1			1 (2%)
PENTECOSTAL			1		1 (2%)
CHURCH OF GOD			1		1 (2%)
UCC				1	1 (2%)
CRC	1				1 (2%)
CHRISTIAN	1				1 (2%)

Appendix 3

Example of item analysis for Section II of the Survey

In Section II of the survey the first item asked participants to respond to their perception of their overall experience as a REMF in a PWI, using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
strongly disagree agree	disagree	somewhat disagree	neither agree or disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree

The item reads as follows:

- ___ 1. The experience of being a racial/ethnic minority faculty in a mostly white theological institution and context has been good for me

The table below summarizes the score averages for three different categories (all males, all females, and the general average for the whole group) and for each of the three major racial/ethnic groups at ATS schools. The overall average indicates that, as a group, REMF neither agree or disagree with the statement.

	Average All Male	Average All Female	Overall Average
All Groups	4.24	3.94	4.12
Hispanic/Latino(a)	3.79	5.00*	4.06
Asian Am/Asian	4.33	2.86	3.54
African Am/African	5.40	4.75	5.11

From the table, one can conclude that, as a group, Asian and Asian American faculty seem to have a less favorable experience than the other two groups, but this is because female Asian faculty experience lower levels of satisfaction as they experience higher levels of discrimination than male Asian faculty (something that is supported by other data in the survey). The asterisk (*) in the Hispanic Female score highlights the fact that this score is not as reliable as the others because the low numbers and limited diversity of the participants in this group: only four Hispanic women, all of them tenured, two from similar theological institutions which had more positive attitudes towards issues of diversity. This caveat will be true for all other items of the survey for this particular group. Still, an 5.00 average indicates that they “somewhat agree” with the statement, which doesn’t imply clear agreement with the statement. One more observation from the data in the table: African Americans indicate a higher degree of satisfaction. Although this observation invites further analysis, it may be a sign of the longer time, the greater recognition and the greater gains they have experienced in theological education, after decades of struggle. Again, these observations have the purpose of exemplifying the kind of analysis that this study involves.