Esko Kähkönen &Teemu Pauha (eds.)

Faith-Based Social Action in Combating Marginalization
Conference Proceedings, Helsinki, 17.–18.11.2011

Diak

Esko Kähkönen & Teemu Pauha (eds.)

Faith-Based Social Action in Combating Marginalization
Conference Proceedings, Helsinki, 17.-18.11.2011

ABSTRACT

Kähkönen Esko **Pauha Teemu (eds.)**	**Faith-Based Social Action in Combating Marginalization** **Conference Proceedings, Helsinki,** **17.-18.11.2011**
Helsinki: 210 p. appendixes	Diakonia-ammattikorkeakoulu, 2011 Diakonia-ammattikorkeakoulun julkaisuja B Raportteja 50
ISBN 978-952-493-159-5 (nid.) 978-952-493-160-1 (pdf)	ISSN 1455-9927

The following papers were first presented in the conference "Faith-based Social Action in Combating Marginalisation" that was held in Helsinki from 17th to 18th of November 2011. The major theme of the conference and the common thread that run through the conference presentations was dignity.

Dignity is here investigated in the context of faith-based social action. The significance of dignity is demonstrated in relation to various areas of social care and diaconia. We approach dignity from a variety of angles and with the help of various concepts. Citizenship and resilience are a few examples of such concepts. The role of religiosity and spirituality as a guiding framework and ethical foundation of faith-based social action is also discussed.

Tony Addy, Adam Dinham and Esko Kähkönen discuss the concept of dignity in the context of faith-based social action. Their papers provide the background for the rest of the volume by highlighting the importance of dignity for social action and introducing the three key domains of faith-based social action, that is, service provision, community cohesion and advocacy.

These three are also the three main sections of this publication. The service section begins with an article by Ella van `t Hof and Sytske Teppema, who present the findings of a pilot study on how the philosophies of life are accounted for in the social work practice. This article is followed by Ulla

Jokela's paper that, by using institutional ethnography as a methodological approach, points out relations of ruling that can be criticized for not being respectful of the client in the diaconia work.

Heikki Hiilamo studies the poor relief of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland between the recession in the early 1990s and the global recession beginning in 2008. Einar Vetvik, in contrast, addresses the poverty situation in the Norwegian welfare state and the role of diaconia in alleviating it.

In the next section, Community cohesion, Jim Robertson and David Penn offer a glimpse into British projects and policies that aim at community development and resilience. Teemu Pauha introduces his study focusing on the identities of Muslim youth as well as a theoretical framework for further explorations of the topic.

The advocacy section contains articles by Mikko Malkavaara. In his first article, he investigates the history of rights-based thinking within Finnish diaconia before 1975. In the second one, he informs the reader of both the history and the current situation of the Dalits as well as ecumenical and church initiatives for improving their status in society.

Contents

ADVOCACY

Tony Addy (Diaconia University of Applied Sciences), Adam Dinham (Goldsmiths, University of London) & Esko Kähkönen (Diaconia University of Applied Sciences)

EXPLORING INTERPRETATIONS OF THE CONCEPT OF DIGNITY IN THE CONTEXT OF FAITH-BASED SOCIAL ACTION

1 Introduction: dignity does not "grow" in poverty and exclusion

The more economic integration is seen as a treatment for poverty and exclusion, the stronger talk and action for human dignity are needed. In this introductory presentation we observe and analyse key areas of interest when studying dignity in the context of faith-based social action. Our approach includes pointing to research needs in specific contexts of faith-based social action.

Our view is that one cannot theorise about dignity without touching on poverty and exclusion. The recent and present financial and economic crises both increase levels of poverty and challenge people's resilience to it. We perceive that human dignity is threatened in contexts of poverty by narrow 'pathological' understandings of poverty. Academic social policy literature has, over the last 20 years, used many wider interpretations of poverty than the now very widespread, economic and employment perspectives. This is why both the EU and other actors have used the concepts of exclusion, marginalisation and deprivation alongside poverty. An emphasis on dignity and cohesion is part of this development of a wider conceptual understanding. However, welfare policies are increasingly being based on the idea that emp-

loyment/unemployment related poverty is best approached in narrow personal terms. The principle of 'less eligibility' underpins many neo-liberal approaches and lies behind the curtailing of social benefits. The European Charter's commitment to human dignity as a fundamental right challenges narrow interpretations, yet it remains under-developed in policy terms.

By working against poverty in communities across Europe, faith communities experience the distinction between material deprivation (which differs between member states) and the broader manifestations of poverty, as they play out in people's lives. Faith communities recognise that, in practical situations, relative poverty is not just about income but also levels of indebtedness, unemployment, poor health, educational opportunities, housing and environmental conditions and access to adequate public services. These factors are emphasised in the language of social inclusion. Faith-based social action argues that the degree to which people feel that they are able to exercise power and control, participate in decisions about their own lives and engage in community life also has to be taken into account.

In spite of the overall wealth in Europe, poverty is persistently at a high level and children, young people and women are disproportionately affected. The EU regards poverty as 'a direct attack on people's fundamental rights' [which include dignity] as well as bringing with it its own high costs, financially and in terms of human misery and indignity.

Traditional approaches to understanding poverty can be divided into two broad schools. The first locates poverty in the pathology of individuals and by extension to the areas in which they live, understanding poverty as a result of individual incompetence, and people in communities as architects of their own disadvantage and that of those around them. As many have shown, this emerges from a long tradition (for example the English Elizabethan and later Victorian 'Poor Laws' in the UK), which sought to encourage people to find the means to support themselves by making alternative state-provided welfare unbearably unpleasant. What underpins this approach is the view that, if states provide support against poverty, people will become dependent upon it, whereas if they minimise support, people will fend for themselves. The second approach takes a broader structural view which locates poverty, not in personal pathology, but in macro-economic and social systems which oppress poor people through unequal processes of competition, power and distribution of wealth.

Recent policy and practice in relation to overcoming poverty in the European context has focused on the idea of social cohesion. In some countries (notably the UK), the idea of community cohesion is widely used, yet according to many commentators 'there is no effective and agreed definition of social cohesion' even though in sociological discourse it has a long history stretching back to Tönnies and Durkheim. The tradition contrasted the mechanistic solidarity of preindustrial societies with the organic solidarity of industrial societies and 'Gemeinschaft' with 'Gesellschaft' but more recently it has been claimed that a differentiated society achieves cohesion through shared normative values and 'impersonal expectations'.

There are strong ideological, nationalistic and even xenophobic elements in the discussion of social cohesion. This is seen most clearly in discussions of 'immigration, integration and citizenship' but also in actual or potential disputes in countries marked by cultural and religious divides. Consequently, when exploring the present situation in European societies, greater knowledge and understanding of multi-faith -based social action across religious traditions and serving people of all faiths and none is needed.

We identify two dimensions to social cohesion:

The first 'dimension' concerns relationships: shared norms and values and associated interpersonal social relations – in civil society, in religious and cultural life and in social and work life.

This strand is related to the preceding discussion and emphasises shared norms and values (sometimes including culture and religion), interlocking networks, high levels of trust, 'other regarding behaviour' and social coherence. This discourse informs debates about many topics from 'anti-social behaviour' to the impact of refugee and black and migrant communities in Europe and their 'integration'. Nationalistic movements are also nourished by this discourse which also informs an emerging 'liberal racism' — being against the 'other' in order to protect the inclusive values of 'European culture'.

It follows that social cohesion has to encompass social relations (formal and informal, private and political, economic and cultural) and opportunities for participation in political life, including civil society, and in sha-

ping working life conditions. Social cohesion also concerns the quality of familial relationships, and relationships in localities (solidarity or conflict, attitudes and cooperation between groups; social isolation). Cohesion is, therefore, a concept which is related to dignity and to the question of poverty and inequality.

The second dimension of social cohesion is related to the issue of poverty and inequality in different national societies and between regions and countries.

This theme can be explored in terms of specific locations and with reference to large scale policy (for example EU policies concerning cohesion between regions). Debate about this aspect of cohesion ranges from asserting that cohesion is mainly concerned with the need for legally enshrined 'equality of opportunity', to the need for policy and practice to address the 'inequalities of opportunity'. This leads on to arguments about the need to reduce disparities in income and wealth or of minimising inequality and poverty. The debate highlights the fact that a society may be cohesive (in the sense of being socially integrated) while at the same time be very unequal and therefore not truly cohesive.

Recent studies of social cohesion indicate that all regional disparities and inequalities, inequality of opportunity (taking into account life-cycle, gender, stratification, different abilities and citizenship issues) and social exclusions have to be taken into account in assessing cohesiveness.

We conclude that attention should be paid to both dimensions of social cohesion and that an emphasis on the human dignity of everyone facilitates this.

2 Dignity is the key issue for well-being

Dignity is used in the EU Fundamental Charter of Rights to describe a basic right, but it remains largely undefined. It is a term widely used in relation to human rights and in moral, ethical and political discussion to signify an innate right to respect and ethical treatment. European culture has been built on three pillars: Greek philosophy, Roman law and Jewish-Chris-

tian religion. Religious traditions have helped to shape social thinking and legislation, but reciprocal human rights, although they grew in 'Christian soil', were formulated in the Enlightenment, which was, in the main, critical of religious perspectives. Human rights have developed through complex, interacting historical processes, informed by experiences of oppression and totalitarianism, injustice and violations of human rights. Nevertheless, human rights can be seen both as rooted in older religious beliefs and practices, and as modern political fruits of those beliefs.

Dignity draws on Enlightenment notions of universality residing in the person (as opposed to residing in God or gods) and is regarded as a precondition of freedom. Politically it is used to critique the treatment of oppressed and vulnerable groups and individuals. While dignity is a term with a long philosophical provenance it is rarely defined outright in political, legal and scientific discussions. Recent research has shown how the concept of dignity tends to be restricted to practical welfare contexts such as those dealing with people with learning difficulties or disabilities.

In modern Europe, citizenship has been an important concept underpinning dignity and it is emphasised in such documents as the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. From these and other documents legal citizenship rights are derived but no obligations are set, except that citizens act within the law. As already hinted however this 'citizenship by status' is potentially an inherently excluding concept. There is a second view of citizenship, deriving from the Athenian polis, where civil life is understood in terms of community and the obligations of citizens to it. So for Aristotle, a citizen is 'someone who participates in public affairs'. Such a conception focuses on mutuality and the 'shared life of the polis' and has more recently been developed into an understanding of 'citizenship by practice'.

It has been suggested that the dichotomy between status citizenship and practice citizenship has been superseded, not only in the rise of the idea of participation as a form of citizenship, wherein 'local people work together to improve their own quality of life' in an 'active citizenship', but also in the way in which status (rights) can be defended or extended through practice (agency). Thus citizenship may be understood, not as an absolute, but as a continuum so that people are citizens to a greater or lesser extent. The issue of how practice citizenship and status citizenship are inter-related and

how they support human dignity in the context of overcoming poverty, is a pressing practical and research question.

Developing 'practice citizenship', particularly in context of poverty and human dignity, is likely to require community development processes that build capacity for engagement and facilitate the identification of aims and their delivery. These are the activities that can be very effectively explored in faith-based contexts. The question to be answered is how can dignity sustain, and be a part of, the sense of citizenship-identity in context of poverty and to what extent can dignity support resilience and action to overcome poverty.

3 Faith-based actions to strengthen dignity

Research suggests, that faith-based social action seeks to fight poverty through social inclusion, participation and well-being. We presume that faith-based social action therefore presents opportunities for adding value to anti-poverty approaches by promoting human dignity as well as simply meeting basic needs. Churches and other faith communities have a long tradition of working for social change and reform, which has been adapted to the new context.

The idea of dignity needs to be sharpened, specifically in the context of combating poverty and promoting cohesion. The social practices of faith communities in tackling poverty can be examined in terms of their explicit or implicit understanding of human dignity and of the processes which enhance resilience against and recovery from poverty. It is also important to know how people 'living in poverty' understand human dignity and to explore ways in which it could be enhanced.

A broader understanding of poverty relates closely to the three domains of faith-based social action — service provision, community cohesion and advocacy and campaigning.

3.1 Faith-based organisations and communities make a significant contribution through the provision of services which meet individual and group needs.

Faith communities have a long tradition of working with people, particularly in disadvantaged areas, to achieve change and development. Nowadays in many societies, a focus on more market-led approaches is apparent. The impact of this change in focus varies depending on the context and on previous developments. The balance of the so called welfare-mix differs according to local conditions, for example in some countries faith-based organisations and NGO's have become major service providers with varied financial arrangements.

Statistically, one of the most important elements in service provision related to faith communities is the significant volume of organised and informal care and social work based in local communities and congregations, temples, mosques etc. In the UK it has been calculated that informal service, if estimated at the minimum wage, would amount to about five times total state spending on social services. Therefore faith communities as organisations with a long term presence in localities and tuned to local conditions are an important resource for social services.

Another aspect of faith-based social action in contexts marked by high levels of poverty and exclusion is their role in promoting the provision of services through locally based community projects. This sort of activity has been described in the UK as 'standing alongside the poor' and in other contexts the emphasis of liberation theology and the liberation pedagogy of such thinkers as Paulo Freire has influenced Christian faith-based social action under the heading 'option for the poor'.

Another dimension is the relationship of faith and belief to the provision of services. In some organisations, faith orientation has a 'low profile' but for some propagation of faith is a central part of the organisation's ethos. The impact of these differences on efforts to support human dignity needs to be explored. The implementation of different ideals of service and analysis of the effect of these on supporting human dignity as part of the effort to overcome poverty and build social cohesion needs to be better understood. An examination of the relationship between the two axes of 'diverse orientation – close focus' and 'high faith profile – low faith profile' is required as is an analysis of human dignity in relation to combating pover-

ty and promoting cohesion.

There is a need to explore and clarify the meaning of human dignity within arenas of faith-based social service which address poverty, both in theory and in practice. This involves asking 'what is the relationship between theory and practice?' and seeking to identify links between interpretations of dignity and efforts to combat poverty.

3.2 Faith-based social action has emphasised community cohesion and community development

There are many examples of initiatives and projects designed specifically to promote community cohesion and development, especially in contexts where a community is weakened by poverty, or threatened by perceived competition for resources and jobs, for example where there is significant immigration and/or high levels of need. In very different European contexts, faith communities are present in, and share, local life. This provides a base for them to help communities develop. Sustaining communities, and building or rebuilding them, drawing on community development approaches and structural critiques of poverty is a task that is quite distinct from meeting needs through the provision of services. Community cohesion will be a key challenge of the recession years and there is much to be learnt about this from faith communities. There is a need to focus on local action to overcome poverty and explore how the perspectives of faith communities enable them to engage with people and to support their actions for change and development. It is our understanding, that although there are very good examples, there is much untapped potential in community development. Good practice models need to be identified, along with relevant training concepts.

Dignity helps sustain the citizenship-identity of individuals and communities, even through periods of acute poverty. Dignity helps to equip people and communities to be more resilient to the effects of poverty and to recover from it with self and community more intact.

Faith communities can be agents which create cohesive communities that are exclusionary and nationalistic. On the other hand there are claims that faith communities, by involving their members in their organisation and in social action become 'schools for citizenship and democracy'. So, rather

than being exclusive, faith communities can provide a basis for joining in the common life of the locality and nation. The challenges that social cohesion presents to faith communities should not be minimised. However it is also important to recognise that there is extensive, if low profile, work going on at local and even national levels to find ways of developing social cohesion across and beyond faith community boundaries. Work is needed to identify the self-defined characteristics of those faith communities which promote the 'relational and participatory dimension' of cohesion, thereby strengthening dignity and overcoming poverty.

The same way, work is required to identify the practices of faith communities and related organisations which promote the 'economic and political-participatory dimension' of social cohesion as an aspect of strengthening human dignity. It could be useful to study the self understanding of the different actors, especially the 'users' or 'participants' in such initiatives.

Faith-based approaches to community development can be divided into different types and some important related characteristics might be identified. The majority of faith-based community development projects are based in local faith communities or in associations of faith communities (either of one faith, or multi-faith). These local projects relate to the immediate social area in which the congregations are set and it might be expected that there would be a close 'fit' between their interests and the interests of local people. In practice this is often an area of considerable misunderstanding and even conflict. There are two axes to this, one is the mismatch between the life world of the members of the faith community and other local residents and the other is conflict or rivalry between different faith communities in the same place. On the other hand when these relationships are functioning well faith communities have considerable potential to help overcome poverty and build community cohesion. In some contexts faith communities have resources to employ their own community development workers or local social workers who choose to work with a community development approach.

The second type of faith-based community development could be called 'low profile' and is linked to the idea of people of faith being 'present' in an area (maybe even living in the area, sometimes having a small office). The aim of this type of community development is to accompany people in the neighbourhood staying close to their life world (everyday life) and to sup-

port them in creating their own response to the issues which they face.

Thirdly large faith-based welfare organisations may establish their own community development project in a particular locality, alone or in partnership with local faith communities or others. Such agencies are very similar to projects run by secular NGO's or municipalities. Whether there are any particular characteristics of these projects that tend to promote human dignity, in overcoming poverty and building community resilience, is a question which needs to be explored.

New insights could be gained by examining case studies of faith-based community development from the perspective of human dignity. Analysis of projects could help identify the factors which promote the dignity and empowerment of the people involved.

Approaches to community development vary and depend, in part, on the character of the project sponsor and their organisational framework. Analysis of varying approaches adopted by faith-based projects is required to assess the impact different approaches may have on human dignity and on learning.

A third research priority is to develop a deeper understanding of the concept of community that underlies community development and how this is related to dignity, resilience and overcoming poverty. By analysis of the ideas about community held by those involved in faith-based community development it should be possible to see how their attitudes affect the promotion of dignity and community cohesion.

3.3 Faith communities have a tradition of advocacy and campaigning on poverty and human dignity issues.

Advocacy and campaigning against unjust structures, practices and attitudes is increasingly being recognised as a fundamental aspect of a life of faith. Advocacy includes raising awareness, building movements for justice within churches and other faith groups and mobilisation of people of faith to lobby local and national governments, the European Union, businesses and multi-lateral organizations. It also means building up partnerships with many who share common goals on these critical issues.

The effectiveness of advocacy is an important area for further research. Advocacy by, rather than on behalf of, marginalised people, may yield the

most sustainable results. In the poor communities it is usually children, young people and the women who are most marginalised. A greater understanding of the impact of direct involvement of marginalised people in advocacy and campaigning is needed. Issues such as trans-generational poverty, and gender as a structural cause of poverty, also need to be explored in the context of advocacy and awareness raising actions. This research should lead to a fuller understanding of human dignity.

The hypothesis that human rights, and especially dignity as a human right, provide a firm basis for advocacy work, locally, nationally, on European level and even globally should be tested. In exploring the hypothesis differences and nuances would have to be explored. Human rights principles and processes are important tools for the protection of human dignity. Faith-based social action, which takes a rights-based or dignity-based approach, uses these tools for the advancement of justice for all, especially for the powerless, the most marginalized and excluded. Advocacy, which is essentially about revealing the reality of people's experiences through their stories, is often related to resisting the power of the mighty and their ideology. Dignity-based advocacy work involves defending people and seeking justice. Because of the challenging nature of its work faith-based social action can cause problems within the power structures of faith groups.

The issues of empowerment of excluded people in processes of advocacy and campaigning as well as the effectiveness of advocacy and campaigning in terms of policy changes which have an impact on poverty and marginalised communities and groups in Europe should also be addressed.

> *FAZIT*
> *"We aim to explore how faith-based social action supports the dignity of people in poverty, and the extent to which this underpins their resilience to it. It will consider how it helps to uphold people's dignity as citizens in contexts of poverty, as expressed by the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights which states "Conscious of its spiritual and moral heritage, the Union is founded on the indivisible, universal values of human dignity…"*

The following topics are of particular interest in terms of priorities for further research in the field of faith-based social action:

1. To identify the meaning and importance given to human dignity by people living in poverty and those working with them, in relation to preserving, sustaining and restoring resilience against poverty and strengthening engagement in action to overcome poverty.

2. To explore the added value and distinctiveness of faith-based social action in combating poverty and how this relates to the meaning of dignity.

3. To sharpen the understanding of dignity in operational contexts as a key aspect of addressing poverty and translating this understanding and related practices into renewed practical policies for social cohesion and to create guidelines and frameworks for policy and practice in local, national and European Union contexts.

4. To identify the participatory and innovatory working methods which promote dignity in the context of poverty, through service provision, community development and advocacy and so identify best practices.

Tony Addy (Diaconia University of Applied Sciences)

Exploring dignity:
developments & ambiguities

1 Introduction: ambiguity & relevance

This essay aims to explore some ideas related to the reformulation of thinking about human dignity in relation to understanding poverty and the policies and practice related to overcoming it. The reason for this is that human dignity is normally seen to be undermined by life in poverty. For example, the European Union regards the safeguarding of human dignity as a 'human right', yet as far as can be ascertained, the Union has not precisely defined human dignity. The concept has roots in different traditions, including at least the enlightenment and Christian teaching. Furthermore, the concept of human dignity underpins Catholic social teaching and has formed a key aspect of that church's response to the developments of work and welfare under capitalism. Human dignity is also often mentioned in UN documents as a basic concept underpinning development. However, in general terms we can see that the concept is largely undefined and implicit in such official EU and UN documents. In everyday discourse, human dignity seems to be a self evident concept and people intuitively understand what it means. The original international 'Dignity' research project proposed exploring the meanings given to dignity by different actors in order to deepen understanding, complementing what may be uncovered in historical, philosophical and theological studies.

Recent events have even strengthened the rationale for the project. For example, the movements originally springing up in early 2011 in southern

Europe, especially Spain, gave themselves the title 'Los indignados' — the indignant ones — those whose dignity has been offended. This is interesting because the movement is directly a consequence of the harsh economic policies unleashed by governments, as a result of the various interlinked financial crises. The austerity measures are seen to be a direct attack on human dignity. This is a very graphic illustration of the way in which the (financial) economy acts directly on personal life, work and welfare by creating precarious conditions and diminished life chances. The fact that this is seen to be an 'indignity' is relevant to our concern with the concept of dignity and its salience. We are now facing the situation that the 'financial economy' (rather than simply the productive economy of manufacturing and services) directly affects people's lives. In a situation where the financial system operates with minimal checks globally, it acts as the arbiter of work and welfare through direct control of finance and the consequent inclusion and expulsion of population groups. (Hardt & Negri 2009.)

Another example of the salience of the concept of dignity as an element in social exclusion can be found in the latest UNDP Report on social exclusion in eastern Europe and the Balkans (UN Development Programme 2011). Through case studies and interviews the report argues that there are three dimensions to exclusion:

  - The impact of unemployment and low pay, economic migration and informal working conditions on exclusion (labour market)
  - The availability or otherwise of good quality health, education and welfare services as well as affordable housing
  - The quality of relationships with others beyond the immediate family, including the various dimensions of civil society and political participation (which also depend on the transparent functioning of state institutions and governmental structures)

What the report argues is that all three dimensions are important and that it is not enough to secure 'decent work' and a living income and to ensure that education and other welfare services are adequate. The personal engagement of people and communities in shaping their own future and the effectiveness of their 'agency' is very important. The functioning of labour markets and services of course affect 'dignity' but opportunities for effective participation is also a significant component in combating exclusion and supporting dignity. The report also points out that faith communities

play a very significant role in promoting participation and voluntary action in the region.

2 The link between dignity and economic thought

As already mentioned, human dignity has found expression in many church documents criticising working conditions especially in the early phases of capitalist development. It was as an alternative to Marxist analysis that the Catholic Church was instrumental in the formation of the International Labour Organisation and the concept of the dignity of labour was reflected in the teaching of many churches on work life issues. Of course, the concept was also central to the struggle by trade unions for better working conditions.

However, one of the most important dilemmas we have to face is that in recent thinking the connection has been made between ideologies which support free market thinking and the diminution of political responsibility for economic and social welfare and the promotion of 'dignity'! How has this come about?

In secular thought, the roots of the modern understanding of dignity lie in the enlightenment 'anthropology' of dignity based on the optimal picture of the 'rational decision making person, with their own autonomy'. This is a very individualistic notion but it provides the deep background to the idea that 'people are responsible for their own future' and this responsibility is an expression of 'inherent dignity'. Of course at the time of the formulation of this concept, it was understood that the decisions made by individuals should be informed by a moral code. Adam Smith, the father of liberal economics, which is rooted in this concept, recognised that the power of the capital owner would reduce the worker to pauperism, even death if (he) did not act within a moral framework. He also recognised that this moral framework is not generated by this free market theory and practice. (Smith 2007.) In fact, the operation of the 'free market' erodes the value base on which it depends. We see this very clearly in the justificatory reactions of those responsible for some of the biggest 'financial mistakes' in recent years, as well as in the irresponsible way that very high earnings have become detached from any sense of 'merit' or 'contribution'. Now we are living in a time where ethical relativism has grown to encompass views which would be foreign to Adam Smith. For example the thinking of Ayn

Rand, which extols the virtues of selfishness has become quite influential in recent years (Rand 1992).

This basic enlightenment thinking about dignity was modified by the romantic movement to include the freedom to articulate one's inner self. Elements of this modified understanding have now been fused with classic enlightenment thinking about dignity. By this I mean that the fusion of an ethically critical viewpoint and the goal of 'self realisation' in the frame of the free market, set the scene for a 'hedonistic individualism' which now exploits the potential of the free market for the successful and which also tends to justify the neglect of the 'other'. The principle exponent of this viewpoint is the Polish/British sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (Bauman 1997; 2011).

These roots are reflected in the dominant economic concepts through the link from liberalism to contemporary neo-liberalism. The basic picture of the human being as an individualistic rational decision maker, out to maximise his (sic) own profit is at the root of liberalism. The understanding that it is up to the individual to make 'his' own way in life and work now informs much of social policy making. Many aspects of government policy in the European context assume that if a person is unemployed it is because 'he' has not worked hard enough at becoming employable. From this it is a short step to 'blaming the victim'. This perspective erodes many aspects of welfare such as the idea that education is a public good, in fact tends to be dismissive of the idea of the common good in its entirety.

What I aim to demonstrate in this section is that paradoxically, the very idea of dignity which lies behind currently dominant economic ideas and which also informs public policy is based on an unsustainable individualistic view of human dignity. For example, even the 'capabilities' approach of Amartya Sen can be used as a rationale to focus on overcoming the 'defective' capability of the individual to the neglect of structural factors and conditions (Sen 2001). I believe this is one of the central issues which the 'Dignity' project should address.

Here I would like to introduce the first critical idea, which is to reflect on the understanding of the 'human' which lies behind economic thinking and much present day social policy. There is a long tradition of thinking rooted in the Christian and Jewish traditions which runs counter to the individualistic approach just outlined. It takes a much more realistic approach, seeing persons being formed, not as isolated individuals but in their relations first

with their carers and then in the wider societal context. This tradition encompasses such diverse thinkers as Martin Buber and John Macmurray. It is unsurprising that Macmurray is being 'rediscovered' because, as well as developing a personalist understanding related to the Christian tradition, he was also very well aware of the shaping power of the economy. Not surprisingly such approaches also receive support from exponents of contextual theologies, especially feminist theologians who are normally extremely critical of individualistic masculinist ideologies. (Buber 2010; McIntosh 2011; Macmurray 1971; 1991) Another thinker who is critical of this individualistic approach and who informs much thinking about diaconia is Emmanuel Lévinas who bases his relational understanding on the 'unconditional' demand which the 'other' makes on us (Lévinas 2006).

3 Further problems in present understandings of dignity

So far I have presented some reasons why the present understandings of dignity need to be criticised and more realistic reformulations found. The first point is that the present dehumanising economic thought is grounded on an already heavily biased root understanding of dignity. Secondly, this understanding is basically rooted in a limited individualistic anthropology which has already been subjected to deep critique by social science and theology. It follows logically, that if public policy is based on the same understanding it will lead to a dead end!

Now I would like to introduce some further critical ideas related to this root ideal of the human being as an individual, autonomous decision maker responsible for 'his' own life. The first and most obvious point to make is that there are many people (especially those for whom diaconia and social work has a priority concern) who are unable to reach this ideal. For either physical or other reasons (such as learning difficulties) some people simply cannot achieve this ideal and an understanding of dignity which does not include all people is not adequate. Another group of people may be unable to reach this ideal because of circumstances related to their life course or context, or the relation between the two. We can say all people should be treated in a dignified way but if we always have the ideal picture presented by the dominant view there is no possibility to integrate those who are (economically, socially) dependent. Social work is recreated so that there is no

real space for those who need continual social support, as someone wrote recently, it is a mark of diaconia to stick with people where there is no expectation that they will reach this ideal. Should we then say their dignity is not 'real'? And what about those persons who are so ill or damaged that their ability to communicate is reduced to their 'skin' (touch) as an extreme case? All the apparatus of case management and individual action plans is based on a similar anthropology, looking for outcomes in terms of autonomy. At this point I only want to make the connection, it is for further research to investigate this issue and come up with a more 'realistic' perspective on dignity and practice.

There are other groups of people for whom this understanding of dignity maybe problematic. For example, some people may, for reasons connected with their circumstances and life course not fulfil this model of dignity. This would include not only some elderly dependent people but also people who have suffered traumatic personal or group experiences. Furthermore, those who do not share the same cultural, spiritual or religious background as those who formed these now dominant ideas may also have very good reasons for not following them. In fact it may be that such 'alternative' values contain elements which are much needed to renew the present dominant economic culture.

When we examine the employment related policies and practices promoted by the European Union, they are shaped by the dominant ideas promoted by neo-liberal assumptions about human flourishing and the related background ideas of human dignity. These ideas are presented as 'value neutral' but are in fact heavily biased and neglect perspectives related to diversity of culture or religion as well as to gender and class bias.

4 Developing counter-arguments

In the previous paragraphs it has been argued that contextual shaping and life-situation are important factors in the understanding of human dignity. For example the discipline of the financial market (and not simply the labour market as previously) now bear directly on the individual worker and in many instances prevent autonomy and fulfilment. This has an impact on the formation of character and reconstructs even professional work in an 'economistic' way. The relationships in the workplace are very important in the development of dignity and if work is tightly structured and highly pressu-

rised there is a consequent influence on the person. In fact all social relationships affect the dignity of the person through the fact that people 'mirror' the assumptions that other's make about them for good or ill. (Sennett 1999; 2009.) Neo-liberal ideas (or any other dominant ideology in another context) shape the possibility for different groups to flourish, along with racism and other forms of discrimination with which these ideas inter-relate. This means that the promotion of human dignity requires engagement with systems, structures and the overall ideological environment which informs politics and economic and social policy.

As we have already seen, any realistic proposal should build up an understanding of dignity based on a relational model. This model is in any case, viewed from the point of view of human development and nurturing, more 'realistic'! These more theoretical approaches taken together with the previous analysis and the experience of the Diaconia University of Applied Sciences with participatory approaches to community development work also imply an inductive, participatory and relational approach to building up an understanding of human dignity. On this basis, to develop a 'realistic' understanding of dignity, it is important to work with marginalised groups and persons in a process of defining dignity from their own situational and contextual perspectives. Out of such a process, new knowledge about human dignity may be produced. Such a process will also link discussions about dignity with a critique of the recent mainstream anthropology discussed above, which has focussed on the link between poverty and morality, emphasising personal 'failure' as a causal factor. What this discussion opens up is not only the classical 'blame the victim' approach which tends to ignore systemic factors but also the exploration of the normative values behind the policies adopted. The values of different 'life worlds' are normally defined as 'pathological' in relation to 'reproducing' the mainstream system. But realistically, it is not possible to assume everyone can be or will be successful on one 'model'. It is well known that these views have also been reinforced in cultural Protestantism which has tended to focus on individual shortcomings at the expense of fullness of life. A more differentiated approach would mean for example, to take a case example, not working with Roma communities as if they have a similar individualistic culture to mainstream 'white' society. In theological terms, the focus would be more on relational concepts and common grace as important foundations of life in community.

5 Constructive understanding

What follows from this line of argument is a reformulation of our understanding of the place of marginalised groups in society, of those whose values and cultures are different from that of the 'system world'. First, in social and diaconal work the task is very often uncritically defined as being simply to incorporate marginalised people into the mainstream. Marginalised groups such as homeless people, jobless people, many immigrants and people who are mentally ill are consequently identified as a kind of 'residue' of the mainstream and the ensuing policies and practices tends to reinforce their exclusion. To put it more directly, the criteria by which marginalised groups as 'judged' have been constructed by those who are 'successful' on the mainstream model and these criteria and related policies and practices are supported by powerful interests in economy and politics. The evaluation is usually related to labour market participation — rather lack of it!

In relation to the evaluation of anti-poverty policies then, the starting point should be that exploitation and deprivation are unacceptable regardless of the morality of the persons negatively affected. This is a pre-moral understanding because the supply of the basic resources to sustain life is a fundamental right not connected to 'performance'. Yet in present day Europe there are a growing number of citizens and residents who are denied these basic 'pre-moral' rights. It also means that any policies which are based on coercion (or manipulation) should be rejected on the grounds of infringement of human dignity, especially when the basic resources for life itself are dependent on following coercive demands. Of course it also means that slave like conditions of work are also totally unacceptable. To put it more positively in the European context all residents (not just citizens) should be entitled to the means of life (basic income etc) unconditionally. This also implies unconditional access to basic health and welfare services and education as well as to shelter.

In terms of anti-poverty practice, it goes without saying that such an approach requires participatory practice with people and a rejection of instrumental goals. This is to a large extent self-evident in social work and community work literature. Yet there is a huge diversity of interpretation of this practice and much pressure on the field to shift to time limited and instrumental approaches linked to 'integration' into and conformity with

mainstream norms, values and expectations. The casework approach (case management) not only tends to relate to the 'individual' aside from contextual factors but it also tends to create goals which are performative in relation to these values. The time limited approach, often dictated by economic considerations, which shapes both social and community development is an added pressure to work in a way which reinforces this. Social work has therefore in the recent past become more and more shaped in its fundamental operating conditions not only by economic practice but also by the assumptions about the human being which are underlying neo-liberalism. Diaconia and Christian social practice should be very critical of this and open up space for a practice which is relational and critical. To put it more sharply, should the practice of Diaconal social work and community development be orientated on 'reproducing' the dominant ideas or be an open process which aims for transformation, working with persons in relation to each other and the context?

Linked to this are two further questions which have to be explored in theory and practice which arise in the discussion about enhancing human dignity as a goal of practice. The first is how to 'position' the worker 'in-between' the (diverse) life world(s) of those with whom she works and the system world which has itself excluded or marginalised the person. Does the worker so identify with the norms, values and expectations of the 'system' that she aims to enable those she works with to identify with these? If so, the practice may become oppressive and the possibilities for newness diminished. If the worker starts with an attitude of disrespect for the culture of a given life world, the production of change is usually blocked. This is an especially important issue in working with minority groups, immigrants and Roma. The concept of integration implies a process which affects and changes 'both sides' but, given unequal power relations, this implies work over the longer term (Alghasi, Eriksen & Ghorashi 2009; Freire 1996).

Secondly, the implementation of project-like structures which are time limited also presses workers to aim for short term instrumental rather than transformative goals. The 'time factor' can itself be an instrument of oppressive practice when working with people who are excluded from work life or included only in marginal ways. Time concepts are also different in different cultures. For example in in nineteenth century Europe, the imposition of factory time regulation was a way of restructuring cultural relations to time.

The present day more 'flexible' approach to work life embodies another understanding of time but this may itself be oppressive. Social workers should also examine the structures of their own work from this perspective, as the profession is increasingly shaped by time micro-management. This raises the question of the nature of professionalism. (Sennett 2009.) The perspective of Diaconia and Christian social practice should be rather in the direction of working with people relationally for the longer term, even when there is apparently 'no return' in terms of 'integration' to the system (such as employment). To work with marginalised people and communities in a transformative way demands a longer term commitment.

7 Conclusion

These introductory comments are intended as the start towards creating a critical frame for the exploration of social and community development work by a reappraisal and clarification of the meaning and implications of a commitment to 'human dignity of all'. It also points to the need for change in political practice and as well as in social and economic policy of the 'right to dignity' is to be upheld.

References

Alghasi, Sharam; Eriksen, Thomas Hylland & Ghorashi, Halleh (eds.) 2009. Paradoxes of Cultural Recognition. Farnham , Ashgate.

Bauman, Zygmunt 2007. Consuming Life. London, Polity Press.

Bauman, Zygmunt 2011. Collateral Damage – Social Inequalities in a Global Age. Cambridge, Polity.

Buber, Martin 2004. I and Thou. London, Continuum.

Freire, Paulo 1996. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. London, Penguin.

Hardt, Michael & Negri, Antonio 2009. Commonwealth. Cambridge, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Lévinas, Emmanuel 2006. Humanism of the Other. Urbana, University of Illinois Press.

McIntosh, Esther. 2011. John Macmurray's Religious Philosophy. Farnham, Ashgate.

Macmurray, John. 1971. The Form of the Personal. London, Faber and Faber.

Macmurray, John 1991. The Self as Agent. London, Faber and Faber.

Rand, Ayn 1992. The Virtue of Selfishness. New York, Signet.

Sen, Amartya 2001. Development as Freedom. Oxford : Oxford University

Sennett, Richard 1999. The Corrosion of Character. Norton, London.

Sennett, Richard 2009. The Craftsman. London, Penguin

Smith, Adam 2007. Theory of Moral Sentiments. New York, Cosimo.

UN Development Programme 2011. Regional Human Development Report – Beyond Transition: Towards Inclusive Societies. Accessed 12th of December 2012. http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4e7b5db92.html

Ella van `t Hof & Sytske Teppema (University of Applied Sciences Utrecht)

Philosophy of life in social work

1. Introduction

'Municipal youth work taken over by Christians' (Binnenlands Bestuur 2009). This heading refers to the work of Youth for Christ in an Amsterdam neighbourhood. This organisation, successful in youth work nationwide, last year came out first in an open competition of the Amsterdam district De Baarsjes. Because of this they were commissioned to undertake all the youth work in this multicultural neighbourhood. The conditions were not to evangelise and not to limit recruitment to personnel inside their own circle but to recruit from outside the organisation as well. When they later appeared to have put a job advertisement only on their own website, this led to heated debates. Finally Youth for Christ acknowledged and rectified this mistake.

   This example is a concrete illustration of the actual and sometimes delicate relationships between philosophy of life and social work.

1.1 Revaluation of philosophy of life

In the Netherlands the transformation from a pillarised society to a secularised society took place over a relatively short period. This depillarisation led to a more strongly professionalised and intervention focused sector in social work. Philosophy of life and questions on the meaning of life were viewed as part of the private domain. Given the protestant, catholic and socialist roots of social work in the Netherlands this is a remarkable shift.

The current curriculum of social work at the University of Applied Sciences Utrecht exactly reflects the changes that took place in society. In the field of education the attention to philosophy of life also moved out of the heart of the curriculum and one's philosophy of life came to be viewed as the individual student's private concern. Surprisingly so, given the attention to multiculturalism and theology of the dedicated institute *De Horst* in Amersfoort, now merged with the University of Applied Sciences Utrecht.[1]

This transformation was strengthened by two far-reaching didactic developments taking place during that period. On the one hand the educational system was transformed from a modular structure with specialist teachers to thematic (project-based) education with education coaches. On the other hand institutes for higher professional education developed more demand-driven education. Consequently parts of education on philosophy of life moved from the common subjects to the minors, which the student can choose individually.

Now the tide has turned. In our society we see a re-evaluation of the meaning of philosophy of life. Philosophy of life is, to a much lesser extent, connected with an institution. Philosophy of life is mainly viewed and regarded as individually experienced religiosity and ideology. (Alma 2005.) Non-religious individual philosophies of life are often grouped under the umbrella term 'ietsism.' According to the SCP-report 'God in the Netherlands' (2006) a large proportion of the Dutch are 'ietsist.'

Interest in religion among the Dutch was also raised because many non-western immigrants hold religious beliefs. Since 9/11 the religion debate has really erupted. The presence of Muslims in our country and fear of political Islam led to feelings becoming heated. Violent incidents like the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004 and attention attracting debates about Islam (Geert Wilders) contributed and overturned the dusty image of religion. Religion has once more become very much part of the public debate. As James Kennedy argues in a newspaper column ten years after 9/11: The debate about religion still has a long way to go (Kennedy 2011).The return of religion as an issue for public debate may be an unpleasant surprise for many Dutch people; however, Kennedy suggests that it will continue for some years. His view is that the debate about religion does not depend on

1 De Horst in Amersfoort was the Institute for Social Work and Services and Cultural-social Training. Between 1984 and 1993 these social-agogic studies were combined into Theology and Society. Philosophy of life, Women and Welfare, and Multi-ethnic Social Work received a great deal of attention.

how religious a country is, but on why changes in religious patterns disturb expectations and balances of power. For decades the Netherlands did not experience religious unrest, because it seemed to be self-evident that religion would disappear. Now that this does not appear to be the case we are very much on the alert: religious minorities are closely watched for fear of radicalisation, differences between Christianity and Islam are named and religious tensions have grown. Kennedy expects at least another ten years of intense debate before the Netherlands will have found a new balance of power. (Kennedy 2011.)

The increased cultural and ideological diversity in our society is of course reflected in the field of action and in the composition of the social work student population[2]. Increasing interest in philosophy of life is evident here at the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences (Miniutti, Steendam, & Rijsdijk 2008). The role and the meaning of philosophy of life for professional practice in general social welfare organisations are issues that are being discussed (Koekkoek & Vandereycken 2008). In discussion interns, social professionals, volunteers, and colleagues made clear how strongly — and sometimes how controversially — people experience this issue. The fact that Christian and Jewish ethics have inspired the emergence of the discipline of social work and that the roots of social work are mainly faith based (Van der Linden 2007) seems to be rather overlooked in our secular society. For the Research Centre for Social Innovation (Kenniscentrum Sociale Innovatie [KSI]) these signals were reason enough to give new impetus to the study of religious diversity.

1.2 Research centre for social innovation and philosophy of life

To give shape to this reconsideration of philosophy of life a research group *Philosophy of life and Diversity* was given the task of exploring the diversity of philosophies of life within social work. A pilot study was to be held for to provide some orientation on the theme and to stimulate internal discussion within the Faculty of Society and Law.

The pilot study was rounded off with an internal publication of the research report (Van 't Hof & Teppema 2010) and led to a follow-up study with MOVISIE, the Netherlands research centre and consultancy company

---

2 In 2010, there were 7,993 students of non-western origin enrolled in Social-agogic Studies at the University of Applied Sciences Utrecht (HBO-Raad).

for social development. This research is now well under way. In chapter 2 the research of the pilot will be described more in detail.

2 Research on philosophy of life and diversity

After a preparatory phase the first stage of this research started in 2009 with a pilot study, which was completed in 2010. The objective was to collect empirical data and to start a more extensive study based on the pilot's outcome in stage two in 2011.

The research group consisted of six members who represented different studies within the Faculty of Society and Law: Social Legal Services, Cultural Social Training, Social Work, and Law. Parallel to the pilot the research group supervised student studies on the ideological backgrounds of students and the need for expertise in the field of philosophy of life. The outcomes will not be discussed here, but will be used as input for the follow-up study.

