



Pekka Launonen & Minna Valtonen (eds.)

**DIACONIA IN DIALOGUE – THE CHALLENGES OF
DIVERSIFYING CONTEXTS**

6th Biennial Conference for Research in Diaconia and Christian
Social Practice (ReDi) Helsinki, Finland 14/15–17 September 2016

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AND CHRISTIAN SOCIAL PRACTICE (ReDi)
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ABSTRACT

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The International Society for the Research and Study of Diaconia and Christian Social Practice (ReDi) has organized conferences for research in diaconia biennially since 2006. The articles of this publication are based on the presentations of the conference in Helsinki in 2016.

The main theme of the conference was *Diaconia in Dialogue – The Challenges of Diversifying Contexts*, and it was made the title of this book as well. The aim of the conference was to study the theories and practices of diaconia in the changing world. The aspects were multidisciplinary in the context of different churches, religions and societies. The viewpoints of diaconia, social care and welfare were in dialogue. There were one hundred participants from 16 countries in the conference.

This publication is divided into three parts. In the first part, *Welfare practice and Diaconia – Reflections on Theoretical Concepts and Historical Roots*, there are four articles. Two of them examine the concepts of *conviviality* and *dialogue* in the contexts of diaconia and church work. One of the articles studies the faith-based welfare practice in Islamic theological tradition. The fourth article researched the history of youth diaconia in the city of Tampere in Finland.

The second part, *Diaconal Professionalism and Institutions in Community*, presents reforming practices and structures of diaconia in the changing society. The first article studied how the spaces and environments of diaconia work are always defining its professionalism. The second article analysed the changing role of diaconal institutions as welfare service providers in the Norwegian society. The third article describes how food banks have

risen into a significant role in the area of social services and challenged traditional practices and professionalism.

The themes of the third part, *Faiths, Attitudes and Practice of Living Together*, are global and multicultural. The first article researched the religiosity of the Finnish youth and its connections to their attitudes. Does Christian faith enhance tolerance? The contexts of the second and the third article lie in the society of South Africa. They studied attitudes towards refugees and tools of managing the crisis.

The publication has genuinely varied viewpoints of diaconia and Christian social practice. As such, this collection of articles is a very comprehensive presentation of the whole conference. Diaconia comes true in various contexts and in the front of changing challenges. Therefore, when diaconia is in dialogue, it sounds very polyphonic.

Keywords: diaconia/diakonia, dialogue, change of society, multiculturalism, diversity, professionalism

Themes: Welfare and health, Church and parish, Multiculturalism

TIIVISTELMÄ

**Pekka Launonen &
Minna Valtonen (toim.)**

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Diak Työelämä 12

The International Society for the Research and Study of Diaconia and Christian Social Practice (ReDi) on järjestänyt vuodesta 2006 lähtien joka toinen vuosi diakoniatutkimuksen konferenssin. Tämän kirjan artikkelit pohjautuvat vuonna 2016 Helsingissä pidetyn konferenssin esityksiin.

Kokouksen teema oli *Diaconia in Dialogue – The Challenges of Diversifying Contexts* ja se annettiin myös tämän julkaisun nimeksi. Konferenssin tavoitteena oli tutkia diakonian teoriaa ja käytäntöjä muuttuvassa maailmassa. Aihetta lähestyttiin monialaisesti eri kirkkojen, uskontojen ja yhteiskuntien näkökulmista. Diaconian, sosiaalipalveluiden ja hyvinvoinnin näkökulmat kohtasivat toisensa. Konferenssissa oli sata osanottajaa 16 eri maasta.

Tämä julkaisu jakautuu kolmeen pääosaan. Ensimmäisessä osassa, *Welfare practice and Diaconia – Reflections on Theoretical Concepts and Historical Roots*, on neljä artikkelia. Kahdessa niistä tutkitaan *conviviality*- ja *dialogue*-käsitteitä diakonian ja kirkon toiminnan yhteydessä. Yksi artikkelista tarkastelee hyvinvoinnin edistämistä islamlaisen teologian valossa. Neljäs artikkeli tutkii suomalaisen nuorisodiakonian historiaa Tampereella.

Toinen osa, *Diaconal Professionalism and Institutions in Community*, käsittelee diakonian uudistuvia käytäntöjä ja rakenteita muuttuvassa maailmassa. Ensimmäisessä artikkelissa pohditaan sitä, kuinka diakonian ammatillisuutta määrittävät aina ne tilat ja ympäristöt, joissa toimitaan. Toinen artikkeli analysoi diakonialaitosten muuttuvaa roolia hyvinvointipalvelujen tuottajana norjalaisessa yhteiskunnassa. Osan kolmannessa artikkelissa kuvataan, kuinka ruokapankit ovat nousseet merkittävään rooliin sosiaalipalveluiden alueella ja haastaneet perinteisiä käytäntöjä ja ammatillisuutta.

Kolmas osa, *Faiths, Attitudes and Practice of Living Together*, on teemoiltaan globaali ja monikulttuurinen. Ensimmäisessä artikkelissa tarkastellaan suomalaisten nuorten uskonnollisuutta ja sen yhteyksiä asenteisiin. Lisääkö kristillinen usko suvaitsevaisuutta? Kahden muun artikkelin yhteiskunnallinen konteksti on Etelä-Afrikassa ja niissä tarkastellaan pakolaisuuteen liittyviä asenteita ja pakolaiskriisin ratkaisumalleja.

Julkaisun näkökulmat diakoniaan ja sosiaalista hyvinvointia lisäävään työhön ovat hyvin moninaiset. Tällaisena tämä artikkelien kokoelma edustaa kattavasti diakonian tutkimuksen konferenssia. Diakonia elää hyvin monenlaisissa ympäristöissä ja muuttuvien haasteiden edessä. Siksi myös keskustelu, jossa se on mukana, kuulostaa hyvin moniääniseltä.

Asiasanat: diakonia, dialogi, yhteiskunnallinen muutos, monikulttuurisuus, moniarvoisuus, ammatillisuus

Teemat: Hyvinvointi ja terveys, Kirkko ja seurakunta, Monikulttuurisuus

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Pekka Launonen & Minna Valtonen

PREFACE

The background of this publication is the sixth conference on the research and study of diaconia and Christian social practice in Helsinki in September 2016. Its main theme was *Diaconia in Dialogue - the Challenges of Diversifying Contexts*. The conference was organized by the International Society for the Research and Study of Diaconia and Christian Social Practice (ReDi) in collaboration with Diaconia University of Applied Sciences. The first of these biennial conferences was held in Järvenpää in 2006, and the next venues were in Oslo (2008), Heidelberg (2010), Prague (2012) and Stockholm (2014).

The aim of the Helsinki 2016 conference was to highlight urgent challenges to *diaconia* (or *diakonia*) and related research and study. The organizers emphasized that in the face of increasing diversity and inequality, there is a need to re-evaluate practice and to also revisit the basic understanding of diaconia. It is a field which explicitly involves dialogue between disciplines. The conference was open to all researchers of diaconia as well as practitioners with an interest in research. Contributions from researchers with an interest in social care, health and well-being were also greatly welcome.

All this came true during the meeting. There were one hundred participants from 16 countries altogether, including different churches, societies and communities. The presentations and dialogues took place in plenaries, paper sections and workshops. After the conference, the speakers were asked to write an article based on their presentation in order to make an edit of the conference publication possible. Thus, the contents of this book – ten articles from nine writers – were collected.

The book has been thematically divided into three main parts. On the first pages, there are welcoming words from the Bishop of Helsinki – Irja Askola. Her greeting for the participants was warm, poetic and metaphorical: “Diaconia is the selfie of our society!”

Part one contains four reflections on the theory and history of welfare practice and diaconia. Tony Addy first examines two important concepts, *autonomy* and *citizenship*, in light of contemporary challenges. He also presents *conviviality* as a core concept of diaconia. Mohammed Fazlhashemi continues by studying faith-based welfare practice in the context of Islamic theological tradition. He describes how the work of constructing a social safety net for society's weaker individuals has been inspired in a Muslim context. This is followed by an article by Minna Valtonen. She reflects on the theological and spiritual roots of the concept of *dialogue*. She also inquires whether the dialogic approach could be a joint basis for professional interaction in diaconia, Christian education and Church youth work. Finally, Mikko Malkavaara describes the developmental phases of youth diaconia of Tampere parishes in Finland. First, he gives an overview of the birth and growth of Christian youth work in general. Then, he shows how youth diaconia was developed from the late 1960s till the beginning of 2000s.

Part two includes three studies on the changing roles of diaconal professionalism and institutions in communities. Hans-Joachim Sander first reflects on the concepts of *who-identity* and *where-identity* in the context of diaconia. He emphasizes that in diaconal practice, one has to be aware of the places of people who have to struggle for their human dignity and are in need of help. Hans Morten Haugen continues by describing how the history of the Norwegian welfare state is to a large extent a history about non-profit organisations. However, his case study about the diaconal institutions and pension obligation sheds light on the new challenges in the changing society. Tony Addy then concludes by analysing the rise of food banks as a new form of normal welfare provision in Europe. He examines the user perspective and the position of users and service providers in a system that creates 'wasted lives'.

Part three presents three articles about the practices of diaconia and living together in a world of various faiths and attitudes. Jouko Porkka first examines the Finnish young church volunteers' attitudes toward alternative religiosity, multiculturalism, diversity, immigration and Islam. Of special interest is the question of whether religiosity supports or opposes prejudice. Then, Barnabé Anzuruni Msabah describes how the refugees in South Africa go through painful experiences, even as they seek to survive in their new setting. He encourages a paradigm shift in practical theology by providing practical tools on how to manage the global refugee crisis. Finally, Frederick Kakwata discusses the Christian social effort and development work in the South African context of intense migratory flow and ingrained negative at-

titude towards migrants from the Pentecostal perspective. He also seeks to propose a diaconal approach that is contextual and transformational in order to foster the transformation of the South African society.

The publication is a construction of diverse elements, just like the conference. The articles vary from each other in style of writing and the context of their study. In the editing process, this diversity of texts was left visible on purpose. Diaconia as “the selfie of our society” really has many faces; therefore, it is necessary to have this kind of forum – recalling the aims of the conference – to highlight urgent challenges, to re-evaluate practices and to revisit the basic understanding of diaconia. As editors, we hope that this publication with its polyphonic character will continue the dialogue.

Bishop Irja Askola

WELCOMING

15.9.2016

*The Church without Diaconia would be an institutional monster.
The Church without Diaconia would be a faceless organization.
The Church without Diaconia would be a good structure or a beautiful ceremony.*

Diaconia makes the Church be the Church! With Diaconia and through Diaconia, we survive as the one, which we are called to be. To care, to share and to struggle for justice.

Diaconia is difficult, embarrassing, complicated ... and exactly the way we need it. Diaconia brings us the hidden stories, as well the words, which are whispered in shame and in shadow. Diaconia is the selfie of our society!

Diaconia is a bridge, an open bridge, not a locked room and certainly not a close concept. Maybe a Navigator in our institutional car – so, what would happen, if we dare to ask, where do we actually want to arrive?

I welcome you here in Helsinki. But and however, I appreciate your professional vocabulary of “being welcome”. It is more and deeper than “come in”. “Welcome” – it is a word of surprise!

I welcome you to surprise us with your knowledge and with your compassion.

You are most welcome!

1

**WELFARE PRACTICE AND DIACONIA –
REFLECTIONS ON THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND
HISTORICAL ROOTS**

Tony Addy

Research Associate, Diak, Finland

*Chairperson, International Society for the Research and Study of
Diaconia and Christian Social Practice, 2012–2016*

1.1 AUTONOMY AND CITIZENSHIP – IMPLICATION FOR SEEKING CONVIVIALITY

Abstract

This chapter examines two important concepts, autonomy and citizenship, in light of contemporary challenges and delineates the issues they present for social policy and practice. The everyday understanding of autonomy has been transformed under the pressure of neo-liberal ideas and turned into an instrument not of liberation, but of oppression for marginalised groups. This is argued in relation to the ‘reform’ of social welfare in Europe and its impact on the practice of everyday life and of social service. An alternative, relationally grounded perspective on autonomy is provided from within the Judeo Christian tradition. The challenge to citizenship, particularly social citizenship, from this perspective is discussed, and the concept of ‘acts of citizenship’ as a perspective for extending citizenship rights per se and opening the debate about rights for denizens and non-citizens is introduced. These debates are then related to diaconia as the field of Christian social practice, which does not have to be constrained by prevailing policy norms and criteria. The concept of ‘conviviality’ is advanced as a core concept for diaconia, which can address issues facing a diversifying society and deepening inequality. The idea of ‘diaconia seeking conviviality’ refers to practice that is not required to be in conformity with the values and practice in accord with the dominant neo-liberal paradigm, but on the contrary, promotes countervailing and alternative values and practice.

Three Concepts in Transformation

In this presentation, I would like to bring together work that I have been involved with in various projects in the recent past. In on-going work with Interdiac, the questions of exclusion and marginalisation have been uppermost, but behind this question lies the question of how to develop civil society and functioning welfare states in the so-called post-Communist countries. This development has been marked by the influence of different overlapping trends. On the one side, some early efforts were characterised by what one Czech politician called the ‘creation of a central European Sweden’. Yet, this was just at the moment when the concepts of a welfare state and a welfare society were deeply under threat from the ideology of free market individualism promoted by many advisors from the USA and to some extent the UK. (Bratislava Declaration 2010.) Meanwhile, the reform of the welfare state in the European Union leaned in the same direction (Arpe et al. 2015).

Another area of engagement has been with the faiths and community initiative of Diak with a number of partner universities around the question of citizenship and the rights of citizenship for different groups and indeed the rights of denizens (those with permission to stay in a country, but without, for example, social rights), not to mention the rights or the lack thereof of residents without the required documentation (*sans-papiers*) (Addy 2011).

These kinds of questions are further integrated in the on-going work of the European Solidarity Group for Community Diakonia of the Lutheran World Federation, which has centred its work on the concept of ‘conviviality – the art and practice of living together’. The work of this group has been grounded in the engagement of people from all regions of Europe with the impact of the changes mentioned above in relation to exclusion, inequality and citizenship. The whole context is given new urgency by the rise of right-wing populist and nationalist movements, which provide a ready answer to the apparent threats that affect the poorest and those who feel their position in society is under threat. The so-called ‘fear of falling’ or the desire to return to a mythical golden age of national autonomy are driving political change in the direction of a less convivial society. The Lutheran group has articulated a vision for local diakonia and developed a basic understanding of practice. More recently, it has worked out the implications for the practice of working towards a ‘convivial economy’. (Addy 2015 & 2017.)

The presentation will proceed by analysing the ways in which the understanding of autonomy underpins liberal economic, and consequently, so-

cial policy in the direction of ‘reform’, as articulated by, among others, the European Union. The impact of this on social citizenship rights and the renewed discussion of citizenship will be discussed. The paradox of growing cultural rights, simultaneously with restrictions for some groups, is a feature of recent policy developments in several countries. In this respect, religion plays an increasingly significant role. In the European context, both human rights and social justice are under threat, because in some cases, fundamental human rights are being increasingly set aside or denied. The response of diaconia with related civil society actors will be discussed using the core concept of ‘conviviality’. This can be understood as an effort to work with people on the basis of a relational understanding of autonomy. The consequence for the form of politics will be outlined and linked with the discussion of ‘acts of citizenship’ in distinction from ‘active citizenship’ and will be related to diaconal practice for conviviality. (Isin & Nielsen 2008.) Diaconia can occupy a space that is not controlled by the logics of neo-liberal social policy and which is resistant to the politics of populism.

Autonomy

In ordinary, everyday language, everybody knows what autonomy is! It is the result of the process of development by which a person forms and defines themselves as ‘different’ from their parents or carers. It is self-norming, developing the form of adult personhood, the creation of an autonomous self. We know the consequences if this process does not work out well! I use the word ‘personhood’ deliberately, because the process of developing an autonomous self is relational. Actually, we create our ‘sense of self’ through relations with other people. We also recognise that people are embedded in different structures, which also carry messages about what kind of person we are! If we think about the capacity for decision-making, which is part of our everyday understanding of autonomy, then the ‘messages’ that we receive from structures, including the media, are very important not only in shaping our capacity for decision-making, but also for the framework in which we place our decision-making.

As already mentioned, I prefer to use the word ‘person’ rather than ‘individual’, because it signals the idea that we are persons in a relationship with others – other people and structures that give negative or positive meaning to our own personhood. Indeed, it is even more complex than that, because we know that that we relate very differently to different people and in different contexts. Somehow, even whilst declaring that we are autonomous, we are relational. At the extreme, we know that people are capable

of terrible evil if their context changes (Arendt 2003). As persons, we are formed in and through relationships, and as persons, we decide on courses of action from our position situated in relationships with others and in relation to networks and structures; this much is clear. Nevertheless, much social and economic policymaking and media talk proceeds as if it were not so! The dominant paradigm assumes the singular autonomous individual. This, in turn, supports the idea that people who are marginalised or excluded have made the wrong decisions or have not applied themselves diligently. It disregards structural factors and creates and sustains negative images of the excluded or different 'other'. The consequent practices trap people in dependence, supporting the creation of media stereotypes and preventing interdependence, not the least – by squeezing out empathy!

Autonomy in the present day thinking about social policy is closely linked to 'dignity', but it also appears as a topic at a time when the dominant ideology – free market or neo-liberal understanding – is calling for and implementing a reduction of political responsibility for economic and social welfare. Policy makers and the related media are propagating images of people that deny their dignity and, as I already mentioned, destroy the basis of empathy. As the 'welfare state is reformed', to use the current key phrase of the EU, the level of fear and uncertainty in the community rises – both among those whose daily life is transformed and those who fear that their security may be undermined. This is a fertile breeding ground for politics of 'fear of the other' – the stranger, the one who is different. The political movement against the different 'other', feeding on fear, further undermines empathy, but also provides a diversionary political field, which distracts from the changes in policy and practice for welfare and work. This is also an important point in terms of social and diaconal practice – the context in which we work very often acts against the objectives we work for, in part because policy and public discourse is based on an understanding of the person, which is deficient and limited.

Looking a bit more deeply into the question of how this has come about, we have to consider the roots of the modern understanding of individualistic autonomy. These are to be found in the enlightenment anthropology of dignity based on the optimal picture of the 'rational decision-making individual with their own autonomy'. This is the notion that provides the deep background to the idea that 'people are responsible for their own economic future' and that this responsibility is an inherent part of dignity and autonomy. The conclusion to be drawn based on this view is that dignity and autonomy are not related to context at all, rather to the practice of the subject! The understanding of autonomy, linked to dignity attributed to the

decision-maker is dominant; re-shaped by liberal economic thought, they also form the background of social policy.

When these definitions were first formulated, they were embedded in a moral framework, which, as Adam Smith himself understood, is not generated by the free market, and furthermore, the free market may in fact undermine it. He understood very well that the power of the capital owner would reduce the worker to pauperism – even death – without such a framework. (Smith 1790/2010.) This is even more real nowadays, because the economy is financialised, and decisions are made far from where they impact personal and community life. We could imagine that the financial system operates like a drone in warfare – it is controlled at a distance, but targets persons and communities, who are all but invisible to the control system – a truly ‘invisible hand’!

It is noteworthy that especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, the writings of Ayn Rand, who extols the virtues of selfishness, has become influential in shaping the attitudes of opinion-formers and decision-makers. Her most famous book is called ‘The Virtues of Selfishness’. (Rand 1964). This classical thinking about dignity and autonomy as linked to rational decision-making has been further influenced by the impact of more recent thinking about the importance of ‘self-realisation’, which, in the framework of free market thinking, has set the scene for ‘hedonistic individualism’ – ‘I want it, and I want it now!’ (Bauman 2007.)

The basic picture of a human being is as an individualistic, rational decision-maker out to maximise his/her own profit, and the viewpoint that it is up to the individual to make ‘his’ own way in life is now at the root of policy-making and practice. It is a short step from this to assert that if someone is unemployed or otherwise living in poverty, it is because that person has not worked hard enough at becoming employable or at earning a living. Moral criteria are imposed, and it is another short step to ‘blaming the victim’. This perspective erodes many aspects of welfare and social work. Therefore, when we use the concepts of autonomy and dignity, we have to be careful, because the understanding we have of them are divergent (Byrne 2006; Dean 2007.)

This is the first main point about understanding the context: it is important to closely analyse what understanding of the person lies behind our understanding of human dignity and autonomy, and which are reflected in economic and social policy. The long tradition of Jewish and Christian understanding of the person is against to this individualistic conceptual framework and takes a more ‘realistic approach’ by seeing persons being formed through relationships in everyday life. (Macmurray 1961.) Eco-

conomic interests may shape the relational context and affect personal development negatively or positively. Similarly, the political-economic ideological framework influences and shapes the paradigm for social work. (Harris 2014.) For diaconal work, this leads to the question of whether this changed paradigm and framework should be adopted, adapted or rejected.

Individualism and Citizenship

The concept of autonomy introduced in the first section, when applied to thinking about marginalised people and communities, hides the structures that cause marginalisation and puts all the attention on seeking change in the individual person's behaviour, rather than in the structures themselves.

However, there is further change, which has taken place under the impact of financial globalisation. On top of the long-understood fact that context and life situation are important factors, which reflect and support human dignity and autonomy or undermine it, financial globalisation has produced a situation where increasingly, financial and not only economic structures bear directly on the individual, and therefore, prevent autonomy and also fulfilment. The operation of financial markets and the financialisation of the economy, including the production of the service of general interest, has an impact on the formation of character. For instance, it affects education by turning it into a commodity for achieving financial success. This is one intended by-product of introducing student fees and loans, instead of grants and direct financing of higher education.

Relationships in the workplace are also very important in supporting or undermining human dignity and autonomy. If employment is tightly structured and highly regulated and pressurised, there is a consequent influence on the person. Similarly, if employment is at arm's length and 'flexible', so that each worker is an independent contractor (the so-called 'gig economy'), it also affects people's self-understanding, as they are in a dependent situation for their income and work rate. All the risks and costs of employment, as well as social and health care contributions, are off loaded on to each single worker. (Aloisi 2016.) In fact, all relationships affect the person through the fact that people tend to 'mirror' the assumptions people make about them, for good or ill! Neo-liberal ideas (or ideas from any other dominant ideology), along with racism, xenophobia and other ideas, with which the dominant concepts inter-relate, shape the possibility for groups to flourish. This means that if we want to promote policy and practice which reflect inherent human dignity and the capacity for autonomy, we have to find ways to address the overall ideological environment that informs social and economic

policy and not only to tackle specific decisions. This is precisely an area where public theology has a vital contribution to make. (Fretheim 2016.)

Understanding Authoritarian Liberalism

Now, I want to turn from the general background to analyse a bit more closely how exactly the ideas of autonomy propounded by liberal policy-makers turns into a process of disciplining marginalised people and communities, whilst espousing an ideology which is allegedly based on the freedom of the individual and the dignity of the ‘autonomous decision-maker’. The myth of autonomy is supported by the understanding that the ‘market’ is an arena for autonomous decision-making, and that ‘free choosing’ will enhance dignity.

The cluster of ideas which links autonomy to economic purchasing power as it is applied to social and labour market policies and practices creates three important negative consequences:

The first is that social citizenship is eroded, and the service structures, which were previously based partly on citizenship rights and partly on an understanding of solidarity, are also eroded. The value and coverage of income maintenance systems are reduced, and there is a growing number of situations where policy is contrary to the basic human rights to which all EU member states subscribe. The terminology used to define social income is changed to reflect this new understanding. For example, in the simplest case in the UK, Unemployment Benefit is redefined as Job Seekers’ Allowance. An income based on an insurance right (solidarity) is turned into a discretionary benefit depending on performance.

In Europe, we face a situation where more and more people live as denizens, not as citizens, certainly in the social sense. People have the right to live in a country legally, but they gradually lose or never even gain citizenship rights –social and health care and income maintenance. In the last two hundred years in Europe, we witnessed a gradual extension of rights into the social and cultural fields, but the last 20 years have seen a retrenchment of social rights by changes in the law and also by penalising what is deemed inappropriate behaviour (Byrne, 2006; Dean 2007.)

Increasingly, access to income maintenance is related to the performance of specific tasks related to behaviour that is supposed to be conducive to entering the labour market. The system of sanctions surrounding this for younger and older workers, as well as for people who are sick or have a disability, has led to a growing number of people going hungry and relying on food aid – and not only in countries facing severe economic problems.

In the UK, churches alone opened over 500 food banks during the last 5 years, and over 400 are in one of the support networks. (Trussell Trust) Rules for social support are becoming more punitive and restrictive of personal autonomy. They restrict the autonomy of workers in the social system to have discretion over payments and the provision of support. Moreover, private sector employers of benefit assessors increasingly reward those workers in the social welfare system that are more 'punitive' towards their clients. They may receive extra salary if they reduce the numbers of new claimants in receipt of support or withdraw or reduce benefits. This supports the punitive aspect of the welfare system and the decrease of care and support for people with long-term needs (Dwyer 2016.)

The root ideal which informs policy is, as already mentioned, of the autonomous individual taking responsibility for their own life, and the obverse of this is that someone who cannot reach this ideal has to be coerced into the 'right' form of behaviour. This is one of the basic understandings behind welfare reform. It affects people and communities who are marginalised and also those who work with them.

Therefore, for the second point, it is worth just pausing to look again at **the basic concept of autonomy** itself. The most obvious point to make is that this concept as used in present policy discourse is utopian in a negative way. It is unrealistic and cannot be reached. First of all, as we know so well, many people who should be our priority concern will never reach this ideal! For physical or other reasons, such as learning difficulties, they simply will not reach this autonomous understanding of dignity. Another group may be unable to reach it because of circumstances related to their life course or context – or the relation between the two.

It is typically said that all people should be treated in a 'dignified way'. However, if we always have an ideal based on the market-conformed dominant view in our mind, then many of marginalised or excluded people will not be able to be integrated into the primary labour market – they may always be (socially, economically) dependent in some important ways. They may be able to make a contribution to life, providing it is not coerced and not in the primary labour market. It is a similar case for elderly people suffering from dementia or physical limitation or for people who may have suffered deeply traumatising personal or group experiences. In this context, we have to keep in mind the central ethical idea of the dignity of the person and in terms of economic and social policy and social work ensuring that dignity is respected. I would rather say professionals and volunteers should respect people's *inherent* dignity and work for policies that reflect the same value position.

So, we come to the *third* point. **Social work and health care is recreated**, so that there is no real 'space' for those who need continuous social support (unless they can pay for it), and social care is delivered in such an economising structure, that it is not supportive of development, nor does it reflect the inherent dignity of the carer or the person being cared for. Should we then say that for those who cannot reach this ideal of autonomy, dignity is not real or is in some sense limited? And what about people who are so ill or damaged that they cannot communicate, except through touch? For example, elderly people with memory loss and severe physical limitation, but also people with a traumatic personal or group experience in their past.

There are many other groups of people for whom this individualistic perspective is problematic for reasons of cultural or religious (Enache 2017.) In fact, those who are successful within the present systems of education and employment are the very people who promote this model. There is, however, no reason to assume one model fits all people and situations! It may be that there are values and practices that are important for renewing our societies and creating a common future which are not represented in this policy consensus. Dignity is a quality that is inherent in all people; it is not related to performance. Social policy and social practice should reflect this viewpoint.

In summary, the policies and practices underlying national and European Union welfare reform programmes are shaped by dominant neo-liberal assumptions about human flourishing in a market-conformed society. They are presented as value-neutral but are in fact heavily biased in terms of class and gender as well as culture and religion. These practices are authoritarian and coercive towards marginalised people and groups, and they are intentionally meant to be so!

Strategies for Change

Seeking Conviviality – the Art and Practice of Living Together

Any realistic proposal for the future should be built on a relational understanding of the person and a broader understanding of dignity and autonomy, which goes beyond the moralistic viewpoint enshrined in authoritarian liberalism. The starting point that I take is rather to understand the structural forces that accentuate inequalities and the state policies that mirror these processes and, in fact, deepen their negative impact on people and communities. In this situation, it is important to build our understanding and action on the twin pillars of compassion and empathy. Compassion is

based on the reality that the 'other' is different, and empathy involves trying to be increasingly aware of the experience and identity of the other person on their own terms.

It means allowing the different experience and culture, the different identity to be present to us without trying to reinterpret it according to our own personal or professional ideas or any other external framework. With an empathic approach, we do not imagine that 'we are like the other', but, rather, we are in a way, curious about the other. Empathy is vital, because we are dealing with difference all the time. The feeling of compassion is linked to empathy and is a fundamental part of Christian love of neighbour. Compassion is an important virtue, because it is the emotional counterpart of empathy and implies an active desire to work to remove suffering and injustice.

These relational concepts are linked to the tradition that we realise freedom in association, not as atomised individuals! Empathy and compassion do not imply that I have to 'like' another person's viewpoint or actions, but rather that we should not start by punishing them for difference (the limit could be if they harm others, but even then, the appropriate response has to be found by due process, not administrative fiat). A liberal market policy penalises empathy and compassion in favour of competition and opportunism. The accompanying politics of blame and shame further destroy empathy in the wider society. I could cite many examples from the UK and other countries to back up this assertion.

Compassion is also a cornerstone of greater social interconnection and helps build conviviality. Here, I use the concept conviviality, which can be clarified as the 'art and practice of living together'. The origins of the concept lie in the around 500-year period in history when Christians, Jews and Moslems lived together in the Iberian peninsula, before the violent Christian expulsion of the Moslem population and the attacks on the Jewish minority. I use this as a heuristic concept to reflect on the practice and the goals of engagement with people in the present context. Conviviality implies that we make our common life together, and it does not start with community, which is a concept with 'boundaries' (the Catholic community, the black community) and which also tends towards stereotyping whole groups (Addy 2015 & 2017.)

Furthermore, in order to live together, the structural conditions of justice have to be struggled for collectively, with and on behalf of people who are suffering from injustice. The search for conviviality incorporates a view of human dignity which is not linked to the market-shaped criteria of autonomy. Conviviality is a relational concept based on dignity and justice,

which implies that people work together to create their own common actions and promote political change in their interests.

The implications of ‘seeking conviviality’ can be worked out in two dimensions that should be interlinked. The first is to support local action for conviviality, using resources at hand and enabling people to contribute in addressing urgent needs and in long-term responses to the challenges of sustainability. This action has to be linked to the redevelopment of politics as the people’s work – politics of and for conviviality. In this respect, politics can be understood as working with people in relationship to address pressing issues and to make an impact on decision-makers and holders of power. Politics is a relational concept, but it has also been individualised and conformed to the model of a consumer market (Topolski 2015.)

When we approach social policy and social work from the viewpoint of ‘conviviality’, we can start to reformulate our understanding of the place of marginalised groups in society, of those whose values and cultures that are different from those of the ‘system world’ we have described so far.

Social work, for example, has been reformulated, in relation to unemployed people and perhaps also to minority groups, as simply to incorporate marginalised people into the mainstream – for example unemployed people – as though the mainstream was self-evidently a ‘good place to be’! I could also mention immigrant and migrant groups who should, according to the latest political thinking on social diversity, ‘assimilate’. This means that marginalised groups such as jobless people, migrants, people who are mentally ill and other such groups are defined as a sort of residue of the mainstream (consumer) society. Based on this assumption, many policies, practices and projects reinforce exclusion, rather than contributing to a convivial society. To put it more directly, the criteria by which marginalised people are judged to have ‘failed’ in some way have been constructed in the interests of the more powerful in economic and political life and reflect their criteria of success and the nature of personhood.

Seeking Practice and Politics of and for Conviviality

From the perspective of conviviality, the starting point for political engagement is that poverty, exploitation and hunger are unacceptable, regardless of the identity of the people affected and their actual behaviour or culture. This is a pre-moral understanding because the supply of basic resources to sustain life is a fundamental right not connected to ‘performance’. It is related to basic human rights and any policies to meet these basic needs, which are based on coercion, should be rejected on the grounds of infringe-

ment of human dignity. In terms of social action, one of the most important contributions is to develop participatory practice, create space and foster dialogue, in order to create conditions and processes for innovative developments and a renewal of political action.

One of the most important changes in political culture in the past decades has been a shift from political processes, whereby grassroots groups contribute to shaping political policy, which their representatives aim to implement into what we might call a 'market conformed democracy'. A form of politics has developed, where the political leaders increasingly, as it were, tell the people what is needed and which policies should be followed. Even more damaging is the oft-repeated phrase that 'democratic decisions have to respect the market' – which is actually not one thing, but an abstraction.

At the moment, right wing populist parties and movements are able to gain traction because the main parties do not resonate with people's everyday needs and concerns. This means that people search for a 'decisive force', which will allay their anxiety and fear. Crafting participative and deliberative processes and appropriate supporting structures is an important first step in overcoming this impasse.

Conviviality implies relatedness across the divisions of society, but also concern for the resources for common life. If we look at recent social developments, we see many situations where people are not only supporting movements for economic sustainability, but also taking their own action to create new economic initiatives. People are making new choices about how to balance paid employment with other kinds of work and activity, not only in extreme situations, but also in many locations which are not hard pressed.

Recently, the United Nations Development Project office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (UNDP) funded a large-scale inductive study about social inclusion (UNDP 2011).

From this report, we can draw out the important elements, which are essential as a prerequisite for a well-functioning society and economy. There are three main elements and the first two are self-evident:

- To resist policies that remove residents' rights and struggle for inclusive policies, for example, on income support and employment as well as to work for transparent, reliable decision-making based on due process.
- To provide health, education and welfare services to a high standard that is inclusive for all residents, without being rationed by the ability to pay.

The third element is surprising and is related to the question of conviviality and citizenship:

- To strengthen civil society, so that it can play a part in, on the one hand, taking local initiatives and shaping local and national policy, and on the other hand, ensuring the transparency of decision-making and the accountability of power holders. The UNDP notes that churches make an important contribution to civil society, which had previously been unrecognised!

In this light, we can see that the challenge of working towards a convivial economy and society is a central issue for social and diaconal work as well as for political action. The growing number of situations where social and cultural/religious rights as well as political rights are being withdrawn, together with a rising number of people who are denizens (legally residents, but unable to exercise any rights) poses a new challenge. In a growing number of situations, even non-governmental social service organisations are forced to report people who are living in a country without legal papers, which also raises questions about the responsibility of maintaining the basic human rights of residents (Corporate Watch 2017.) In this situation, where there clearly is a conflict of rights, and where right-wing populist parties are on the rise, diaconal and social welfare organisations are challenged with maintaining people's 'right to have rights' and not to have those rights constrained by a supposed mainstream culture or religion (Arendt 1951/1968.)

One approach, which has been developed to analyse practice in this context, is to think in terms of 'acts of citizenship', which refers to the self-organisation of people in order to enact their rights as if they were citizens (Isin & Saward 2013.) This can refer to action by people with no citizen rights in order to claim rights and behave in the public sphere, as if they had rights, or actions to expand, regain or defend citizenship rights. The subjects of these actions re-constitute themselves as citizens and demand or claim inclusion and recognition on their own terms. In other words, they assert the 'right to have rights' (Addy 2016.)

These actions reveal that rights and freedoms are unequally distributed, whether they be political, social, economic cultural or religious. Looking at the historical expansion of the concept and practice of citizenship, we can see that generally, the development of a more inclusive citizenship in most cases followed from such citizen actions. For example, the political inclusion of women (which was only recently achieved in all western European

countries) was the result of generations of struggle and the organisation of women in a way that pre-figured the achievement of, inter alia, the right to vote. The development of policies that reflect these gained rights will require a strengthening of democratic structures and a reversal of the trend towards authoritarianism in government. The importance of creating a relational base for political dialogue and practice is a key aspect of this development (Topolski 2015.) This implies, as the UNDP report mentioned above underlines, the strengthening of civil society, and this is a role for community development and diaconia.

Normally, diaconal actors provide resources and services for marginal groups. They may also act as advocates and support campaigns for inclusion. This paper raises some key questions for both community development and local diaconia. The concept of 'seeking conviviality' points in the direction of working with a dialogical approach across different groups as well as working to strengthen groups of marginalised and excluded people in particular. This underpins the creation of sustainable local initiatives based on a participatory approach. It also extends the practice into the arena of active citizenship and the renewal of political processes from the local level. This has been further elaborated in the Lutheran World Federation initiative 'Re-forming Community Diakonia in Europe' (Addy 2014 & 2016.)

Conclusion

The rapid changes in the political developments in Europe, as well as the reform of the welfare state and the migration and refugee pressures discussed above, will demand a new form of diaconal and community development work professionalism. This professional model should support the creation of spaces and processes for the participation of groups which are marginalised or whose voice is unrepresented, so that they can be publicly present. This will lead not only in the direction of creating new initiatives, which will use the expertise and resources of the engaged people, but also in the direction of political change, locally and beyond. The inclusion of new voices changes the discourse and creates pressure for change. This work is very critical, especially with groups who are attracted to simplistic solutions put forward by populist political leaders. A more difficult area is the support for citizenship actions with people who are not recognised as citizens, and who do not have the legal papers giving the right of residence. This challenge will become more acute in the future. This scenario has implications for the learning processes of professionals, volunteers and activists and for the related profile of community development and diaconal workers.

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1.2 FAITH BASED WELFARE PRACTICE – REFLECTIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC THEOLOGY

Abstract

The care of people who, for various reasons, have found themselves in crises or are in need of help and support has a central place in the Islamic theological tradition. The work of constructing a social safety net for society's weaker individuals has been inspired by these lines of thought in a Muslim context. The motive for these interventions takes its starting point in a religious conception of taking care of weak members of society. Its forms of expression may vary, ranging from involvement in various forms of charitable contributions to faith-based philanthropic volunteer work.

Charitable work that is based on a religious foundation, which in turn is based on a duty-centred perspective, is founded on notions that a believer shall perform his/her duties fittingly. A true believer is expected not to be egocentric, but to consider his/her fellow men. At the same time, we should not forget that the duty-centred religious perspective contains the idea that anyone who becomes involved in charitable work, also receives something in return. Somewhere in the background is the notion that a person who performs his religious duty to take care of his neighbour will be rewarded in one way or another, either in this life or a coming life. The faith-based philanthropic motive may also be based on a religious worldview, but here, the reward motive is replaced with the care of one's fellow beings and respect for man's interior character. Some parts of this paper are historical overviews based on the author's previous research. These parts focus on examples and the development within the Shiite tradition in Iran.

Compassion in Muslim Theology

Both charitable and the faith-based philanthropic motives can be traced to the Muslim moral philosophy concerning compassion. A compassionate person shows pity and tenderness of heart towards his fellow beings and, first and foremost, towards the weak and fragile members of society. Compassion is a virtue that is emphasized through interaction with other people. It is thus not limited to clean-living, abstinence, the performance of certain rituals, saying prayers or something similar. It is rather an honourable action that is brought out through active deeds towards other people.

Viewed from the reward-oriented perspective, charitable deeds control what happens to a person after death, in a future life. Charity is rewarded with a place in Paradise or other forms of reward. According to this perspective, a charitable act takes place in a deontological, ethical place, where the principal value of the act lies in it being founded on a duty that in turn is based on a religious norm. The act can therefore be viewed as a kind of bargaining on the part of the doer, when the person who performs an act will be rewarded in some way.

An idea formulated by the Muslim philosopher Ibn Rushd, Averroës, (1126 – 1198) opposed this conception. He played down the reward perspective in favour of the intrinsic value of the ethical norm. When people act on the basis of ethical norms, they contribute to the creation of a better world. Averroës thereby went against the reward imperative and emphasized the ethical norms' intrinsic value which does not necessarily need to be based on religious norms. He said that ethical principles not only exist to determine the fate of people in what happens after death, but also have significance here and now. We know nothing of what happens after we die, but we know that these norms are very important to the life we live in the present. When people break ethical norms, this affects not only our own lives, but the whole of society. And, conversely, when we act on the basis of ethical norms, we contribute to the creation of a better world, as Averroës claims.

The faith-based philanthropic perspective is assumed to safeguard society's best interests and also to protect humanity from cynicism, profit, ego-centric consumerism, narcissistic self-absorption and, lastly, discrimination on the grounds of financial standing, social status, ethnicity or other discriminatory factors.

In the Islamic theological tradition of ideas, however, compassion is represented as not just a human virtue. It is, to an even greater degree, a divine quality. This is made clear not least by the phrase with which every chapter, *sura*, of the Quran begins. With the exception of the 9th *sura*, every

chapter, *sura*, of the Qur'an begins with the phrase: "In the name of God the Beneficent, *ar-rahman*, and the Merciful, *ar-rahim*". Both qualities can also be found among the 99 names that are used in Islam to refer to God.

The purpose of the recurring reminders about God's compassion in the Qur'an seems to be to emphasize that which is most divine about God. Compassion is, however, not only described as a prominent quality of God, but also a human virtue that can bring out the most magnificent aspects of the person who has accepted the virtue. Compassion is also represented as a virtue that every human being can adopt, if they want to live up to their human self or even the divine qualities they bear within themselves. This reasoning takes its starting point in the conceptions of the double nature of human beings that has its origins in the characterization of man that is found in the Qur'an.

Indeed We created man in the best form. Then We reversed him to the lowest of the low. Except those who believe and do good deeds, for whom there is never-ending recompense! (*Qur'an*, 95: 4–6)

The Islamic notion of man's double nature has its roots far back in history. It can be traced back to ancient Indian, Chinese, Persian and Greek worldviews. It is also an established conception in the Abrahamic philosophical tradition that differentiates between man's earthly/material and spiritual sides. According to this tradition, man's spiritual nature derives from God, since God breathed His own spirit into man and created him in His own image. One side of man is the one we are considered to have in common with all other living creatures, i.e. man's material side. We thus share this side with, for example, animals and other living creatures, and in this respect, we are controlled by our instincts, our urges and our desires. The parts of the nature of human beings that sets us apart from other creatures is the thinking, sensible, spiritual dimension.

