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### **How to post-colonialize discussions on Protestantization?**

The research project, “Good Protestant, Bad Religion? Formatting Religion in Modern Society” (GOBA), is about the Protestant tradition and its impact on the development of society and religion in a contemporary context. Even if the Protestant is evidently part of the modernity, democracy and citizenship, it might also be part of trajectories of exclusion and repression, both in the past and today.

Therefore we have called this subproject *Borders and Religions crossing borders. Perspectives on Space, Formation and Citizenship*. The history of Protestantism is about borders, from the *eius regio, cuius religio* in the times of Reformation to the development of many of the nation states in Europe, in the colonies and in North America. Those living inside the borders were the citizens, those outside non-citizens. So border and migration studies related to Protestantism are definitely core issues where we can fruitfully research and learn more about spaces, formation and citizens.

On the one hand Protestantization is about modernity and the development of democracy and the nation-state: “Catholic observers have coined the term Protestantization to refer, usually pejoratively, to recent changes in their church. Stripped of its pejorative undertone, it is rather an apt term. Sometimes it describes doctrinal changes...But the term is most apt in describing social changes within the church – to wit, the role of an increasingly assertive laity, the transformation of the church into a *de facto* denomination, and one doctrinal change that is definitely relevant here – the theological undergirding of the norm of religious liberty, (Peter Berger, in Banchoff 2007)

On the other hand, however, the Protestant is not only citizenship and democracy, it is definitely also colonization. It is important to have this first workshop in the project in at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa where the Protestant colonizers, being Dutch reformed, Anglican, Methodist or Lutheran formatted one of the least generous faces of Protestantism in modern history, the state where you became a non-citizen inside the border also, due to race and ethnicity.

Now, one thing is the struggle to remain inside the border and remain or become a citizen. Another thing is the other side; the side Foucault called the heterotopic. In the times of Reformation and many centuries and decades after those outside were first of all people just there or people to be colonized and disciplined. Edward Said called that Orientalism. But today these kinds of interpretations are losing hegemony. Today, from a Protestant perspective, it is not any more obvious the Protestant is only on the inside. The Protestant paradox is that it might as well live on the outside and on the border, and may be even more there, some would say.

Migration is about leaving, but it is definitely also about getting in, aiming at being part of the inside. How is religion formatted when the outsiders insist of being insiders? Which are the spaces accepted when the outsiders pass the borders? And there is obviously also a gender impact in this formation and new spatial construction. The obvious reformation, which happens when the heterotopic becomes part of the inside is a very promising field for the study of Protestantization and borders.

This means that post-colonial studies are significantly relevant in this project. If post-colonial theory has Edward Said's *Orientalism* as one of its classic texts, one could also say that Orientalism and Protestantization from one perspective are two of a kind. The outsiders are strange.

Being so, the point in this paper will be that Dipesh Chakrabarty's reflection on Orientalism and the post-colonial is probably also valid for Protestantism and Protestantization. Chakrabarty (2000) tells us that he identifies with the Enlightenment quest for subjectivity and freedom, phenomena, which we might call the Protestant values inside the border. But the situation is, according to Chakrabarty, that the environment, that created all freedom and all democracy, also became the agent of oppression, exclusion and colonization. Still, it is just at this point that the post-colonial task starts. Since the colonial ended up as the oppressor and since there is no way than protecting democracy and subjectivity, the only solution is to start searching for these values among the colonized themselves. There must be practices, life-worlds and experiences, which also favor the important values, even if they take place outside or at the border.

My point is that the post-colonial turn should finally also be valid for Protestant studies . Do we find them in spaces and practices on the other side? Do we have to do a radical critique of where the Protestant is and a following as radical critique of where the Protestant too many times has been? Chakrabarty's position is then to stick to the democracy, but at the same time to oppose the colonial regimes because they did not enhance the democracy they had invented.

What Chakrabarty is not reflecting on at all, is the role of religion in this context. Here we should learn more from Bryan Turner. He locates the connection between citizenship and Protestantism to be a very close relationship, both historically and current:

“On the basis of this structural principle (the separation of religion and politics), I attempt to trace the origins of western citizenship in the theological division between faith and politics, in Protestant congregationalism, in religious notions of equality (the priesthood of all believers), and in religious objections to arbitrary power, (Weber, [1921] 1958)”, (Turner 1993)

Following Turner, therefore, we need also to reflect the traditions of friendship and charity when we search for sources of citizenship, and such sources can be found both inside, but definitely also outside the borders.

This workshop is not about what is the true Protestant. But in the Protestant dogmatic, especially the Lutheran one, the Protestant is always a relation, to God and to the neighbor. There is no such thing as a Protestant essentialism. Your senses take notice of this connectedness long before you are cognitively aware of it. And your body is in this way part of the basic connectedness, etc., etc. Protestantism develops from the human connectedness we are already embedded in.

This is why Chakrabarty's vision to reconstruct a subjectivity on the other side of the colonial, might as well be a very good option for the study of Religion on, and off, the borders. The

thesis that we can find something less orientalist there in the embodied life worlds and in the practices might be a good research vision.

Refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are not only moving towards Europe from the South and the Middle East. They also enter the other South. Due to civil wars, political and social complexities etc. there are today a considerable number of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant in South Africa. A lot of them come from countries like Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Malawi, and Zimbabwe. In South Africa it is well known that there has been explicit xenophobic violence in many cities, hitting the foreigners. So the inside of the border can be cruel, no matter where it is and no matter who lives at the inside.

In the relatively small city of Pietermaritzburg there also seem to be a considerable number of refugees, some are asylum seekers, some are not, and therefore undocumented. Groups of these people are parts of different Pentecostal ministries. Some of these aim at Swahili speaking Congolese and people from nearby countries.

In one of these services you can experience the combination of the Chakrabarty and the Protestant approach. Here is a group of Congolese refugee, most women in their finest Sunday dresses, some men and lots of young kids, around their mother or everywhere in the rooms. The Pentecostal pastor, himself a refugee from the same countries, resides on the scene, praying, singing, preaching, dominant, but not in the extreme in any way.

This service cannot but be interpreted as embodied in all ways. The rooms smell of dirt, the sights of the colors, the seriousness and kind of melancholia in the eyes of all, may be most striking with the mothers, but first of all the singing. As in all Pentecostal service there is strong singing. But this singing is different; it is ethnic, Congolese and Pentecostal at the same time. In the middle of the service a group of the participants gather in the front, as if they were a choir, suddenly there are drums and other instruments and the pastor's wife is the solo-singer. The pastor himself participates in the choir in his middle blue dress on the scene and about ten others join in with their voices and drums. It is like a successful jam-session in a club, but it is not. We are still in the very poor refugee service for people from Congo, some of them with recent experiences of violence visible in their bodies.

In our context: It is all Protestant, it is on the other side of the border and it is the embodied, almost desperate, but a spiritually moved desperation to reconstruct some definitely embodied identity, some belonging and some hospitality. The Pentecostal Protestant becomes a space of resistance and hope: on the other side. Borders and religions crossing borders are relevant for space, for formation and for citizenship re-construction. And to post-colonialize Protestantization might be a good option for new research.