2.1 Pilot study

In this paper we confine ourselves to describing the pilot. Of course from a pilot of this limited size no firm conclusions can be drawn. However, we have been able to test questions, assess how far the subject was relevant, and find intriguing points of view, dilemmas, and questions that help the reflections and discussions among professionals and researchers. For our exploratory research we used a broad central question: What role does philosophy of life play in the professional practice of the social professional?

This central question is divided into the following sub-questions:

1. In what way does the philosophy of life of the social worker play a role in his professional practice?
2. What policies do organisations pursue with respect to philosophy of life and what influence does this have on the practice of the social worker?
3. What attention is given to the philosophy of life of the client?
4. Is there a need for training in the field of philosophy of life and if so, what kind of training?

2.1.1 Methodological and theoretical framework

To obtain answers to these research questions we interviewed eight professionals who were active in various areas of social work, namely youth work, welfare work, special needs education, and chaplaincy. Since we aimed at as diverse a research group as possible in terms of philosophy of life, ethnic origin, age, and gender we selected professionals from both so-called ideological organisations such as the Salvation Army and general welfare institutes and organisations in the city and area of Utrecht. We approached them personally and obtained permission from their employer. A number of interviews were held during the employees' working hours. For practical reasons and at their request a number of interviews were conducted in their own time. Everybody reacted with enthusiasm to our request.

In addition a focus group conversation took place with ten professionals from a general social work organisation in Utrecht.

We also interviewed four volunteers who were active in various social fields. These interviews served as extra orientation and also helped guide the composition of the volunteer group to be explicitly included in the follow-up research. This report is limited to the information collected from interviews with professionals.

Using semi-structured in-depth interviews the following subjects were covered:
- Description of the personal philosophy of life of the professional and its meaning for their work;
- Their organisation's policy with respect to philosophy of life;
- The attention given to the client's philosophy of life;
- The need for staff training on philosophy of life.

2.1.1.1 Definition

The concept philosophy of life has many definitions. For this study the definition by Den Besten[3] was used (Besten, Paping & Pol 2002) which was later adapted by the research group. An attempt was made to express the relationship between philosophy of life and the everyday reality which

---

3 G.J. den Besten et al. cluster world religions and humanism under 'ideological movements'. These are distinguished from political-social movements and from alternative movements, the so-called one issue movements.

social workers have to deal with.

> *Philosophy of life is understood to mean all religious traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), spiritual traditions, and religious and secular movements which give direction in one or more of the following areas:*
> *- values that people find worthwhile striving for in life;*
> *- answers to the question of the sense or nonsense of life;*
> *- behaviour in everyday life;*
> *- giving shape to life by means of rites and rituals.*

Because of the open research attitude during the process of interviewing and our main goal, investigation of empirical data, we did not begin with a defined theory but instead kept some of our 'sensitive concepts' in mind, including:
Religion and social exclusion (Davelaar & Van den Toorn 2010; 2011)
Primary and secondary reference frames of social workers (Mooren 2008)
Spiritual competence in social work (Van Leeuwen 2009)
Normative professionalism (Kunneman 2005; 2008)
Psychology of religion (Hood, Hill & Spilka 2009)

2.1.2 Results of the interviews

Below we give the most important results of the interviews held with the professionals. This is presented using the research sub-questions.

2.1.2.1 Sub-question 1: In what way does the philosophy of life of the social worker play a role in his professional practice?

We talked to the respondents about their own philosophies of life and their own interpretations of the concept. We also asked them about the meaning of their philosophies of life in their jobs.

2.1.2.1.1 Definition of one's own philosophy of life

Almost all interviewees were able to think aloud and formulate what the concept of philosophy of life meant to them. For those who were not able

to do so immediately our definition was helpful. Even though the concept of philosophy of life conjured up different reactions the above mentioned description appeared to be recognisable and manageable. Remarkably so no-one reacted negatively or unfavourably to the concept. Sometimes they were quick to say though that for them philosophy of life had nothing to do with institutionalised religion.

Most respondents linked their philosophies of life directly to traditional religions: Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and to hybrids of, for example, Islam and Zoroastrianism. Some linked their philosophies of life to ideological beliefs as well, such as socialism and communism. A number of times 'faith in Something' was mentioned too. Whatever philosophy of life people mentioned it was always characterised by universal values such as solidarity, love, respect, equality, justice, openness, being there for others, doing good, giving self-respect, and being open to growth.

2.1.2.1.2 The meaning of one's own philosophy of life in one's job

Most interviewees made a direct connection between their philosophies of life and their professions:

"I only want to do work that contributes to the welfare of society or of a person."

"By doing good I want to contribute to strengthening the God of love and light."

"I do this work while knowing it will not make me rich. It will make me happy though, because it fits in with my view on life to mean something to others."

Some respondents linked their motivations for having jobs that fitted in with their philosophies of life to important personal, heartfelt experiences:

"My story was never listened to. I know how bad this is. That's why I do it in my job."

"I have been through a lot; I know how vulnerable people can feel themselves. Therefore I am able to understand them and mean something to them."

"Without Jesus I have no foundation. He rescued me; suddenly the burden had gone and my shoulders were light. (…) And so I give the young people

the feeling that they are important, worthwhile."

2.1.2.1.3 Role models

What is striking in the stories of those who found inspiration in their traditional religions is the meaning of role models in the family, who lived up to their philosophies of life:

> *My Dad was a Muslim, but had a Jewish friend. He saw no point in buying something in a Jewish shop; he shook hands with and talked to the owner and made jokes. This helped me to have no fear for people from different religious or ethnic backgrounds. In my job I similarly want to stimulate (young) people to become world citizens.*

In a way Christianity inspired respondents sometimes talked of Jesus or even of God as their role models:
"We do God's work."
"Bringing Jesus Christ in our comings and goings."

2.1.2.2 Sub-question 2: What policies do organisations pursue with respect to philosophy of life and what influence does this have on the practice of the social worker?

As regards the question whether and how philosophy of life is visible in the organization and in its policy we can distinguish between organizations that present themselves as general or neutral and organizations that explicitly present themselves as religiously inspired (the so-called faith-based organizations). In the interviews we talked about the way in which philosophy of life in the policy of these organizations is expressed in the ensuing corporate culture.

2.1.2.2.1 Philosophy of life and policy

In religiously inspired organizations philosophy of life is expressed in policy, mission, methodical work, and personnel management: the Salvation Army, for instance, does not hire Muslims or non-Christians. Within the general organizations we see a dichotomy. On the one hand there are organizations

that explicitly pursue a policy on ideological diversity. For them religion is one of the relevant points of interest, which are made visible in their mission, methods, and personnel management. On the other hand there are organizations that have no (explicit) diversity policy.

General organizations often have a vision in writing that amounts to equal and respectful treatment of diverse groups and clients. Mostly managers tacitly assume that their employees act accordingly. Within the organization this vision is no active and recurring subject for discussion. Within the religiously inspired organizations on the other hand a lively exchange takes place on ideas of vision and life principles. These exchanges are elicited by the faith-based identity of the organization, as with Youth for Christ for instance.

2.1.2.2.2 Corporate culture

In general organizations things are often understood implicitly. This fits in with colleagues who hardly (dare to) speak to one another about their ideological views, which is done for fear of damaging the professional relation. This is evident, for instance, in the following quotation from a youth worker in a social-cultural centre:

> Our policy says: 'Youth do have a place.' This is quite a statement in a time in which youth are marginalised. I have many colleagues with different philosophies of life. We find each other on the basis: being there for youth. But we are completely different and all express this basic conviction in a different way. I have learnt to be careful in choosing with whom I talk about politics and religion, for that can be a delicate matter. To my strict Christian colleague I expressly do not talk about my view on organised religion, because doing so I would hurt him.

The other way round is the exchange culture of religiously inspired organizations where discussions, including confrontations, are explicitly sought after, and from which people draw inspiration. A major in the Salvation Army says:

> Our organization hires people who more or less hold a Christian view of

life. A convinced Muslim or someone who admits he is an atheist during the job interview will not be hired. We have had trials on this issue, four of them related to Muslims, but have won each time. Since we are a Christian organization we are allowed to make certain demands on people. Within the organization one is given a free rein. I am allowed to go my own way with people from other religions: from handing out a rosary to a Catholic to buying a Koran for a Muslim and even charging the organization for it.

2.1.2.3 Sub-question 3: What attention is given to the philosophy of life of the client in the professional practice?

The question which role the philosophy of life of the client does play in the professional contacts was very diversely answered by the interviewees. There appeared to be a clear dichotomy in their views.

2.1.2.3.1 Reserved attitude

On the one hand one sees professionals who are reserved, even careful, in this area. They are of the opinion that attention to a client's philosophy of life could create an unprofessional impression or even harm the contact. For them it is a sign of acting professionally to be very reserved on the subject of one's philosophy of life.

Examples are found in the following quotations:

A youth worker with an open mind (23, female, Dutch, inspired by humanism):
"In my job I think it is important to approach everyone with an open mind. I see each person as an individual human being, not as a member or representative of a group, a culture. (…) I myself do not want to give too much attention to someone's philosophy of life, for that can hinder the contact. I simply want to get to know the person."

A pragmatic assisted living worker (40, female, Kurdish, inspired by Zarathustra and Muslim, Kurdish idealism, communism influences):
"In my job I usually do not talk about faith issues. My clients go through a

crisis and live in survival mode. Then one should not talk but act. If it is necessary to build a relation of trust religion may be a subject for discussion. And when I did something good in my job I am glad to have strengthened the God of light."

A no-nonsense outreach youth worker (39, male, Dutch, inspired by humanism):
"In my job I hesitate to talk about someone's philosophy of life. I call all youth to account on the values and rules that apply in our country: deal with one another with respect and an open mind. Young people sometimes get confused when they see me talk to all kinds of subgroups. They are not used to dealing with or being interested in people who have different views. I do confront them with their religion if, for instance, Muslim youth drink heavily while I know that their religion does not permit drinking."

2.1.2.3.2 Actively making use of philosophy of life

On the other hand there are professionals who experience the added value of actively making use of the philosophy of life of the target group or client in their contacts; this can be very helpful in signalling a question or a problem and add depth to the relation. This goes along with using one's own philosophy of life professionally as well according to them. This is clear from the following quotations:

A social worker looking for the essence (52, male, Iranian, inspired by universalism with humanism, Muslim, socialism influences):
"In my job I deliberately use culture and religion. At the GGZ we now use a cultural intake in which we ask many questions on religion and how this is linked to the problems. I walk alongside the client and cross the border into the landscape of his philosophy of life. Without judging I just listen and watch. (…) Thus you earn their trust. You understand how their problems began and what tools that landscape has to address those problems."

A school youth worker with Youth for Christ (24, female, Dutch, Christian):
"In my job I view each youth as a unique, worthwhile human being, and not, therefore, as a 'little pest to be kept off the street'. This positive portra-

yal of mankind comes forth out of my image of God. Therefore there are no limits, how negative a youth's behaviour may be. I think that makes a difference. (…) The fact that I am religious breaks down barriers, with Muslim girls for instance. They are quick to talk about their stories, background and ask me what I believe in, which we then talk about."

An emphatic major of the Salvation Army (60, female, Dutch, Christian):
"In my job I often come across Muslims who do not practise their faith. As a Christian I look for similarities. I may say: I could pray the Lord's Prayer with you, but you probably learnt a prayer when you were young, which you have not forgotten. Or I may talk to a Hindu who says: 'Yes, I stay in a Christian home now, but I remain a Hindu, for that is what I am. However, Hindus have not been able to help me; Christians offered me shelter and they are now my family.' But later on I have to come and chase the ghosts out of his room; so it kind of becomes mishmash."

2.1.2.3.3 Orientation on philosophy of life with young professionals

The younger, recently graduated professionals seemed to differ greatly in how far their philosophies of life have crystallized. For those saying they were still searching this often went together with a relativistic view. Thanks to their interests in diversity and their deliberately open attitudes they seemed to be well equipped for professional practice.

At the same time the interviews gave rise to the assumption that there might be hiatuses in the area of signalling and managing philosophy of life related questions. The most obvious conclusion is the lack of work experience. However, an interview with a young professional from a faith-based organization gave food for thought. On the basis of her religious experience and knowledge she appeared to have sufficient religious sensitivity to notice signals in a timely way, to interpret them and to handle them effectively. She described her professional motivation as inextricably anchored in a profound 'drive'. Therefore she seemed to be sure of her ground. She did not shy away from questions on the meaning of life and the accompanying struggles and was able to coach young people without forcing her own philosophy of life on them.

2.1.2.4 Sub-question 4: Is there a need for training on philosophy of life and if so, what kind of training?

The last research question focused on the need for training on philosophy of life. The respondents by and large agreed on this subject.

2.1.2.4.1 Offer of courses and organizations

Most interviewees were of the opinion that the social work studies did offer some training and instruction on philosophy of life. At the same time they indicated that one could never have enough. They said they would appreciate courses in this area on postgraduate level. Apart from this some saw it as their own responsibility to take initiative. They emphasized that there is no time for reflection in the work field and that training would be very helpful:

> *I think it would be very inspiring if the study Social Work would offer training on philosophy of life. As a youth worker in a social-cultural centre you are mainly concerned with keeping things going. There is hardly time for deepening insights.*

The faith-based organisations appear to offer their staff members regular and broad refresher courses, they have no need for extra training:

> *Twice a year I am offered training weekends, apart from lots of other training. They cover a large number of subjects: from Buddhism and Islam to fear of failure and aggression reduction. And — very importantly — we intensely support and coach each other.*

2.1.2.4.2 Emphasis on attitudinal aspects

Almost everyone emphasized that in their professional practice attitudinal aspects are of the highest importance: humanity, genuine interest, open communication, and the ability to empathise with other people's values. These aspects are regarded as professional core values. The professionals considered reflection on core values, transfer of knowledge and skills training to be necessary and useful additions, which the study should pay attention to:

Make students attend such an evening with us so that they experience the tensions between the different subcultures of youth. Then they can design plans to deal with this problem. We could probably learn something from them.

The studies have the opportunity to provide more follow-up for students. My experience is that the questions asked in this interview give food for thought: I am getting new ideas. The study could do more by organising courses, workshops, and meetings for youth workers.

I think it is important to promote world citizenship among students. There is less openness than in the past, everyone gets stuck in one's own story. Students have to learn how to stimulate people to leave their trenches. For this it is necessary to learn to acquire this open attitude and dialogue during their studies.

2.1.3 Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from the interviews are described below. Firstly we answer the four sub-questions then the principal conclusion addressing the central question of this pilot will be given.

2.1.3.1 The influence of social worker's philosophies of life on their professional practice

For all interviewees the philosophy of life of the social worker appears to play an important role in their motivations for choosing this profession. They all mention a number of universal values which offer inspiration and put their work in perspective. 'Being there for others' appears to be the core value. Apart from this a distinction can be made between two groups: those who explicitly mention a religious or political source of inspiration for the values they strive for, and those who do not make a connection with an underlying source of inspiration.

There is also a dichotomy with respect to the role of philosophy of life in professional practice. On the one hand there are social workers who think that the philosophy of life of the professional belongs to the private domain. This group tries to acquire what they call 'neutral attitude'. On the other hand

there are professionals who are convinced that an individual's philosophy of life inevitably plays an implicit role in their professional practice. This group thinks that philosophy of life should therefore be used explicitly if the context asks for it.

Furthermore there are differences to be found in the way in which professionals deal with the philosophies of life of their clients. These differences seem to be connected to the way in which they deal with their own philosophies of life. On the one hand there are professionals who attribute a deep heartfelt meaning to their own philosophies of life in their private lives and in their jobs. In the professional practice this group appears to focus explicitly on the role the philosophy of life of the client could play. These social workers openly communicate about their own philosophies of life with the client and experience a deeper dimension in the contact.

Opposing these are the professionals who formulate their philosophies of life in terms of generally accepted values, without connecting these to a deeper source of inspiration. In their contacts with clients about their philosophies of life these professionals primarily focus on concrete values. Professionals who think that their philosophies of life belong to the private domain also do not address (deeply) the philosophies of life of their clients. They do so out of respect for what they regard as someone's private domain.

2.1.3.2 Policy on philosophy of life and influence on the social worker's practice

A similar dichotomy can be seen in the policies of organisations on philosophy of life. On the one hand there are faith-based organisations which explicitly state their philosophies of life. There the employees have lively discussions on this subject, through internal training and coaching programmes and other approaches. On the other hand there are organisations that do happen to be universalistic, but which are neither explicit nor active as far as philosophies of life are concerned. In these organisations hardly any communication on this subject takes place between employees. There is a culture of tacit assumptions and fear of damaging professional relationships.

2.1.3.3 Attention given to the philosophy of life of the client

There is disagreement on the choice whether or not to pay attention explicitly to the philosophy of life of the client. In their contacts with their clients most professionals are confronted by considerable ideological diversity areas amongst their clients.

Some say that they deliberately pay attention to the client's philosophy of life; they experience this as a prerequisite for the quality of their work: it is helpful in defining a problem, or a source of power, and adds depth to the relationship. Others deliberately pay as little attention to it as possible: believing that a focus on philosophy of life would hinder rather than clarify the professional relationship and distract them from the focusing on the client's need for help. Sometimes they explicitly refer to a cultural relativistic vision.

2.1.3.4 Need for expertise in the field of philosophy of life

In general the interviewees were positive about the idea of giving attention to philosophy of life in their studies. Still social workers in general organisations would welcome possibilities for refresher courses. Knowledge of ideological diversity in society and a method for managing ideologically related questions are mentioned as important subjects. They also mention learning to reflect on their personal prejudices and blind spots. The social workers who work for faith-based organizations say that they receive sufficient support from their own organisations. They regularly attend internal training, receive coaching and keep in close contact with one another.

2.1.3.5 Principal conclusion

Our central question in this pilot was: What role does philosophy of life play in the professional practice of social professionals? On the basis of our research we conclude that philosophy of life does matter: all professionals have to deal with ideological diversity in their daily work.

There does seem to be a — seemingly irreconcilable — dichotomy in the way in which professionals deal with it. One group explicitly uses its own philosophy of life in contacts with clients; the other group rather has res-

ervations about doing so. The significance of the professionals' philosophy of life seems to be suggesting that the stronger the meaning, the more they give room to it in their jobs.

2.1.4 Reflections

The pilot was successful as a first exploration of the role of philosophy of life in social work. The results reveal delicate tacit tensions and call for further research, since lots of questions remain to be answered.

This was also the outcome of a symposium for faculty colleagues, where the preliminary results of the studies were presented and a workshop on the role of philosophy of life in our education and research was held.

If social professionals hold very different views on how to deal with philosophy of life in practice, what does this mean for the applied methodology, for instance? We are also curious to find out if and how the opinions of the interviewed professionals will be reflected within the student population of our faculty. What role do the perspectives of different generations play?

Within the general, secular organisations interchanges on the philosophy of life of professionals do not seem to be promoted. Even within one organisation or team there can be unspoken conflicting views on how to deal with philosophy of life. Tensions in society on issues such as government funding for faith-based social action (Davelaar & Smits 2010) and the grim way in which the debate about religion is carried out by the media seem to foster this reservation. Apart from this cultural relativistic reasons are given. The opportunities — given the results of this research — to make good use of philosophy of life in contacts with clients remain unaddressed. This also calls for further research.

It would be interesting to link this to further research on the policy of general organisations relating to ideological identity. The richness of ideological identity seems to be acknowledged but used insufficiently.

A number of respondents raised an interesting issue about working with volunteers in relation to religious sensitivity. Volunteers who themselves have religious backgrounds would be able to draw on their background in a sensitive way to make sustainable contact with clients and to deepen the relationship. This corresponds with the outcomes of studies on the role of faith-based organisations and social exclusion (Davelaar & Van den Toorn 2010; 2011). Quite often they have an advantage over the reserved or insensi-

tive professional, which leads to unbalance in the triangle client-volunteer-professional. This may lead to volunteers gaining access to so-called difficult or unreachable clients or client groups, whilst the necessary professional help cannot be delivered. This also arose in interviews with volunteers who have been excluded from this account. In our follow-up research we would like to address this issue.

The interviews made it clear that there is a need for continued training. The question is what kind of training is needed most. Is there need for a specific 'spiritual competence' in the curriculum within the general education (Van Leeuwen 2009)? The development of demand-based education has led to a less integrative basic *body of knowledge*. Van Ewijk states that in social work practice and in the education of social workers there is a strong need for the integration between ethics, philosophy of life and culture (Van Ewijk 2010, 64).

On the basis of the results of this research the assumption is made that religious, or more generally, ideological sensitivity can have added value in the work of the social professional. Is this really true? If so in what context? And what exactly is the influence of the ideological inspiration of the social worker?

This last question fits in with the question of what is 'good work' and how to deliver 'good work' as a professional; this brings us to the field of normative professionalism, the professional practice driven by moral values:

> *Normative professionalism stands for the so-called practical wisdom of social workers, physicians, teachers, welfare workers, and chaplains as well as for the value loadedness of professional choices, actions, and decisions, and its reflections[.] (Jacobs 2008.)*

In the collection from which above quotation was taken Van den Ende and Kunneman state that normative professionalism also has an important social meaning:

> *… because normative professionalism, according to almost all authors who tackled the subject, has an existential anchoring and also depends on tapping and letting flow the sources of inspiration of the persons involved[.] (Jacobs 2008, 86.)*

The authors argue that normative professionalism carries the concepts of meaning and humanising, because these contain hope and belief in the possibility of contributing actively to a more humane society.

This notion also comprises the historic foundation of social work, as described in this paper's introduction, which makes things come full circle.

Based on the above conclusions and reflections, further research will be carried out in 2011. In this new research we hope to include a group of respondents who are actively engaged in social work as volunteers. The results of this new study will give us extra input and inspiration.

References

Alma, H. 2005. De parabel van de blinden, psychologie van het verlangen naar zin. Amsterdam, Uitgeverij SWP.

Besten, G.J. den; Paping, Th.B. & Pol, H. (eds.) 2002. Mens & Medemens; Geestelijke stromingen in onze samenleving. Houten, Wolters Noordhoff.

Binnenlands Bestuur 2009. Gemeentelijk jongerenwerk gekaapt door christenen. Accessed 14th of December 2011. http://www.binnenlandsbestuur.nl/nieuws/2009/01/gemeentelijk-jongerenwerk-gekaapt-door-christenen.106439.lynkx

Davelaar, M.; Toorn, J. van den & Veen, R. van 2010 Buitengewoon alledaags. De rol van levensbeschouwelijke organisaties bij het bestrijden van sociale uitsluiting in Tilburg. Utrecht, Verwey-Jonker Instituut.

Davelaar, M. & Toorn, J. van den 2011. Geloof aan het werk. De rol van levensbeschouwelijke organisaties bij het bestrijden van sociale uitsluiting in Rotterdam. Utrecht, Verwey-Jonker Instituut.

Davelaar, M. & Smits, E. 2010. Tussen principes en pragmatisme. Een onderzoek onder Nederlandse gemeenten naar de subsidiëring van levensbeschouwelijke organisaties. Utrecht, FORUM.

Dierckx, D.; Vranken, J. & Kerstens, W. (eds.) 2010. European Policy Brief. Policy implications of FACIT, an EU-funded research project involving eight institutions led by Centre OASeS (Inequality, Poverty, Social Exclusion, and the City) of the University of Antwerp. Accessed 14th of December 2011. http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/policy-briefs_en.html

Enden, T. van den & Kunneman, H. 2008. Normatieve professionaliteit en normatieve professionalisering. Een pleidooi voor conceptuele verdieping. In Jacobs, Gaby; Meij, Ruud; Tenwolde, Jams & Zomer, Yanaika (eds.): Goed werk, verkenningen van normatieve professionalisering, Amsterdam, Uitgeverij SWP, 68–87.

Ewijk, H. 2010 Maatschappelijk werk in een sociaal gevoelige tijd. Rede uitgesproken ter gelegenheid van de aanvaarding van het bijzonder hoogleraarschap 'Grondslagen van het maatschappelijk werk', Universiteit voor Humanistiek. Amsterdam, Humanistic University Press / SWP.

HBO-Raad; overkoepelende vereniging van hogescholen in Nederland. Accessed 14th of December 2011. http://www.hbo-raad.nl/hbo-raad/feiten-en-cijfers/cat_view/60-feiten-en-cijfers/63-onderwijs/74-instroom

Hof, van 't, E. & Teppema, S. 2010. Levensbeschouwing in social work, een factor van

belang. (internal publication). Utrecht, University of Applied Sciences.

Hood, R.W.; Hill, P.C. & Spilka, B. 2009. The Psychology of Religion – An empirical approach. New York/London, Guilford Press.

Kennedy, James 2011. Religiedebat is nog lang niet af. Accessed 14th of December 2011. http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4324/Nieuws/article/detail/2901349/2011/09/10/Religiedebat-is-nog-lang-niet-af.dhtml

Koekkoek, B. & Vandereycken, W. 2008. Themanummer Religie en levensbeschouwing in de GGZ. PsychoPraxis, Volume 10, number 6. Houten, Bohn Stafleu van Loghum.

Kunneman, H. 2005. Voorbij het dikke –ik, bouwstenen voor een kritisch humanisme. Amsterdam, Humanistics University Press / SWP.

Leeuwen, van R. 2009. Geloof of het of niet…! Spiritualiteit als relevante dimensie in zorg- en hulpverlening. Lectorale rede, Gereformeerde Hogeschool Zwolle.

Linden, M. van der 2007. Basisboek geschiedenis sociaal werk in Nederland. Amsterdam, Uitgeverij SWP.

Minutti, G.; Steendam, D. & Rijsdijk, A. 2008 Zingeving bij jongeren en de behoefte onder studenten Instituut Social Work Hogeschool Utrecht aan (onderwijs)activiteiten op spiritueel gebied (thesis, internal publication). Utrecht, University of Applied Sciences.

Mooren, J.H.M. 2009. Geestelijke verzorging en psychotherapie. Utrecht, Uitgeverij De Graaf.

Scheffer, P. 2007. Het land van aankomst. Amsterdam, Uitgeverij De Bezige Bij.

Sociaal en cultureel Planbureau 2006. God in Nederland. Den Haag, Uitgeverij SCP.

Ulla Jokela (Diaconia University of Applied Sciences)

Relations of ruling in the diaconia work of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church

1 Introduction

Research into diaconia work is a rapidly growing field in Finland. Earlier studies were produced mainly in theological faculties, but now diaconia research is also being undertaken in nursing science disciplines (eg. Rättyä 2009) and in the social sciences (eg. Paajanen 2008). Information about diaconia work is also emerging from studies concerned with social service institutions and organisations in Finnish Society. Through social work (eg. Juhila 2008), and poverty research (eg. Krok 2009) knowledge about diaconia work relating to services for people in need and last resort support has been gained. Theological research has been expanded to include everyday practice of diaconia work (eg. Juntunen 2011; Pessi 2009; Yeung 2008).

  Diaconia work has gained a foothold among the Finnish welfare service providers, in particular since the recession of the 1990s. When public sector responsibilities are reduced, expectations of the third sector and church provision tend to grow. (eg. Grönlund & Hiilamo 2005; 2006; Hiilamo 2009.) The politics of diversion (Hänninen et al 2007) brings new clients from public sector to diaconia work. Many clients are actually directed to seek help from the church (Juntunen 2006; Suominen 2008; Kinnunen 2009). Diaconal workers are critical of these trends and feel that their work is becoming more like social work (eg. Siivonen 2003). During the period

when the welfare state was expanding diaconia workers were accustomed to be able to focus more on pastoral care. (eg. Kettunen 2001, 23).

My interest in the subject rises from my personal experience of diaconia work. I have worked in various positions in the diaconia field for about fifteen years, and then as a lecturer at Diaconia University of Applied Sciences for about ten years. As a young diaconia worker many years ago I faced clients, who were seeking financial assistance. I wondered why my relationship with them was different from my relationship with those who were seeking pastoral or counselling help. I understood vaguely at that time, that the question was somehow related to differences in the quality of the relationship and that it had something to do with power. At that time, I did not have tools to evaluate the issue in more detail.

2 Research task

Research has shown that diaconia work (eg. Juntunen et al 2006; Kinnunen 2009) can be seen as an important support and 'walker alongside' clients at various life crises. 'Walking alongside' is a key phrase used to describe diaconal work in a variety of contexts. The experience of 'walking alongside' is described both by diaconia workers and by clients (eg. Jokela 2011). What else can these experiences tell us about diaconia work?

My interest relates specifically to clients' experiences, a topic which has not been extensively researched within diaconia studies. The question I am addressing is 'Is it possible to gain a broader picture of diaconia work by looking at practice through the experiences of clients?' I decided to investigate the meanings which clients attribute to diaconia work by asking two questions: how is work with clients shaped in diaconia practice and what kind of 'relations of ruling' does it include?. The research inquiry started from the experiences of clients but also extended beyond them. The primary purpose of the research is to examine the 'relations of ruling', which are hidden within the everyday life experiences of the clients of diaconia work.

3 Institutional ethnography's window into diaconia work

Institutional ethnography is used as an analytic tool in order to investigate the research task. It makes it possible to rely on knowledge arising

from clients' experiences. Thus, the client maintains his or her subjectivity through the study process and is not objectified as a target. Instead the target is the relations of ruling which are embedded into his or her experience and are organizing his or her everyday life as a client of diaconia work. (See Smith 1988.)

In institutional ethnography issues can be approached by looking first at problematic data, data which causes 'bother'. Problematic data in institutional ethnography can be compared to the concept of a variable, used to analyse data being examined. I began by 'kneading' data relating to various manifestations of power. In this context power is understood as relating more to street-level bureaucracies (Lipsky 1980) than to diaconia work. By following to the clues given in my data I started to disassemble the experiences of clients that revealed something about power, which I saw as problematic.

Another key concept of institutional ethnography is a standpoint (Smith 1988). The researcher's task is to choose a side, from where he does his research. My selection focused on the clients' side because their experiences of diaconal work have not received much research attention. A standpoint is, however, a broader concept than a point of view, since the standpoint commits the researcher to be accountable to the client. Because I have chosen the standpoint of the client my research will also provide knowledge that will inform developing diaconia work practice.

The third key concept in this study is a social relation (Smith 1988). By social relations I do not mean relations between human beings, but specifically relations which connect a variety of actors to each other. These social relations are 'relations of ruling' which govern actors' everyday life. Social relations themselves are not under investigation, but the concept is an operational tool for analysing those hidden 'relations of ruling' in diaconia work practices.

In institutional ethnography social reality is seen as a local and historical process which is created by those involved. Practices, objects, and the world are created and constantly reviewed. (Smith 1988, 123–125, 142–143.) Institutional ethnography does not, however, belong to the tradition of constructionism, although they both share common epistemological principles and analytic strategies. Institutional ethnography focuses not only on investigation of how knowledge or meaning is organized (cf. constructionism: is

constructed), but also on what occurs in a person's everyday life when that knowledge is constructed. (McCoy 2008, 703, 710–711.)

4 Data

In this study I have used two types of data. First, I sent a questionnaire to the diaconia workers of one metropolitan area's parish union. The main purpose of this study was to collect data about the client process of diaconia work. Due to the low response rate (24.1%) it has not been possible to make far-reaching conclusions. Instead, the data is used as background information on how the client work of diaconia is done. It provides a context for the knowledge generated by other data. The second set of data has been collected by ethnographic methods from a single parish's diaconia work in a metropolitan area. Ethnographic fieldwork took place over a period of one and a half months in early autumn of 2008. Institutional ethnography does not require a long data collection period, because conclusions can be drawn from relatively small samples.

Institutional ethnography data collection methods are the same as in the traditional ethnography: observation, interviews and document collection. 36 appointments between clients and workers were observed. Some of these took place in reception services where clients were able to come without any appointment. Some observed meetings happened in situations where worker and client had made an appointment beforehand. A diary was made of these meetings, recording the observations (a total of 52 pages). Four client-worker meetings were also recorded. All clients whose meeting with a worker I had observed and who gave permission to do so were interviewed. In addition, I interviewed a few clients whose appointment with the diaconia worker I was not able to see during the field work period. In total, 29 interviews of clients were generated. I interviewed five diaconia workers from the field study parish. The interviews lasted an average of one hour. I transcribed interviews verbatim, and I have a total of 499 pages of data. I collected also seasonal brochures, the management rules and the financial assistance guidelines as document data. In addition, l collected some brochures of individual events.

The clients were pleased to give an interview which I think reflects the fact that they felt positive that someone was interested in their story. Some

clients also showed their interest by asking their diaconal workers about the progress and completion of the study.

5 Data analysis

Institutional ethnography does not prescribe a specific methodology for data analysis. It can be seen more as problem-solving process in which knowledge is organized little by little. Analysis can also be continued indefinitely, as analysis of the data opens new perspectives. (Devault 1999, 50; Devault & McCoy 2002, 755.) A specific step by step strategy can be followed to progress the analysis and obtain results. The first step is the identification of experiences. The second step is to identify those institutional processes which shape experiences and are relevant to the research task. The third step is to investigate and analytically describe those processes which are embedded in experiences. (Campbell & Gregor 2002, 46; Devault & McCoy 2002, 755; 2006, 20; cf. Smith 2005, 41–42.) I used my personal experience from diaconia work as a tool when I identified experiences. The guiding principle in identifying processes was to pay particular attention to data which seemed confusing. This is the problematic approach. Issues in the data related to power particularly concerned me. The second phase of the institutional ethnography procedure, is the collection of ethnographic data. This is collected from the transcript records and concerns 'relations of ruling' and practices. (Smith 2005, 165.) I began to organize the data at this stage from the perspective of power, and looked at this through the 'relations of ruling' which were structuring the everyday life of diaconia work clients. The data gradually began to take shape by using a concept of social relations. According to Smith (1988) these might, for example, be the professional discourse of diaconia work, the complexity of the administration, exchange relations, and textually conveyed discourse, such as the various standards and guidelines (Smith 1988, 108, 122; 2005, 10, 18).

  I used close reading (eg. Kain 1998) and applied narrative analysis (Smith 1990) as analysis tools. By using the close reading approach I identified the experiences and by reading my data several times I tried to solve the mystery of the problematic data. Narrative analysis in this study means studying the narratives that people construct from their everyday experience. This narrative helps diaconia work's actors to expand the image of diaconal work

and enables them to develop the work further. This analysis will help create a map of the 'relations of ruling' (Smith 2005, 51). The map makes it possible to expand awareness of the practices of diaconia work and to improve them.

6 Research ethics

Clients of diaconia work often live in very difficult life situations. Thus, researchers need to be particularly sensitive when they meet clients as they may have been ill-treated by various 'helping' agencies. I had two different kinds of research permission in my study. I applied for permission from the vicar of the parish, and another from each person him or herself. As well as obtaining approval for the study I gave to each person a brochure about my research and went through it briefly with each subject. Subjects were able to commit to observing mode, to be interviewed, or give me a permission to look at data-based information of their client carrier from the client information system. Alternatively they were free to authorize only one of these and refuse the other(s). There was also an opportunity to opt out at the mid point of the research process. Refusals which were mainly in relation to the interview, were very low.

Ethical considerations also arose in relation to the parishes selected for the field study. To preserve the anonymity of the research locations, as far as possible, promotional material has been removed in the presentation of the results which is why details of parish are omitted. The analysis of power relationships which are presented in the study may seem strange to diaconia workers. They even might conclude that the analysis could harm the image of diaconia work. Because of the theoretical and methodological approach adopted the research inevitably raises questions about 'relations of ruling' from the standpoint of clients, exposing some painful issues. This should not in any way detract from the value of diaconia work or imply that it does not deserve all the appreciation it gets.

7 Client and financial assistance and 'relations of ruling'.

In the parish chosen for the study field support to clients is provided mainly in the form of small 10 to 20 euro one-off grants. The practice is the same in the other parishes of the parish union. Similar small grant activities are

carried out in many other parishes around the Finland (Evangelical Lutheran Church 2011). To receive a grant clients have to provide documents which verify their revenue and expenditure situation. These do not have to be produced for each application as most people are regular clients with few changes in their life situations.

Assistance is normally provided by giving vouchers which can be used in nearby shops. Diaconia workers, may on behalf of their clients, apply (via the diaconia fund of the parish union) for a larger grant from the diocese or Church Council. In this case thorough statements are required. My observations concern mainly those receiving small grants.

> *Ulla: Have you normally got, when you have got this financial support from parish, preciously those vouchers to there [shop]?*
> *Lassi: Yes, but I can't take either them anymore, because last time when I went to buy food there, so the cashier stand up and waved that voucher, that here is a client of social work*
> *U: Yeah*
> *L: and I began to feel shamed and I have got small panic disorder symptoms during these years, there were much of people behind me and they started to laugh there and look at me like whether I have even afford to buy food.*
> *U: Yeah*
> *L: and it was so embarrassing situation, as can be, it was a terrible situation*
> *U: Yeah*
> *L: I wanted to run from the store*
> *U: Yeah*
> *L: so humiliating, so terrible*
> *[…]*
> *L: It's like you will get a stigma on the forehead immediately. (Lassi)*

A voucher is seen as a textual ruling practice in analysis, which binds together the various actors. When a client comes to meet a diaconia worker in financial difficulty, he or she expects a shopping voucher. His daily life is organized by this need and his situation requires him to produce the kind of story that is credible, and to provide evidence about his need. The diaconia worker assesses the situation and decides whether to make a grant for

his client or not. If a client receives a grant, he or she goes to a nearby store to buy, what it is possible to get with the small amount of grant provided. Thus, this voucher organizes the everyday life of the diaconia worker, client and vendor together. By analysis it is possible to connect the administration of the parish union, which coordinates the small grants, with its role in assisting in the setting of standards and practices. It is also possible to connect with the co-people in store. Co-people are able to follow how the situation of diaconia work's client is developing in the shop. The client's experience of humiliation might be strong if the shopping process does not work discreetly. The voucher system also provides a connection to the suppliers who bring food for trade. (Jokela 2011.)

Through analysis of ruling practices it is also possible to examine the hidden power embedded in the client-worker relationship. Power is demonstrated firstly by the worker's decision to assist or not assist. Secondly power is apparent in the limited freedom of choice that the client has when she or he uses the ten euro voucher. It is written on the voucher that it is valid only for food and hygiene products. If a client comes to meet a diaconia worker so late that the situation is critical, he or she has to be very rational in making shopping decisions in order to obtain best value from the voucher.

There is a possibility of humiliation hidden in the voucher system. This is very obvious in the interview with Lassi (above). Just seeking help involves the client in humbling his or herself for the first time by admitting that she or he cannot not survive alone, but has to seek help. The second time he has to be humbled in the shop by having to present a voucher to the seller. Humiliation can be exacerbated if the client is in a queue of other customers keen to follow the situation evolving. If the seller is a professional, she may be able to manage the situation discreetly. At worst however, the voucher, provides to the seller an opportunity to exercise power. In this process, the client can be stigmatized as deviant and strange (see Goffman 1990/1963). It is also possible that the diaconia worker may refuse to provide assistance. In this case, the client's experience can be humiliating, because he has applied for assistance, which he has not been able to get. Matters are complicated by the fact that he may have to apply for assistance again from the same worker in the future.

8 Client, emotional and spiritual support, and ruling practices

Diaconia workers interviewed want to be seen as givers of holistic support. One of the diaconia workers interviewed defined financial assistance as spiritual presence in people's everyday life. The process does, however, involve more tension than the term suggests. The diaconia workers have to deal with a large number of clients wanting economic assistance and they have an important job to do in emergency situations often organised on a busy timetable. The tensions are apparent in the following transcript of a diaconia worker's responses in a number of different ways:

> *Annika: I was confused when I went there [to work] as a diaconia worker, when I suddenly noticed that when there were those crisis grant applications and that kind of what were done. I had to work with six or seven at the same time in order to get them into the meeting. Then I started to think, because it took a lot of time to clarify them, so it takes a lot of working time, in generally it takes still [time] to clarify people's things and for calls on the behalf of them, or with them. That is required to make on behalf of them or in order to receive information that is relevant, so. But I was somehow, how it can be, it can't be, that this is too much of this kind of office work somehow. So surely it wasn't the idea, rather discussions and pastoral care was my idea. (Annika, diaconia worker)*

The expectation referred to by Annika is also expressed in the brochure used by the field study parish which describes diaconia work. The brochure states that diaconia work is particularly intended to provide mental and spiritual support. The brochure does not refer to financial aid. This raises the question of whether spiritual and mental needs are valued more than bodily needs in diaconia work. Diaconia workers in local parishes tend to be people with high levels of education who have to relate to people with difficult physical life situations. In practice, financial aid clients are given empathy and focussed attention, but they are seen mainly during reception times when emergency help is given. Consequently time per client is limited, as there is often a queue of clients waiting for an encounter with a diaconia worker. For clients in mental and spiritual need agreed appointments are made beforehand and the allotted time available is longer. Clients with fi-

nancial or other social needs can make separately agreed appointments, but in practice, they tend to use emergency help drop-in sessions. Only a proportion of clients are selected for longer conversations.

Valuing spiritual and mental over social and bodily needs is related to the concept of "real social work" found in social work studies (eg. Mäntysaari 1991, 142). "The real social work" is something more than "only" income support. However only a proportion of clients are selected for deeper social work (Arnkil 1991; 2005). The same applies in the work of deacons. Often those selected for deeper diaconia work are the ones who have the ability to handle their own lives more deeply. In diaconia work conflict is evident if what is written in Church Order is taken at face value. The document states that diaconia work should focus on people who are most in need and who are not helped by other providers (Church Order 4§3). Often the most vulnerable people are not able to express their needs in a way that would lead to an invitation to participate in deeper discussion. Their situation can be so acute that they lack the strength for anything beyond coping with everyday life. Valuing spiritual and mental needs over the bodily ones is a 'relation of ruling' which leads diaconia workers to forget who they are supposed to be working for as defined in Church Order yet they have the greatest expertise to help wounded and oppressed people.

9 The meeting point of 'ruling relations' in the public sector and diaconia work

Many clients come to diaconia work having had demoralising experiences of other services. In the diaconia office they often encounter a worker who is humane. A client in social office can easily be faceless, as social workers increasingly rely on written social assistance applications. In diaconia work workers still meet their clients face to face. The explanations which clients give for choosing to seek help through diaconia offices vary. Often the client is seeking more humane treatment and face to face contact. Some clients live just above the standards for social assistance income and their benefit from social office is always discretionary. When the norms and standards get tougher clients seek help elsewhere. The data I have collected indicates that it may be easier to apply support from diaconia work than from social work because of its flexibility, although the amounts are very small.

Pressures on financial assistance resources are growing in diaconia work, as the real level of minimum social security has decreased since 1990s economic recession. Even benefits such as labour market benefit and general pension benefit, which are linked to the pension index, have not kept pace with general income (Pykälä 2010). The effect of diminishing public sector resources is reflected not only in the number of applications for grants from diaconia work, but also in demand for help in other sectors. Clients report that mental health services and substance abuse services, are increasingly difficult to access. They are limiting assistance to, as one interviewee said, "The patch for wounds." Thus, from the standpoint of clients diaconia work seems to be trying to fill the gaps left by reductions in official social work provision, as reported in some previous studies (Juhila 2008, 46; Yeung 2007, 11–12, 22; Grönlund & Hiilamo 2005; 2006).