Compassion is considered to be founded on this part of man's nature. This virtue allows us to rise above our material, earthly, animal side and unite with the divine. The relationship between human beings' material and spiritual sides is characterized by a continuous struggle. A person who manages to acquire this virtue is regarded as having achieved an inner freedom, which allows them to no longer be ruled by their own desires, instincts and material needs. Through compassion, man can counteract his material side, which will in turn lead to the spiritual aspects filling the vacuum that occurs when the material aspects are driven back. Compassion allows man's spiritual side to grow and master the material side.

In the Islamic theological tradition, compassion is also described as a virtue that helps us, as social beings, to avoid putting ourselves in a dysfunctional or destructive position in our interaction with our fellow beings. The idea is that people must not focus on themselves, personal gain or group interests in their social relations. Compassion is consequently represented as an important basis for people's involvement in faith-based philanthropic activities, meaning, the kind of volunteer work that is done without any thought of receiving something in return from the targets of the intervention or reward from a higher power.

Fundamental Respect for Human Beings

In the Muslim theological tradition, both charity- and faith-based philanthropic volunteer work has personal experience of hardship and suffering as a central place. This experience is considered to increase an individual's motivation to participate in both charitable and faith-based philanthropic activity. Personal experience of hardship increases the will to help people who find themselves in a similar situation. We can of course find out about these people's plight from various information channels, but personal experience is considered to increase our awareness nonetheless. The starting point is that we feel greater affinity in a reality where we are present ourselves, than in a world that we observe from a distance.

It is on the basis of this perspective that we view the month-long fast during Ramadan in the Islamic world. Suffering thirst, hunger and tiredness in conjunction with the fast is represented as a privation that we should undergo in order to gain personal experience of hardship and suffering to be able in turn to understanding the situation of distressed people and thereby become more willing to help them.

Charity, philanthropy and willingness to participate in volunteer work take their starting point in a virtue, compassion, through which people as individuals show empathy and solidarity with each other. Unselfish aid work, however, is not intended to remain an individual virtue. In addition to the individual relationships, compassion must form the foundation for building a functioning social network in society. Compassion seems to be used here as a basis for an equality mindset through which the very weakest in society will be given help to rise to the same level as other members of society. Viewed from this perspective, it is a virtue that constitutes a foundation for active measures that help people, who find themselves in a kind of "situational inequality", meaning that they have involuntarily come up

against various problems that have put them in an unequal position in relation to their fellow men.

On the basis of this perspective, it is interesting to note which people qualify themselves according to the Qur'anic basis for this collective compassion. It is primarily those who are closest to a person, the immediate circle of people, who are included in this social care programme. This circle consists of parents, family members and close relatives, but is not limited to only those who have some sort of family relationship through blood ties. People who live in physical proximity and are part of the people's social network are also included. Neighbours, in particular, are an important group. What is common to all these people is that they have, for various reasons, ended up in difficulty. (*Qur'an*, 2:83, 4:36) In the next step, the circle is widened to encompass all vulnerable people, who find themselves outside what society regards as a normal, equal level. These include orphans, people who can be categorized as distressed, the needy, heavily indebted etc. What is common to all these groups is that they have in one way or another found themselves unable to pay their debts or are going through a crisis in their lives. (*Qur'an*, 9:60, 17:26)

Social Safety Net

The discussions about the creation of a social safety net connect to a debate that goes far back in Islamic history. It was already going on during the formative phase of Islamic theology and philosophy in the 8th and 9th centuries (according to the Christian calendar) or the 3rd and 4th centuries of the Islamic calendar. It was a time when rationally focused Muslim theologians and philosophers tried to emphasize rational arguments for the most central conceptions within the Islamic philosophical tradition, alongside the strictly religious arguments. Their debate was not limited to only ontological and epistemological conceptions, but was just as much linked to issues that concerned social life.

In their discussions of the Qur'an's exhortations to be compassionate, Muslim theologians and philosophers tried to use rational arguments. They said that such exhortations should not only be interpreted as something that concerned life after death. According to these thinkers, the imposed actions would lead to the creation of a better world, and people would, therefore, already benefit from them in this life. The debate also concerned the question of whether compassion should be regarded as a virtue, a religious duty for the pious and the virtuous to devote themselves to, or if

it was fundamentally based on a rational argument about creating a social safety net, the purpose of which was to help one's fellow men who were enduring hardship in their life. This was an idea that had its origins in the notion that helping one's fellow men, who found themselves in difficulty, can also be regarded as a desire for people to want to be treated in the same way in times of trouble.

The discussions about compassion's faith-based philanthropic and social aspects follow from these ideas. Faith-based philanthropic activities include a particular emphasis on taking care of the distressed and the weak in the lowest stratum of society.

Another group who are explicitly mentioned as people qualifying for collective compassion are those termed *Ibn as-sabil* – literally “son of the road/wayfarer”. (Qur'an, 2:177, 8:41, 30:38, 59:7)

“It is not righteousness that you turn your faces toward the east and the west [in prayer], righteousness is rather one who believe in God, and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book, and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the kindred, and the orphans, and the poor, and the wayfarer, and the needy, and for the emancipation of those in bondage and the slaves ...” (*Qur'an*, 2:177)

“So give to the near of kin his due, and to the needy, and to the wayfarer. This is best for those who seek the pleasure of God, and it is they who are successful.” (*Qur'an*, 30:38)

The term is used to refer to a stranger who finds himself far from home, more precisely, someone who, because of their circumstances, has insufficient means to survive. In a broader perspective, this also includes people who for various reasons cannot return home, e.g., refugees seeking sanctuary/asylum from political, religious or some other form of persecution.

Other groups mentioned include prisoners and slaves. The rules relating to these last groups take their starting point in the local prevailing conditions during pre-modern times and concern the efforts that should be made when fellow-believers or people belonging to the same tribe or clan were captured during the recurring conflicts between different tribes and clans. The same applied to the slave trade, since redemption of slaves was considered a compassionate and God-pleasing deed. These groups were a natural part of the social context in pre-modern times. What unites them with the other named groups is that they are classified as distressed and afflicted people who need help.

As the legal discussion continues today, further categories have come up as to those who should be included in social care programmes, for example, mentally handicapped people and minors who have no guardian or trustee, divorced women and widows who have no source of income etc.

The conceptions concerning caring for the distressed are not unique to the Islamic theological tradition. According to French islamologist Louis Massignon (1883–1962), these conceptions can be traced to the Semitic and Abrahamic religious philosophical tradition. Referring to exhortations to take care of strangers and the oppressed in the biblical tradition – for example Exodus 22:21, Leviticus 19:33 and Deuteronomy 27:19 – Massignon considers the notion of compassion to be founded on respect for man's inner person to exist in all three Abrahamic religions. In the Muslim civilization, this philosophical tradition was given a functioning social and political form. (Sandgren 2007, 125–126.)

Created of One Essence

In conclusion, we might say that compassion was intended as a virtue, the principal purpose to safeguard fundamental respect for human beings. This applies in circumstances where people find themselves in a weak and fragile position in particular. The question is how the discussions have run in regards to living up to this virtue and all the ideas and conceptions associated with them.

One question that has dominated the discussions about compassion and faith-based philanthropic interventions in the Muslim context is that of who should bear responsibility for ensuring that the needy and distressed are taken care of from pre-modern times onwards.

The exhortations for everyone to do their utmost to live up to the recommendations associated with the virtue of compassion are an inseparable part of everyday religiosity. People are constantly reminded of life's fragility, and that it is every human being's duty to show compassion towards their fellow men. The 13th century Persian poet Sa'di of Shiraz (1184 – 1283/1291) believed that humankind's kinship constitutes a foundation for volunteer efforts, and that people must involve themselves in the work of helping the distressed. In his collection of poems and prose *Golistan* (The Rose Garden), he expresses this through the following poem:

The sons of Adam are limbs of each other,
Having been created of one essence.
When the calamity of time afflicts one limb
The other limbs cannot remain at rest.
If thou hast no sympathy for the troubles of others,
Thou art unworthy to be called by the name of a man

The view of man that permeates Sa' di's poetry stands out as the complete opposite of the individual-centred modern view of man. The latter puts a focus on the individual and his/her individual needs. Volunteer work, both as an individual and collective faith-based philanthropic activity, loses its meaning in a view of mankind, where society consists of people who disintegrate into individuals with very disparate needs, where the individuals are constantly busy realizing their individual ideals and asserting their right to realize their egocentric targets. This view of mankind also differs from the social model, where support and help for the distressed is passed from the individual to the state or municipal level through taxes that the working population pay. Faith-based philanthropic volunteer work does not necessarily need to mean abandoning our individual objectives in life or rejecting state and municipal responsibility in favour of charitable non-profit activities.

This is work that has its origins in an equality mindset, a social structure and a view of mankind that presumes that human beings will live in community and coexistence with each other, and that they show consideration to each other and not only for the weak individuals in society and the world.

Institutionalization

The social care issues that compassion involved were, however, too extensive to be able to be dealt with at the level of the individual. The scale of the different measures that would be implemented meant that it was felt that the task would be too much for single individuals. Without depriving the individual of the opportunity to act on his/her own micro level, fertile ground was created for making demands for the establishment of social structures and interventions from the society to realize the objectives of creating a social safety net. This, in turn, laid the foundation for development towards institutionalization of social care and coordination of voluntary work. In addition to action on an individual basis as a volunteer, the individual was also to assist in the work of creating structures. This would be done with the help of the religious tax that every Muslim has to pay, among

other things at the end of Ramadan, *zakat al-fitr*. This task is specifically intended to aid weak and distressed people.

Another important question, however, was who would take on the role/responsibility for organizing or monitoring the creation of the social safety net's institutionalization. The modern welfare state and its pretension to take on this responsibility were conspicuous in their absence.

The regulations concerning Islam's religious taxes made the ruling powers during the history of Islam get involved with various initiatives in this area, but as rules, they were far from sufficient. This responsibility did not sit comfortably with the powers of the day. From the 10th century, the major Islamic empire the 'Abbasids' had become more and more unstable. The rulers were all too occupied with the problems of holding on to their power. This meant defending themselves against all external and internal threats directed against their positions of power. Caring for the weak and the vulnerable in society, consequently, had no priority in the agendas of the earthly rulers. It was also a resource-intensive measure that was based on a mindset of equality and caring – a way of thinking that ran counter to the ruling powers' authoritarian form of government that was based on their subjects' unquestioning allegiance in exchange for protection by the earthly rulers. Issues of social care and taking care of the weak were seen as an area of jurisdiction that could just as well be shifted to other principals, who could consider involving themselves in charitable activities.

One group that was more than willing to take on this role was the scholars, the religious leaders. They felt that it lay within their field of responsibility to ensure that this central virtue was realized both at the personal/individual level and, most importantly of all, on a social plane. The scholars justified their commitment with a number of motives. On the one hand, they referred to strict religious arguments, claiming that the scriptures laid this responsibility upon the scholars. On the other hand, they claimed that, considering the significant needs of society, substantial social structures and their associated institutions were needed to deal with these societal matters. Without institutionalization, there was a great risk that the work of creating a social safety net would be left to its fate, or as the scholars put it, there was a risk that these issues would lie fallow.

However, it did not go without saying that the scholars would view these issues as a self-evident part of their jurisdiction. We find fairly different perceptions on the matter at different times in Islamic history and in different branches of Islam. A number of other factors also played a crucial role in this context; these are historical, social and economic circumstances and different interpretations of Islamic scriptures.

In both the main branches of Islam, Sunni and Shia, scholars involved themselves in social care issues. They did so, however, for different reasons. In the larger of the two groups, the Sunnis, it was viewed as a kind of distribution of work between the earthly leaders and the scholars as religious/spiritual leaders. In this perspective, the earthly leaders were accepted as legitimate rulers, since they had succeeded in usurping earthly power. Things were quite different in the Shiite branch. The Shiite scholars also believed that social care issues were part of their jurisdiction, but unlike the Sunni scholars, the Shiite scholars belonged to a vulnerable and often persecuted minority, who considered that earthly powers that be were not legitimate. They took on the social care issues, but refused to recognize the earthly rulers' legitimacy. Some went so far as to claim the earthly power and could even consider challenging its representatives in order to take over the power for themselves.

The scholars' involvement in the matter meant that a virtue had been institutionalized. They created institutions and structures to deal with the social care issues. This was generally done on condition that there was no civil society with associated institutions to provide the social safety net. Even if the scholars mainly viewed their involvement from a religious perspective, the purpose of which was to maintain a central virtue in society, they were forced to involve themselves in the institutionalization of care activities. This required, among other things, systematizing routines and organizing the collection of donated real estate that ended up in the so-called waqf-system. The basis of the waqf-system was that a person could donate real estate, wells, schools, hospitals, agricultural land etc. for charitable purposes. A donation meant that the property was withdrawn from the market and could not be sold, pledged, inherited or confiscated by the state. It belonged to the waqf-institution that acted as a foundation to manage the property and ensure that it was used or that income from it was used for various charitable purposes. In conjunction, volunteer efforts to help with the collection and administration of contributions and donations were of great importance.

Collections were at first administered locally, but in some Muslim countries, for example, Persia under the Safavid era (1501 – 1736), the work was centralized. Centralization of the collection of financial contributions and taxes meant that scholars achieved economic independence that not only gave them financial muscles and resources to carry on resource-intensive social activities, but also economic independence, that rendered them independent of the earthly powers. The increased financial resources and economic independence opened up new possibilities for the scholars. They

did not limit their efforts to helping the weak and the distressed in society financially, but began to act increasingly as public representatives who looked after these people's legal interests. People who considered themselves to be subjected to injustice by the ruling powers turned to the scholars for assistance. Their role developed into that of defenders of legal security, an authority to turn to when one wished to make a complaint against the ruling power. (Zargarinejad 1995, 120.)

This development meant that compassion was not limited to financial aid for the distressed and the financially weak individuals and groups in society. Efforts to combat legal insecurity and provide support for people subjected to injustice or arbitrariness within the legal field, or what in today's terminology would be termed 'social activism', became a self-evident part of a spectrum of activities that went under the heading of compassion. The scholars' support of the socially vulnerable, the financially weak and those who went against the ruling powers gave them even greater grass-roots support. Their increased popularity in turn led to more people paying religious taxes to the scholars or donating property for social care in the waqf-system that was being increasingly developed in Muslim countries.

Socio-political Factors

The group that distinguished itself in regards to their involvement in the social care issues was the scholars. They found support for their role in, among other things, the prophet's tradition, which points to the scholars as a group with a defined task. This applies, first and foremost, to the following pronouncement from prophet Muhammad: "The scholars are the heirs of the prophets and my congregation's scholars are like the prophets of Israel." (Fazlhashemi 2011, 104.)

Based on this prophetic pronouncement, they considered that leading the congregation was one of the scholars' tasks. But despite the prophetic pronouncement and several other arguments, that all underlined the scholars' tasks, there has never, not even today, been any consensus regarding the scholars' area of responsibility. There are groups that believe that the scholars' area of responsibility is limited to the spiritual area and to helping people to finding their way around all religious sources and tradition. Opposing this are those who believe that the scholars' responsibility includes both spiritual and earthly leadership. Here, again, we find no consensus regarding the extent of the scholars' jurisdiction. However, all groups agreed that the scholars should, in one way or another, take responsibility for social care issues. The only detail that has caused any problems and where opin-

ions have diverged was whether the scholars themselves should deal with the issue or whether they should monitor or delegate the responsibility to others. In general, they agreed that they should act as administrators of the social safety net. (Fazlhashemi 2011, 105.)

The scholars' social involvement and the organization of volunteer work associated with it has, however, been affected by political and social circumstances. For a long time, there has been an unwritten, but de facto, distribution of work between the earthly rulers and the religious institutions, where the latter was responsible for the social work and the voluntary activities associated with it.

The winds of change began to blow in the 19th century, as the central powers in the principal Muslim states of the time, i.e. the Ottoman Empire and the Persia of the Qajars, were becoming progressively weaker. This weakness had its origins mainly in internal circumstances such as political incompetence, widespread corruption, absence of legal security and a weakened economy. To this must be added the European colonial powers' challenge to the Muslim states, both on the battlefield and in the political and financial arenas. The different factors contributed to increased social, political and economic problems. There was a greater need for efforts that would safeguard the society's social safety net.

The weakening of the central powers in Muslim countries and the increased social and financial problems opened up the field for scholars and religious institutions to play a greater role in the earthly area. This was most evident in Persia (the country officially changed its name to Iran in the 1930s). The scholars believed that the unsatisfactory situation in the country demanded their involvement. They wanted to assist their sorely tried compatriots. Their involvement was not, however, limited to the social care issues, but also came to include political questions. Many scholars involved themselves in the efforts to bring about a paradigm shift in the country, that is to say, a transition from autocracy to a constitutional form of government. The scholars found inspiration in the constitutional form of government that had its roots in the modern European form of government. They held high hopes that a transition to a constitutional form of government would lead to major political, social and economic improvements in the country. Among other things, they would work to counter the country's economic destitution, strengthen legal security, combat corruption and last, but not least, they would break foreign countries' influence over the earthly powers, which in their vocabulary, they had termed 'colonialism'. (Mahallati Gharavi 1995, 475.) Here, again, they justified their involvement in political issues by pointing to the need to create a social

safety net and take care of the weak and the distressed. They believed that a transition to a constitutional form of government would give social care issues a significant boost. (Khalkhali 1995, 232, 318–319.)

One of the scholars, who had been working actively for the introduction of constitutional government since the 1890s, was Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Tabatabai. In one of his pronouncements, he justified his support for a constitutional form of government as follows:

We have not seen for ourselves those countries that are led by constitutional governments. But from what we have heard and what people who have been in those countries tell us, a constitutional government leads to security and development. For this reason, we wish to take action to establish constitutional government in this country. (Kermani, 1992, 339; Kasravi, 1977, 85–86.)

Tabatabai somewhat ironically writes that his ambitions to establish a constitutional form of government worked against the scholars' jurisdiction, because in a country with legal security and a sound economic position, fewer and fewer people would join them. But he had nothing against going down in history as the person who worked to establish a parliamentary constitutional system and a constitutional state, where social care issues did not lie fallow. (Kasravi 1977, 76.)

The scholars' efforts regarding social care issues were dependent on the financial contributions they could bring through taxes, grants and donations. Alongside religious taxes, the merchants were one of the biggest contributors. As their revenues shrank, religious institutions' coffers also began to run dry. This was to some degree due to the general economic decline that had resulted from the earthly powers' mismanagement of the economy. Another, more important, reason was the earthly powers' clumsy handling of the awarded concessions to foreign businessmen that excluded domestic businessmen.

In the early 1890s, English major G.F. Talbot was granted a monopoly on purchasing, processing and selling tobacco in Persia. Over the following two years, this concession gave rise to widespread opposition against the king and what was perceived as foreign influence over the country's economy. The measure caused great indignation among the merchants, who were thus excluded from the tobacco trade in the domestic market.

The merchants were driven by fears that the foreign tobacco company threatened their financial interests. Their appeals to the royal court had been in vain, and therefore, they turned to the Shiite scholars. The highest

Shiite scholar of the time, Ayatollah Mirza Shirazi (1814–1896), wrote to the king, complaining about his frivolous awarding of concessions to foreign states and companies. He demanded that the tobacco concession be annulled, but the reply from the king's envoy was that the agreement with the English was binding and impossible to cancel. The highest spiritual leader's reply to this was that if the state was unable to do so, then he would personally and with God's help annul the concession. This was followed by a serious demonstration of power by the highest Shiite scholar.

The Ayatollah issued a fatwa, through which he forbade the faithful to use tobacco. The fatwa was very concise, but its symbolic value was all the greater. In the fatwa, the Ayatollah wrote that all use of tobacco was to be considered an act of war against Islam. In practice, the fatwa meant that the Ayatollah imposed a religious prohibition on tobacco. In addition to boycotting tobacco products, the fatwa gave rise to a series of extensive protests against the king and the foreign companies. The bazaars, which were the hub of the economy, were closed by general strikes and mass protest rallies were organized. In 1892, the king gave way and annulled the concession.

The Ayatollah's actions in the tobacco affair and the debates that followed showed how the religious leaders and the institutions advanced their positions, as the central powers continued to weaken. Religious authorities not only spoke of the need to safeguard Islam, but also touched upon other areas such as safeguarding the nation, the kingdom's sovereignty, independence from foreign powers and the public's interests and, lastly, the necessity to protect the weak members of society. The scholars reserved the right to have opinions regarding the earthly powers' activities and to restrict the earthly powers' authority. Their successful action against the royal family and the foreign companies made the scholars aware of the potentially enormous power that they had. These events marked the beginning of a series of other manoeuvres on the part of the scholars, through which they advanced their positions further still. It is at the same time, that despite the Ayatollah's demonstration of his great power through the fatwa, he did not wish to proceed further. Despite his opposition to the king, he did not wish to go as far as to demand his abdication, and that the scholars should take over his power while waiting for the secret imam. When the king agreed to the Ayatollah's exhortation, albeit extremely unwillingly, and annulled the agreement with the English, the matter was closed. (Kermani, 1992, 20–28.)

The 19th century was also the era of constitutionalism. Increasing numbers of scholars fell behind the demand for a transition from an autocracy to a constitutional form of government. The main motive was that a transition to a constitutional form of government would enable the social care issues to

be handled better. Their reasoning was that the constitutional form of government was not the most ideal form, but was definitely second best, and since it presented better possibilities to deal with the social care issues, they were prepared to support such a transition. A constitutional form of government would also mean the final demise of autocracy in the country, and, last but not least, it would mean the end of foreign influence over the state.

Earthly Power Ambitions

The transition from an autocracy to a constitutional government took place in Persia in 1906, but instead of better conditions and the realization of all the hopes that had been tied to the constitutional form of government, the country was thrown into political chaos. The power struggle between different political factions who wanted to fill the vacuum after the abolition of autocracy, instead led to anarchy and political disarray. The economic situation worsened, and the weak and vulnerable saw their circumstances deteriorate further still. The chaos frightened a large group of scholars, who chose to withdraw their support for constitutional government. The final turning point came during the inter-war years, when the autocratic ruler of the time, king Reza shah, inspired by Turkish dictator Ataturk, implemented a deislamification campaign that clamped down on everything that had to do with Islam and its representatives in particular. The campaign made Islam out to be an obstacle to modernization of the political, economic, social and cultural areas. The religious leaders were now even more sceptical towards the constitutional form of government. In fact, there was not much left of the political reforms associated with the constitutional form of government. (Fazlhashemi 2011, 153–160.)

We see the same trend in other countries. In Egypt, great hopes were pinned on the transition to constitutional government in the early 1920s. There, it was England as a colonial power that dashed all hopes by its refusal to relinquish its hold on the country. In the late 1920s, the first demands began to be voiced for the establishment of an Islamic form of government. In Iran, the demand was first voiced in the mid-1940s. It was not, however, met with any great sympathy, since support for political Islam was still weak. Support grew all the stronger in the 1960s and 1970s. The most important reason for this was the actions of the government that had suppressed all forms of political opposition.

The religious leaders accused the earthly powers of betraying the distressed at the same time as they and their immediate family were rolling in money from, for example, the enormous oil revenues that were flowing

into most Muslim countries. The oil revenues were instead spent on weapons and lives of luxury for those in power and their immediate families. The destitution of society's weak and distressed was one of the most important aspects that the religious leaders focused on in their criticism of the people in power.

It was in conjunction with this that a group of scholars put forward their demand for a transition to Islamic government. The religious leaders were, however, far from unanimous on this point. Most of them supported the demand for action in the social area and caring for the distressed, but they did not wish to go so far as to support the demand for a political takeover of power. Their interpretations of the scriptures and the regulations concerning compassion on the social plane were based on it being the scholars' responsibility to ensure that this virtue was realized in society, it is true. But they also said that it was the task of scholars see to it that it really was carried out, and that this important issue did not lie fallow. This did not, however, mean that they would assume the political power, or that they themselves would intervene personally. They could just as well delegate or transfer the task to the legal entities or institutions that were well equipped for the task.

From the early 1960s on, demands to take over the political power as an important prerequisite to deal with the social care issues became increasingly vociferous. The most important component of their opposition to the earthly leadership was the fact that the earthly powers had broken their commitments. Not only had they submitted to foreign powers and mismanaged the economy; what was even more serious was that they were implementing a conscious anti-Islam policy.

The generally unsatisfactory conditions with widespread corruption, skewed finances, and lack of an adequate social safety net for the distressed were taken as further evidence that the powers had not fulfilled their earthly undertakings. These circumstances were in total considered to disqualify them as earthly leaders in Muslim countries. (Fazlhashemi 2011, 172–202.)

Compassion in the Fight against Religious Oppression

The endeavours to introduce an Islamic form of government had borne fruit in several Muslim countries. In Iran, a social revolution in 1979 led to the deposition of the despotic Shah. In Turkey, an Islamic party won three general elections since 2002. In countries like Tunisia and Egypt, where popular uprisings in the wake of the Arab spring led to old dictators being

forced from power, Islamic parties won the electorate's mandate to rule the country. In all these countries, commitment to social issues to aid society's distressed and organize volunteer efforts has been anchored in the political context.

The form of government that has existed the longest is the Iranian example. It is based on a specific and rather unusual political doctrine that goes by the name of *the rule of the scholars*. The many changes that took place in the country, once the scholars had come to power, include the establishment of a number of governmental and quasi-governmental institutions with the specific task of dealing with the issue of social care and organizing volunteer work. These institutions took stock of the country's households to identify the weak and the distressed. A large group of people among the country's weak and distressed have since then been covered by a social safety net that aids vulnerable groups in different ways, for example, in the form of social-security allowances. Alongside these governmental and quasi-governmental institutions, individual scholars and non-profit organizations run their own activities along with volunteers in their work with financially weak families and other groups of citizens in need of extensive assistance.

Despite all endeavours to fulfil the needs of the distressed, the discussions concerning social care, a social safety net and the need for volunteer activities have not ceased, rather the reverse; the debate has intensified, and religious leaders have been severely criticized for not being able to create sufficient protection for the society's needy. Another problem was that the new political system proved to be extremely authoritarian and developed into a totalitarian form of government that showed no compassion at all towards political opponents or citizens who, in one way or another, deviated from the ethical, social, cultural and political norms that the state had set up. Over the past three decades, prominent religious leaders have demanded that the powers that be live up to compassionate norms. Their demands have not been limited to caring for society's financially weak individuals, but have come to include legal security and worthy, humane treatment of dissidents and political opponents to an increasing extent.

An illustrative example of the religious leaders' involvement in this respect is the events that followed the controversial presidential election of 2009. The popular protests against election rigging were brutally beaten down, causing vociferous protests from several high-ranking religious leaders, including Ayatollah Hussein Ali Montazeri (1922–2009). He condemned the assaults on the protesters and people who had been impris-

oned, the collective sham trials, coercion of confessions in front of TV cameras etc. as actions in glaring contrast to compassion.

In one of his pronouncements, he compared the sham trials after the presidential election in Iran with Soviet dictator Stalin's and Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's show trials and insisted that such sham trials and confessions obtained under coercion ran counter to Islamic beliefs (Montazeri s.a, a; Montazeri s.a, c).

Ayatollah Montazeri went so far as to say, with support from his religious authority, that the regime in power in Iran lacked religious/Muslim legitimacy. (Montazeri s.a., b.) In his view, the right to demonstrate and express one's opinions was to be regarded as a civil right and underlined the fact that respect for human rights and fundamental civil liberties is an important aspect of compassion in Islam.

A Question of Personal Responsibility

Discussions concerning social care, caring for those in need of protection and the distressed and volunteer work in the Muslim context have been linked to an ethical question or a religious obligation in conjunction with the virtue of compassion. On the personal plane, the discussions have concerned both ethical questions and conceptions that volunteer efforts will be rewarded in one way or another. Another side of the debate has been the discussions about the role of religion in society and religious institutions' attitudes to earthly questions and politics. Central to the discussions has been the question of whether compassion is to be regarded as a personal virtue or function as a societal virtue, and first and foremost, whether the representatives of the religious institutions are to play an active role when it comes to designing a social safety net and organizing volunteer efforts. It is important to note that the discussions about compassion have not been carried out in a social or historical vacuum, but have very much been coloured by social and political circumstances. Under certain historical and social conditions, the discussions about compassion have also come to involve such questions as legal security and respect for fundamental civil liberties.

It can be said that some kind of consensus has existed on personal responsibility. Every individual must strive to fulfil this virtue. The dividing lines have been drawn regarding the issue of realizing it on the societal plane. As the somewhat abridged historical account above shows, the scholars' entry into the social and political arena was motivated by the lack of in-

stitutions and players dealing with the social care issues and the defence of legal security. In modern times, safeguarding the various aspects of this virtue has been used as an excuse to justify the assumption of political power. In a modern welfare state, community-founded on the rule of law, where an independent judicial system guarantees legal security, and social authorities take care of weak and vulnerable people, there should not be any space for religious leaders to intervene, because realization of the public aspects of the virtue of compassion is a matter for the state and judicial and social authorities. What remains then is personal responsibility, which is a matter for the individual. In this respect, volunteer work becomes a question for the individual who can justify his or her decision to participate in volunteer work for both religious and ethical reasons.

As regards the scholars and their role, the Shiite Ayatollah Akhund Khorasani (1837–1911) distinguished himself with the vision that he outlined at the beginning of the last century. He was a devoted advocate of the constitutional form of government, but warned the scholars against involving themselves in politics, because he did not consider this to be compatible with their responsibilities. On the other hand, he spoke about personal responsibility, and based on this, he reserved the right for the scholars to act as warning voices in society with the right to criticize politicians and statesmen, who were not fulfilling their undertakings. As individuals, the scholars would watch, scrutinize and criticize the government and combat corruption and oppression. He compared this role to that of salt. The scholars would be the salt of the earth. In the same way as salt prevents decay, scholars would counteract autocratic attitudes and the decay of power. They would act as defenders of compassion, when the earthly powers commit transgressions against legal security, and sound a note of warning when social care issues were neglected. (Kadivar 2006, 16–17.)

Akhund Khorasani's point of departure was not any conception of the scholars' special standing in society. He saw no difference between the scholars and other people in the public sphere. Like everyone else, scholars would pursue the struggle against social injustice as individuals. A role that he described as the salt of the earth. (Kadivar 2006, 19.)

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1.3 DIALOGUE AS A FUNDAMENTAL APPROACH IN CHURCH WORK

Abstract

In the last decades, dialogue has been the key idea in social care work and in different kinds of therapies and pedagogies, but it also has a significant role in church work.

The aim of this article is to reflect the theological and spiritual roots of the concept of dialogue. At the same time, I am asking if the dialogic approach could be a joint basis of professional interaction in diakonia, Christian education and the Church's youth work. In this reflection, I firstly had a look at the concepts of dialogue and dialogicity, and secondly, at the classical Christian doctrine of a triune God and Christology.

*The Greek word **dialogos** emphasizes two discourses instead of one. In Christian faith, God is a Person with whom one can have a personal relationship. The classic doctrine of trinity speaks of God, which is one of the essence, but three Persons. Therefore, God Himself already contains the relations, the dialogue, between the three Persons. The three Persons of God are in real interaction with each other. As an image of God, a human being is also invited to interact with God, with other human beings and with creation.*

*The concept of dialogue also indicates another sense, namely, through the words *dia* and *logos*. Christ as "**the logos**" shows the way to the very essence of God – love. The core essence of Church work is to spread this love of God.*

Through this "theology of dialogue", we can find a Christian explanation of the dialogue and dialogical approach in Church Work. Dialogue is also a very Christian way to interact. It is the task of professional diakonia, Christian education and Christian youth work to develop the dialogical methods and to enable everyone to interact.

Introduction

The first time I got in touch with dialogue, a dialogical approach and their philosophical roots was when I was working on my doctoral dissertation and using narrative data and the narrative method (Valtonen 2009). The next step was my supervisor studies in dialogue-oriented training some years ago. During that training, I felt that dialogue as a practical method and dialogicity as an attitude are inspiring and meaningful findings that steer not only my professional activity as a supervisor and pastor, but also as a lecturer in the Diaconia University of Applied sciences (Diak).

The background theories of dialogue and dialogicity are in social constructionism (Seikkula 2001), which is a theory of knowledge in sociology. The concept of social constructionism comes close to social constructivism and is also linked to constructivism. It seems that researchers do not have a clear common understanding about the relationship between these concepts (see e.g. Puolimatka 2002 and 2005; Tynjälä, Heikkinen and Hutunnen 2005; Kauppila 2007).

Social constructivism is based on the idea that knowledge, reality and their structures and phenomena are constructed in social and linguistic interaction (Berger & Luckmann 1994). There is no absolute truth, but rather different kinds of jointly constructed explanations and narratives. According to the constructivist theory of religion, the religious reality and religious concepts are human constructs (Puolimatka 2002, 43; Kalli 2005.) Thus, during my supervisor studies, I felt that there is tension between the philosophical background of my dialogical-oriented supervisor studies and my professional role as a pastor of the Lutheran Church. As a Church worker, I am committed to the Church's doctrine, which is constructed on the basis of some kind of absolute truth (see also Simojoki 2008, 72). It should be noted that in Finland, in the field of philosophy of education, there has been discourse concerning constructivism and its relation to ontology. According to some opinions, a constructivist concept of learning does not necessarily indicate constructive ontology. With certain limitations, constructivism can also be linked to philosophical realism. (Holma & Konttinen 2005.)

I still considered it important to study the concept of dialogue in relation to a Christian and Lutheran interpretation of the world. My questions are: Can "dialogue" and "dialogicity" be defined with Christian concepts and in connection with the Christian tradition? Is it possible to justify dialogue as a fundamental approach in parish work and especially in diakonia? And if it is possible, could dialogue and dialogicity be a joint basis of professional interaction in diakonia, Christian education and the Church's youth work?

In the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF), parish work is characterized by strong professionalism (Haastettu kirkko 2012, 345–349; Meriläinen 2016, 75–77), and especially in many large parishes, the way to organize the work is quite sectorized. Diakonia, youth work and early childhood Christian education have been considered separate, individual forms of work, even if the university degrees required to work in these professions have been in many ways unified in last two decades. In a way, the strong professionalism has been and still is a strength of ELCF parishes, and it has enabled the employees to serve as experts in their own fields. It has also enabled equal membership in many multi-professional networks in the fields of social and health care, youth work and early childhood education. This expertise will have value and development needs in the future as well.

However, it is also necessary to develop these Church professions further to make them broader and more flexible. The tightening economic situation within the parishes is forcing them to re-evaluate the roles of their employees and to strengthen the co-operation between different actors, as noted in the assessment by the ELCF Commission for the Future (Kirkon tulevaisuuskomitean mietintö 2016, 178, 184). In the middle of the changes of the Church's professionalism, it is important to consider the joint theological base of the diakonia, youth work and early childhood Christian education.

In this article, I study the concept of dialogue in relation to classical Christian theology. My approach comes from systematic theology. I view the term “dialogue” thematically in relation to the classical doctrine of Trinity, Christology and also in relation to Christian anthropology. Guidelines for the used research material are quite practical: I am reflecting on texts that are used in theological studies at Diak, which concern Trinity and Christology and the theology of diakonia, Christian education or Christian youth work and texts which can be found in Diak's curriculum implementation plans (soleops.diak.fi; Kirkon alan opinnot 2016). The main references in this theological reflection are Pihkala 2009, McGrath 2012 (translation from the English language edition McGrath 2011) and Kopperi 2014. On top of these, I have also used some texts from the supplementary literature of Diak's theological courses, e.g. Kopperi 2007, Mannermaa 1992, 1999 and 2005, Luoma 2001 and Pihkala 1997.

The goal of my study is to review dialogue and dialogicity and link the themes to the practices and principles of parish work, especially to diakonia and pastoral counselling, and, in some cases, also to Christian education. It has been a conscious decision to focus on theology in this article and not to analyse the terms “social constructionism” or “social constructivism”. As

stated above, there are already many interesting writings about them, e.g., Kauppila 2007, 47–62 and Puolimatka 2002.

Dialogue as an Approach in Social Practice, Pedagogy and Church Work

In the last decades, “dialogue” and “dialogicity” have become fundamental approaches in social care work (see e.g. Socca i.a., Terveiden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos i.a.) and in many therapeutical and pedagogical contexts. In Finland, for example, there has been significant dialogue research in the fields of psycho-social work. Jaakko Seikkula and Tom Arnkil’s (2006, 2014) models of “Open dialogues” and “Anticipation/Future Dialogues” have renewed the practices in the fields of psychiatric treatment and social care work. Both researchers conclude that dialogic encounters between professional networks and clients’ networks have great potential in constructing common understanding and finding solutions. They point out that there is a need for network-centred methods and client-centred ethical orientation: clients should be treated like active actors instead of objects or passive receivers of help. In a mutual dialogue, there is a possibility to form an understanding that no single participant could reach or manage alone (Seikkula & Arnkil 2006, 6, see also Mönkkönen 2002).

In the fields of pedagogy, youth work and education, Kiilakoski (2005, 2012) and Värri (2004) have pointed out the power of dialogue and dialogicity. The questions are, for example, how to support the participation of young people and children in a school system (Kiilakoski 2012) and in democratic municipal decision-making (Gretschel et al. 2014).

Dialogue and dialogicity also seem to have an important role in the work of the Finnish Evangelic-Lutheran Church and especially in diakonia: the client-oriented methods of social care and healthcare are used in diaconal social care work, parish nursing and pastoral counselling (see e.g. Sielunhoidon aikakauskirja 2009). Dialogue is also needed when Church professionals participate in social care networks and other professional cooperative networks.

But the question is not only about the methods; dialogicity can also be considered a diaconal or pastoral orientation. There is specific training for Church professionals titled “Dialogicity in Church Work” (“Dialogisuus kirkon työssä”, *Kirkon henkilöstökoulutustarjonta* 2017). In many of the Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran Church documents, the dialogic approach is linked to facing different beliefs and other cultures (Uskontodialogi on

kohtaamista s.a.). In the new curriculum of Finnish Confirmation School, one of the main targets is “Dialogue is a way of being and speaking” (Ripikoulusuunnitelma 2017, 19–20).

Dialogue is one of the social work client methods taught at Diak (SOS01 mallitots/6 2015–2016; Nietola & Lyhty 2015, 142–159). Diak trains specialists at BA and MA levels in the fields of diaconal work and Church youth work, education, social services, nursing and interpretation. Students of Church-related studies in the Degree Programme of Social Services (210 ECTS) achieve a dual qualification which gives them competence in social care work (Bachelor of social services) and eligibility for the positions of a deacon, youth worker or coordinator in Christian Early Childhood Education in FELC. There is also the Degree Programme in Nursing (240 ECTS), which has an option of Diaconal Nursing. Hence, Diak’s Church-related students connect with dialogue and the dialogical approach in the fields of Finnish social care work, healthcare work and in Church work.

About the Concepts of Dialogue and Dialogicity

The concept of dialogue is multi-dimensional and trans-disciplinary. Dialogue can, for instance, refer to a way to discuss or debate. Usually, it means conversation, in which the debaters consider what kinds of meanings they give to the ideas they are constructing together. The concept “dialogism” can also refer to a certain philosophical orientation. The roots of dialogical philosophy are in ancient Greece, in Socrates’ radical way of teaching and Plato’s written form of dialogue (Alhonen 2016, 24–26). Of the modern representatives of dialogical philosophy, we can mention, e.g., Martin Buber, Mikhail Bakhtin and Emmanuel Levinas (see, e.g., Pruuki 2009 and Hankamäki 2003). In the areas of pedagogy and education, Paolo Freire’s pedagogy of solidarity is based on the dialogical approach (Freire 2005).

The common feature of all kinds of dialogical orientations is the emphasis on interaction between human beings. Individuals or communities are always in an interactive relationship with each other. “Dialogue” means both “an interaction” and “an approach to enable the interaction” in different situations. In this article, I use the word “dialogue” when referring to the interaction between two or more beings. Dialogue is not just a kind of conversation; it is interaction that is based on equality. When referring to a dialogical approach, I use the concept “dialogicity”, while the term “dialogism” refers to the philosophical orientation.

The etymological review of the term “dialogue” reveals that there are connotations between *dia-* and *duo-/di-* in the sense that the word “dialogue” emphasizes two (or more) discourses instead of one. At the same time, “dialogue” (Greek *dia* + *logos*) means that something happens “through words” (Ringgaard Lorensen 2014, 14). These two basic connotations are relevant also when reflecting the themes of this article.

Triune God: Fellowship of Equal Persons

The first meaning of the term “dialogue” brings up two (or more) discourses instead of one. In Christian theology, there is a strong emphasis of interactivity and being in a relation. The classical Christian doctrine of Trinity maintains that God is one substance and exists in three Persons: “*Una substantia, tres personae*”. The three Persons of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – are in real interaction with each other (Pihkala 2009, 112–113, see also Pihkala 1997, 94–108). God can also be understood as a fellowship of equal Persons rather than a hierarchical entity. At the same time, Christian anthropology has an idea of humans being in a personal relationship with God, other people and creation.

The doctrine of a Trinitarian God was formed during the first Christian centuries and can be found in early Christian creeds and confessions, in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed and the Athanasian Creed. The doctrine of a triune God cannot explicitly be found in the Bible (Pihkala 2005, 90–91, 110–111; McGrath 2012, 335–336). However, the doctrine can be inferred from biblical claims, e.g., from the Great Commission: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:16–20.)

