

On 5 October 2020, a conference by videoconference brought together 18 representatives of the member churches of the CEPPLÉ Regional Group. Stemming from the preoccupations prioritized at the General Assembly in Lisbon in 2018, the theme was «**Borders that recompose, theologies in tension, remain together Protestant Churches living in the south of Europe**». This meeting was intended to contribute to a key issue of our 2018-2022 legislature : How do we design together a Latin Protestant specificity? This with the conviction that a minority can have an impact, a living communion can make reference, the strength of a shared action, a common witness relayed by coordinated Church media can strengthen our visibility. Felix Moser, Professor Emeritus in Practical Theology of the French-speaking faculties of Switzerland, contributed to this symposium.

We determined two dimensions of the reality of the Latin Protestant Churches:

**Trans-territoriality:** Standing together as Protestants is a necessity to be in a position to carry the Gospel in southern Europe. The linguistic and cultural «borders» disappear in the daily reality of our contemporaries. Our condition as Latin countries, in notable diaspora situation compared to other regional groups of the Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE), is an identity that binds us beyond borders.

**Trans-ecclesiality:** In their theological diversity (ecclesiology, ethics, hermeneutics), the member churches of the CEPPLÉ embody together a Protestant presence in southern Europe. We support this capacity for dialogue, sharing, solidarity in our diversity and a unity to which the CPCE contributes.

What we can learn from our sharing:

**Regarding to trans-territoriality :** churches administrative frontiers are persistent, institutional logic is a factor in blocking working habits. COVID containment reinforces the notion of network, but also the logic of the same. Some networks instigate separatism. According to Professor Moser, several areas of reflection need to be deepened and articulated: **Unity and diversity** No avoidance of irritating topics. We cannot aim for unanimity but ask ourselves the question of «how far can I live the difference» and from which the difference of practice or conception no longer seems tolerable/ **Change of territories and mutualisation-reciprocity** The logic of hospitality should not be driven by fear of loss, but by enrichment

**Concerning trans-ecclesiality: Worship and culture** How do we celebrate together? Learn the language and culture of our nearby communities, lift the implicits that we believe to master/ **Writing and interpretation** Could we agree on criteria? For F Moser, the canon would be that of justification by Grace. In the interpretation criteria, Community reading is an essential point, one cannot be right alone.

**Some doctrinal red lines** seems important to the participants: presbytero-synodal system – academic level of formation of pastors - differentiate ethics from the recognition of ethics from legitimacy – recognition requires respect for the specificity of the other, I do not own the truth – the hermeneutic of salvation through Grace – the articulation between faith and reason.

The Concord of Leuenberg and the doctrinal texts CPCE are a support to discernment. CEPPLÉ will continue this reflection in 2021 with a view to a synthesis in 2022.