My data indicates that the advocacy role of diaconia work is growing in importance. Workers are increasingly finding that they have to speak on behalf of their clients. Diaconia workers seek to enable their clients to meet the social workers. They also act as advocates alongside with their clients in situations where the clients voice may not be heard:

> Ulla: How have you experienced it if the diaconia worker is involved in some situations for example, how does it affect to the case of the client there at authorities?
> Eeva: Well, yes it is, it is horrible, but after all, it has a positive effect. My opinion is that it is an infringement of human dignity that a person cannot handle their own affairs. And that she or he should be heard. Why there has to be some diaconia worker as an arbitrator and then it is more convincing or? It is pretty outrageous, no wonder that self-esteem goes down when you have to go from one place to another. And then you don't care anymore. (Eeva, diaconia worker)

Other clients have also reported similar experiences. Clients may receive advocacy support from diaconia workers in a number of situations, especially where the client has statutory needs but the benefits are discretionary. Advocacy is often helpful. At the individual level advocacy has a significant impact but diaconia workers have no resources for a wider social influence.

10 Looking at the map of 'relations of ruling'.

When diaconia work is examined using the tools of institutional ethnography, the picture it provides is inevitably harsher than the view which previous studies have given. This approach gives new shades of meaning to diaconia work. The map of 'relations of ruling' constructed by institutional ethnography forces us to examine diaconia work critically. It reveals practices of 'ruling': including latent humility; elements which limit freedom such as the voucher system; the process of selection of clients in general and selection of clients for more intensive relationship with a worker; the valuing of spiritual and mental needs over physical ones. These practices point to a need to reflect in more detail on the question of respectful treatment. According to Richard Sennett (2004), reciprocity is a solution for the realisation of respectful treatment. The importance of respect in the worker-client encounter is even more significant especially when it concerns an unequal relationship, which a helping relationship is. According to Sennett recognition of the autonomy of the client is the basic premise of the respect for the other. (Sennett 2004, 125–130, 177, 215, 222–256.) Reflecting Sennett's thinking it is obvious that the principles of reciprocity should be included in diaconia work.

Diaconia work is also revealed to be filling gaps left by reduced public social security. When different support agencies in the public sector refuse entry to clients from the services, diaconia work has to fill the gap. On the one hand it is filling gaps in economic support. On the other hand it also fills gaps left by other helping areas, such as mental health care. This issue has not yet been publicly discussed. Diaconia workers can be placed in the difficult position of having sometimes to reject clients whilst also fulfilling the role of being their advocate, defending their rights. Although clients may respect diaconia work it nevertheless involves oppressive elements in its practices which may counteract the positive effect of the respectful treatment. Sensitivity and awareness of the 'relations of ruling' embedded in clients' experience is essential for the development of diaconia work. Adoption of this client focused approach could lead to new to a understanding of diaconia work.

References

Arnkil, Tom Erik 1991. Peilejä. Hypoteeseja sosiaalityön ristiriidoista ja kehitysvyöhyk-keestä. Sosiaali- ja terveyshallitus. Tutkimuksia 5. Helsinki, VAPK-kustannus.

Arnkil, Tom Erik 2005. Metaforat, dialogisuus ja käytäntötutkimus. In Satka, Mir-ja; Karvinen-Niinikoski, Synnöve; Nylund, Marianne & Hoikkala, Susanna (eds.): Sosiaalityön käytäntötutkimus. Helsingin yliopiston Koulutus- ja kehittämiskeskus Palmenia. Helsinki, Palmeniakustannus, 173–200.

Campbell, Marie L. & Gregor, Frances 2002. Mapping social Relations. A Primer in Doing Institutional Ethnography. Ontario, Garamond Press.

Church Order [Kirkkojärjestys] 1055 / 1993. Accessed 12th of December 2011. http://sakasti.evl.fi/sakasti.nsf/sp?open&cid=Content344521

DeVault, Majorie & McCoy, Liza 2002 Institutional Ethnography. Using Interviews to Investigate Ruling Relations. In Gubrium, Jaber F. & Holstein, James A. (eds.): Handbook of Interview Research. London, Sage, 751–775.

Evangelical Lutheran Church 2011. Diakoniatyön tilastoanalyysi 2010. Accessed 12th of December 2011. http://sakasti.evl.fi/sakasti.nsf/0/E64CAA2B17A67F51C22577 0A00396219/$FILE/Diakonian%20tilastoanalyysi%202010.pdf

Grönlund, Henrietta & Hiilamo, Heikki 2005. Diakonian resurssit ja alueellinen tar-ve. Panostetaanko diakoniaan kunnan huono-osaisuuden mukaan? Diakonian tut-kimus 2 (2), 98–115.

Grönlund, Henrietta & Hiilamo, Heikki 2006. Diakoniatyö hyvinvointivaltion mit-tarina. Yhteiskuntapolitiikka 71 (2), 134–145.

Hiilamo, Heikki 2009. Yhteiskunnalliset muutokset ja diakoniatyön haasteet. In Lahti-nen, Mikko; Pohjalainen, Terttu & Toikkanen, Tuulikki (eds.): Anno Domini 2009. Diakoniatieteen vuosikirja. Lahti, Lahden diakoniasäätiö, Lahden diakonian insti-tuutti, 43–57.

Hänninen, Sakari; Karjalainen, Jouko & Lehtelä Kirsi-Marja (eds.) 2007. Pääsy kiel-letty: Poiskäännyttämisen politiikka ja sosiaaliturva. Helsinki, Stakes.

Jokela, Ulla 2011. Diakoniatyön paikka ihmisten arjessa. University of Helsinki. Fa-culty of Social Sciences. Doctoral Dissertation. A Tutkimuksia 34. Helsinki, Diako-nia-ammattikorkeakoulu.

Juhila, Kirsi 2008. Aikuisten parissa tehtävän sosiaalityön areenat. In Jokinen, Arja & Juhila, Kirsi (eds.): Sosiaalityö aikuisten parissa. Tampere, Vastapaino, 14–47.

Juntunen, Elina 2006. Diakoniatyön taloudellinen apu ja viimesijaisen sosiaaliturvan aukot. In Juntunen, Elina; Grönlund, Henrietta & Hiilamo, Heikki (eds.): Viimei-

sellä luukulla. Tutkimus viimesijaisen sosiaaliturvan aukoista ja diakoniatyön kohdentumisesta. Helsinki, Kirkkohallitus, 51–176.

Juntunen, Elina 2011. Vain hätäapua? Taloudellinen apu diakoniatyön professionaalisen identiteetin ilmentäjänä. University of Helsinki. Faculty of Theology. Doctoral Dissortation.

Juntunen, Elina; Grönlund, Henrietta & Hiilamo, Heikki (eds.) 2006. Viimeisellä luukulla. Tutkimus viimesijaisen sosiaaliturvan aukoista ja diakoniatyön kohdentumisesta. Helsinki, Kirkkohallitus.

Kain, Patricia 1998. How to Do a Close Reading. Accessed 12th of December 2011. http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr/documents/CloseReading.html

Kettunen, Paavo 2001. Leipää vai läsnäoloa? Asiakkaan tarve ja diakoniatyöntekijän työnäky laman puristuksessa. Kirkon tutkimuskeskus, sarja A, nro 76. Tampere, Kirkon tutkimuskeskus.

Kinnunen, Kaisa (eds.) 2009. Sairas köyhyys. Tutkimus sairauteen liittyvästä huono-osaisuudesta diakoniatyössä. Suomen ev.lut. kirkon kirkkohallituksen julkaisuja 2009:7. Helsinki, Kirkkohallitus.

Krok, Suvi 2009. Hyviä äitejä ja arjen pärjääjiä – yksinhuoltajia marginaalissa [Good mothers and everyday survivors – single mothers on the margin]. Acta Universitatis Tamperensis; 1437. Tampere, Tampere University Press.

Lipsky, Michael 1980. Street-Level Bureaucracy – Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services. New York, Russell Sage Foundation.

McCoy, Liza 2008. Institutional Ethnography and Constructionism. In Holstein, James A. & Gubrium, Jaber F. (eds.): Handbook of Constructionist Research, 701–714.

Mäntysaari, Mikko 1991. Sosiaalibyrokratia asiakkaiden valvojana. Byrokratiatyö, sosiaalinen kontrolli ja tarpeitten sääntely sosiaalitoimistoissa. Sosiaalipoliittisen yhdistyksen tutkimuksia 51. Tampere, Vastapaino.

Paajanen, Taina 2008. Diakonia- ja sosiaalityö kumppaneina sosiaalisen työn kentällä diakonia- ja sosiaalityöntekijöiden konstruoimana. University of Tampere. Department of Social Policy and Social work. Master's Thesis.

Pessi, Anne Birgitta 2009. Spirit of Altruism? On the role of the Finnish church as a promoter of altruism of individuals and of society. In Monroe, Kristen & Scussarello, Sarah (eds.) On behalf of Others: The morality of car in a global world. Oxford, University Press.

Pykälä, Pertti 2010. Perusturva laahaa perässä. Lähes kaikki Kelan etuudet ovat jääneet tuntuvasti jälkeen ansiokehityksestä. Sosiaalivakuutus 4/2010, 15–20. Accessed 12th of December 2011. http://www.kela.fi/in/internet/liite.nsf/

NET/181110160924AK/$File/Sosiaalivakuutus_4_2010.pdf?OpenElement

Rättyä, Lea 2009. Diakoniatyö yksilöllisenä ja yhteisöllisenä auttamisena yhteiskunnallisessa murroksessa. Kuopion yliopiston julkaisuja E. Yhteiskuntatieteet 179. University of Kuopio. Department of Nursing Science. Doctoral Dissertation.

Sennett, Richard 2004. Kunnioitus eriarvoisuuden maailmassa [Respect in a World of Inequality]. Tampere, Vastapaino.

Siivonen, Teuvo 2003. Diakonian erityisyys kirkossa. In Lahtinen, Mikko & Toikkanen, Tuulikki (eds.) Anno Domini 2003. Diakoniatieteen vuosikirja. Lahti, Lahden diakoniasäätiö, Lahden diakoniainstituutti, 74–83.

Smith, Dorothy E. 1988. The Everyday World as Problematic – A Feminist Sociology. Milton Keynes, Open University Press.

Smith, Dorothy E. 1990. Texts, Facts and Feminity – Exploring the Relations of Ruling. London/New York: Routledge.

Smith, Dorothy E. 2005. Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People. Walnut Creek, CA, AltaMira Press.

Suominen, Katja 2008. ”Mä voin sanoo asiakkaalle, että ota yhteyttä diakoniaan, jos mä en pysty enää auttaa” – Sosiaalityöntekijöiden käsityksiä diakoniatyön roolista auttamistyössä Turun kaupungin alueella. Diaconia University of Applied Sciences. Master's Thesis.

Yeung, Anne Birgitta 2008. Servant of Solidarity, Institution of Authenticity – The dilemma of welfare in the Church of Finland. Nordic Journal of Religion and Society 21 (1), 1–19.

Yeung, Anne Birgitta 2007. Diakonia ristipaineiden aallokossa? Diakonian työnäky ja suhde hyvinvointivaltioon. Diakoniatutkimuksen aikakauskirja 1/2007, 5–25.

Heikki Hiilamo (Social Insurance Institution of Finland)

Reinvigorated church poor relief in Finland between two recessions

1 Introduction

St. Mark (14:7) quotes Jesus as saying that "the poor you will always have with you." For a long time this holy verdict was taken as a divine order. Not until the modern welfare state was there anything that was supposed to create a brave new world without poverty. The ideas underpinning the different variants of the welfare state were linked to various forms of Christianity: the Central European model was based on Catholic, the social democratic version on Lutheran and the Anglo-American model on laissez-faire religiosity (Kersbergen & Manow 2009). The most comprehensive welfare states were constructed in the countries with a Lutheran tradition. The Nordic universal welfare state was born to secure inclusion across population strata.

The traditional models used to explain the development of modern welfare states — structural-functional theories, theories of democratic politics, state-centred theories — leave hardly any room for church activities. The power resources theory does not recognise the church as an independent actor. The church is viewed as an institution forming, for instance, ideologies and norms concerning the role of families (Korpi 2000). Church ideologies and norms are transmitted through confessional parties (cf. Kersbergen 1995). Esping-Andersen's (1990; 1999) typology of three welfare state regimes, each with a qualitatively different arrangement between state, market and family, acknowledges the role of the church only in relation to the first type, the "corporatist-statist" regime, where the church, in shaping state intervention, maintains class and status differences. The second type,

the "social-democratic" regime, is dedicated to promoting equality, particularly along class lines, without any influence from the church. The welfare state regime hypothesis suggests that the kind of traditional assistance the church lends to the poor would die out in the course of "socio-democratic" welfare state development, a statement analogous with the secularization hypothesis[1].

Until the early 1990s there was no reason to challenge the regime hypothesis. The Nordic countries had developed comprehensive earnings related benefits for the employed and flat rate benefits for individuals outside the labour market leaving hardly any space for selective church poor relief or inclusion programmes on state or municipal level (Kautto et al. 1999; Korpi & Palme 1998). The mature Nordic welfare state construed poverty as a residual problem best combated through active employment-promoting policies combined with an encompassing system of social benefits. The welfare state was seen as such a strong safeguard against poverty that it would eradicate poverty just as preventive measures and antibiotics eradicated tuberculosis.

A deep economic recession hit the Nordic countries in the early 1990s. Finland was hit most severely (Kautto 2000; 2001; Nordlund 2000; Timonen 2003). This led to an abrupt end of the golden years of the welfare state in Finland, where welfare state development had actually been slower than in other Nordic countries (Alestalo & Kuhle 1984; Alestalo & Uusitalo 1986; Flora & Heidenheimer 1981). The aim of this study is to analyze crowding out/crowding in effects in Finland from the perspective of the poverty alleviation activities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland (cf. Dahlberg 2005). The hypothesis is that when the government increases expenditure on social protection, the role of the Church activities in Finland will diminish. But, if the role of the public sector vis-á-vis the needs and scope of social protection is reduced, Church activities are likely to grow. The years of "permanent austerity" (Pearson 1994) between the two recessions, i.e., the recession of the early 1990s and the global recession beginning in 2008, provide a backdrop for the analysis.

With a membership that covers around 80 per cent of the Finnish population as of 2009, the Evangelical Lutheran Church dominates the religious

---

1   Secularisation refers to a general conception of historical development where society progresses toward modernisation and lessening dependence on religion. The secularisation hypothesis suggests that religion loses its position of authority and religious institutions lose social significance. There is also a shift in the provision of social services from churches to the government (Wilson 1966; Sommerville 1998).

landscape in Finland. Its poverty alleviation efforts like other activities are financed mainly with church taxes, which, in effect, correspond to membership fees[2]. Church input in providing social welfare is a charitable activity. There is no obligation in state law for the Church to provide assistance to the poor nor is any right to such assistance provided for by Church statutes. The assistance provided by the Church represents a form of traditional poor relief in a modern setting where field workers are left with considerable freedom to address local needs. We exclude social work of religious welfare associations and foundations and focus on parish level poverty alleviation activities, which is the most exceptional element of church activities in the Finnish Lutheran tradition (Yeung 2003).

European welfare state research has focused on the links between religious values, religious cleavages and the shaping of the welfare state but has mostly ignored the role of faith-based institutions in providing welfare (Fix 2003). The literature on the role of faith-based institutions from the U.S. suggests that the role of religious-based agencies became more important when the federal system of entitlements and social services was dismantled and shifted to the states (Cnaan, Wineburg & Boddie 1999; Garland 2008; Wineburg 2001).

2 Data and methods

A disciplined configurative case study method is applied, where — using Thomas' (2011) language — Church engagement in poverty alleviation in Finland is a case of possible crowding out/crowding in effect. The analysis is carried in four sequences using both quantitative and qualitative material. The first section, a brief overview of the historical origins of church poor relief in Finland is based on published literature and official Church documents such as Statures and Church Law. In the following sections two forms of Church poverty alleviation activities, church social work offices and food banks and advocacy work, are analyzed through quantitative material. The unique feature of the poor relief activities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland is that all field workers (deacons and deaconesses) keep a record of their clients (Hiilamo 2009). The tradition was initiated during a period when the Church's societal work was closely connected with com-

2 In 2009 79.7 per cent of the Finnish population belonged to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. The percentage has declined steadily over the last two decades with the exception of the years 1997–1999.

munity based health care services. The statistics include information on the number and age groups of clients and on the nature of client contacts (Kirkkohallitus 2009). The most recent statistics also describe the volume of new forms of Church poverty alleviation efforts such as the provision of free meals, food banks and financial assistance[3]. Data on church activities is contrasted with aggregate data on municipal social work (social assistance) (THL 2009). Quantitative data is contextualised with results from a literature survey on published research on Church poverty alleviation in Finland (mainly available only in Finnish language). Finally, in the fourth section Church advocacy work is studied through official documents such as Church documents relating to poverty alleviation, government programs and National Action Plans against poverty (cf. Kuivalainen & Niemelä 2010).

3 Development of church poor relief before 1990s

The qualitative change that Protestantism brought about in the church–state relationship has been understood as a historically decisive prelude to secularisation and the welfare state (Bruce 1990, 113). The transition of poor relief from the church to the state was a relatively smooth process in the Lutheran countries of Northern Europe where Luther's doctrine of the two estates precluded conflict: the religious estate was responsible for the soul and the governing estate for order (Kahl 2009). These countries were neither religiously heterogeneous nor did the 'national revolution' lead to fervent state–church conflicts. Identification between church and state was strong, even to the extent that there was little for the church to protest against the state taking over responsibility in the welfare arena. The absence of religious cleavage in the Nordic countries accelerated the construction of an encompassing welfare state. The Lutheran state churches withdrew from providing social protection and focused on serving mostly as public agencies of moral and religious nurture (Gustafsson 2003). However, the churches continued to engage in poverty alleviation.

In Finland the Evangelical Lutheran Church's poverty alleviation efforts share historical roots with municipal social work (Kouri 1997). Countries in the dominantly Lutheran region established tax-based and centralised systems of poor relief to take the place of the church's charitable activities. As

3   The data was collected by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (Kirkkohallitus 2009). However, there is no data on Church poverty alleviation on individual level.

early as in 1788, relief for the poor was defined in Sweden-Finland as a communal responsibility. Community meetings were still chaired by vicars. The poor relief statute of 1852 introduced provisions that defined poor relief as an activity independent of the Church. However, as late as in the first half of the 20th century, Church nurses or deaconesses employed by the Church remained the only professionals carrying out poor relief activity.

The devastation following the Second World War called for new inputs from all social actors in Finland. The experiences of the war brought about a change in the Church's social doctrine, i.e., in how it viewed worldly involvement (Lauha 2005, 27–30; Malkavaara 2004). Church leaders advocated supplementing health care and social services with Church-sponsored measures. The synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church proposed an amendment to the Church Law in 1944. It became compulsory for every parish to create an official position of deaconess (later deaconess or deacon)[4]. The Church delivered aid for the needy donated from abroad as well as funds collected through fund raising campaigns (Yeung 2003). While parish level nursing and social work is a special feature of state churches in Northern Europe, its institutional position became clearly strongest in Finland.

In lay terms diaconal activities may most aptly be conceptualised as church social work (or poor relief). According to Church statutes (Kirkkojärjestys 1991/1993, 4:3) the purpose of diaconia is to help those in the gravest need and especially those who are not helped by others. This mission statement to focus on the most marginalised groups gives parish level social work and nursing a distinctive character and a large degree of freedom to address emerging needs.

Development of the universal welfare state in Finland began in the 1960s (Alestalo & Kuhle 1984; Alestalo & Uusitalo 1986; Kuusi 1964; Flora & Heidenheimer 1981, 23). While the welfare state took shape, the niche in which other actors could operate began to shrink. The state assumed all-encompassing responsibility in health care and social welfare, consequently the role of the Church was marginalized. Yet the Church did not decide to dismantle the diaconate.

A major shift in the Church's poverty alleviation efforts took place in 1972 with the adoption of the Public Health Act. The Act no longer recognised the work performed by deaconesses (Church social workers with an educa-

4   Within the Evangelical Lutheran denomination, church social work and nursing are conceptualised as diaconal work. Other Christian denominations conceive diaconal work as a precursor to priesthood (Brown, 2005).

tional background in nursing) who had to take on other duties in the area of municipal health care provision (Malkavaara 2004, 164–165). In 1971 as many as 40 per cent of parish nurses' individual client contacts consisted in some part of traditional nursing activities: tending to wounds, measuring blood pressure, administering injections and providing palliative care. By the 1980s these activities accounted for only 10 per cent of all client contacts (Malkavaara 2002). In the golden years of the welfare state, the Church's social activities refocused on spiritual activities and work with the elderly and the handicapped (Ryökäs 1990; Yeung 2006).

Before 1990s it was evident that as a result of the construction of the universal welfare state, the role of Church social work had become marginalised. In accordance with the secularisation hypothesis, the Church's role became less significant. However, the Church's social activities were by no means eliminated. While its tasks were limited and given a supplementary role to the public services, its resources remained intact. Before the onslaught of the recession in 1991, the Church employed as many as 1,100 full-time social workers and nurses compared with 4,000 social workers employed by municipal social services offices. The ratio of Church social workers to municipal social workers is not exceptionally high compared with, for example, e.g. U.S. (Cnaan & Boddie 2001) but surprisingly large within a Nordic welfare state regime.

4 The Great Depression in the early 1990's

In the late 1980s the common conception was that the Nordic welfare state had provided a permanent solution to the problem of poverty in Finland. Income inequality was the lowest in the industrialised world (LIS 2010). With only slight exaggeration poverty was referred to as something that only homeless alcoholics could expect to encounter. In the early 1990's Finland was hit by a severe economic recession that later became known as the Great Depression (Kalela et al. 2001). As a country with a Lutheran legacy Finland provided generous welfare benefits but required the able bodied to work. Due to the recession there were no more jobs available. Between 1991 and 1993, GDP declined by 13 percent and unemployment rose to almost 17 percent (Figure 1). The government introduced an austerity programme that cut benefits and raised taxes (Timonen 2003).

The recession was followed by rapid economic growth but basic benefits were left to erode. Unemployment persisted among single parents and those with low levels of educational attainment. Benefits were reduced and plans for expansion scrapped. At the end of the 1990's, the level of social spending (excluding unemployment-related expenditure) was about 10 percent lower than at the beginning of the decade although the number of pensioners had increased (Jonung, Kiander & Vartia 2008). The Nordic welfare state project began to run out of steam. Consequently poverty re-emerged as a formidable social problem (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001; 2003; 2006) that was further aggravated by the onset of the global recession in 2008 (LIS 2010).

Figure 1. Rate of unemployment and GDP volume change 1989-2010 in Finland, %.
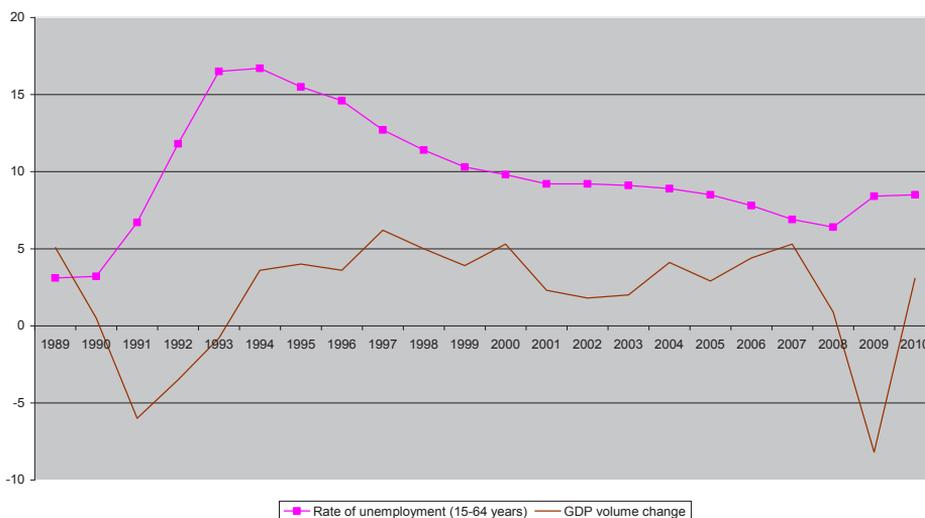
With the state seeming to fail to alleviate poverty, a number of non-governmental organisations gained an opportunity to intensify their anti-poverty efforts. Among these organizations was the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

5 Clients at Church social work offices

In financial terms, too, the Church suffered setbacks as a result of the recession. There were hardly any new funds to spend on poverty alleviation. Nevertheless the number of Church social workers began to grow towards the

end of the 1990's (Figure 2). With improved public and Church finances the number of municipal social workers together with Church social workers increased after 2001.

During the period of social insurance expansion, Church poor relief had become residual. It continued to exist as a last-resort supplement, covering only those who fell through the cracks of the social insurance system. These groups consisted of the long-term unemployed and those outside the labour force without earnings related benefits. The main source of income for these groups was provided by municipal social assistance. The Church quickly reacted to the problems caused by the recession with a wide array of activities, which included the introduction of debt counselling and settlement services, establishing food banks and organising meeting places and activities for the unemployed (Gothóni 2006; Yeung 2003, 203–204).

The most obvious change was the increase in client contact. The number of client contacts at church social work offices increased rapidly as soon as non-urban parishes also opened social work offices (Figure 3). By 1997 the number of client contacts at church social work offices had climbed above 500,000 contacts annually. During the 1990's the number of client contacts at church social work offices varied directly with the number of house-

Figure 3. Number of annual Social Assistance (SA) Recipients and Clients at Diaconia Receptions 1990-2009.
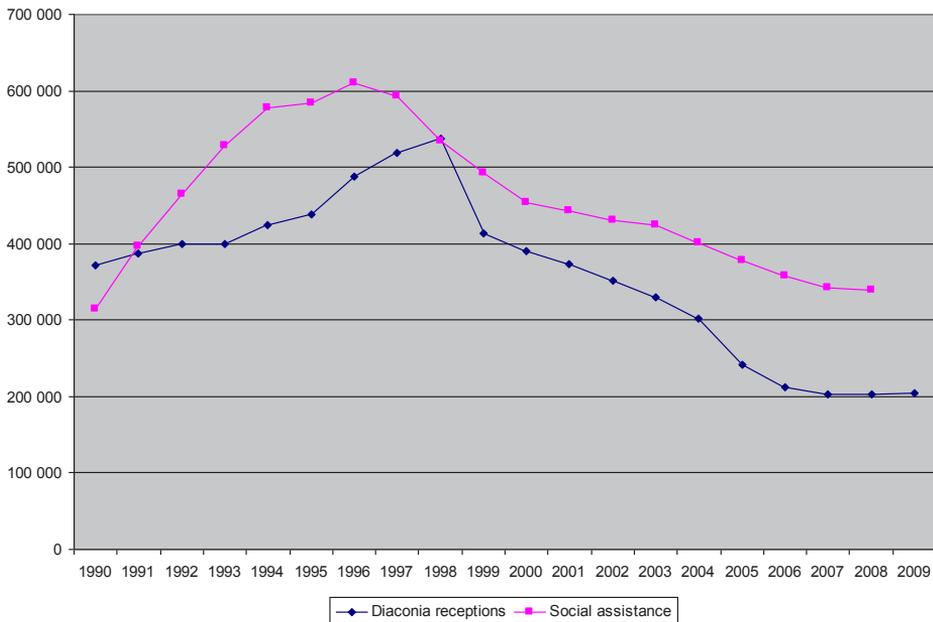
holds receiving social assistance from municipal social offices. It is also noteworthy that the number of social assistance recipients and church social work clients peaked two to three years after the recession was over in terms of GDP growth. This reflects the fact that economic hardship is aggravated if workers are unable to find new jobs, earnings-related provisions expire, and social security benefits are cut or left to erode. In 1998 the number of Church client contacts surpassed the number of social assistance recipients[5].

The Church's administrative structure is based on the idea of autonomous parishes. Given the fact that there are no detailed instructions on how to practise poverty alleviation at the parish level it is noteworthy that so many chose to refocus their activities from spiritual activities and work with the elderly and the handicapped to helping the unemployed and the poor (Hiilamo 2010).

---

5   Information on social assistance is derived from the social assistance register (THL 2009). Receipt of social assistance is measured as the number of those individuals who received social assistance for at least a month during the year. Church social work clients are measured as the number of contacts during the year, which means that the actual number of individual clients is smaller as many clients tend to have several contacts during the year. Statistics kept by the Church Council do not contain information on the actual number of separate clients at receptions.

As the employment situation gradually improved, the number of client contacts at Church social work offices began to decline (Figure 3). The development coincided with an increase in Church social worker and nurse vacancies. What was even more puzzling was that the statistics did not show an increase in any other type of activity either. Part of the explanation may lie in the adoption of new work methods emphasising pre-booked appointment and computerised client records. However, field workers also made the observation that individual clients had a larger number of problems. A similar development was evident in social assistance statistics. With an improvement in the employment situation, there were fewer social assistance recipients but those who received assistance needed more of it (THL 2009).

During the golden years of the welfare state Church social workers were mainly occupied in making home visits to elderly clients. In the early 1990's the parishes opened social work offices especially for working-age people most severely hit by the depression. They were offered counselling, food aid, financial assistance and group activities, among other services. The proportion of 64-year-olds and older among all client contacts remained around 60 per cent until 1990 but declined steadily over the 1990's to a level below 40 per cent (Figure 4). The share of working age clients climbed above 50 per cent in the late 1990's reflecting a shift of focus in Church poverty alleviation. There was also a shift of emphasis in client contacts at church social work offices. Previously the contacts mainly involved psychological

Figure 4. Church Diaconia Client Contacts 1988-1999 by Age Group, %.
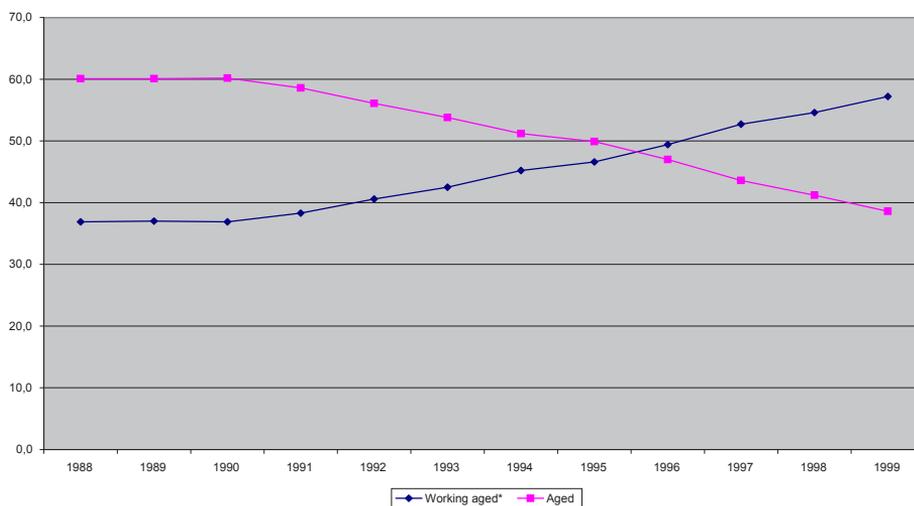
and spiritual support. The recession gave an impetus to the provision of financial assistance in the form of food coupons and packages, covered health bills and rents and the occasional provision of more generous financial assistance for example to service an overdue debt.

The volume of Church aid increased steadily throughout the early 1990's, and the level of 900,000 counselling sessions (at social work offices, homes, institutions, etc.) per year for a clientele of 308,000 persons was reached at the turn of the millennium. In 2000 the number of paid diaconal employees was 1,247. Approximately 7 percent of the population received help and counselling from the Church. According to field workers the main motivations for seeking help were unemployment, financial worries, mental health problems, intoxicant abuse, anxiety, and insecurity.

The amount of Church funds spent on financial aid was very small by any standard; it was clearly below one per cent of the amount that municipalities spent on social assistance. However, the total cost of Church activities in 2000, for instance, climbed to 83.6 million euros if personnel and other expenses are included[6] (Kirkkohallitus 2009). That was equal to 17 per cent of the expenditure on social assistance (excluding personnel costs) for the same year. These figures show that the Church's input into poverty alleviation was mainly realised through client contacts involving counselling, social support and assistance with filing claims for statutory benefits and services. Between the two recessions the Church did not allocate more funds for social work but the profile of the work changed profoundly with the Church reaching out to help the poor.

6 Establishing Food banks

In 1994 the Finnish economy began to recover from the recession (see e.g. Kalela et al. 2001). The following years witnessed robust economic growth. Despite strong economic growth both the state and the municipalities continued to run austerity programmes, which were reflected in a depreciating value of basic income transfers and in a more limited supply of social services (Timonen 2003). Persistent unemployment and widening income inequality emerged as new problems. The number of social assistance recipients increased until 1996. Subsequently, the number stabilised at a level clearly

6   In addition to Church social work the figure includes as minor items family counselling, hospital chaplain work and telephone help line services (Kirkkohallitus 2009). The amount is expressed in 2009 prices.

above previous levels, and the proportion of long-term social assistance recipients increased (THL 2009).

Despite budget cuts Finland adhered to the principles of the Nordic welfare model (Kautto 2000; 2001; Kautto et al. 1999). The range of legislative provisions concerning the right to social welfare and health care services did not narrow: in fact, there were some improvements such as the introduction of a right to day-care for children and certain statutory services for people with disabilities. Municipalities were required to reserve adequate funds for the provision of social services in all circumstances. However, many social welfare and health care services were based on budget appropriations. In practical terms individual clients were entitled to services only within the limits of the funds allocated to them by the municipality in its budget. The municipalities began to seek co-operation with local parishes.

The urban parish of Tampere was the first to come up with the idea to set up a food bank following the continental European model of food banks where a large number of people can pick up food at certain times (Jääskeläinen 2000; Malkavaara 2004, 167–173). The first food bank adhering to established standards was opened in Tampere in 1995. In that same year, Finland became a member of the European Union and was entitled to apply for special assistance from the EU for intervention supplies to be delivered on social grounds. Food banks began to proliferate in 1997 when the Church's annual fundraising campaign known as Common Responsibility [7], with the President of the Republic as its patron, made food banks part of its programme. In 1997 as many as 272 parishes — half of all parishes — distributed EU food aid. At this point there were 150 food banks. Bags of food and coupons to purchase food were distributed at field worker offices. These activities were focused on urban communities. Food aid was also made available to elderly clients during home visits. The demand for food aid grew, outstripping the earmarked appropriations. Besides the EU supplies, the Church and the NGOs distributed food donated by local stores and the food industry. They also raised money though collections and campaigns as well as using existing funds to buy food.

While a large number of religious and non-religious NGOs were involved

---

7   The Common Responsibility Campaign (known in Finnish as 'Yhteisvastuukeräys') is Finland's largest annual fundraising campaign, organised by the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church and its Church Resources Agency (Kirkkopalvelut ry). Its mission is to promote social responsibility that focuses on alleviating suffering and advocating for justice. The campaign was first launched in 1950. A small coordination unit in Helsinki runs it. 40 000 volunteers and all parishes around the country participate in its activities each year.

in the distribution of EU food, the Evangelical Lutheran Church gained a dominant position in the distribution of food due to its existing delivery chain: there was at least one Church office in every municipality where it was possible to distribute food (Hiilamo, Pesola & Tirri 2008). Bread-queues on city corners became a symbol of the economic crisis, exemplifying the decline of the welfare state. Some politicians called for the closure of the food banks and the raising of the level of basic income benefits.

Initially the food banks were intended as an efficient way of distributing food aid. The food banks were criticised inside the Church for their presumed potential to establish a new poor relief system. Also, it was felt that the ways in which the aid was distributed were too mechanical and often quite humiliating for clients (Addy 2005, 187–189). The food bank project of 1997 assumed that food banks would be closed by 1999. However, parishes continued to provide meals and offer other activities for the unemployed, often collaborating with unemployed advocacy groups. At its peak in 1999, the programme provided meals to a total of 577,000 persons (Kirkkohallitus 2009).

As general economic conditions in Finland improved some food banks were closed. Food banks and similar systems remained important in the most hard-pressed communities. This was an indication of changed conditions. General economic improvement no longer guaranteed that people would be lifted out of poverty. The Church was not criticised for re-establishing poor relief. On the contrary, its activities were welcomed by the great majority — an attitude also reflected in the fact that during some years in the late 1990's nearly as many people joined the Church as left it. A major reason to join the Church and to remain as a Church member was that Church was engaged in helping the poor. In short, the reorientation of Church poverty alleviation efforts placed poverty at the focal point of the activities (Hiilamo, Raunio & Yeung 2008). The Church began to work with marginalised individuals and groups.

By the early 2000's, with the number of client contacts having declined rapidly for two years, food banks seemed likely to remain a temporary phenomenon (Figure 5). However, the Church food assistance programme went through another reorientation where the number of EU-provided food bags continued to decline but new clients were reached out to through meal services. Meal services were given preference over bags of food as a more com-

Figure 5. Distribution of EU-food by local parishes 1998-2009.
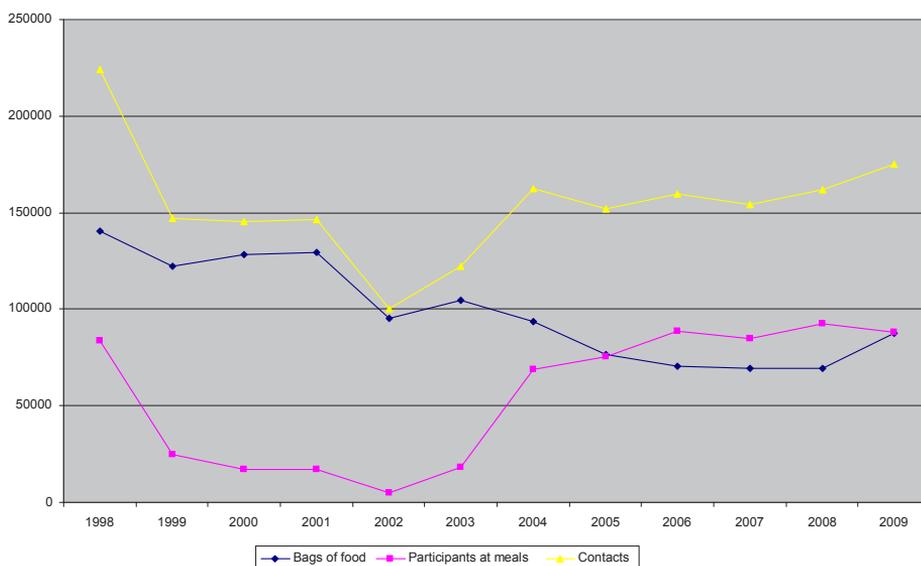
munity centred form of assistance. It was also discovered that some who received food bags with flour, oil and other basic food items were unable to prepare food due to lack of skill or equipment. The actual number of recipients of meal services (including events serving food from other sources than the EU) remained above 400,000 throughout the early 2000s (Kirkkohallitus 2009). Based on information on pick-up patterns for EU food aid we may assume that almost the same number of people claim social assistance as rely on Church food aid at least once during a given year.

The Church and the NGOs continued to offer food and financial assistance for the most vulnerable groups in the second half of the 2000's. The general trend showed a slight decrease in the number of clients but equally a small increase in the volume of assistance — a similar development observed in social assistance records. However, the trend turned in 2008 when the global recession hit Finland (Table 1). A ten-year decline in client contacts at church social work offices was halted and the volume of food assistance both in terms of clients and money increased. This holds true also for other types of financial assistance, including congregational funds spent on such items as rents and health bills. Attendance at meal service events also increased. Field workers reported a 16 per cent increase in financial problems as a reason for client contacts (Kirkkohallitus 2009). As many as 150 of

466 local parishes delivered food aid in 2008. The following year the number climbed to 163. In early 2010 the number of parishes participating in the EU's food aid programme was 193.

Table 1. The number and share of parishes delivering food aid, 2000–2010.

Year	Number of parishes	Share of all parishes
2000	211	35,9%
2001	188	32,1%
2002	180	30,7%
2003	166	28,5%
2004	158	27,4%
2005	158	28,1%
2006	154	28,1%
2007	154	29,8%
2008	150	29,1%
2009	164	35,2%
2010	193	41,5%

It may seem self-evident that the distribution of free food by NGOs marks a deviation from the universal welfare state model. However, the question is more complicated. The Church had an obvious motivation to distribute food: to help the needy according to its calling and also perhaps to polish its image. But if supplies are made available at no cost there will always be demand. Empirical evidence on motivations for picking up free food is very limited but points in the direction that clients are generally not hungry (Mäki 2005; Salonen 2009; Siiki 2008). They aim to ease personal budget constraints associated with the receipt of welfare benefits and free up funds for other purposes. It is not clear whether an increase in, for instance, the level of social assistance would considerably decrease the number of food bank clients. At any rate the delivery of free food by the Church indicates that it had a role in providing last-resort assistance within the universal welfare state.

A study published in 2005 (Grönlund & Hiilamo 2005) indicated that in the early 2000's the Lutheran parishes assigned more funds for Church poverty alleviation in regions where local inhabitants experienced more financial difficulties (Grönlund & Hiilamo 2006). Church poverty alleviation resources seemed to be allocated according to the prevalence of social

problems in each region, particularly through client work at fieldwork offices. Regionally those congregations where the population, on average, faced more severe economic difficulties were more active distributors of EU food aid (Hiilamo 2010). The ethos of Church poverty alleviation filled gaps in state and municipal provision (Juntunen, Grönlund & Hiilamo 2007; Kinnunen 2009). The results indicated that Church poverty alleviation efforts had indeed become an established part of the last-resort social safety net and no longer represented a random act of charity determined, first and foremost, by each organisation's history, local customs and resources. However, the charitable nature of Church aid was reflected in significant variations among local parishes in responding to emerging local needs for poverty alleviation (Hiilamo 2010).

7 Church's advocacy work

The Lutheran state church had no reservations about the state playing a dominant role in social protection in the 1980's or earlier (Malkavaara 2002). Taking a historical perspective it could have been assumed that the Church would not have engaged in public debate on poverty issues, believing them to be within the domain of the governing estate of the state and the municipalities. However, the Church and the non-governmental social welfare organisations were the first to address the problem of poverty in the public arena during the economic recession of the early 1990s (Hiilamo, Pesola & Tirri 2008). Indeed, they took up the issue of poverty as a campaign theme (Kuivalainen & Niemelä 2010). Generally they applied a two-edged strategy. They provided help for the most vulnerable groups while claiming that these activities should be carried out by the institutions of the universal welfare state. They drew particular attention to people in the most vulnerable positions and claimed that the welfare state had failed when it came to the needy.

For the Church the food bank activity served a critical function in making its voice heard. By setting an example it found a way to speak about poverty (Kuivalainen et al. 2005). The pressing needs of the poor were recognised in a statement on common good given by the Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1999. The statement was followed by a public uproar as it was interpreted as a political manifesto and a deviation from the

Church's traditional role as an agency of religious and moral nurture (Par-viainen 2000). The Church also organised, along with the unemployed, a human rights day for unemployed people with the intent of drawing the attention of political decision-makers to the difficulties and rights of the unemployed (Yeung 2006).