The origin of the concept of “Person” (lat. *persona*) lies in the ancient roman theatre, where it meant a theatrical mask and theatrical character or role in the play (McGrath 2012, 281–282, 37; Luoma 2000, 13–14). Church father Tertullian was the first who used the term “Person” trying to explain the essence of God. He wanted to emphasize the relational being of God. The concept of person refers to a role an individual is playing in an interpersonal network. The main idea expressed by the concept of “a personal God” is a God with whom human beings can have a relationship. This relationship is analogous to that which we could have with other human persons (McGrath 2012, 281–282, Luoma 2000, 13–14).

This interaction within the Trinity is full of love – and furthermore, God *is* love, and He also gives this love to human beings. 1 John says: “Dear friends, let us love one another, for love becomes from God. Everyone who

loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.” (1 John 4: 7–8.)

With his infinite love, God creates the world and mankind. The world and human beings were born in this interactive, loving relation with God (Pihkala 2009, 114–115). In the beginning of Genesis, there is a verse describing how God is somehow talking with himself: “Let us make a man in our image, in our likeness.” (Gen. 1: 26.) God wanted to create man to be in a relationship with him.

Call to Dialogue: Man as a God-created Being

As a created being, man is an image of God, *Imago Dei* (Pihkala 2009, 134). Every human being’s absolute dignity and uniqueness is based on this creation and being an image of God. The dignity of a human being comprises the soul and the spirit as well as the body.

“Man” also means the whole of mankind. The *Imago Dei*, the likeness of God, can also be interpreted to mean that we human beings form God’s image together. In Genesis, there is a story about God creating a man: “... the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and the man became a living being.” (Gen. 2:7.) The Hebrew word for man, *adam*, is also the name “Adam”.

Imago Dei means that every man is intended to live in relation to God. *Imago Dei* highlights that in creating man, God created a being to whom He can talk to and who listens to him. God does not invite man to receive the Truth passively, but to active and reflective interaction. God reveals himself in many ways to human beings; He, for example, speaks through Biblical texts and theological traditions like prayers and songs.

Man was created for dialogical, interactive relationships. Dialogue is interaction between two beings, two persons. Buber has an analysis of dialogue and the idea of a “person”; the title of his main work was “I and You” (Buber 1999). The term “person” points to the meaning of being in relationships.

Buber underlined the basic dialogical dimension of human life. A human being is always in two kinds of relations: “I–It–relations” and “I–You–relations”. These concepts do not refer to existent beings, but specifically to being in relations. The attitudes are also related to these relationships. Only an I–You relationship can mean a real, authentic encounter between two beings. An I–It relationship always involves the tendency to categorize and objectify (McGrath 2012, 283–284). Because of that, all encounters between people should be based on I–You–relations.

Man is created for relations: he/she has a relationship with God, with other human beings and with creation. Human reality cannot have only I-centred interpretations. A human being comes into existence through other people and relations. The person “I” cannot grow and develop without fellow human beings and the creation around it.

The Trinity has been a challenging and perplexing concept throughout the history of the Christian Church (McGrath 2012, 329). There have been, and still are, many controversies and different kinds of explanations of the structure and real meaning of the Trinitarian doctrine. At the same time, there is a common understanding in the Christian faith that to human beings, the essence of God always stays somehow hidden and mysterious. The classical doctrine of Trinity can be considered an attempt to express that God is living and dynamic (Pihkala 2009, 111). He is present in the everyday life of human beings, but at the same time, He is an almighty God incomprehensible for human wisdom.

Christ as Logos

The other connotation of the term “dialogue”, *dia + logos*, means that something happens “through words” (Ringgaard Lorensen 2014, 14). In Christology, “the Logos” (Greek *Λόγος*) is the title of Christ. The roots of this doctrine are in the prologue to the Gospel of John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John 1:1.) God has revealed and still reveals himself through His Word and in His Word. The incarnated Son and all that the Bible speaks about Him is God’s announcement to human beings, to mankind. Incarnation means that God is actively interested in the cosmos (Pihkala 1997, 312–313).

In Luther’s theology, there is the core idea of Christ present in faith. Finnish Luther researcher Tuomo Mannermaa (2005) writes:

“The idea that Christ is both God’s favor (*favor*) and God’s gift (*donum*) permeates the entire theology of Luther. “Favor” signifies God’s forgiveness and the removal of His wrath. In other words, “favor” is the attitude toward the human being in the “subject” of God. Christ as a “gift”, in turn, denotes the real self-giving of God to the human being.” (Mannermaa 2005, 19.)

Luther calls this event by many names, one of which is “happy exchange”. According to Mannermaa, the most accurate expression might be “communication of attributes”, which describes the main idea well (Mannermaa

2005, 21). In Luther's thinking, the doctrine of incarnation is most closely connected with that of justification. The second person of Trinity, the Logos, "did not regard it as something to be exploited", to be in the form of God, but in His infinite love, "took the form of a slave by becoming a human being" (Phil. 2:6). Luther explains that Christ really has and bears the sins of all human beings, which is why Christ is the greatest and the only sinner (Mannermaa 2005, 13). Mannermaa underlines that it is necessary to appreciate that the victory of the forces of sin and destruction takes place within Christ's own person: "Sin, death, and curse are first conquered in the person of Christ, and 'thereafter' the whole of the creation is to be transformed through His person. Salvation is participation in the person of Christ." (Mannermaa 2005, 16.)

Mannermaa (1992) also writes that the roots of diakonia are deep in the atonement between God and the human being. God himself is the "Word", which man will be involved with in faith. Christ, as the Word of God, is united with man, so that man can be Word, and all people can "be Christs" for each other in mutual relationships (Mannermaa 1992, 90).

Lutheran doctrine emphasizes that God is really engaged in human reality; nothing in human life is strange to Him. God's interest is directed towards the things that are humanly, not dignified and glorious. In his Heidelberg Disputation (1518), Luther presents his theology of two kinds of loves – God's love and human love. The nature of human love is basically selfish; it seeks its own good. The objects of human love are always things that are worth loving; men and women love things that they can enjoy and which make them happy. Human love also leads people to seek God through human wisdom and good deeds (Kopperi 2007, 146–147).

God's love is the opposite. It is not based on the good attributes of human beings or good deeds, but on God's own good will. God's love does not seek its own good. Rather, it flows and bestows good. God's love seeks that which is worthless in itself and donates not only gifts but itself (Kopperi 2014, 48–55, see also Mannermaa 1999, 9–11). God's self-giving love was expressed on the cross. This can be considered the most profound act of hospitality.

The theology of the two kinds of love is associated with Luther's concepts of two kinds of theologies: the theology of the cross and the theology of honour. For human beings, it is natural to seek honour and dignity, things that are prominent and valuable. In the same way, human beings also seek God and His presence in places where there seems to be power and majesty.

God, however, reveals himself through totally different kinds of attributes, namely through human vulnerability, weakness and suffering. God's

deity in Christ is hidden in His humanity, His power in His weakness, the righteousness in sin, life in death and Heaven in Hell (Kopperi 2007, 149–150, see also Mannermaa 1992, 93).

According to the theology of love and the theology of the cross, Church work, and especially diakonia, should go for what is humanly insignificant and worthless, shameful and wretched. The presence of Christ in a Christian brings out the love of the neighbour. The “Christ in us” is a personal reality, which is not meant to stay just our own property, but which should be donated forward (Kopperi 2007, 152–153).

The Theology of Dialogic Encounter

In this article, I looked for answers to three questions: Could “dialogue” and “dialogicity” be defined in Christian concepts and in connection with the Christian tradition? Is it possible to justify dialogue as a fundamental approach in parish work and especially in diakonia? And if it is possible, could dialogue and dialogicity be a joint basis for professional interaction in diakonia, Christian education and the Church’s youth work?

I think the answer to all the questions is yes. The classical doctrines of Trinity and Christology seem to give us both a basis and all the elements to define the concept of dialogue. The core idea of Trinity is dialogic: The Trinitarian doctrine builds a picture of God that is a relational being who – in His infinite love – is interested in mankind and every single human being. In many ways, He invites human beings to be in relations; being in relation to God, to one’s neighbour and to creation are the base relations of human beings. This God also listens to human beings and wants to be present in their everyday life.

This dialogue between God and human beings is radical in that it is full of love and clears all obstacles which prevent man or mankind from being in a dialogical relation. A Trinitarian God is at the same time the idea of a dialogical relationship between persons and the dialogue (*dia + logos*) that makes it possible for man to encounter God. The report of the Lutheran/Roman Catholic Study Commission summarises this as: “What God has done for the salvation of the world in Jesus Christ is transmitted in the gospel and made present in the Holy Spirit. The Gospel as a proclamation of God’s saving action is therefore itself a salvation event.” (Gospel and the Church 1972, see also Kärkkäinen 2014, 18–19.) The Word of God includes the narrative of God’s infinite love, and at the same time, it also gives this love to mankind. God is both the giver and the gift.

This dialogue happens not only in our minds and souls, but comprises the whole human being. Incarnation demonstrates that God's interest and love also concerns bodily presence. He was born a man and lived and died a man. In the Church's work, we should also view human beings holistically. In the Bible, there are texts about the human soul, spirit and heart (See, e.g., 1. Thessalonians 5:25; Matthew 22:37; Luke 10:27 and Hebrews 4:2). Human beings exist and interact with their whole being. This also means constant interaction between the disciples of social care work, health care work and also with the arts. Sometimes, it is diakonia's task to defend the holistic approach in these fields, which takes spirituality into account (Jokela 2010; Gothóni & Jantunen 2010, Kotisalo & Rättyä 2014).

These ideas of dialogicity can form a basis for encounters in diakonia, youth work, early Christian education and pastoral care. Their working methods and focuses may vary, but the core idea of being in relations, the theology of dialogic encounter, is the same. In diakonia, it is possible to study and exploit, for example, the dialogic methods of social care work like anticipation dialogues and network-type working methods. In Church youth work, it is necessary to get acquainted with the critical pedagogy (Häkkinen 2016, 137–149). In the field of early childhood Christian education, it is important to study “the pedagogy of wondering” (Luodeslampi 2013, 46–59) and Children's theology. In all these fields, the starting point is the interaction between equal persons.

The Challenges to Dialogue with “Others”

The doctrines of Trinity and Christology tell us something essential about God and His presence. At the same time, they are only human enterprises towards the idea of God: The essence of God stays always hidden and mysterious.

The *Imago Dei* and the likeness of God mean that in the same way God is mysterious, human beings are also mysterious to each other. In interpersonal relations, we are always somehow hidden and shrouded in mystery. In professional encounters, we cannot know or anticipate the other person's situation or his/her thoughts or expectations. The processes of human life are not rational and predictable, but quite unexpected and sometimes irrational.

I think that the approach in Church work should also be based on the recognition of the mystery in interpersonal relations and the equality and uniqueness of the other person. The only means to reach another person's

inner world and his/her experiences is to be present and listen to him/her in a shared moment.

The thought of mystery comes quite close to the concepts of “other” and “otherness” in dialogical philosophy. Levinas, for example, emphasizes that we have to find a way to consider the human interactions, so that the other person, “the other”, can maintain his/her otherness. According to Levinas, “the ethic is the first philosophy” (Jokinen 1997, 7–8).

Seikkula and Arnkil (2014) find that when searching for the core of dialogicity in relational practices, they had to emphasize respect for the other, the unique otherness of the other (Seikkula & Arnkil 2014, 6–7). In his study about dialogic education, Veli-Matti Värri (2004) suggests that an ethically justified education has three preconditions: 1) Reality is basically a mystery, an unresolved issue to the instructor, too; 2) The disciple is a unique other person; 3) The disciple has his/her own future, which is transcended and oblivious to his/her educator.

Värri also points to the meaning of a person’s bodily presence: “We are experiencing subjects because of our bodily presence.” (Värri 2004, 47–50.) The mystery also concerns our bodily beings. The relation between oneself and another subject requires communication and sameness, but at the same time, the other one is also “other”, and there have to be differences between us (Värri 2004, 54–55).

I think these are in many ways ethical questions that are also related to themes of power and authority in the Church’s work. In Finland, Ulla Jokela (2011) has studied the role of diakonia work in people’s everyday life. The results indicate that there are holistic and respectful practices in diakonia work, but also hidden elements of humiliation in the exchange ratio. The ethos of holistic encounters and emphatic practices turned out to prioritise spirituality over the bodily being. Awareness of the oppressive practices and reviewing them critically are the means to develop diakonia work (Jokela 2011, 183–198).

The Church is living and acting in a social context full of polarization and in an increasingly multicultural and multi-faith context. The Lutheran World Federation has published a report titled “Seeking Conviviality”, which emphasizes the meaning of listening and accompanying and points out that the dialogical principle in human life is also a diaconal principle (Seeking Conviviality, 12–13). To the Church’s work, the theology of dialogicity means a constant reminder to look outward and to interact with people from different backgrounds and life situations. Due to the radical nature of the theology of dialogicity, it leads us to fight against inequality and marginalization in different ways.

At the beginning of this article, I referred to the tension between the ontologies of constructivist philosophies and Christian theology. The tension is real, and I think it is important to be aware of that. At the same time, I think there are no obstacles to making use of dialogical methods based on socio-constructivism or other constructivist theories. The Christian theology of dialogue also challenges us to interact with different philosophies, convictions and views.

Our world needs dialogue and dialogicity: The dialogical approach and attitude are needed in education, work places, public services and politics. They are needed in confluences of religions, nations and ideologies – in situations where people with different kinds of experiences and views meet each other. Because of its theology, the Christian Church has a responsibility to be in dialogue and to create dialogue between people and communities.

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1.4 YOUTH DIACONIA – WHAT IT IS AND HOW DID IT START – CASE TAMPERE

Abstract

This article describes the developmental phases of youth diaconia of Tampere parishes in Finland. First, there is an overview of the birth and growth of Christian youth work in the Lutheran Church of Finland, and then, a more detailed historical description of the beginning of the youth work in Tampere parishes follows. The focal points were Sunday school work with boys' and girls' groups separately and gatherings of confirmed youth, who were over 15 years old, but at the end of the 1930s, just before the Second World War, more structured youth work with youth pastors and youth leaders began.

The beginning of youth diaconia was based on observations of how the “gangs” or street youth needed different kinds of meeting places than the devoted “parish youth”. In the late 1960s, youth cafés were arranged both in the city centre and the suburbs. In 1970, Youth Counseling Service started for youths who had recently moved to the city and those confronted with troubles. Youth leaders visited prisons, meeting young prisoners, and from the summer 1972 on, they offered their help at rock festivals in different parts of Finland for youths in distress with many volunteers. In the years 1973–75, the Youth Diaconia Center also maintained a shelter for intoxicated youth.

After this phase of sharp diaconal ideas, youth diaconia was changed to “special youth work” as a separate unit from other youth work, but with more traditional working methods. In the parish leadership, youth diaconia and its objectives had been seen as too radical. New emphasis was put on precautionary work with 12–15-year-old youngsters and opened its doors for them. Typical work in the 1980s was community projects in newly built suburbs and close co-operation with schools. Special youth work preserved many of its work meth-

ods, but grew closer to ordinary Christian parish youth work and its methods. Regular Christian youth work was easier than taking care of those who have severe problems.

The situation stayed quite stable before the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, when the project model reached parish work as well. However, most projects with separate funding were not especially new, as evaluated by their aims. The real big change took place in 2007, when special youth work as a special unit completely ceased. It merged with diaconia work and formed a new unit – Family and Youth Diaconia Unit Messi. Its main task was to reach youth and young families, which have not been reached out to by such services, for which they are justifiable. This work was done together with schools, social work of the municipality and many NGOs. In Tampere, the name of special youth work was no longer used, but replaced by youth diaconia once more.

Introduction

In this article, my aim is to describe the starting point and development phases of special youth diaconia in Finland. I do not deal with the historical development in the whole of Finland and its majority church, The Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland, but I concentrate on Lutheran parishes of Tampere, the third largest city of Finland with 225 000 inhabitants (2015). There is also emphasis on Christian education of youth, the needs and the societal situation in the beginning, and then, with examples from Tampere parishes, I will present the birth and growth of youth diaconia.

For this methodologically historical research, I have collected my material, mostly archival documents, from the archives of the parishes of Tampere. This article is based on my larger historical research of youth work in parishes of Tampere in the years 1930–2010, *Nuori Tampere – Seurakuntien nuorisotyö Tampereella 1930 – 2010* (Young Tampere – Youth Work in Tampere Parishes in 1930–2010). More accurate documentation can be found in my book. (Malkavaara 2013.)

Attention to Youth

One of the big differences between the Lutheran church of Finland and other comparable churches is the status, quality and organization of its youth work with degree-educated employees. In year 2015, there were about 20 300 employees in the church, of whom 3600 (almost 18 per cent) worked with children and youth.

The rise of youth work belongs to the same wave which launched the Temperance Movement, the Women's Movement, the Voluntary Fire Brigade Movement and the early Labor Movement in the late 19th century. The components of life were no longer only individual, family, village and crown. The sphere of life was rapidly changing to a civil society, network of people, their opinions, desires and aspirations, which could be expressed in newspapers and magazines, or they could change to determine work in different societies. In Finland, this change began in the 1860s, but more so in the 1880s. It can also be seen through nationalism and in construction work for the Finnish society. The Grand Principality of Finland was a part of the Russian Empire from 1809 to 1917. During the 19th century, the ideas of national identity and Finland as a nation strengthened. National liberalism united the modernization of the society and the formation of a national mind. Industrialization started in Finland relatively late, but rather fast. Therefore, in comparison with Sweden, similar folk movements began in both countries on almost the same schedule. (Klinge 1980, 11–12, 28–41; Antikainen 2006, 14; Jussila 2007, 232–243, 293–297; Lund 2007, 17–18, 22.)

Estate-based societal structure was in the process of breaking. Changes in economic life mitigated the limits between the estates. The traditional nobility had always been small in number in Finland, and now, it was losing its power. In cities and towns, there was a new type of middle class growing, whose status depended more on tasks and earnings, not on birth. New associations and societies did not always gather people from one societal group only, but they united different circles together and, thus, speeded up the breakdown of the estate society.

The change of the young generation started in school. In rural areas, a 12-year-old could be taken to work – and the same happened in the early phase of industrialization also – but in the 1880s, because of the child welfare rules in cities, there was no work available for children who had finished school. Inspirers of early youth work were those young people, who in the eyes of the adults suffered from idleness and inactivity and problems caused by them. Thus, the first motive for organized youth activities was fear. (Kortekangas 1965, 118–133; Halila 1980, 294–303; Jaakkola 1994, 77–80, 143–153.)

Gradually, youngsters were no longer seen as individual young persons, but as representatives of a larger group – the youth. The idea of collectively shared youth was born among the youngsters themselves. Youth was considered a special age between childhood and adulthood. The joint experience of a similar age period began to create youth movements and their

own culture of youth. At the same time, the significance of youth as consumers and influential persons grew. Soon, a competition of the youth began between different types of actors, who represented sports, scouts, labour movement and churches. When the church youth work had advanced far enough, it became clear that it was one of those competitors that went against the time and the interests of youth.

The development of society was so fast that the young generation grew up differently from their parents. This caused anxiety and new kinds of activities, too. The first associations for youth were founded in 1881, but when their central organization was founded in 1897, their membership was over 13 000, and in 1905, about 40 000. The expansion of the youth association movement was astonishing in speed. The youth associations put together a national awakening and public education. When the socialist labour movement started to acknowledge youth associations, other political groups followed. At the same time, sports clubs became more popular. The youth had really been discovered. (Jaakkola 1994, 79, 101; Lund 2007, 18, 21, 23–30; Malkavaara 2013, 23–24.)

The Birth of Youth Work of the Church

The Lutheran church was one of many who started activities for young people in 1880s. Its immediate reason to join this wave was challenge experienced by the Free Churches. There were vital groups of youth among Free Church awakenings. Also, among university students, there were new types of organized Christian circles. The first Lutheran association for young people was founded in 1886, but the world conference of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in Stockholm in 1888 was the deciding factor. Some prominent Finnish participants proposed that YMCAs should be founded in Finland, too. Because YMCA is alliance-based (cross-denominational), some Lutheran pastors demanded that the basis for YMCA in Finland should be Evangelical Lutheran by confession. While others did not accept this, the Imperial Senate of Finland accepted in 1889 bylaws of both associations, YMCA and the youth association of the Evangelical revival movement. The latter insisted on the importance of the Lutheran confession. In 1900, there were 24 local YMCAs, and five years later, the number was 43, but almost none in the countryside. (Juva 1960, 227–230; Heikkilä 1979, 34–35, 43, 75–77; Lund 2007, 18–20.)

Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) was founded for young women in 1896. Its growth was also fast. In 1905, there were more members

in local YWCAs than in corresponding young men's associations. Lutheran Student Christian Movement in Finland was founded in 1897 and joined the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) from the beginning. (Heikkilä 1979, 36–37, 43, 76–77; Pietikäinen 1997, 3–6; Antikainen 2006, 7.)

In 1905, Finnish WMCAs formed a union, an umbrella organization. For the future of the Christian youth work, it was decided to also accept women's membership. This led to the establishment of Christian Associations of Youth, whose numbers grew rapidly. In the 1920s, there were around 160 new mixed associations, and only some 20 YMCAs for young men only. Christian Associations of Youth extended its youth work to the rural areas. They were independent associations, but worked in close contact with local parishes. Before the breakthrough of the church youth work by the parishes themselves, these associations took care of the Christian youth work in Finland. (Heikkilä 1979, 36, 85, 113, 120–121, 131, 153; Lund 2007, 33–36; Malkavaara 2013, 25–37.)

The Beginning of Christian Youth Work in Tampere Parishes

The first Sunday Schools were organised in Finland as early as the 1780s, which took place in the Orimattila parish in southern Finland but was left unique to the area. Real work in developing Sunday Schools started in the 1830s, according to models from abroad. Sunday school activities advanced in different ways in different parts of Finland; the Evangelical-Lutheran Sunday School Association of Finland was not founded until 1888. (Kansanaho 1988, 8–48.)

In Tampere, Sunday school activities started in 1881. In the beginning, they were organized by the Tampere City Mission, an association for diaconia work and Sunday Schools. These new and modern working methods could not be arranged directly by the parish at that time, and therefore, this kind of liaison partner was needed. In 1907, when the population of Tampere was around 40 000, the number of Sunday school children was 2000. Sunday schools reached almost all children between five and twelve.

Activities for boys and girls in the form of special clubs for Christian education started in Tampere from the beginning of 1900s. Vicar Waldemar Walli suggested the Tampere City Mission to start work with poor children under the confirmation age of 15. The parish was able to finance the work. Two male deacons, August Hurme and Juho Wirtanen, launched the project. In 1909, there were already more than 300 boys in their clubs. (Malkavaara 2013, 18, 29.)

The starting point for work with confirmed youth over 15 took place in Tampere in 1908, when Pastor Kustaa Hallio invited his recently confirmed youth to gatherings of their own for the first time. These meetings went on until 1916, when Pastor Hallio moved from Tampere. Active youth work for those who really wanted to commit themselves to Christian values was started from 1913 by Mission awakening in Tampere. Youth of Mission was founded in 1914. For a few decades, it was very influential. When it was organized as an association in the beginning of the 1920s, its membership was around 150.

The first Scout group was founded in Tampere as early as 1910, only three years after Lord Robert Baden-Powell founded the Scout organization, but it was halted by the Russian authorities. It started again in 1917, the year of Finland's independence. In the beginning, it had an elitist label, but was democratized later, when WMCA started their scout activities. For the last 70 years, Tampere parishes have been close partners and supporters of scouts in Tampere.

The Civil War in Finland in 1918, right after the declaration of independence, divided the people, including members of the church, into white winners and red losers. Tampere was the scene of decisive battles between the red defenders of the labour city and the white conquerors, who came from north and east. Thousands of lives were lost and even more were taken to prison camps. The atmosphere was depressing, two-fold and problematic for a long time. Bitterness was on both sides, which did not help in creating the new. Parish work was quite conservative for many years. The main method of youth work was confirmation schools. In the year 1930, pastors Kristian Tammio and Yrjö Hirvonen invited their recently confirmed former pupils to a special gathering. Around 100 young people came. That "Youth of congregation" was the beginning for youth work in Tampere. (Malkavaara 2013, 27, 29–30, 32–33.)

1930s: The Decisive Decade

Tampere was not the only place with new plans for church youth work. After the independence and the Civil War, it became more obvious that parishes could start different kinds of work models themselves, without the help of special associations. That was the starting point of new parish work. One of the pioneers of a new type of parish work was A. W. Kuusisto, who was elected Vicar of the Northern parish of Helsinki in 1925. He saw the needs of the youth and invited Pastor Heimer Virkkunen to be the first

full-time youth pastor in the history of Finnish Lutheran church to his parish in 1930. Virkkunen earlier worked at the Student Christian Movement. He is famous for introducing volley ball to Finland.

In Tampere, the gatherings of youth continued without any special resources. Some pastors understood its value and wanted to be with the youth. The starting point in Tampere was different from the decisions in Helsinki. In Tampere, parish leadership wanted to find a capable full-time youth leader for work with boys. This was Tuure Laitinen, who had already developed work with boys with the Ahjola settlement in western side labour suburbs of Tampere. He started in the Cathedral parish of Tampere in 1933. At the same time, the responsibility of girls' clubs and other activities with girls was given to Deaconess Tyyne Jakobsen.

As a result, diverse and modern activities were developed. Laitinen saw that the work would need a permanent base in the countryside for summer camps and for all-year-round use as well. A suitable place was found in 1935, an island called Isosaari of lake Näsijärvi, around 35 kilometres from Tampere by road, but by boat, notably less. In the beginning, Isosaari was specifically place limited for boys' work, but some girls' summer camps were arranged there already in the late 1930s, too. Later, it became one of the most traditional places for confirmation camps.

Late 1930s was a time of development of youth work in the parish of Tampere. First full-time youth leaders for girls were employed in 1939, and in the same year, the parish decided to also employ a youth pastor for young people after confirmation age (15). This was Pastor Oke Peltonen, but, unfortunately, because of the Second World War, he did not have too much time to develop his work before he was called to serve the army. (Malkavaara 2013, 33–57.)

Active Youth Work in the 1950s and 1960s

War time in 1939–1945 influenced everything, but youth work was not interrupted. The boys took care of Isosaari, even though Tuure Laitinen served in the battlefronts, and boys' and girls' clubs continued their action. For youth work, there were many short-term pastors. One big issue during the war years was to find a permanent summer house for youth, instead of houses rented for one summer season. A place was found after the war, in 1948, and became the centre of summer time's activities for a few decades.

A new innovation of confirmation camps took place in Nurmijärvi, near Helsinki, in 1935. After the war, in late 1940s, this innovation was put

into a real planning process by the Student Christian Movement. The first confirmation camp of Tampere parishes took place in summer of 1953 in Isoaari, the traditional place for boys' camps.

Youth work in Tampere parishes in the 1950s and 1960s can be considered very active. There were big gatherings, many kinds of activities, and the amount of participants was high. One indicator of the quality and intensity of youth work of those times can be seen in how many coming pastors, youth leaders, deaconesses, deacons and other influential persons for the church it brought together, but we must be aware of the reverse, as well. That kind of youth work did not really touch lower-class families. Parish youth came mainly from middle class, and pupils in first confirmation camps in those days came mostly from grammar schools.

Before the big school renewal in the 1970s, less than 30 per cent of school pupils went to grammar schools. Thus, the church reached a lot of youth from upper and middle classes, but not so many from the lower ones. The societal class differences were seen in other practices of confirmation schools. For grammar school pupils who did not choose the confirmation camps, confirmation school was offered at school, during the school hours, and it was shorter, because they had religion lessons at school. Confirmation schools for the majority were still traditional and took place in the evenings. It was relatively rare that any participant of these confirmation classes would join the youth of congregation. (Malkavaara 2013, 59–92, 96–148, 161–166.)

The First Starts of Youth Diaconia

Pastors and youth leaders were well-aware of differences between youth groups, but nothing special was done before the late 1950s, when talk of the need of special gang work began. The first solutions to this in the late 1950s and early 1960s was a youth café in the city centre. The place became very popular among the youth and also attracted the youth of the streets. The activity had to be discontinued because of cooperation difficulties between employees. The responsibility of the project was shared between different parishes, but a café in the city centre did not interest parish workers of the suburbs. Most probably the main reason was the fact that there were not many in the parish leadership who understood the significance of this kind of work.

One gang of youngsters from the western part of Tampere took over the old summer house of youth work. Times had changed, and parish youth did not need this kind of common summer place any more. Thus, in the summer 1966, the visitors changed from parish youth to the youth of the streets.

This observation was important. In the next autumn, more organized action started. The spirit of time in the late 1960s emphasized social responsibility, and now, “the youth of the streets” were called to big gatherings. This did not mean any real diaconal activities, but it was a new beginning to building bridges to those who had been forgotten. Gradually, big gatherings changed to more social working methods and supporting young people in their difficulties. (Malkavaara 2013, 146–148, 171–172, 174–175, 178–179.)

Special Youth Work Established in Early 1970s

Tampere was not alone. Especially in Helsinki and in some other bigger cities, experiences were quite similar. The training for work with “gangs” was organized by the church in 1968. In Tampere, parishes’ new youth cafés for gangs were started in four different places in the same year. Their focus was on “troubled youth”.

New organization for youth work in Tampere parishes was established in 1970. The work was divided into different boards. One of them was the Board for Youth Diaconia, but it changed its name soon after to the Board for Special Youth Work. This expression – “special youth work” was used in other parts of Finland and is still mainly used instead of “youth diaconia” in the parishes of the Lutheran church of Finland.

With the Family Counseling Center of Tampere, parishes’ special youth work opened in 1970 Youth Counseling Service for youth who had recently moved to the city and those confronted with troubles. In the same year, there were already eight youth cafés for gangs. Emphasis was on seeking work, looking for youth who had problems, but did not appear in cafés or gatherings. Special clubs were arranged for Roma youth and for boys who were not able to adapt to cafés and other youth coming to them. The youth workers of special youth work visited young prisoners from Tampere in order to help them after their release. (Malkavaara 2013, 211–212.)

Youth Diaconia?

Later in the 1970s, special youth work was again defined as “youth diaconia” in Tampere. The focus of the work was mainly in diaconal aid and counselling, not that much on youth work. In 1976, direct material aid, food and clothing were given to 1498 young people with the biggest need.

Visits in prisons continued. Youth clubs and cafés were both in suburbs and in the city centre. One new method from the summer, 1972 was to go

to big rock festivals in different parts of Finland on a minibus to give aid for youth in distress. Later, in 1975, “Operation Boot” (Operaatio Saapas) began its activities as service of the whole church with the same service idea. For example, in 1977, the Boot-group of Tampere took 34 youths to hospital, gave first aid to 60 youths, accompanied 70 intoxicated youths to recovery and had discussions with more than 800 youths. 55 persons belonged to the service group, many of whom were nurses.

The number of clients of the Youth Counseling Service grew gradually. In 1974, there were 1317 young people who needed its services, in 1977, the number was already 2010. Youth Counseling Service started in 1976, with a special telephone emergency service for youth. Also, those seeking work grew in number. In the mid-1970s, in the city centre, there were street patrols almost every night. This was based on voluntary work and cooperation with the city of Tampere, A-Clinic Foundation and the Public Probation Association.

In the years 1973–75, the Youth Diaconia Center also maintained a shelter for intoxicated youth. A lack of adequate control and a number of disturbances caused the place to close in December 1975. (Malkavaara 2013, 246–248.)

Warnings: Too Visible and too Radical

In spring, 1978, the board of the youth work of Tampere parishes evaluated its youth diaconia critically. Its working methods were seen as too visible and radical. The board created new guidelines. Big statistical numbers were to be avoided in information work. Its diaconal task was just to bring immediate and concrete aid to those in need.

New emphasis was put on precautionary work with 12–15-year-old youth, opening doors to activities in clubs and cafés continued and even expanded. Youth diaconia was also criticized by conservative parish circles and some pastors, too. The working methods in cafés and clubs caused noise and disturbance in their neighbourhoods and did not guide these youths of the streets closer to the congregation, even though this was its purpose, or so they claimed.

With close cooperation with the city of Tampere, in 1980s, local community projects started in some recently built suburbs. The most important took place in Hervanta, a satellite town of Tampere, located about 10 kilometres south from the centre. The biggest problem of a successful project was its unpopularity with the vicar and faithful parish activists. (Malkavaara 2013, 280–283, 288–289.)

Diaconal Ideas Darken

One new innovation idea was to start a Christian disco in the city centre's traditionally popular dancing place Linnasali in 1982. A starting point for this was the concern for increased use of alcohol and other intoxicants among the youth. This also worried Bishop Paavo Kortekangas, who along with Governor Risto Tainio, sent a letter to all parishes and municipalities, asking for more concern over the youth and their future.

The new place got the name Linnadisko and pursued contact with youths, who wandered the streets of the city centre as a habit. From the beginning, in October 1982, it was a success. It gathered 500 youths on Saturday nights, though there was a lot of gospel music among the pop and rock music. Because of heavy criticism by the parish conservatives, the activities were changed to a youth café. After careful negotiations and new plans, the special youth work took responsibility for the place, together with local YMCA and YWCA.

During a couple of years, activity in Linnadisko was lively; on every Saturday, there were 300–500 young people. In the fall, 1985, an experiment was conducted on new styles of practices. Activities in Linnadisko were changed to club evenings, where new gospel bands mostly from Tampere got the possibility for performance. The audience, the youth, was not interested in this more religious style and conscious hijack of the place by devoted youth. The place became quiet, and soon, the activities were discontinued. The main reason was continuous criticism, which also caused a change of the programme.

Cooperation with schools expanded, but all more radical and diaconal ways in work became diluted. Old methods, like open-door clubs, precautionary work, visits to prisons and aid at festivals still continued.

Tampere is an ice-hockey city, famous for its ice-hockey teams Tappara and Ilves. In the early 1980s, youth work of Tampere parishes made a deal with Tappara and Ilves to arrange a camp for their ice-hockey juniors every summer. From the second part of 1980s onwards, in this new atmosphere, even the cooperation with big ice hockey teams was seen as special youth work.

Special youth work did not lose its diaconal tasks and diaconia identity completely in the 1990s, but its work was very much mixed with ordinary Christian parish youth work and its methods. The reasons for this change were many. First, regular Christian youth work is easier than taking care of those who have severe problems in their lives. Second, radical and diaconal special youth work or youth diaconia had received a lot of criticism from inner circles of the parishes. Third, the new leader of special youth work in Tampere, Matti Nyberg, wanted this change. Very obviously, he also want-

ed a very visible role in regular youth work and status in the city because of his activities in city politics. It was very much a question of leadership and competition, and it weakened youth diaconia for years. (Malkavaara 2013, 273–275, 287, 289–290, 307, 314–316, 341–345.)

New Programmes in 2000s – Youth Diaconia

After some years, when the vision of special youth work was partly lost, the new century began with fresh ideas. Open-door clubs were organized in a big network from the city of Tampere and police to many NGOs and sports clubs. Many were concerned about the youth, and by now, they had learned the significance of cooperation and networking. In the year 2000, the number of youths who came to the club evenings was about 340.

One new innovation for the clubs' activities was that they offered working places for youth who were fulfilling community service instead of prison punishment. One new focus of work was helping youth in mediating their crimes. Old methods, prison visits, city patrolling in the night and helping youth during big festivals in Tampere still continued.

Special youth work had close relationships with schools, which had special classes for those suffering from major problems. Special youth workers of the parish organized grouping lessons, gave lessons in parents' evenings, arranged camps, expeditions and hiking trips, even to Lapland.

The beginning of the 2000s was a time of learning to utilize the project model. Strong school cooperation gave motive for a project to help school drop-outs. The goal of the AKU-project (Ammatilliseen Koulutukseen Uralle – To Vocational Education and Work) was to search for youths who had not been able to finish their 9-year school or who had big problems in finding reasonable work or studies after the compulsory school years. The project personally helped these young people and tried to find each of them meaningful continuation to their life. Annually, there were more than 100 youths who received aid from the project. The project was successful and was presented in the media widely. When the project's term of 2000–2005 was over, it became a permanent part of established work of Tampere city.

The project model received increased funds and possibilities, but new ideas were rare. The funds helped create ideas and work models, which were not really new. Among those, there were open-door activities for whole afternoons for youths between 11 and 13 and from 13 to 17. That was realized together with the YMCA.

“Special youth work” was never a very good expression. In spite of that, it is still in use in many parishes. It created an image of work which is separate

from others. The expression polarized the field of youth and youth work, though its purpose was to help youth to integrate themselves into the society and the church. In the late years of depression in the 1990s, there were diaconal elements in all church work with children and youth. It was supported by the project model and the society's desire to give resources to projects which opposed social exclusion of children and youth.

Therefore, in 2007, Tampere parishes started a new Unit of Youth Diaconia, which was included in the diaconia department. The former Unit of Special Youth Work was merged with this new unit. Later, it got a new name. Now it is called Family and Youth Diaconia Unit Messi. Its main task is to reach youth and young families, which have not been reached out to by such services, for which they are justifiable. This work is done together with schools, social work of the municipality and many NGOs. (Malakavaara 2013, 369–372, 398–403.)

The need for special youth diaconia was seen in the 1950s, and started in the 1960s, and was especially keen and efficient in the 1970s, but maybe not professional enough. In those turbulent years, too much was done by the church alone. From the 1980s, professional skills were developed, of which, the ability to create networks and also trust with others was the most important. That was needed in the difficult years of the 1990s, when one fifth of the population was in distress because of the mass unemployment, and in the 2000s, when projects realized by networks became normal. Also, we must remark that especially in the 1980s, criticism by the conservatives was so strong, that they were able to influence the working methods and weaken the project's diaconal aspirations.

In the 1970s, youth diaconia was understood as the correct expression for this work. Otherwise, it was called "special youth work", until Tampere parishes created their Unit for Youth Diaconia in 2007. The change was administrative, when the special youth work was taken away from its earlier background of youth work (Christian education) under the leadership of diaconia work, but it was also principled. The concept of diaconia is different from special youth work.

The scope of youth diaconia is about two generations. Its first grassroots were seen in the late 1960s. In the beginning, it was called "youth diaconia", but soon, it changed its name to special youth work, a name which is still widely used. In many cases, Tampere parishes have been forerunners in the church development in Finland. The future will show whether the vision of youth diaconia will reach other areas and parishes of the Lutheran church of Finland.

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2

**DIACONAL PROFESSIONALISM AND
INSTITUTIONS IN COMMUNITY**

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2.1 SPACES THAT MATTER. DIACONAL PROFESSIONALISM AS RELIGIOUS AVANT-GARDE IN A SECULAR AGE

Abstract

Identities can be linked to who a person is or where she/he is located. This is a difference of inside and outside. In diakonia, one comes into contact with both identity-modes. As modern human beings, professionals in diakonia are looking for a strong “who-identity”, which provides secure grounds in modern welfare-production. Yet, in diaconal practice, one has to be aware of the places of those people who struggle for their human dignity and are in need of help. These spaces matter by challenging the normality of human life. They are linked to ‘other-spaces’ (heterotopias), where one has to discover what to do in this special case also one is experienced in professional care. This “where-identity” is not a noun, but a verb. The diaconal professional becomes the practice he or she is providing at the relevant other-spaces. In this respect, the Good Samaritan is not a metaphor for diaconal practice, but a metonymy for the complexity of caring in a globalized civilization. Theologically speaking, this complexity presents a diaconal triad of boldness in the economy of salvation: imposition, (self-)humiliation, encouragement. With it, diakonia becomes an avant-garde in our times.

Introduction

As you know, the current German Chancellor is Angela Merkel. And she has had a hell of a job in the last few years. She had to stand for her cause in refugee-politics, and it still is a tough fight with her own political camp,

especially the conservative sister party, which is part of Merkel's Big Coalition, opposing her refugee-politics. Last year, it did it openly in public. Meanwhile, it is a more tacit opposition. This is a strange situation: most the people admiring Merkel in Germany have never voted for her or her party, and they do not know if they will do so in the 2017 election. And a significant part of those who voted for her in the last 2013 election, and who belong to her own political party or to the Bavarian sister party, are sceptical if she should continue the job. Then, there are those who are closely related to her by conservative agenda, but who are strictly against all that she does in favour of refugees. They left the political camp of the conservatives and vote for a new populist party at the far right of the political spectrum, which is pretty successful in regions where very few people live from outside Germany. Observers are convinced that this party will make it to the Parliament in 2017.

Some of you may think that you know this situation in diaconal practice. People you think would be in favour of what you are doing are sceptical or even against your goals. And people who never thought they would be in favour of what you are doing are willing to support your agenda. And there is another parallel. It comes out of Merkel's famous phrase from late August last year: "Wir schaffen das – yes, we can". The phrase was not a deliberate decision, strategically set after a long period of intense political debate. Merkel reacted to urgent needs and to human catastrophes caused by the terrible circumstances of the dangerous routes. This revealed a long standing deficit, especially in German politics on migration. Before that, the German Chancellor was almost super-cautious and famous for not taking risks – and all of a sudden, she went for high risks and great uncertainties by a decision based on morality. And by her new politics on refugees, Germany has changed quite a lot. The whole administration is focused on the goal to bring people where they could get help and bring help to places where it can make a difference. It is a heavy logistical task to come to terms with almost a million new refugees – and, of course, Germany is not the only European country to undertake these logistics. Sweden, as you know, has done even more. And still, most people in Germany think that this logistical change was needed, and still, the majority believes that Germany can handle that. Sometimes, this has an undertone of: "who else, if not we Germans".

German politics is certainly not the content of this conference. But one can raise the issue, if Merkel is something like a secular diaconal professional, trying to change a conservative-liberal society into a caring one.

