CHAPTER 3

The Lutheran Pastorate in Theory and Practice

In the midst of explicating the relationship between the individual and the pastor in the first volume of History of Sexuality, Foucault mentions in a footnote that “[t]he reformed pastoral also laid down rules, albeit in a more discreet way, for putting sex into discourse” (1998, 21n4). Not only do Foucault’s analyses and conceptualisations appear Roman Catholic due to his historical focus on the Middle Ages in the lectures on Security, Territory, Population, but his emphasis on confession and masturbation—not to mention the kind of relationship fleshed out between the individual and the pastor in The Will to Knowledge (1998)—are all within a Roman Catholic frame of reference.¹

This distinction is important because it reveals the difference in subjectification between the practices of the Roman Catholic confessional and the Protestant catechism, which is where I would situate the Protestant subjectification process. If the Roman Catholic pastorate produced desiring subjects, then what kind of subjects did the Protestant pastorate produce? And what kind of shepherds? In the following sections, I trace the construction of the Lutheran social order and its relation to the order of the cosmos. I then trace the construction of the Lutheran subject, beginning with the individual in relation to the shepherd and then spreading out into the family as the locus for subjection. This will enable me to show the pervasiveness of colonisation and its fundamental restructuring of society into a new hierarchical system with new parameters and rules. This is firmly connected to—indeed enabled by—Lutheran pastoral power and its social ideal. As I argued in the first chapter, Hveyssel’s display of mastery revealed that he followed an unwritten hierarchical order in which he was at the top and the brothers Berthelsen, whose father was Danish, immediately below him. The analysis showed that this hierarchical order was racialised, because the brothers’ Danish heritage was the reason for Hveyssel’s favouritism towards them. Next in the hierarchical order stood the national catechists, and, last, the other Greenlanders, men as well as women. Hveyssel’s attitude towards the catechists under his tutelage was paternalistic and superior, an attitude which was endemic to the working relations between Danes and Greenlanders in the mission. The missionary was “in charge,” and thus the one who could send recommendations back to the

¹ The distinctive Roman Catholic dimension is also noted in the Introduction to the anthology on Foucault and theology (Bernauer and Carrette 2004, 5–9, esp. 6).
Missionary Department. As illustrated in the case of Joseph, however, the missionary could also withdraw his favour. This sense of hierarchy is built into the Lutheran social structure, a structure I will unpack in the present chapter.

In order to move beyond the religious overtones of shepherd/pastor, and to emphasise my Lutheran focus, I designate the shepherd as the master. This enables me to draw in the system of domination based on gender, class and race, and intermasculine issues raised in chapter one, and which I see at work in the social hierarchies of the catechism. Furthermore, the move from shepherd/pastor to master will stress the terrestrial realm of pastoral power and the extensions of its outreach.

The Protestant Pastorate in Practice

What divided the interpretations of Söderberg, Gad, and Lidegaard in the first chapter was the extent to which this movement was seen to have political significance; that is, to what extent did the movement constitute some sort of collective opposition to Hveyssel and the colonial apparatus he represented? Was the movement deliberately positioning itself against Hveyssel? While there is clearly room for such a political reading within Söderberg and Lidegaard's interpretations, Gad avoids such an approach and finds the reasons for the popularity of the movement in the hysterical nature of Mary Magdalene and the emotional nature of the Greenlanders. The effect of Gad's interpretation is a feminisation of the Greenlanders, understanding the feminine within a Western context as inherently hysterical and emotional. This coupling of the feminine and hysteria is but one part of a larger epistemological structure, amply identified and testified to by a range of (feminist) scholars, namely, a masculine signifying universe which codes emotion, matter, and nature as feminine, and rationality and reason as masculine (MacCormack and Strathern 1980; Plumwood 1993; von Braun 2009 [1985]; Lloyd 1993; Rosaldo, Lamphere, and Bamberger 1974). Situating Gad within this frame, we see how he first identifies Hveyssel as a rationalist, which is positively coded, and then proceeds to place himself as an extension of this approach, albeit with a more mature insight into the larger historical picture, as the Hegelian spirit manifest.

The term hysteria derives from the Greek word for womb (hystera), thus connecting this affliction firmly with the female sex. Christina von Braun’s Nicht Ich. Logik, Lüge, Libido deals at great length with hysteria as a female corporal contestation of the masculine signification process into which women are interpellated. I do not deal with this aspect of her study, but only with her outline of the masculine signification process in chapter four.