In the early 2000s Finland chose not to reverse the cutbacks in social protection and allowed inflation to erode existing benefits further. Despite steady economic growth and strong public finances only minor improvements were made to basic welfare benefits, which caused some to label the Finnish case as one marked by "permanent austerity" (Pearson 1994). Lower taxes and considerable pay raises increased inequality between those in work and those suffering from long-term unemployment or making ends meet outside the labour force. In effect Finland began to edge away from the universal model (Kuivalainen & Niemelä 2010). As a positive response to Nälkäryhmä (Hunger Group), an advocacy group organised by the Church, the government programme in 1999 stated that "the Government's key area of emphasis is to promote activities which prevent and reduce serious poverty problems, social exclusion and the accumulation of deprivation". This was the first time ever that poverty was mentioned in a government programme. The key symbols of Finnish antipoverty policy have been the legislative "packages for the poor" put together partly in response to lobbying activity by the Church and the NGOs. In the Nordic model, targeted government or NGO programmes had previously been considered as a deviation from the fundamental principle of a universal welfare state. Following the introduction of the first package in 2001, the same government introduced two further poverty packages. They included a selection of measures that delivered minor improvements in the level of certain allowances for targeted groups.

New impetus for anti-poverty politics came from the EU. The EU Member States agreed at the Nice European Council in December 2000 to draw up National Action Plans against poverty and social exclusion as part of the political cooperation between the Member States on social protection. The Member States drew up the first two-year National Action Plans against Poverty and Social Exclusion in 2001. Initially the EU's focus on social exclusion and particularly the development of anti-poverty programmes to combat social exclusion was met with skepticism among the Nordic countries

(Jacobsson & Johansson 2009). This attitude stemmed from the conviction that such policies are not effective in alleviating poverty.

Before the introduction of the soft "open method of coordination" (OMC) procedure at the EU Lisbon summit there had been no established patterns of co-operation between state officials and NGOs — with the exception of trade unions — either in Finland or in Sweden. The situation changed somewhat when ministries were asked to develop National Action Plans (NAPs) on social inclusion. As the body responsible for drawing up National Action Plans the Finnish Ministry for Social Affairs and Health mobilised all relevant parties including NGOs and the Church. These parties were invited as partners and not merely as participants to develop the NAPs, which reflected the absence of state–Church conflicts. For Church actors the invitation was a sign that their input continued to be valued even in post-secular circumstances.

The OMC process also facilitated collaboration between various actors by constituting a common discourse and providing a platform for institutionalised dialogue. The Church and the non-governmental social welfare organisations emphasised the importance of upholding the legacy and principles of the Nordic welfare state model. They argued that the primary aim of social policy is to guarantee a decent standard of living for all citizens.

In the National Action Plan it was frequently stated that the Finnish social security system rests on the basic principles of universal social welfare and health services and a comprehensive income security system (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2001; 2003; 2006). A key tool in the prevention of social exclusion was adherence to the principle of universality. It was firmly stated that policies aimed at combating poverty and social exclusion would rely first and foremost on the development of the universal system. The Church and the non-governmental organisations, particularly, identified the inadequate level of basic security benefits and the unsatisfactory functioning of these schemes as the most important reasons for poverty (Kuivalainen & Niemelä 2010).

The Finnish branch of the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN-Fin), established in 1994, and the Finnish Federation for Social Welfare and Health acted as policy platforms. The Church was actively involved in both bodies. The OMC process of social inclusion provided the Church and NGOs with a window of opportunity to gain recognition from official bo-

dies. Before the OMC there was no established pattern of co-operation bet-
ween NGOs and official bodies. The OMC on social inclusion constituted a
"common framing of claims" or "conception of problems" for NGOs whe-
reby the NGOs were able to make their inputs more visible and gain recog-
nition from the government.

8 Conclusions

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland's poverty alleviation efforts
provided a unique case study to evaluate the role of unofficial poverty relief
under economically challenged conditions. Given the strong role of public
benefits in the Nordic welfare state model, Finland was from the outset the
least likely candidate for the emergence of vibrant church-based charitab-
le activity. However, the Finnish case gave more evidence for the crowding
out/crowding in theory than for the welfare state regime hypothesis sugges-
ting that the kind of help the Church provides for the poor would die out
in the course of the development of the "socio-democratic" welfare state.

In Finland, the Church's poverty alleviation efforts co-existed with the de-
velopment of the universal welfare state starting in the 1960s. Its role was
marginalised. After decades of marginalization the role of the Church's po-
verty alleviation became more pronounced after the recession in the early
1990's. In the early 1990's, the focus of Church social work shifted from
working with the elderly to providing assistance and financial aid to the
unemployed and the heavily indebted. Poverty alleviation in terms of finan-
cial assistance and distribution of food became the dominant features of the
Church activities. The food banks were intended as temporary relief so that
no one should become dependent on such assistance. However, people kept
coming and the banks remained open.

Again, the global recession beginning in 2008 gave new impetus for Church
efforts to combat poverty and social exclusion. The Church provided the
poor with a large-scale and organised poverty alleviation input most com-
monly associated with the Southern welfare state model and the welfare sta-
te model in the US (Cnaan, Wineburg & Boddie 1999; Ferrera 1996; Gar-
land 2008; Wineburg 2001).

The Church not only provided various forms of assistance but also chan-
ged its profile in the public debate. Kahl (2009, 287) argues that churches

have tended to call for state involvement in crises such as the depression of the late 19th century in the U.S., the failure of the friendly societies in the UK, and the Great Depression as some examples. This also seems to be the case in Finland. After the depression of the early 1990s Church poverty alleviation efforts assumed a critical function as a way to draw attention to the need for targeted measures to help the poor. The abrupt end of the golden years of the welfare state together with the adoption of the open method of coordination on social inclusion in the European Union provided the Church with a window of opportunity to reorient itself in public life. It was called on as a recognised partner to combat poverty problems, that is, to fill gaps in the welfare state. National Action Plans against poverty and social exclusion illuminate the fact that there is a new and separate element in the Finnish social policy which may be called anti-poverty policy and which puts an emphasis on targeted measures for the poor.

The Church and non-governmental social welfare organisations took an active role in promoting the issue of poverty during the 1990's. They made an impact on the adoption of poverty as a central political concern by the government and the political parties. However, the Church mostly failed in its efforts to introduce improvements to basic welfare benefits. In Finland there has been a gradual change from the traditional idea of the Nordic welfare state towards the idea of selectivism. The Church has on one hand criticised the tendency but on the other hand contributed to it by proving assistance for the most needy.

The analysis demonstrates that there is a contradiction between grass-roots engagement in poverty relief and the official conception of the Nordic welfare state model in Finland. In the Weberian perspective secularisation, as a concluding phase of western rationalisation, was assumed to accelerate the development of the welfare state (Kersbergen & Manow 2009, 16). If we take this statement at face value, it is fair to ask what would happen if welfare state development were halted at some point. The Nordic welfare model continues to rely heavily on the public sector and the Nordic countries exemplify universalism as an idea behind all policy prescriptions. Kersbergen and Manow (2009, 34) note that "public policies affect religiosity to the extent that a large welfare state has a negative impact on religious activity and overall religiosity". Our results indicate that periods of austerity in welfare state development may reinvigorate religious activities in poverty

alleviation. As Kahl (2009, 287) notes churches' position towards state involvement is not static but rather adapts to new realities.

The Church reacted strongly to the pressing needs of the poor in the early 1990's and continued to do so. The scope and volume of the Church's poverty alleviation programmes during economic downturns gives reason to challenge the conventional clear cut conception of the universal Nordic welfare state in Finland. It is too early to see if this is only a temporary diversion from the universal welfare model or a more permanent change towards a fragmented model. However, our results are not valid for other Nordic countries where church and state contexts have played out differently during the years of crisis (Pessi, Angell & Pettersson forthcoming). Our study also endorses a wider approach to the analysis of social welfare institutions and their incorporation of religious actors.

References

Addy, Tony 2005. Diaconal issues in Europe: Challenges to and from Finland. Diakonian tutkimus 2, 182–192.

Alestalo, Matti & Uusitalo, Hannu 1986. Finland. In Flora, Peter (ed.): Growth to Limits – The Western European Welfare States Since World War II – Volume 1. Berlin, De Gruyter, 197–292.

Alestalo, Matti & Kuhnle, Stein 1984. The Scandinavian route: economic, social, and political developments in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. Helsinki, University of Helsinki.

Bruce, Steve 2002. God is Dead – Secularization in the West. Oxford, Blackwell.

Cnaan, Ram A. & Boddie, Stephanie C. 2001. Philadelphia Census of Congregations and Their Involvement in Social Service Delivery. Social Service Review 74 (4), 559–580.

Cnaan, Ram A.; Wineburg, Robert J. & Boddie, Stephanie C. 1999. The Newer Deal – Social Work and Religion in Partnership. Columbia University, New York.

Dahlberg, Lena 2005. Interaction between voluntary and statutory social service provision in Sweden: a matter of welfare pluralism, substitution or complementarity? Social policy and administration 39 (7), 740–763.

Ferrera, Maurizio 1996. The 'Southern Model' of Welfare in Social Europe. Journal of European Social Policy 6 (1), 17–37.

Fix, Birgit 2003. Social Work of Religious Welfare Associations in Western Europe. Eurodata Newsletter 16/17, 1–6.

Flora, Peter & Heidenheimer Arnold J. (eds.) 1981. The development of the welfare state in Europe. London, McCroom Helm.

Garland, Diana 2008. Christian social services. In Mizrahi, Terry & Davis, Larry E. (eds.): Encyclopedia of Social Work – Volume 1: A–G. 20th edition. Washington DC, NASW Press, 282–288.

Gothóni, Raili 2006. Velat anteeksi? Akordirahastotoimintamallin arviointitutkimus [Evaluation of Church's debt settlement arrangements]. Suomen ev.lut.kirkon kirkkohallituksen julkaisuja. 2006:1. Helsinki, Kirkkohallitus.

Grönlund, Henrietta & Hiilamo, Heikki 2005. Diakonian resurssit ja alueellinen tarve. [Resources for diaconal work and local needs]. Diakonian tutkimus 2 (2), 98–115.

Grönlund, Henrietta & Hiilamo, Heikki 2006. Diakoniatyö hyvinvointivaltion mittarina [Diaconal work as an indicator of welfare state]. Yhteiskuntapolitiikka 2, 134–145.

Gustafsson, Göran 2003. Church–state separation Swedish–style. West European Politics 26 (1), 51–72.

Hiilamo, Heikki 2009. Diakonistatistiken som hjälp att utveckla diakoniarbetet [How to use statistics to develop diaconal work]. In Kummel–Myrskog, Pia; Sarelin, Birgitta & Ekstrand, Sixten (eds.): Där nöden är störst. En introduktion i diakoni ur finländsk synvinkel. Helsingfors, Kyrkostyrelsen, 185–199.

Hiilamo, Heikki 2010. Laman uhrien auttaminen diakoniatyössä 1990–luvulla [The role of diaconal work in supporting victims of the recession in the 1990s]. Diakonian tutkimus 1, 7–27.

Hiilamo, Heikki; Raunio, Antti & Yeung, Anne Birgitta 2007. Lähimmäinen hyvinvointivaltiossa [Neighbour in the welfare state]. In Saari, Juho & Yeung, Anne Birgitta (eds.): Oikeudenmukaisuus hyvinvointivaltiossa. Helsinki, Gaudeamus, 220–235.

Hiilamo, Heikki; Pesola, Ulla & Tirri, Sirpa 2008. Kirkon ruoka–apu [Church food aid]. In Hänninen, Sakari; Karjalainen, Jouko; Lehtelä, Kirsi–Marja & Silvasti, Tiina (eds.): Toisten pankki – Ruoka–apu hyvinvointivaltiossa. Helsinki, Stakes, 115–124.

Jacobsson, Kerstin & Johansson, Håkan 2009. The micro-politics of the Open Method of Coordination: NGOs and the social inclusion process in Sweden. In Heidenreich, Martin & Zeitlin, Jonathan (eds.): Changing European Employment and Welfare Regimes: The Influence of the Open Method of Coordination on National Reforms. London, Routledge, 173–191.

Jonung, Lars; Kiander, Jaakko & Vartia, Pentti 2008. The great financial crisis in Finland and Sweden – The dynamics of boom, bust and recovery, 1985–2000. European Economy. Economic Papers 367. Brussels: European Commission. Accessed 29th of November 2011. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/publication13551_en.pdf

Juntunen, Elina; Grönlund, Henrietta & Hiilamo, Heikki 2006. Viimeisellä luukulla – Tutkimus viimesijaisen sosiaaliturvan aukoista ja diakoniatyön kohdentumisesta [Study on Church social work as a last resort welfare provider]. Helsinki, Kirkkohallitus.

Jääskeläinen, Pietari 2000. Yhteisvastuukeräyksen ruokapankkiprojekti [Food bank project]. In Heikkilä, Matti; Karjalainen, Jouko & Malkavaara, Mikko (eds.): Kirkonkirjat köyhyydestä. Kirkkopalvelujen julkaisuja N:o 5. Helsinki, Kirkkopalvelut, 203–211.

Kahl, Sigrun 2009. Religion as a Cultural force: Social Doctrines and Poor Relief Traditions. In van Kersbergen, Kaas & Manow, Philip (eds.): Religion, Class Coalitions

and Welfare State Regimes. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 263–294.

Kautto, Mikko 2000. Two of a kind? Economic crisis, policy responses and welfare during the 1990s in Sweden and Finland. Forskningsrapport från Kommittén Välfärdsbokslut. Stockholm, Statens Offentliga Utredningar (SOU 2000:83).

Kautto, Mikko 2001. Diversity among Welfare States. Comparative Studies on Welfare Adjustments in Nordic Countries. Research report 118. Helsinki, Stakes.

Kautto, Mikko; Heikkilä, Matti; Hvinden, Bjørn; Marklund, Staffan & Ploug, Niels (eds.) 1999. Nordic Social Policy – Changing Welfare States. London and New York, Routledge.

Kalela, Jorma; Kiander, Jaakko; Kivikuru, Ullamaija; Loikkanen, Heikki A. & Simpura, Jussi (eds.) 2001. Down from the Heavens, Up from the Ashes – The Finnish Economic Crisis of the 1990s in the Light of Economic and Social Research. VATT Publications 27:6. Helsinki, Government Institute for Economic Research.

van Kersbergen, Kees & Manow, Philip (eds.) 2009. Religion, Class Coalitions and Welfare State Regimes. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

van Kersbergen, Kees. 1995. Social Capitalism – A study of Christian democracy and the welfare state. London and New York, Routledge.

Kettunen, Paavo 2001. Leipää vai läsnäoloa? Asiakkaan tarve ja diakoniatyöntekijän työnäky laman puristuksessa [Client's need and diaconal workers mission during the economic depression]. Kirkon tutkimuskeskus, sarja A, nro 76. Tampere, Kirkon tutkimuskeskus.

Kinnunen, Kaisa (ed.) 2009. Sairas köyhyys – Tutkimus sairauteen liittyvästä huono-osaisuudesta diakoniatyössä [Study on Church measures to assist those who are sick and poor]. Helsinki, Kirkkohallitus.

Kirkkojärjestys (1991/1993) [Church Order]. Helsinki, Kirkkohallitus.

Kirkkohallitus 2009. Kirkon tilastollinen vuosikirja 2008 [Statistical Year Book of the Church]. Helsinki, Kirkkohallitus.

Korpi, Walter 2000. Faces of Inequality: Gender, Class, and Patterns of Inequalities in Different Types of Welfare States. Social Politics 7 (2), 127–191.

Korpi, Walter & Palme, Joakim 1998. The Paradox of Redistribution and Strategies of Equality: Welfare State Institutions, Inequality, and Poverty in the Western Countries. American Sociological Review 63 (5), 661–687.

Kouri, Erkki I. 1997. Health care and poor relief in Sweden and Finland c. 1500-1700. In Grell, Ole Peter & Cunningham, Andrew (eds.): Health Care and Poor Relief in Protestant Europe 1500-1700. London and New York, Routledge, 167–203.

Kuivalainen, Susan & Niemelä, Mikko 2010. From universalism to selectivism: the

ideational turn of the anti-poverty policies in Finland. Journal of European Social Policy 20 (3), 263–276.

Kuusi, Pekka 1964. Social Policy for the Sixties – A Plan for Finland. Kuopio, Finnish Social Policy Association.

LIS 2010. LIS Key Figures. Accessed 5th of December 2011. http://www.lisproject. org/key-figures/key-figures.htm.

Malkavaara, Mikko 2000. Yhteisvastuukeräyksen historia [History of the Common Responsibility Campaign]. In Malkavaara, Mikko (ed.): Ei etsi omaansa – Tutkimuksia altruismista ja yhteisvastuusta. Pieksamäki, Kirkkopalvelut, 127–223.

Malkavaara, Mikko 2002. Nälkä ja köyhyys kirkon asiaksi. Näkökulmia laman ja markkinakilpailun aikana [Hunger as a campaign theme for the Church]. In Mäkinen, Virpi (ed.): Lasaruksesta leipäjonoihin – Köyhyys kirkon kysymyksenä. Jyväskylä, Atena, 283–312.

Malkavaara, Mikko 2004. Finland. In Noordegraaf, Herman & Volz, Rainer (eds.): European Churches Confronting Poverty – Social Action Against Social Exclusion. Bochum, SWI Verlag, 160–175.

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2001. National Action Plan Against Poverty and Social Exclusion. Working Group Memorandums of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2001:12. Helsinki, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2003. National Action Plan Against Poverty and Social Exclusion for 2003-2005. Helsinki, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2006. National Reports on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion – Finland. Publications of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2006:24. Helsinki, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

Mäki, Sari 2005. Leipäjonon arki [Queuing up for food]. Taloustieteen laitoksen selvityksiä nro 39. Helsinki, Helsingin yliopisto. Accessed 5th of December 2011. http://www.mm.helsinki.fi/mmtal/abs/Selv39.pdf

Nordlund, Anders 2000. Social policy in harsh times – Social security development in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden during the 1980s and 1990s. International Journal of Social Welfare 9 (1), 31–42.

Parviainen, Seija 2000. Piispojen luterilainen sosiaalietiikka globaalitalouden paineessa [Bishops' Lutheran social ethics and pressures from global economy]. In Heikkilä, Matti; Karjalainen, Jouko & Malkavaara, Mikko (eds.): Kirkonkirjat köyhyydestä. Kirkkopalvelujen julkaisuja N:o 5. Helsinki, Kirkkopalvelut, 117–148.

Pessi, Anne Birgitta; Angell, Olav Helge & Pettersson, Per [Forthcoming]. Nordic churches as agents in welfare cutbacks – critical voices and/or complementary pro-

viders? Temenos – Nordic Journal of Comparative Religion.

Pierson, Paul 1994. Dismantling the Welfare State? Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Brown, Rosalind 2005. Being a deacon today – Exploring a distinctive ministry in the church and in the world. London: Morehouse.

Lauha, Aila 2005. Finnish Christianity since 1940. In Ryman, Björn; Lauha, Aila; Heiene, Gunnar & Lodberg, Peter (eds.): Nordic Folk Churches – A Contemporary Church History. Cambridge, Eerdmans, 27–40.

Ryökäs, Esko 1990. Diakonianäkemyksemme [Views on diaconical work]. Pieksämäki, Kirkon tutkimuskeskus.

Salonen, Anna Sofia 2009. Suomalainen hyvinvointiyhteiskunta ruoka-avun asiakkaan näkökulmasta [Welfare society in Finland from the food aid client's perspective]. University of Helsinki. Faculty of Theology. Master's thesis. Accessed 5th of December 2011. https://oa.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/50513/suomalai.pdf?sequence=1

Siiki, Anna-Mari 2008. Myllypuron ruokajono – Esimerkki hyvinvointiköyhyydestä [Food bank in Myllypuro – An example of poverty in the middle of affluence]. In Hänninen, Sakari; Karjalainen Jouko; Lehtelä, Kirsi-Marja & Silvasti, Tiina (eds.): Toisten pankki – Ruoka-apu hyvinvointivaltiossa. Helsinki, Stakes, 209–222.

Sommerville, C. John 1998. Secular Society/Religious Population: Our Tacit Rules for Using the Term Secularization. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 37 (2), 249–253.

Thomas, Gary 2011. Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse, and Sturcture. Qualitative Inquiry 17 (6), 511–521.

Timonen, Virpi 2003. Restructuring the Welfare State – Globalisation and Social Policy Reform in Finland and Sweden. Cheltenham, Edward Elgar.

Wilson, Bryan R. 1966. Religion in Secular Society – A Sociological Comment. London, Watts.

Wineburg, Bob 2001. A Limited Partnership – The Politics of Religion, Welfare, and Social Service. New York, Columbia University Press.

Yeung, Anne Birgitta 2003. Re-emergence of the church in the Finnish public life? Journal of Contemporary Religion 18 (2),197–211.

Yeung, Anne Birgitta 2006. The Finnish Lutheran Church as a Welfare Agent – The case of Lahti. In Yeung, Anne Birgitta (ed.): Churches in Europe as agents of welfare – Sweden, Norway and Finland – Working paper 2 from the project Welfare and religion in a European perspective. Uppsala, DVI, 142–203.

Einar Vetvik (Diakonhjemmet University College)

Poverty and dignity in a rich welfare state – the case of Norway. Does diakonia matter?

1 Introduction

This paper is about poverty in a rich state, which is also a welfare state — contemporary Norway. A hundred years ago Norway was a poor country in the North Western Periphery of Europe. Poor economic conditions led to a massive emigration from Norway to the USA in the period from 1870–1930. The emigration rate as a percentage of the population was only exceeded by Ireland among the European countries.

This paper is structured to address the following questions relating to the main theme. Has the rich welfare state abolished poverty? If not, which forms of poverty exist? What interest and response does the problem stimulate in Norway today? How does poverty appear in statistics and social life? What is the role of public policy and diakonia in combating the existing forms of poverty? Does diakonia matter, that is, does it make a difference in terms of its impact on important aspects of poverty in Norway? These questions are considered in this paper from comparative and contextual perspectives using both national and international data.

Poverty is as old as human life and it is related to other problems threatening the quality of life and in severe cases life itself, like starvation, illness and lack of care. In the past this challenge to life was overcome by work and family solidarity based on an informal contract between the generations. Even though this has been modified and changed in the modern world, the institutions of work and family are still more important for poverty relief than is normally recognized. But the sharing that takes place within the fa-

mily over a life time in accordance with the cycle of life does not redistribute resources over different income strata.

At present more than eight million people die from poverty each year (Sachs 2005). This is related to the stark reality of extreme poverty which means that people and households lack basic means of survival. The standard for defining extreme poverty used by the World Bank is a purchasing power of less than one US dollar per day per person. Moderate poverty as a less severe category is defined as income between one and two dollars per person per day, barely enough to meet basic needs. More than 90% of the world's extreme poor live in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Overall extreme poverty in the world declined strongly between 1981 and 2001, but in sub-Saharan Africa extreme poverty was much increased over the same period (Sachs 2005). It was against this background that the UN made its Millennium Declaration which includes several socio-economic goals, the first of which was to halve the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day between 1990 and 2015.

The situation with regard to poverty is markedly different in Europe and particularly northern Europe. Poverty is also a social/political issue here, but in a different form. The concept most commonly used here is relative poverty, which is defined and measured as the income of a household/person 50% (in OECD) or 60% (in the EU) below, average income as measured by the median income in each nation. This means that poverty in the public statistics and political discussion in the western world is mainly connected to income inequality in the population. It also means that the poverty threshold in terms of purchasing power for the individual varies significantly from nation to nation for example in the European Union. In the academic world and research it is necessary to go deeper in analyzing the empirical data to provide more knowledge on a complicated phenomenon. Although for academic and research purposes deeper analysis taking account of complicated phenomena has to be undertaken it should not be overlooked that poverty is strongly connected to income distribution and inequality in a given society.

Poverty is of course normally viewed as an unwanted social phenomenon, which attracts social and political attention although to varying degrees. Over the last 20 years the issue of poverty has once again become a focus of concern within Europe, both in nation states and increasingly in the Eu-

ropean Union (EU). In the Lisbon strategy for the period 2000–2010, the EU declared that poverty in EU should be abolished by 2010. The EU asked members to formulate national action plans (NAP) for implementation of the goal.

As it is well known, this strategy did not succeed at all. Poverty increased through the period. But the EU did not give up fighting poverty. The year 2010 was proclaimed the European year for combating poverty and social exclusion. Learning from its experience in implementing the Lisbon strategy EU realized that poverty was a more complex and difficult problem than earlier believed. The new EU development strategy for the period 2010–2020 was based on a modified goal of reducing poverty among the citizens of member states by 20 million persons. The precise meaning of this goal remains somewhat unclear.

2 What is poverty? About the concept and understanding of poverty

Poverty is a classical social problem which societies and politicians in Europe (Rowntree 1951) and all over the world have tried to resolve (Sachs 2005). Sometimes the problem has been proclaimed solved in the modern affluent welfare societies in EU and OECD. At the end of the 1960's and in the 1970's politicians in Norway declared that poverty had been overcome. These statements reflected the fact of economic and social progress but the frame of reference was poverty in the form of people lacking basic means of subsistence. Relative poverty in the form of economic inequality, labeled by some as "the new poverty", was never abolished. Current data shows that poverty is still present in wealthy welfare states (See Eurostat and OECD statistics). At the end of the 1970's the very important work "Poverty in the United Kingdom" by Peter Townsend (1979) presented a broad and thorough approach to modern Poverty studies.

Use of the concept of "poverty" declined in social policy studies and the public debate (Lavalette & Prat 2006). Other concepts such as "social exclusion", "low income", "marginalization", "relative deprivation", "low standard of living/conditions" and others have been used instead or as supplements (Lister 2004). Among the possible reasons for this are both new insights into the problem and its correlations and also the wish to avoid stigmatising people in poverty. These can be seen as positive and legitimate reasons but

can also be seen as escapism arising from uneasiness about society's lack of success in handling the problem. Poverty is seen as something which is best not mentioned by its crude, but proper name.

In Norway there has been a revival in the use of the poverty concept in the last 15 year (Fløtten, Pedersen & Lødemel 2009). There are several reasons for this. The fact that grassroots client organizations started to use the poverty label on themselves was important. Also political parties and the government became aware of poverty again and put it on the political agenda.

Poverty can be understood as consisting of three dimensions.

The first and basic is about money, that is, total economic capacity. Poverty is about lacking economic resources for a normal life in society for an individual or a household. This is relative poverty, a significant negative deviation from the average economic standard in the given society. Level of income is the central denominator, but other economic factors such as wealth and social capital contribute to the assessment. When the level is so low that material basic needs like food, clothes, housing and care cannot be met, it is appropriate to use concepts such as "strong deprivation" or" absolute poverty."

Poverty is basically about lack of economic resources but many factors that correlate with lack of economic resources, both in terms of causes and of consequences have to be taken into consideration to understand the phenomenon. This is reflected in the second and the third dimension of the concept of poverty.

The second dimension of poverty is social exclusion. This includes low participation, low integration into society and sometimes real isolation. This dimension relates to economic poverty both with regard to causes and consequences. Social inclusion in a community is the opposite of this.

The third dimension of poverty is lack of dignity in the sense of lack of respect and value demonstrated by the way that a person is treated in society and by his/her fellows. Dignity is a crucial attribute of being human. Most of the international human rights conventions and declarations have an initial reference to the dignity of all mankind as a precondition and a basis for the different human rights. See for example the Preamble to the United Nation Declaration of the fundamental human rights from 1948 (Laqueur & Rubin 1989). Dignity is also a fundamental precondition for the rights in the European Social Charter. The dignity dimension enlarges

our understanding of poverty as something spiritual in addition to its economic and social aspects. Dignity is about equal rights, self-determination, respect and human value.

Empirical analyses show that the three dimensions are correlated. The problems are related and partly overlapping. Having one problem increases the risk of suffering from the others. We also see that they often develop into vicious circles of causes and consequences reinforcing each other. This phenomenon can be illustrated by a passage from the bible, the so called Matthew principle (Mt. 25:29). Poverty and its problems are often transferred from one generation to the next; a social and economic inheritance. In political science poverty has been connected to social policy, distribution of resources and power in a broad sense (Bachrac & Baratz 1970). In Norway the concept "political poverty" has been used to describe "powerlessness" as an important aspect of poverty (Jacobsen 1970).

3 The return of poverty to the Norwegian political and academic agenda

In a book with the critical title "The myth of the welfare state" (Lingås 1970) a group of radical academics pointed to the fact that there were few studies and little information about poverty in Norway at that time (Aubert 1970). On the political level poverty was little discussed and the general view was that poverty belonged to history. But towards the end of the 1970's research started to rediscover poverty in the western world (Stjernø 1989). Poverty also was put on the agenda in the European Community where a report to the Commission reported more than 10 million people living in poverty in the member states. In Norway Steinar Stjernø published "The modern poverty" (Stjernø 1985). He reported that there was little interest in the question of whether poverty was still a fact of life in Norway up to that time. His study concluded that the new/modern poverty was best understood as a relative poverty. 5% of the adult population had an income of less than 50% of the average income in Norway in the beginning of the 1980's. 5% of the population at the same time had an income lower than the lowest pension from the National Insurance System (Folketrygden). Stjernø referred in his work to Peter Townsend's definition of poverty in his extensive work on poverty in the UK (Townsend 1979). The fruitful concept of "relative dep-

rivation" was central to his definition, that is, a situation where people lack the necessary resources to obtain adequate food, equipment and social life that are common in the society where they belong.

During the 1990's little happened with regard to the poverty issue in Norway. Norway was much less affected by the economic crisis that for example became a real, major problem in Finland and some other European countries. But from the end of the 1980's Norway also had to reconsider some of the development which took place during the 1980's where a conservative government had pursued a more liberal economic policy. This resulted in a banking crisis and massive government support to stabilize the economic system.

Finland and Sweden joined the European Union in 1994, partly as a response to these economic problems. In Norway the majority of the people voted against membership in spite of a massive campaign from the political elites, the economic elite and the overwhelming majority of the media. It may be seen as a true sign of democracy that the people can still beat the elites of a society in a fight over really important issues in a peaceful way, by voting. There were many reasons behind the people's No-vote in the referendum about membership of the EU. Protection of the welfare state and a desire to maintain control over the country's vast natural resources were central issues. There was also concern about the so called democratic deficit in the EU and a desire to protect national political independence. In national election campaigns from 2001 onwards, poverty became a central issue on the political agenda. It was seen as problem, if not a shame, that the rich welfare state had to realize that the poverty in the country had not been abolished. The issue was brought to the centre of national politics by various governments. In 2003 the Ministry of Social Affairs on behalf of the Center-Right/conservative coalition government published an action plan to combat poverty (Det kongelige sosialdepartement 2002). In the election campaign before the 2005 election opposition Social democratic parties attacked the government parties for lack of success in the matter. They argued that the problem was easy to solve. They argued that if the political will was there, the means to solve the problem were available. The so called red-green coalition (Social Democrats, Socialist Left Party and the Agrarians/Green Party) won the 2005 election and formed a new government. In the government's declaration they promised to eradicate poverty in the co-

ming four year period. A new plan to combat poverty was launched in 2007. Norway was thus on the same wavelength as the EU statement in the Lisbon Strategy. As in the EU the much regretted conclusion at the end of the period was that poverty was on about the same level as before, measured by relative income indicators. This represented not only a problem for political rhetoric and the credibility of politicians, but could be understood as a severe dysfunction of the welfare state. As the rhetoric says, the quality of the welfare state is best measured by the way poor and marginalized people are treated both with regard to dignity and to material wellbeing (Chan & Bowpitt 2005). On the positive side it was commonly accepted that the poverty issue was more complicated and demanding to solve, than had earlier been believed. This emerged as one result of the 2009 election campaign. The time for the bold promises was over.

The issue has not been shelved however. The Red-Green coalition won the election again in 2009, probably benefiting from the effects of the international economic crisis. The majority of the population held the opinion that the crisis was an argument for the continuation of a political leadership which was implementing elements of a Keynesian economic-policy approach to the economy. Some on the Conservative side voiced more liberal economic ideas.

The government has continued to focus on welfare issues, employment and social policy. The political differences over these issues are however smaller in Norway than in many other countries. The idea of "principled pragmatism" (Heclo 1979) is a common heritage in Norway and the Scandinavian countries. This paves the ground for a high degree of consensus and compromise on a practical level in most health, social and welfare policy issues (Elder, Thomas & Arter 1988).

The political will to continue an emphasis on poverty and poverty related issues has recently been documented in a public report to the government with the title: "Welfare and migration. The future of the Norwegian model" (Det kongelige arbeids og velferdsdepartement 2011) and a Government Report to the Parliament: "The report on distribution" (Det kongelige finansdepartement 2011). These reports contain a lot of empirical data and important analyses and value statements about the actual status of the multifaceted poverty issues in public policy.

In the report to the Parliament the government stated that the "The goal

of the government is a society without poverty". The action plan to combat poverty will be continued in 2012, the report says.

The will of the government is thus clear. Various means to accomplish this are analyzed and discussed. The government policy is to attack the problem in a broad, comprehensive/holistic manner with a long term perspective and emphasis on preventive measures. This is a very important positive basis for working to meet the poverty from the central political level. This may be seen as a necessary condition for improving the situation. But it is probably not sufficient to handle the poverty issue as it appears on the micro level of individual problems in local society. The understanding of the problem and the instruments the government proposes to handle it may be questioned. To what extent is government policy adequate and relevant to meet real challenges as they emerge in concrete terms on the local level? The relationship between intention and reality needs to be examined both more extensively and more intensely.

This point can be developed by looking at some basic information about the Norwegian welfare state structure and its functioning. A comprehensive picture of the main pillars of the Norwegian welfare state is presented in two recent books (Hatland, Kuhnle & Romøren 2011; Halvorsen & Stjernø 2008). The latter is in English.

4 Some aspects of the structure of the Norwegian welfare state model

The formation of Norway's modern welfare state dates back to the end of World War 2. The economic crisis in the 1930's lead to strong support for Keynesian economic policy amongst the ruling elite. Also the experience of the resistance and necessity of solidarity during the Nazi occupation from 1940–45, paved the way for the proclamation of the goal to create a welfare state after the war. All political parties signed a joint statement in 1945 to cooperate to implement this goal.

The building and operation of the welfare state coincided with the longest growth period in Norway both economically and socially. Without going deeper into questions about causality, it may be maintained that this development, which is fairly similar in the Scandinavian countries, modifies or even contradicts the popular liberal economic theory that high social protection, in the form of public spending to obtain a high level of so-

cial and economic security in a society, will harm the economic performance of that country.

The basic structure of the welfare state was completed around 1970. From this point in time a new development started that is very important for the performance and the challenges of the welfare state today. Firstly there is the strong movement towards gender equality and a changed role for women in society, as well as a change regarding the role and functions of the family. At present we see a situation where females are equal with men both with regard to work and education. Secondly Norway changed to become a country of immigration. From a modest beginning Norway today has an immigrant population on the same level as the other Scandinavian and North western European countries. Thirdly, Norway found oil in the North Sea/Norwegian Sea, and after initial investment costs oil and gas production since the 1980ies have made an important contribution both to the private and the public economy of the country. Most of the surplus from the state income from the oil sector is kept in financial funds which have been steadily growing and is designed to give security for the growing pension costs in the future (Halvorsen & Stjernø 2008).

During the Neo-liberal period in the 1980's the idea that the future of the welfare state was insecure and its days numbered was voiced both in politics and in academia, in Norway as elsewhere (Glennerster 1983; Kolberg 1983; Ringen 1981). In one of my works I argued, on the basis of a survey of a representative sample of Norwegian citizens, that the welfare state was regarded positively and that the support from the people would continue if the need for more information and participation from the citizens was met by the system (Vetvik 1988). The support of the population has always been an important element in strengthening the legitimacy of the welfare state in shifting political and economic environments (Bay, Blomberg-Kroll & Kroll 2009).

The welfare state continued, with some elements changed, but the basic structure survived and it has been maintained as the central structure of social policy in Norway. Since 1990, however, use the concept of the welfare state has declined. The new concept "welfare society/community" has been used in order to make the point that the wellbeing of society is not solely the task of the public sector.

The Scandinavian version of the welfare state is a political organisation

of a nation where the state has undertaken the basic responsibility to protect its citizens/inhabitants from the effects of social problems through legislation granting rights and services to help people to sustain a normal life in society. The value of dignity and human rights underpins this obligation. The mantra of the system for individual members of society is: "Do your duty. Claim your rights." This is a strong ethical obligation that may best be understood when the Lutheran religious tradition in Norway is taken into account. A strong emphasis on work ethics is a central aspect of the principle of the welfare state.

There are two principal dimensions which need to be measured to assess the quality and sustainability of a modern welfare state.

The first dimension is the quality of the social fabric of society and its sustainability. Because social problems appear and must be handled in a broad social context, the question of how "good the society" is for the people living there, is central. If a high level of social and societal problems are present in a society, more resources are needed to combat them than in a society with fewer and lower levels of problems. A society with a poor economy, high levels of social conflict, poor health conditions and high levels of unemployment, represents a greater challenge to social policy and poverty relief, than a society with more positive scores on these variables.

Secondly, the capacity and quality of social policy with regard to income maintenance and social services, among others, is very important in determining the total sustainability of the society. These two dimensions are correlated positively and negatively. They reinforce each other. Low levels of problems and high sustainability of the social fabric makes it easier for the social policy system to build capacity to cope with problems. This capacity is particularly needed when society is faced with new challenges. Thus such a system contributes to building and sustaining trust, credibility and responsibility in society. This can be understood as belonging to good or vicious circles (Mt. 28). Another concrete and simple illustration of this point, at least partially, is given in the biblical story of Joseph's dream about the seven good years which were followed by the seven bad years and how to handle these changing economic conditions (Gen. 41). This may also be expressed by the modern term of shifting economic cycles.

The main points emerging from these considerations are that if the sustaining structures of a society collapse, there is no social policy system that

has the capacity to deal with the consequences of it. And if there is no will in the population or policy from the government to build capacity in the public sector and its welfare systems, you cannot expect the public sector to be able support you much when a crisis comes. The ongoing crisis in Europe can perhaps be seen as an illustration of this.

This also means that social spending figures do not always show the generosity or the priority of social policy in a society. The employment situation and demographic factors may cause both reduction and increase in social spending at different times, regardless of, or with little correlation, to political priorities.

Socio-economic progress has been the main driver of Norway's progress from a poor country with few social rights, rudimentary income maintenance systems and few social services and towards a rich welfare state. Simultaneous and related investment in a comprehensive and relatively generous welfare state in interplay with this has been the pattern for the last 60 years. This has reduced and changed the county's social problems and challenges. No society can, however, completely solve its social problems in the sense that no problems will occur. The Norwegian sociologist Gudmund Hernes has stated that whatever reforms are undertaken, there will still be problems to solve. Solutions often create new problems. Hernes states that what we must find out is whether we prefer present problems to the problems of the past (Hernes 1988).

The goal of the welfare state is to address social problems, their causes and correlations — to help people and particularly to abolish or at least reduce the relatively strong correlation / overlap between poverty, health and lack of care as basic social problems; again, maintaining good circles and breaking vicious circles in the life of human beings.

The following chapter gives an overview of the present situation using statistical data relating to some important factors regarding poverty in the Norwegian welfare state to make the discussion more concrete. Some resource variables are presented and then some problem indicators are examined.

5 Central data about the Norwegian welfare state in a comparative perspective

In table 1 we present some data on national economy, the economy of the

households and employment for some European countries and the USA.

5.1 Economic resources

TABLE 1. INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT IN SOME COUNTRIES

COUNTRY	NNI/CAP	HOUSE-HOLD INCOME	EMPLOYMENT (15–64 Years)
	2006	2009	2007
Norway	45.600 USD	31.000 USD	76.5%
USA	38.900 USD	31.000 USD	67.6%
United Kingdom	30.000 USD	25.000 USD	70.6%
Netherlands	31.800 USD	24.000 USD	75.8%
Sweden	31.200 USD	23.000 USD	72.2%
Finland	28.200 USD	21.000 USD	68.4%
Germany	27.600 USD	21.000 USD	70.4%
Italy	24.400 USD	17.000 USD	57.5%
OECD Average	26.500 USD	19.000 USD	66.1%

Source and explanation: The sources for this information are the publications Society at a glance 2009 – OECD Social Indicators and Society at a glance 2011 – OECD Social Indicators. The columns Net National Income per Capita and Average Household Income are both measured in USD and adjusted for different price levels by using PPPs (Purchasing Power Parity standards).

The table demonstrates Norway's solid economic position for, particularly with regard to the national income, but also with regard to the average household income. The correlation between the income variables and the total level of employment is also clear, even though the US has a lower employment rate as compared to the income variables.

The high level of employment in Norway, Netherland and Sweden is connected to a general high level of productivity and economic activity. It is also connected to the fact that in the Nordic countries, particularly in Norway and Sweden, the percentage of employment in the age group 55–64 is much higher than in the euro countries or in EU-27 (European Union 2010, table 5.1). This is among other factors connected to the formal pen-

sion age. When the French turn to the streets to fight a one year increase of their relatively low pension age, this is not well understood in the Nordic countries.

Another factor making an impact on the total level of employment is the high level of work participation for females, almost on equal level with men. This is clearly connected to effects of welfare state family policy in the Nordic countries. This is also reflected in current higher fertility rates for the Nordic countries compared to southern and eastern Europe.

Another way of presenting national wealth is to measure GDP per capita in PPPs. In the Eurostat table 1.1 for 2010, containing figures from 2008, we find that Norway scores 190 where the average of the EU-27 is 100 and the euro area is 108. The US scores 154, Netherlands 135, Sweden 121, UK 117, Finland 115, and Italy just on the average by 100.

The figures for state debt show that the euro area has higher debt than the EU-27. The Nordic countries, with the exception of Iceland, have a much more comfortable situation with regard to this in comparison with large EU countries like Italy, France and also Germany (European Union 2010, table 1.6).

Data on taxation as a percentage of GDP show that the Nordic countries, with the exception of Iceland, have a higher level of taxation than the average both in EU-27 and the average in the in the euro area (European Union 2010, table 1.7). The point is that in the Nordic countries more of the cost for the households and for contributions to and services from the welfare state are met from taxation. As it can be seen from the data, this does not mean that the economy of these countries and their households are weaker than the average in EU and the OECD. On the contrary — the Nordic countries are scoring higher.

5.2 Problem indicators: unemployment, inequality and poverty

In table 2 we give an overview on the factors unemployment, inequality and poverty in Norway in comparison to some other European countries and the USA, same countries as in table 1. The sources are data from OECD and Eurostat.