That what applies to her political situation can be said about professional diaconal contexts – a lot of those who are in favour of what happens there cannot do a lot in favour of diakonia. And those who are connected to the work and should be on the side of those doing diakonia professionally are sceptical about what is done. In a lot of cases, diakonia has not the time for long deliberate discussions on an issue, but one has to react pretty quickly to needs when they come forward. And those who are in the centre of diaconal attention – people in need of help – have a hard time being accepted as rightly being at this centre, because of the pressure they create. They have to be afraid of a whole range of resentment against them. So, as politics with a moral agenda, diaconal professionalism is an uphill fight. How can you bring help where it belongs or people to resources they need?

In this sense, diakonia belonging to the centre of Christian faith is challenging those standing for it. It is an essential part of the human logistics the Christian Gospel is claimed to be. I would like to bring forward this logistic-aspect in diakonia, and I will concentrate on the topology of the logistic question. Topology was first discovered in the 18th century in mathematics. One major inventor was Euler, and the Seven Bridges of Königsberg is considered a classical problem – Is it possible to cross all seven bridges once and only once, ending up where you started? The result is negative, and it laid foundation for the graph theory. In other words: In following logistic lines, one has to look to the resources available and combine them in a relational way to each other and relative to the problem you have to solve. And sometimes, you have to twist them like the Moebius Strip, which is another part of topology.

In the case of diakonia, it is at one side secular economy, as in the case of Merkel's politics, which is fiercely opposed for the economic costs of her diaconal politics. In the case of religiously based diakonia, the relevant economy is also the economy of salvation, which means there is a sort of twist in this logistics. Sometimes, this economy is a counter-conduct to the usual economical goals, but all the same, it is searching for places where the Gospel has meaning. Economy of salvation has to solve the problem of how the Gospel reaches the places where it belongs. It is a topological problem, and so, this shall be my working thesis – in diaconal professionalism, one can get to places where the Gospel belongs to, but in order to achieve that, space matters. What are the presuppositions to do that?

Diaconal Professionalism Ad Intra – a Modern Enterprise of the Gospel

One may start the logistic enterprise with those who actually do it and what diaconal professionalism is. That is the classical way to raise the issue – it is the modern way for identifying somebody or something. That what or who somebody or something is can be taken for coming to terms with its, her or his identity. For identifying a person or a subject, one has to go *ad intra*. In this line, identification starts with the person or the reality and tries to find something out of it which can characterize the subject. This applies to diaconal professionalism as well, and then, only out of this professionalism in diaconal matters one can identify it.

There is an alternative. One may ask *where* diaconal professionalism is. The ‘what’-line and the ‘where’-line go for identification. Yet, the second one is looking for the confrontation an identity cannot avoid including the critical ones, whereas the first identification-line is taking the advantage to concentrate on that what is demonstrating the strength of the subject identified. As modern people, we very much like the who- or what-identity. It gives us security, especially if it is our own identity at stake. So, for people working professionally in diakonia, it is important to look to diaconal professionalism *ad intra*. They identify their existence with what this professionalism is. I will start with this ‘what’-line, trying to find out where it leads to and where its limits are. Then, I will change to the ‘where’-line.

In classical modernity, the normal discourse is that creating professionalism had a rational reason. It was the answer to complex processes that create big differences which have to be resolved. Professionalism enables one to reduce this complexity by controlling the differences. For that reason, each profession has a more or less well-defined field to work with. In this sense, diakonia belongs to the modern mode of Christian faith. It may even be the peak-point of modern Christian faith.

Of course, there is a longer tradition behind it but its focus as a professional activity has always been modern – the reduction of complexity by controlling differences in fields of helping people in need. One may even claim that there was no such professionalism before modernity. The guilds in Medieval Ages and the slave labour in Ancient times were different practices. They follow completely different social grammars and created sort of homogeneous life styles for those who were into these practices. In a profession, one does not follow a homogeneous life style, but rationality according to the problems to be solved. And this applies to diakonia as well, as professional caring practices related to faith, spirituality and religion.

So, I would like to argue here that one cannot have diakonia without modernity. Modernity is something like a presupposition for diaconal professional practices. But, of course, I do not want to say that your modern diaconal professionalism has nothing to do with Jesus, Hildegard of Bingen, Francis of Assisi, Elisabeth of Thuringia etc., but that what Wichern, Bodelschwing, Kolping and others started to do in the 19th century has a different scope. It is attached to another discursive approach and followed other social grammars. The scope, the discourse and the grammar come from modernity, and this means, it is following three rationalities. The *first rationality* is the modern subject, a life form which has to be in control of all aspects of life and, for that reason, needs help if this sovereignty is in jeopardy or even completely lost. And *secondly*, diakonia results from the search of religious communities for their own place within modern, industrialized societies. Its rationality, in this respect, follows the religious ambition not to be pushed to the margins of modern societies and states. Religious communities had to struggle for their importance, and diakonia is one of the most successful results of this struggle. By diakonia, modernity came into the Churches and was established as an unavoidable context for professional actions, at least for the diaconal field. And for that reason, there is a *third rationality* for diaconal professionalism. It is inextricably linked to the modern production of welfare in modern societies.

In der Moderne erfinden sich gewissermaßen die alten Religionsgemeinschaften neu. Caritas und Diakonie sind Ausdruck von zentralen Modernisierungsprozessen im Christentum. Über sie reichen die Kirchen in das für moderne Gesellschaften zentrale Feld der Wohlfahrtsproduktion hinein. (Gabriel 2013, 101.)

This does not mean that diakonia is originally coming from the modern subject, from religious struggling with modern secularism or even from a welfare-state. We all know that very early in Christian religious history, there were deacons and deaconesses which had the money in their hands and organized charity with that. This charity and its organizing practices were done in completely different social circumstances. My point here is that modernity is a derivation for diakonia as professional practice, but not its origin. Without modernity, one cannot realize the discursive activity of diakonia. The difference between origin and derivation – in German: “Ursprung” and “Herkunft” – was discovered by Friedrich Nietzsche in criticizing historicism as an insufficient method to come to terms with

what one finds in history, and it was widely used by the French philosopher Michel Foucault (Foucault 2002).

Based on that, I would argue that diaconal professionalism somewhat follows the classical modern formula: more differences and less complexity. Diakonia is capable of realizing differences with a plurality of diaconal professions and reducing complexity in caring for people in need of help by means of these professional differences. One can see that in the rivalry of theological disciplines as well. The pre-modern disciplines in theology, like dogmatics, have always tried to dominate the discipline of practical theology, and it is looking to diakonia as a second-class consequence of its own discursive knowledge. It is not yet a normal discipline in theological faculties – some have it, others not.

It had developed a sort of hybrid identity between religious motivations for caring practices and modern rationalities for welfare production. This hybrid identity leads to a lot of conflicts on which side has the say – the religious one or welfare production. Within this hybridity, diaconal professionalism has a modernizing impact on the affiliated religious communities. It gives them places, reasons and people to be integrated within modern societies. One can even claim that it means “inculturation” within modern societies.

Die verbandlich wahrgenommene, diakonische Grundfunktion kirchlichen Handelns erbringt damit für die Kirchen wichtige Integrationsleistungen nach innen wie nach außen. Im Innern vermittelt sie zwischen den auseinander strebenden Sektoren der sich zunehmend pluralisierenden Kirchen. Nach außen stellt sie einen Bereich des öffentlichen Lebens dar, in dem Kirche und Gesellschaft neue Verflechtungsformen angenommen haben, die gegenstrukturelle Wirkungen zu Prozessen der Entkirchlichung bzw. Säkularisierung des übrigen gesellschaftlichen Lebens entwickeln. Die kirchlichen Wohlfahrtsverbände erbringen so Inkulturationsleistungen für die christliche Tradition im Kontext der für moderne Gesellschaften zentralen Wohlfahrts- und Sozialkultur wie sie gleichzeitig zu den wichtigsten institutionellen Trägern einer solchen Kultur in der deutschen Gesellschaft gehören. (Gabriel 2013, 105.)

At the same time, this hybridity challenges the pure welfare-rationality. It is even a precarious factor for them by not accepting the whole range of economic efficiency which has become so important in the last decades. And it can even be a precarious counter-conduct, as we see it in the cur-

rent refugee-crisis. The religiously based professionalism of help is a political factor against closing borders and even against identity-politics by international means. Here, it follows a goal like this: “Modernity has a lot of black holes in the welfare universe, and the welfare systems of modern societies cannot liberate themselves from their gravity. But diaconal professionalism is capable of fixing the biggest ones of the black holes. Modern societies do not do enough, but, yes, we modern diaconal professionals, we can.”

But this diaconal “yes we can” immediately has a bigger problem if modernity is in trouble. Diaconal professionalism looks like a Sisyphus, if the modern discourse cannot believe in modernity any more, and each time the stone falls down, it becomes heavier. We have seen for quite some time that people do not believe in the modern without hesitation promises – even if they can report positive results in their cases. And we experience all over Europe that, all of a sudden, big struggles around these promises fill out the public discourse: Is everybody to be included in personal security, respecting human rights and basic health-care? Is it the best we can get to possess a citizenship with privileges, and is it only one of these unfulfilling utopias to have elementary human rights, no matter what the personal life is about? Sometimes, it looks like religiously motivated people belong to a minority, or even that they are the only ones still believing that these dreams may come true. Has modernity left the religious once more, and have we a new gap with the old distance? In my view, this is not the case, because something has changed. It is the role of religion for modern societies.

Diaconal Professionalism Ad Extra – Religion That Matters in a Globalized Civilization

It began to come forward in the early 1960s, more than 50 years ago. There were three events which demonstrated that modernity has entered a new era, was leading to a complete interconnected world all over the Planet. The first is the Cuban Crisis, the second one – the assassination of John F. Kennedy. The third one was a purely internal ecclesial event – the Second Vatican Council of the Catholic Church. That was a big surprise, especially for those who had to decide this Council, i.e. the Bishops. Here, one could see that the role of religion in modernity has changed, and that this role is not a marginal one. The classical thesis of secularism by Max Weber slowly but continuously lost its convincing argument.

It is simply not true, as Weber speculated, that as more secularity is present in a society, the less importance religion will get for the people’s habits. This may sometimes be true for personal life, but it is certainly not true

for public life. The importance of religion is not diminished by secularism, but simply changed. Religious diversity seems to be an important factor in the transformation of modern societies into a globalized civilization. It is a power with global range, because it follows people which migrate, and it is already present where people move to. A diminished flock of the faithful does not mean that this capability is reduced. On the contrary, it is itself a factor for people to become interconnected with others on a global scale.

On the one hand, we have hot global problems such as migration, climate change etc. On the other hand, we have religious ambitions to be part of solving them, because religious people opt for supporting migrants and ecology. There are two sides of the same reality, and religion is a social factor on both sides of the struggle. On the one side, there are people considering themselves to be religious which are very much in favour of keeping the promises of modernity as the right to migrate. On the other side, there are people coming from other cultures – not the least from the Islamic world – which are confronted with habits and legal systems not granting them the same rights as those living in European welfare states due to their religious background. And they react to that by counter-conduct to integration-politics and use religion for it. So, religion can be on both sides.

How can one describe it? Two possible lines of argue were found in the early 1990s. Let us start with the second one, because it is well-known in theological circles. It is José Casanova's speculation on the so-called "public religion", published in 1994 in his book on "Public Religions in the Modern World". He argues that in certain circumstances, in a secular society, religious communities by their own means can provide with an open discourse, with an internal debate, with a resisting practice, which reveals bigger problems within this society, and at the same time, such a community can provide a sort of rational line for society to solve such problems. Casanova's role model for this speculation is Vatican II, especially its pastoral constitution *Gaudium et spes*. Such a public religion may not be a permanent position for religion, but it demonstrates that religion's importance is obviously not handicapped by secularism. On the contrary, in secularism a religious community can get what is essential for her well-being – religious freedom. And in order to get religious freedom, religions accept secularism. Most of Casanova's examples, like Catholicism in Poland during the Communist regime, stand for an improvement of civil society in times of transition. In public religions, religious people by their social and political actions push modern promises forward by religious means, but within secular orders. They are not behind modernity, desperately longing for more modernity within their own faith-communities. Instead, they are ahead of

modernity, providing with meeting places for a better future not only for them, but more or less for all.

The same line of analysis is followed by Gilles Kepel. He is a political scientist at SciencePo in Paris, a specialist for radical Islamism in France and a heavy critic of the French elite standing helpless in front of religious radicalization. But in Kepel's findings, the avant-garde of a publicly religious power in secular societies is not standing for an open approach towards a better future for all. They stand for a sort of identity politics to improve the position of one's own religious agenda, which at the same time, is a sign for what will be seen in a society afterwards. It is a reaction ahead of social problems, which are getting even hotter by the secular reactions towards this reaction. Religions go ahead in identity politics, and societies will reach that point sometimes later, but both – religion and secularism – have the same reason for that – the incapability to establish the progressive modernity that was promised. For that reason, the title of Kepel's book from 1991 is 'La revanche de Dieu' (Kepel 1995). Kepel's major examples are Khomeini's revolution in Iran, Pope John Paul II's agenda on New-Evangelisation of Europe by spiritual-political lay-movements, like Opus Dei and others, instead of establishing Vatican II within the inner ranks of the Catholic Church and not least the political takeover of Israeli politics by the Jewish settlement movement. All three positions came forward in the late 1970s. All three caused a sharp internal identity agenda within the religious communities and were very much depend on re-establishing a strong, powerful religious hierarchy. Here, the avant-garde is caused by an identity-mission, which is not simply an internal religious development, but a reaction to a longing in a broader spectrum in society, a longing after disenchantment with modern utopias. In our days, there is no western society where one cannot find strict identity-missions with fiercely political agendas – Front Nationale in France, the strong position of parties from the right in Scandinavian countries, the Urbanisation of the Eastern States in the European Union, 'Austria to Austrians', the "Alternative für Deutschland" etc. One may even add the Brexit-vote and Donald Trump's "America First" to this list. Kepel argues that the radical religious option for strong identity has the importance of the labour movement in 19th century.

So, the radical turn to religious identity is openly and publicly challenging modernity as a sort of 'public religion', yet not to overcome borders but to establish them. It has an energizing agenda: "we, religious people, push our identities forward, because modernity cannot fulfil its promises".

You may think of the internal debates about diaconal professionalism at this point. Is professional diaconal practice strictly a part of modern welfare

production, or is it dependent on motives of faith, spirituality and even religious agendas? Is it part of welfare economy or economy of salvation? Is it a place to work for a universally better human life or to find God's universal will for salvation?

And if it is both – which is obviously the case – then it has to decide which side to bring forward in secular settings, the religious one of a strong Christian identity or the modern one of a strict humanitarian universality. Claiming that there are both in diaconal professionalism, the broken promises of modernity and the religious identity quest push towards a decision where diakonia really stands. It seems that the two different grammars to react to the crisis of modernity do not allow a precarious position in-between.

Now, you may argue that for those who are in need of help, it does not matter if diakonia follows more authentic identity-quests, or if it provides more diaconal secularity. The major goal is that its logistics to achieve help are successful. I agree with that objection, yet it does not solve the problem of the classical modern binary. All modern binaries push towards what is first: right or left, male or female, plus or minus, profit or debt etc. One cannot ignore the power aspect in these binaries, which has consequences for diaconal professionalism.

The universal-grammar of humanitarian help has to struggle with authenticity and longing for identification in difference to others, which are inevitably deficits in their secularist-agenda. Theologically speaking, the *apocatastasis* – the position that nobody will ever be excluded from salvation – is a heresy. Salvation is up to God. Human beings can believe in it, but they do not possess it and will not be capable of achieving it on their own terms.

The same applies to the other side: The religious identity-grammar, which opts for economy of salvation, first has to struggle with resentment and border-agendas against others which should not be part of the economy of salvation. Theologically speaking, God's sovereignty rules the economy of salvation and not mankind's economy goals. God is the only power capable of excluding from salvation. No human being or human institution has this position. So, claiming the position to exclude human beings from help they need and to exercise justice by that is a heresy. One cannot restrict loving your neighbour. From those who restrict loving your neighbour to those they decide to grant this title 'neighbour' do not follow love, but their own power agenda. So, in opting for religious identity when providing help for people in need, you have to take care not to support an excluding power-agenda, which is undermining your true motives. It is not

up to those helping people to decide who is included in divine love. They can only act universally in loving their neighbour – here, nobody in need of help can be excluded.

Being a neighbour is decided by the need a human being has and not by those giving that love. That is the strong part of Christian faith in diaconal professionalism. There are universal human reasons for helping people – but there are also religious motives for universal non-exclusion and faith is one of them. Loving your neighbour sometimes even has an avant-garde moment by its economy of salvation, which turns power and powerlessness completely around. This twist needs to be respected in humanitarian diaconal professionalism, otherwise it cannot realize its significance beyond a local range.

Is there a third position possible for diaconal practice? In other words, can diakonia avoid becoming part of a secular resentment culture in opting for an identity stand in their diaconal practices? And also, from the other side, can diakonia avoid becoming part of utilizing altruism in opting for a humanitarian stand in their human rights practices?

I think that this third position is possible, and it has to begin with those who are the clients of diaconal actions. They bring something into the diaconal situation, which reaches out beyond modernity, and which is, at the same time, a prosaic secular reality. Their need is not everywhere, i.e. universally shared, but *somewhere*. And without this local dimension, it cannot be universally shared. So, the identity quest of an authentic faith approach to diakonia and the universal quest of a professional approach to human need have a contact zone in this spatial aspect of that what is needed by those who are to be identified as loving your neighbour.

Diaconal Professionalism after Secularism – Awareness of Spaces of Precarious Human Dignity

One part of the classical modern formula ‘more differences for the sake of less complexity’ is still valid. The need for respecting differences has even increased – as can be seen in the refugee debate. Some societies are longing for less differences and more homogeneity; in other words, they want to achieve reduced complexity without paying tribute to plurality; this is a utopia – something that can be used to gain political power. But the results are not like this – differences are not decreased; on the contrary, they become hotter and much more contested and can even turn into violence.

This has something to do with the experience that the second part of the modern formula is no longer valid. We do not reduce complexity by our professional skills any more – we increase them, simply due to profession-

alism. It is a never-ending story; one has constantly to reach out beyond the capabilities one has already achieved. In other words, the professional field is constantly becoming more complex. This is also true for the diaconal field – it becomes more and more complex. You know that better than I do, I am simply observing, you are professionally involved in this process.

Now, what to do with that? Here is my proposition. One may change the formula in its second part, which means – to increase complexity, instead of reducing it. The commandment to love your neighbour is never a reduction of complexity. It increases the problems – simply due to the fact that those granting help are not those who have the power to decide who their neighbours are. So, if you want to solve the problem with increasing complexity, increase it. Is that a contradiction? It is not, it is a spatial approach.

The reason is very simple. Everybody who needs help is somewhere, and most of the time, he or she is excluded from places where she or he could cover their needs on their own. Like justice, helping people has a spatial dimension. However, this is not simply a spatial context; it is an element in identifying the neighbour in others who need help. Diaconal professionalism cannot avoid looking into this spatial dimension simply because it is there.

Space is not simply an asset in the process to help people, it is a confrontation. Without action, people who are in need of help create a space which is different to normal places. One cannot avoid being confronted by this space – it creates a difference with much gravity. In the refugee crisis, Lampedusa is a major example for that. It is no longer simply a remote island in the Mediterranean Sea, it is a place which revealed big deficits in refugee politics and the urgency of need of those longing for the shores of Europe. In such places, two different aspects of spatial analysis can be grasped.

One was discovered by Henri Lefebvre in his 'Production of Space' (Lefebvre 2011). Not only time, but space also has three dimensions – perceived space or firstspace, conceived space or secondspace, lived space or thirdspace. Space is always related to places as they are. Lampedusa is an island in the Mediterranean Sea. You cannot change that. It is, secondly, a place which is linked to images, experiences, concepts the public attention has produced due to what happened there in last few years and is still happening. And thirdly, such a space cannot be predicted in its importance. It comes forward by surprise – and in the case of Lampedusa, most of them were terrible surprises. One cannot isolate one dimension for the sake of the others in a space, but at the same time one cannot mix them up.

In this mutuality, spaces, where one is confronted with people in search for help, have another dimension. This was stressed by another French phi-

losopher, Michel Foucault. He refers to the mutuality of time and space – the relativistic nature of the physical universe – from the historical dimension of it. We are unavoidably confronted with spaces in reference to history. The history of the refugee crises last year has confronted us with that terrible truck at the Austrian Highway, where more than seventy dead persons were found. It confronted us with the dead body of that child at the Turkish shore, and it confronted us with all that happened and still happens at the borders of Europe, not the least at the route through the Balkans. This spatial dimension of history is not a part of modern history's utopian dimension, i.e. these places are really there, they are not lying in the future. But these places trigger something else – a discourse which confronts the usual order of things with what reveals its deficits and failures. And thirdly, it pushes towards an alternative ordering of things to come to terms with fierce powerlessness which is revealed in these real places. Foucault called these 'heterotopias', other places (Foucault 2004), and the othering of these places is not fulfilled in a clear discourse with clear mechanisms of relation etc. – it is a discourse which is precarious and which can fail right in these spaces. The dead people lying in this long line of body bags at the kai of Lampedusa created such a heterotopia.

This applies to people in need of help. Their sheer powerlessness comes forward at heterotopias, and for that reason, the logistic practice to bring help to them has itself a heterotopic character. So, the topology of diakonia – how to bring help to those which are in need by way of an economy of salvation – is a sort of heterotopology.

If diaconal professionalism reacts to heterotopias, then it cannot avoid being part of a heterotopic process. It will confront heterotopias and will be judged, if it is capable to react to them. This means that it cannot avoid being a precarious activity and opening a door to unexpected territory in welfare production. So, the possible avant-garde of diakonia is not that you have a clear plan of how to overcome deficits in modern welfare production. This belongs to modernity, and it is part of modern diaconal professionalism. This is not avant-garde. Diakonia called to link public attention to such precarious places, where people have to struggle for their dignity – that is avant-garde. It is the capability not to disregard the confrontation of spaces where people suffer and need help. In order to touch this third aspect of such spaces, one has to stick to the first dimension of this space – simply being there and not disappearing in history, and to accept that the usual concepts to react to such spaces are not sufficient.

This is a Christian identity quest, as we have it in the narrative of the Good Samaritan. This narrative does not simply say that the Samaritan

gives help. It says, in the first place, that other than the Priest and Levite, he did not simply walk past the one who got robbed. His reaction is a spatial production of help and a social production of this space as being more important than the place he intended to go. Finally, I would like to look deeper in this spatial production of diakonia.

Diaconal Professionalism in Spaces – an Exploration in the Verb ‘Diakonia’

The spatial aspect of diaconal practice does not reduce complexity. This is, to some extent, surprising. Usually, we think that space is simply there, being a sort of container we can rely on. Contrary to all dynamic events, space gives stability, but this is not so. Space is not simply there. We are not living *in* it and realizing it as a sort of homogeneous context of our practices. *We are living it*, or to be more precise, we cannot avoid living it, and this living is a bodily one. Any place can become such a space we have to live, and we cannot simply live in it. In Kaia Rønsdal’s dissertation at the University of Oslo 2016, I learned an excellent formula for that: “Space is not a noun. Space is a verb.” (Rønsdal 2016, 29.)

A whole range of possibilities and impossibilities come up, if you enter a space and you are turned into a lived space. In a room like this, where we are sitting now, you simply cannot fly beyond the ceiling, but already realizing that you come in touch with the verbal nature of space. It provides you, but pushes you at the same time, with different kind of actions related to the lived space.

This verbal aspect is intensified if one is confronted with heterotopias. The activity one gets involved in heterotopias is a search for an alternative to the usual range of activities. You cannot reduce the complexity as in the case of ‘normal places’. Heterotopias get you by a surprise, and so the activities triggered by them keep this surprising factor.

What does that mean for diakonia? It is definitely not a noun. Diaconal professionalism is demonstrating that it is a practice, but there is more to be said. It is a spatial practice, evolving from heterotopias, where diaconal presence is needed but risky. It is not strictly ordered by one’s own programme, but it is defined by the clients of this practice that are actually there. By that reasoning, all sorts of unexpected problems may come up which can be a surprise for the professional routine. It is a practice which reacts to people that are in need and that cannot avoid the spaces of these people. Due to its relation to heterotopias, it cannot react to something that will only come forward in the future. It has, at first, to react to the pres-

ence on the ground. Only then can it start to produce something by itself. Secondly, this spatial presence has a bodily dimension. One is coming into touch with that heterotopian dimension by not being capable of avoiding it. So, to some extent, it catches the person that gets involved. He or she is part of the lived space. This bodily presence is not caused by all heterotopias, but by those where people in need show up.

In this sense, the spaces diaconal professionalism is in touch with are not first-order verbs. They have an active character and a passive dimension at the same time. So, diakonia is a second-order verb – a verb reacting to other verbs which are connected to the heterotopias on the ground. This means that at the same time, one cannot create thirdspaces which are dominated by diaconal professionalism. Of course, you can do that, but then one avoids contact with the relevant heterotopia.

Diakonia is probably something like a heterological verb. It is another hospital practices due to the gravity of those who are in need of help. This othering is not the end, but the beginning of a different line of verbs. Without practices of bodily involvement at these spaces of others, one cannot use this verbal dimension in diakonia. At the same time, this verb is involved in a different sort of topology of power.

By diakonia, Christian religious communities try to bring the Gospel where it belongs, as I said at the beginning. This topology means that in the first place, one discovers where the Gospel belongs to. And this first place is meant exactly not to discover the Gospel, but to become aware of a firstspace, where someone is in need. The Gospel aspect may come in secondspace, but then it becomes a pretty prosaic praxis, because it cannot be separated from the firstspace. This means that the thirdspace opened up is not leading towards higher orders or even transcendental realms. It is revealed on the ground.

One may even bring that in the form of language. Diakonia is not a metaphor for the Gospel, leading to a higher order of things like a divine order. It is not a poetical use of faith, but a pretty prosaic praxis, defined by people needing help. In this sense, the Good Samaritan is not a metaphor of the Gospel, this figure is a metonymy. By metaphors, one can reduce complexity in reaching out towards a higher placed truth. By metonymies, one has to go into a much more complex situation, which needs practices with an open end. A metonymical approach is a search for truth not yet completely discovered (for the difference, see Jakobson 1971 and Dirven 2002). Metaphors encourage utopias, by metonymies one gets into contact with heterotopias. In the narrative of the Good Samaritan, his caring practice is making the situation much more complex than the Levite's and the Priest's

passing by. For them, the situation is reduced to a side-effect of their journey to important religious business. They do not stop. So, they are metaphors for a higher religious truth, which is completely linked to utopias. This religious truth has no place here and now, especially not at the side of the unconscious person on the street. The Good Samaritan stopping and helping reveals a heterotopia, where not only need is urgent but God is present in an anonymous manner. For the Good Samaritan, helping the person in need is a risky practice with possibly dangerous complications. But without the Good Samaritan, one gets no idea of the Gospel, yet he is not that what the whole activity is about. He is a relevant starting point because he is not passing by, but reacting to what is really there – the person in desperate need of help.

Here, a diaconal triad of boldness comes up, which belongs to the elementary grammar of any economy of salvation. It is a triad out of imposition (in German: “Zumutung”), bodily (self-) humiliation (in German: “Demütigung”), which is reacting to what is really there. And only after these two types of boldness react to each other, a third one can come up – encouragement (in German: “Ermutigung”). One can combine that with the triad the Bishop mentioned yesterday – to share, to care and to dare. The Good Samaritan is a metonymy for that. It is not that everybody involved in diaconal professionalism becomes a Good Samaritan. But in this figure, one can get an idea of the bodily spatial confrontation any diaconal practice will lead to. How complicated the situation will be depends on the spaces where the diaconal verbs are found, but one cannot expect that it will be without complications, as described in the metonymical narrative of this emblematic figure. In this line, diakonia is a prosaic avant-garde in our world, but actually a pretty needed one.

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2.2 WHAT IS POLICY SPACE FOR DIACONAL INSTITUTIONS? CHALLENGES FROM PENSION OBLIGATIONS

Abstract

Norwegian non-profit institutions have provided health care and social services in accordance with contracts with various public authorities. These contracts had various specifications concerning pensions. The core message in the contracts was, however, that employees in non-profit institutions were required to be included in similar pension agreements as public employees. During the latter part of the 2000s, this was no longer an explicit requirement in new contracts, but neither the various public contractors, nor the non-profit institutions pushed for a change in the pension rights of employees in non-profit institutions. This gave the non-profit actors a considerable extra cost, as they were about to take part in new tender processes. Coverage of pension costs beyond the contract period have been found by both Norwegian courts and a public commission report to be a responsibility of the state. The current Norwegian government must determine how to respond to the public commission's recommendations, but the counties' and municipalities' responsibilities are still not adequately addressed.

Introduction

Diaconal institutions and other non-profit actors have for more than a century entered into contractual arrangements with Norwegian authorities to provide social and health care services. As said by a Public Commission assessing pension obligations: “The history of the Norwegian welfare state is

to a large extent a history about non-profit organisations” (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 40; own translation; all translations from Norwegian are done by the author).

There are three characteristics of these services. First, they are law-imposed obligations on the Norwegian state, hence being available for the general public. Second, the institutions providing these services are reporting to and being subject to overall supervision from Norwegian authorities. Third, they are provided free of charge – or with a low fee – for the individual user of the service, with some notable exceptions, such as the rather high costs of living in a nursing home.

From the 1990s onwards, the Norwegian welfare system gradually changed from welfare cooperation to a “market in services” (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 23). The terms applied in the relevant contracts were that the employees were to have “similar payment and working conditions” as public employees – or similar wording (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 89-97). Hence, there were no *explicit* contract-specified pension requirements for-profit actors, but the wording of these contracts implies that pension requirements are *implicitly* covered.

With the 2005 Act on mandatory occupational pensions (Norway 2005a), all enterprises with more than two employees were required to have a pension system in place. We will come back to the various pension systems below. Initially, it is relevant to note that the Norwegian Parliament acknowledges: “Today, the differences in pension costs may represent up to 15 per cent of gross wages” (Norwegian Parliament 2014, 2). There are also considerable differences between the different pension systems with regard to the future costs of the employer. Both the present and future pension costs make it challenging for non-profit actors to compete with for-profit actors (Haugen 2017).

The article proceeds as follows. First, there is an overview of the Norwegian pension system and the relevant actors. Second, a brief outline of the conditions required by public bodies in the contracts and the changes in these conditions are outlined. Third, the motivations for mandating a Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors, submitting its report in 2016, is reviewed. Fourth, there is a discussion on the permissibility of implementing the recommendations, as the EU law sets clear restrictions on state aid. Fifth, the possibilities that these recommendations can be applied to non-profit actors engaged in provision of health care and social services based on contracts with counties and municipalities are dis-

cussed. Sixth, the article concludes with an overall assessment of the policy space for ensuring a continued role for diaconal institutions.

The overall research question that this article seeks to answer is: *What is the policy space for relieving non-profit organizations of their historical pension obligations, in order to facilitate competition on equal terms, and how likely is it that a proposal presented in August 2016 will represent a substantive solution?*

Norwegian Pension Actors and Pension Requirements

There are three relevant employers' associations for non-profit actors: the Enterprise Federation of Norway (Virke), the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) and the Employers' Association (Spekter). Only Virke has a mandatory *public* pensions requirement as a part of their general agreement with the trade unions. As will be seen below, Virke is currently seeking to reduce the pension obligations for its members, as some are joining – or threatening to join – other employers' associations. Spekter is primarily organizing public enterprises, including the regional health authorities as well as Lovisenberg diaconal hospital in Oslo.

Also, private enterprises that have a *relationship* to the public sector, primarily by receiving a considerable share of funding from the public, were relatively easily included in the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund earlier, despite the fact that it was intended for public employees. The reasoning is illustrated in a Government report to the Parliament, stating that incorporation of non-public employees applies to:

...enterprises with charitable purposes, whose inclusion has often been motivated by the fact that these institutions had taken on tasks that really were the State's responsibility to undertake. As an example various Norwegian missions can be mentioned ...and private health organizations, institutions for persons with disabilities and persons with addictions. (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 79, referring to a 1960 report.)

We see with some surprise that Norwegian missions was considered to undertake tasks that really were the State's responsibility to undertake. This must be understood to be a reflection of an agreement that Norwegian official development assistance was based on a principle of *quadrupling* the development assistance made available by Norwegian development actors, the

so-called 80:20 principle, that later changed to 90:10. Norwegian Church Aid employees also have membership in Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund. By including many non-public institutions and organizations within this Pension Fund, they were actually heavily subsidized. (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 79.)

Moreover, in addition to a countrywide municipal pension fund (KLP), there are 26 municipality-owned pension funds in the larger cities, being reserved exclusively for municipal employees. It is relevant to note that the regional health authorities, being the employer for all those employed in the specialist health care – and members of Spekter – use KLP as their pension fund. There is also a public pension scheme for nurses managed by KLP. While the management is done by KLP, there is a separate board, led by a person from the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund and with board members from Spekter and Norwegian Nurses Organisation. This pension scheme applies to nurses in clinical duties, *irrespective* of whether their employers are public or private, and the scheme is guaranteed by a specific act that ensures public pension for these nurses. (Norway 1962.)

As seen above, all enterprises are to have a pension system. Under the 2005 Act on mandatory occupational pensions, there are different options, which had already been in operation since 2001 (Norway 2000a; Norway 2000b). These *enterprise* pension schemes are alternatives to the *public* pension scheme, and in addition, all Norwegians are members in the National Insurance Scheme that includes basic pensions.

First, there is the defined contribution scheme (“contribution”), where employers pay a pre-defined annual contribution. The annual pension is, however, not a given. The payment can be done either to life insurance companies or pension funds.

Second, we have the defined benefit pension scheme (“benefit”), which specifies annual pension benefits, based on the salary on retirement. In addition to those listed above, pension payments can be made to banks and companies that manage securities funds. (Norway 2008; Norway 2005b.)

In short, contribution is most beneficial for the employer – as they have control over the payment – and least beneficial for the employee, as one has no guarantees regarding the size of one’s pensions (Orskaug 2016). Benefit is least beneficial for the employer – as there is no certainty regarding overall costs – and beneficial for the employee – as they have predictability regarding their future pension for the rest of their lives. Lerø (2014) gives a critical assessment of benefit – simply, the costs are too high and unpredictable.

The wide gap between the two types of pension led to the adoption of a third type of pension scheme, termed hybrid pension (“hybrid”) (Norway 2013). As it is the contribution by the employer that is at the core, not the annual pension to be received by the former employee, it is closer to contribution. If one’s pension scheme is hybrid – which currently has a limited but rapidly increasing coverage – one’s membership in the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund ceases, as hybrid implies that one’s pension is managed by financial institutions. Virke has been the most active employers’ association in pushing for a shift from benefit to hybrid among its members.

If an enterprise instead chooses to adopt contribution, this implies that one’s membership in Virke must be replaced by membership in another employers’ association. Therefore, when The Salvation Army opted for contribution, they had to leave Virke and decided to join Abelia. Being the association of Norwegian knowledge- and technology-based enterprises, Abelia is a part of NHO, that also organizes the for-profit enterprises through NHO Service.

There are many differences between contribution and hybrid, however, three of which will be highlighted. First, hybrid lasts for the rest of one’s life, while contribution stops at the age of 77, after which, the National Insurance Scheme provides the pension. Second, unlike contribution, hybrid has a so-called “0-guarantee”, implying that those keeping the pensions savings must guarantee a positive return on the savings. Third, hybrid implies that those remaining in the scheme will inherit the pension savings from the one who dies, while under contribution, the relatives inherit these pensions. For an overview of the main differences between the three schemes, see Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors. (2016, 76–77.)

As benefit is the costliest for the employers, there is no surprise that a decreasing number of employees are under this scheme. From 592 000 employees in 2004, the figure in 2016 is only 175 000 (Ødegaard 2015). In the same period, the number of persons under contribution has increased from 120 000 to 1 245 000. (Hippe & Veland 2016.) Hence, there have been radical shifts in the choice of pension schemes in Norway.

Institutions in the non-profit sector continued with the benefit scheme, while new for-profits who entered the Norwegian service market were under a contribution scheme, giving them a competitive advantage. We need some more details of this process in order to assess whether it is justified that the state is to be responsible for the historical pension obligations for non-profit actors.

Pension Conditions Required by Public Bodies in the Contracts

The welfare cooperation that characterized the development of the Norwegian welfare state in the first decades after the Second World War implied that non-profit actors were involved in the planning and prioritization for the different types of users/clients/patients. The budgets for the institutions owned by non-profit actors were approved by public authorities – state, county or municipal – often with no objections. In many instances, there were multi-year framework agreements, giving predictability for the non-profit actors. Two policy priorities served the needs of the non-profit sector: first, expansion of the welfare state required an enhanced capacity, extended by supplementary services; second, allowing freedom of choice, facilitated through complementary services. When the era termed “market in services” was introduced by the end of the 1990s (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 23), the motivation was primarily cost reduction, but freedom of choice was also emphasized in public communication.

According to the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors, the last contract between a public body and a non-profit institution that contained a clause specifying salary and pension similar to public employees was entered into in 2009 (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 90). Even without a specific requirement in the contracts, non-profit institutions continued to provide their employees with the benefit scheme. The public funding for some of these institutions came from both state, county and municipal sources, and they were an integrated part of the Norwegian welfare system. Moreover, employees shifted between public and non-profit employers, and this was facilitated by the fact that they were under similar pension schemes.

Both the 2005 Act on insurance companies, pension companies and their activities and its preceding law from 1988 specified that the “new system [regelverket] may not contain provisions that involve reduction of employees’ right to accrued pension and related premium reserves or accrued pension capital” (Norway 2005b, Section 6-3; Norway 1988, Section 8c-3). This shows that pension rights in principle have a strong protection in Norwegian law. A change in estimating pensions emerged in the municipal pension fund KLP in the late 1990s and was introduced in Norwegian law in effect from 1 January 2004. While pension costs were previously payable annually, encompassing pension costs for current employees, as long as they were employed and the institution was in operation, the new pensions estimates implied that the costs became enduring. There are, howev-

er, mechanisms to take over pension obligations in cases of bankruptcy or discontinuation of institutions, as will be shown in the second court case introduced in the section below.

According to the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors, accrued pension costs became higher than expected by the pension funds, employers' associations and individual enterprises due to the low interest rate during the 2000s (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 23). The resulting higher costs have been compensated for some non-profit actors, such as hospitals, which operate under agreements with the Regional Health Authorities.

The Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors only addresses pension requirements in contracts between state authorities and non-profit institutions. Nine different types of institutions were investigated further, with a total of 219 non-profit institutions that had operated under contract with various state authorities: hospitals, specialized drug addiction treatment, psychiatry, specialized rehabilitation, ambulance services, child welfare services, family counselling, work integration facilitation [arbeidsmarkedstiltak] and asylum reception centres.

Five of these were defined out of the scope of the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors, either because they had already been integrated into the public service (ambulances), because public pension was never required in the contracts (work integration; asylum centres) or because they had public pension schemes and had already had their increased pension costs compensated for (hospitals – based on pre-EEA commitment and long-term agreements – and family counselling). This left the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors with four kinds of institutions: specialized drug addiction treatment, psychiatry, specialized rehabilitation and child welfare services, with the total number of institutions covered being estimated to be 92.

The increased use of foreign workforce has led the government of Norway to adopt a Regulation on salary and other conditions in public contracts (Norway 2012). The Regulation requires that conditions in enterprises with which a contract is entered into must be in accordance with the general agreements, even if the enterprise in question is not party to the general agreement valid in this specific sector. The Regulation specifies the Act on public procurement and applies to services, as such binding all public bodies in their contracts with any enterprise. While pensions are not explicitly mentioned in the Regulation, the general agreements cover pension obligations. This Regulation strengthens the argument that pensions are at least implicitly covered in public contracts.

Motivation for Mandating a Public Commission on Pension Obligations for Non-profit Actors

A part of the mandate for the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors was to estimate the economic consequences of establishing a system whereby the state takes responsibility for the future pension costs of non-profit actors. The central premise is that these actors were required – or at least expected – during the 1990s and almost all of the 2000s to have a pension scheme in place that was similar to that applying to employees working in the public sector. As seen above, the costs of maintaining such a scheme increased the overall costs for non-profit actors for an indeterminate number of years.

When limiting the scope of such a compensation system to the four kinds of institutions as specified above, the costs of the proposed system was estimated at approximately 1 700 million NOK (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 181) or approximately 200 million Euro. These were the incurred costs by the end of 2015. The final costs would be higher or lower, depending on which cut-off date that was chosen. The Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors proposes two alternatives. If the last contract that specified pension obligations is taken as the basis, this would be 2009. Alternatively, the cut-off date should be from when the new system has been adopted and is in place. This was expected to be from 2018, as specified in the 2017 budget agreement (Høyre, Fremskrittspartiet, Kristelig Folkeparti & Venstre 2016, para. 56). When reporting to the Parliament in May 2017, as part of the revised national budget for 2017, the government wrote that the various issues to be clarified will require more time than earlier anticipated (Norwegian Government 2017a, 145).

All political parties want to be seen as friends of the non-profit organisations (Haugen 2017). The current government gave the mandate to the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors, asking it to assess which part of the pension costs should be covered and whether any compensation system is reasonable, in light of the special relationship that has emerged between public actors and non-profit actors. Three formulations of the mandate are to be read as objectives: 1) developing the relationship with non-profit actors; 2) improve the overall conditions for the non-profit actors; and 3) facilitating equal conditions for providers of health care and social services. (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 18.)