TABLE 2. UNEMPLOYMENT, INEQUALITY AND POVERTY IN SELECTED COUNTRIES

COUNTRY	UNEMPLOYMENT 2009	INEQUALITY, Late 2000s	POVERTY, Late- 2000s
	% of total emplyment	Gini Coefficient	50% of median income
NORWAY	3.2%	0.25	7.8%
USA	9.4%	0.38	17.3%
UNITED KINGDOM	7.8%	0.34	11.3%
NETHERLANDS	3.9%	0.29	7.2%
SWEDEN	8.5%	0.26	8.4%
FINLAND	8.4%	0.26	7.9%
GERMANY	7.8%	0.30	8.9%
ITALY	7.9%	0.34	11.4%
AVERAGE OECD	8.1%	0.31	11.1%

The average of the EU-27 is about the same as OECD average with regard to unemployment and inequality. Because EU uses the 60% of median income as their "risk of poverty" indicator, these figures are not equal, but the structure with regards to ranking and differences are rather similar.

Using these indicators we see that Norway has a better score than the other countries and the average in OECD/EU and it has the lowest scores for unemployment and for inequality. With regard to poverty, the Netherlands has a somewhat better score. The table also shows that the Nordic countries and the Netherlands have fewer problems measured this way, than the average of the OECD and the EU countries.

One important fact that is demonstrated through particularly the OECD studies is that inequality and poverty have been rising over the two last decades when considerable economic growth has been taking place. This is a main topic in the OECD report: "Growing Unequal"? (OECD 2008). The report analyses growth and poverty and income distribution in the OECD

countries. There are also data in the OECD 2011 version of "Society at a glance" and in the Eurostat Yearbook 2010. Evidence of increasing inequality and of relative poverty point to the need to re-examine poverty and distribution policies in OECD and euro countries.

In Norway, however, both relative poverty and inequality have been reduced since 2006 (Det kongelige arbeids og velferdsdepartement 2011; Det kongelige finansdepartement 2011). Relative poverty and inequality are highly correlated and can be seen as two sides of the same coin.

The inequality problem can be seen as the basic lasting expression of poverty. In an interesting contribution by Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) the authors present a vast empirical study with comparisons between many different nations with regard to equality and other social dimensions. They maintain that in advanced societies the sensitive social indicators of health, life expectancy, violence and literacy are much more dependent on nation's levels of equality than on their levels of wealth. They conclude that equality is better for all. The conclusions from Wilkinson and Pickett are in line with some of the findings in a study by Glyn and Miliband (1994). They point to the fact that inequality also gives rise to severe economic costs for the society. A similar point is made in relation to the experiences of liberalisation of western economies in the 1980's. The free market policy brings heavy social costs (Taylor 1990).

The figures we have shown above have not yet reflected much of the ongoing crisis in the western economy since 2009 because statistics are lagging behind reality. Figures from OECD demonstrate that from 2010 the economic crisis is causing income difficulties for an increasing number of people who are finding it difficult to live on their current income (OECD 2011). 24% of the people in the OECD report that they have this kind of income difficulty. In Norway the figure is 6%, Sweden 7%, Netherlands 9 % and Finland 11%, these countries are at the on the positive end of the scale, while USA (21%), Italy (26%) and Greece (49%) have more widespread problems. This is a different way of measuring poverty, but the main picture is reinforced by it.

Another way to compare the poverty situation is to look at indicators of purchasing power for individuals and households on low incomes in various countries. A median income in Norway would produce a high purchasing power in some other countries. This factor among others, particularly

climate difference, explains the movement of elderly people from Northern Europe to the Mediterranean countries.

It is necessary, for several reasons, to identify supplementary indicators to measure relative poverty by income at a certain point in time. To find indicators of absolute poverty or strong deprivation is, however, more methodologically complicated than the relative measures we have been discussing so far. Better data about forms of absolute poverty is, however, required to make a valid assessment of poverty. The OECD have done some work of this kind in their study "Growing Unequal" (OECD 2008). There are also national studies of this type for some countries.

An OECD study of 2008 mentions the use of more absolute standards in the form of "a basket of goods and services required to assure minimum living conditions…"(OECD 2008, 129–130). By using such a measure the report concludes that there has been a significant reduction of absolute poverty between 1995 and 2005. In the 15 OECD countries where this information is available the absolute poverty rate fell by 40% in the period. This is an important fact to take into account in the analysis of poverty.

5.3 Briefly about some other relevant social indicators

Migration into many of the OECD countries increased significantly over the last decade. In 2008 the average foreign born population in the OECD was 11.7% of the total population. Norway had 10.3%, while Sweden had 13.9%, Germany 12.9%, USA 13.7%, Netherlands 10.9%, Italy 6.6% and Finland 4.1%. Migration is a factor that represents both advantages and challenges, much dependent on the need for employment and the composition of the migrant population in terms of their qualifications and values.

Migration to Norway started as labor-migration in the 1970's. In recent years migration has come mainly from Poland and Sweden due to the extension of the inner market in the EU and the difference in labor opportunities in Norway and Sweden. The need for qualified labor, good salaries and high living standard has made Norway increasingly attractive for unemployed people and experts in other parts of Europe. Many people from the countries of southern Europe now come to Norway to look for employment. This is made possible through Norway belonging to the inner market of the EU due to the European Economic Area agreement. Norway is, however,

further away from EU membership than ever. A monthly opinion poll in October 2011 showed that, 78% of the population was against Norwegian membership, while only 14% were in favor and 8% were undecided.

Social trust is an important quality for a society's sustainability and level of cooperation. In the OECD social indicators (OECD 2011) the Nordic countries and Netherlands score highest on 'trusting other people in society'. All these countries have a level of trust over 80%, while OECD average is 59%.

The Nordic countries also perceive the lowest levels of corruption in society and the highest level of confidence in the national institutions (OECD 2011).

5.4 Some conclusions from the OECD 2008 study on poverty

A main finding from the OECD study is that income poverty among the elderly has been falling over the two last decades, mainly as a consequence of better pension systems and the general economic development. Poverty for children and young people has been on the rise. Absolute poverty has been decreasing considerably. The saying "the rich get richer and the poor get poorer" is true if relative income criteria is used. But it is normally not true if you look at absolute poverty or compare the growth in the national economy of countries, neither in Europe nor in the rest of the world.

Income poverty at a point in time does not necessarily say much about poverty. Only if people have a low income over many years are they likely to be really poor and deprived. Entries into poverty very often reflect negative change in work and family situation.

Measures taken by governments to reduce income inequality make inequality less than it would have been without them. Public services are distributed more evenly than income in society and in this way social policy matters. Income maintenance schemes reduce inequality in many countries. Wealth, however, is distributed much more unevenly than income. This may be seen as an argument for redistribution as a means of fighting economic crises and poverty.

Social policy of governments uses both the strategy of work and the strategy of redistribution. If these strategies are well combined their effects are maximized. The norms and values in society are important for the actual

social policy chosen.

My interpretation of the report is that economic growth and high employment are positive factors in meeting the challenge of poverty. But a policy which is limited to these aspects cannot by itself combat the serious remaining aspects of the poverty challenge, particularly when we take equality and dignity into account.

6 A tentative reflection about the link of religion and quality of society

The data we have presented clearly demonstrates correlations between situations in different countries. Richard Titmuss (1968; 1977), Gösta Esping-Andersen (1990; 2000) and others have in several works tried to develop typologies of welfare states according to the similarities and differences between nations. In most of these works religion as a factor has been almost absent. Looking to older works from the sociological classics we find however that both Karl Marx and Max Weber had interests in the role of religion in society.

Max Weber argued that the ideas and norms in society were of great importance to understand the society and its development. He explained his views on the link between the two in his famous work about Protestant Ethics and the emergence of the capitalist economy (Weber 1976). His work and his conclusions have been much discussed. But his main point, that the culture, the ideas and the religion of a society have an impact on the development and functioning of society, remains a fruitful analytical perspective.

Karl Marx, from his basic materialistic assumption, saw religion as a negative force in society, giving people false consciousness and illusions of reality. Religion was "opium" for the masses and stopped them from rebelling against the ruling order in society — the dictatorship of the capitalists (Marx 1844). Marx may also be understood to emphasize that the individual life in society was formed to a very high degree by the social structures of that society, especially the forms of ownership.

Certainly both perspectives need to be examined. To understand society you need to understand the individual at the micro level of society. To understand individual behavior in a given society you need to know the main economic and cultural structures of that society.

Modern social policy in Europe can be said to start with the conservative German Emperor Bismarck who made social security legislation to curb rising social unrest which resulted from industrialisation and urbanization after the middle of the 19th century. His initiative can be seen as a counter measure to the popular support for the ideas of Marxism (Kuhnle 2000).

A little earlier, diakonia emerged in Germany, also as a reaction to the social circumstances for people in a poor and weak position. This initiative was based on a Christian calling based on Lutheran Protestant theology. In modern terms the initiative could be labeled as an act to protect the integrity of the creation with the purpose of protecting human beings from the destructive aspects of modernisation. From the beginning there was a strong spiritual dimension in this.

Anthony Giddens (1998) has in our time proclaimed social democracy as the "Third way" between conservatism and communism. In Europe Protestantism can be seen as a third way between Catholic/Orthodox Christianity and a secular worldview. Diakonia in Europe is certainly a child of protestant religion, even if charity work in general has been associated with Christianity from the beginning.

On this sketchy background and the empirical data from this paper I will pose the following question: to what extent may religion be seen as a driver behind the different welfare states in Europe (Vetvik 1992)? An answer to this must be very tentative and sketchy too.

On the surface, anyway, it seems that Protestant countries with relatively high levels of diakonia, also have the most advanced economies and also the best scores on welfare indicators in comparison to the Catholic area, not to mention the former communist Eastern bloc in Europe based mainly on Catholic and Orthodox Christianity.

These empirical findings are not confined to the Nordic countries. It is also true for the Netherlands, Northern Germany and Switzerland. The divide between north–south–east in Europe also represents a difference in the religion and culture of these societies.

The idea and existence of a comprehensive, universal and tax based welfare state, is highly correlated with the prevalence of protestant religion as a social, cultural denominator. The value basis of these Lutheran countries also gives relatively higher legitimacy for the state to intervene in private and family life where abuse and lack of care is found to be threatening the

social wellbeing and dignity of individuals. Legislation about child protection and abuse are concrete examples of this.

So, perhaps religion matters for the fabric of society and its social policy. Both Weber and Marx pointed to important aspects of this although there are, of course many differences between present day Europe and the Europe of the 19th and early 20th century. This theme does, however, deserve more research attention than it currently receives.

7 Poverty and dignity in Norway at present in a general assessment

The people of Norway enjoy a privileged situation in a nation with a strong economy and high levels of employment in a welfare state which has an annual budget surplus and a positive export/import balance. The welfare state provides for good public services and relative comprehensive income maintenance schemes. The system is mostly universal, mostly tax based and based on rights to a higher degree than in most, if not all other European countries. The large annual contribution to the state from oil revenue is mostly allocated to a fund to secure the future high demand for pensions for the elderly.

If the poverty problem was only about money, Norway has, over the last two decades, had the resources to solve it.

But as it has been shown in the previous data, Norway still has poverty problems and problems related to inequality. Even absolute poverty has not been completely abolished. The poor in Norway are found more often in some groups than in others. This is similar to the general picture in Europe, but to a lesser degree. Young people and migrants have about the double level of unemployment compared to the national average. Some migrant groups have much higher levels of unemployment than the average. Child poverty has been on the increase while poverty among elderly people has been reduced. Also entry to the labor market is hard for relatively many young people, particularly for young people dropping out of high school without being able to get relevant work. Levels of poverty and also of homelessness are much higher in urban areas, particularly in Oslo, than in other areas. These factors require closer attention both in practical action and research.

Taking dignity into account I will argue that the universal rights based

model, with some redistributive functions, has great significance for people's experience of dignity. It may be said that the model almost is a necessary precondition for dignity, but this may be discussed, modified and opposed by other views. My argument is, among others, that creating a unitary and comprehensive system of public social security can make an important contribution to social integration/inclusion. If these issues are handled through a fragmented system of diverse private and public systems, the risk of falling out of/through the system is much higher than in the universal one. The system in the USA in this respect can be seen as an extreme example of this. But also the so called "subsidiary principle" adopted by many of the countries in the European Union, represents in my assessment a problematic practice if dignity is the yardstick. This is because the knowledge about who is paying for your services and treatment will relate to your self-esteem and to the respect and dignity you are afforded by others.

The relevance of Titmuss's (1977) statement that services to poor people tend to be poor services is still valid in Europe today. The same may be said about the level of contributions different people receive to sustain their daily expenses. This was part of his argument in favor of universal welfare systems against a more particularistic system.

The universal welfare state such as Norway's, is however, not sufficient to meet the challenges of poverty and inequality, even if the situation may be seen to be better than in many other countries.

Firstly we see that some people are falling through the safety net of the welfare state, both because the system is not completely comprehensive and also because some people are unable for different reasons to obtain their rights.

Secondly we see that the way that welfare bureaucracy is operating, both with regard to the treatment of people and the rules that are regulating the system, sometimes denies people their dignity. More precisely we can say that all services and contributions which require the individual to make an application, can represent a risk to personal dignity, even if it is not normally so. This argument relates very much to services and contributions which are means/need tested. Disability pension, social assistance and services to the elderly come in this category.

We see examples of this in sometimes heated debates over stigma and contributions to disability recipients and social assistance recipients. The argu-

ment is that people who are not in a real need of these contributions get such generous economic contributions that they get more from the system than they could get from work. Disincentives to work in a system that relies very much on work as the main strategy for combating poverty, is of course a problem. On the other hand we may question the idea that people unable to work should not have the same level of income and living standard as others. We also need to be aware of what it is like to be out of work and poor in a society that is filled with working, well off people.

The old debate over "worthy" and "unworthy" recipients of social contributions and services is still alive as an undercurrent in social life in Norway. Individuals, whose case for getting these contributions is not clearly visible, run the risk of stigma and the need to legitimise themselves as worthy recipients can be humiliating.

There is, however, the political will on the part of the government to improve the situation as a recent report to the Parliament about the issue indicates (Det kongelige finansdepartement 2011). Civil society, voluntary organizations and diakonia share this objective and work towards improving the situation. Does diakonia matter in practice in meeting this challenge of combating poverty and lack of dignity? Can diakonia make a difference?

Of course it does, some will say. Maybe it does not matter so much as we think, I will ask? The answer is not self-evident. So let us take a closer look at some perspectives and elements/conditions of the answer. There are interesting aspects both of actual practice and future possibilities that require closer examination.

8 Some aspects of diakonia actions and roles related to poverty and dignity

Social policy is about the good life in society for human beings. Diakonia is a concept that is not very well known in circles concerned with social policy. From one point of view diakonia is about bringing a religious/spiritual dimension into social policy/social work in society.

The concept is normally primarily related to church and theology. I will not at this point, consider theological literature concerned with the "right" conceptual understanding of diakonia. Diakonia will be primarily in terms of Christian based social practice. Diakonia is here defined as "Christian

based action for people in need". It stems from a Greek word that basically means "serving". The idea of diakonia is to serve God through serving his creation and mankind in particular. The Lutheran Church of Norway, which still has 80% of the population as members, has made a normative program for diaconal activity in the church and its congregations. This program has been translated into English (Church of Norway 2008). The New Testament professor Hans Kvalbein has made an important contribution to the biblical understanding of poverty in his PhD thesis (Kvalbein 1981).

Diakonia maybe acts on the individual level. The Merciful Samaritan in the Bible (Lk 10:30 -37) is often mentioned as an example of this both by lay people and the clergy (Røed 1993). But normally diakonia is connected to activity from collective organisations like churches/congregations and Christian based NGOs (Lutheran World Federation 2009). Diakonia implies both actions and words based on Christian values. It covers both micro level action and macro level propagation of values and norms for society.

In the Norwegian context it is necessary and fruitful to make an analytical distinction between the Lutheran Church on one side and the Christian social NGOs on the other side. The church and its local congregations play a relatively limited role in relation to poverty and issues of inequality. Christian organizations/NGO's related to the church but with formally independent status are, however, doing much work in the field of social welfare in a broad sense. They also make a difference through activity directly related to the challenges of poverty and inequality.

Diakonia is active in a variety of social fields in European countries. The umbrella organization Eurodiaconia reports and co-ordinates this activity on behalf of national organizations/institutions on the protestant side (Eurodiaconia 2010). The Catholic organization Caritas has a similar role. These organizations are very active in Brussels feeding information and value positions into the processes of the European Union.

A recent study in the so called FACIT project set out to analyze the activity of diakonia in various national contexts in European cities (Dierckx, Vranken & Kerstens 2009) taking a broad approach under the heading of "faith-based organizations". It is too early to evaluate the outcome of this project, although the work appears somewhat fragmented and uneven. There are other projects which take a more direct view of the role of religion in modern Europe (Bäckström & Davie 2010). However these studies only

cover parts of the picture and are not directly related to the issue of poverty. More research is necessary.

Research about diakonia in the Nordic countries has increased considerably over the last decade. An article by Olav Helge Angell (Angell 2007), within the framework of a European project Welfare and Religion in a European Perspective (WREP) examines the role of organized religion in a city in Norway. He maintains that the local congregation in the Lutheran Church of Norway does not live up to expectations in practice. However, a Christian NGO was seen as acting as a value guardian in support of human dignity and the collective support for the welfare state. This finding is in line with a more general impression about the structure of the diaconal activity in the country.

A study by Jan Olav Røed found that few principal priests (sokneprestene) in local congregations of the Lutheran Church of Norway saw actions for poor and marginalized people as a normal and natural task for their congregations (Røed 1993). When this was published some priests maintained that the reason for this was lack of poor and marginalized people in their local community. This in my opinion was because poverty and marginalization were not generally very visible in Norwegian society at the time. It also may indicate a lack of understanding and knowledge of the problem. Poverty was less of a public issue than it became some years later, as earlier described.

There was also, however, an element of principled pragmatism in the responses to the survey. The problem of poverty and marginalization was seen as a task that was properly handled by the Welfare State.

In Finland at the same time local congregations of the Lutheran Church in Finland were very active in helping victims of the economic crisis (Hiilamo 2009). This can be explained by the considerable difference in the level of economic need in the two countries. It is also because the capacity of Finnish diakonia was and is much higher than in Norway. This is because, in Finland, national legislation requires that a diakonia worker should be employed by all congregations. In Norway this is a voluntary choice dependent upon the financial means and priorities of local congregations. Only about 30% of congregations in the Lutheran Church of Norway employ a deacon.

There is however also another important dimension in Røed study. He

finds that in the hypothetical situation where the welfare state does not cope with social challenges, the great majority of the priests, 63%–89% depending on the concrete task, answered that the church under such circumstances ought to contribute to meet the challenges. This attitude is still to my knowledge the dominant value in the Lutheran Church of Norway. The church leadership, represented by the bishops supports the welfare state. They scored as more radical than other elite groups in society on social ethical issues in the large national so called 'Power study' around year 2000 (Guldbrandsen et al. 2002).

The standpoint of church leaders is based on Lutheran teaching about the distinction between the spiritual and the social realm. In this view the state will act in line with the will of God in societal matters in normal situations, giving order, support and protection to the people. In exceptional situations when this is not the case, the church will take extraordinary responsibility. An example of this is the churches' role under the Nazi-occupation in 1940–45 (Austad 1978).

The capacity and willingness of the church to act in a situation of acute crisis was tested in a conflict with the state over church sanctuary for asylum seekers during the 1990's. In November 1993 more than 700 Kosovo Albanian asylum seekers sought church sanctuary in more than 140 churches and prayer houses, to avoid forced return to Kosovo. This caused a conflict between the church and the state as the state saw this as illegal obstruction of democraticly based decisions. The church argued that this was legitimate protection of vulnerable people and therefore an ethical obligation for the church. The conflict was resolved in a peaceful way through negotiations between the church leadership and the Government (Vetvik 1996).

The main view in Norwegian research about the voluntary organizations/NGOs with regard to their role in the welfare state/welfare society, is that they have a supplementary/complementary role. Kuhnle and Selle (1992) maintain that the public sector takes on the main responsibilities and most difficult tasks in the provision of social services and contributions while the NGO's take on the smaller and easiest tasks. The authors have a broad perspective and make general statements about the whole NGO sector. There may in my view be a need for clarification of both concepts and analysis here.

The conclusions of Kuhnle and Selle have, however, also been repeated

by some more recent studies which have focused more directly on diakonia organizations' actions to combat poverty in Norwegian cities. Nuland (2007) and Gautun (Gautun et al 2005) give interesting descriptive analyses of what the diakonia organizations actually do and how they do it. Their general conclusion is that the diakonia organizations' activity is merely a supplement to the public social services in helping the poor.

From a quantitative perspective, measuring the services, clients and expenses, I think the conclusion about diakonia as supplementary/complementary activity may be valid. But if the matter is examined in a more qualitative manner it can be hypothesized that diakonia is making a qualitative difference.

Part of the evidence for this comes from indications in data collected in the above mentioned studies and also others. The data show that the users of diakonia services and activities often report that their experience of its service is that the service is more respectful, open and dignifying than that provided by public services (Stjernø & Saltkjel 2008).

It is also reported in studies both from Finland (Kummel-Myrskog, Sarelin & Ekstrand 2009) and Norway (Angell 2007; Gautun, Drøpping & Fløtten 2005) that the work of diakonia organizations are seen both by the diaconal workers, by clients and by research as a work helping the most needy at the bottom of the social ladder and living in a form of absolute poverty. Such work is certainly not easy. The title of the report from Gautun and the title on the report from Finland is similar in English translation: "When the need is the largest". Some of diakonia's proclamations state that diakonia is serving the poorest of the poor and helping people who no one else is helping.

Again I feel there is a need for a closer look at this in order to make a valid and comprehensive picture of the activity. Many of the users or clients of diakonia services are undoubtedly in great need, but definitely not all of them. We know that many of the users have their basic means of income met from social assistance and social security. We need more precise and reliable empirical studies of this. We need more information about the background and situation of the users of diakonia. Diakonia should be open to self-criticism and open to critical research just as much as others.

We also may need to modify the view that diakonia has a great reservoir of dignity that is automatically handed out when diakonia organisations and

people are meeting the needy. Diaconal services receive complaints and have conflicts with their users.

The fact that diaconal services very seldom give money to the poor, but instead provide counseling, mediating, food, shelter clothes and other gifts, may also be discussed critically from a dignity perspective. If you get money, how you use it is your own decision. When the church is "feeding the poor" you have to take what you get.

Dignity connected to self-determination is a fundamental part of the concept. There have always been questionable aspects of charity, despite good intentions.

Nevertheless the central research question is in which forms and to what extent can diakonia provide qualitatively different services and results for its users, clients and the people they meet. Is diakonia only present in the gaps of welfare society as a purely quantitative resource, or is it sometimes functioning qualitatively better in helping poor and marginalized people? Diakonia has a long history of pioneering help to poor and ill people. It started long before the welfare state and social policy. Is it still possible for diakonia on the basis of its practice to be an innovator in finding new ways to deal with the old problems of poverty, inequality and injustice?

An important point for consideration and research is the relationship between diakonia and other providers/stakeholders in society, both private and public. Much of diaconal activity in Norway would not be possible without economic support from a generous welfare state and a partial integration into the public system of services and contributions. Studies of diakonia actions to combat poverty should therefore always take into account their relationship to other actors. To act in ways that increase cooperation and diminish competition, hostility and unfamiliarity with the work of others, should be a goal for diakonia if it wants more dignity for people in society.

One conclusion from a closer study of diakonia is that "practice based evidence" is required as well as "evidence based practice".

The challenge is not only to design structures and actions to combat poverty and marginalization in theory and legislation. We also need to find out how it works in practice and find ways to improve that practice. In doing so there is a need to focus on the value basis. Inequality and poverty can never be overcome without the willingness to share. That means redistributive policies on the macro level and resource sharing among people in local

community. Diaconal values of serving people and society may be a fruitful approach to making a change and a difference with regard to dignity.

Whether diakonia represents a qualitative innovative practice is an interesting research question. A comparative case study method, may give new insights into this (Flyvbjerg 2001; Yin 2003). The community building side of diakonia may have great importance for social inclusion and dignity. To what extent and in which forms can diakonia act as an inclusive factor for poor and marginalized people in society? How inclusive is diakonia in reality in organizations and congregations? Is it sometimes more exclusive than inclusive? Can diakonia strengthen local community resilience through local development?

The diakonia approach is to a high degree targeting individuals and local communities. Can diakonia contribute to a qualitative change in the lives of individuals trapped in a vicious circle of marginalization and poverty? This has to do both with the idea of breaking bad circles to prevent a negative development and to supporting people for example on the way out of treatment and problems. Very often we see that the transition periods in people's lives are high risk periods. We have looked upon some diaconal practices in Norway which may be very interesting for closer empirical studies (Greaker & Vetvik 2000; Kvalvaag, Sørbye & Vetvik 1995; Kvalvaag & Vetvik 1997; Vetvik & Greaker 1998; Vetvik & Omland 1995; Øygard and Hardeng 2001).

9 Some tentative conclusions

The universal welfare state model based on human rights, including the social rights for citizens, in combination with a high emphasis on work strategy and work ethics has many advantages over other models with regard to combating poverty and giving dignity to the people. But as we have demonstrated through the paper this is not sufficient to abolish poverty and give dignity to all people. Sometimes we may even get the impression that the strong emphasis on employment and work ethics has side effects that are harming the dignity of poor and marginalized people. This needs more attention both in research and in practice.

Poverty even in a rich welfare state like Norway still presents important challenges to social wellbeing and dignity. Poverty in a more absolute sen-

se can perhaps be seen as an issue which is no longer paramount, but it is still visible and threatening in the lives of poor and marginalized people. They can be seen on the streets of Oslo both in the cold winter and the rest of the year. These problems are not easy to solve. There is a need for a different approach to improve the situation from where it stands today. The words of Jesus, "The poor will always be among you" (Mk. 14:7), are still an actual challenge.

Poverty in the relative sense is still persistent and is so widespread that it cannot be labeled as not of immediate concern. This fact leads to the observation that poverty is not something that we can get rid of through the use of money and material measures alone. Poverty poses a more fundamental problem about equality and dignity for people in society. We need more qualitative research and good innovative practice to make further progress here. This new practice must be a combination of macro political reforms and targeted social practice on the micro level, meaning individuals and local communities. For diakonia the tale of the "good shepherd" (Jn. 10:11–16), may be seen as an inspiration to such innovative practice.

Diakonia already plays a role on both levels supporting the welfare state from an ideological perspective based on social ethics and Lutheran theology. The greater part of diakonia work undertaken by Christian social organizations is in tandem with and integrated into the welfare state. It is financed and controlled to a large extent by the welfare state system. It can be seen as a supplement/complement to the welfare state, as a mainly quantitative resource. That is not bad and must be assessed in positive terms as a contribution from diakonia to the common good of society.

But there are also examples of some more independent, grassroots oriented diaconal contributions targeting poverty and social exclusion more directly. This could be studied more closely so that more can be learnt about the situation for the weakest members of society both with regard to their life situations and their possible ways out of a vicious circle of poverty. We need more qualitative research and more quality social practices to make progress here. In my assessment such studies may demonstrate that diakonia can sometimes be innovative and make a qualitative difference to the work of the welfare state. One theme which calls for more research in particular is invisible/hidden need. Some people suffer for a long time in isolation in modern society.

The actual role of diakonia in European welfare states can also be seen as a dilemma, particularly from a Marxist perspective.

In a Marxist perspective diakonia can be seen, not as opium, but perhaps as a sleeping pillow for the responsible governments. Diakonia softens the blows from and conscience about injustice in society. The governments may be using diakonia to get off the hook and slide away from the consequences and responsibility of their mistaken policies.

On the other side diakonia based on its ideals has to care about the weakest members of society and cannot use poor people's increased suffering as gunpowder for political purposes to maximize the crisis.

Will diakonia accept being a "hostage" because of being dependent of government funding of much of their services, even if this limits its freedom to voice criticism of economic and social policies in society and their consequences for poor and marginalized people? Or will the government not only allow, but also welcome a diaconal based criticism of the functioning not only of welfare bureaucracy, but also of government social policy? It may be difficult, but Norway is after all the country which invented, developed and still maintains the ombudsman system. From a Christian point of view diakonia will always have to assess whether it will stay by the meat pots in Egypt or make an exodus to more freedom (cf. Ex 37–42).

Combating poverty and making dignity means breaking bad economic cycles and sustaining the good ones on the macro level. On the individual, micro level it is about breaking vicious circles for people and sustaining them in good circles.

References

Angell, Olav Helge 2007. Church-based welfare and public religion. Nordic Journal of Religion and Society 20 (2), 179–193.

Austad, Torleiv 1987. Eivind Berggrav and the Church of Norways's resistance against Nazism, 1940-45. Mid-stream: An Ecumenical Journal 26, 51–61.

Aubert, Vilhelm 1970. Fattigdommen i Norge. In Lingås, Lars Gunnar (ed.): Myten om Velferdsstaten. Pax Forlag, Oslo, 16–32.

Bachrac, Peter & Baratz, Morton S. 1970. Power and Poverty – Theory and Practice. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bay, Ann-Helén; Blomberg-Kroll, Helena & Kroll, Christian 2009. En Nordisk Opinion? Syn på fattige i Norge og Finland. In Bay, Ann-Helén; Pedersen, Axel West & Saglie, Jo (eds): Når Velferd blir politikk – partier, organisasjoner, opinion. Oslo. Abstrakt Forlag, 202–247.

Bäckström, Anders & Davie, Glen (eds.) 2010. Welfare and Religion in the 21st Century Europe: Volume 1 – Configuring the Connections. Aldershot, Ashgate.

Chan, Chak Kwan & Bowpitt, Graham 2005. Human Dignity and Welfare Systems. Bristol, Policy Press.

Church of Norway National Council 2008. Plan for diakonia.

Commission on Social Justice 1994. Social Justice – Strategies for National Renewal. London, Vintage Books.

Det kongelige arbeids og velferdsdepartement 2011. Velferd og migrasjon – Den norske modellens framtid 2011. Norges offentlige utredninger 2011: 7. Accessed 2th of December 2011. http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/16413697/PDFS/NOU2011201110007000DDDPDFS.pdf

Det kongelige finansdepartement 2011. Meld. St. 30 (2010–2011) – Melding til Stortinget. Fordelingsmeldingen. Accessed 2th of December 2011. http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/35133947/PDFS/STM201020110030000DDDPDFS.pdf

Det kongelige sosialdepartement 2002. St.meld. nr. 6 (2002–2003) – Tiltaksplan mot fattigdom. Accessed 2th of December 2011. http://www.regjeringen.no/Rpub/STM/20022003/006/PDFS/STM200220030006000DDDPDFS.pdf

Dierckx, Danielle; Vranken, Jan & Kerstens, Wendy (eds.) 2009. Faith based Organizations and Social Exclusion in European Cities – National Context Reports. Den Haag, ACCO Leuven.

Elder, Neil; Thomas, Alastair & Arter, David 1988. The Consensual Democracies – The Government and Politics of the Scandinavian States. Oxford, Blackwell.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta 1990. The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism. Polity Press, Cambridge.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta 2000. The Social Foundations of Post Industrial Economies. Oxford, University Press.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta (ed) 2002. Why We Need a New Welfare State. Oxford, University Press.

Eurodiaconia 2010. The Social Cost of the Crisis: Even More in Need and More Needed – Report on the social repercussions of the economic and financial crisis. Accessed 30th of November 2011. http://www.eurodiaconia.org/files/Financial%20crisis/The%20Social%20Cost%20of%20the%20Crisis,%20Even%20More%20in%20Need%20and%20More%20Needed.pdf

European Union 2010. Key Figures on Europe. 2010 edition. Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union.

Flyvbjerg, Bent 2001. Making Social Science Matter – Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Fløtten, Tone; Pedersen, Axel West & Lødemel, Ivar 2009. Når problemet er fattigdom. In Nuland, Bjørn Richard; Tranøy, Bent Sofus & Christensen, Johan (eds.): Hjernen er alene – institusjonalisering, kvalitet og relevans i norsk velferdsforskning. Oslo, Universitetsforlaget.

Gautun, Heidi; Drøpping, Jon & Fløtten, Tone 2005. Når nøden er størst – En analyse av frivillige organisasjoners hjelp til fattige. Fafo-rapport 476. Oslo, Fafo.

Giddens, Anthony 1998. The Third Way – The Renewal of Social Democracy. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Glennerster, Howard 1985. The Future of the Welfare State – Remaking Social Policy. Aldershot, Gower.

Greaker, Arild & Vetvik, Einar 2000. Ettervern for domfelte – Samarbeid mellom frivillige organisasjoner og det offentlige – Sluttrapport fra B.A.R.M.-prosjektet. Oslo, Diakonhjemmets høgskolesenter, Forskningsavdelingen.

Gulbrandsen, Trygve; Engelstad, Fredrik; Klausen, Trond Beldo; Skjeie, Hege; Teigen, Mari & Østerud, Øyvind (eds.) 2002. Norske makteliter. Oslo, Gyldendal Akademisk.

Halvorsen, Knut & Stjernø, Steinar 2008. Work, oil and welfare – The welfare state in Norway. Universitetsforlaget, Oslo.

Harsløf, Ivan & Seim, Sissel (eds.) 2008. Fattigdommens dynamikk – Perspektiver på marginalisering i det norske samfunnet. Oslo, Universitetsforlaget.

Hatland, Aksel; Kuhnle Stein & Romøren, Tor Inge (eds.) 2011. Den norske vel-

ferdsstaten. Oslo, Gyldendal Akademisk.

Heclo, Hugh & Madsen, Birger 1979. Policy and Politics in Sweden – Principled Pragmatism. Temple University Books, Philadelphia.

Hernes, Gudmund 1998. Reformledelse. In Kolbjørnsen, Tom (ed.): Ide, konsekvens, handling – Suksesskriterier for endring. AFFs årbok 1998. Oslo, Cappelen Akademisk forlag.

Hiilamo, Heikki 2009. How the Church became engaged to help the victims of a deep economic down turn? Experiences from Finland in the 1990ies. Presentation in Reykjavik 14.9.2009

Jacobsen, Knut Dahl 1970. Politisk fattigdom. In Lingås, Lars Gunnar (ed.) : Myten om velferdsstaten. Pax Forlag, Oslo, 175–180.

Kolberg, Jon Eivind 1983. Farvel til velferdsstaten? Folketrygdens økonomi, sosialpolitiske modeller, offentlig og privat omsorg, nedskjæringer. Cappelen, Oslo.

Kramer, Ralph M. 1981. Voluntary Agencies in the Welfare State. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kuhnle, Stein 2000. Velferdsstatens idégrunnlag i perspektiv. In Hatland, Aksel; Kuhnle, Stein & Romøren, Tor Inge (eds.): Den norske velferdsstaten. Oslo, Gyldendal Akademisk, 9–31.

Kuhnle, Stein & Selle, Per (eds.) 1992. Government and voluntary organisations – A Relational Perspective. Aldershot, Ashgate.

Kummel-Myrskog, Pia; Sarelin, Birgitta & Ekstrand, Sixten (eds.) 2009. Där nöden är störst – En introduktion i diakoni ur finländsk synvinkel. Helsingfors, Kyrkostyrelsen.

Kvalbein Hans 1981. Jesus og de fattige. University of Oslo. Faculty of Theology. PhD thesis.

Kvalvaag, Heidi; Sørbye, Liv W. & Vetvik, Einar 1995. En evaluering av AAN's organisasjon og virksomhet. Rapport nr. 4/95. Oslo, Forskningsavdelingen, Diakonhjemmets høgskolesenter.

Lavalette, Michael & Pratt, Alan (eds.) 2006. Social Policy – Theories, Concepts and Issues. London, Sage.

Laqueur, Walter & Rubin, Barry (eds.) 1990. The Human Rights Reader. Meridian Books, New York.

Lasswell, Harold D. 1936. Politics: Who gets what, when and how? Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Sivesind, Karl Henrik; Lorentzen, Håkon; Selle, Per & Wollebæk, Dag 2002. The voluntary sector in Norway – composition, changes and causes? Oslo, Institutt for samfunnsforskning.

Lingås, Lars Gunnar (ed.) 1970. Myten om velferdsstaten. Pax Forlag, Oslo.

Lister, Ruth 2004. Poverty. Cambridge, Polity.

Lund, Monika 2006. De frivillige og de fattige – Frivillige organisasjoners hjelpetiltak overfor fattige. Fafo Rapport 528. Oslo, Fafo.

Lutheran World Federation 2009. Diakonia in Context – Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment – An LWF Contribution to the Understanding and Practice of Diakonia. Geneva, Lutheran World Federation.

Marx, Karl 1844. Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechts Philosophie. Accessed 2th of December 2011. http://www.zeno.org/Philosophie/M/Marx,+Karl/Zur+Kritik+der+Hegelschen+Rechtsphilosophie

Nuland, Bjørn Richard 2007. Ansikt til ansikt med fattigdommen – Frivillige organisasjoners hjelpetiltak overfor fattige. Fafo-rapport 2007:18. Oslo, Fafo.

OECD 2008. Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries. OECD Publishing.

OECD 2009. Society at a Glance 2009 – OECD Social Indicators. OECD Publishing.

OECD 2011. Society at a Glance 2011 – OECD Social Indicators. OECD Publishing.

Ringen, Stein 1981. Hvor går velferdsstaten? Fordelingspolitikkens opprinnelse og fremtid. Oslo, Gyldendal.

Ringen, Stein 1988. The Possibility of Politics – A Study in the Political Economy of the Welfare State. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Rowntree, Benjamin Seebohn 1951. Poverty and the Welfare State. London, Longmans Green.

Røed, Jan Olav 1993. Soknepresten og Menighetsdiakonien. University of Oslo. Faculty of Theology. Thesis.

Sachs, Jeffrey 2005. The End Of Poverty – How We Can Make It Happen In Our Lifetime. London, Penguin.

Stjernø, Steinar 1985. Den moderne fattigdommen – Om økonomisk knapphet og ydmykelse i 1980-åra. Oslo, Universitetsforlaget.

Stjernø, Steinar 1989. Fattigdommen og fattighjelpen – ved et vendepunkt? In Lingås, Lars Gunnar (ed.): Myten om Velferdsstaten – 20 år etter. Pax Forlag, Oslo.

Stjernø, Steinar & Saltkjel, Therese 2008. Gjennom det siste sikkerhetsnettet? En studie av Frelsesarmeens og Bymisjonens brukere. In Harsløf, Ivan & Seim, Sissel (eds.): Fattigdommens dynamikk. Perspektiver på marginalisering i det norske samfunnet. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Taylor, Ian (ed.) 1990. The Social Effects of Free Market Policies – An international Text. New York, Harvester Wheatsheaf.

The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005.

Titmuss, Richard Morris 1968. Commitment to Welfare. London, Allen & Unwin.

Titmuss, Richard 1977. Social Policy – An Introduction. London, Allen & Unwin.

Townsend, Peter 1954/2010. The Meaning of Poverty. The British Journal of Sociology 61, 85–102.

Townsend, Peter 1979. Poverty in the United Kingdom – A survey of household resources and standards of living. Harmondsworth, Penguin.

Vetvik, Einar 1988. Folk og forvaltning – Reformer kreves om velferdsstaten skal overleve. Nordisk Administrativt Tidsskrift 4.

Vetvik, Einar 1992. Religion and State from a Western Christian Perspective. In Nielsen, Jørgen S. (ed.): Religion and Citizenship in Europe and the Arab World. London, Grey Seal, 7–24.

Vetvik, Einar 1996. Kirkeasyl – religion og politikk på norsk. Norsk statsvitenskapelig tidsskrift 2, 163–178.

Vetvik Einar & Omland, Torunn 1995. KRAFT – veien tilbake til samfunnet? Oslo, Diakonhjemmets høgskolesenter, Forskningsavdelingen.

Vetvik, Einar & Kvalvaag, Heidi M. 1997. En modell for forebyggende arbeid med ungdom i problemer – En evaluering av arbeidet ved Kirkens kontaktsenter i Bergen. Oslo, Diakonhjemmets høgskolesenter, Forskningsavdelingen.

Vetvik, Einar & Greaker, Arild 1998. Aktivitet og Mening – En studie av Kalfarhuset i Bergen som ettervernstiltak. Oslo, DHS.

Weber, Max 1985. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. London, Unwin.

Wilkinson, Richard G. & Pickett, Kate 2009. The Spirit Level – Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better. London, Allen Lane.

Yin, Robert 2003. Case study research – Design and methods. 3rd Edition. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Øygard, Lisbet & Hardeng, Stein 2001. Divorce Support Groups – How Do Group Characteristics Influence Adjustment to Divorce? Social Work with Groups 24 (1), 69–87.

David Penn (Churches' Regional Commission in the North East)

APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

In this paper the concept of community resilience is explored and the ways in which it is being developed in a range of different contexts are examined. The paper includes:

  (a) some definitions of community resilience
  (b) aspects of community resilience
  (c) community resilience and faith
  (d) resilience in UK public policy and
  (e) brief conclusions.

1 Some definitions of community resilience

The term community resilience, as it has been developed and applied in a wide variety of contexts worldwide, has become a broad concept as the following ten definitions demonstrate. What all these definitions have in common is the idea that communities which are resilient take the initiative rather than allowing external forces to determine their future.

1. The capability to anticipate risk, limit impact, and bounce back rapidly through survival, adaptability, evolution, and growth in the face of turbulent change. (Community and Regional Resilience Institute 2011).

2. Community resilience ... is the existence, development, and engagement of community resources by community members to thrive in an environment characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability, and surprise. (Magis 2010, 401).

3. "A resilient community is one that takes intentional action to enhance the personal and collective capacity of its citizens and institutions to respond to and influence the course of social and economic change" (Canadian Centre for Community Renewal 2000. 1-5).

4. "The capacity of social groups and communities to recover from, or respond positively to, crises" (Maguire & Hagan 2007, 16).

5. "The ability of communities to withstand and adapt in response to shocks" (IPPR 2010, 4).

6. "Resilience: The capacity of an individual, community or system to adapt in order to sustain an acceptable level of function, structure, and identity." (Edwards, C 2009, 18).

7. "Resilience ... is a community or region's capability to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from significant multi-hazard threats with minimum damage to public safety and health, the economy, and national security" (Edwards, W 2009).

8. "An unexpected positive outcome being achieved in the context of high levels of adversity" (Bartley M 2006, 1).

9. Individuals and households who manage to negotiate adverse conditions rather than be overcome by them (Davidson 2008, 115).

10. "Resilience can be seen as a six fold capacity that enables communities to absorb or adapt to change, negotiate uncertainty, recover from disasters, deal with conflict, overcome adversity and resist threats" (Gilchrist 2009, 1).

2 Aspects of community resilience

The concept of resilience has brought an added dimension to the understanding of communities and their development. Building on social capital theory resilience brings a dynamic perspective, looking at events and challenges and seeing how communities respond. Breton (2001, 21) refers to

the stability of a community's equilibrium and suggests that a neighbourhood with a large stock of social and physical capital is not easily dislodged whilst one which has been weakened by past public and corporate policies loses its capacity to recover. Communities can, for example, be destabilised by significant inward or outward migration.

Resilience has become a key concept in the field of emergency planning and disaster recovery. Studies of natural and manmade disasters have shown that the capacity of a community to recover and continue to develop varies according to its resilience capability. Maguire and Hagan (2007, 16) propose three 'properties' of social resilience: resistance, recovery and creativity. The creativity dimension, describing the community's capacity to adapt and learn provides the link between resilience and community development. Social capital analyses can provide a 'snapshot' of a community's social capital assets, resilience studies can show how these assets can be enhanced or depleted through learning and adaptation. Batty and Cole (2010) show how resilience can move thinking about communities on from deficit models of social and economic exclusion by placing more emphasis on 'resilience as a process of meeting successive challenges'.

The resilience concept has been applied and adopted by a wide range of disciplines leading to a flow of ideas which are continually enhancing and developing its use. Individual resilience is an important concept in psychological health for instance. The link between individual children's resilience and neighbourhood resilience has been made by Mykota and Muhajarine (2005). Their model looks at protective and risk factors related to (a) structural characteristics of neighbourhoods and (b) social and interpersonal neighbourhood processes.

Resilience has become a major component of community economic development, not only in advancing theory but particularly in the development of tools and techniques which communities can apply. The (CEE) Centre for Community Enterprise, in British Columbia, Canada has developed a resilience model with 23 characteristics grouped into four 'dimensions': people, organisations, resources and community processes. The Centre has produced a manual and toolkit for communities (Canadian Centre for Community Renewal 2000, 1-5) to use for self evaluation and strategic planning. Their focus is primarily on economic development. A complete picture of community resilience would require a bringing together of

the structural characteristics of neighbourhoods referred to by Mykota and Muhajarine (2005) with the CEE's four dimensions.

Other important developments of economic and developmental community resilience come from the field of emergency planning and disaster recovery, for example in the USA (Community and Regional Resilience Institute 2011) and in Australia (Building Resilience in Rural Communities Toolkit 2008). The close link between the natural and social aspects of resilience can also be seen in Magis (2010).

Networking lies at the heart of both social capital and resilience theory and this is exemplified in the RSA's major study 'Connected Communities' (Rowson, Broome & Jones 2010, 11). This study, which maps in detail the formal and informal networks which make up an inner London community, sees networking as the core component of resilience. The authors see resilience as 'not about keeping everything the same, but about having some control over the changes to which we are subject'. They see the strength or fragility of community hubs and the degree of their interconnectedness as being particularly important. They also look at the process of network formation, in response to specific problems, and the extent to which such connections persist after the problem has been resolved. This emphasis on formal and informal networks is also found in Alison Gilchrist's (2009, 1) work on connected communities.

Some studies have developed resilience measurement tools so that communities can be compared. The IPPR's study of BNP support (IPPR 2010, 4) uses a resilience scoring methodology based on a set of economic, political, community and individual statistical indicators. In the UK the concept of community resilience has also been used (by the government) in connection with resistance to violent extremism (Building Community Resilience – Prevent Case Studies 2009).

The economic resilience of communities is of interest to central and local government and resilience ratings based on a range of social and economic indicators are now commercially available (Experian 2011).

Because these approaches are based on national social and economic data sets they are only able to explore relatively limited and external aspects of resilience. The work of the community economic development practitioners in Canada and Australia mentioned above includes use of resilience measurement tools developed, tested and used by communities based upon

their own experience and perceptions. The value of indicator development for community building can be seen as a way of bringing resilience measurement and community development together (Zautra 2009).

3 Community resilience and faith

Resilience is a concept which connects to and draws on spiritual values and moral theology. The spiritual dimension of resilience in the context of the Christian tradition has been explored by Titus (2002). Titus looks at the application of the resilience approach in the human and social sciences to individual and community resilience and links this to the spiritual values of virtue and fortitude. This linkage finds practical expression in the ways that faith communities build their own resilience and that of the societies in which they are located.

Since 2001 governments have given increased emphasis to the positive potential that faith communities offer for society building whilst also recognising the perceived threat of extremism. In the USA the White House has established an Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. The web site (Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships) refers to President Obama's statement that

> *The particular faith that motivates each of us can promote a greater good for all of us. Instead of driving us apart, our varied beliefs can bring us together to feed the hungry and comfort the afflicted; to make peace where there is strife and rebuild what has broken; to lift up those who have fallen on hard times.*

In the UK the coalition government's Big Society initiative places considerable emphasis on the contribution of faith communities to civil society. The theological basis of this is explored in a report of the Mission and Public Affairs Council to the Church of England's General Synod (General Synod of the Church of England 2010, paragraph 51) stating that

> *a Christian vision of the good society aims to generate the kind of strong social bonds that also appear among the objectives of the Big Society project. It will be important for us to stress that, for Christians, such bonds are the*

prerequisite of any viable human society and are not to be valued merely for economic, expedient or utilitarian reasons.

The idea of a resilient community and the way in which this can be linked to faith has also been applied to people and societies facing extreme threats and challenges. Jan Holton examines the ways in which the Dinka community's Christian and indigenous traditions help build the resilience of young Dinka men (Doering 2010). The World Council of Churches Ecumenical Review (Ecumenical Review 2010) focuses on the faith of indigenous people and contains articles which look at the relationship between their faith and the resilience of their communities using theological approaches.

Looking at resilience in the context of faith helps to highlight a core aspect of the concept. Resilience is dependent on the values of the community and its people and in some societies these are indistinguishable from spiritual values. Whilst governments may support resilience for instrumental reasons resilience based on faith can be fundamental to the community concerned.

4 Resilience in UK public policy

Perceptions of the resilience concept within the public and third sector in the UK have been shaped by its application to two different, but not unrelated, spheres:

(a) emergency and disaster recovery planning and
(b) resistance to violent extremism, the 'prevent' agenda

4.1 Resilience and emergency and disaster recovery planning

The use of the resilience concept in relation to emergency planning is exemplified by the UK resilience programme's website (Cabinet Office 2011) which focuses on emergency preparedness, response and recovery. The term community resilience in this context is defined as being

about communities and individuals harnessing local resources and expertise to help themselves in an emergency, in a way that complements the res-

ponse of the emergency services.

The use of the community resilience concept is widened in the government's Community Resilience Programme to encompass a more holistic understanding (Cabinet Office Community Resilience 2011).

The programme aims, for instance to:

> *increase individual, family and community resilience against all threats and hazards,*

> *support and enable existing community resilience, and expand and grow these successful models of community resilience in other areas" and*

> *remove the barriers which inhibit or prevent participation in community resilience at a local level*

In practice the programme focuses on communities' collaborative emergency planning, response and recovery capabilities and upon threats from natural, environmental, industrial and terrorist sources. It does not extend to economic and social threats or to the hazards arising from multiple deprivation.

The connection between capability to recover from disasters and inequality is not made despite the lessons learnt from emergencies such as the hurricane Katrina which have highlighted the link between poverty, deprivation and a community's capability to recover. The Social Science Research Council's website (Cutter 2006) highlights the importance of making this link, learning from the experience of New Orleans:

> *The revelations of inadequate response to the hurricane's aftermath are not just about failures in emergency response at the local, state, and federal levels or failures in the overall emergency management system. They are also about failures of the social support systems for America's impoverished—the largely invisible inner city poor. The former can be rectified quickly (months to years) through organizational restructuring or training; the latter requires much more time, resources, and the political will to redress social inequities and inequalities that have been sustained for more than a*

half century and show little signs of dissipating.

Because the link between emergencies and inequalities is not made at UK government level the perception of 'resilience' within many parts of local government is that it relates to physical infrastructure and emergency procedure issues. The role of faith communities in this specific aspect of community resilience was set out in a UK government paper in 2008 'Key Communities, Key Resources: Engaging the capacity and capabilities of faith communities in civil resilience'. (Department for Communities and Local Government 2008.)

4.2 Resistance to violent extremism, the 'prevent' agenda

The other use of the term 'community resilience' within government that has shaped local government and third sector perceptions is its use in relation to prevention of violent extremism. The 'Prevent' strategy introduced by the previous government associated community resilience with its strategy for prevention of violent extremism. The present (post May 2010) coalition government has reviewed the Prevent strategy and queried this linkage.

5 Conclusions

As the concept of community resilience gains currency it has also become more diverse in its application. There is a danger that adoption of the term by governments in relation to specific programmes such as disaster recovery or the threat of extremism may weaken and devalue its power. As post Katrina studies show resilience is undermined by inequality.

Resilience has a moral dimension which in some societies finds expression in the language of faith. In others, whilst this may not be the case, resilience is nevertheless dependent upon acceptance of values such as the common good, respect, justice and equality. Understanding that the concept of resilience is intimately linked to people's core values and beliefs will strengthen it.

References

Bartley, M. 2006. University College London Department of Epidemiology and Public Health on behalf of the ESRC Priority Network on Capability and Resilience. (2003 – 2007) Project number RES-337-25-0001W: www.ucl.ac.uk/capabilityandresilience

Batty, E. & Cole, I. 2010. Resilience and the recession in six deprived communities: Preparing for worse to come? Joseph Rowntree Foundation programme paper: Poverty and place programme. Accessed 12th of December 2011. http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/recession-deprivation-communities-full.pdf

Breton, M. 2001. Neighbourhood Resiliency. Journal of Community Practice 9 (1), 21–36.

Building Community Resilience – Prevent Case Studies 2009. London, Department of Communities and Local Government.

Building Resilience in Rural Communities Toolkit 2008. University of Queensland and University of Southern Queensland. Accessed 12th of December 2011. http://learningforsustainability.net/pubs/Building%20Resilience%20in%20Rural%20Communities%20Toolkit.pdf

Cabinet Office 2011. Accessed 27th of September 2011. http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience

Cabinet Office Community Resilience 2011. Accessed 27th of September 2011. http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Strategic-National-Frameworkon-Community-Resilience_0.pdf

Canadian Centre for Community Renewal 2000. Community Resilience Manual – A Resource for Rural Recovery & Renewal. Canadian Centre for Community Renewal. Accessed 12th of December 2011. http://communityrenewal.ca/sites/all/files/resource/P200_0.pdf

Community and Regional Resilience Institute 2011. Definition of Community Resilience. Accessed 27th of September 2011. http://www.resilientus.org/about-us/definition-of-community-resilience.html

Community Resilience Project Team 1999. The Community Resilience Manual: A New Resource Will Link Rural Revitalization to CED Best Practice. Making Waves 10 (4), 10–14.

Cutter, Susan 2006. The Geography of Social Vulnerability: Race, Class, and Catastrophe. Social Science Research Council. Accessed 12th of December 2011. http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/

Davidson, R. 2008. More than 'Just coping': the antecedents and dynamics of Resilience in a Qualitative Longitudinal Study'. Social Policy and Society 8 (1), 115–125.

Department for Communities and Local Government 2008. Key Communities, Key Resources. Engaging the capacity and capabilities of faith communities in civil resilience. London, Department for Communities and Local Government.

Doering, Carrie 2010. Building Resilient Communities: Lessons from the lost boys of Sudan. Journal of Pastoral Theology 21 (1), 6–10.

Edwards, Charlie 2009. Resilient Nation. London, Demos.

Edwards, Warren 2009. Defining Community Resilience. CARRI Blog 23/2/2009. Accessed 29th of September 2011. http://resilientus.blogspot.com/2009/02/defining-community-resilience.html

Ecumenical Review 2010 62 (4). World Council of Churches.

Experian 2011. Accessed 27th of September 2011. http://publicsector.experian.co.uk/Products/Local%20Economic%20Resilience.aspx

General Synod of the Church of England 2010. "The Big Society" and the Church of England. GS1804. Accessed 12th of December 2011. http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1150450/gs1804.pdf

Gilchrist, Alison 2009. The Well Connected Community: a networking approach. 2nd edition. Bristol UK, The Policy Press.

IPPR 2010. Exploring the Roots of BNP Support. An ippr briefing paper. London, Institute for Public Policy Research.

Magis, Kristen 2010. Community Resilience: An indicator of Social Sustainability. Society and Natural Resources 23 (5), 401–416.

Maguire, Brigit & Cartwright, Sophie 2008. Assessing a community's capacity to manage change: A resilience approach to social assessment. Bureau of Rural Sciences, Canberra.

Maguire, Brigit & Hagan, Patrick 2007. Disasters and Communities: Understanding Social Resilience. Australian Journal of Emergency Management 22 (2), 16–20.

Mykota, D. & Muhajarine, N. 2005. Community Resilience Impact on Child and Youth Health Outcomes. Canadian Journal of School Psychology 20, 5–20.

Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Strengthening the Role of Community Organizations in the Economic Recovery. Accessed 12th of December 2011. http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ofbnp/policy/recovery

Rowson, J.; Broome, S. & Jones, A. 2010. Connected Communities: How social networks power and sustain the Big Society. London, RSA.

Titus, S.T. 2002. Resilience and Christian Virtues: What the psychosocial sciences offer for the renewal of Thomas Aquinas' moral theology of fortitude and its related virtues. University of Fribourg. Faculty of Theology. Doctoral thesis.

Zautra, A.; Hall, J. & Murray, K. 2009. Community Development and Community Resilience: An integrative approach. Community Development 39 (3), 130–147.

Jim Robertson (Churches' Regional Commission in the North East)

The Faith in our Community Project – a community development approach to poverty in North East England

1 Introduction

The Faith in our Community (FIC) Project was launched as an innovative approach to working in neighbourhoods marked by the long term consequences of marginalisation and unemployment in urban and rural areas. It marks an important development in the dialogue about the role of community development from a faith-based perspective, in the regeneration of neighbourhoods and communities. It also points to the characteristics and nature of 'mission' in contemporary urban and rural situations. This article describes the project and draws out some reflective implications.

2 The regional context

In 2004, the Diocese of Durham had 207 of the most deprived areas in urban and rural Britain, according to the UK Government Office of National Statistics.[1] The Church of England has an established fund for supporting initiatives in deprived areas (The Church Urban Fund - CUF)[2]. However, in spite of the severe deprivation in the region, the Diocese was underspending and was 5th in the league-table of Dioceses claiming resources from this special fund. The Diocese, at that time, was simply reacting to applications from churches wishing to receive grants rather than having a

---

1 See http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination Accessed 31.03.2011
2 See http://www.cuf.org.uk/ Accessed 31.03.2011

clear strategy for action against marginalisation. Therefore it was decided to use the CUF funding strategically, to create a longer term impact. In 2006 the Diocese set up a community development programme in six of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the region. Ecumenical partners were approached and FIC was established with partners which include: Durham Diocese Board of Finance, the Churches' Regional Commission in the North East, Churches' Community Work Alliance, the Community Work Assessment Consortium for NE England (a secular community development network agency) and The United Reformed Church (which has pioneered a form of local diaconia based on community development practice).

The North East of England also is marked by communities in a process of transition. The decline of major employment in coal mining, ship building and other heavy industries and the legacy of their resultant health problems, has given rise to some of the most acute and entrenched deprivation in England. Regeneration initiatives over the years show only very limited impact on these concerns. The changes impacting on communities were reflected on by using a framework for analysis adapted from the CABLE project model.[3] This model notes the nature and characteristics of the transitions impacting on communities:

•*Demographic Transition*: an increasingly ageing population; significant gender restructuring relating to roles in families and work situations; intergenerational tensions and divisions; increasing migrant populations.

•*Economic Transition*: the poor getting relatively poorer, changing labour market systems and structures, fluctuating unemployment, the impact of globalisation, weak and punitive income support systems and inconsistent support for social enterprise systems; persistent inequalities in public service provision

•*Social Transition*: marginalisation and social exclusion, discrimination, worklessness, changing role of the family, identity and formation, self-interest and social responsibility, different faces and facets of oppression, social cohesion and expressions of fear and suspicion.

3 The CABLE project has partners in six countries working on a model of Community Action Based Learning for Empowerment. The project is coordinated by the Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, Finland. The model for transitional communities was produced by Jim Robertson (see Robertson 2007).

• *Political Transition*: formal status and support for extremist parties, restructuring of models of welfare, welfare to workfare, strategic partnerships, networking, ambivalence about political structures and evidence of political apathy and mistrust in politicians and political systems

3 The Faith in our Community Project

The six FIC projects are located in areas of significant change and transition, predominantly localities that were formerly lively mining communities or based upon manufacturing industries. They are areas with a history of closeness, solidarity and commonality. As these industries have declined, community network support systems have changed and new support systems have been required. Faith organisations have responded to the need for the renewal and reshaping of these support systems. All six of the FIC projects have contributed to this process in a variety of different ways and have been uniquely responsive to their particular context and circumstances.

The main emphasis has been to tackle social exclusion and inequality from the bottom up. The funding was used to appoint unwaged local people as community workers in the six neighbourhood areas and to give them 'on the job' training and support. The training also encompassed other important actors such as the project management groups and the clergy as well as larger workshops for groups in the community. The six workers gained a nationally recognised qualification in basic community development work as a result of the project. During the first phase of the initiative, a range of locally managed projects have been developed to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups in their communities. All six projects have involved church members and built links with non-church going residents. They have worked with people of all ages, from pre-school groups to older people's homes, and developed a wide range of activities, from keep-fit classes to food growing schemes and developing allotments. They have supported vulnerable adults and engaged people 'missed' by mainstream services.   And they have shown that church-based community development provides unique opportunities to address issues of social justice for both individuals and communities.

All six projects have been rooted in the values that come from their Chris-

tian faith, but they have not been confined to church buildings and community halls. Workers, management committee members and volunteers have been living out their faith beyond the walls of their own churches. These projects also suggest how this approach can be strengthened further. The development has led to a vibrant environment in which churches are involved in responding to social needs. Perhaps it is fair to say, however, that this type of church related community development approach has not always been understood or appreciated either by people inside or outside of faith-based organisations.

4 The community development process & the churches' mission

Community development work with its core values of Social Justice, Self-determination, Working and Learning Together, Sustaining Communities, Promoting Participation and Critically Reflecting on Practice have been the 'pillars' for the FIC project, along with a contextual, liberation theology frame of reference. The project is now being used as a model for mission across the Durham diocesan area. It is in line with the Durham diocesan policies towards 'shared-ministry, acting collaboratively and developing leadership', all of which can be identified as key themes within the diocesan development plan "Growing the Kingdom".[4] The plan approvingly quotes David Bosch (1998):

> The issue is not to talk more about God in a culture that has become irreligious, but how to express ethically the coming of God's reign, how to help people respond to the real questions of their context, how to break with the paradigm according to which religion has only to do with the private sphere.

Mission has been understood in different ways throughout the history of the church. In the early 90's some theorists articulated a more *holistic* perspective that includes social action as an essential and core component of mission. The transformational concept that was being articulated more strongly included the idea that *critical social analysis* and *social engagement* are a legitimate and purposeful expression of mission. In the UK context, funding from the Church Urban Fund, established by the Church of Eng-

4 See http://www.durham.anglican.org/mission-and-ministry/mission-in-the-diocese.aspx Accessed 31.03.2011

land, but available to any faith community has given energy to local or neighbourhood 'social engagement' initiatives such as FIC. Thus a proliferation of 'community projects' has emerged and a clear lineage can be traced to people of faith engaged in social activism going back into the beginning of the last century. Further, it can be observed that over the recent period, the repertoire of some of the clergy has widened to encompass the investment of time in networking and deeper social analysis as well as the skills of community project design and management, thus building on their traditional commitment to pastoral work and closeness to the people.

5 Faith communities, social analysis and locality centred mission – key lessons

The Faith in Community Project has demonstrated that faith communities have the potential to offer a distinctive presence in urban and rural communities. The CABLE project mentioned previously, has also influenced the FIC project by suggesting that the role of faith communities can be conceptualised through conceptualising the role of faith communities through the notion of 'distinctive presence[s]'. These are described as follows (Robertson 2007):

•*A Strategic Presence* – being able to see things holistically. Promoting social cohesion. Encouraging cooperation and improving connectedness through enhancing bonding, bridging and linking forms of social capital.

•*A Critical Presence* – engaging in critical social analysis; drawing attention to inequalities and evaluating the outcomes of public services. Helping to reflect on the idea that social exclusion may be socially constructed; proofing all social policies through the lens of the poor.

•*An Affirming Presence* – through aiming to empower individuals and groups to develop their knowledge and skills and negotiate for their resource requirements and needs. To provide pastoral care and support. Provide mentorship and coaching where appropriate. Exploring the potential of accompanying people and communities.

•*A Resisting Presence* – engaging in community organising and social action; To support social movements and encourage advocacy in respon-

se to policies which are socially divisive and excluding.

•*A Discerning Presence* – being prepared to question the given and be alert to critical analysis of the values behind policies and practices.

6 Building blocks for transformational practice

A faith perspective may bring a search for a coherent framework of values and commitment to the context of practice. The FIC project groups have based their work on the standards created in the framework of community development work and linked them to faith perspective as follows (National Occupational Standards for Community Development 2009):

•*A Concern for Social Justice* – enabling people to claim their human rights and have a greater control over the decision making processes that affect their lives.

•*Promoting Participation* – facilitating democratic involvement by people in the issues that affect their lives based on full citizenship, autonomy and shared power.

•*Advocating Equality* – challenging the attitudes of individuals and the practices of institutions and society that discriminate against marginalised people and groups.

•*Learning from Each Other* – recognising the skills, knowledge and expertise that people contribute and develop by taking action to tackle social, economic, political and environmental problems.

•*Co-operation and Collaboration* – working together to identify and implement action based on mutual respect of diverse cultures, faiths and contributions.

On the basis of these commitments, the project has developed an orientation to effective practice that involves:

- Having a theoretically informed basis for practice

- Providing space for the expression and inclusion of the views of oppressed individuals and groups
- Developing a critical analysis of the issues of power, both personal and structural
- Being able to analyse the oppressive nature of organisational culture and its impact on practice
- Having a flexible approach but not losing focus
- Using multidimensional change strategies which incorporate the concepts of networking, user involvement, partnership and participation
- Being able to challenge and seek to change existing ideas and practice
- Continuous reflection and evaluation of practice

7 Conclusions

The initiatives and achievements of the FIC Project have illustrated the understanding faith communities have about local communities, and the possibility of giving this understanding a practical and political expression. This has demonstrated the potential importance of faith in public life and revealed faith communities as a rich resource working in partnership (or in critical engagement) with statutory bodies. Faith communities are rich in 'religious capital' — with buildings and presence in most neighbourhoods. They also have vast 'human capital' and offer a rich seam of expertise and energy to invest into many and diverse 'service models' of community development and social action. However, the FIC project acknowledges realistically that there remains a weakness in the churches and faith communities, in their engagement with public life. There is also a considerable lack of awareness and understanding about the detail of national and municipal government and the structures available to participate in and influence local decision making.

The FIC projects have also illustrated that some churches and their members also often lack the confidence to engage in socio-political activity. Thus a key task for the future is to provide an appropriate infrastructure and support system for local churches and groups to engage more effectively with political and governmental structures. The FIC experience shows that a basic requirement in any scheme for community development based mission is a coherent learning programme that will address the learning and

support needs of all who are involved — at all levels of the organisations without exception. Community development, social action and community organising are not easy options. The 'wicked questions' are plentiful when construed through the lens of those who find themselves oppressed, for whatever reason, in our increasingly fractured and self interested society.

Information and Contact:
For more information on the project see:
The Churches' Regional Commission in the North East web site: www.northeastchurches.org.uk
For the project reports see: gttp://tiny.cc/goo5v

The author, Jim Robertson, is directly involved in developing the FIC project and can give more information. He can contacted at the email jimwrobertson@yahoo.com

References

Bosch, David J. 1998. Believing in the Future – Toward a Missiology of Western Culture. London, Gracewing.

Robertson, Jim 2007. Contexts of Transition. Unpublished paper for the project and the Churches' Community Work Alliance. Available from the author.

National Occupational Standards for Community Development 2009. London, Lifelong Learning UK. Accessed 9th of December 2011. http://www.fcdl.org.uk/NOS_Consultation/Documents/NOS_CD_Eng_v2finalartworkedversion.pdf

Teemu Pauha (Diaconia University of Applied Sciences)

CIVIC IDENTITY OF MUSLIM IMMIGRANT YOUTH: AN INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

1 Introduction

"The most exciting phrase to hear in science, the one that heralds new discoveries, is not 'Eureka!' but 'That's funny...' " (Isaac Asimov)

The quote above has succeeded in capturing the experience that I have found most rewarding in doing scientific research. There are few things that are as exhilarating as having one's intuitions challenged. This is what happened with my master's thesis on the identities of Muslim youth. I tried to find out how the young Muslims living in Finland identified themselves with Finnishness on one hand and Islam on the other. I found some answers to my original research questions but was also faced with many new ones: What actually is "Finnishness"? How does one develop an identity as Finnish? How is it related to religion but also to other kinds of social identities?

In this idea paper, I summarise some of the main findings from my master's thesis. I especially concentrate on how my own understanding of identity has changed due to some unexpected results and research experiences. After that, I introduce the concept of intersectionality and discuss its potential in making sense of my findings. I will then carry on outlining the foundations of my ongoing research on the civic identity of Muslim youth.

First, however, I would like to ask why any of this matters. Why is it important to discuss civic identity at all?

2 Why does civic identity matter?

In recent decades citizenship has become a key concept in social theory. As such, however, it is a contested one and a significant number of definitions have been proposed for it. (Lister 1997, 1 & 13.) According to Etienne Balibar (1988, 724), citizenship can be defined either narrowly as full political rights or broadly as a capacity to act effectively and "get listened to" in the public space. It is therefore better understood as a continuum than as a fixed category; a person may be more or less a citizen regardless of what it says on her/his passport. Even if a person is formally a citizen, she/he may not enjoy the full privileges of citizenship due to her/his gender, ethnicity, race, class, religion or some other characteristic (Castles & Davidson 2000, vii).

A quote from the novel *The Red Lily* by Antoine France expresses well how policies that are just in principle may be discriminatory in practice:

> *Another reason to be proud, this being a citizen! For the poor it consists in sustaining and preserving the wealthy in their power and their laziness. The poor must work for this, in presence of the majestic quality of the law which prohibits the wealthy as well as the poor from sleeping under the bridges, from begging in the streets, and from stealing bread.*

Laws such as this are based on the needs of certain people and they may utterly disregard the needs of all others. The law may be the same for everyone in that it "prohibits the wealthy as well as the poor from sleeping under the bridges, from begging in the streets, and from stealing bread". However, by doing so, it helps the wealthy to live their lives undisturbed by the sight of the less well-off and at the same time makes it more difficult for the poor to make ends meet.

Citizenship has both a formal and an informal dimension (Harinen 2000, 13). On one hand, citizenship is an official classification that comes with certain rights and obligations and is represented by ownership of a passport. On the other hand, citizenship is a matter of social recognition. Citizenship in this sense means having one's beliefs, values, symbols and ideas accepted by the public culture. This social dimension of citizenship is relatively informal in comparison to the legal dimension; whereas the latter is officially defined by state institutions such as courts and border controls, the former is

discursively produced in social encounters, media, museums, history books etc. (Fernández 2003, 162 & 164–166.)

This dialectic of the formal and the informal is also present in the way that the citizenship is both personal and shared: even though the meaning and prerequisites of citizenship are put forward in national legislation, they are also experienced in the lives of individual people. (Harinen 2002, 13.) According to Päivi Harinen (2002, 13), citizenship "arises out of the encounter between the formal and the informal in the life of an individual person"[1].

Civic identity relates to one's experience of being a citizen. It is most often defined by two elements. Firstly, it entails a sense of belonging to a physically located community. Schools, neighbourhoods, villages or countries are examples of such communities. Secondly, civic identity is connected to specific rights and responsibilities, such as a right to vote or a compulsory military service. (Atkins & Hart 2003, 156.)

James Youniss, Jeffrey A. McLellan and Miranda Yates (1997, 620) offer a related but somewhat different conceptualisation of civic identity. In their view civic identity consists of a political-moral awareness together with a sense of social agency and social responsibility. (Youniss, McLellan & Yates 1997, 620.)

Adolescence is as crucial for the development of civic identity as it is for the identity development in general (Youniss, McLellan & Yates 1997, 621). During this period an individual starts to understand the nature of citizenship and its requirements for her/him. She/he is no longer only benefiting from the privileges of citizenship but is also expected to contribute to the community in return. (Atkins & Hart 2003, 157.)

James Youniss and Miranda Yates (1999, 364–365) have reviewed ten previous studies on youth activism and its relationship to political-moral behaviour in adulthood. All of the studies reviewed were longitudinal and utilised control groups. Taken together, they give strong support for the view that youth activism has lasting influence. Youth who participated in civic and political activities were significantly more likely to be involved in politics and voluntary associations than other youth. Differences could be observed even decades later and they did not depend on the kinds of youth activities attended: high-school government, 4-H, antiwar activism and demonstrations were all related to positive outcomes. (Youniss & Yates

---

1 "kansalaisuus merkityksellisenä ilmiönä syntyy formaalin ja informaalin kohtaamisesta yksittäisen ihmisen elämässä"

1999, 364–365.)

Youniss and Yates (1999, 365) link these positive outcomes to identity development. The worldviews that underlie civic activism are also of importance here: by participating in activities guided by religious or political ideologies, the youth can learn to see themselves as participants in these historical traditions and possibly become socialised into them.

In another article, Youniss, McLellan and Yates (1997, 621–623) have reviewed a range of studies demonstrating that the level of adolescent participation in civic activities predicts civic engagement in adult life. The authors then propose civic identity as a mediating factor behind long-term commitment to community action (Youniss, McLellan & Yates 1997, 624).

Civic identity is often studied together with moral identity, that is, the centrality of one's moral ideals to one's self-conception (Nasir & Kirshner 2003, 138). Commitment to moral ideals is related to striving for their realisation in the community, namely, to civic identity. Therefore, the development of civic and moral identities is not only important for the individual but also for the whole community. Civic identities generate interpersonal trust and willingness to work for common objectives. (Atkins & Hart 2003, 157.)

3 Previous findings

In my master's thesis in psychology, I studied the Finnish and Muslim identities of Muslim youth with immigration backgrounds. For this, I applied a framework that Jean Phinney (see, for example, Phinney 1990; Phinney et al. 2001) has developed for conceptualising the interplay between ethnic and national identities. (Pauha 2010, 2.) According to Phinney (1990, 501–502) and Phinney et al. (2001, 497), ethnic and national identities are separate dimensions of identity development. An immigrant child may identify strongly with both her/his ethnic background and the surrounding society, with one of these or with neither of these. The first option, identifying both with national and ethnic cultures, is the best case scenario: this so-called integrated identity is related to such positive outcomes as psychological well-being. (Phinney et al. 2001, 502.)

In my study, I tried to find out how strongly Muslim immigrant youth identify on the one hand with Finnishness and on the other with Islam. In addition to this main research question, I had two other questions: 1.) How

are the Finnish and Muslim identities related to each other or to psychological well-being? 2.) Are sociodemographic variables (such as age, sex or country of birth) related to Finnish/Muslim identities or to psychological well-being?[2] (Pauha 2010, 11.)

To answer these questions, I undertook a study of public schools of Helsinki. My respondents were Muslim pupils who answered questionnaires in their religious education classes. Altogether 247 pupils in the age range of 11 to 16 years participated in the study. 121 of them were girls and 116 boys. Majority (N = 176) of the informants were born in Finland but all of them had at least one parent who was born in some other country. Most often (N = 144) the parents had come from Somalia. (Pauha 2010, 11–13.)

When I started my research, there were no scales available for measuring both Finnish and Muslim identities. I had to develop my own identity scales which I achieved by looking for questionnaire items that were used in a wide variety of inventories measuring different kinds of social identities. Finally, I ended up with two five-item scales; one for measuring Finnish identity and one for measuring Muslim identity. All items were rated on a 4-point Likert-scale. (Pauha 2010, 15 & 35.)

The five items were:

"I am happy that I am Finnish/Muslim."
"I am proud to be Finnish/Muslim."
"I usually speak of 'us Finns'/'us Muslims' (instead of 'those Finns'/'those Muslims')."
"I think I am a typical young Finn/Muslim."
"I get insulted if Finns/Muslims are being bad-mouthed."

The statistical properties of my data placed some limitations on the analyses. First of all, none of my continuous variables were normally distributed which ruled out many of the parametric methods commonly in use. Instead of them, I had to use non-parametric statistics such as the Mann-Whitney U test, Kruskal–Wallis one-way analysis of variance and Spearman's rank correlation coefficient. (Pauha 2010, 17–18.)

Secondly, my Muslim identity scale suffered from a strong ceiling effect. Over half of the respondents received the maximum score on this scale. Statistical analysis requires variance and in this case there is quite little of it.

2 As this idea paper focuses on identity, findings related to psychological well-being have been omitted.

As a result, some caution is needed when interpreting the results related to Muslim identity scores.

Despite these limitations, there were still many interesting conclusions that could be drawn from my data. First of all, the Muslim immigrant youth identified much more strongly with Islam than with being Finnish. On a scale of 1 to 4, the mean for Muslim identity was 3.75 (sd = .48) whereas the mean for Finnish identity was left at 2.08 (sd = .91). Secondly, Finnish and Muslim identities were negatively correlated with each other (r = −.17, p = .007**). (Pauha 2010, 18.)

Thirdly, the Muslim and Finnish identities were also related to the ethnic background of respondent's family: informants who had one Finnish-born parent identified themselves on average more with Finnishness and less with Islam whereas informants with Somali parents tended to have stronger Muslim identities. (Pauha 2010, 19–20.)

4 Puzzlement about identity

In light of my background theory, it was surprising to find out that the Muslim and Finnish identities of the adolescents I studied were inversely related. As mentioned before, Phinney (1990, 501–502) and Phinney et al. (2001, 497) see national and ethnic identities as separate dimensions that may vary independently of each other. In my study, however, Muslim identity correlated negatively with Finnish identity. Correlation was not strong but it was nevertheless statistically significant.

What was even more surprising was that in every school there seemed to be pupils who were born in Finland and spoke perfect Finnish and still found it difficult to rate a sentence such as "I am proud to be Finnish". They claimed that they could not give a rating as "they were not Finnish". Their feeling of exclusion was so strong that it astounded me. After all, in my view, these pupils were as Finnish as I am. The way I saw them, however, did not match with their own experience. Their sense of belonging to Finnish society was rather limited even though they mastered the Finnish language and were born in Finland.

The question that arises, then, is whether we are dealing with a national or civic identity here. I understand these two as being conceptually distinct even though they are often treated as synonymous in the Finnish context. I

define national identity as a sense of belonging to a nation as an "imagined community" or a system of representations. Civic identity, on the other hand, entails a sense of belonging to a state as a political entity and being able to contribute to its functioning. In short, I basically see national identity as identification with the culture and civic identity as identification with the political community.

Päivi Harinen (2000, 22) makes a somewhat similar point by defining citizenship as a membership of a state and nationality as a membership of a nation. According to her, nationality is something more profound than citizenship, and it cannot be imposed juristically (Harinen 2000, 23). Citizenship, on the other hand, is a status that needs to be legally ascribed to an individual (Dunkerley et al. 2002, 10).

However, a distinction that is theoretically meaningful may empirically be less so. Even though Harinen (2000, 22) defined civic and national identity as being different concepts, her young Finnish informants did not do the same. Their sense of citizenship was so tightly interwoven with inherited national belonging that changing one's citizenship was seen as more difficult than changing one's name or even sex. In contrast to theories that conceptualize citizenship only in terms of political rights and duties or membership in political communities, the adolescents in Harinen's study understood their citizenship as pre-given or inborn. (Harinen 2000, 59 & 61–64.)

As for myself, I am mainly interested in how the young Muslims experience their chances of participating in the society. However, it may be that this is so closely tied to their national self-representations that any distinction between national and civic identity would be questionable.

Making such a distinction may even be ethically problematic: In his study on the second and third generation Turkish immigrants in Berlin, Feyzi Baban (2006, 193–195) argues that separating citizenship rights from national belonging can actually hinder the minorities from gaining full recognition. By granting citizenship rights to immigrants, Germany and other countries can present themselves as upholding the democratic ideals and at the same time leave their national self-representations unquestioned. The result of this is that the immigrants cannot receive cultural recognition without full assimilation into the dominant culture. For example, the Turkish-Germans are not accepted as full members of the society unless they become "just Germans". (Baban 2006, 190 & 199.)

So what did my informants actually mean when they said that they were not Finnish? Was it that they felt unable to participate or to contribute to their society? Or did they feel that typical representations of Finnishness were incompatible with their own self-representations? Perhaps they felt both? Before knowing the answer, I will leave open the possibility that the theoretical distinction between civic and national identity may not hold empirically.

5 Intersecting identities

Even after I had finished my study, I sensed that I had only scratched the surface of the identities of young Muslims. However, the methods and conceptions of identity that I had utilised were insufficient for accurately portraying the identity dynamics that I was interested in. What had become apparent in the course of the study was that identity as a phenomenon is much more multifaceted and complex than I had thought. First of all, it turned out that national, religious and ethnic belonging were all related to each other. Second, based on both my statistical findings and the observations I made while collecting my data, it seems to me that many Muslim adolescents find it difficult to identify with Finnishness despite being born and brought up in Finland and mastering its language.

How, then, do these identities arise? How does one develop a sense of a national or civic belonging? How are religious, ethnic and other identities related to civic or national identity? Clearly civic identity is intrinsically linked to many other kinds of identities, but how can these linkages be conceptualised?

Within gender studies, the concept of intersectionality has been proposed for conceptualising complex interactions between identities. The term was first coined by Kimberlé W. Crenshaw (1989, 1991) who used it to make sense of so-called discrimination on multiple grounds. It is clear that women face many kinds of discrimination on the basis of their gender — even more so if they, for example, also belong to a sexual, ethnic or religious minority. However, the discrimination faced by a Somali, Muslim woman cannot be understood by just adding up the discriminations that Somalis, women and Muslims in general come up with. Being a Muslim or a lesbian not only adds to the discrimination that a woman has to deal with but changes the

very nature of it. Experiences of people with multiple minority statuses are more than the sum of their parts.

Applied to the study of identities, "intersectionality" is taken to mean the "mutually constitutive relations among social identities" (Shields 2008, 301). In other words, the intersectionality approach helps to understand how the experience of one social identity changes depending on other identities. There is not a uniform Muslim identity but a school-aged Finnish boy with a Somali background may feel "Muslimness" in a manner quite different to an elderly Egyptian housewife or a young Moroccan woman who aspires to be a rock star. New, unique forms of identity emerge in the intersections of different identity categories.

When studying the civic identities of Muslim youth with an immigration background, the intersectionality approach is both challenging and extremely important as there are so many axes of difference that have a bearing on citizenship. To give due credit to the experiences of my respondents, I will not choose beforehand what I will take to be relevant identity categories. My analysis will be a grounded one, taking the stories of my respondents as a starting point.

6 Concluding thoughts

As I mentioned in the first chapter of this paper, it is important to study civic identity because of the significance it has for many aspects of social life. Therefore, it is particularly important to study the effects that religion has on civic identity. How does being a Muslim affect the experience of citizenship?

Some preliminary answers can be found in the study conducted by Nick Hopkins and Leda Blackwood (2011) who have studied the effects that being a Muslim has on a person's ability to practice her/his citizenship. Their British Muslim interviewees described how being identified as a Muslim may lead to a lack of voice in society: sometimes their Muslim identity was seen as being at odds with British national identity. Sometimes their opinions and views were disregarded as their religion was seen as compromising their rationality. The interviewees also reported that the assumptions others made about their religion forced them to act in certain ways in public. They, for example, felt a need to emphasise their Britishness and distance themselves

from the stereotypical images of Muslims. The interviewees explained how they were viewed first and foremost as Muslims which, in turn, led to a lack of recognition for their other identities. (Hopkins & Blackwood 2011, 220–225.)

The study of Hopkins and Blackwood (2011), however, is limited in that it considers only the relationship between religious and national identities while disregarding the range of other identities that may alter the situation. As Amartya Sen (2009, 93) has firmly pointed out, the experiences and actions of individual Muslims may be determined by an identity other than religious.

I wholeheartedly subscribe to Sen's argument but at the same time think that it should be taken further. Sen (2009, 53) seems to understand people as having a selection of identities from which they can choose the one that best suits their current situation. I, however, see the identities as meshed together so that it is almost impossible to tell them apart. In short, we do not act according to either national or religious identity — we act according to the whole of our identity that is based on both national and religious belonging!

I see identity as a multilayered concept. On one hand, we have our religious, national, ethnic etc. identities that Sen (2009) discusses. I call these the first-order identities. On the other hand, in individual lives, the first-order identities are all fused together to form a second-order identity. This second-order identity is emergent — that is, it is more than the sum of its parts. It is also experienced as unified; it would be strange to experience oneself as sometimes being a Muslim and at other times being a woman. Instead, these two are tied together to form the identity of "a Muslim woman".

In my current research, I apply this refined conceptualisation of identity in investigating further the civic identities of Muslim youth. For this, I will use two kinds of data. First, I will use the findings generated during my previous study. Besides filling out questionnaires, the youth who participated in my study also wrote letters about living in Finland as young Muslims. However, I did not analyze these letters for my master's thesis. My next step will be to study the conceptions of citizenship and nationality that are prevalent in these letters and see whether they can be understood within the intersectionality framework.

Second, I will supplement this data with personal interviews that I will

conduct with young Muslims in Finland. I will try especially to reach subjects completing secondary education. At this age, adolescents are required to take responsibility for their future education, career and family. This requires engaging in identity work.

My previous statistical findings also need to be reconsidered in the light of the intersectionality framework,. I was never really happy with the statistical properties of my identity variables. The Muslim identity scale seemed especially problematic. Besides the strong ceiling effect mentioned before, it also suffered from reliability that was satisfactory at best; Cronbach's Alpha for the Muslim identity was .61 — and this only with two items removed from the scale. (Pauha 2010, 16.)

But what if religious identity is not something that we can measure one-dimensionally? What if religious identity does not vary only in its strength but in its forms as well? In that case, it would be futile to try to fit it on a one-dimensional linear scale.

I have sketched the following chart (Figure 1) to present the dynamics that I am interested in:
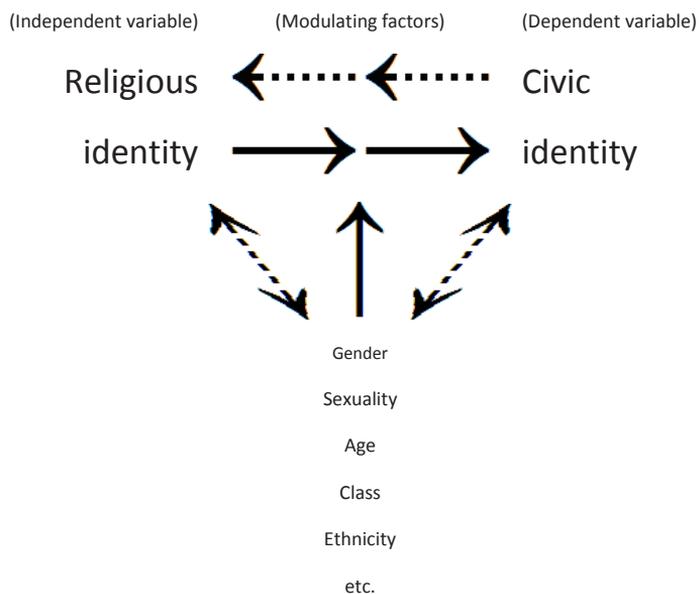
FIGURE 1. Dynamic interplay of identities

Simply put, I try to specify how the religious identity of Muslim youth affects their civic identity. However, in light of my previous findings and the principles of intersectionality, this cannot be done without accounting for the other identities that an individual has. Factors such as gender, sexuality, age, class and ethnicity all have a role to play in the identity formation. Being a Muslim does not automatically lead to certain outcomes with respect to civic identity. Instead, it is quite possible that a Muslim civic identity may be formed quite differently depending on other identities involved. For example, it is likely that Muslimness contributes differently to a man's and a woman's citizenship.