Responses from those reviewing the proposal show that the large majority is in favour of the proposal, with KLP being principally against – as they themselves have been the primary pension insurer in the non-profit sector and want to keep their role (KLP 2017; available via Norwegian Government 2017b). The KLP makes, however, strong arguments in favour of choosing 2018 as the cut-off date, as it will imply “insurmountable practical problems...” to retrospectively identify which pensions that were earned before 2009 and from 2010 onwards (KLP 2017; available via Norwegian Government 2017b). A total of four responses (of 38) hold that the cut-off date should be 2010: NHO, Spekter and two regional health authorities; but the latter two seem to have misunderstood by referring to “payment” to non-profit actors (Norwegian Government 2017b). The legal issues were also a part of the mandate and will be analysed in the section below.

While the mandate for the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors did not explicitly identify the risk of several court cases raised against the state by non-profit actors, the prospects of frequent litigations is real. Three cases have been raised before Norwegian courts, resulting in defeat for the state in two cases and a victory for the municipality of Oslo in the third case (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 114-115). In the case brought by Kirkens Sosialtjeneste, the Josephine Foundation and the Church City Mission Rogaland, membership in KLP was specified in the contract (Oslo Tingrett 2013a, 7-8). The three diaconal organisations won the case in both the local and the regional court. The formulation in the contract reading “within the framework of the approved budget” was discussed extensively by the regional court. The formulation is considerably weaker than what is found in many other contracts, but the concrete implementation of the pension payments implied that the municipal pension fund KLP calculated the overall pension payments for the non-profit actors, making their demands to the public bodies, that in turn took responsibility for paying. This seems to be a common procedure until the mid-2000s.

Another court case ended in an agreement, after the Salvation Army’s argumentation prevailed in local court (Oslo Tingrett 2013b). The body that ensures pension benefits in cases of bankruptcy or other discharge argued that the Salvation Army had to take responsibility for pensions earned by employees at one nursing home and one hospital that both had been owned by the Salvation Army but were discontinued.

A third case was brought by three hospitals in Oslo that were established by congregations in the Church of Norway (Nordberg, Frogner, Sagene). While the local court ruled in favour of the three hospitals, the regional court ruled against the three hospitals and in favour of the municipality of Oslo (Borgarting lagmannsrett 2014). Central in the regional court's argumentation was that the pension costs should *not* remain Oslo municipality's responsibility after the ending of the contract term, as this obligation was valid "while [så lenge] nursing homes undertake health and care for the municipality". This was based on a restrictive reading of municipality's obligation to "ensure the necessary allocations for providing services..." (Norway 2011, Section 11-1 (extract)). The regional court held that this obligation to ensure necessary allocations applied only to the contract period.

This illustrates that there are legal uncertainties in the responsibility of pension obligations after the expiry of the contract term, and it is reasonable to ask whether there are different obligations for municipal bodies and state bodies concerning pension obligations incurred during a contract term. A likelihood of several court cases against the state of Norway or municipalities of Norway do not seem to be a desired development, however. Such court cases would most likely result in an overall atmosphere that would not be beneficial for the overall cooperation in the realm of health care and social services. The establishment of the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors, the choice of its members and the wording of its mandate clearly show that the Government of Norway is eager to find a political solution outside of the courts.

EEA Obligations When Implementing the Recommendations of the Public Commission on Pension Obligations for Non-profit Actors

The last parts of the mandate given to the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors was to assess whether the proposals were in accordance with the legal obligations under Norway's EEA (European Economic Area) membership, based on the fact that Norway is subject to EU's internal market requirements, including the freedom of establishment. The mandate also specified that the practical implementation was to be identified within the legal space provided by the EEA obligations.

The challenge is that a system whereby the state takes responsibility for the pension obligations of non-profit actors will by other actors in the health care and social services market be understood as state aid, or unjustified favouring of some actors over others. State compensation is allowed,

while state aid is prohibited, as further specified in Article 61 of the EEA Agreement, defining state aid as “any aid ... which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favouring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods ... in so far as it affects trade...” From this list, six cumulative requirements can be read. It has to be a) public support, b) favouring, c) some; d) undertakings (providing economic services); e) potentially distorting competition; and f) affecting trade.

When discussing these criteria, the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors specified that the first three and the two last criteria are affected. The threshold for the two latter criteria is that the public support provided to certain actors makes it more difficult for other actors to establish themselves in this given market. (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 163.) The Public Commission’s reasoning applies to economic services, while non-economic services, implying exercise of state authority, are not discussed by the Public Commission. The EU itself has specified public service compensation in several documents (EU Commission 2016; 2012; 2011a; 2011b; see also Haugen 2017).

The EU Commission has sought to simplify rules on state aid by exempting “small services organised at a local level and which have a limited effect on trade...” (EU Commission 2011b, 6) from its scope. The EU Commission listed “hospitals and other health care facilities ... aimed at a local population and unlikely to attract customers or investment from other Member States” as eligible for public support and not liable to affect trade (EU Commission 2016, para. 197(c)). Hence, while the EU has specified its prohibitions against state aid, and the EU allegedly being stricter than the European Surveillance Authority (ESA) (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 49), there are exemptions applying to health care and social services serving the local population.

The criterion that the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors discussed in the greatest detail is support benefiting a specific undertaking. As seen above, the distinctive element of an undertaking is that it provides *economic* services. The crucial question is if the non-profit actors are engaged in providing such services (European Court of Justice Grand Chamber 2006). The nature of the services provided by non-profit actors have three characteristics: they are law-imposed obligations; the institutions providing these services have reporting requirements to and supervision by political authorities and might provide services encompassing exercise of governmental authority; and they are provided free of charge – or with a low fee – even if other units within the same undertaking might

be involved in commercial activities. In a decision concerning hospital pharmacies, it was clarified that only those activities that aim at providing the hospital itself with necessary equipment and medicines can be termed non-economic services (European Surveillance Authority 2013, para. 61).

Summing up these three characteristics, the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors concluded that the non-profit actors were fully integrated in the public service provision, and hence, not undertakings in accordance with Article 61 of the EEA treaty. Criterion four in Article 61 of the EEA treaty was therefore not affected. By this line of reasoning, a situation whereby the Norwegian state takes responsibility for the pension costs of the 92 identified institutions – covering a total of 15800 former and previous employees – do not constitute state aid. The present author agrees with the main line of reasoning, but believes that recent EU clarifications on services with local organization seeking to serve merely the local population could have been applied more actively. By this line of reasoning, the two criteria relating to potentially distorting competition and affecting trade of Article 61 of the EEA Agreement could also have been found not to be affected.

In summary, when determining what is unjustifiable state aid, unlike justified state support – also termed *public service compensation* – the amount of support must be seen in relation to the cost of producing the given service done by a fairly efficient undertaking (European Commission 2012, preambular para. 4). This is one of the so-called Altmark criteria (European Court of Justice 2003); the other three are: 1) the recipient must have clear public service obligations; 2) the public compensation must be objective, transparent and established in advance; 3) the compensation cannot be excessive, taking into account a reasonable profit. These four cumulative criteria determine when public service compensation does not constitute state aid. Hence, as specified by the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors (2016, 165) – if the state support reflects the costs, is agreed in advance, and the service is important for and is for the benefit of the general public – such support is not incompatible with the EU/EEA obligations.

Are the Recommendations Applicable for Contracts with Counties and Municipalities?

The mandate of the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors was limited to contracts entered into by state bodies, not county and municipal bodies. The Public Commission's mandate was, however,

to assess what to do with pension obligations in those situations, where the overall responsibility had been transferred to the state. An example of what used to be the responsibilities of counties is public hospitals and specialist health services. Hospitals were transferred to the state as of 1 January 2002, and specialized drug addiction treatment, psychiatry and specialized rehabilitation were transferred as of 1 January 2004. The state conducts its responsibilities through the regional health authorities. The counties had responsibilities for child welfare service institutions, a responsibility that was transferred to the state as of 1 January 2004, conducting its responsibilities through Bufetat.

When these responsibilities were shifted, the non-profit actors specified that all the responsibilities had to be transferred to the state. The Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors does not specify the period of the relevant contracts that might now give rise to state pension payment responsibilities – provided that the Norwegian Government approves and decides to implement the recommendations. At least some of the contracts will be from the period before 2002/2004.

The Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors answers the part of the mandate that deals with transfer of responsibilities by referring to the two court cases referred to above. It does, however, specify that the recommendations can also apply to counties and municipalities. A full quote is warranted:

There are non-profit institutions that cooperate with and receive funding from state and municipalities alike, where employees have the same pension scheme in KLP. The Committee finds it difficult to distinguish between pensions earned through service provisions for state and municipal bodies, and any such distinction must specify the time period for the different forms of cooperation. The Public Commission believes that to the extent that smaller parts of the institutions' service provisioning are done based on contracts with municipalities, it can be argued that related pension costs are included in the proposed compensation scheme. The reason for this is that distinguishing between the different services can be administratively demanding. How this can be done in practical terms must be resolved before the compensation scheme is established. (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 150.)

Any solution in line with this proposal might make the compensation scheme more difficult to establish, as more actors will have to agree and po-

tentially provide funding. The preferred option by the Public Commission is that the administration of the compensation scheme is managed by the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund. The Public Commission proposes three alternatives for ensuring that this Pension Fund can take on these responsibilities: 1) annual contributions by the state over the state budget; 2) a one-off payment by the state; or 3) the establishment of a fund, managed by a separate administration. Any of these three alternatives will be administratively challenging.

By also including pension costs resulting from contracts with municipal and county bodies, the Public Commission has also assessed this in relation to Norway's EEA obligations and the Public Commission

...believes that other public health and social services that are funded, facilitated and organized in the same way [as services provided based on state contracts], will have to be considered as non-economic activity as specified by EU rules on state compensation (Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors 2016, 15).

This reasoning is consistent with its overall argumentation that seems solid and in line with recent EU clarifications. When reporting to the Parliament in May 2017, uncertainty concerning the compensation for those non-profit actors that had also entered into contracts with municipal authorities was reported to be among the issues that required further deliberation (Norwegian Government 2017a, 145).

Conclusion

It is interesting that a pro-competition government, such as the former (and future) government of Norway – consisting of the Conservative Party and the Progress Party – chose to initiate the process that may lead to the state taking responsibility for pension costs for non-profit institutions. As we have witnessed, many of the contracts required pensions to match those of public employees, while others did not. The mandate for the Public Commission on Pension Obligations for Non-Profit Actors outlines three – not explicitly termed – objectives: i) developing the relationships, ii) improving the overall conditions, and iii) facilitating equal conditions.

The Government proposes, in the proposed budget for 2018, that option 1) is chosen, with 27 million NOK set aside for the coverage of the pension costs accruing before 2010, in other words the earliest cut-off-date (Nor-

wegian Government 2017c, 78). The amount is approximately one quarter of the calculations of accrued pension costs to be paid in 2018 for employees in the 92 enterprises, done for the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors (2016, 112). However, the proposal from the Government was voted down in the subsequent negotiations, as the negotiating parties held that the scheme had to be more elaborated upon before the Parliament could approve it (Norwegian Government 2017d, 14).

While the leader of the Progress Party and Minister of Finance, Siv Jensen, has argued against the “Norwegian model” (VG 2013), the out-going government has sought to keep, but “modernize” the so-called Norwegian model in the realm of welfare, and this includes a so-called “welfare mix” of public, non-profit and for-profit actors. NHO Service, that speaks on behalf of the for-profit actors, are positive to the recommendations in the Public Commission’s report, as a way to provide for equal conditions in the service market in order to promote competition (Norwegian Government 2017b). NHO Service and Spekter, representing state-owned enterprises, such as public hospitals, support a cut-off date of January 1, 2010, and not the date when the mechanism will eventually enter into force. The cut-off date seems to be the most contentious issue in the implementation of the proposal from the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors. Different cut-off dates represent considerable differences, both for the state – through higher costs – and for the non-profit actors, as an early cut-off date will not fully relieve them of their historic pension obligations.

By its recommendations, the Public Commission on pension obligations for non-profit actors has provided policy space for non-profit actors that will allow them to take on new tasks and better serve those in need – even if the future Norwegian welfare state will come under increased pressure.

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2.3 FOOD BANKS AS A CHALLENGE TO DIACONAL SELF UNDERSTANDING AND PROFESSIONALISM

Abstract

The article starts from an analysis of the rise of food banks as a new form of normal welfare provision in Europe. The phenomenon of food banks is linked to the growth of an affluent society that produces waste. The food bank is a symbol of the divide between abundance and exclusion. The article then examines the user perspective and the position of users and service providers in the system that creates 'wasted lives'.

The link between the phenomenon of food banks and the rise of nationalism is traced, and the challenge to plural societies is elaborated. The need to address these issues requires a reformulation of the diaconal task, and the approach of 'seeking conviviality' is advocated as a way to link practice with people who are users and providers of food banks with the political and cultural challenges the phenomenon reveals.

Introduction

This presentation is based on recent work I have been doing with a group of local diaconal workers from across Europe and especially in Vantaa and the wider Helsinki region. It has deeper roots in training and development starting from local work in Britain, in big cities like Glasgow, Leeds and Manchester. As a result of this experience, it has become clear to me that there is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to diaconia – it depends on con-

text and also on finding the right ‘service model’. In countries with a structured social work and welfare system, diaconia has more possibilities to create innovation than social work. In general, we can see that social work and social service tends to conform to the dominant social and, especially nowadays, economic paradigms and priorities. On the other hand, there are countries in Europe, and more so in Eastern Europe, where the welfare system and social work are not as comprehensive as they are in Scandinavia. My entry point to this discussion is via the growing problem of food poverty and the rise of food banks as at least part of the ‘answer’ to this problem. I see food banks as a potent symbol of the transformation that is taking place in welfare states in Europe. There may be lessons to be learned from this experience, which can improve the development of new models of community diaconia.

The Three P’s

In order to clarify our ‘service model’ for diaconia, it is important to uncover the resources and motivation, which come from our own roots, and to build on them, clarifying them through learning and reflection. We also have to be sharply aware of the context in which we are working, especially in a time of rapid change, because a practice which may be constructive in one context or moment in time, may be counterproductive in another. So, our journey will have three steps:

- The first contextual consideration will be the form of and response to **poverty amidst affluence** in our time.
- Secondly, because people living on the margins are very susceptible to nationalist populism, it is important to examine the issue of **pluralism**, as it will affect our working practice. The rejection of pluralism in a context of growing inequality, poverty and uncertainty is one of the responses to the present turbulent context. We need a form of practice, which will address this issue, without moralising it.
- Finally, we will come to **professionalism** or practice, which we are all seeking to develop in response to the rapid growth of poverty and populism.

Poverty Amidst Affluence

I want to start some time back. In the early 1970’s, when I was engaged in developing urban work in a large industrial city suffering from structural

unemployment and the impact of the oil crisis. I was able to visit the USA to learn about urban church work there. I arrived in Chicago and was taken to a local church, where a meeting of about 20 people discussed food distribution. I thought at first they were talking about Central or Latin America. But no, to my surprise, it was their own neighbourhood they were concerned with. The question was how to reorganise the food bank due to the rising demand. When I came back, I reported on these encounters, and I sincerely thought we would never get to a state where the comprehensive welfare systems of Europe – even of Britain – would require churches to organise large-scale food banks. It is apt to say ‘never say never’!

In the 1970’s, in very hard-pressed neighbourhoods in Britain, all pastors had a small supply of emergency food to give to people who for one reason or another had none. It was not at all organised, because there was no need for it. In my experience, we needed such emergency food 4 or 5 times a year. Really informal efforts were enough. Now, we have enormous organised effort, supported by the European Union with international funds, dealing with food poverty.

I want to use this development to highlight the changes in the welfare society in the last generation. There are enough food resources for all, especially in rich Europe, but we choose – or at least economic and political leaders choose – to create a situation where people are so poor, they have to depend on freely distributed food. But this is just the surface issue. Food banks reveal much more.

In fact, food banks are flourishing in societies that are more affluent than ever before. Whereas absolute scarcity was the norm for most of human history, our society is consumer-choice-driven, and our food is supplied under conditions of competitive globalisation. This system produces surplus food for some and hunger for others. It also produces a surplus population that is not able to enter the consuming society. We could say we witness ‘waste food’ and ‘wasted lives’. Zygmunt Bauman has even claimed that the main product of competitive globalisation is ‘waste’, including wasted lives (Bauman 2003)!

Furthermore, food banks act as the practical and symbolic dividing line between abundance and exclusion. In fact, they socialise abundance amongst exclusion and even create a ‘feel good factor’ in at least some of those involved in organising them. The churches in Holland talk about ‘helping under protest’, but the ‘helping’ is more visible and acceptable than the ‘protest’ (Noordegraaf, 2010)!

Food Poverty from the Viewpoint of the Food Bank User

If we think about organising our social life and sharing food resources on an everyday basis, we can find three systems of sharing. One is as a customer, when I go to the supermarket, another is as a citizen, when I receive social benefit as a right and can purchase food, and the third is when I am invited as a guest, or share food informally in other ways. (Lorenz 2015.)

Looking at food banks, they somehow mirror and corrupt all these three main ideas at the same time. Firstly, as a ‘customer’, I have money, and I can go into the shop and choose what I want to buy – within my budget. Food banks may mirror the atmosphere in a shop, and there are very good examples of social shops, but the consumer choice is limited and in some cases non-existent. The word ‘customer’ implies a market relationship, and if I have to get a voucher from a state office to receive food or am in other ways regulated, an essential element in being a customer is missing – the power to choose where and what to buy is missing!

The second word we might use is ‘citizen’. But the concept of ‘citizen’ usually implies rights, and even though social rights are under attack, we normally think a person who is a citizen has the right to social security. But in most countries, no one has the ‘right’ to use a food bank, especially if public resources are involved. You have to have a discretionary pass, which states how much and how often you can consume. So, this is no citizenship right!

Thirdly, if I am invited as a guest, we share a common meal and usually there is a kind of reciprocity involved, as I bring some small present and I at least intend to invite the person back to my place. The reciprocity in meal-sharing and gift-giving implies some equality between donor and recipient. But the word ‘guest’ is corrupted in food banks and shared meal provision, where, even though there may be participation, reciprocity is not possible.

Food Banks as the Visible Point of New Welfare Politics

At least in Britain, after the crash of the big banks, the food bank movement took off in a big way. Mainly organised by churches, mosques and temples, they grew exponentially. More than 400 food banks distributing more than half a million packages every 6 months are organised in one network alone. (Trussell Trust 2016.) The huge cuts in welfare budgets, so-called austerity policies, were targeted at the weakest in society, people on low incomes already, people with disabilities, sick long-term and so on as well as on welfare services. Conversely and at the same time, taxes were cut

for companies and more affluent earners, especially those with very high salaries. This was supposed to kick start the economy again. The economic theory behind this policy has been totally discredited, but politicians keep on with it as though more of the same failed cure would improve things. (Blyth 2013.) However, these policies also manufacture poverty and fuel media attacks on marginalised groups. The stock of empathy in society was reduced dramatically; for example, people with disabilities in Britain are regularly abused and spat upon as they go about their daily life. (Guardian 2016.)

The second transformation is to reform welfare payments, so that they are no longer rights and entitlements, but allowances with performance conditions attached. Fail to comply, and the payments can be stopped for shorter or longer periods. For example, Unemployment Benefit in the UK became 'Job Seeker's Allowance', which is not only a euphemism, but a trap. The role of the social worker handling claims turns from being a supporter, as it were on the side of the citizen, into that of a policeman on the side of the state. In these and many other ways, under this regime change, social work has been stripped of any transformative potential, and the social worker is now reduced to being a servant of state policy. (Byrne 2005; Dean 2007.)

I lived in the Czech Republic for 10 years, and one thing I saw very clearly from that experience was how the ideology of the primacy of work is used as a threat in every ideological system. It is a tool of social control. The national socialists used work as an instrument of oppression (*Arbeit macht frei*), and so, did the communist party in a different way. But the current neo-liberal parties in government have more or less the same belief that people who do not work should be 'punished' or at least coerced, and that any work is better than none. This philosophy is usually promoted by people who are 'successful' and have no personal experience of what degrading and dehumanising work might mean. Even people with long-term illnesses or permanent multiple disabilities are subject to humiliating regular tests in terms of fitness for work. (United Nations 2016.)

The Link Between Marginalised Groups and New Nationalism

People who are living at or near the margins feel that present political leaders do not recognise their position and hear their voice. They very easily see minorities as the cause of their misery and can be co-opted into nationalistic policies for the left or right. With the changes in employment patterns

and growing precarious work, the narratives that sustained life are disrupted and broken. There is nothing hopeful to replace them, and as we know, we all live out our lives through stories, narratives. The narrative of industrial work and the narrative of improvement through the generations are broken, and the identity that goes with this is disrupted. State policies of blame and moralising reinforce this.

On top of that, the political culture nowadays plays on fears and stereotypes and does not usually create spaces for dialogue. Some of the volunteers and short-term workers involved in food bank services, as well as many of the users of food-banks and the marginalised unemployed or low-waged people, feel an affinity with resurgent nationalism. I will look at the issue of nationalistic populism in more detail, because it is important to hold on to the connection between the people whose life narrative has been disrupted and the ideology of nationalism, when we think about the roles of diaconia, the diaconal church and the diaconal worker.

The Myth of National Purity

The changes in welfare and the feeling of economic insecurity have increased the level of anxiety that people feel about the future. The fact that we have the first generation since 1945 that does not feel confident about having a better life standard than the generation before, rather the contrary, does not help. The attacks on people and families in poverty, which are promoted politically and in the media, have led to a very hostile climate and break down of empathy and trust, one might even say of ‘solidarity’.

On top of that there has been an increase in the mobility of EU citizens and an increase of inward migration to European countries, which has had a strong impact on public opinion, even in traditional countries of migration like the UK. The increasing migration and, at the same time, increasing precariousness of life have been linked together as cause and effect. The fact that the economic impact of migration is almost always positive and that immigrants are needed for the labour market are beside the point. ‘They are here and they are just riding on our backs and abusing our welfare system’ is the mantra. If you add the refugee crisis to the growth in migration and mobility at a time of austerity, you have a volatile mix.

For these reasons, compared to 20 years ago, the governance of the nation state has re-appeared as a political theme. The perceived threat to nations across Europe and the rise of nationalism on other continents is a growing fact of political life. However, many people have benefitted from free movement and supported international exchange, and in spite of in-

creased travel, the fear of the 'other' has grown out of all proportion. This very strongly affects diaconal practice in local communities and is an important challenge, because it is also very much tied to religion as a signifier of identity.

Across Europe, we can see new expressions of the myth of national purity and the contamination of the country by alien cultures. The most right-wing – even fascist – parties and movements in Britain evoke Christian symbols without any lived understanding of their meaning or content. Churches engaged in interfaith dialogue or actions are routinely accused of 'selling out', and there are demonstrations outside churches and other religious buildings.

Actually, if you look at European history, you can easily see how all nations are the product of various migrations, and that the idea of a national community is mainly a product of active imagination, political pressure and even propaganda (Anderson 2016). The borders in Europe have been constantly redrawn, and populations even of the same language are divided till today. In fact, the modern idea of a nation would have been incomprehensible for most of European history. But the myth of national, even religious purity has become potent again, a bit more than 100 years after the last great national romantic revivals. (Delanty 2013).

In all this – and especially because of the large refugee movements (which are not so large as compared with movements in the last century, when there were less resources to cope) – borders and borderlands have become very significant. But if we honestly examine our own roots, we can see that very often, the borders run through us, they are not just out there!

In addition to this insecurity and almost panic or at least paranoia, the long-developing traditions of developing deliberative democracy are being subverted in many countries nowadays by the emergence of strong populist leaders who make a virtue of being 'decisive'. It is surprising to see developments in Hungary and Poland in terms of actual governments and the entry of parties like the FPÖ in Austria into regional and municipal government with slogans such as 'We clean our country', or 'They deliberate, but we decide' or 'Your country needs you'. And in the territory of Christianity and the Churches: 'Love your neighbour – your neighbour is an Austrian'.

It is a chilling reminder of the distance between the thinking of someone like Jürgen Habermas who is arguing for more participative politics and, for example, Carl Schmitt, the Catholic lawyer who became an apologist for the Nazi regime with his theory that the sovereign nation could only be formed among a homogenous group against a common enemy. In his view, which is increasingly prevalent, every country needs a sovereign

instance that can decide, when the threat is great enough, to suspend aspects of the constitution or constitutional rights and procedures. (Habermas 2015; Schmitt 2007.)

The Paralysis of (Social) Democracy

This political crisis – I think you could call it the crisis of social democracy – is further reinforced by the impact of the finance economy on democratic decision-making. It was Angela Merkel who some years ago told the Portuguese government – who have living memory of fascism – that they may have democracy, but democracy must conform to the needs of the market. (Wall-Strasser et al. 2012.) The Greek crisis was an even more dramatic expression of the same sentiment. (Varoufakis 2015.) What we see in these developments is the capitulation of political, democracy-based decision-making to economic power. Under these kinds of threats, it is very important to create spaces and processes for building trust and for a common dialogue, which will reformulate ideas about citizenship and how to promote the common good of all. (Offe 2015.)

At the same time, nation states and the European Union are enacting laws that contradict United Nations declarations on human rights, which they have signed. This may be in the field of rights to health, education and welfare, the right to a habitable house or in the field of the rights to citizenship, family life, refugee status or family reunion.

Defending the Common Good of All

Because of these developments, there is a need for the creation of space and of processes to renew and reformulate the understanding of citizenship. In the last 150 years in Europe, citizenship developed step by step, including first, the franchise, meaning political citizenship, and then – social citizenship that protected the individual and the family and created the framework for comprehensive welfare. More recently, the understanding of citizenship expanded to include rights related to culture and identity. In the last years, however, we have witnessed an erosion of citizenship rights in the fields, for example, of welfare rights and employment legislation as well as of access to services such as health care. There is also a growing number of denizens – people with a right to live in European countries but who possess no social citizenship rights and so-called ‘sans-papiers’. Therefore, there is a need to react to these developments and to work for change in at least two directions:

- The reformulation of citizenship to restore lost rights and to develop new concepts which support integration.
- The formulation of a concept of the common good for all which prevents further immiseration of the poor at the expense of the very affluent and which supports more just division of labour, income and wealth.

This, I would argue, gives the church an important opening, because through diaconia, we are in daily contact with those most at risk, and also, we have the resources to promote a wider social dialogue not tied to power of the perspective of the financially driven economy. (Church Action on Poverty)

Furthermore, the surprising feature of the first years of this century is exactly the resurgence of the role of religion not only in personal life, but also in public life. The presence of immigrant communities with their own religious traditions and much closer connection between religion and everyday life and also, for obvious reasons, between religion and identity is just one aspect. They have a much closer explicit relationship between identity and belonging and their faith than we recognise in, for example, the main national church contexts in Europe. This means that the new forms of interreligious dialogue at the grassroots level tend to have a more direct bearing on life together than more scholarly or policy-driven debates. As a symptom of the salience of religion in everyday life and politics, in recent years, we have seen how much more engaged municipalities have become in working for good interfaith relations. (Stringer 2016.)

Not only that, the so-called mainstream churches have become much more engaged in political processes. In some instances, this is more connected to traditional moral issues, but the rise of public theology and the role of religions in local and national life has also been given new salience by the changes in the role of the state, for example, in welfare. (Lutheran World Federation 2016.) On the other hand, diverse thinkers who do not have a Christian background, such as Jürgen Habermas, have been looking into religious sources for new inspiration and new (previously neglected) ideas, which can renew social democracy in Europe (Habermas 2015).

The Need for a New Diaconal Professionalism

When we take this quick tour of our context seen through the lens of welfare and nationalism, we can see that we are in a crisis situation in most European countries. Exclusion and poverty are growing, as attitudes to mar-

ginalised people and groups are hardening. There is a feeling that 'things are getting out of control', which is a manifestation of powerlessness and a feeling of a lack of 'agency'. The big political questions about migration and the need to respect the rights of refugees are being answered in a haphazard and mostly negative way, officially at least. New fences and harsher conditions seem to be the main responses. These developments feed the growing nationalism – even militant nationalism.

In terms of electoral politics, a combination of the economic domination of much decision-making and the commodification of politics, as expressed by such thinkers as Schumpeter, has turned elections into a personalised marketing campaign which is not so much concerned with real political debate, but rather with surface 'image'. (Schumpeter 1976.) As a consequence of the combination of this line of thought and the destruction of traditional communities due to economic change, we are losing the dialogical basis of political life in trade unions, parties and other intermediary bodies. Therefore, political life is less and less rooted in everyday life and the lives of marginalised people and communities, who in any case do not tend to vote.

Of course, there is another parallel development, because we also witness the mobilisation of local groups, civil action and the emergence of movements for change. Even in the American presidential nominations, we can see some expression of the desire for change. But there is a need for the renewal of political engagement at the local level, including people who are outside the normal circles of either the business of party politics or who are engaged in social movements (Castells 2012). What some political scientists seem to conclude is that we need to recover the relational basis for politics, to build trust and reciprocity, to build trust between people and confidence to change. It is nothing less than a call for 'political love' and 'political empathy'. (Hardt & Negri 2009.)

The danger is that marginalised people are easily attracted to populist movements which increase the exclusion of those who are for any reason 'different', such as immigrants and refugees, or who are perceived to be living well on the social welfare system such as people with disabilities. This is leading to more hate speech and violence in the public space. In social movements as well as voting patterns, there is a growing divide between people who are cosmopolitan in outlook and those who have lost or are in danger of losing out because of the development of neo-liberal policies, especially after the crisis of 2008-9.

Marginalised people are the users and are also often among those who are doing paid or voluntary work in food banks; therefore, the conversations and practices that take place around addressing food poverty in these local contexts are important as an entry point for change. The question for diaconia is how to combine working with people who are marginalised in a process of reflection and action that recognises their position and experience as a step towards empowerment and transformation. As a bridge to practice, I will explore some themes arising from Biblical and theological reflection on food and the sharing of food as symbolic of the realm of God.

A Basic Model for Diaconia

We started with a critique of food banks, and we continue now with the question of food. We begin with the story, as told in Luke's gospel, about the man who wanted to organise a banquet. He invited all his friends; those who would be likely to invite him to their feast too. But one by one, they made their excuses. One had to deal with some property speculation he was involved in, another had bought some working animals and had to try them out, and another had just got married. Business as usual, apart from the marriage, that is!

Then, the servants were sent out again, and this time, they were sent for the deserving poor; those who, at that time, were recognised as being poor through no fault of their own, such as widows, orphans and people with disabilities – as in the story Jesus told before this one. Still, the table was not full. Then comes the twist in the story. The servants were to invite anyone they meet in the street to the banquet, and this creates an important reversal – even a table revolution. As I suggested at the start of this chapter, tables and who is around them and who sits where mirror the society, but this story celebrates an open table, where all criteria for participation are removed – not just friends from the same social class, not just the deserving poor, but anyone from the street. It is one of the most important stories Jesus tells about food and the sharing of food – the table is open to all. (Luke 14:15–24.)

The second image about food and drink is the Eucharist, which Christians celebrate each week. It uses manufactured things which are questionable – bread must be baked from basic ingredients, which are traded, wine must be prepared from grapes and through fermentation. So, the rule for the Eucharist is no production, no Eucharist. And the products embody both human labour and the distribution of resources in society. We share

them in church symbolically, and we also share them equally. We say this is the enactment of the body of Christ, a foretaste of the realm of God, the open table, where the goodness of the earth and the work of human hands is celebrated as the means of contact between humanity and God. We can say, with good theological backing, it is a sign of the kingdom that we pray for every day. (Robinson 1960.)

Amongst the many stories about food and sharing in the New Testament and the Hebrew Bible, we can build up an approximation of what kind of political and social vision would correlate with this Christian understanding. Food has a deeply relational and communal nature. It brings people and creation together; people come together with each other. The Eucharist is a sign of how food should be shared, and there is a well-known Pauline passage where the church at Corinth is admonished, because some ate at the expense of others (1Cor. 11:17–22). If the response to food poverty is a food bank, where there is no relationship built up other than donor-recipient, some crucial elements are missing. Even eating together, where some serve food and others only receive, is to miss the mark. Fundamentally, eating together can radically change the power dynamics and foster a different quality of relationship as well as bringing people of diverse backgrounds together. This process can lead to shared support, common action and work for change. (Sims-Williams 2015; Hames 2005.) Conversation and trust building, which allows for reciprocal sharing, opens the possibility through common action of creating a new narrative supporting self-worth, dignity and agency. This is an important step in contexts where narratives of meaning are disrupted.

On the other hand, it is important to link this discussion to the general discussion of food banks at the start of this paper. Food banks are set up in such a way that they offer the promise that food poverty and hunger can be solved by charity, and that even in a rich society, food poverty is ‘normal’. They tap into the voluntary ethos and the natural desire of churches and other groups to respond to an obvious need. (Salonen 2016.) In the case of food banks, as in many other cases of social action, there is considerable ambiguity, even ambivalence. The question is, can we, from a critical or critical faith perspective, use the relationships possible in the situation to work for a more inclusive life and society.

In this context, a core or guiding concept for the diaconal church, that will support life together and a sharing of resources, is needed. Such a concept should integrate work with people on the local level, with support for sustainable societies and economies, whilst minimising creation harm.

Conviviality as a Core Concept for Diaconia

In recent work together with interdiac (International Academy for Diaconia and Social Action, Central and Eastern Europe), and more recently, with the Lutheran World Federation, I have been developing ‘conviviality’ as a core concept for diaconia. The term ‘conviviality’ basically means “the art and practice of living together”. It refers to the Spanish term ‘convivencia’ and encompasses living together in solidarity, in sharing resources and in the joint struggle for human dignity and sustainable community life. It draws from old traditions of neighbourhood support in sustaining common life and the traditions of migrant communities in supporting life in new environments, which in some cases, are not as welcoming as one would hope and expect. Work in local communities is linked to the need to work ‘structurally’ for good working and living conditions, to address questions of justice and work for the common good of all. But the entry point is lived experience in the locality and building on the common vocation to promote the common good of all.

There were many reasons for choosing conviviality, not the least because the most commonly used synonym ‘community’ is unhelpful, because for some, it is nostalgic, and for others, it may be exclusive. It may lead to building up walls between people and preventing relationships across diversity. Because of this, community may also be a factor in oppression. Therefore, whilst agreeing that we are seeking life in a community as a basic factor of diaconia, we also have to be careful in choosing our understanding of community in a way which encourages openness to the other and which also allows for internal diversity. (Addy 2014.)

Seeking Conviviality in Practice

Conviviality refers to the art and practice of living together. The word was first used in the contemporary context by Ivan Illich to refer to the idea of creative relationships between people and people and their environment. He contrasted conviviality, which he saw as a free give and take between people as they create their own reality, to the mechanical and conditioned responses to demands made on people by others with power. (Illich, 2001) It has also been used by interdiac learning programmes as an alternative to multiculturalism, because it refers to the everyday interactions and practices of living together without domination.

Conviviality, therefore, implies creating a situation that emphasises:

- The relational nature of the person, in distinction to a view of the person that is based on possessive individualism.
- Respectful views towards people and communities which are ‘different’
- Reciprocal relationships of give and take between people as a foundation for life together

Conviviality emphasises the building of creative relationships between people which recognises interdependency and promotes companionship.

The origins of the word conviviality lie in the historical period in Spain, when Christians, Jews and Moslems lived together until the end of the 15th century. It is a very useful concept to frame our work for creating liveable cities and villages in a context, where there are many different communities living side by side – building society in diversity. If we use this idea as a basis for diaconal practice, we will come to a new understanding of the basis of relationships in conversation, which take time to be alongside people in everyday activity, creating space for developing the ‘art and practice of living together’. This can include simple activities, such as preparing food, and may lead to other more complex actions that may, in turn, create new alternatives or may involve people organising and supporting each other in work for change. This has implications for diaconal practice, because in this experience-based and inductive approach, outcomes cannot easily be predicted.

The implications of this are that diaconia should focus less on projects and on delivering services that are contracted out from municipalities – or simply on filling the growing gaps in the welfare net. Diaconia should focus much more on creating spaces of trust, reciprocity and dialogue, that would renew social life and create new shared narratives.

This means beginning to look very carefully at all the projects and services from the point of view of ‘seeking conviviality’. The reason is that many well-meaning projects reinforce divisions and are based on – often negative – classifications of people. Diaconia should offer an alternative to the systemic disciplining of marginalised groups.

It also means that there is a need to revisit our working methods and practices on a micro level to see how far they reproduce the viewpoints and perspectives of the mainstream consuming society. This implies the need to reflect on how far we are involved in productive conversations that lead to transformation and empowerment, and how far our structures, practic-

es and conversations tend to reproduce social priorities that reinforce the dominant social and economic model.

To seek conviviality means that our approach to professionalism has to change, because our communication also has to be ‘reciprocal’ and ‘horizontal’ as far as possible (recognising the questions of power and status). Learning about how to live together with others is an inductive process. It takes time, and we cannot predict the outcome. It means working for ‘integration’, rather than ‘assimilation’, which means that *we* are included in the change process. Therefore, this is not so much asking to ‘do more’, as it is a call to reflect on what we already do and to act differently!

The Contribution of Diaconia to a New Political Culture

The present-day leading political options and the leadership of the main political actors lack a positive vision for society and economy, which addresses the growing exclusion and the fear for the future of people on or just above the margins. The search for conviviality is an important supportive process, not only for a better everyday life, but also for a more positive social vision.

Because European societies are becoming more differentiated in themselves due to economic and cultural change, as well as more diverse because of migration and mobility, the practice of diaconia based on seeking conviviality is a key contribution to building up a society in diversity and working for change, which will support conviviality and a convivial economy. (Addy, 2017)

Seeking conviviality as a practice based on reciprocity and dialogue in a differentiated society develops relationships of empathy and trust among people who are normally excluded. It supports a culture of reciprocity that, at the same time, works to secure social rights, which are not based on performance or identity but are universal. The understanding of conviviality as a concept for the art and practice of living together questions the rights of the strongest and most successful to deny the rights of the weakest and supports movements to secure these rights for the common good of all. In all that we do in diaconia, it is important to celebrate our common life and to recognise the strengths and gifts people bring to the common table.

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3

FAITHS, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICE OF LIVING TOGETHER

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3.1 DOES CHRISTIAN FAITH ENHANCE TOLERANCE AND PREJUDICE?

Abstract

The study examined the Finnish young church volunteers' (YCVs) attitude towards alternative religiosity, multiculturalism, diversity, immigration and Islam. Of special interest was the question of whether religiosity supports or opposes prejudice. Several tools of measurements were developed in order to find answers to the research questions. Devotional and coalitional behaviour and early childhood Christian socialization were taken into account. In addition, four religious orientations were formed via cluster analysis based on the traditional separation of Intrinsic/Extrinsic religious orientations. The groups were named Intrinsic Social (IS), Intrinsic Personal (IP), Extrinsic and Quest. The data was collected before the tidal wave of immigration in autumn 2015.

The YCVs of the IP religious orientation seem to be the strongest adherents of the traditional Christianity among all the YCVs. The attitudes of the YCVs of the IS orientation, on the other hand, are a mixture of the traditional teachings of the church and spiritual cultural phenomena dominant in the society. This would explain both their strong belief in Christian dogmas and in angels, strong support for the syncretistic statement, which sees all religions as paths to the same truth, and strong support to the statement, which sees God and gods as creations of men. These phenomena bring the IS orientation close to the Quest orientation in some respects.

Through observation, it was concluded that YCVs of the IS orientation and devotional behaviour were comparatively more open towards immigration, multiculturalism and diversity. These alignments were associated with a desire to come to know people from other religions and the ability to see Islam as a religion of peace. On the flipside, the attitude of the IP-oriented was much more

critical towards these topics. This leads to the conclusion that it is not only the religious orientation that explains the results, but there are also other factors in play. In this study, the biggest difference discovered between YCVs of the IS and the IP orientation is their personality: while the IS-oriented are open, social and active persons, the IP-oriented appear to be introverted, timid and shy. This fact would lead to the conclusion that personality should also be taken into account when looking into the connection between religion and tolerance.

One important finding was the role of active private praying and intercessory prayer, which were found to support personal growth towards empathy and compassion, very important traits for both the future of an individual and the society. Because private devotional activity is closely correlated with the intrinsic form of religiosity, this finding supports the conclusion that intrinsic social religious orientation is connected to tolerance and an open attitude towards multiculturalism, immigration and people in other religions among the Finnish YCVs. However, the IP orientation seems to be much more reserved towards the multiculturalism and the influence of other religions in Finland. Therefore, the results of many previous studies, where intrinsic religiosity has been linked to prejudice, also receive some support in this study. Where many studies find a strong correlation between conservative values and religiosity, it seems probable that this is caused by measurements too narrow to reveal the internal variety inside the intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions.

Introduction

Finland is a small, very homogeneous Northern European country with ca. 5.5 million inhabitants, of whom 74 per cent are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF). Until the 1980's, Finland had hardly any immigrants. In 2013, at the time of the data collection for this study, there were about 250 000 people with an immigrant background in Finland – i.e. about five per cent of the whole population. However, they concentrated around the capital and other big cities: immigrants are 8–10 per cent of the urban population. There are about 30 000 new immigrants every year. Some are students, employees or jobseekers; some have social reasons (marriage, family reunification); some come for humanitarian reasons (refugees, asylum seekers). (Wallin 2013; Ministry of Interior 2016.)

In autumn 2015, the situation changed dramatically, as it did in the whole of Europe. In 2015, Finland received 32 476 new asylum seekers, most of them from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. That is almost ten times the previous year's number of 3651 (Ministry of the Interior). This dra-

matic increase lead to notable civil unrest. Social media, among others, was full of hate speech, including ‘internet rage’. There were numerous hateful rumours about the refugees and the asylum seekers circulating around the internet, but on the other side of the coin stood blue-eyed understanding and acceptance. Demonstrations for and against the immigrants were organized; there were even non-governmental street patrol groups “to protect the Finnish females”. A lot of what has taken place for and against has been done in the name of Christianity.

Though the tidal wave of immigration has stopped at the Mediterranean Sea for now, the clashes between the positive and the negative attitudes towards refugees and immigration have remained frequent and intense both in media and on the streets. From time to time, the conversation has gotten quite fierce on social media due to the Islamic extremists’ terrorist attacks on Europe and due to the forced returns of rejected asylum seekers. Religions and churches have had strong visibility in these conversations. Islam has especially been thought as guilty of terrorism. While on one hand, the ELCF and Christians have been accused of protecting the refugees and Islam, on the other, there have been calls for an entry ban of Islamic people in the name of Christianity.

Christianity seems to be a useful tool and metaphor for both those who are for and against immigration. Does Christianity advance equality, tolerance, and peace or persecution, oppression and inquisition? Does religiosity bring good or ill upon humanity?

Gordon Allport asked the same questions already in 1954, writing ‘The role of religion is paradoxical. It makes prejudice and it unmakes prejudice’ (Allport 1954, 444). At the time, many studies had found that strong religiosity, conservatism and prejudice are linked. These results were thought incomplete and misleading; however, bringing out the problems with these results required a division of religiosity into different dimensions to enable a more in-depth analysis of the matter. (Hay 1977, 157.)

Allport developed a theory through which he tried to understand the contradictory effects religion can have on nations as well as individuals. According to Allport, extrinsically motivated individuals use religion for their own good, for example, in order to get social value, contacts and status. Intrinsically motivated individuals have assimilated religion as a part of their personality, and their personality is in harmony with their needs. Extrinsically motivated people use religion as a means, whereas intrinsically motivated people live religion; for them it is an end. (Allport 1966, 456; Allport & Ross 1967, 434.)

Although the theory of intrinsic/extrinsic (I/E) religiosity in its more developed forms has been in use for almost fifty years, the original question still stands: does Christianity enhance tolerance or prejudice?

This article is closely related to the Finnish confirmation work, because young church volunteers (YCVs) who replied to the questionnaire were volunteering in confirmation work when they replied. They are a few years older than peer leaders (mean age 16,4 years), who assist in confirmation groups all the while from their first meeting. They act as volunteers not only in confirmation work, but also in, e.g., children's camps, family camps and diaconia camps; in worship life; and in organizing parish events, youth and children's clubs, etc. (Porkka 2004).

According to the YCV study, during the years 2007 and 2008, the biggest negative attitudinal change as YCVs during the time was unexpectedly measured towards those who belong to other religions. This is even more surprising, because the YCVs are in part responsible for carrying out activities which aim towards tolerance. Diversity is an important topic in the curriculum of confirmation work in Finland. The analysis indicates that the YCVs whose attitudes changed towards the negative were more probably those who did not receive strong childhood Christian parenting or were not very actively involved with the parish in their childhood - they also were not very active in their spiritual life at the time of their volunteering. I/E division seemed to explain the result: intrinsic religious commitment seems to enhance the understanding towards people from other religions, but extrinsic religiosity seems to lead towards stronger prejudices. There may also be something in the informal learning during the confirmation work that can escalate these prejudices. (Porkka 2012, 243–247.) The purpose of this article is to seek a clearer view of this phenomenon.

The Aim and Data of This Article

The aim of this article is to find answers to following research questions:

- 1) What is the YCVs' attitude on alternative religiosity?
- 2) What is the YCVs' attitude towards multiculturalism, diversity, immigration and Islam?
- 3) Through questions 1 and 2, this article strives to find the answer to the overarching question of whether religiosity supports or opposes prejudice.

The data was gathered with two separate questionnaires from the YCVs in 111 confirmation groups around Finland, where they were volunteering in 2013: in the beginning of the confirmation time, when 510 of the YCVs replied, and at the end of confirmation time, about half a year later, when 506 of the YCVs replied. Simultaneously, the Finnish part of the international confirmation survey data¹ was gathered from the same parishes and confirmation groups. The confirmation groups selected represent different kinds of parishes all around Finland (for more information see Niemelä & Porkka 2015).

The European refugee crisis had not yet started 2013, when the data was gathered. The results of this study would probably have been different, if the data gathering would have taken place two or three years later.

The data was analysed with SPSS statistics software version 21. The statistical analysis was done through factor and cluster analysis, mean values and percentile figures. The comparison between the different variables is presented in frequencies, with cross tabulations and one-way between-groups ANOVA. The test used for statistical significances between the groups is Tukey Post Hoc Multiple Comparison. The test used for the cluster analysis is K Means Cluster, which is meant for large data of more than 200 respondents.

The Many Faces of Religious Orientation

In many studies, conservative values, prejudice, intolerance and discrimination of some groups of people have received strong correlations with religiosity (Batson & Ventis 1982; Donahue 1985; Batson et al. 1993; Hall et al. 2010; Myllyniemi 2015, 88). Simultaneously, a big number of studies have shown that people with intrinsic religiosity have less prejudice, intolerance and discrimination than people with extrinsic religiosity. For example, in a meta-analysis of 41 empirical studies, Batson et al. recognized that in a majority of the studies, people with intrinsic religiosity scored the same as non-believers on prejudice and tolerance. However, they could not find any studies where religiosity would have decrease prejudice, not even among the intrinsically religious people. (Batson, Schönrode & Ventis 1993, 302–311.) Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that a majority of these studies focused on attitudes, not the behaviour of the informants. In the studies where indirect methods were used and where focus was on

¹ The first international confirmation survey was gathered from seven countries: Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and the second – from nine countries with 11 churches (see Niemelä, Schlag, Schweitzer & Simojoki (2015).

the informants' behaviour, the intrinsically religious scored equally on prejudices compared to the extrinsically oriented (Batson, Ventis 1982, 280–281; Batson et al. 1993, 311–315).

I/E division has been criticized and subsequently heavily modified. The most important improvements for this study are the work of Allen & Spilka (1967), Benson & Spilka (1973) and Batson et al. (1993). Allen & Spilka split the additional dimensions of committed and consensual religiosity from I/E split. A person of committed religiosity lives religion as a relevant part of their everyday life. She is tolerant, and able to define the religious concepts she lives by. A consensually religious person has religion as a separate domain in her life, finding religious values either magical or rather neutral. Such a person tends to have external faith: living by religious formulae, participating in rites and rituals, without much understanding of their purpose. In studies, such a person answers questions on religiosity with imprecise routine words or phrases (Allen & Spilka 1967, 191–206). According to Benson & Spilka, an individual's idea of God has a key role in whether their religiosity is internally committed or externally consensual (Benson & Spilka 1973, 304–309).

When comparing Allport & Ross's model to Allen & Spilka's, a strong correlation between intrinsic and committed religiosity was detected – even to the degree that they could be considered one and the same, the dimension of intrinsically committed religiosity. Extrinsic and consensual religiosity, on the other hand, stood more clearly apart. On a fundamental level, the division is about the perspectives of the personal meaning and social dimension of religiosity.

Kirkpatrick (1989) split extrinsic religiosity into extrinsic-personal (EP) and extrinsic-social (ES), two different categories of non-religious goals, which are pursued through religiosity. Whereas an EP religious orientation points to the use of religion to gain comfort, security or protection, an ES orientation marks the use of religion to gain social contact. Intrinsic commitment is defined as motivation for one's religious beliefs, whatever they may be. Following Kirkpatrick's analysis, Gorsuch and McPherson modified the extrinsic part of the scale by suggesting that extrinsic religious orientation consists of two distinct components: a social and a personal one. ES deals with attainment of social benefits, while EP orientation deals with overcoming and controlling psychological trouble and distress. (Gorsuch & McPherson 1994, 316.)

Batson and Ventis (1982) criticized the original I/E model, because according to them, intrinsic division does not do a good job of measuring non-prejudiced “mature” religiosity – a strong commitment to religion

could also manifest in the form of immature fanaticism. Therefore, they added a third dimension, the religious quest into the theory. According to them, the quest dimension is related to increased tolerance for difference and sensitivity towards the needs of others. (Batson, Schoenrade & Ventis 1993, 363–364.) According to them, an individual's religious orientation is not exhaustively described by a single category, but formed from a combination of the different dimensions. In this view, scoring high on one scale would not ordain scoring low on the others. A quest orientation is expressed in (1) posing complex existential questions without reducing their complexity, (2) regarding doubt as important and positive and (3) emphasizing tentativeness and incompleteness in formulating answers to religious questions. (Batson & Ventis 1982; Batson, Schoenrade & Ventis 1993.)

Hall et al. (2010) did a meta-analysis of 55 studies on the relationship of religiosity and racism in US between the years 1964–2008. According to their findings, extrinsic religiosity, strong religious identity and fundamentalism correlated positively, but intrinsic religiosity and quest orientation – negatively with racism. However, the inverse correlation between intrinsic religiosity and racism could be explained away with social desirability. Therefore, the quest orientation seems to be the only form of religiosity, which is unambiguously tolerant and anti-racist. That leaves the question if the orientation measures religiosity at all, because they are people who only seldom participate in religious events and lack a strong faith in God. (Hall, Matz & Wood 2010.)

The theory of I/E religious orientation has mostly been used in US, but it has been recognized that it is also useful elsewhere, in different kinds of religious circumstances, and that it best measures the different orientations of Protestant Christians. This was the conclusion of one European study within four denominational samples of university students in four different cultural environments: Slovenian Catholics, Bosnian Muslims, Serbian Orthodox and American Protestants. In this study, I/E orientations only formed two separate dimensions within the American Protestant sample, but among Eastern Orthodox, Islamic and Roman Catholic, all extrinsic personal and intrinsic items combined into a single dimension. (Flere & Flavric 2008.) However, in a Norwegian study, the internal consistency of the included scales was recognized to be satisfactory and the intercorrelations were in the predicted directions (Kaldestad & Stifoss-Hanssen 1993).

Because of the problems mentioned above, it has been suggested that the original division to I/E religious orientations should be abandoned. Instead, e.g., the devotional and coalitional division have been suggested. Hansen and Norenzayan (2006) measured devotional attitude with

the frequency of prayer, coalitional attitude and behaviour, the frequency of attendance at organized religious services and a statement of religious exclusivity: “My God (beliefs) is the only true God (beliefs)”. They recognized that fundamentalism and religious exclusivism are related to the coalitional² attitude, but devotional attitude is related to a more tolerant attitude. Similar results were also discovered in BBSC’s survey data in 2004 (N=10 069) from ten countries (the US, the UK, Israel, South Korea, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Russia, Mexico and Nigeria), where the devotional people were found to be less likely to use the other religions as scapegoats (“I blame people of other religions for much of the trouble in this world”). (Hansen & Norenzayan 2006.)

In the European RAMP survey (Religious and Moral Pluralism, N=11 904), which used data collected from 11 European countries, a membership in a religious community, participation in worship life, exclusive faith, believing in Christian doctrines, the importance of faith in one’s life and personal spirituality were used in measuring the relationship between religiosity and prejudice. It was found that a membership in a religious community, participation in worship life and exclusive faith correlated positively, but believing in Christian doctrines about Jesus, the importance of faith in one’s life and personal spirituality correlated negatively with prejudices. (Scheepers, Gusberts & Hello 2002.)

Ketola (2011) used ISSP data and the questions involved in it while measuring the connection of religiosity and prejudice with the following four items: (1) mental images of different religions, (2) attitudes towards extreme religious phenomenon, (3) attitudes towards religious inequality and (4) religious prejudice. One of his findings was that in Finland, the connection between religiosity, national identity and national symbols is still extraordinarily strong. Extrinsic religiosity is emblematic for Finland, because Christian symbols and institutions are used to support ethnic identity. He also found that devotional behaviour was significantly connected with a negative mental image of foreign religions. Religion has an indirect impact on prejudice and intolerance towards foreign religions and people from different cultures. This happens via coalitional belonging: the groups

² Hansen and Norenzayan (2006) use the concepts “devotional” and “coalitional” in their theory. With “coalitional”, they mean the forms of religion that are rather extrinsically motivated (i.e., based on social pressure and advantages), focus on the institutional and collective dimensions and often reflect some closed-mindedness in cognition and morality. Coalitional does not give a clear impression of the meaning, and instead of that, e.g., Ginges, Hansen and Norenzayan (2010) use the concept “coalitional-committed”. However, the original concept of Hansen and Norenzayan has been used throughout this article, because it is already quite established.

in congregations are typically exclusive, and therefore, they strengthen stereotypes and the negative image of those who do not belong in the group. (Ketola 2011, 86–87.)

As has been noted above, the theory of I/E religiosity has many limitations and problems. The critical remarks on the theory have been accounted for in this article as well as possible. In this text, intrinsic religiosity refers to such mature religiosity that it is the main motivation of an individual's life and affects how they choose to live their own lives. According to Allen & Spilka, intrinsic religiosity is closely related to committed religiosity, which is linked to tolerance.

Extrinsic religiosity is understood as immature religiosity that serves the individual's goals and is not linked to tolerance. Such religiosity is often used to gain, e.g., respect, social prestige, social contacts or status. In the analysis, Batson's quest dimension is also given its due consideration as well as any possible overlap in categories. I/E orientations have not been used as a categorical classification, but rather as a unidimensional one, an approach supported by recent empirical analysis (Tiliopoulos et al. 2007, 1618). This means that religious orientation cannot be classified as either the ends or the means of someone's religious orientation. Not only are the religious means and ends mutually exclusive, but they can both be identified within each of the proposed orientations. Therefore, the question is not if the religion is the means or the end. The important point is how religion is used in living and to what ends (Pargament 1997, 59–63).

The measured aspects developed from that perspective and the statements asked are introduced in the following chapter.

The Tools of Measurement

Devotional behaviour is the first aspect based on Hansen & Norenzayan's suggestion (2006). In this article, devotional attitude will be measured with the frequency of private prayer and the habit of praying on behalf of other people, who are in difficult situations, the prayer of intercession.

Coalitional behaviour is also as suggested by Hansen & Norenzayan (2006). An index of common religious participation (iCRP) was created (Cronbach's alpha .75) to measure this. The index contains the frequency of participating in parish's youth activities, worship life and other spiritual events.

Early childhood Christian socialization (ECCS) is the third measured aspect. It will be measured by the parents' interest in religion. It turned out to be the best indicator of early childhood religious socialization in the in-

ternational research on confirmation work, and it also predicted the confirmands' interest in religiosity and their post-confirmation activity in the parish (e.g. Porkka, Schweitzer & Simojoki 2017). This was also recognized to correlate strongly with the YCVs' attitudinal change towards people in different religions during the first international study on confirmation work in 2007/2008.

However, it is important to keep in mind that in the theory of socialization, the attachment relationship between parent and child has a central role: if this relationship is safe, the child's socialization to the parents' religiosity is easier than in an unsafe relationship. In homes with safe relationships between a child and the parents, the child identifies more strongly with the values and the form of religion the parents regard as important (Sunden 1974, 122; Kallioniemi, Luodeslampi & Ubani 2010, 181; Niemelä 2011, 40.) However, this indicator also has some limits, because the role of early childhood religious socialization could also have a negative effect on the child's development. This is especially true if the religious upbringing is too restrictive or includes physical or psychological threatening or bullying. A child's way of believing could become extrinsic in a negative milieu, when the child learns to behave in a way accepted by the parents, which gives security, acceptance and power to the child. (Kallioniemi et. al 2010, 165–166.)

Tools to measure the *Intrinsic/Extrinsic/Quest religious orientation* were created with a cluster analysis on the 33 items measuring the YCVs' motivations to volunteer in confirmation work. Because the I/E/Q orientations deal mostly with the person's motivation as Neyrinck, Lens, Vansteenkiste & Soenens (2010) conclude, the items which measure the YCVs' motives are suitable tools to measure the religious orientation, although they are mostly different from the items traditionally used to measure these indices.

With the help of factor analysis, four motivation indices were formed out of the items measuring YCVs' motivation. These are (1) Religious motives and expectations, (2) Expectations and motives related to community and altruism, (3) Expectations and motives related to personal growth and (4) External and social expectations. After that, four religious orientation clusters were formed with the help of cluster analysis. Table 1 shows the results of this analysis, including the names given to each of the religious orientations, mean values and standardised mean values. These orientations were named by utilising the theory of I/E religiosity.

TABLE 1. YCVs' religiosity types, mean values (M, scale 1-7), and standardized mean values (Z).

	Intrinsic Social		Intrinsic personal		Extrinsic Social		Quest		Total
	M	z-points	M	z-points	M	z-points	M	z-points	M
Religious motives and expectations	5,54	1,00	3,79	- 0,31	4.34	0,10	2,33	- 1,41	4,21
Expectations and motives related to community and altruism	6,44	0,88	5,81	0,04	5,03	-0,99	4,82	- 1,27	5,78
Expectations and motives related to own growth	5.85	0,96	4,78	0,02	4,22	- 0,55	2,88	- 1,72	4,78
External and social expectations and motives	4,96	0,60	4,38	0,13	3,14	- 0,90	2,91	- 1,09	4,23
%	30 %		13 %		46 %		12 %		100 %
N	141		59		216		57		473

The descriptions of the religious orientations are as follows:

Intrinsic Social: They are very active persons, who participate in YCV activity because of altruistic reasons, social motives and motives related to spiritual and personal growth, but they are also active in their personal spirituality. Therefore, it can be said that for them, religion is a goal – but it is simultaneously a means, which deals with the attainment of social benefits. They take part in the parish life more than others, and they volunteer in school and hobbies. About 30 % of the YCVs belong to a religious type, proportionally more females than males (24 % of boys, 34 % of girls).

Intrinsic Personal: They are socially timid and mostly interested in learning more about spiritual life and theology and in helping the confirmands find the importance of these topics. However, they are not interested in topics related to their own growth, nor in non-theological questioning. Their private spirituality is more active than the YCVs' in other orientation types, but they participate in the parish activities less than the Intrinsic Socials, and they are often critical towards the church. Many of them do not like

communal activities, because they find social gatherings unpleasant. They do not volunteer outside the parish. For them, religion is mostly an end, and a part of them is also quite fundamental in their spirituality. 13 % of the YCVs belong to this religious type, proportionally, an equal amount of boys and girls.

Extrinsic: They are not interested in spiritual or personal growth, but they participate in the YCV activity mostly for the opportunity to be together with their friends and confirmands in order to extend their social network – for them, the YCV activity is primarily a means through which to realize their own goals. Because YCV activity has a good reputation in the eyes of parents and is a part of youth culture in Finland, being a YCV also gives them respect, social prestige and status. However, they have altruistic reasons for participating in the YCV activity, because they want to support the confirmands in their personal growth. They have seldom participated in the parish activity in their childhood, and they are passive in their personal spiritual life. They are also quite passive in volunteering in school or hobbies. Almost half (47 %) of the YCVs belong to this religious type, proportionally more male than female (51 % of boys, 43 % of girls).

Quest: They are not motivated to be YCVs at all, and they seem to be expecting nothing from being a volunteer in confirmation work. It seems that they had started this activity by accident – perhaps they did not have anything else to do, or they had lost the reasons for why they originally started the training. Their opinions related to faith and religion are quite similar to those of the socially and externally motivated. Many of them have not participated in the parish child work and are still passive during their time as YCVs. Also, personal spirituality is quite rare among them compared to the other YCVs. This orientation is named according to the findings of Hall, Matz and Wood (2010), where people in this religious orientation only seldom participate in religious events and lack a strong faith in God. 12 % of the YCVs belong to this religious orientation, an equal percentage of boys and girls.

Findings

The YCVs' religiosity

It was found that 16 % of the YCVs had parents showing significant religious interest, with over a half (56 %) showing some religious interest, and almost a third (28 %) having no interest at all. The YCVs belong to three

categories in their private prayer activity: every fourth (23 %) prayed daily, half (47 %) – every now and then, and every third (30 %) – hardly ever. However, more than half (57 %) of the YCVs prayed for others when they were in difficulty, and only one third (32 %) did not. 15 % of the YCVs were very active participants in parish life, while 10 % did not participate at all. Almost every third (30 %) of the YCVs belongs to intrinsic social (IS), 13 % – to intrinsic personal (IP), almost half (46 %) – to extrinsic (E) and 12 % – to the quest (Q) orientation.

Early childhood Christian socialization (ECCS) had a strong positive correlation with devotional behaviour. Almost half (44 %) of the YCVs with strong ECCS prayed daily, when this percentage was only 17 among the YCVs with weak ECCS. Also, iCRP correlated positively with ECCS and devotional behaviour. Almost every fifth (18 %) of the YCVs with strong ECCS prayed every day, while as many as 71 % prayed for others when they were in difficulty. The corresponding figures among the YCVs with weak ECCS were 10 % (daily prayers) and 51 % (prayer of intercession). Those who scored high in iCRP were also active in devotional behaviour: 60 % prayed every day and 80 % – for others when they were in difficulty, while the corresponding figures among those who scored low were 45 % (daily prayers) and 57 % (prayer of intercession). These findings are in line with the results of the international study on protestant confirmation work. (Porkka, Schweitzer & Simojoki 2017.)

The devotional behaviour was much stronger among the YCVs with IS and IP orientation, and weaker among YCVs with E and Q orientation (daily private praying: IS 40 %, IP 42 %, E 23 %, Q 19% and active prayer of intercession: IS 40 %, IP 42 %, E 23 %, Q 19 %). Surprisingly, little correlation was found between religious orientation and ECCS (strong ECCS: IS 16 %, IP 20 %, E 14 %, Q 18 % and low ECCS: IS 26 %, IP 26 %, E 28 %, Q 33 %).

YCVs' attitudes towards alternative religiosity and some traditional Christian statements

Many studies have shown that the growing popularity of these views is related to increased variety and mixing of spiritual cultural phenomena, rather than the strengthening of an individual alternative culture. Simultaneously, believing in traditional Christian dogma of Heaven and Hell and Jesus' resurrection has become less popular, even among the active Christians, and atheism became more popular, especially among young adults (Haastettu kirkko 2012, 38–40; Niemelä 2011, 45). How this pertains to

the second research question of the YCVs' attitudes towards multiculturalism is very interesting: Do the YCVs primarily abide by the general atmosphere of the society, or do they place more weight on the traditional teachings of the church?

Belief in reincarnation/transmigration of the soul was covered in the question of "A human being lives on Earth only once". Figure 1 shows that about a tenth of the YCVs (11 %) disagreed with the statement. This is a much lower percentage than among young people in general, because 21 % of the 15-24-year-old Finns agree with this statement (Niemelä 2011, 46).

A bit over half of the YCVs (58 %) reported believing in angels, females reporting significantly stronger beliefs than males ($p < .01^{**}$), which is in line with the beliefs of the whole population (Utriainen 2016). The least popular statement was that "God and gods are the creation of man", which measured atheistic attitudes: a fifth (20 %) of the YCVs agreed with the statement, males slightly more often than females ($p < .05^*$). This is a surprisingly high value because only 2 % totally agreed, and 6 % partially agreed (5-7 on a scale 1-7) with the statement "I'm an atheist", when that was asked from the YCVs in the same questionnaire. The percentage of atheists among 15-29-year-old Finns is 22 % (Haastettu kirkko 2011, 42).

The statement "All religions are paths to the same truth" received support with almost half (47 %) of the YCVs agreeing with the statement, and only a fifth (20 %) disagreeing. This is surprising, considering that the respondents were volunteers in the confirmation work of the FELC, and this statement is contrary to the teachings of the Church. A similar statement was included in Gallup Ecclesiastica. It was formulated: "The origins of all religions lie in the same inner and spiritual experiences". 60 % of the Finns agreed partially or fully with this statement (5-7 on a scale 1-7); a tenth of the respondents agreed fully (10 %; 7 on a scale 1-7). The increased belief in angels is also considered to be related to increased variety and mixing of the spiritual cultural phenomena. (Haastettu kirkko 2012, 39-40.)

Unlike the views discussed above, the belief in Jesus' resurrection and Heaven and Hell belong to the traditional teaching of the church, but believing in them has decreased in Finland during the last few decades (Haastettu kirkko 2011, 45). Altogether 58 % of the YCVs agreed with the statement "Jesus has risen from the dead", and 43 % – with the statement "After death, a person will go either to Heaven or Hell", while a fifth (18 %) disagreed with the dogma of Jesus' resurrection, and a fourth (25 %) – with the statement of Heaven and Hell. YCVs have a much stronger belief in Jesus' resurrection and Heaven and Hell than other people in Finland. According to Gallup Ecclesiasticus, only 36 % of Finns believed in Jesus'

Resurrection in the year 2011, while the percentage was 57 in 2007 and 69 in 1999 (Haastettu kirkko 2011, 45). According to Niemelä (2011, 45), only about a third of all the 15-24-year-old Finns believes in Heaven, and only about fifth – in Hell.

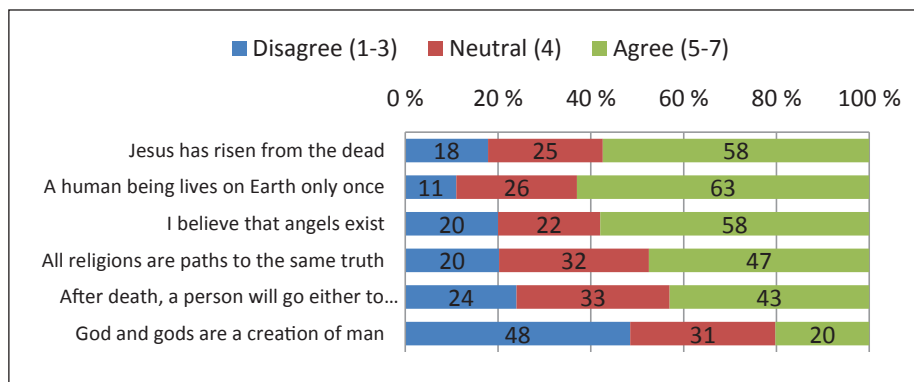
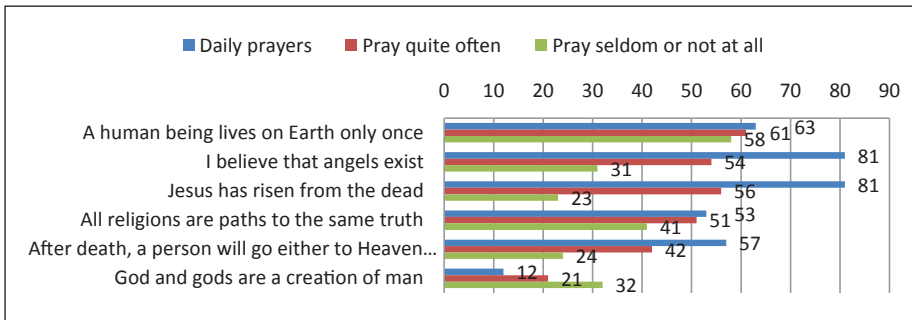


FIGURE 1. YCVs’ views on some statements on alternative religiosity and traditional teaching of the church. N=493-503.

The connection of coalitional behaviour measured with iCRP and the agreement with the statements in figure 1 was quite similar to what it was with ECCS. Compared to the other YCVS, the YCVs who scored high on iCRP were more likely to agree with the statements: “A human being lives on earth only once” ($p < .05^*$); “I believe in angels” ($p < .001^{***}$); “Jesus has risen from dead” ($p < .001^{***}$); and “After death, a person will go either to Heaven or Hell” ($p < .05^*$). The results strengthen the previous findings that participating in a parish’s activities strengthens the belief in the teachings of the church – and vice versa. Also, quitting volunteering and participation in parish activity has been found to correlate with a negative change in the attitude towards the church and its teachings. (Porkka, Schweitzer & Simojoki 2017). However, correlation does not equal causation – it is hard to say which causes which and to what degree. Those who are active participants of parish activities believe in the teachings of the church more often than those who seldom participate. No significant correlation was found between coalitional behaviour and acceptance of the statements of alternative religiosity.

Similar results were found when taking into account devotional behaviour. Figure 2 shows that daily prayers were much more likely to agree with the existence of angels, Jesus’ resurrection and the statement that a person

will go either to Heaven or Hell after death. They were more likely to disagree with the statement “God and gods are a creation of man” than those who seldom prayed. No significant differences were found between the groups regarding the statement “A human being lives on Earth only once” and only a small difference concerning “All religions are paths to the same truths”. It is interesting to recognize that those who rarely or never had private prayer were much more critical towards the traditional teachings of the church, and every third (32 %) even agreed with the atheistic statement “God and gods are a creation of man”. However, they were surprisingly less likely to agree with “All religions are paths to the same truth”. Perhaps they do not see any religions being a path to truth, and therefore, they disagreed with the statement.

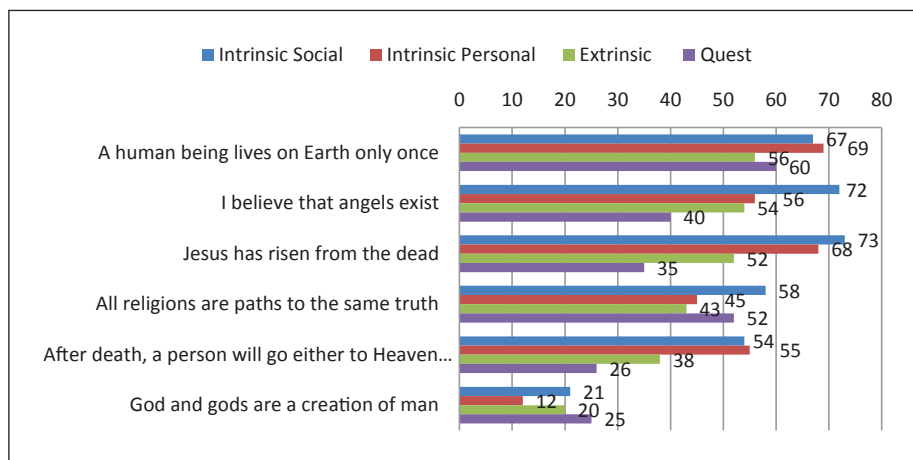


N (daily prayers) = 117-119; N (pray quite often) = 64-69; N (pray seldom or not at all) = 80-81. The share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable.

FIGURE 2. The connection between the frequency of private prayer and attitude towards some statements on alternative religiosity and traditional teachings of the church.

Figure 3 shows that YCVs with IS and IP religious orientations agreed significantly more often than others with the statements “A human being lives on Earth only once”, “Jesus has risen from the dead” and “After death a person will go either to Heaven or Hell”. All of these indicated belief in Christian dogma. However, the results were much more complicated with the statements which measured alternative religiosity and atheism. YCVs with IS orientation believed significantly more often in the existence of angels than YCVs in IP and E orientation, while Q orientation people believed in them the least of all. Surprisingly, YCVs in IS and Q orientations were more likely to agree with the statement “All religions are paths to the same truth” than the IP and E orientation. This statement measures rela-

tivism which does not really fit with the traditional description of intrinsic religion – in the Quest mentality, it fits perfectly, however. Surprisingly, IP orientation was the only group that had a higher than average agreement rate with the statement “God and gods are a creation of man”.



N (IS) = 105-106; N (IP) = 41-44; N (E) = 157-159; N (Q) = 39-40. The share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable.

FIGURE 3. The connection between YCVs in different religious orientations and the attitude towards some statements on alternative religiosity and traditional teachings of the church.

The YCVs with IP religious orientation seem to be the strongest adherents of traditional Christianity among all the YCVs. The attitudes of YCVs with IS orientation, on the other hand, are a mixture of traditional teachings of the church and the spiritual cultural phenomena dominant in the society. This would explain both their strong belief in Christian dogmas and a strong belief in angels, strong support of the syncretistic statement, which sees all religions as paths to the same truth, and quite strong support to the statement which sees God and gods as creations of men. These phenomena bring the IS orientation close to the Quest orientation in some respects.

Some confusion can also be seen among the YCVs with the Q religious orientation. They are simultaneously sceptical towards the traditional teachings of the church and often express atheistic opinions, but they may support the syncretistic opinion, which sees all religions as paths to the same truth. This confusion is natural, because the YCVs are still young and their religious views may change over their time as YCVs.

In the following chapter, the focus is on tolerance and prejudice. According to the theory of I/E religiosity, the quest attitude links to tolerance towards different views and represents openness to different views, and thus, helps people to navigate the diverse views available.

YCVs attitude towards immigration, multiculturalism, diversity and Islam

The second research question asks if the religious orientations explain the YCVs' attitudes towards multiculturalism, diversity, immigration and Islam. Figure 4 shows the statements and YCVs' opinions on these questions. The statement "Islam is a religion of peace" received the most uncertainty (4 on a scale 1-7), selected by over half (51 %) of the respondents. This statement measures the respondents' skill to separate Islam as a religion from the mass media's stories of the Islamic fundamentalism and suicide bombers.

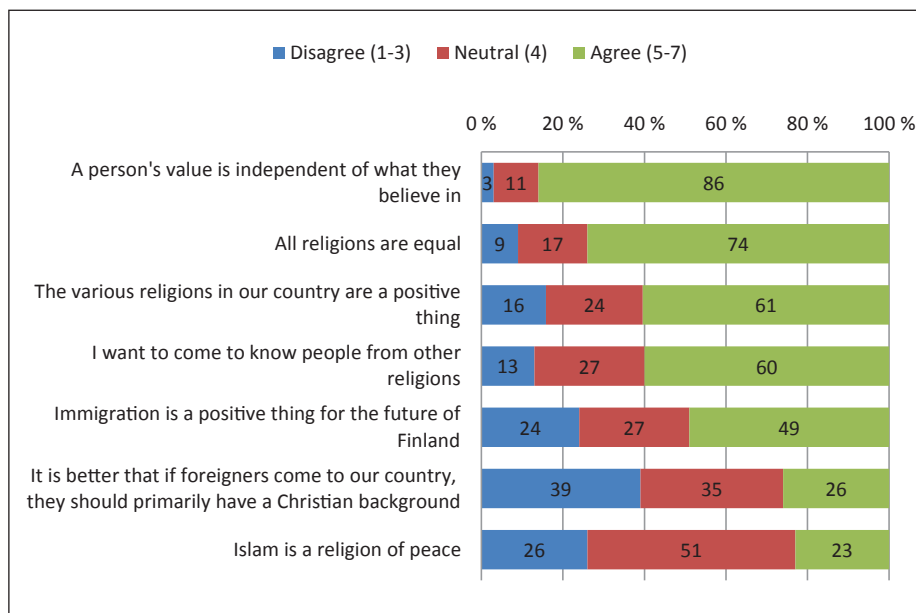
The statements where the majority of the YCVs agreed measured tolerance: "A person's value is independent of what they believe in" and "All religions are equal". Only a few of the YCVs disagreed with these statements. Females were universally more tolerant than males ($p < .05^*$). However, the results could be thought to have more to do with social desirability than the YCV's way of behaving.

The statement sparking the strongest disagreement was "It is better that if foreigners come to our country, they should primarily have a Christian background", with 39 % disagreeing, and only a fourth (26 %) agreeing. Males provided this view with a much stronger backing than females ($p < .001^{***}$).

The statement was originally brought to the attention of the Finnish collective by Päivi Räsänen, the chairwoman of the Christian Democratic Party and the Minister of Internal Affairs during the immigration crisis. In a sense, the statement is racist, since it splits immigrants into different categories according to their religion. However, it can also be justified with common sense, as Päivi Räsänen did. The interpretation of this statement is also ambiguous in this research, because it is hard to say how the respondents perceived the statement, and therefore, the answers are difficult to analyse.

A majority of the YCVs considered the various religions in our country a positive thing (61 %), females more often than males ($p < .01^{**}$). A majority of the YCVs also wanted to come to know people from other religions

(60 %). Half (49 %) of the YCVs considered immigration a positive thing for the future of Finland. YCVs, particularly males, were more positive towards immigration than the Finnish average. Numerous studies, e.g., the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) and Finnish Youth Barometer, have shown that females are more positive towards immigrants than males (Puolustuskanalla 2010, 89–93). The attitude differences towards ethnic groups and immigrants were the largest among the participating countries, according to the ICCS-study (Suoninen, Kupari & Törmäkangas 2010). According to Finnish Youth Barometer 2014, 41 % agreed fully or partially with the statement “It would be good if more foreigners came to our country”. 33 % of the respondents disagreed partially or fully with the statement. (Myllyniemi 2015, 81.)



The scale 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable.

FIGURE 4. YCVs' views on statements about immigration, multiculturalism, diversity and Islam. N=493-503.

For more detailed information, the connection between the different religious orientations and the YCVs' answers was scrutinized.

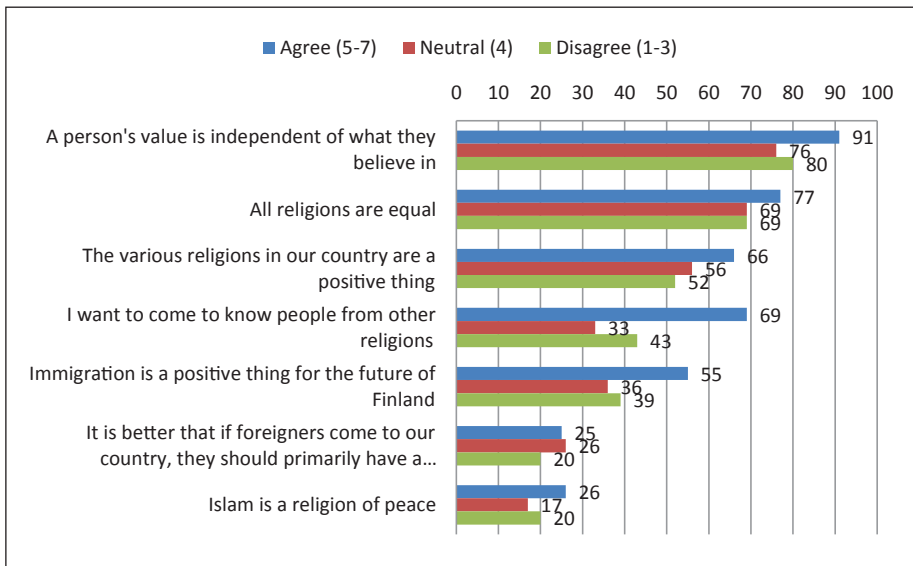
ECCS did not clarify the research question much, because the findings were ambiguous. On one hand, the YCVs with strong ECCS were much

more likely to agree with the statements “Immigration is a positive thing for the future of Finland” ($p < .001^{***}$) and “Islam is a religion of peace” ($p < .01^{**}$), but seldom with the statement “All religions are equal” ($p < .05^*$). They also were more likely to agree with the statement “It is better that if foreigners come to our country, they should primarily have a Christian background” ($p < .001^{***}$). These findings give the impression that YCVs coming from Christian homes are better than others at separating Islam as a religion from the extremist actions done in its name, whereas the frequent media coverage does not necessarily state the difference. They also see immigration as a positive thing for the future of our country, but only if the immigrants are Christian.

Coalitional behaviour does not shed light on the question, because a significant result was found only with the statement “A person’s value is independent of what they believe in”; those who often participated in parish activities were more likely to agree with the statement, than those who participated less ($p < .001^{***}$). With all the other statements, the connection was ambiguous.

Devotional behaviour was measured by the frequency of both private prayer and intercessory prayer. It was found that compared to those who prayed seldom, the daily prayers were more likely to agree with the statement “A person’s value is independent of what they believe in” ($p < .05^*$); “Immigration is a positive thing for the future of Finland” ($p < .01^{**}$); and “Islam is a religion of peace” ($p < .05^*$), but also, with the statement “It is better that if foreigners come to our country, they should primarily have a Christian background” ($p < .05^*$). These results lead to the conclusion that those who pray are more open to multiculturalism, diversity and immigration than those who pray seldom.

Figure 5 shows that those YCVs who pray for others were more likely to agree with all the statements on diversity, multiculturalism and immigration, save for the statement where the immigration of Christians was prioritized. Because private prayer measures intrinsic religious attitude, these results seem to support the idea that intrinsic religious orientation enhances the understanding towards people from other religions. Moreover, theologically speaking, ‘to intercede’ means to act altruistically, on behalf of others. Therefore, interceding is in connection with compassion and empathy, which in turn are considered an important skill for building a righteous society (Porter 1997, 94).

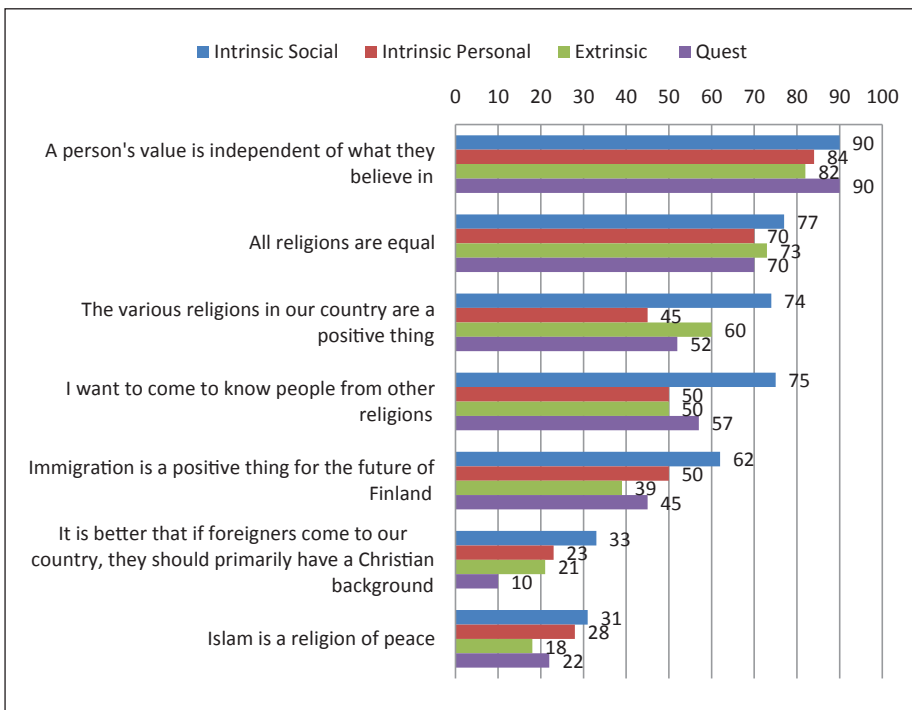


The scale 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable.