Arrows with broken lines indicate relationships that are important to be kept in mind but that I am not going to focus on. It is not only that religion may have an effect on civic identity but also the other way around. In addition, identities based on gender, sexuality, age, class, ethnicity or other factors both form and are formed by religious and civic identities. However, due to time and space constraints, I will not pay much attention to aspects of identity that do not shed light on my main research question: how does being a Muslim affect one's civic identity?

I hope that by answering these questions, I will be able to contribute to the discussion that is being held about the role of Islam in European societies. Ideally, this kind of research has the potential to help in clarifying and eventually solving obstacles of equal participation and social inclusion.

References

Atkins, Robert & Hart, Daniel 2003. Neighborhoods, Adults, and the Development of Civic Identity in Urban Youth. Applied Developmental Science 7 (3), 156–165.

Baban, Feyzi 2006. From Gastarbeiter to "Ausländische Mitbürger": Postnational Citizenship and In-Between Identities in Berlin. Citizenship Studies 10 (2), 185–201.

Balibar, Etienne 1988. Propositions on Citizenship. Ethics 98 (4), 723–730.

Castles, Stephen & Davidson, Alastair 2000. Citizenship and Migration – Globalization and the Politics of Belonging. London: Macmillan.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé 1989. Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics. University of Chicago Legal Forum, 139–167.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé, 1991. Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. Stanford Law Review 43 (6), 1241–1279.

Dunkerley, David; Hodgson, Lesley, Konopacki, Stanisłav; Spybey, Tony & Thompson, Andrew 2002. Changing Europe – Identities, Nations and Citizens. London: Routledge.

Fernandez, Christian 2003. The Stranger Within – Union Citizenship and Third Country Nationals. In Petersson, Bo & Clark, Eric (eds.): Identity Dynamics and the Construction of Boundaries. Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 161–179.

Harinen, Päivi 2000. Valmiiseen tulleet – Tutkimus nuoruudesta, kansallisuudesta ja kansalaisuudesta. [Young Citizens – Arrivals at the Given. A Study of Youth, Nationality and Citizenship.] Helsinki: Nuorisotutkimusverkosto.

Hopkins, Nick & Blackwood, Leda 2011. Everyday Citizenship: Identity and Recognition. Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology 21 (3), 215–227.

Lister, Ruth 1997. Citizenship – Feminist Perspectives. London: MacMillan.

Nasir, Na'ilah Suad & Kirshner, Ben 2003. The Cultural Construction of Moral and Civic Identities. Applied Developmental Science 7 (3), 138–147.

Pauha, Teemu 2010. "Aivan tavallinen suomalaisnuori?" – nuorten muslimimaahanmuuttajien psykologinen hyvinvointi sekä kansallinen ja uskonnollinen identiteetti. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopisto.

Phinney, Jean S. 1990. Ethnic Identity in Adolescents and Adults: Review of Research. Psychological Bulletin 108 (3), 499–514.

Phinney, Jean S.; Horenczyk, Gabriel; Liebkind, Karmela & Vedder, Paul 2001. Ethnic Identity, Immigration, and Well-Being: An Interactional Perspective. Journal of Social Issues 57 (3), 493–510.

Sen, Amartya 2009. Identiteetti ja väkivalta. [Identity and Violence.] Helsinki: Basam Books.

Shields, Stephanie A. 2008. Gender: An Intersectionality Perspective. Sex Roles 59, 301–311.

Youniss, James; McLellan, Jeffrey A. & Yates, Miranda 1997. What We Know About Engendering Civic Identity. The American Behavioral Scientist 40 (5), 620–631.

Youniss, James & Yates, Miranda 1999. Youth Service and Moral–Civic Identity: A Case for Everyday Morality. Educational Psychology Review 11 (4), 361–376.

Mikko Malkavaara (Diaconia University of Applied Sciences)

How has rights-based thinking influenced Finnish diaconia? Background paper on developments before 1975

1 The aim of this study

The original aim of my research was to trace the development, and explain the impact, of rights-based diaconia on Finnish diaconal thinking. The topic is particularly interesting because human rights and human dignity have been increasingly used as grounds for social action in recent years. Human dignity is very old Christian concept and ideal and whilst human rights were formulated during the 18th century Enlightenment, they have never featured so prominently as they have in the last few decades. Even though Finnish diaconia research is quite lively, there has been no other research on this topic.

This paper explores these changes and reasons which lie behind them. My starting point is the Second World War and its influence on the social welfare system and theological thinking in Finland. My aim is to depict the environment within which diaconia work operated and identify changes in thought or practice which may have influenced Finnish diaconia.

Unfortunately in this conference paper I am not able to present more than an introduction to the topic. This article takes the story up to the time when the meaning of the human rights exploded after the Helsinki Agreement in the summer 1975. I hope to produce the final part of this interesting story later.

2 Social orientation of the church after the Second World War

The social emphasis of the gospel was very much strengthened by the Second World War. Before the war the influence of the Social Gospel was felt particularly in the Settlement Movement, thanks to its grand leader Sigfrid Sirenius. Finnish interpretation of diaconia work was also quite socially oriented prior to the war, due to the work of Otto Aarnisalo, the grand old man on Finnish diaconia and founder and first director of the Inner Mission Society of Finland. (Malkavaara 2000, 29–30; Malkavaara 2007, 102–103; Malkavaara 2011b, 124–126.)

In spite of this, the Second World War caused major change. The war democratised and unified society. Social policy had an uncompromising goal: the population had to be strong and supportive of the state. Thus the social policy became a tool for uniting the nation. Those sent to the front needed a message of consolation: families will be taken care of. (Anttonen & Sipilä 2000, 59–60; Haatanen 1992, 46–47; Jaakkola 1994, 204–208; Malkavaara 2002, 224; Malkavaara 2011b, 126; Satka 1994, 295–300.)

The Finnish Association of Brothers-in-arms constructed a national integration strategy for improving morale. So called Brothers-in-arms-pastors under Martti Simojoki's and Erkki Niinivaara's direction brought the same ideology into the church: the church had to get closer to the people and establish relations in a spirit of compromise with the labor movement. The pastoral care of the church was for all.

The church, with its pastoral care, wanted to be seen as a servant of the whole nation. The old folk church program was transformed, first for benefit of the country and its morale, but soon also became an extension of support for church itself. This led to a new era of cooperation between the church and the Social Democrat party.

In October 1943 the Synod approved new statutes of parish diaconia formulated by bishop of Kuopio, Eino Sormunen. Otto Aarnisalo had died one year earlier but his life-long goal, a compulsory ministry of diaconia for every parish became legally valid in 1944. (Huhta 2005, 91–94; Jalovaara 2007, 37; Malkavaara 2002, 223–226; Malkavaara 2011, 126–127; Meriläinen 2009, 32–37; Murtorinne 1995, 277–279; Määttä 2004, 31–35; Seppo 1999, 25–27.)

A new organisation supporting parish diaconia was established. At its

head was the central office. Interestingly in the beginning it was not called a committee of diaconia but a committee of social affairs of the church. Accordingly in every chapter one pastor was nominated as a special social pastor of the diocese mostly coordinating diaconia work in the diocese. Diaconia work was organised in the parishes even down to village level. The phase of social or even political diaconia did not last beyond 1948, when it was decided, that caritative diaconia would be the basis of Finnish diaconia work. Attempts to work with political parties in the Committee for Social Affairs were too challenging. It was not until the early 1950s that the titles of social pastors were changed to diaconia pastors. (Huhta, 2005, 59–64; Malkavaara 2002, 223–231; Meriläinen 2009, 37–40; Murtorinne 1995, 302–313; Nieminen 2008, 136–140; Ryökäs 2006, 139.)

3 New folk church ideology

The Brothers-in-arms pastors adopted a new theological model of thinking which was built on ideas of Luther-researchers at the Lund University, Sweden. According to this model the whole creation of God belonged to the sphere of power of the sovereign God. Christian faith should not be confined only to the spiritual sphere, it was relevant not only for the church and its theology but for the whole society. This meant also a breakthrough in thinking about the place of natural law in Finnish theology. Lundian Lutheran theology emphasized the Christianity of everyday life and earthly vocation, responsibility for God's world and the idea of a man as a co-worker of God. Therefore the social responsibility of the church was not restricted to the diaconia work but had to be extended to all social activities. (Malkavaara 2000, 29; Malkavaara 2002, 226; Seppo 1997, 532–533.)

The new theology changed and broadened the practical and social orientation of the church. The new ideal was of a service church, a church that has contacts with everybody. It was for the beginning of a new ideal type of parish work, which would encompass children's care, marriage counseling, telephone emergency services, youth work, information and media work and new forms of diaconia work.

This new folk church ideology meant a great opening of the church towards society, but it had also critical opponents among the pietistic revival movements. They stressed that the only important message of the church

was that of salvation. The catechism of 1948 was written mostly on the basis of the theology of the revival movements. Therefore, where pietistic way of thinking was dominant, the grounds for diaconia were derived mostly from individual ethics and individual salvation. Helping the weak and the poor was seen as being of lower rank. (Malkavaara 2000, 30–33; Malkavaara 2002, 226, 231–238; Malkavaara 2011a, 11–12.)

4 Welfare state and the church

Because of the heavy losses of the war, building of welfare state structures was slower in Finland than in other Nordic countries. It started in the 1950s but the real turning point took place in 1961, when Pekka Kuusi published his book of new social policy. The new policy focused on what was the best for the citizen. The classical task of the social policy had been to locate and eliminate poverty but now the goal was benefiting the national economy. Leveling the incomes of the citizens supported continuous economic growth and guaranteed every citizen's welfare and social security. Instead of appealing to the compassion and fairness of the better-off the new policy was based on politically controlled integration and on universal entitlement to rights and services. (Anttonen & Sipilä 2000, 54–56; Haatanen 1992, 47–54; Helne, 2003, 17–31, 51–53.)

   The church was quite well prepared for these big changes. It had foreseen the collapse of the role of the deaconesses. The Public Health Act, which withdrew recognition of deaconesses as nurses came into force in 1972 but the church was able to steer its diaconia work towards new directions for parish diaconia. In the future, instead of home nursing, the church would provide services in forms of pastoral care and holistic encounters together with supplementary services for elderly people, mentally disordered, physically challenged and alcohol and drug abusers. (Hissa 1970, 3; Huhta 2005, 191–217; Kansanaho & Hissa 1979, 64–68, 72; Malkavaara 2011 a, 15–17, 97; Pyykkö 2004, 126–127.) Theological change was influenced by increased interest in ecumenical and Catholic theology which supported the change in parish diaconia. This new way of thinking emphasised the diaconia and mission aspects of the church's nature. (Malkavaara 2000, 33–38; Malkavaara 2007, 111.)

   Thus the public health law of 1972 changed both the role of the church

as a provider of social services and the character of the caritative work of the deaconesses and other diaconia workers. Therefore, from the perspective of the church, the year 1972 is the beginning of the era of welfare state in Finland.

5 Social ethics and natural law

At the same time social ethical trends strengthened within the churches and the ecumenical movement. The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) was already important. In the ecumenical movement social reflection was increasing. Former colonies became independent and global interest in development work grew. Immanent and worldly broke into the theological thinking.

For the Lutheran Church of Finland the influence of the Fifth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in Evian, France, where the social and global responsibility was emphasized, was especially important. Peace, racial equality and human rights were big themes of the assembly. The church was looking for a connection between the classical doctrines of justification and social justice. (Grosc 1971, 83–100; Malkavaara 1998, 142–143, 147–153; Malkavaara 2011a, 56; Sinnemäki 1971, 52–84, 108–141.)

The Assembly influenced Archbishop Martti Simojoki who launched a process of social ethical research and thought within the Lutheran church of Finland. In 1972 the church published two committee reports titled *Pelastus ja yhteiskunta* (Salvation and the society), which was the first official document of the Finnish Lutheran Church, in which justification by faith and social ethics were not separated and salvation was not seen as being isolated from everyday life or confined to a private spiritual dialogue between man and God.

Social ethics was founded on natural law which could be understood by every human being. The Golden Rule was not a call for unselfish and altruistic love but for equal rights and responsibilities. The basis of social ethics was reciprocity and it belonged to the sphere of common sense and nature and not the Kingdom of God. On the other hand, the demand for unselfish *agape-love* belonged to the sphere of Christian love. Reports were influenced by the old Lund theology strengthened with new ecumenical theology. Although the theological thinking of the church reverted to thinking formulated almost 30 years ago it had also developed a lot. (Grönvik 1981,

58–59; Hytönen 2003, 280–282; Malkavaara 2000, 43–44; Malkavaara 2011a, 56–59; Sinnemäki 1972, 7–9, 11, 15–18, 52; Simojoki 1973, 40–42; Veikkola 2005, 12–13.)

6 Human rights and the churches

The human rights were formulated during the Enlightenment era, but seeds of the human rights concept can be seen in the Old Testament, whilst human dignity is one of the oldest concepts of Christianity. *Dignitas humanae substantiae* is known from prayers deriving from the second century after Christ.

During the Middle Ages in Christian societies the state began to develop and separate from the church, but both the church and the state were seen as being decreed by God. The turning point came with the renaissance and the modern age. Niccolo Macchiavelli and Thomas Hobbes underestimated the significance of human dignity, but early enlightenment philosophers Hugo Grotius and John Locke defended the individual's value vis-à-vis the state. Samuel Pufendorf took the concept *dignitas naturae humanae* to centre of his theory of natural law and derived human rights to freedom and equality from it. (Traer 1991, 35–36).

Human rights were written into the constitution of the United States and they were important in the French Revolution. For the Catholic Church they were difficult to accept, because they were human centered and defended freedom of opinion and religion.

Pope Pius VI condemned the French Declaration of Human Rights in his letter *Quod alicantum* as early as 1791 as did his successors. It was not until 1891 and declaration *Rerum Novarum* by Pope Leo XIII, that the social teachings of the Catholic Church started to change. The intention of this letter was to declare that a human being has priority over the state and that human dignity should be the basis for legislation. (McGrath 2000, 712; Traer 1991, 3–4, 33–34; Woodrow 1998.)

Concern for the integrity, value and dignity of a human being has been seen as starting point for human rights. The Protestant Churches have emphasized human dignity and individual's faith but the long struggle of slavery in the United States in the 19th century indicated that the Protestants have not been good defenders of the human rights either. (Ahlstrom 1975,

91–115; Stokes & Phelps 1964, 281–290; Traer 1991, 19–20.)

After the First World War the Treaty of Versailles stressed minorities' rights, right to life, liberty, freedom of religion, right to nationality of the state of residence, complete equality with other nationals of the same state, and exercise of civil and political rights. In the same year, 1919, the International Labour Organization was founded to advocate human rights in working life. (Universal Declaration of Human Rights 50th Anniversary.)

The early ecumenical movement paid attention to the human rights even before it got organized. It gave particular emphasis to peace and justice within human rights. The idea of human dignity was crucial for its social ethic which was built on natural law. The changing state of world politics in the 1930s and the influence of Karl Barth's dialectical theology separated the ecumenical movement for a long time from this tradition which the assemblies in Oxford (1937) and Madras (1938) saw as naïve liberal theology. According to dialectical theology the kingdom of God was seen to be in permanent tension with the world. (Lindqvist 1975, 58–62; Teinonen 1961, 51–54.)

Pius XI (1922–1939) was Pope between the two world wars and during the great depression, the development of the communist Soviet Union and rise of dictatorships in Italy and in Germany. He was thoroughly orthodox theologically and had no sympathy with modernist ideas that relativised fundamental Catholic teachings. Despite this he developed an idea of social justice as a principle from which human dignity and social conditions could be defined. He published his social doctrines in encyclica *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) in which he warned about socialism and unrestrained capitalism as enemies to human freedom and dignity. Pius XI hated the capitalistic greed of international finance. Instead this conservative defender of social justice envisaged an economy based on co-operation and solidarity. In 1937 he published an encyclica *Mit brennender Sorge* in which he condemned the Nazi ideology of racism and totalitarianism and an encyclica *Divini Redemptoris,* where he opposed Communism. In the latter he listed human rights such as the right to life, to physical integrity, the necessary means of existence, the right of association and the right to possess and use property. (Traer 1991, 34.)

Even though many of the human rights were highly important for the church, their connection to the Enlightenment made them suspect in the

eyes of the church. It was therefore easier to speak about human dignity and to list separate rights to freedom rather than join with the of human rights tradition. Ultimately it was the Second World War and its crimes against the humanity that helped the church and theology to see the Biblical and Christian roots of the human rights and their significance in defending humanity.

7 Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The United Nations (UN) was established in 1945 in San Francisco. Its Charter states that one of its main purposes is the promotion and encouragement of "respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion". The Charter underscores the principle of individual human rights. Its Commission on Human Rights with Eleanor Roosevelt as its chairperson prepared the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which the UN General Assembly adopted in 1948. (Traer 1991, 6–8; Universal Declaration of Human Rights 50th Anniversary.)

By the 19th century there were international documents concerning human rights such as those prohibiting slavery, securing the status of some minorities and rules for warfare. Before this human rights had been regarded as internal affairs of state. The Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights gave juridical reasons for states to interfere in the internal human rights violations in other states. The same documents brought human rights issues visibly into international politics for the first time and created the foundations of the human rights system. (Pohjolainen 1999, 230.)

An American Lutheran professor of theology, O. Frederick Nolde, was at the San Francisco conference as a delegate authorised by the NGOs to argue for including human rights in the constitutive Charter of the UN. He was soon nominated as the first director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches. Between 1946 and 1948 he participated in the preparation process leading to the Declaration of the Human Rights contributing to the parts of the declaration concerning freedom of religion and freedom of conscience.

The founding Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1948 in Amsterdam supported the efforts to finalise the text of the Universal Decla-

ration, regarding it as the cornerstone of the just, peaceful and durable new world order so eagerly sought by the churches. Directly from the Amsterdam Assembly Nolde travelled to Paris where the UN General Assembly was finalising the Universal Declaration. There, strengthened by the Amsterdam statement, Nolde offered a draft of the right to freedom of religion, which was included as Article 18 of the adopted Declaration. (John 1998; Nolde 1970/1986, 263–265, 270–271; van der Bent 1986, 1–3, 27–28.)

At the same time Monsigneur Roncalli, Papal Nuncio in Paris, later Pope John XXIII, was also working hard to promote these issues and he played an important role in the formulation of the draft of Declaration of Human Rights. As the World Council of Churches tried to influence the US delegation, the Catholic Church worked in close connection with the French delegation. (Traer 1991, 178.)

8 Human rights and the churches during the early phase of the Cold War

During the first years of the Cold War the significance of the human rights was limited. The signatory states saw the goals of the declaration as important but did not see them as binding. The first generation of human rights were those deriving from the liberal Enlightenment, according to which it was believed that man is born to be free, to live and to possess and also that the freedoms of association, opinion and religion were natural. The West emphasised first generation human rights. Second generation human rights, such as the right to health care, and the right to study and to work and required action by the state, were the rights stressed by the East. This difference gave the super powers opportunities to hamper decision making concerning human rights in the UN.

One reason for the rise of the human rights was the increased influence of international NGOs. The other was independence of the former colonies. In addition to the competition between west and east another struggle arose, the contradiction between the North and the South. Third generation human rights were those which were important to the third world countries, like right to development, to peace and to a healthy environment. The West was in the beginning suspicious of rights belonging to whole nations and which could not be implemented by a court of law. In the West's view, the

lack of the third generation human rights was not a reason to restrict the right to freedom, to political life or to restrict rights of conscience, which were important to the West. (Pohjolainen 1999, 232–233, 245.)

It was a remarkable step forward, when the *International Covenants on Civil and Political and on Economic, Social and Cultural, Rights* were accepted by the UN in December 1966 and came into force after ten years in 1976. The earlier position of the majority of states, that human rights are an internal matter for sovereign states, had slowly but steadily given way to the acceptance of an array of international norms and standards which now constitute a body of international law by which the behaviour of sovereign nations is often judged. Also the conception of human rights slowly changed as international law developed through the United Nations. (John 1998; Traer 1991, 21.)

Pope John XXIII did not himself see any results of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), which he called and which adjusted the Catholic Church to modern times (*aggiornamento*), as he died in 1963. Only a couple months before his death he published his encyclica *Pacem in Terris,* where he clearly states his joy about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He asserts that it is a first step towards the establishment of a legal and political organisation for the world community. Protection of human rights was fundamental for peace. Human dignity, which was already central in the *Rerum novarum* of Leo the XIII, became the cornerstone of the Catholic social doctrine. During its last session the Vatican II approved the statement *Gaudium et spes* in which one whole chapter was devoted to human rights. Since this Catholic theology has been much concerned with discussion of human rights, both in relation to their foundation on natural law and the danger of too individualistic interpretation. (Traer 1991, 38–39; Woodrow 1998.)

During the Cold War discussion of human rights stagnated and was limited to a number of specific issues like peace, disarmament, security, refugees, migrants, those without legal rights and issues of economic and social development. In the ecumenical movement the conflict between East and West dominated discussions. The WCC invoked human rights mainly when it was looking to defend the individual rights to religion in the atheist socialist countries. The concerns of the ecumenical movement were western. There was a tendency to regard the rights of the individual as a prerequisite

for the rights of the whole society. Collective rights were thought of as an accumulation of individual rights.

This pattern began to change at the world conference on "Church and Society" in Geneva in 1966 where a scale of values was developed with human rights at the top rather than being limited to freedom of religion. The main focus of the conference was on the Third World and on revolution.

The Assembly of Uppsala in 1968 created a new concept of just, participatory and sustainable society and demanded a major change in attitudes concerning human rights. "Let the world set the agenda", was the slogan of the assembly. Since 1968 the central notion became justice in its economic, social and political dimensions and the concern for freedom was expressed in terms of human dignity. This was a turn to the left for the ecumenical movement, but did not noticeably increase interest in, or raise the profile of, human rights. Their renaissance only began in the 1970's. (Hintikka 2000, 147; Lindqvist 1975, 46–57; Nolde 1970/1986, 271–285; Ryman 2011, 253; Traer 1991, 21; van der Bent 1986, 8, 28–30.)

9 From the Civil Rights Movement in the US to the rebellion of values in the 1960s

In the United States the Civil Rights Movement was concerned with the efforts to abolish racial discrimination of African Americans particularly in the southern states. The decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in 1954 was insufficient in that it gave to the African Americans "separate but equal" opportunities and thus allowed racial discrimination. Occasional incidents led to the emergence of Martin Luther King as the leader of non-violent civil right movement of the black. Passive resistance and a variety of demonstrations were effective and received support. Incidents multiplied during 1963, but the culminating event was the peaceful convergence on Washington D. C., of over 250,000 marchers. However, Martin Luther King's moving depiction of his dream to this vast audience did not bring peace and equality to America. On the contrary, next year rioting spread into many cities. The same year, 1964, racial discrimination was made illegal. The situation remained restless and the emergence of the Black Power Movement, which lasted roughly from 1966 to 1975, enlarged the aims of the Civil Rights Movement to include racial dignity,

economic and political self-sufficiency, and freedom from oppression by white Americans. (Ahlstrom 1975, 592–598; Marty 2010, 239–240.)

The demands of the Civil Rights Movement, in the noise of the turbulent 1960's were mixed and included opposition to the Vietnam War and apartheid policy in Southern Africa, advocacy for development aid, the marginalized and those without legal rights. The basic tune of this radicalism was opposition to old morals and to old-fashioned institutions.

The value rebellion of the first generation after the war was an international phenomenon, which also spread to Finland where the academic young intelligentsia in the 1950's and early 1960's saw leftist ideology as quite strange and pursued a more modern rather than radical path. Criticism of the new radicalism since the mid 1960's aimed at national values. (Virtanen 2002, 164–167.)

In the beginning the topics were cultural. Hannu Salama's novel was accused of blasphemy. Because the new archbishop, Martti Simojoki, had been critical of the book, the Church was blamed for being reactionary. Later these cultural discussions became concentrated on sex, national pride, the Second World War and other national themes. Finnish radio became the centre of new radicalism after Eino S. Repo was appointed director. The President, Urho Kekkonen, liked to socialise with the young radicals.

A turning point came in the turbulent year of protests, 1968. Worldwide, campuses became battle grounds for social change. Opposition to the Vietnam War dominated the protests, but students protested about lack of civil liberties, against racism, for feminism and against biological and nuclear weapons. Television was influential in forming the political identity of this generation and was the tool of choice for the revolutionaries.

Radicalism attacked the Lutheran Church as an old-fashioned and moralistic institution. The Students' Christian Movement became radicalised in Finland as in many other countries. At first it showed an increased interest in international affairs such as apartheid policy in South Africa, but gradually it adopted most of the elements of leftist ideology. Simultaneously the conservative revival movements formed its own students' associations without social ethical emphasises. (Malkavaara 2011a, 26, 32; Pietikäinen 1997, 74–79; Virtanen 2002, 269–350).

Again the year 1968 was decisive. Directly following the Assembly in Uppsala of the WCC the *World's Student Christian Federation* arranged an

international conference in Turku, Finland. The revolutionary atmosphere of Uppsala mediated to the conference, where the mood was already tense because of the world wide student riots. Marxist analysis was the basis for the chaotic discussions in this politically and theologically charged atmosphere. About half of the participants moved to the Assembly of the WSCF in Espoo, near to Helsinki. Politics was seen an instrument to keep human life human. The conviction was that the Christian faith demands active opposition to oppression. "We are called to be partisans in the struggles of our day", it was said in one of the reports. The third world representatives formed a majority in the new Executive Committee because the Federation wanted to be in solidarity with the poor and oppressed parts of the world. (Lehtonen 1998, 70–104; Pietikäinen 1997, 80.)

Political openings in spirit like this cost the Students' Christian Movement in Finland all the economic support it had received from the church. It had been a semi-official organ of the church with many student pastors, but in 1969 the church reorganized its work among students. (Pietikäinen 1997, 80–83.)

Interestingly the peak of this rising radicalism coincided both with the hectic renewal of the welfare system and huge social change in Finland. People were moving to towns and cities, from farms to factories and offices, and also, towards the end of the decade, to Sweden. The Finnish countryside emptied. These changes broke traditional social networks and family structures.

New social care client groups were dissatisfied with traditional relief which was seen humiliating and stigmatising. This new lower middle class rebellion and struggle for human rights led to demands for change in the character and control of services for the poor including their removal from social care. People wanted to be seen as citizens and to use social services which were planned for them.

Criticism was also aimed at involuntary treatment, child protection, the condition of homeless alcoholics and the treatment of psychiatric patients. Social workers had to defend themselves. As a result of these discussions the significance of the NGOs decreased and state controlled welfare increased. Associations advocating for the marginalised (Marraskuun liike, Yhdistys 9, Sadankomitea) in the spirit of the 60's received a lot of attention. (Urponen 1994, 232, 240–241.)

Working for the oppressed, for women's rights, for famine relief and op-

posing racial discrimination were aspects of working for human rights and defending human dignity, but those concepts were only seldom mentioned. Instead these activities were seen as a strengthening of leftist values and as part of internal change leading to a multi-value society where the duty of care extended beyond one's own close circle.

10 Human rights, international politics and the ecumenical movement

The history of the Lutheran World Federation's discussion of human rights culminated in developments which took place in the 1970s. The Fifth Assembly of the Federation was planned to be held in Pôrto Alegre, Brazil. Only six weeks before the opening ceremonies it was announced that the meeting would take place in Evian, France, near Geneva. The original idea had been to arrange the Assembly in the GDR, but, surprisingly, the state authorities of the GDR cancelled that plan in the summer 1966.

During the Assembly preparations reports of torture and oppression perpetrated by the military government of Brazil were heard. As early as January 1969 the Swedish National Committee reported that two Christian youth organizations were pressing for a change of venue. During the spring of 1970 the argument within the LWF leadership became even more heated. Among prominent critics were Archbishop Martti Simojoki and Professor Mikko Juva. (Ryman 2011, 252; Schjørring, Kumari & Hjelm 1997, 382–385.)

As a result human rights violations in Brazil stole the attention of the Lutheran world. Dealing with human rights was an important part of the work of the third section of the Assembly. Its topic was "Responsible Participation in Today's Society". The report paid attention particularly to the rights of political prisoners and to racism. Later, the adoption of a strong resolution on human rights was seen as perhaps the most significant decision of the Assembly. Some of the delegates wanted to add examples of human rights violations committed by the Soviet Union or the GDR in the same way that "the horrendous system of apartheid and colonialism as it exists in Southern Africa or the continuing racial tension in the United States" were mentioned. (Grosc 1971, 9–10, 13, 18, 28, 92–94; Schjørring, Kumari & Hjelm 1997.)

Real change in the WCC's attitude to human rights dates from the period

of the St. Pölten Consultation in 1974, which had a substantial impact on broadening and sharpening the agenda. The constraints of the East–West politics of the time had kept the "individual" and the "collective" rights issues divided along the lines of the 1966 Covenants. Human rights were not "indivisible", as the Universal Declaration had them, but divided by a chasm of ideological and political differences. While considerable headway was made on civil and political rights, the area of social, economic and cultural rights remained largely ignored, even though the Commission did venture into new territory, elaborating "third generation" rights to peace and to development.

The WCC's new human rights focus began following international discussion on human rights in 1968 after the UN World Conference on Human Rights held in Teheran and the Uppsala Assembly. In the same year the WCC Central Committee called for a review of ecumenical policy on human rights. The review resulted in a consultation on *Human Rights and Christian Responsibility* in St. Pölten, Austria, 1974. (John 1998.)

At issue were different interpretations of human rights in the atmosphere of the Cold War. The problem for the churches was that they were from the both sides of the political border. During the consultation a group representing protestant churches in the GDR submitted a text where they argued that "the inviolability of life, dignity and property are not a constitutive element of the human being", as these rights belong only to God. The churches of the West interpreted this as dictation by socialist government.

In spite of the tensions the consultation of St. Pölten was important and productive and was able to draft a new statement of ecumenical policy on human rights. On the basis of this consultation, the WCC Assembly in Nairobi in 1975 confirmed a growing ecumenical consensus on what constitutes human rights, emphasising the right to basic guarantees of life, the right to self-determination and cultural identity and the rights of minorities, the right to participate in decision-making within the country, the right to dissent, the right to personal dignity, and the right to religious freedom.

Very importantly, that statement emphasised the indivisibility of the articles of the Universal Declaration, and of the two International Human Rights Covenants. It significantly reversed the trend of ecumenical thinking, which up to that point had been heavily influenced by the western emphasis on

individual human rights. (Nikolainen, Janhonen & Cantell 1976, 165–175; Traer 1991, 22; van der Bent 1986, 32.)

11 Human rights and Eastern Europe

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe which opened on 3 July 1973 was concluded at Helsinki on 1 August 1975 by the High Representatives of 35 sovereign states. This conference deeply changed international policy. Preparations began in 1972 in the atmosphere of détente of the early 1970's. On the wish list of the West there were various freedoms, like freedom of individuals, labour, free mobility of literature and freedom of visas. The Soviet Union pursued increased political security, to secure the postwar borders of Europe and discussion of economic and scientific cooperation. (Kallenautio 2005, 354–372.)

In the preparation process different issues were put into baskets of which the first concerned security, the second economy, science, technology and environment, the third human life, and mostly human rights. The core question was, would the actions of the socialist countries be recognised and legitimised or would the West get a springboard for criticism of human rights in the East.

In the summit conference NATO argued that European countries should together secure the realisation of human rights and that discussion about their implementation should not be seen as interfering in state's internal matters. The President of the Soviet Union Leonid Brezhnev disagreed. It was his view that no nation had the right to instruct another on the management of its internal affairs. Thus Brezhnev repulsed demands for adjustments to international social responsibilities for human rights. At Helsinki the signatory states recognised postwar borders and the division into two ideological pacts. They also made a commitment to promote and respect human rights. (Kallenautio 2005, 374–382.)

The WCC Assembly in Nairobi was arranged in December 1975, five months after the Helsinki conference. The position of human rights was totally transformed post Helsinki. Dissident groups in Eastern Europe were strengthened by utilising the agreement. (Kotiranta 2010, 346.)

Before Helsinki it was expected that the Nairobi Assembly would concentrate on third world questions, but the human rights became the dominant

issue. The atmosphere was electrified by a letter from two Russian dissidents, Father Gleb Jakunin and the phycisist Lev Regelson. They drew attention to human rights violations in the Soviet Union and asked for action. The Russian representatives labeled Jakunin and Regelson as trouble-makers, who should have been ignored. In the assembly there were also reports from other East European countries, but main issue was the human rights situation in the Soviet Union which took up two days of debate. Meetings of the fifth section which dealt with human rights were sharply polarized. In spite of this the report of the Nairobi Assembly was "a remarkable milestone in ecumenical understanding of human rights for two reasons: the question of religious liberty had become "inseparable from other fundamental human rights" and "for the first time in ecumenical history, the churches arrived at a consensus regarding the *content* of human rights". (Hintikka 2000, 146–151; Murtorinne 2010, 37; Nikolainen, Janhonen & Cantell 1976, 163–165; Traer 1991, 22.)

The Helsinki Agreement was a tactical mistake for the leadership of the Soviet Union. It had sought stabilisation for Europe, but the agreement caused a rupture to the iron curtain which divided Europe. From the agreement people were able to read about the rights their country had committed to respect.

In Czechoslovakia an informal civic initiative Charta 77 emerged, motivated by political arrests. Led by the poet Václav Havel it criticised the government for failing to implement human rights. The Catholic Church elected Polish cardinal and archbishop of Krakow Karol Wojtyła as Pope. His visit to his native country revived a national enthusiasm which resulted to formulation of the independent and non-controlled trade union federation Solidarity.

The number of political prisoners in Soviet Union increased but their fate was not as secret as before, there were more ways of obtaining information. The most famous dissidents were Nobel-prize winning physicist Andrei Sakharov and the novelist Alexander Solzhenitsyn. (Bock 1992, 90–92; Chrypinski 1990, 126–128; Kotiranta 2010, 345–346; Murtorinne 2010, 38.)

In the GDR opposition movements began, in 1978, as pacifist and ecological movements. From the outset prominent figures of the protestant church like Professor Heino Falcke were involved. In 1980 a 'decade of

peace' initiative led to tens of thousands of people participating in peaceful demonstrations every November. At the same time the state sought to improve its relations with the church using the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther as a tool. By 1986 the movements began to show signs of rebellion. (Ramet 1992, 57–63.)

Human rights and human rights activists were one factor in the collapse of the socialist system. The movements were mostly grass-roots action in defense of civil rights. The church leadership worked under state control and at first only gave them limited acceptance. The Catholic Church was a more important player in the process than the Orthodox or Protestant churches, not least because of the influence of the Polish Pope John Paul II. Traditionally the Catholic Church had been an opponent of Communism. In Poland it began to support Solidarity trade union and its demands for civil freedoms. The underground Catholic Church was an important supporter of the human rights struggle most notably in Czechoslovakia. (Ketola 2010, 67–68; Murtorinne 2010, 38–45.)

12 Conclusions and reflection

The next part of my study will deal with the primary research material, texts originating from Finnish diaconia work. My research thus far, shows that the Helsinki Agreement was a real borderline. Before 1975 it was possible to make plans for the diaconia of the whole church or to write text books of theological ethics without mentioning human rights. The influence of the human rights in Finnish diaconia is quite recent.

The division of human rights into two generations would be interesting. Does the church and its diaconia emphasise the classical, liberalistic and individualistic human rights as in the West or also recognise the social human rights stressed by the East? Or, was the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc a turning point in this sense? What were the reactions of the Finnish Lutheran Church in the beginning of the 1980's when the Cold War intensified for the last time? Has the significance of the social human rights decreased since the end of the Cold War?

And what has been the significance of the ecumenical and international diaconia? What has the South taught the church? Can a major influence of the Liberation theology be seen and if so when? Who are sources of inspiration?

The evidence from my study shows that the churches preferred the concept of human dignity rather than human rights given the choice. Human dignity belongs to classical Christian terminology and is therefore an easy choice. Is there evidence of change over this period?

Finland became a member state of European Union in 1995. How significant was this for diaconal thinking and human rights? In 1995 there was an important renewal of civil rights in Finland, leading to changes in the Finnish constitution. First and foremost it involved new legislation banning discrimination. In the church it led to considerable discussion concerning the rights of women and sexual minorities. The next part of this study will also explore the influence of this development on the diaconal thinking.

References

Ahlstrom, Sydney E. 1975. A Religious History of the American People. Volume 2. New York, Image Books. A Division of Doubleday & Company.

Anttonen, Anneli & Sipilä, Jorma 2000. Suomalaista sosiaalipolitiikkaa. Tampere, Vastapaino.

van der Bent, Ans J. 1986. Christian Response in a World of Crisis. A brief history of the WCC's Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. Geneva, World Council of Churches.

Bock, Paul 1992. Protestantism in Czechoslovakia and Poland. In Ramet, Sabrina Petra (ed.): Protestantism and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia. The Communist and Postcommunist Eras. Durham and London, Duke University Press, 73–106.

Chrypinski, Vincent C. 1990. The Catholic Church in Poland, 1944–1989. In Ramet, Pedro (ed.): Catholicism and Politics in Communist Societies. Durham and London, Duke University Press, 117–141.

Grosc, La Vern K. (ed.) 1971. Sent into the World. The Proceedings of the Fifth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation. Evian, France July 14–24, 1970. Minneapolis, Augsburg Publishing House.

Grönvik, Lorenz 1981. Suomen luterilaisuuden anti nykyisissä ekumeenisissa keskusteluissa. In Martikainen, Eeva ja Tamminen, Kalevi (eds.): Teologian näkymiä 1980-luvun alkaessa. Helsinki, Suomalainen Teologinen Kirjallisuusseura.

Haatanen, Pekka 1992. Suomalaisen hyvinvointivaltion kehitys. In Riihinen, Olavi (ed.): Sosiaalipolitiikka 2017. Näkökulmia suomalaisen yhteiskunnan kehitykseen ja tulevaisuuteen. Helsinki, WSOY, 31–67.

Helne, Tuula 2003. Sosiaalipolitiikan perusteet. In Helne, Tuula; Julkunen, Raija; Kajanoja, Jouko; Laitinen-Kuikka, Sini; Silvasti, Tiina & Simpura, Jussi, Sosiaalinen politiikka. Helsinki, WSOY, 17–92.

Hissa, Pentti I. (ed.) 1970. Diakonia ja muuttuva yhteiskunta. Helsinki, Kirkon diakoniatoimikunta.

Hintikka, Kaisamari 2000. The Romanian Orthodox Church and the World Council of Churches, 1961–1977. Diss. Helsinki. Helsinki, Luther–Agricola-Gesellschaft.

Huhta, Ilkka 2005. Sisälähetysseura kirkon ja hyvinvointivaltion työrukkasena 1960–1974. In Huhta, Ilkka & Malkavaara, Mikko: Suomen Kirkon Sisälähetysseuran historia. Vuodet 1940–2004. Helsinki, Kirkkopalvelut, 136–221.

Hytönen, Maarit 2003. Kirkko ja nykyajan eettiset kysymykset. Tampere, Kirkon tutkimuskeskus.

Jaakkola, Jouko 1994. Sosiaalisen kysymyksen yhteiskunta. In Jaakkola, Jouko; Pulma, Panu; Satka, Mirja; Urponen, Kyösti: Armeliaisuus, yhteisöapu, sosiaaliturva. Suomalaisten sosiaalisen turvan historia. Helsinki, Sosiaaliturvan keskusliitto, 71–161.

Jalovaara, Ville 2007. Kirkko, Kekkonen ja kommunismi poliittisina kriisivuosina 1958 – 1962. Diss. Helsinki. Helsinki, Suomen Kirkkohistoriallinen Seura.

John, Clement 1998. Human rights and the churches – the new challenges. Reformed World 2/1998. Accessed 20th of November 2011. http://www.warc.ch/dcw/rw982/03.html

Kallenautio, Jorma 2005. Suomi kylmän rauhan maailmassa. Suomen ulkopolitiikka Porkkalan palautuksesta 1955 Euroopan Unionin jäsenyyteen 1995. Helsinki, Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Kansanaho, Erkki & Hissa, Pentti 1979. Palveleva kirkko. Diakonian oppikirja. Pieksämäki, Kirjaneliö.

Ketola, Mikko 2010. Katolinen kirkko. In Turunen, Maija (ed.): Kirkot ja uskonnot itäisessä Euroopassa. Helsinki, Edita, 67–95.

Kotiranta, Matti 2010. Uskonnonvapaus itäisessä Euroopassa. In Turunen, Maija (ed.): Kirkot ja uskonnot itäisessä Euroopassa. Helsinki, Edita, 343–360.

Lehtonen, Risto 1998. Story of a Storm. The Ecumenical Student Movement in the Turmoil of Revolution. Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge U. K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Helsinki, Suomen Kirkkohistoriallinen Seura.

Lindqvist, Martti 1975. Economic Growth and the Quality of Life. An Analysis of the Debate within the World Council of Churches 1966–1974. Diss. Helsinki. Helsinki, Missiologian ja ekumeniikan seura.

Malkavaara, Mikko 1998. Luterilaisen maailmanliiton sosiaalieettisen mallin kehkeytyminen. In Raunio, Antti (ed.): Kansainvälinen solidaarisuus ja sosiaalietiikka. STKS:n symposiumissa marraskuussa 1997 pidetyt esitelmät. Helsinki, Suomalainen Teologinen Kirjallisuusseura, 119–164.

Malkavaara, Mikko 2000. Diakonian, teologian ja diakonian teologian murrokset. In Heikkilä, Matti; Karjalainen, Jouko & Malkavaara, Mikko (eds.): Kirkonkirjat köyhyydestä. Helsinki, Kirkkopalvelut, 17–57.

Malkavaara, Mikko 2002. Sodasta laman kynnykselle – köyhyys ja diakonia hyvinvointivaltiota rakennettaessa. In Mäkinen, Virpi (ed.): Lasaruksesta leipäjonoihin. Köyhyys kirkon kysymyksenä. Jyväskylä, Atena, 221–260.

Malkavaara, Mikko 2007. Suomalaisen diakoniatyön taustat ja nykytilanne. In Latvus, Kari & Elenius, Antti (eds.): Auttamisen teologia. Helsinki, Kirjapaja, 83–121.

Malkavaara, Mikko 2011a. Tutkiva kirkko. Kirkon tutkimuskeskus kirkon tutkimuspolitiikan toteuttajana 1964–2009. Tampere, Kirkon tutkimuskeskus.

Malkavaara, Mikko 2011b. Kriisit jalostavat diakoniaa. In Ikonen, Tiina (ed.): Käytännöllinen teologia Helsingin yliopistossa. Käytännöllisen teologian tutkimus ja opetus 2000-luvun alussa. Käytännöllisen teologian osaston vuosikirja 2010. Helsinki, Helsingin yliopisto, Käytännöllisen teologian osasto, 110–140.