FIGURE 5. The connection of answers on the statement “I pray for others when they have hard time” and the attitude towards immigration, multiculturalism, equality and Islam. N=493-503.

Figure 6 shows the connection of the religious orientations to the YCVs’ attitude towards the statements to the second research question. It is evident that the IS orientation has a rather similar open attitude towards immigration, multiculturalism and diversity as devotional behaviour. They agreed more often with the statement “The various religions in our country are a positive thing”, “I want to come to know people from other religions” and “Immigration is a positive thing for the future of Finland”. However, they also agreed with the statement “It is better that if foreigners come to our country, they should primarily have a Christian background”. Interestingly, the YCVs of the IP orientation are very different from the YCVs in the IS orientation, even though they both measure intrinsic religiosity. The difference between these two intrinsic orientations is in the statement “The various religions in our country are a positive thing (5-7 on scale 1-7: IS 77 %, IP 45 %); “I want to come to know people from other religions” (5-7 on scale 1-7: IS 75 %, IP 50%); and “A person’s value is independent of what they believe in” (5-7 on scale 1-7: IS 91 %, IS 76 %).

The YCVs of the Q orientation disagreed with the idea of preferring Christian immigrants, which is a rather apt fit for the description of the quest orientation in the theory (e.g. Hall, Matz & Wood 2010). However, it is unclear if this measures tolerance, because they are quite critical towards the statement “The various religions in our country are a positive thing”, which was agreed to only by 52 % of the Q-oriented. This response could also be interpreted as an atheist statement. Compared to the other YCVs, the YCVs with E orientation were less likely to agree with the statement “Immigration is a positive thing for the future of Finland”. In general, YCVs with E orientation are much more critical towards the statements in figure 6, than those of the IS orientation.



N (Intrinsic social) = 101-105; N (Intrinsic personal) = 43-44; N (Extrinsic social) = 157-160; N (Extrinsic personal) = 40: The share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable.

FIGURE 6. the connection between YCVs in different religious orientation and the attitude towards immigration, multiculturalism, diversity and Islam.

The aim of this article was to find the answer to the question of whether religiosity supports or opposes prejudice. In this analysis, the emphasis has been on the connection between the different religious orientations and the behaviour regarding the topics. It was discovered that the attitude towards the multiculturalism, diversity, immigration and Islam seems to depend on multiple factors, because private devotional activity is closely correlated with the intrinsic form of religiosity. The findings above support the conclusion that among the Finnish YCVs, intrinsic social religious orientation is in connection with tolerance and an open attitude towards multiculturalism, immigration and people from other religions. Therefore, the conclusion of the first study in 2007/2008 is also reinforced by this result (Porkka 2012, 243–247).

However, personality is also an important factor, as the huge difference between the YCVs of the IS and the IP orientation shows. Therefore, results from many previous studies, where intrinsic religiosity has been connected to prejudice, also receive some support in this study. Where many studies find a strong correlation between conservative values and religiosity, it seems probable that this is caused by measurements too narrow to reveal the internal variety inside the intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions.

Conclusion

The aim of this article was to seek an answer to the question of how the YCVs' religiosity is in terms of religious orientation, and how these orientations correlate with their attitude on alternative religion and multiculturalism, immigration, diversity and Islam.

Four religious orientations were found among the YCVs: Intrinsic Social (IS), Intrinsic Personal (IP), Extrinsic (E) and Quest (Q). Moreover, devotional and coalitional behaviour and early childhood Christian socialization (ECCS) were taken into account when scrutinizing the answers to the research questions. Devotional behaviour was measured by the frequency of private prayer and the prayer of intercession, coalitional behaviour – by an index of Christian religious participation (iCRP), and early childhood Christian socialization (ECCS) – with the parents' interest in religion.

It was discovered that early ECCS correlates positively with the iCRP and devotional behaviour. YCVs of IS and IP religious orientations were recognized to be much more active in their devotional behaviour than the YCVs of E or Q orientation. However, no correlation between religious orientations and ECCS was found.

The first research question was to find an answer to how the YCVs' religious orientations correlate with the statements measuring alternative religiosity. In order to find comparative information, the questionnaire included statements regarding their attitude towards some teachings of the church, including the questions of Jesus' resurrection, believing that after death, a person will either go to Heaven or Hell, and that a human lives on Earth only once. The statements concerning alternative religiosity included statements on reincarnation/transmigration, seeing all religions as paths to the same truth, seeing God and gods as creations of men and believing in angels.

A majority of the YCVs accepted the statements on Jesus' resurrection, a human being living on Earth only once, and the teachings of the church on Heaven and Hell. These statements were more often accepted, if the YCVs had a strong ECCS, scored high on iCRP and were active prayers. However, almost half of them also accepted the statement "All religions are paths to the same truth", and every fifth agreed with "God and gods are a creation of man". It was recognized that the YCVs who accepted these statements were more probably passive both in their devotional and coalitional behaviour. These results strengthen the previous findings that participating in parish activities strengthens the belief in the teachings of the church – and vice versa. Active devotional behaviour seems to have similar effects. However, it is hard to say which is the cause and which is the effect, and to what degree.

When the religious orientations were taken into account, it was recognized that the YCVs with IP religious orientation were the strongest adherents of traditional Christianity among all the YCVs. The attitudes of YCVs with IS orientation, on the other hand, are a mixture of traditional teachings of the church and the spiritual cultural phenomena dominant in the society. This would explain both their strong belief in Christian dogmas and strong belief in angels, strong support to the syncretistic statement, which sees all religions as paths to the same truth, and quite strong support to the statement which sees God and gods as creations of men. These phenomena bring the IS orientation close to the Quest orientation in some respects.

The YCVs with the Q orientation were sceptical towards the traditional teachings of the church, and they support atheistic opinions, but simultaneously, many of them supported the idea that all religions are paths to same truth. The E-oriented were in-between the extreme groups in every statement. These findings make sense in light of the fact that the YCVs are

still young, and their opinions may change a lot in either direction during their volunteering, as has been recognized in the previous studies (Porkka 2012, 242–243).

The second research question was on the YCVs' attitudes towards immigration, multiculturalism, diversity and Islam. The statement "Islam is a religion of peace" received the most uncertainty, with the neutral choice selected by half of the respondents. The strongest disagreement related to the statement "It is better that if foreigners come to our country, they should primarily have a Christian background" with 39 % disagreeing, and only a fourth (26 %) agreeing. A majority of the YCVs considered the various religions in our country a positive thing (61 %) and wanted to come to know people from other religions (60 %). Half of the YCVs considered immigration a positive thing for the future of Finland, and male YCVs were more particularly positive towards immigration than what is average in Finland.

The coalitional behaviour measured with iCRP had little correlation with most of the statements measuring the attitudes towards immigration, multiculturalism, diversity and Islam. The only exception was the statement "A person's value is independent of what they believe in", where the correlation was positive. The connection of early childhood Christian socialization (ECCS) with the statements measuring this research question was ambiguous. The results give the impression that YCVs coming from Christian homes had more skills than other YCVs in considering Islam as a religion and a separate entity from the terrorist extremism so visible in media. These YCVs also saw immigration as a positive thing for the future of Finland, but only if the immigrants are Christian.

Through observation, it was concluded that YCVs of the IS orientation and devotional behaviour were comparatively more open towards immigration, multiculturalism and diversity. These alignments were associated with a desire to come to know people from other religions and the ability to see Islam as a religion of peace. On the flipside, the attitude of the IP-oriented was much more critical towards these topics. This leads to the conclusion that it is not only the religious orientation that explains the results, but there are also other factors at play. In this study, the biggest difference between YCVs of the IS and the IP orientation is their personality: while the IS-oriented are open, social and active persons, the IP-oriented are introvert, timid and shy. This fact would lead to the conclusion that personality should also be taken into account when looking into the connection between religion and tolerance.

One important finding was the role of active private praying and intercessory prayer, which were found to support personal growth towards empathy and compassion, very important traits for both the future of an individual and the society. Because the private devotional activity is closely correlated with the intrinsic form of religiosity, this finding supports the conclusion that intrinsic social religious orientation is in connection with tolerance and open attitude towards multiculturalism, immigration and people of other religions among the Finnish YCVs. Therefore, the conclusion of the first study 2007/2008 is also reinforced by this result (Porkka 2012, 243–247).

However, the IP orientation seems to be much more reserved towards multiculturalism and the influence of other religions in Finland. Therefore, results of many previous studies, where intrinsic religiosity has been connected to prejudice, receive some support in this study. Where many studies find a strong correlation between conservative values and religiosity, it seems probable that this is caused by measurements too narrow to reveal the internal variety inside the intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions.

The quest dimension also proved useful in the analysis. Respondents scored the lowest on all the four indices measuring the motivations and expectations for the YCV activity. The results make one wonder why they are YCVs, if they are not at all motivated and do not expect anything from it. The findings of this study provide at least some support for the assumption that they are seekers, as the name of their religious orientation says. Because they are critical towards the church and Christianity, it is easy for them to be tolerant towards people in other religions. However, they also simultaneously represent prejudice, a fact which calls some aspects of their thinking into question.

Ketola's findings on the indirect impact of religion supporting prejudice and intolerance against people in foreign religions and different cultures is important and should be taken into account in designing the YCV activity and confirmation work in Finland. Youth work builds the future of the church, and therefore, it is important it is open and it avoids exclusive groups, which strengthen stereotypes and negative images of those outside these groups. (Ketola 2011, 86-87.) According to the findings of this study, one good model would be to bring these topics up as part of worships and youth meetings and to encourage adolescents to pray for the immigrants, refugees and other people in need.

Teaching about tolerance, open spirituality and projects which tear down the mental and physical boundaries are needed in the congregations' youth work, because there is a clear connection between civic knowledge and attitudes towards immigration, social pluralism and social understanding: the better an adolescent's score on a test on their knowledge, the more positive their view of the ethnic groups (Lauglo 2011, 15). It is apparent that in addition to school, YCV activity and confirmation work also provide information and influence the development of a positive attitude towards pluralism. Especially good results have been found from the activities where adolescents have been able to do concrete things for people in need. Combined with discussion and talk about the topics, it is extremely effective (Porkka, Schweitzer & Simojoki 2017).

Even though the findings of this study are interesting, it would be prudent to accumulate more information on the phenomenon with qualitative research methods, as well. It would be important to clarify how the adolescents' attitudes are influenced by the big debate on refugees, multiculturalism and diversity and the terror attacks in Europe. Therefore, a fresh quantitative research would also be needed.

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3.2 SITUATING THE GLOBAL REFUGEE CRISIS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ECCLESIAL DIACONIA AND PRAXIS: THE CASE OF CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Abstract

The rate at which human migration advances poses serious challenges to various countries. For some people, migration means being on a remote work assignment, on a vacation or simply acceptance of a job offer. In such cases, migration suggests being away from home willingly and/or temporarily. However, for others, migration is a painful experience. It signals forced displacement and could mean a perpetual dislocation from a home environment and family circle. Such is the case of refugee migrants. Theirs is a case of inconvenience; a case of expulsion from territorial space; a case of exclusion from socio-economic ownership. This poses a praxical challenge for practical theology and explains why the refugee phenomenon requires special attention from ecclesial diakonia. The research on which this article is based indicates that refugees in South Africa go through painful experiences, even as they seek to survive in their new setting. The paper, therefore, encourages a paradigm shift in practical theology by providing practical tools on how to manage the global refugee crisis. It seeks to diversify the current scholarship in practical theology by offering a unique angle of vision from which to consider how the church can respond effectively to the pressing needs of refugee migrants. In this way, the paper further provides a well-grounded framework based on empirical research as a paradigm for instill-

ing renewed hope into the lives of those for whom pain and sorrow are characteristically a daily affair.

Introduction

“Where are you from?” “How long have you been here?” Many refugees are asked these questions all the time upon meeting a new acquaintance. I have been asked such questions for the past fifteen years in South Africa, having immigrated into the country in 2001. Depending on the duration of one’s stay in the country, one’s answer is often met with some sort of satirical surprise, “Wow, so you are a South African now!?” And before one even gets a chance to comment on this seeming mockery, a bombshell would fall: “Do you like South Africa?” Now, personally, this question is always difficult to answer; for some reason, despite one’s polite “Yes, I do!”, the question is a constant reminder of one’s foreignness, particularly with regard to the vulnerable conditions refugees are subjected to in the country and, at the same time, a call to be grateful for the various spaces afforded to refugees, albeit with strict and restrictive immigration laws.

Migration has always been a part of my life. My parents left the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC – formerly Zaire) in the late 70s and migrated to Burundi due to the brutality of Mobutu’s regime, and the numerous cases of political assassinations of intellectuals, from which my father escaped a couple of times. Seeking asylum in the neighbouring Burundi was my parents’ last option. As a result, I was born an asylum seeker in Burundi, and since then, migration has always influenced my being, my becoming and my belonging. All the challenges associated with the refugee status, including the pain of having to leave parents and other family members behind, as well as the discriminatory immigration policies by some governments, are all parts of my life story. However, mine is just a drop in the ocean of refugees’ lived experiences. In South Africa, this is a familiar trend for the entire forcibly displaced population.

As it were, scores of people are on the move, and their compulsion to move is necessitated by various forces (Amit 2013, 94; Belvedere 2007, 52). More than 10 million people worldwide are refugees today, while more than 20 million are internally displaced within the borders of their own countries (cf. Nail 2015, 2). Ours, therefore, is a generation of people on the move. ‘Being on the move’ is an existential phenomenon in the African continent, and South Africa is not immune. The city of Cape Town, the legislative capital of South Africa, has faced development challenges similar to other cities in the country over the last few years, includ-

ing the demanding task of managing the refugee phenomenon (cf. Amit 2013, 105; Jacobsen 2012, 31; Palmary 2002, 41). This is because the city of Cape Town is also home to a great number of refugee migrants, most of whom suffer indignity on account of their refugee status.

The Challenges of Being a Refugee in South Africa

Migration has been a fundamental part of the South African history. However, according to Watters (2003, 224), in South Africa, the “[refugee] phenomenon dates from 1993 following the introduction of asylum determination procedures for individual applicants”. Migrant labourers formed the foundation of South Africa’s mining industry during the *apartheid* years. This is because immigration policies in South Africa were specifically designed alongside radicalised lines to support the segregationist goals of the *apartheid* regime. Now, as migration across African borders continues, government officials of the current regime hold a renewed responsibility to ensure that the written rights of refugee migrants are not just theoretical (Jacobsen 2012). Acknowledging the potential socio-economic value offered by refugee migrants is a step towards their empowerment and hope for improved well-being.

Refugees and the Challenge of Extreme Health Needs

Most refugees migrate to South Africa because they do not lead a life of dignity and self-worth, as they should, in their home countries. Their migration is, therefore, forced by various socio-political circumstances and informed by the need for freedom and dignity. This is despite the fact that in South Africa, “the possession of a refugee identity book has not guaranteed access to rights afforded refugees” (Adjai & Lazaridis 2013). These two are essential for survival, and without them, the human self is reduced to nothingness. The challenges that refugee migrants experience in South Africa are several, such that they are often considered as sub-humans by a certain portion of the local population. As I interviewed participants on health issues for this research, it was generally found that many consider health as the absence of disease. However, a few went a bit further to say that health was more than just the absence of disease in the body. To them, being healthy also meant being in a good financial situation and comfortable with one’s social condition. In other words, health is also a state of happiness, comfort and contentment.

Kulisa is a refugee from the DRC. She works in a beauty salon where she cuts hair. When asked about health issues within the refugee community in

Cape Town, she indicated that “if you don’t feel sick, you’re healthy”. Kulisa is among many others who thought health was the lack of physical illness. She sought medical help or visited a doctor only when she felt sick. In the same vein, Mashraf, a member of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) for women, corroborated the idea in the following terms, “when you are sick, you are sick. That’s why you go to the hospital to see the doctor. When you are not sick, you are fine, and you are happy, and you don’t have to go to the hospital”. Despite such views on health, key components of health maintenance and prevention were thought to be adequate nutrition and access to medical services, when symptoms arose. Some respondents, however, attributed changes to nutrition during migration to ill-health on their arrival in South Africa. Others acknowledged that good health was maintained by vitamins, immunisation and regular check-ups, although they admitted that they rarely visit healthcare facilities for such purposes – citing that it was unnecessary, if one was not feeling ill, and/or it would be costly, since they do not have health insurance to cover such expenses.

“The food I cook keeps me healthy” was the answer given by Tamil, a refugee from Somalia and mother of four. She appeared to have little understanding of preventative health, considering the comment she made when I asked her a probing question in order to ascertain whether she was aware of the fact that one may fall sick unexpectedly for not seeking medical help or visiting health centres or hospitals regularly. Her reaction was, “I just live. I do not look into health by eating well or sleeping. I just worry about sickness, if it comes”. Her responses are indicative of the finding that refugee migrants need proper programmes to educate them on health issues and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle – and this can only be achieved, if the local government puts structures and measures in place aimed at integrating refugee migrants into the mainstream society.

I also spoke to Tekele, a refugee from Ethiopia, who is married, but has not seen her husband for the past seven years, and with whom they have five children. Tekele has been living in South Africa for the past six years. When I asked Tekele what does “being healthy” entails to her, she said with all confidence that “to be a healthy person, I would live among my family”. This is indicative of the African view, according to which, “I am because we are”, as Mbiti (1989) puts it. In this way, Tekele provides support to the fact that being with family or in a community has positive effects on the well-being of a refugee migrant and increases the glimmer of hope one has. One would argue that this is to some extent verified, considering that refugee migrants are people who need familial comfort more than anyone else. They leave all that is dear to them, including all that is necessary for their improved well-being.

In the new setting of asylum, refugees often face challenges that threaten the very existence of their social fabric. Being with family is, therefore, one of the few things that bring them comfort and increase their hope for survival. In this way, communal life, rather than individualism, is vital for improving refugees' holistic well-being. That is to say, African *Ubuntu* empowers the self with the hope for improved well-being and a better tomorrow, which is why refugee migrants live *en masse*, even as they reside in derelict structures. The question of health is significant in the mind of Africans, such that some respondents indicated the presence of certain diseases, which they do not know exist. During the interviews, some would make mention of asymptomatic diseases, which they would refer to as "disease that is hiding". As one woman from Rwanda, Hebagira, puts it: "There are diseases that do not have symptoms, like... you don't know that you are sick, but it's there... it's hiding". This partly explains why refugee migrants in South Africa tend to visit health centres when the situation has deteriorated. This is consequential of the fact that they do not regularly do medical check-ups to monitor what is wrong with them. However, it could also be a result of the fact that there is a lack of health awareness within the refugee community.

When asked about his overall health, Dibala, a gentleman from the DRC, said, "I don't know what is happening in my body. That is why I go to the hospital, right? So the doctor can help me! You know... if somebody is sick, he always goes the hospital to see the doctor". This further indicates that most refugees do not visit healthcare centres for routine check-ups until the condition gets worse. However, when the healthcare services result in medication provision, they tend to cooperate and take the medication.

This was confirmed by Shelawil, when she said: "I was given some medication for my blood system, and it helped. They treated me, and I'm fine now". In other words, refugee migrants take medication when in a situation of health crisis; the only problem tends to be the experiences they go through with health practitioners. Nevertheless, when refugee migrants visit healthcare centres, and they are not given or prescribed any medication for their ill health, they easily get frustrated. In this regard, Shelawil complained:

As an adult, if I complain about my health, and something is wrong, and the blood test is made, and nothing is found, and still, I'm suffering, why does the doctor take the situation of what I'm saying and help me with what I have told him to prescribe to me... I'm still suffering. Why should the doctor not analyse the situation and recognise my suffering?

Here, Shelawil believes that once tests are done, or when visiting a health-care centre, a patient should be told what is wrong with his/her health. He further claimed that he was never told his results, and they never bothered to explain the reason for not telling him the results, because he was a foreigner. Although his claims may not be proven, the level of xenophobic treatment by healthcare practitioners has been reported by many researchers in the field of migration and health (cf. Nazroo & Iley 2011, 32). As it were, it appears that once health practitioners realise a patient is not South African, they start acting weirdly towards them, as if they are not in a hurry, or as though refugee patients are not a priority at a South African healthcare centre.

Refugees and the challenge of healthcare inaccessibility

In this research, most women were mothers and some among them were expectant. They had all, at some point in their lives (while refugees in South Africa), encountered difficulties with accessing antenatal care. Besides, most of them indicated that they do not understand English well, and it is even worse, when nurses talk to them in their local languages, which they also do not understand. This makes them feel discriminated against on the basis of language. In this regard, they mentioned that when they go to the hospital, they get someone who speaks some English.

The lack of interpreters at most health centres and hospitals was such that most respondents indicated their absence. Indeed, interpreters reduce the communication barrier between the refugee health seeker and the health provider, but the practice involves practical concerns due to some of its inadequacies. Most female respondents indicated that the practice of having interpreters intrudes on their privacy. This could be due to the fact that the person sitting there for the purpose of interpretation is not professionally trained for the job and, therefore, a confidentiality threat. In view of this, refugee migrants always live with the anxiety of having their privacy interfered with and their dignity violated due to the language barrier, which remains a constant frustration for most refugee migrants. Besides, the use of interpreters is not always the best, because there is risk for the interpreter to withhold vital information or the patient not willing to say certain information in front of a third person.

In this way, it can be seen that communication between refugee patients and health care providers is often problematic. Most respondents mentioned that when they experience challenges which they deem discriminatory, they just decide to stay at home, rather than going back. Thus, within the South African health system, language is a barrier to accessing health

services for most refugee migrants. Language can be used as an instrument for discrimination and tool for exclusion. However, to cross that barrier, most refugees attempt to learn the local language to identify with the local community. In brief, it is important for the health providers to know (or learn) the language of the health seeker and vice versa.

The most common health concerns among the respondents were chronic headaches, insomnia and stomach problems. Respondents associated recurring ailments that they suffer from with their lack of stability and their struggle for integration in the South African community. While I was interviewing Fatima from Somalia, she talked at length about her hardships, her sense of instability and her inability to obtain refugee status in South Africa through the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). She had friends who went to Libya in an attempt to get to Italy, but she chose to come South instead. Now, Fatima demonstrates an atmosphere of regret: “When I think of my life here and our problems, when I think of the [refugee] status and how I can’t get it, my head hurts so much”, she says. Her eyes show bitterness, even as she continues: “Now, my head hurts all the time. I can’t sleep. My body aches. It feels like there are worms crawling all over my body”.

Apart from headaches and a variety of other ailments, most refugees in Cape Town, particularly those who came from war-torn countries, such as Somali, Congolese, Burundians, Rwandans etc., have scars that remind them of their painful past. Some other refugees suffer from diabetes and even respiratory problems. Some of the interviewees talk about family relatives and friends in Cape Town who suffer from mental problems. Interestingly, many of those with mental problems are not taken to hospitals, but either to houses of prayer or traditional healers. This is reminiscent of their strong beliefs (Christian or otherwise), which provides support to the fact that to Africans, not every disease is treatable with Western medicines or scientific intervention.

Nevertheless, it remains evident that the growing number of refugee migrants and asylum seekers in South Africa presents enormous challenges to the country’s welfare services (Adjai & Lazaridis 2013). While there are multiple challenges for every potential patient, people with foreign backgrounds encounter unique barriers when attempting to benefit from public services. Impediments to accessing public services include difficulties in cross-cultural communication and limited cultural awareness on the part of the public officials. While there is an effort to acknowledge and address linguistic and cultural barriers, learning by trial-and-error remains the most common form of education on the current South African administrative system. Miss V has this to say with regards to refugees’ access to health care services:

But from my observation, refugees are often overlooked in local HIV and gender-based violence (GBV) prevention efforts. Apart from being faced with frequent human rights violations, refugees and migrants sometimes experience amplified GBV and power struggles in their communities due to a breakdown in traditional community support structures, including families and a friendly familiar neighbourhood. Many have also been victims of violence and abuse in situations of civil unrest and war in their home countries and face possible loss of income and an uncertain future. Refugees have experienced discrimination in South Africa for many, many years and in all different areas of their lives, be it in clinics, schools, workplaces, when using public transport or by the police.

In the same vein, another respondent – a social worker (Mrs L), adds the following, when asked whether it is true that refugee migrants find difficulties in accessing healthcare services from a social work perspective:

Yes, it is for sure. And although refugees have had the same rights to access health services as South African citizens since 1998, many are not able to exercise these rights. They are regularly discriminated against or refused treatment in clinics by nurses and doctors who are not aware of the law. Many are humiliated when attempting to access services at a local clinic. Yet refugees often need especially good access to health care, as many are forced to endure inadequate living conditions, greatly compromising the possibility of them leading a healthy lifestyle. Refusal to provide health services to refugees not only places their health, but also their lives at risk, particularly with regard to HIV treatment and care.

Different forms of discrimination create obstacles for the realisation of the right to health and other rights of refugee migrants. Most often, countries use nationality or legal status as a basis to draw a distinction between persons and who may and may not enjoy access to health care facilities, goods and services, which happens to be the case in South Africa, judging from these findings (Adjai & Lazaridis 2013). Here, one can deduce that the more refugees get frustrated with the system, the more they multiply their efforts to improve their well-being. It appears that the challenges they go through increase their hope for a better future in the country. Dr Sam has this to say on the health of refugee migrants, particularly when they get sick in the hosting country:

Some get sick before they migrate; others get sick during the migration process; while others get sick after arriving here in South Africa. So, each phase of the migration is associated with specific risks and exposures. In other words, the prevalence of specific types of health problems is influenced by the nature of the migration experience, in terms of adversity experienced before, during and after resettlement in the country. South Africa also has a lot of problems that require the government's attention.

The statement from Dr Sam suggests that it is not the fault of the hosting country that refugee migrants are not getting health care access, because most of them arrive in the country already sick, while the government's priority is the local citizenry. Although participant observation was not one of the methods of data collection in this research, when one goes around Bellville and Mowbray, the sites of this research's fieldwork, one hears a combination of different languages, various accents, attire etc. that bring life to the streets. Kiswahili, Lingala, French, Amharic, Somali, Arabic etc. are heard among the isiXhosa and Afrikaans languages. It is also hard to miss the Zulu beadwork sold alongside Senegalese artwork, Nigerian fabrics, Congolese hair extensions etc. The atmosphere in both Bellville and Mowbray is congruent, harmonious and rich – reminiscent of a kind of diversity and multiculturalism South Africa boasts. Yet, once again, stories of simmering xenophobia and discontent are not hard to find or hear from participants.

I had an opportunity to interview Chikoze from Zimbabwe on the matter, and this is what he had to say: “You know, South Africans easily forget. They forget that during apartheid, the whole of Africa was fighting their struggle alongside them”. As I sat opposite him, Chikoze, who is a student at the University of Cape Town (UCT), projected confidence and said:

When we paid our school fees in my country, we also set aside a sum of money to be sent to South Africa to fight the apartheid system. The apartheid struggle was an African struggle. But South Africans seem very quick to remind us of the man-made borders that divide our beautiful continent.

Improving access to healthcare services was, therefore, identified as a great need in the refugee community. A number of respondents described difficulty with appointments, waiting times and emergency care. Upon ar-

rival in a hosting country, refugees deal with the reality of parting with their social structures or support networks and that of leaving their home for an undefined period of time. Related to this challenge is trying to settle in a new environment, notwithstanding the consequential psycho-social problems related to it. Most existing studies on the refugee phenomenon in South Africa (e.g. Adjai & Lazaridis 2013; Bhugra & Gupta 2011, 3; Carballo 2001, 274) put emphasis on the processing of asylum applications by the DHA, possibly because without the “right papers”, finding work in South Africa as a refugee is a seemingly insurmountable challenge (Adjai & Lazaridis 2013; Crankshaw 2012, 28).

Throughout the process of migration, refugee women may encounter enormous stressors, including attempting to gain access to available skill training, searching for employment opportunities and obtaining transportation, accommodation and their kids’ schooling (Buscher 2011, 92). Other stressors comprise the woman’s varying responsibility in the established family context and the loss of traditional social support networks (Rosenkranz 2013, 34). For that reason, women’s unmet needs for reproductive health care may well remain unaddressed. Gaining access to habitual care and livelihood is vital in the spectrum of a woman’s life (Taylor 1990, 71). Women’s habitual needs that require prompt care are often sensitive. This comprises care for the duration of pregnancy, delivery and motherhood as well as family planning counselling, inter-conception care, screening for gender-based violence and sexually transmitted infections and monitoring for chronic diseases. Health providers should be accustomed to any traditional cultural practices that may influence reproductive health outcomes in order to provide services that meet the unique health care needs of refugee women.

Refugees and the Challenge of Documentation

The findings of this research indicated that documentation is another major challenge refugees face in South Africa. Both the temporary asylum seekers’ permit and the formal recognition of the refugee status permit are A4 papers. Refugees’ identity books are maroon in colour and only have two pages on the inside. Before refugees obtain the refugee status permit or the maroon identity book, they face immense challenges at various institutions, including banks, schools and even health facilities (Adjai & Lazaridis 2013). The question of documentation, or rather the lack of proper documentation, makes life difficult for refugees. Without relevant papers required by these institutions, it is impossible for refugees to access basic

services provided by those institutions. In other words, the question of documentation affects refugees' being and belonging.

As it were, refugees leave their homes for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, civil wars. Proper documentation is essential for refugees to settle and pursue improved well-being within the requirements of the law in a hosting country. A respondent from Somalia, Karim, had this to say regarding the question of documentation, particularly the A4-sized permit given to refugees, which is often refused by most employers and institutions that require the green South African identity book:

[The question of documentation] affects me negatively. Because with the A4 size temporary permit – no job; even with the Status and I.D.; no professional job. That is why I do not do my professional job.

The problem of proper documentation extends to other institutions, such as banks. This makes refugees keep their money in their bags, which often makes them victims of crime. When criminals find out, refugees become targets and are attacked and robbed. Thus, their lives become endangered in every area, due to the documents they are given. In brief, the documents refugees are given contribute to the challenges they face in the hosting country, including health challenges. These sentiments become more and more sensitive as another respondent, Dan, who has been living in South Africa for more than 10 years, says: "I have been trying to get an I.D. book since 2005, but they never responded, without reason". Due to increased dissatisfaction with the question of documentation and the service by the DHA, Dan said that service delivery at the DHA is horrible. This is what he said, in his own words:

The Home Affairs is the most horrible place I never see; to go to Home Affairs and to stay illegal is just the same; we need [an] international community to take care of us, not Home Affairs.

Dan's sentiments echo the voices of many respondents. His sentiments explain refugees' feelings of vulnerability and the undignified treatment attributable to the disservices of the DHA. It demands remarkable courage, which involves, for example, travelling from Cape Town to Durban or back to Musina (port of entry) to extend one's permit in order to remain legally documented in South Africa. Studies carried out by various researchers (cf. Adjai & Lazaridis 2013; Potts 2011; Belvedere 2007) confirm that the con-

texts in which most refugees pursue improved well-being are unsupportive and uncaring. This could be due to restrictive policies against refugees in most hosting countries. In South Africa, for example, until recently, it was illegal for refugees to study, work or own businesses, and it is still illegal for them to own property or to access financial services, such as loans. In this vein, Kitambala, a university student and refugee from the DRC, had this to say:

As a refugee, I don't exercise all my rights; there are rights that a refugee cannot claim, because he is not a citizen of the country; but a refugee student, for instance, should be allowed to apply for a loan to finance his studies.

Although they are now entitled to study and work, finding employment remains a great challenge, because they compete for the jobs with the majority of the local population, who are in most cases prioritised for job openings (cf. Amit, 2013; Belvedere, 2007). This makes refugees' resilience fragile, and their pursuit for improved livelihoods challenging. Bukuru, a recent graduate from Burundi, who believes he has "unused talent" said the following:

I have been in South Africa for 12 years and in exile for 18 years. [I] have managed to get BSc, PGCE, but have no teaching position because of the document I am using. Yes, the country needs science teachers, but fails to give a teaching post, no matter how I managed to work on short contract for some months. I hold unused talent that the countries, the world, need to profit from.

Bukuru's "unused talent" could be an asset to the growth of the economy and development of the country. Yet, a common misconception is that refugees are dependent people, surviving at the mercy of either the humanitarian organisations or the generosity of the local community. Refugees were also found to demonstrate enviable solidarity with the newcomers in their midst, whom they accommodate from the time they arrive, until they find something to earn them a living. Those who own businesses, such as Somalis, introduce the newcomers to the world of business without delay. Ibram, a Somali trader, further indicates the following with regard to the treatment most refugees receive, despite their efforts to the country's economic growth:

If South Africa was good country, it is supposed to assist refugees fully, because we are paying taxes and creating jobs; imagine if you come to Bellville, many foreigner shops, they employ many South Africans. And imagine apartheid time, South Africans were refugees all over Africa, but they treated them nice until 1994.

These words provide support to the fact that refugees are economically productive and have skills that could make them a useful asset to the hosting community, if allowed to fully explore their potential. When refugees are allowed to explore their full potential, they are able to empower themselves and, therefore, improve the prospects of their holistic well-being. The findings of this research further reveal that refugee migrants struggle to integrate in the country, because the South African government does not make space for their integration. That is, there is no official structure or programme that addresses or provides means for refugees' integration.

The difficulties associated with the integration of refugee migrants in the South African society illustrate the contradictions inherent in South Africa's official position towards refugee migrants. Within the framework of the policies of the government and its actual practices, refugee migrants in Cape Town, as well as many other cities, can be seen as the 'others' that cannot and should not be part of what is perceived as the 'nationals'. Yet, the presence of refugees is not entirely unwanted by South Africa, because they make money and spend it within the country. While it could be argued that the amount of money spent by refugee migrants is not significant to the overall South African economy, it is of assistance to a substantial number of South Africans. In a country where unemployment and inflation are major problems, one may contend that the money spent by refugee migrants on rental fees on a monthly basis is a source of income to a sizeable number of South African property-owners in various neighbourhoods. In many cases, this monthly income is a needed supplement to the salaries of these property-owners. Moreover, owners of small businesses, such as cheap internet cafés, are able to profit from the refugees' use of the internet for affordable and regular contact with their family members back home.

Considering all the challenges that refugees face on a daily basis and the complexity of the refugee phenomenon on a global scale, the question to ask would be – what is the role of the church in all this? Nevertheless, it cannot be overemphasised that the church has a role to play. Thus, to understand the role of the church in the refugee crisis, it is appropriate to have a quick look at the concept of “church” as used in ancient scriptural records, particularly the Bible.

The Role of the Church in the Refugee Crisis

The term ‘church’ comes from the Greek word *ekklesia*, which can be translated as “a gathered people” (Ott 2015; Magezi 2012; Branick 2012). In this regard, a church is neither a place where one goes on Sundays for a worship service, nor a building, into which people enter for religious purposes. It is rather an assembly of a redeemed people called to form a community of *shalom*. Bowers (2005, 54) argues that the essence of the church is to activate hope in context, because as a “Kingdom community”, the church is called to be “a visible sign of [God’s] presence and [the] demonstration of His [rule] in situations of poverty”. In this regard, “the unity of the church is not first and foremost a question of church order and ecclesial structures”, according to Nordstokke (2011). It is, however, “related to a vision of the unity of human beings and the church’s ministry of reconciliation in the world” (Nordstokke 2011). In the same context, Bowers further points out that the church is “a beacon of hope” *vis-à-vis* the system that dehumanises the poor and renders them powerless (Bowers 2005, 56). In other words, the church is a “servant community and a source of encouragement” (cf. Bowers 2005, 56), which is a truer embodiment of what *diakonia* is all about. This is because “*diakonia* plays a central role in the reconciled communion of believers, and the church’s mission for the healing of the world”, as Nordstokke (2011) finds.

Smit (in Bowers 2005, 20) provides a somewhat thorough portrayal of the nature of the church. He argues that the definitional context of the church is six-fold. A church can be 1) a worshiping community, 2) a local congregation, 3) a denomination, 4) an ecumenical body, 5) believers in their involvement with voluntary organisations and lastly, 6) individual believers in their daily lives. Here, my understanding of church within the context of this research is used interchangeably to refer to any of the above manifestations of church. This is because the church as a community of hope embodies a “holistic spirituality” for both the present and the future, and it is suggestive of the “transformational power of the hope of the Kingdom” (cf. Bowers 2005, 22, 29).

Refugees often “hope against all hope” (cf. Romans 4:18), despite the fact that prevailing circumstances of their refugeeness do not give any reason to do so, or even though there are no rational grounds for it. Empowering refugees with hope, therefore, is pivotal to building their capacity and ensuring their improved well-being. This is why Louw (2016), with regard to the refugee phenomenon and its xenophobic corollaries, points out that

we have to accept that the refugee crisis brings out the ugliness in humanity. Opening homes to refugees is, however, an alternative to xenophobia (Louw 2016). This provides support to the fact that in South Africa, refugees are subjected to a high level of exploitation and suffer xenophobia while leading a precarious life. Therefore, it cannot be overemphasised that “[t]he current refugee and migrant crisis is revealing on a deeper ‘spiritual level’ a crisis of meaning and habitus (attitudinal crisis)”, as Louw (2016) finds. This is because social ills, such as prejudice and xenophobia, reveal “a crisis of compassion and diaconic outreach” (Louw 2016).

Local authorities have not been constructively involved in resolving refugees’ problems, and the political response often goes from benign negligence to active hostility. In view of this, the church is called to respond to the needs of those in need; those endangered by poverty; those dehumanised by the structures; those at the margin of the society. According to Bowers-du Toit (2015, 523, 524), responding to their needs is not “an act of goodwill”; it rather “remains a justice issue, not a charity issue”. This can also be said of the refugee phenomenon in South Africa, which is characterised by poverty and marginalisation. Thus, as the church acts in response to the socio-economic needs of refugee migrants, it does so to correct the prevailing unjust structures. As Bowers-du Toit (2015, 524) observes, it is important that the church assists in bridging the socio-economic divide in South Africa today, just as it did in opposing the socio-economic ills of the *apartheid* system. In other words, the church has a responsibility in resisting the structures and systems that make any layer of the social fabric feel dehumanised. It has the responsibility to help the vulnerable and the marginalised “rise and walk on two legs”, to use Bowers-du Toit’s (2015, 521) rhetoric. Enabling the disadvantaged to rise up on their own feet so they can walk by themselves is empowerment by hope. Here, the disadvantaged layer of the social fabric is the refugee community.

The presence of refugees is proof that something needs to be done. This means the church needs to be involved in activities that aim at eradicating the problems that produce refugees and programmes that improve their well-being in the country of asylum. In other words, there is a need to confront the forces, seen and/or unseen, that lead to forced migration. This can be done in various ways, including through charitable organisations aimed at empowering refugees to be self-sufficient, through advocacy and through activism or militancy. Thus, the concept of empowerment by hope is a theological paradigm for putting hope into action in response to the pressing issues humanity is facing.

Empowerment by Hope as Praxical Engagement for Ecclesial Diakonia

For praxical purposes, it could be argued that *diakonia* is an essential tool of the “ecclesial machinery”, to use Koffeman’s (2014) wording. Its contribution to the church’s public life is unparalleled, considering that it reshapes the life of both the self and the other. It is a biblical call to expand our relational horizons by making the gospel speak to the other with praxical relevance. In other words, *diakonia* becomes ecclesial praxis, when it is applied in response to the needs of the vulnerable, that is, in service to God and the other. This partly explains Manchala’s (2014) observation that diakonia has always been recognised as a “service to uprooted people”. One can thus understand *diakonia* as embodying a relational dimension of ecclesial life, which is a way of living human relationships within a community setup and being of service to God and the other, with no shrouded desire for social standing or prestige. Thus, *diakonia* is not a specific programme within the *ekklesia*, but its essence, its very life.

As it were, diaconal life requires that the church confronts the world in solidarity with the vulnerable and the hopeless for a just society. As Parker (2012) argues, it is failure to confront that kills the church. This includes failure to confront systems that marginalise and powers that dehumanise. However, by confronting them, the church becomes a liberating agency, “transforming [both] people and situations, so that God’s reign may be real” in their lives (Ham 2012; see also Phiri and Dongsung 2014). This is what gives *diakonia* public relevance. Thus, the church cannot grow as it should without offering the vulnerable space in its midst and advocating for a just society on their behalf. In other words, the church is “called to be a diaconal community through a pilgrimage of justice and peace” (Phiri and Dongsung 2014). It is this encounter with the vulnerable that highlights the theological dimension of *diakonia*. It could be said, therefore, that ecclesial *diakonia* is not only an ethical duty, but also, and more deeply, an appointment with Christ. It is a sacramental experience that allows the Christian to live a life of solidarity with sheer commitment. This explains why *diakonia* is an original way of living in solidarity and strengthening community life, and why it promotes holistic growth and transformational development.

In this regard, participating in empowerment by hope is to be actively involved in God’s initiative of restoring his image, which is inherently the ecclesial duty of being a witness. This may involve going all over the world

to proclaim the redemptive work of Christ and God's justice to all the nations with perfect relevance. It may also involve *diakonia*; that is, serving God through acts of service to the other, which is one of the ways to instil hope in them. The famous Great Commission (cf. Matthew 28:19) is, in this way, a holistic commission. The "go ye therefore" of the Great Commission is seen here as a movement of the self to go 'out there' and be a part of the *missio Dei* in restoring the *imago Dei*. Thus, empowerment by hope is holistic commission; it explains the migration of the self out of its comfort zone into the world to meet the needs of the other holistically – which is pivotal for Practical Theology. This is in line with the fact that "the Bible's first confession of faith begins with a story of pilgrimage and migration" (Rivera-Pagán 2013).

As it were, South African citizens prefer the government to get tough with refugees due to the widespread suspicion that most of them are not genuinely what they claim to be and the irrational fear that they are an economic threat to the nation (Hayem 2013). Perhaps the most significant and consistent perception about refugee migrants that causes ill-feelings among the local population is the claim that they steal, rather than create, jobs. Here, one could argue that when the refugee phenomenon is only viewed as a "threat", it is not unusual for the local citizenry to prefer harsh policy measures against refugee migrants. Indeed, as Sigona (2012) indicates, the refugee phenomenon is a global trend that produces "major social and economic impacts" on both the hosting and the producing countries. Put differently, the refugee phenomenon can present opportunities that may benefit the hosting country, if managed properly (cf. Zetter 2012). Such opportunities could be capitalised upon to bring about desired change, leading to a more productive economy in the country. In view of this, our attitude towards development should be reflected in the hope and action to empower others. This explains why empowerment by hope is an invitation to imagine a different future for humanity and to strive for its realisation by putting hope into action. As expounded throughout, refugee migrants use hope as a resource for self-empowerment, but a lot still needs to be done to ensure their improved well-being.

The conditions associated with the refugee phenomenon and the poor well-being of refugee migrants make them vulnerable to various viral and/or bacterial infections (cf. van der Ham et al. 2014; Martinez et al. 2014). In general, it was found that refugee migrants in Cape Town have poor financial well-being and a low standard of living, which affects their overall quality of life. This varies depending on the employment sector and is

partially due to a high concentration of refugees in the lowest-paid jobs. It should be reiterated, in fact, that while some refugee migrants easily integrate in the hosting country, many others live in conditions of marginality and, sometimes, exploited or deprived of their basic human rights (Ford & Chamrathirong 2012; Martin et al. 2012). As a result, they engage in behaviours detrimental to the society in which they live. Thus, local integration includes rights, duties and care for refugee migrants to have a decent and dignified life. In turn, refugee migrants need to attend to the values offered by the society in which they live for the purpose of social cohesion. Giving refugees various alternatives to pursue a livelihood and, thereby, improve their well-being provides support to sense-making in this ever-changing global world. This explains Zetter's (2012) observation, that "there are fiscal costs and impacts in providing social and welfare assistance for refugees". The narratives given by refugees here are reminiscent of the hope they have in spite of the challenges they encounter on a daily basis. Indeed, their challenges seem to overshadow their sense of hopefulness, but this is because hope finds its meaning in despair. Their many challenges and sufferings provide them with an opportunity to hope anew.

The understanding of empowerment by hope from the context of the refugee phenomenon has to be based on the premise that the church ceases to be church, once it ceases to be a church after the *missio Dei* (Bosch 1991). Bosch (1991) emphasises that *missio Dei* is not an activity the church plans to do or a programme it aims to accomplish (i.e. *missio ecclesiae*); rather, it is God's doing. The *missio ecclesiae* is the activity of the church that "takes its existence from its participation in God's mission" (Bevans & Schroeder 2004, 290.) Thus, the *missio Dei* is God's activity and initiative. Like the *imago Dei*, the *missio Dei* also involves both vertical and horizontal relationships between the self and God or between the self and the other. In this regard, empowerment by hope translates the attitude of God towards humanity into service towards the other. Such is the agency role of the self towards refugee migrants, but also of refugee migrants towards their fellow migrants. In this prospect, empowerment by hope is, to use the words of Bevans and Schroeder (2004), a "constant in context".

Thus, empowerment by hope is participatory, because it has a holistic approach. August (2010) affirms this, when he observes that the followers of Jesus Christ, who engage in social action, should never choose between satisfying physical hunger and spiritual hunger or between healing bodies and saving souls; the love of God (*agapé*) should lead the Christian to serve holistically. In the same vein, Bosch (1991) points out that a par-

adigm shift is always part of a series of previous shifts that lead to new opportunities. Here, integral mission becomes the transformational practice of God through the church. This is why Bevens (2013) explains that “mission is more urgent today than ever”. His argument is based on the reality that the centre of gravity in terms of Christianity has shifted to the Global South, massive migration trends are being registered in the Global North, and widespread secularism is on the rise globally. In view of this paradigm shift, empowerment by hope places the biblical reality with perfect relevance in our everyday context. It is this biblical reality that helps the church find resonance in the refugee phenomenon and provide refugees with practical tools to be agents of hope within their own community.

In spite of the fact that the life of refugees in South Africa is characterised by unprecedented suffering, Apostle Paul indicates that suffering and pain are not an excuse for despair (cf. Romans 5:3–5). That is, they are not to thwart our rejoicing in hope. Those who hope have enough to be pleased about, despite the circumstantial challenges they encounter in the everyday. In other words, hope makes rejoicing in suffering a real possibility. Those who hope for a better tomorrow rejoice unashamedly in the suffering of a ‘worse’ today. Thus, it is despair that causes shame. From the narratives of refugee migrants, I established that albeit considered by many as nobodies and, thus, trodden under foot as the mire in the streets, refugee migrants have resilient hope and are not ashamed of their painful suffering. Amidst all the conflicts and bloodshed in the African continent, and behind the living conditions of those affected by such violence are narratives of hope, lies resilience and courage.

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3.3 THE PRAXIS OF DIAKONIA IN A CHANGING WORLD: A CHALLENGE AND AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SOUTH AFRICAN PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES

Abstract

*This article aims to discuss the Christian social effort and development work (diakonia) from the Pentecostal perspective in the South African context of intense migratory flow and ingrained negative attitude towards migrants who have flooded the country. It also seeks to propose a diaconal approach that is contextual and transformational in order to foster the transformation of the South African society in which there is an endless cycle of hatred and violence against foreigners. It is argued that South Africans are xenophobic. The recurrence of the xenophobic violence in South Africa suggests that the government and faith-based organisations have not addressed the problem effectively. Given this concern, the present investigation which is essentially a literature review seeks to propose a new approach to **diakonia** of transformation, which can supplement the existing effort to respond to the challenges of migration and foster social transformation. In this regard, the researcher believes that Pentecostal churches have the potential to make such a contribution because of their emphasis on the spiritual aspect of development.*

Introduction

Since the end of apartheid in 1994, South Africa has been facing great challenges in immigration. In more than two decades, South Africa has become the new hub of the southern migration of the African continent, attracting hundreds of thousands of new migrants from Central, Eastern and

Western Africa as well as Bangladesh, China, Eastern Europe and Pakistan (Segatti & Landau 2011, 9). For some of these migrants, South Africa is the second best choice, a temporary shelter on their way to Europe or North America. Whereas for others and for many unintentionally, it has become a final destination (Segatti & Landau 2011, 27). Therefore, there is now a massive influx of migrants (documented and undocumented) from different parts of Africa and the world.

This creates a strong negative feeling about immigration in the country. These sentiments are exacerbated by the perception that immigration is on the increase, it constitutes a threat to socio-economic well-being of the South African nationals, and as such, it has to come to an end. Migrants are seen as stealing jobs, perpetuating crime, engaging in corruption and other socioeconomic ills. This anti-immigration climate has been having a detrimental effect on migrants and culminated in waves of xenophobic attack on foreigners in May 2008 that shocked the world. Some scholars prefer using the term 'Afrophobia', because the hatred for migrants is mostly directed to black Africans. Segatti and Landau (2011, 9) describe the response of the South African government to the increase of migration as defensive and noncommittal, in the sense that it lacks a clear policy on migration.

It should be noted that faith-based organisations and civil organisations made substantial, valuable contributions in assisting victims of xenophobic violence by providing food, clothes and shelter. But the reality is that the hostility against black African migrants is still the daily experience inside and outside South African church walls. The recurrence of the deadly outbreak of Afrophobia in march 2015 is an indication that the problem of xenophobia has not been effectively addressed by the government, as well as faith-based organisations; it can erupt again any time. This suggests that the biblical teachings on the care for migrants, strangers and ethnic minorities has had little impact so far in the South African society (Prill 2013, 4). Given this concern, there is a necessity for a new approach that can be added to the existing Christian social effort and processes of development (*diakonia*) that can offer complementary contribution towards the healing and transformation of South African society in which the stronghold of Afrophobia is firmly established.

The aim of the study is to discuss a paradigm of transformational *diakonia* from the Pentecostal perspective that can assist churches in fulfilling their mandated role of the ministry or service effectively in the context of intense migratory flow. This article will firstly reassess the biblical view on migration. It will also give an overview of migration in South Africa. There-

after, the researcher will analyse the concept of *diakonia*, and the South African Pentecostals and will propose a paradigm of transformational *diakonia* that can assist churches in playing their role effectively and contributing to the social transformation of the South African society.

Biblical Reassessment of Migration

Immigration is a theme that receives a great deal of attention in the Bible. There are many similarities between migration in biblical time and as we experience it today. The Bible contains rich historical accounts on migrants, which constitute the material Christians and particularly Pentecostals can reflect upon to find counsel and wisdom to engage the current migration phenomenon in the contemporary world and particularly Southern Africa.

Migration in the Old Testament

The Hebrew Old Testament uses the word גֵּר (*gēr*) to designate ‘the migrant’ which has been translated into English in various ways – “as alien, sojourner, stranger, foreigner, non-Israelite, immigrant, temporary resident, resident alien, foreign resident, protected citizen or client”. The term גֵּר (*gēr*) comes from the verb גָּוַר (*gwr*) which means “to dwell as a sojourner or a stranger, to become a refugee” (VanGemeren 1997, 836). The term גֵּר (*gēr*) can be understood as a non-Israelite or foreigner, who dwells within the land of Israel. Thus, a sojourner is a person who has left his homeland, probably because of political or economic reasons, to find refuge in another community.

The Bible reveals that the whole life of the people of God was a life of migrants. For example, Terah the father of Abram left Ur along with his son Abram, his grandson Lot and his daughter-in-law Sarai to settle in Harram (Gen.11: 31). The reason for this migration is unknown. Later, God called Abram to migrate from Harram to Canaan. The motive was that God wanted to bless him and make him a great nation. In the course of time, there was famine in the land of Canaan, which urged Abraham to migrate to Egypt to live there for a while (Gen. 12: 10). There was another famine in the land, and Isaac migrated to Gera, the land of the philistines, but the Lord forbade him to go down to Egypt like his father Abraham (Gen. 26:1.)

Furthermore, Jacob fled to Harran, when he heard that Esau planned to kill him after he had stolen his brother’s blessing (Gen. 29). He returned

to his homeland after he had worked for Laban for twenty years (Gen. 31: 25; 31–38). Joseph, sold by his brothers, was taken to Egypt as a slave. He overcame temptation with Potiphar’s wife and found himself in prison. Through the providence of God, he arose to become the ruler of Egypt (Gen. 37: 41). Joseph then facilitated the settlement of his father and the rest of the clan in Egypt, when there was famine in the land of Canaan; it is at that time, the nation of Israel was born (Gen. 45). Several centuries after the death of Joseph, a new Pharaoh, who knew nothing about Joseph, came to power and turned against the Israelites. He enslaved them and subjected them to forced labour (Exo. 1: 5). During that time, Moses fled from Pharaoh to Midian, after he had killed an Egyptian (Exo. 2: 11–25). That is where he received the mission to go and free the Israelites, who wallowed in slavery for 400 years.

Furthermore, Elimelek, his wife Naomi and two sons also left Bethlehem Judah to migrate to Moab for a while because of famine (Ruth 1). Ten years later, Naomi decided to move back home with her daughter-in-law Ruth, following the loss of her husband and two sons. In the course of time, Assyrians conquered the Northern kingdom of Israel and deported thousands of Israelites to resettle them as captives in Assyria (1Chr. 5: 26; 1Kings 17: 3–6, 1Kings 18: 11–12).

The above discussion reveals that the causes of migration in the biblical time were varied, just like in the contemporary world. Some individuals were forced “to either move out of concrete need or for less-than worthy reasons” (Carroll 2010, 6). For example, the case of Abraham mentioned earlier, to whom God himself commanded to migrate for a purpose. Sometimes it was famine that caused people to migrate, like Jacob to Egypt and many others, or a deliberate will of the individuals. In other circumstances, it was deportation or forceful migration after defeat in war. For example, the Babylonian Captivity, during which, Jews were forcefully detained in Babylonia following the latter’s conquest of the kingdom of the Jews in 598 BC by King Nebuchadnezzar II of *Babylon* (Jer. 29:10). Although the Babylonian exile was God’s punishment to Israelites because of their disobedience (Jer. 25: 8–12), the captives can be classified as refugees.

It is interesting to note that whatever the reason or the circumstances that caused individuals to migrate in Israel, God directed Israelites that the migrant is in the same category of the needy as the widow and the orphan, therefore, they must be treated well (Deut. 24:17, 26:13; Jer. 7:6, Mal. 3:5). Thus, the Israelites had some obligation to care for the foreigners. VanGemen (1997, 837) outlines this as follows:

- The sojourner does not possess land and is in the service of an Israelite who is his master and protector (Deut. 24:14).
- He is usually poor, but as a resident, enjoys the rights of assistance, protection and religious participation.
- He has the right of gleaning (Lev. 19:10, 23:22), participation in the tithe (Deut. 14:29), the Sabbath year (Lev. 25:6) and the city of refuge (Num. 35:15).
- His participation in religious feasts assumes the acceptance of circumcision (Exo. 12: 48, cf. Deut. 16:11, 14).
- He may bring offerings and is obligated to the regulation of purity (Lev. 17:8–16)
- There is legislation for religious offenses (Lev. 24:22) such as blasphemy of the name of Yahweh (Lev. 24:16) or idolatrous practices (Lev. 20:2).
- The sojourner is under divine protection (Ps. 146: 9).
- The Israelite must love the alien as themselves (Deut. 10:19), for that is what they themselves were.
- In daily life, there was to be no barrier between the alien and the Israelite.

The reason was that Israelites were also foreigners in Egypt (Exo. 22:21); they experienced what it is like to be immigrants in a foreign land, experienced oppression and persecution for an extended period. In other words, the Lord was telling Israelites that despite the harsh treatment they had received in Egypt, they should not do the same to foreigners who live amongst them. Since God himself shows love for the aliens, Israelites should do the same (Deut. 10:18). Another reason for treating foreigners well is that God considers Israelites as foreigners living in His land; for that reason, they should not look down upon immigrants who are living in their midst (Lev. 25:23).

The focus of the next section is to look at migration in the New Testament.

Migration in the New Testaments

The Greek word used to designate the immigrant is *πάροικος* (*paroikos*) is the equivalent of the Hebrew word גֵּר (*gēr*). The term *πάροικος* (*paroikos*) is a compound word of *para* (by) and *oikos* (house), which means “neighbour, noncitizen, one who lives amongst citizens without having citizen rights, yet enjoying the protection of the community” (Verbrugge 2000, 439).

A study of the four gospels reveals that Jesus never dealt directly with the issue of immigration in his sermons, but this does not mean that He never taught anything related to immigration. For example, Jesus showed compassion and cared for those who were marginalised and not often considered in Jewish community such as women, the poor, the lepers (Mat. 15: 21–28; Mat 8; Luke 17:11–19), the outsiders, the gentiles and the Samaritans (Carroll 2013, 104). In the same vein, the gospel of Matthew informs us that Jesus was a migrant and a refugee. He fled to Egypt to escape persecution of Herod, and in this way, Jesus identified Himself with migrants (Mat. 2:13).

Furthermore, Jesus uses two parables to reinforce His teaching on the care for the stranger. The first parable is the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37), in which Jesus answers the question of who is the neighbour; Jesus took advantage of this opportunity to teach care for the stranger. The second parable is found in Matthew 25: 31–46, where Jesus announced the judgment when He comes back. Matthew mentions six different areas of need which will constitute the last judgment; one situation directly relates to the treatment of foreigners: “I was a stranger, and you invited me in”. This reveals that in the last judgment, the question to believers will be did you take care of the needy and the stranger? This implies that the last judgment will be based on Christians’ response to the needy and stranger. Thus, Christians worldwide have the moral obligation to take care of immigrants who have left their homeland for any reason and who need any kind of help. In Matthew 25:38–40, Jesus identifies Himself with strangers and the needy, and anyone who assists them in any way serves Christ.

The New Testament records many examples where Jesus’ disciples went through the same experience of migration. Luke narrates that after the stoning and death of Stephen, a great persecution against the church broke out in Jerusalem. All disciples except the apostles were scattered throughout the regions of Judea (Acts 8:1). Luke indicates that the scattering of the Jerusalem disciples contributed to the spreading of the Word of God. Those who were fleeing persecution proclaimed Christ wherever they went. For example, Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed Christ to the Samaritans (Acts 8:5). Other disciples went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch and preached the Word of God there (11:19). As a result, many people believed and turned to the Lord. Thus, the persecution of the Jerusalem church, which led to the scattering of the disciples, was an unplanned missionary strategy for the spread of the gospel. As Prill (2013, 18) puts it, refugee disciples became agents of God’s mission. Luke also men-

tions another refugee couple, Priscilla and Aquila, that was forced to leave Italy after emperor Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome; they joined Paul in his mission in Corinth and accompanied him to Ephesus (Acts 18:2, 19). Prill (2013, 19) emphasises an important fact that “migrants were not only agents, but also recipient of the mission of God and His church”.

In the Epistles, the word *πάροικος* (*paroikos*) takes a different tone, that is to say, a spiritual dimension. First of all, to the Galatians 3:27–28, Paul writes “for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ”. This implies that cultural, social or racial differences in a community are undeniable fact, but they do not constitute a barrier to fellowship now that we are in Christ. The most important thing Paul emphasises in this verse is unity, in other words, we are one in Christ Jesus.

Moreover, all Christians are considered foreigners here on earth, on a journey to Heaven – their permanent home (Phil. 3:20; Heb. 13:14). It is in that perspective the recipients of the Epistle of Peter, who were scattered in different parts of Asia, are called strangers (1Pet. 1:1). This phenomenon was very strategic for the expansion of the gospel. Yet it implies that metaphorically, Christianity is a migratory life. Since all Christians are foreigners and strangers in this world, there should not be a place for rejection or discrimination of immigrants who live amongst them.

After the overview of migration in the Bible, the following subsection will give a synopsis of migration in South Africa.

The Narrative of Migration in Africa

The contemporary world is experiencing the greatest migration flow of its history. People are moving across national and international borders; a phenomenon that has been facilitated by the process of globalisation and seems to be irreversible. It is estimated that there are 214 million migrants around the world, and it is projected that this can rise up to 405 million migrants in 2050 (IOM 2010, xix). One can distinguish two types of migrants globally, namely, the voluntary and involuntary migrants. The voluntary migrant, as the word says, is a person that willingly decides to move from one place to another for the purpose of undertaking studies, doing business, finding employment or joining family, etc. But the involuntary migrant, on the other hand often, refers to a refugee as a person that is forced

to leave his country of origin to find protection in a foreign land, perhaps because of desperate situations such as a natural disaster, war, political persecution, oppression etc. This type of migration poses a serious problem around the world.

There are also internally displaced people, who migrate exactly for the same reasons as immigrants and refugees, but within the national borders (Carroll 2010, 4). It was estimated that in 2007, approximately 32 million refugees were registered in different parts of the world, of which 14 million were internally displaced (Nordstokke 2009, 15). Thus, millions of people leave their home in an attempt to escape poverty or armed conflicts that are prevailing in certain parts of the world. For instance, African migration to Europe and America dates back to the sixteenth to nineteenth century, where Africans were brutalised and forcefully uprooted from their soil like criminals to be enslaved in the Western world. Ironically, in the twenty first century, Africans are crossing the Mediterranean Sea at the peril of their lives in search of a better life in Europe, where they are unwelcome. When a migrant succeeds in overcoming all obstacles to cross the sea and arrives on European soil, she would triumphantly declare *alia ngando* which literally means “I have eaten the crocodile” (Kalu 2010, 168) in Lingala language (spoken in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Congo brazaville, Angola). Kalu argues that this expression signifies, ironically, that the opposite could have happened to the migrant, since the Mediterranean Sea is full of crocodiles. It is the researcher’s view that this migration arises out of poverty and instability that prevail in the continent and will continue to rise, as long as there is a wide gap between rich and poor nations. Africans will increasingly continue to find ways to migrate to other countries in search of a better future for themselves and their families. The underdevelopment of Africa for one part portrays poor leadership in Africa, characterised by selfishness and greed. The prophet Ezekiel 34:2–6 in his prophecy decried evil shepherds that meet their needs at the expense of the sheep in their care. Consequently, without a good shepherd, the sheep scattered to fend for themselves in order to survive.

As already noted, we live in a time of unprecedented migration flows around the world. However, there are potential risks linked to such migratory movement worldwide. First of all, for communities that have members who emigrate, Carroll (2010, 4) mentions “the decrease of available labour, brain drain, the disruption of family life”. Secondly, for the host communities, the massive influx of migrant creates “pressures on job markets, educational institutions, health facilities, and Law enforcement”. In addition,

different languages, cultures and religions (Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism etc.) migrants bring with them have a significant impact on the society. As for the migrants, they face many challenges, including acculturation, integration into a new society, rejection, discrimination, exploitation, hatred because people fear job competition, etc. This raises the question: what is the will of God in this massive migration in the world?

While much attention is focused on immigrants (from Sahelo-Saharan Black Africa, Syria and Afghanistan) who perish in the Mediterranean Sea en route to Europe, migration to the United States and Asia, little scholarly attention is given to Southern Africa that has been the new hub of emerging immigration for the last two decades (Segatti & Landau 2011, 11). It should be stated that immigration in South Africa is a very complex phenomenon and has a long history. South Africa is a typical settler state, a country of immigration, but South Africans have always been hostile towards new comers (Klotz 2013, i). The same source indicates that in 1890s, angry mobs gathered regularly in the port of Durban to protest against the arrival of contracted Indian labourers (Klotz 2013, 6). Yet, the country has been a centre for immigrants from different parts of the world, and this makes South African culture rich and varied.

Segatti and Landau (2011, 11) note that “South Africa welcomed different waves of European immigrants”, including the Huguenots (French protestants many of whom were Calvinists), who fled France in 17th to 18th centuries because of the persecution they were subjected to by the Catholic Church. Another wave of immigrants to South Africa Segatti and Landau records is the Russian and Lithuanian Jews (Jews with roots in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania) who ran from the anti-Jews rioting in Russian empire and in many other countries in late 19th century. Also, during World War II, a large number of Italian prisoners poured into South Africa. Still, there was another wave of Greeks immigrants to South Africa who fled the military dictatorship regime between 1967 and 1974, commonly called the Regime of the Colonels. The period that followed the movement into independence in the 1950s and 1960s brought another wave of immigrants to South Africa – Belgians and Jews who fled the Congo, the Portuguese who left Angola and Mozambique.

Segatti and Landau indicate that not all these groups of immigrants were fairly accepted in South Africa; some groups faced discrimination, for example, the Portuguese. Also, the Mozambique civil war that erupted in 1977, two years after the independence, and ended in 1992, brought a massive influx of about 350 000 refugees to South Africa (IOM 2000,

137). Another massive inflow of immigrants recorded in recent years are Zimbabweans, who fled the economic downfall of the country.

Furthermore, major political and economic changes in the post-apartheid era led to the transformation of South African international migration policy that opened doors to migrants (Segatti & Landau 2011, 9). As mentioned above, this has attracted hundreds of thousands of new migrants, documented and undocumented, from different parts of the world to South Africa which makes the country the new migration hub of Southern Africa. The level of political stability and economic growth the government of South Africa has achieved continues to attract migrants to the country as the new land of opportunities (Segatti & Landau 2011, 11).

Now, the problem is that the government of South Africa and even churches were not prepared to deal with the massive influx of migrants. Consequently, the unpreparedness of the government and churches to handle this situation gave rise to xenophobic sentiments that culminated into xenophobic violence against foreigners that erupted in May 2008 and left 62 people dead, 670 wounded and about 150,000 displaced, primarily foreign national black Africans and members of South Africa's ethnic minorities (Segatti & Landau 2011, 10); this event became the worse violence in the post-apartheid era.

The term xenophobia derives from two Greek words ξένος (*xenos*) which means stranger, alien, and φόβος (*phobos*), meaning terror, fear, fright, awe (Verbrugge 2000, 398, 591). According to Webster's third new International dictionary (2002, 2644), xenophobia is the "fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign". This implies that xenophobia is the fear of the unknown, or anything that is different (Mattes 1999, 21). The meaning of term 'xenophobia' does not necessarily include violence, as we experience it in South Africa. In the South African context, xenophobia is the morbid dislike of black Africans by South Africans and leads to the continuing incidents of violence against foreign nationals.

There have been extensive and detailed empirical studies about xenophobia conducted in South Africa, which prove that the majority of South Africans are indeed extremely xenophobic; they hate black African foreign nationals irrespective of their nationalities (Neocosmos 2010, 97). It should be mentioned that xenophobia in the South African context is more complex than the mere fear of unknown. Several reasons are at play for this attitude toward foreigners. For some, the attack on foreigners is due to scarce resources. African immigrants have been accused of stealing the few job opportunities available, reducing wages, perpetrating crimes, bringing diseases

es, smuggling drugs, stealing women and many other ills, without much evidence. Neocosmos (2010, 89) stresses that migrants are rarely convicted of crimes by a court of law.

Others understand the xenophobic violence as a historical problem of the South African society. They trace the roots of xenophobia back to the apartheid era, where the majority of black people were marginalised by white minority rule. Now, in the new dispensation of democratic South Africa, black people's expectation of a better life was high. The inability of the government to deliver all its promises and ensure a better life for all frustrates black people, who developed xenophobic sentiments and took them out on foreigners to express their anger. In the same vein of xenophobia violence factors, Segatti and Landau (2011, 10) point out the lack of national development strategies around migration, the lack of inadequate migration policy that undermines efforts to ensure the protection of refugees, the public sector's neglect of the dangers and development potentials of migration in society. The fact of the matter is that South Africans do not like refugees, asylum-seekers or foreigners living in their communities; for that reason, they will do whatever it takes to get rid of them.

Nevertheless, the empirical study Phakathi (2010, 12) conducted in Johannesburg to find out the response of churches to xenophobic violence reveals that a number of churches and civil society organisations responded in different ways to the xenophobic violence of 2008, such as providing shelter, mobilising volunteers, raising funds and gathering supplies. Phakathi indicates that the interventions of churches were neither coordinated, nor had adequate direction. He also specifies that no lasting partnerships were developed between churches, civil society and the government after the xenophobic incident. It should be noted that churches have been doing admirable work in different informal settlements and townships to uplift communities that are mired in poverty through various outreach programmes (Phakathi 2010, 1). But the fact that xenophobic violence recurred in March 2015 suggests that the government and churches have not done enough to effectively address the problem. Neocosmos (2010, ix) holds the same view and finds that the existing explanatory accounts of xenophobia in South Africa are deficient in the sense that they do not take into consideration the socio-political aspect of xenophobia and fail to propose solutions for overcoming the problem. At this point, a new diaconal approach that can facilitate the transformation of the South African society, in which there are constant occurrences of violence and an atmosphere of xenophobia against the outsiders, is needed.

After having examined migration in South Africa, the following section will focus on transformational diakonia and the South Africa Pentecostals.

Transformational Diakonia

The Concept Diakonia

The origin of the term ‘diakonia’ derives from the historical event recorded in the book of Acts 6:1–6, when a complaint arose from the Hellenistic Jews that their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food (Acts 6:1–3). But it was not convenient for the apostles to disregard the ministry of the word in order to deal with the distribution of food. To resolve this dispute, the disciples tasked the community to select seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom the disciples could put in charge of serving (διακονία) at tables. The selection criteria for the seven men to minister (διακονία) in this regard is not to be taken lightly. These criteria shed light on the apostles’ strategy to deal with the challenge of marginalised Greek widows and to ensure a quality diakonia in the early community.

The concept diakonia is a transliteration of the Greek word διακονία that stems from the Greek verb διακονέω (diakoneō) and which original meaning, as noted earlier, is “to wait at table in order to serve”; later, it was expanded to mean “care for the household needs, then, to serve generally” (Verbrugge 2000, 136). Unlike the Jews who found nothing wrong in serving, to the Greeks, serving was ignoble and not proper for a free man (Kittel 1964, 82). Thus, diakonia has become a concept widely used within Christendom to designate loving action for a brother or sister and a neighbour or even the community. Kittel (1964, 87) refers to this as the “discharge service in genuine love” or “the discharge of certain obligations in the community”. For example, the contribution the Jerusalem church sent to the brethren in Judea is considered diakonia which portrays an act of true love (Acts 11:29).

It is worth mentioning that diakonia does not have a precise definition, and there is no direct link between the meaning of the concept diakonia in the book of Acts and the contemporary usage of the term. Sometimes, the meaning of a word can vary from one period of time to another, or from one place to another. In the contemporary utilisation of the term, διακονία (diakonia) “is often understood as service, and in many instances, it has also been regarded as acts of charity and benevolence that have been

conferred upon the less fortunate or needy in one's community" (Phiri & Dongsung 2013, 253). It can also be understood as expressing a call for the community of believers to serve (Dietrich, Jørgensen, Korslien & Nordstokke (2014, 2).

Although not all churches are using the concept of diakonia to designate the different services they provide to the communities (each church uses a different name depending on its tradition), but the fact is that in one way or another, churches are performing diakonia. This is evident in the use of the expressions, such as development work, social transformation, social ministry etc., which portray the daily activities of churches (Nordstokke 2009, 9). The world council of churches and some protestant churches designate these different services to the community diakonia. That is why Dietrich et al. (2014, ix) posit that diakonia has always been an integral part of the life and work of the church, but it is being approached differently, depending on the tradition of the church and specific departments within the church. According to Nordstokke (2009, 43), the purpose of diakonia is to respond to the needs of individuals and groups. Thus, in the contemporary world and within Christendom, diakonia is often explored in three vantage points, namely "church mission and diakonia, the diakonia of the marginalised and the diakonia of transformation" (Haddad 2014, 274). Dietrich et al. refer to these services as "humanitarian, developmental and advocacy-related". While considering the three aspects of diakonia as the broad frame of this paper, particular attention is given to diakonia of transformation.

Diakonia for Transformation

Transformation is a very complex term; "it is understood as change in the whole of the person, material, social and spiritual as well as in the community economics, social and political" (Winter & Hawthorne 1999, 579). This implies that transformation is all about changing people and their communities, and this does not happen overnight, it is an ongoing process. It is also understood as a continuous process of rejecting everything that is dehumanising and desecrating life, but adheres to what promotes purity, peace and justice (Nordstokke 2009, 43).

Transformation, which is one of the dimensions of diakonia, can be defined as an ongoing process of social change, progress or development. Nordstokke (2009, 43) elucidates that the process of transformation consists of rejecting what dehumanizes and desecrates life and adopting what

promotes peace and justice in society. The transformational diakonia in this context is a critical and a theological discussion that focuses on Christian social practice in the South African society of a constant influx of immigrants. This transformational diakonia is about engaging with the lived reality in the South African society, in which the hatred for black African immigrants is rooted in the mentality of people. Transformational diakonia can help overcome xenophobic sentiments that are entrenched in the South African society. It is in this perspective Nordstokke (2009, 44) insists that “we all need to be transformed, reconciled and empowered”.

From the biblical perspective, transformation is the continuous work of the Holy Spirit to impact positive change in the life of individuals, in society and in the world. It relates to Paul’s perspective of transformation, which he clearly expressed in the following terms: “do not be confirmed to this world, but be transformed by renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom. 12:2). Thus, transformation also encompasses reconciliation and empowerment.

Reconciliation

The idea of reconciliation implies that the iniquities have made a separation between God and human beings (Isa. 59:1–2); for that reason, there is a need to be reconciled with God through the redemptive work of Christ (Rom. 5:10). As Nordstokke (2009, 44) puts it, reconciliation “is a merciful gift for a broken world, and diakonia seeks to witness this promise through initiatives for furthering peace and reconciliation”. It is clear that reconciliation is about restoring broken relationships, namely the vertical relationship (between God and humans) and the horizontal relationship (between people). The brutal xenophobic attack against millions of black African migrant workers back in 2008 and its recurrence in March 2015 that the world witnessed, portrays a flawed relationship between foreign nationals and local people in South Africa. It should be mentioned that our relationship with God cannot be right, if our relationship with our fellow human beings is wrong. Prill (2013, 3) describes the xenophobic violence as “an extreme expression of ethnic, tribal and national hatred that was related to racism, tribalism, ethnocentrism and selfish national interests that are still widespread not only in South Africa but in many other African countries”. For that reason, the researcher strongly believes that the church has a critical role to play to foster reconciliation and justice in the society, if it understands its prophetic mission (Prill 2013, 3).

This cannot be made effective and sustainable without the presence of the Holy Spirit in the diaconal work, which is the power that can bring the ability and guidance that can facilitate meaningful change in people's lives by restoring broken relationships with the self, others and God. The Holy Spirit can also progressively illuminate the conscience of the people and eventually transform the society. At this point, the necessity for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in diaconal work is clearly perceived.

Empowerment of the Holy Spirit

The empowerment of the Holy Spirit refers to the promise Jesus made to His disciples before He ascended to Heaven: "you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The empowerment of the Holy Spirit brought transformation in the lives of the disciples. Their fear was conquered, and they proclaimed the mighty works of God boldly (Acts 4:8, 31, 6:10). The Holy Spirit equipped the disciples for ministry or service by giving them spiritual gifts. They were empowered to pray effectively and to overcome spiritual opposition (Rom. 8:26, Acts 4:23). In addition, the disciples lived in constant fellowship daily. A strong sense of unity and compassion was built under the impulse of the Holy Spirit. They shared everything in common and sold their possessions. They cared for one another. All these acts were a demonstration of their love for one another. The contemporary church also needs the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to make the same type of contribution in the church community and in society.

It is evident that the Holy Spirit is still empowering people in our contemporary world for ministry or service without distinction of race, tribe, sex or educational background. At the Pentecost day, apostle Peter made it clear in his sermon that the promise of the empowerment of the Holy Spirit concerns everyone, even the future generation (Acts 2:38–39). It only required willingness and availability: people needed to repent and be baptised for that promise to bear fruit in their lives (Witherington 1998, 155). This view strengthens Luke's theme (in Acts) of empowerment by the Spirit to cross borders, suggesting that this empowerment is meant to continue in the lives of believers until the end of the world.

This particular background should help shape diaconal action in such a way that responds to the challenges of the massive influx of migrants, which creates "increasingly pervasive and publicly accepted anti-foreigner sentiments" (Hartman 2011, 2). It will also help establish practical di-

aconia that raises the dignity of people and gives them the opportunity to be subjects in both the Church and society (Nordstokke 2009, 46). Nordstokke also points out that the Greek word *διακονία* (*diakonia*) points to a mission of a messenger or an ambassador who is responsible for restoring relations, healing and reconciling. It is clear that diaconal actions consist of restoring and building relationships in order to contribute to the transformation of the church and the society.

Pentecostalism, which has now become the dominant form of Christianity in South Africa, is an historic heir to the ministry of the apostles through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. In other words, Pentecostal churches have got the potential to engage in transformational diakonia. It positions itself as a community institution that can have a unique impact on their own members' and the broader communities' beliefs and behaviours related to the xenophobic sentiments that prevail in South African society.

After examining the transformation diakonia, the focus is now on South African Pentecostals.

South Africa Pentecostals

In recent years, global Christianity has experienced the emergence of a new version of Pentecostalism, which certain missiologists consider as the third wave of the charismatic/Pentecostal movement or neo-Pentecostalism (Myers 2015, 115). Therefore, "part of this new Pentecostal movement has been called Progressive Pentecostalism" (Myers 2015, 115). This movement emerged in the impoverished urban slums of Sub-Saharan Africa and other parts of the global south such as Latin America and parts of Asia (Freeman 2012, 10). The mentioned spiritual movement has impacted Christianity and has become the fastest growing Christian movement on the African continent.

The first wave is the classical Pentecostalism that started in the 1900s in the USA, expanded to Europe and then to Africa. The second wave of Pentecostalism is the charismatic movement that developed within mainstream Christian denominations such as the Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans and Presbyterians in the 1960s (Freeman 2012, 11, 2). The same source indicates that for the past three decades, Africa has experienced an explosion that has changed its religious landscape drastically, when millions of people joined Pentecostal churches. It is estimated that one third of all Christians in South Africa (i.e. 12.5 million South Africans) are members

of these non-traditional churches, and their numbers are increasing rapidly compared to those of traditional churches that remain static or even decline (Attanasi & Yong 2012, 67). Thus, Pentecostalism is becoming the dominant form of Christianity in the contemporary African setting (Anderson 2004, 103). Lindhardt (2015, 1) holds the same view and emphasises that initially, Pentecostalism was an isolated movement, but in recent decades, it has become a considerable force within African Christianity and sub-Saharan African societies in general. This is probably because, as Miller (2009, 278) indicates, Pentecostalism was born among the poor, which suggests that this movement linked itself to the needs of the destitute.

There are many studies that have been done on Pentecostalism in Africa, but hitherto, there is very little literature on the Pentecostal church in South Africa. However, the country itself is one of the first nations on the African continent to have received Pentecostalism at the beginning of the twentieth century in 1908 (Anderson 2005, 66-67). One of the reasons Anderson mentions is that Pentecostal churches in South Africa are not prominent, in the sense that there are not many megachurches amongst black South Africans, like in Nigeria and Ghana, yet they portray the same features of West African Pentecostalism. For example, the emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit and the manifestation of spiritual gifts such as the speaking in tongues, healing, prophecy and exorcism in the church. Another reason could be that most South African Pentecostals denominations were very reserved in the struggle against apartheid; they did not play an active role like the Anglican church. As de Kock (2000, 107) stresses, Pentecostal churches succumbed to the racial segregation policy of the apartheid regime and have also been accused of endorsing and practising racism in its various forms of injustice.

In the words of Anderson (2005, 70), most Pentecostal white leaders “accepted uncritically the socio-political status quo and the paradigms of apartheid”. This state of affairs, as Anderson indicates, led many black Africans to reject all forms of Western Christianity and steered the rise of African independent churches (such as Zionist and Apostolic independent churches), where people could nurture new social relationships based on human dignity. Although these independent churches have much in common with broader Christianity, Pentecostal churches do not consider them as born again, therefore, they need salvation (Anderson 2000, 36). As a result, the new wave of the Pentecostalism movement experienced slow expansion amongst black people. It is only after 1994, in the new climate of free South Africa that the new charismatic movement began to flour-

ish. Pentecostalism in South Africa includes the classic Pentecostalism, of which the three largest denominations are the Assemblies of God, the full gospel church of God and the Apostolic Faith Mission. Besides the classic Pentecostal denominations, there are also various non-aligned new Pentecostals and charismatics churches (Anderson 2000, 67).

It should be mentioned that Pentecostalism spiritual emphasis is a key factor for social transformation, and it works in the lives of its followers. While NGOs focus primarily on material and economic transformation, Progressive Pentecostal churches combine material and spiritual transformation, referred to as “a transformation of subjectivities” (Freeman 2012, 220). For that reason, Pentecostals may be “more successful in bringing about change that is effective, deep-rooted and long-lasting” (Freeman 2012, 24). Myers (2015, 118) shows that it is the key to the Progressive Pentecostal churches’ better performance record (as opposed to, e.g., the NGOs). Such performance is the result of a few factors: their commitment to changing people and their stories, correcting moral behaviour, giving new meaning to human life and providing a vision and hope for the future.

From the abovementioned, it can be inferred that the Pentecostals’ fundamental focus is spiritual transformation accompanied by social concern. This, however, is an important factor of social transformation. In light of this finding, it is evident that personal transformation is needed as a foundation to bring about sustainable social transformation, particularly in the context of intense migratory flow with “the ongoing episodes of violence and climate of xenophobia in South Africa” (Hartman 2011, 7).

Conclusion

Immigration is a very old phenomenon. The Bible contains a lot examples of people who migrated to other places to escape persecution, famine and natural disasters to such an extent, that some commentators call the Bible ‘the book of migrants’. African migrants can identify themselves with migrants in the Bible in the sense that some have been forced to leave their lands because of civil war, famine, political persecution.

It has been mentioned that migrants in the biblical time faced the same challenges as today’s immigrants, namely rejection, exploitation, stigmatisation, discrimination etc. But God is very concerned about immigrants; He loves them and wants them to be treated with dignity. Migrants are therefore agents of God’s mission; they might bring their own faith or religion to the host country, this might be an opportunity for them to find faith in God through the ministry of native Christians and other migrants.

It was also emphasised that the truth about the care for immigrants seems to have very little impact on South African society. The recurrence of the deadly xenophobic violence in March 2015 gives evidence that the government, churches and other players have not sufficiently addressed the problem. For that reason, there is a necessity for a new approach, which can be added to existing Christian social effort and processes of development (*diakonia*) that can offer a complementary contribution for the healing and the transformation of South African society, in which the strongholds of xenophobia are firmly established. It was argued that Pentecostal churches, with their emphasis on the spiritual, have got the potential to make such a contribution, if they understand the role they have to play in this context of constant migration flow. Pentecostal churches therefore should provide what is missing in other organisations.

This points to future research on the response of Pentecostal churches to migration challenges in South Africa. Currently, research on Pentecostals reaction to migration is shallow, black Pentecostal approach to migrants in general is an acute need. Because the explosion of charismatic and Pentecostal movements attracted attention to the connection between African Christianity and African migrant labour in Southern Africa and the key factor in the growth of Pentecostals churches is migration.

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