Marty, Martin 2010. Kristitty maailma – Kristinuskon globaali historia. Helsinki, Kirjapaja.

McGrath, Alister E. 2000. Modernin teologian ensyklopedia. Helsinki, Kirjapaja.

Meriläinen, Juha 2009. Suomi ja Euroopan kirkollinen jälleenrakentaminen 1945–1948. Diss. Helsinki. Helsinki, Suomen tiedeseura.

Murtorinne, Eino 1995. Suomen kirkon historia 4. Sortovuosista nykypäiviin 1900–1990. Helsinki, WSOY.

Murtorinne, Eino 2010. Kirkkojen ja uskontojen asema kommunismin valtakautena. In Turunen, Maija (ed.): Kirkot ja uskonnot itäisessä Euroopassa. Helsinki, Edita, 10–45.

Määttä, Timo 2004. "Sinne, missä hätä on suurin". Lakisääteinen diakoniatyö Kalajoen rovastikunnassa 1944–1982. Diss. Helsinki. Helsinki, Suomen Kirkkohistoriallinen Seura.

Nikolainen, Aimo T.; Janhonen, Anneli & Cantell, Risto (eds.) 1976. Raja-aitoja murtamassa: Nairobi 1975. Kirkkojen Maailmanneuvoston 23.11.–10.12.1975 Nairobissa Keniassa pidetyn viidennen yleiskokouksen asiakirjoja. Helsinki, Kirjaneliö.

Nieminen, Heikki-Tapio 2008. Piispainkokous. Piispainkokouksen synty, tehtävät ja toiminta 1908–2008. Helsinki, Kirkkohallitus.

Nolde, O. Frederick 1970/1986. Ecumenical Action in International Affairs. In Fey, Harold E. (ed.), The Ecumenical Advance. A History of the Ecumenical Movement. Volume 2. 1948–1968. Second edition. Geneva, World Council of Churches, 261–285.

Pietikäinen, Petteri 1997. Kristitty, ylioppilas ja etsijä. Suomen kristillinen ylioppilasliike sata vuotta (1897–1997). Helsinki, Suomen Kristillinen Ylioppilasliitto.

Pohjolainen, Anna-Elina 1999. Ihmisoikeudet odottavat toteutumistaan. In Kantola, Anu; Kantola, Juha; Härkönen, Riikka; Lahti, Vesa-Matti; Pohjolainen, Anna-Elina & Sipola, Simo: Maailman tila ja Suomi. Helsinki: Gaudeamus, 221–270.

Pyykkö, Raija 2004. Valtion ja kirkon välissä: ammatillisen seurakuntadiakonian muotoutuminen. In Henriksson, Lea & Wrede, Sirpa (eds.): Hyvinvointityön ammatit. Helsinki, Yliopistopaino, 110–143.

Ramet, Sabrina Petra 1992. Protestantism in East Germany, 1949–1989: A Summing Up. In Ramet, Sabrina Petra (ed.): Protestantism and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia. The Communist and Postcommunist Eras. Durham and London, Duke University Press, 40–72.

Ryman, Björn 2011. The Cold War and the Churches – Similarities Between Sweden and Finland. In Laine, Antti & Laitinen, Aappo (eds.): Yliopisto, kirkko ja yhteiskunta. Aila Lauhan juhlakirja. Helsinki, Suomen Kirkkohistoriallinen Seura.

Ryökäs, Esko 2006. Kokonaisdiakonia. Diakoniakäsityksien opilliset liittymät. Helsinki, Diakonia-ammattikorkeakoulu.

Satka, Mirja 1994. Sosiaalinen työ peräänkatsojamiehestä hoivayrittäjäksi. In Jaakkola, Jouko; Pulma, Panu; Satka, Mirja; Urponen, Kyösti: Armeliaisuus, yhteisöapu, sosiaaliturva – Suomalaisten sosiaalisen turvan historia. Helsinki, Sosiaaliturvan keskusliitto, 261–339.

Schjørring, Jens Holger; Kumari, Prasanna & Hjelm, Norman (eds.) 1997. From Federation to Communion – The History of the Lutheran World Federation. Minneapolis, Fortress Press.

Seppo, Juha 1997. Teologinen Aikakauskirja sodan ja Lundin teologian varjossa 1940–1953. Teologinen Aikakauskirja 102, 526–555.

Seppo, Juha 1999. Kirkko ja itsenäinen Suomi 1917–1998. In Heikkilä, Markku (ed.): Uskonto ja nykyaika. Yksilö ja eurooppalaisen yhteiskunnan murros. Jyväskylä, Atena, 10–52.

Simojoki, Martti 1973. Kantaaottavaa puhetta. Helsinki, Kirjapaja.

Sinnemäki, Maunu (ed.) 1971. Vastuu ja yhteys. Luterilaisen maailmanliiton viidennen yleiskokouksen asiakirjoja. Helsinki, Kirjapaja.

Sinnemäki, Maunu (ed.) 1972. Pelastus ja yhteiskunta. Kaksi Suomen evankelis-luterilaisen kirkon piispainkokouksen toimeksiannosta laadittua mietintöä. Helsinki, Kirjapaja.

Stokes, Anson Phelps & Pfeffer, Leo 1964. Church and State in the United States. New York, Evanston and London, Harper & Row, Publishers.

Teinonen, Seppo A. 1961. Missio politica oecumenica. A Contribution to the Study of the Theology of Ecumenical Work in International Politics. Helsinki, Suomen lähetystieteellinen seura.

Traer, Robert 1991. Faith in Human Rights: Support in Religious Traditions for a Global Struggle. Washington D.C., Georgetown University Press.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 50th Anniversary. Accessed 20th of November 2011. www.udhr.org/history/default.htm

Urponen, Kyösti 1994. Huoltoyhteiskunnasta hyvinvointivaltioon. In Jaakkola, Jouko; Pulma, Panu; Satka, Mirja & Urponen, Kyösti: Armeliaisuus, yhteisöapu, sosiaaliturva – Suomalaisten turvan historia. Helsinki, Sosiaaliturvan Keskusliitto, 163–260.

Veikkola, Juhani 2005. Katson kulkemaani tietä. In Sipiläinen, Ilkka & Suviranta, Raili (eds.): Tiellä laajempaan vastuuseen. Juhani Veikkola LXV, Diakonian vuosikirja 2005. Helsinki, Diakonia ry & Kirkkohallitus, 8–27.

Virtanen, Matti 2002. Fennomanian perilliset. Poliittiset traditiot ja sukupolvien dynamiikka. Diss. Helsinki. Helsinki, Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Woodrow, Alain 1998. The Church and Human Rights. The Tablet 1/1998. Accessed 20th of November 2011. http://www.thetablet.co.uk/article/6569

Mikko Malkavaara (Diaconia University of Applied Sciences)

DALITS ON THE AGENDA OF THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT AND CHURCHES

1 Purpose of this study

The caste system is a form of social and economic governance in India and its neighbouring countries, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Migration has transferred the caste system also to other countries. Systems of social stratification and discrimination by work and descent are known also from some other countries. Similarly affected groups are found in Japan, in West Africa and in the Horn of Africa.

The caste system involves the division of people into endogamous social groups (castes) where assignment of rights determined by birth are fixed and hereditary. The assignment of basic rights among various castes is unequal and hierarchical, with those at the top enjoying the most rights coupled with the least duties and those at the bottom performing the most duties coupled with no rights. Members of the affected communities experience systemic discrimination, and often severe violations on their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. (IDSN – International Dalit Solidarity Network.)

Dalits are those at the bottom, outcastes and casteless untouchables. Discrimination against the 260 million Dalits in the world is the biggest known human rights problem. Through history their position has been so low that they have had no possibility of improving their fate. The first indication of Dalits' wish for a better future was their mass conversion to Christianity, which began in the 1870s, but more organised action did not take place

until a hundred years later.

In this article I will describe the way in which the Dalit issue is coming to the notice of the churches and the ecumenical movement, and how and why they have started acting as advocates for the Dalits alongside Dalit organisations. At the same time I will try to give an overview of the problems of Dalits and especially Dalit Christians.

The material of this article is based on my book *Intialainen dalit-teologia* (Indian Dalit Theology), unless there is another reference (Malkavaara 1999). Since completing this book I have continued my research on this subject and published many articles. I also am a social rights activist myself having been chairing the Dalit Solidarity Network in Finland since its foundation in 2010.

2 Context of Indian Christian Theology

Traditionally Indian Christian theology is distinctive and contextual. These characteristics are related to its interaction with Hinduism. Hinduism is the inevitable context of Indian theology. It is an open faith, which holds within it many religious truths. It is the religion of the majority, the core of the culture, and the basis of Indian development.

Hindu reform movements, influenced by western rationalism and Christianity, were formed in the 19th century, when India was still strongly in the sway of mission work and western colonialism. Paradoxically those movements then influenced Christian theology.

The reformers of Hinduism respected Christianity, especially for its ethics. Academic Indian theologians who had converted to Christianity asked in turn if it was possible to build Indian Christian theology on Hindu grounds. The most notable Indian theologians have usually been of the Brahmin caste, or of some other among the highest-ranking castes. Brahminical philosophy was in dialogue with Indian theology.

At the beginning of the 20th century the national aspiration for independence was reflected in Christian thinking. The aim was a national Indian church. The duty of the church was to take seriously the cultural heritage of the country while a new independent India was in creation. The churchmen who called for a national Indian emphasis were active in the ecumenical movement.

The goal was a national feeling of connection and welfare. Salvation was seen not as something related to afterlife but as a change in this life. The church was thought of as an Indian community. The individualistic western-ers had emphasised the message of salvation. Indian Christians emphasised the quality of life of the community.

The academic Indian theologians became interested in mutually unravelling the concepts of Brahminism and Christianity. Thanks to the international ecumenical movement, modern western theology began to influence Indian theology. The new radical theology emphasised its relativistic relationship with religions and opposed western hegemony.

1947, the year of becoming independent, meant a great change. The British were gone. The old colonial India had become two independent countries, India and Pakistan. The biggest challenge was finding a uniting element at a time of separation. In theology the dialogue with Hinduism grew stronger. The motto of the young nation was *nation-building*. Churches started studies on Hinduism and Indian society, as well as vast dialogue programmes.

The most notable of the theologians of the dialogue was M. M. Thomas (1916-1986). While earlier Indian theologians had been searching for common ground with traditional Hinduism, M. M. Thomas set out to create a relationship with modern India and the world of Asian revolution. Thomas, who worked at the top of the ecumenical movement, took theology into dialogue with extensive societal questions.

Thus, adapting Christian theology into existing culture and so-called rethinking has a long history in India. Not only was the thinking of the upper-caste Indian theologians tolerant to the majority of their own country; it was broad-minded ecumenically as well.

The societal theology introduced by the ecumenical movement consisted of global rather than Indian notions in the 1960s and 1970s. Liberation theology spread to India in the 1970s. Like the liberation theology of Latin America, Indian liberation theology has used Marxist analysis as a tool of understanding social, economical and political forms of oppression and exploitation.

Liberation theology instigated a paradigm shift. The experiences of the third world gravely questioned the western way of practicing theology. The suffering and longing of marginalised people required a new way of under-standing and interpreting Christian faith from the comprehensive view of

reality of the oppressed.

There was a strong internal need for change in Indian theology, so the new paradigm was adopted surprisingly fast and flexibly. Unlike in other parts of the world, society-oriented, contextual theology, developed from the viewpoint of the poor, did not face conservative resistance aiming to preserve the teachings of the church. This was because of the tradition of dialogue in Indian theology.

3 The history of mission work in India

According to tradition Thomas the Apostle brought Christianity to India, where he died as a martyr. Historical references of a flourishing Christian church in India can be found starting from the 4th century. The Syrian-Orthodox church, or St. Thomas Church, that was born in Kerala on the southwest coast, developed into an endogamous caste, which can only marry or have meals amongst its own. The Orthodox Christians called Syrians were and are equivalent to the highest castes, so there are no Dalits among them.

During the Age of Discovery, starting from the end of the 16th century, Catholic missionaries arrived in India. The Jesuit, Roberto de Nobili, is the best known of the early missionaries. De Nobili, a nobleman, made a mistake when he thought the caste system was mostly a social institution. He believed that the best way to instil Christianity into India was to start by converting the upper classes, in the hope that the faith would transmit to the lower layers. He thought it necessary that his mission should adopt the ways and philosophy of the upper castes. Thus Jesuit mission work was based on the thought that Christianity should be promulgated to the Hindus as a universal religion based on Indian philosophy.

The Catholic Church created separate worship services for people from different castes. The religious aspect of the castes was not understood. Nowadays the caste backgrounds of Catholic Indians are more heterogeneous than others. The ability to adapt to local cultures characteristic of the Catholic Church is apparent in the way the congregational structures are usually organised by castes.

Protestant mission work started in India in the beginning of the 18th century, and intensified in the 19th century. The missionaries learned Indian

languages and adopted Indian philosophy. During the British colonial period the Christian faith was tied to western culture. The Protestant mission was not aware of castes. The preaching concentrated on the individual and their salvation. Baptism separated the individual from their old caste and made them part of a new mixed community, one with an unclear social status. To the missionaries Hinduism was a wrong religion, and they used the caste system and inequality as an argument against it, and equality as one in favour of Christianity.

Starting from the 1870s Dalits came in great numbers to ask for baptism, and these so-called mass conversions meant a profound change in the Indian Christian church. The number of Christians multiplied in just a few decades.

Dalits wanted to convert to Christianity. Sometimes the missionaries even hindered their enthusiasm, because they were afraid that the poor were only searching for worldly benefits. That is why the expectation of education and a visible change in lifestyle became increasingly important. At times the missionaries refused to baptise, especially during times of famine. Dalits converted in the hope of a higher social status, self-respect and a new freedom from the oppression of the landowners.

The mass conversions transformed the Christian community from a small, socially divided, mostly urban and highly educated group into a new kind of church, which consisted mostly of poor and illiterate Dalits from the countryside. The mass conversions gave the church a permanent Dalit label, a fact to which the church has been astonishingly blind.

The dialogue between the academic Indian theologians did not touch on the subject of the Dalit mass conversions, nor on the social standing of Dalits during the nation-building years or afterwards. On the other hand, the musings of scholarly theologians held little meaning in the work of Christian mission and parishes. The Dalit mass conversions brought new aspects to the theology, but they were quite insignificant in the evangelical view on salvation, which puts emphasis on afterlife. Christian Dalits were more concerned about their life before death. They rejoiced in being free of slavery and in receiving a chance to start a new life.

The later Dalit theologians have criticised the mission work, which, according to them, saw the caste system only as something close to the social classes that were present in all countries. When the castes were seen

as something similar to estates of the realm or social classes they were not condemned, and that is why the caste system lived on within congregations. (Malkavaara 2011.)

4 The caste system

Dalit issues do not only relate to Christianity. The Dalit question should not be seen as a question of the churches unless there is an explicit relationship with the churches.

The Hindu *varna* categorisation divides people into four main groups: the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra. Dalits are those who are completely outside and below these groups. Religious texts authorise their low social status, which is controlled by numerous customs and practices.

More than the varna, each person's everyday life is affected by their own community, their *jati*. This is in fact synonymous with the word caste. There are at least 3,000 jatis. All areas have their own jatis and a hierarchy between them. Central to a jati is its endogamous nature; members can only marry within their own jati. Having meals with people outside your jati is forbidden as well. People from different jatis live in every village. A jati usually also has a traditional profession, but its significance as a binding factor has faded.

Dalits do not live in the same villages as jati-people. Roughly generalising one could say that every Indian village has its own *adi*-village, where the Dalits live. Dalits too divide into separate communities based on conventional professions, with their own hierarchy. Dalits work as servants or on the fields of jati-people, but as unnoticed as possible.

Notions of purity and impurity control the hierarchy. Dalits are the most impure, so impure that their presence and even their shadows pollute. That is why they are *untouchable*. The Indian constitution bans untouchability. According to law, India is a country where discrimination based on race, religion or caste is forbidden. In reality the significance of caste and religion, as well as discrimination based on them, has grown on account of democracy. The caste communities have a strong impact on politics as well. The main question is who controls these communities and how they can be influenced. In addition, politics are controlled by *communalism*, which involves provoking religious opposites against each other.

5 The fight for freedom for Dalits

The caste system, like the accompanying oppression of Dalits, is ancient. For the sake of the Dalit identity, and for one's own awareness, it is important to know when the oppression began and what preceded it.

The Dalit movement believes Dalits originated from a wealthy and sophisticated people who lived in the Indus Valley (home to the cultures of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa), and who were suppressed by Aryan invaders. The caste system, Hinduism and the oppression of Dalits began when the two cultures merged. Despite the claims of the Dalit movement, the theory that Dalits and the isolated tribal societies called the *adivasi* were in fact the indigenous people of India is impossible to prove.

In their own understanding Dalits have a glorious past and a culture of their own apart from the mainstream Hindu culture. Dalits are not allowed to enter Hindu temples and may not receive blessings from Brahmin priests, so by a narrow definition they are not Hindus. The Dalit priests and the pantheon of gods worshipped in the modest temples of Dalit villages are different from the temples of caste Hindus, but by a broader definition their religion is unquestionably Hinduism.

Dalits form a notable minority in all of India. They are however no more than a fifth part of the population in any one place. They never have the power of numbers on their side. The indigenous *adivasis* (tribal people) are the majority in certain areas in Gujarat, Bihar, Orissa and northeast India, but the entire adivasi population is approximately 80 million, whereas there are over 200 million Dalits nationally.

Religion legitimises societal layers and hierarchy. The varna system originates from the time before Christ. *Manusmriti*, or the Laws of Manu, culminated the social rejection of Dalits. These laws denied the humanity of members of the "fifth caste" and ordered them to live outside the villages.

Some movements opposing caste hierarchy and Brahminism did surface in the course of history, of which the most important is Buddhism, originating in the 5th century BC. However, Buddhism gradually merged with Hinduism in India. There was little change in the status of Dalits. The caste system was established in every religion practised in India.

Jyotiba Phule (1826–1890), who dedicated his life to fighting the caste tyranny, created the first modern movement against the caste system and

Brahminical Hinduism. He was the first to call people outside the caste system "Dalits". Phule aspired to make the oppressed classes aware of their own slavery.

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891–1956) was a Dalit, and he still remains the uniting force within the scattered Dalit movement. One cannot understand the Dalit movement and its goals without being familiar with Ambedkar. He was the brave and radical leader of the untouchables, and his goal was for Dalits to have their own political representation system. Ambedkar's most notable opponent was Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi (1869–1948), an upper-caste reform Hindu, who saw the political separation of the untouchables from Hindus as harmful to India. Gandhi emphasised a united India, but Ambedkar insisted that India consisted of separate groups that needed their own representatives. Thanks to the dispute between Ambedkar and Gandhi the question of the untouchables became one of the most important topics in Indian politics. Gandhi won the battle by threatening to "fast until death". Dalits gained entrance to political power, but not the autonomy they were aiming for. The casteless were made part of the Hindu community and Indian society.

As a statesman Ambedkar rose to an important position when India became independent in 1947. He became the Minister of Justice and the chairman of the committee responsible for writing the constitution, and a writer of said constitution. The main goal of the constitution was to guarantee equal political rights to everyone.

Ambedkar summarised his societal thinking in the words liberty, equality and fraternity. The right to human dignity, societal freedom and equality of the oppressed meant bringing the people left in the periphery into the centre. According to Ambedkar, religious and intellectual factors were behind the persistence of the caste system.

Ambedkar converted to Buddhism slightly before his death in 1956. He had made his separation from Hinduism clear twenty years earlier. In Buddhism Ambedkar found an Indian religion that emphasised equality and opposed the faults of Hinduism. A large amount of Ambedkar's followers converted with him. Buddhism, which had almost completely disappeared from India, began to grow stronger. In India Neo Buddhism refers to Ambedkarism and the Buddhist Dalit movement. A noteworthy portion of Indian Buddhists are converted Dalits.

The constitution outlaws untouchability and discrimination based on castes. A positive discrimination system called the reservation system was imposed for Dalits and low castes, according to which "scheduled castes", "scheduled tribes" and "other backward classes" were eligible for special treatment and certain privileges or dispensations. The support was only granted to Hindu Dalits, and later also to Sikhs and Buddhists. As more than 1000 caste groups were mentioned in an amendment to the constitution, in practice this means constitutional recognition of the caste system.

Many Dalits have gained educational and official positions through the reservation system, but to the vast majority it has been meaningless. They are still poor, illiterate and oppressed. Although many middle-class Dalits want to deny their background, there are those who feel obligated by Dalit awareness to show solidarity with the less fortunate within their community. The social advancement of a Dalit minority is one reason for the emancipation movement.

The social status of Dalits has not improved, and caste discrimination is integral to life everywhere, especially in the rural villages. Caste is still the most forceful factor defining a person's value, their calling or their profession. Dalits have adopted customs from higher castes, a phenomenon called sanskritisation, but on the other hand the caste system regulates the Dalit consciousness in a way that makes them accept their low status as something natural.

In the 1970s the Dalit Panthers, a political human rights and activist movement, adopted Ambedkar's ideology and started the widespread use of the word "Dalit", which was not well known before. The goal of the new name was to unite enslaved and oppressed people from all over the country and to abolish the old caste names associated with oppression. The word "Dalit" means broken or crushed. The English language press and the political life of the country use this collective name for the casteless, which has been a notable victory for the Dalit movement.

When Dalit groups have become active and demanded their rights, the consequence has been increasing violence towards them. However, the political Dalit movement is divided. According to the Dalit movement caste is more defining than social class in Indian society.

The Hindu nationalistic movement has risen as an important factor in Indian politics. The Hindu identity and caste awareness have grown stronger,

and this has had a negative impact on the social status of Dalits. The increasing uneasiness between religious groups, as well as the political nature of their disputes, strains the Indian social atmosphere.

The goal of Hindu communalists is a Hindu state. The VHP (*Vishwa Hindu Parishad*), the cultural organisation of this movement, practices active mission work amongst Dalits and adivasis who have converted to Islam or Christianity. It is responsible for the violence directed at Christians. The political party of the Hindu communalists is the BJP (*Bharatiya Janata Party*), and it has had power in the government. The Hindu movement has practically demonised the Muslim population of the country. Especially in the adivasi areas this attack has been directed at Christians as well. It is a battle for souls. Dalits and adivasis who have converted to a western religion form an easy target for the rage of the masses.

There are three major ideological and political currents in India. The first is an integrating notion emphasising the unity of the nation and primarily represented by the Congress party. This is mostly built on the ideological legacy of the Hindu reformists and Gandhism. The second is a communalist view, represented especially by the Hindu nationalists but also by Muslim special-interest groups. The third current is the Communist one; in Kerala and in West Bengal the Communists have been in power for a long time; nowadays the Maoist Naxalites attract Dalits and other poor people and groups in the villages, and also government officials. A fourth current is the Dalit movement, which sees the aforementioned as its opponents, because they represent the caste system and Brahminical Hinduism.

6 The Dalit conditions

The majority of Indian people live in the countryside. Dalits live in their separate villages out of sight of others. The members of the same caste usually share a traditional profession as well as a belief in a common ancestor, which in a way makes the caste a family community. The professions are inherited. Some professions associated with Dalits are shoemaker, tanner, butcher and drummer, all of which require handling the skin of dead animals. The carriers and the drummers in funeral processions, as well as conveyors of animal carcasses, are Dalits whom caste Hindus fetch from Dalit villages. Death is a taboo, and only those who are impure from birth can associate

with death this way.

The well-known traditional Dalit professions are associated with waste management. Sweeping streets, emptying sewers and cleaning toilets are passed on from generation to generation.

The castes represent systematic oppression in which it is essential for each person to know who is below them, whom they are allowed to oppress. The most important is the purity line, which divides the Dalits from the others, but the hierarchy extends below the purity line, which means that Dalit groups oppress one another as well. One group is always lower than another. Women hold the lowest position in all caste groups.

Although there are various Dalit professions, most Dalits are imprisoned by debt, and work on fields and farms, their status resembling that of serfs. Forced labour based on caste is decreasing, but there is more forced labour resulting from economic oppression than before. The majority of Dalits are in debt to the landowners.

Most Dalits live in great poverty, but among the hundreds of millions of poor Indians there are many who are not Dalits. Correspondingly, many Dalits who have prospered through education are not poor. Thus being poor is not the same as being Dalit.

The majority of Dalits live in clay huts with a single room. Usually there are no windows, ventilation or lavatories. Family members from three generations usually live in the same hut. Electric lights are becoming more common in villages.

The community restricts the life of Dalits. Dalits are not allowed in the village's teahouses. Dalits may drink their tea without coming inside from aluminium cups hung from the outer wall of the teahouse. They must wash their dishes themselves afterwards.

Dalits can't use the services of the village's barbers or washers. They may go to a tailor, but as they have no right to step inside the boutique they must do their business outside. Tailors usually refuse to take measurements in fear of getting polluted. Getting around in village shops is also difficult. Dalits are not allowed to touch the merchandise and they must stay away from non-Dalits.

One of the biggest disputes is water. Usually it is impossible for a Dalit to get water from the well of a non-Dalit area. Caste Hindus can however use the well of a Dalit village if their own village is out of water. Streams, ponds

and canals are usually thought of common washing areas, but Dalits may only go about their chores after the higher-ranking washers.

Dalits cannot move freely in areas inhabited by members of higher castes. They cannot come near temples, go to the theatre or stand under the canopy on a bus stop with everyone else.

One of the most dramatic indications of untouchability and the reality of the line of impurity is a study that shows that 97 percent of beggars who belong to a caste would not take food from a Dalit unless it was boiled.

In autumn 2011 a doctoral dissertation about domestic help in middle-class families in the metropolis of Jaipur was examined at the University of Helsinki. Not a single Dalit employee was found in the source material. Only one out of all the families interviewed would have hired a Dalit. According to the study the line of impurity is everyday reality in India today.

In addition to the life regulating restrictions, Dalits face bullying, harassment and violence in their everyday lives. Rape and other sexual violence are common. Dalit women are abused mercilessly. For some reason untouchability does not apply to sexual encounters, or at least to violent ones. Belittling language underlining one's caste status is faced daily. Non-Dalits use harsh terms about Dalits. Educated Dalits are treated better, but only slightly.

7 Special issues with Christian Dalits

Positive discrimination stopped the rapid growth of the Christian population, which had continued from the 1870s onwards. Earlier the increase in the number of Christians was many times higher than the natural growth rate of the population, but in the 1970s it fell below the population growth. One of the reasons for Christians not being given the privileges of the reservation system was their own opinion. The upper-caste Christian leaders thought that the level of equality and sophistication of the Christian communities was so high that there was no need for special treatment.

The lives of Christian Dalits are restricted in the same way as the lives of other Dalits. The only notable difference is in education. Earlier, Christian Dalits were more literate and had a better standard of living than others. According to the newest studies, other Dalit groups have reached the same level as a consequence of the dispensation policies. Nowadays the literacy of Christian children is poorer than that of adults. The main reason for the

decreasing education is poverty. The literacy of women is even poorer than that of men, owing to the long tradition of gender discrimination: young girls suffer the most. All of the aforementioned features of Dalit life are also present in Christian villages. The oppression of women and violence towards them is a part of life in the Christian communities as well. It seems that progress is only making things worse for Christian Dalits. The basic idea of communalist politics, the pursuit of benefits based on one's religion, has left Dalits in a situation where their fate is to lower themselves as the most oppressed and backward group of society.

Lately many Christian Dalits have converted back to Hinduism in the hope of better social status. Persecution adds to the pressure.

Christian Dalits are oppressed in many ways. Like all Dalits, they are oppressed for historical and cultural reasons. The Indian government discriminates against Christian Dalits by denying them the constitutional dispensations applicable to other Dalits. Christians with upper-caste background oppress them within the churches. In addition, women are oppressed for their gender.

In the past few years, churches have aspired to influence the government in order to make the dispensations also applicable to Christian Dalits. As the political Dalit movement rose, Christian Dalits began organising themselves, and in December 1984 they formed a forum as a central body for all Christian Dalit organisations and groups. The forum was named *The Christian Dalit Liberation Movement (CDLM)*. For the first time Christian Dalits within the church began to speak up for their own interests.

8 Dalit theology and Dalit as the identity of the church

Even more important has been the paradigm shift in Indian churches. It has influenced theological thinking and the self-awareness of the church. Theology was the first to be shaken up. The change started from criticism of liberation theology. The critics asked why the topic for discussion was the relationship between labour and capital, when the main question in Indian society is caste oppression. This was the premise for Dalit theology, the contemplation of God and humanity from the Dalit point of view. Dalit theology sees God fighting beside Dalits against castes and oppressive social structures.

Instead of Marxism this new Indian liberation theology based itself on the thoughts of Ambedkar and the Dalit movement. In a couple of decades Dalit theology spread as a study subject and ideology throughout the Indian theological education system. At the same time Indian theology turned its back on Hinduism and the theology of dialogue.

For the church the historical change in paradigm meant a new identity. The power structures of the church were being held by the urban elite and the church had not realised that it was a Dalit church. The violence of the Hindu nationalists has in part helped the church to understand its own identity. The Christian churches of India have now come forward clearly and firmly as Dalit churches, which see the suffering of Christ in their own people, their members. At least three quarters of all members of Christian churches in India are Dalits, and up to 90 percent of Protestants.

9 The ecumenical movement

M. Azariah, the bishop of the Church of South India in Madras, brought the Dalit issue to the attention of churches internationally in the WCC Assembly in Vancouver in 1983. With the development of its new identity and its theological basis in Indian churches, the ecumenical movement has supported the Dalit movement and the intensification of the Dalit voice in Indian churches. A separate Dalit programme has been in action within WCC's unity, mission, evangelism and spirituality programme for a number of years (World Council of Churches 2011).

The Lutheran World Federation is active in its concern with Dalit issues, and this may be surprising. It has a historical link with the Indian Lutheran churches and their spearheading role in the birth of the new paradigm of the Indian Christian churches. Chandran Paul Martin, the Deputy General Secretary of the LWF, is an Indian Dalit himself. Until 2010 Peter Prove, a lawyer specialising in international affairs and human rights, worked in the LWF on behalf of the Dalit movement in the UN. Nowadays he works as the coordinator of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance close to the ecumenical movement, but still follows the development of the Dalit question actively. (The Lutheran World Federation – A communion of Churches.)

In March 2009 the WCC and the LWF organised the Global Ecumenical Conference on Justice for Dalits in Bangkok. Dalits were the sole agenda

of the conference. It was intended as a gesture by the Indian churches and international organisations of churches, to shift the focus of the statement of the UN follow up conference against racism held in Geneva a month later. (The Lutheran World Federation 2009.)

The result of the conference in Geneva was identical to that of the 2001 UN World Conference against Racism held in Durban, South Africa: India managed to persuade the majority of the countries to its view and there was no mention of caste-based discrimination in the outcome document. In Durban the WCC and the LWF posed themselves besides the Dalits who wanted their message to be heard all over the world. The Durban world conference was the first event where the Dalit movement truly attempted internationalisation. (von Wietersheim 2001.) After the Durban II conference in Geneva in 2009 the WCC and the LWF expressed clearly their disappointment that the follow-up meeting was not willing to recognise the oppression of over 260 million people and the ongoing practice of untouchability. (World Council of Churches 2009c.)

The Bangkok conference wrote and approved a significant document that was named the *Bangkok Declaration and Call*, which appealed to churches. Its most important message was that the Dalit churches of India wanted to be heard. (World Council of Churches 2009d.)

The Church of Norway was the first member of the WCC to respond to the Bangkok document. On May 13th 2009 its Council of Ecumenical and International Relations condemned caste-based discrimination and called it a scandal for the worldwide human community.

The Church of Norway expressed its wish to join the forces aspiring to end this discrimination, and to raise awareness of the circumstances where oppression based on caste systems happens and is possible. The Church of Norway also appealed to Norwegian political actors so that they would raise the issue when communicating with Indian officials and work for the issue to rise to the agenda of international organisations such as the UN. (Church of Norway Information Service 2009.)

10 Casteism is sin

At the end of June 2009 the WCC celebrated the 40th birthday of its own anti-racism programme in the Dutch town of Doorn. The most notable

international milestone of the programme had been the fight against apartheid, giving support to the black people of South Africa and Namibia in their battles for freedom. Now the head of the programme supports Dalits in their fight for human rights. (World Council of Churches 2009a.)

The central committee of the WCC assembled in Geneva at the beginning of September 2009, its main focus being on the appointment of a new general secretary. Nevertheless it was notably important that the World Council called on its member churches to recognise that "the continued discrimination and exclusion of millions of people on the basis of caste is a serious challenge to the credibility of their witness to their faith in God". The document repeated the notions of the Bangkok declaration, stating that "caste-based discrimination is a crime" and that "casteism is sin". (World Council of Churches 2009b.)

The council of the LWF assembled in Chavannes-de-Bogis, Switzerland, from October 22nd to 27th 2009. A document was passed, named simply Justice for Dalits. The document included a nine-point list of guidelines and procedures. And at Stuttgart, Germany, on 26th July 2010, delegates to the Eleventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) committed the communion to make the liberation and restoration of the dignity of Dalits a priority in its mission, its action and its testimony to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (The Lutheran World Federation 2010.)

In August 2010 the WCC organized a follow-up to the Doorn conference in Cleveland, Ohio, on racism today. The conference explored a rationale for continued ecumenical engagement in the struggle against racism and casteism. It came up with fresh theological bases for this engagement. (World Council of Churches 2010c.)

In October 2010 an Indian version of the Bangkok conference took place in Delhi, India, where the Indian churches for the first time unanimously termed caste discrimination as sin. "Caste violence has broken the body and bruised the soul...No-one can serve Christ and caste!", said the conference's Affirmation of Faith. (World Council of Churches 2010b.) Also an important book, *Dalit Theology in the Twenty-first Century,* was published. (World Council of Churches 2010a.)

The WCC continues its engagement with the *International Dalit Solidarity Network* (IDSN, www.idsn.org) and the related networks in their advocacy work at the UN Human Rights Council and the UN Office of the High

Commissioner for Human Rights, both in Geneva.

In a short time the churches have started taking highly visible action. Their resilience in the fight for the Dalits should be observed and supported, because the task will not be short-lived or easy. Many Indian churches have not been committed Dalit churches for long. A definite change in mindset within them only happened approximately ten years ago and on the congregation level there still exist various problems and also discrimination from the caste perspective.

Ecumenical church alliances have expressed their level of commitment to the issue. Perhaps they also believe that the Dalit issue will become international in any case. When that happens, they will have been on the front line since the beginning.

11 The caste system can be abolished

In the beginning of October 2009 the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, rejected the caste system by stating that caste practices are in complete contradiction to the principles of human rights. Pillay asked the UN Human Rights Council to work towards getting its members to give their support to the principles of a document drafted earlier that year, aspiring to prevent discrimination based on profession and ancestry. (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2009.)

"The time has come to eradicate the shameful concept of caste," Pillay said in her statement. "Like slavery and apartheid, the international community should come together to tear down the barriers of caste too."

A powerful statement by the highest human rights official of the UN may have marked a turn in the political reception of the Dalit issue. Some have called it a breakthrough. Most importantly the statement goes against Indian government opinion. India does not deny the existence of caste discrimination, the violence, the oppression or the inequality, but it wants to see them as internal affairs, and regards the involvement of foreigners or foreign powers as interference. (Pillay 2009.)

In interviews, Pillay has stated that it is possible to abolish the caste system by a vast expression of international outrage. "People have been talking about caste oppression for more than a hundred years," she stated. "It's time to move on this issue." (International Dalit Solidarity Network 2009.)

Navi Pillay has repeated her message and her support to the fight for freedom of Dalits very clearly also in autumn 2011 by taking visibly part to the campaign "100 days against caste discrimination" organized by the National Dalit Commission (NDC) and the United Nations Human Rights Office in Nepal (OHCHR-Nepal). On 16th September 2011, the President of Nepal officially inaugurated the launch of the campaign with government representatives and human rights defenders, giving hope to campaigners and supporters. (One Hundred Day Campaign against caste discrimination and untouchability.)

In addition to the UN Human Rights bodies, other international organisations, such as the *International Labour Organisation* (ILO), have taken action. On a political level these organisations agree that discrimination based on profession or ancestry should be banned. Githu Muigai, a UN Special Rapporteur on racism, has repeatedly expressed his views to the UN General Assembly that caste-based oppression, and particularly that of Dalits, is the most extensive and serious form of discrimination in the world. (International Dalit Solidarity Network 2010.)

However, discussion at the level of international organisations or even governments has little effect if it is not supported by public debate. That is Pillay's goal as well. The caste system is thousands of years old and has been anchored to the culture of India and its neighbouring countries by the sacred texts of Hinduism, which sanctify the caste practices and the impurity of Dalits, as well as the curse bestowed on them.

Making the Dalit issue international is currently the only powerful course of action that can drastically improve the living conditions of Dalits. That is why the lack of enthusiasm in western media is disappointing. Even the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights breaking her silence or the fact that Dalits are rising to the world's agenda has gone unnoticed. The same can be said of the visits to India of the US President Barack Obama, former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown and some Dutch ministers, who have shown sympathy and solidarity with the Dalits and others who are oppressed by caste discrimination. (International Dalit Solidarity Network; International Dalit Solidarity Network 2011.)

12 The Shit Campaign

The fact that the caste system does not only plague India and its neighbouring countries speaks of its persistence. The culture moves with immigrants as well. A recent British study reveals that tens of thousands of Southern Asian immigrants face discrimination in workplaces, classrooms and doctor's appointments daily in the UK. More than 50 percent of the over 300 thousand participants had faced discrimination based on their caste status. As many as 85 percent had not understood that British legislation protects them from this kind of treatment. (Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance 2009.)

There are currently several ongoing campaigns for the freedom of Dalits, and at this moment one of the most visible and interesting to foreigners is the Shit campaign. In 1993 a law was passed in India which made inheriting a profession associated with sewers and lavatories illegal. The law denied the connection between specific groups of Dalits and their traditional profession, but the law has been ignored. The toilets and sewers of India are still cleaned by forced Dalit labour. That particular profession cannot be chosen; one gets born to do it, just like all other Dalit professions.

Safai Karmachari Andolan is the civil rights movement of the manual scavengers or crap-handlers and sewer rats. Its members have announced they are going to free themselves. They have announced that they are going to stand back and watch as India drowns in shit. (Safai Karmachari Andolan 2010.)

References

Literature

Malkavaara, Mikko 1999. Intialainen dalit-teologia. Vapautuksen teologiaa ja ihmis-oikeuskamppailua. Tampere, Kirkon tutkimuslaitos.

Malkavaara, Mikko 2011. Intian kirkkohistoria ja kastitutkimus. In: Antila, Jaakko Olavi and Laine, Esko M. (eds.): Yleisen kirkkohistorian lähteet ja tutkimus. Helsinki, Suomen Kirkkohistoriallinen Seura, 271–278.

Internet sources

Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance 2009. Hidden Apartheid – Voice of the Community. Caste and Caste Discrimination in the UK. A Scoping Study. Accessed 20th November, 2011. http://idsn.org/fileadmin/user_folder/pdf/New_files/Other_documents/Hidden_Apartheid_-_Voice_of_the_Community_Executive_Summary_2.pdf.

Church of Norway Information Service 2009. Church of Norway council focuses on Dalits. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.kirken.no/english/news.cfm?artid=239878.

IDSN – International Dalit Solidarity Network. Working globally against discrimination based on work and descent. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.idsn.org/.

International Dalit Solidarity Network. Obama on Dalits. Accessed 20th November, 2011. http://www.idsn.org/news-resources/obama-on-dalits/.

International Dalit Solidarity Network 2009. Press clippings: UNHCHR opinion piece. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://idsn.org/index.php?id=401.

International Dalit Solidarity Network 2010. UN Special Rapporteur seriously concerned about caste system. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://idsn.org/news-resources/idsn-news/read/article/un-special-rapporteur-seriously-concerned-about-caste-system/.

International Dalit Solidarity Network 2011.Gordon Brown shocked at living conditions of Dalits after visit to a neighbourhood in Delhi. Accessed 20th November, 2011. http://idsn.org/news-resources/idsn-news/read/article/gordon-brown-shocked-after-visit-to-dalit-neighbourhood-in-delhi/128/.

The Lutheran World Federation 2009. Responding in Solidarity to Caste Discrimination. Global Ecumenical Conference on Justice for Dalits, Bangkok, Thailand, 21–24 March, 2009. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.lutheranworld.org/What_We_Do/OIahr/OIAHR-Dalit_Justice.html.

The Lutheran World Federation 2010. LWF speaks up for Dalits. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.lutheranworld.org/lwf/index.php/assembly-resolutions.html.

The Lutheran World Federation – A communion of Churches. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.lutheranworld.org/lwf/.

One Hundred Day Campaign against caste discrimination and untouchability. I commit to end caste discrimination and untouchability. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.100daysagainstcastediscrimination.com/flash.php?start=166.

Pillay, Navi 2009. Tearing down the wall of caste. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.idsn.org/index.php?id=400.

Safai Karmachari Andolan 2010. Safai Karmachari Andolan. A movement to eradicate manual scavenging in India. Accessed 20th November, 2011. http://safaikarmachariandolan.org/.

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2009. Opinion Piece: Tearing down the wall of caste. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.unhchr.ch/huricane/huricane.nsf/view01/28F485EBDDDEC9D6C125765400557905?opendocument.

von Wietersheim, Erika 2001. Human Rights for the "Children of God". Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.lutheranworld.org/lwf/index.php/human-rights-for-the-children-of-god.html.

World Council of Churches 2009a. Break Down the Walls - End Racism and Racial Discrimination. Message from the 14-17 June conference "Churches responding to the challenges of racism and related forms of discrimination and exclusion". Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/unity-mission-evangelism-and-spirituality/just-and-inclusive-communities/racism/message-from-the-doorn-conference.html.

World Council of Churches 2009b. Caste-based discrimination challenges Christian witness. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1634/caste-based-discriminatio.html.

World Council of Churches 2009c. Global church groupings welcome Durban II outcome, with some regrets. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1634/global-church-groupings-w.html?tx_ttnews%5Bswords%5D=Durban%20II&cHash=f24019358913e7d7652cd9dbe9221d7d.

World Council of Churches 2009d. The Bangkok Declaration and Call. Global Ecumenical Conference on Justice for Dalits, Bangkok, Thailand, 21–24 March, 2009. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/unity-mission-evangelism-and-spirituality/just-and-inclusive-communities/dalits/the-bangkok-declaration-and-call.html.

World Council of Churches 2010a. New publication on Dalit theology launched. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1634/new-publication-on-dalit.html.

World Council of Churches 2010b. No one can serve Christ and caste! An affirmation of faith from the National Ecumenical Conference on Justice for Dalits, Convened by NCCI in partnership with WCC, New Delhi, 22-24 October 2010. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/unity-mission-evangelism-and-spirituality/just-and-inclusive-communities/dalits/affirmation-of-faith-on-justice-for-dalits.html.

World Council of Churches 2010c. Racism today: churches reassess their commitment. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.oikoumene.org/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1634/racism-today-churches-re.html.

World Council of Churches 2011. Solidarity with Dalits for justice and dignity. Accessed 19th November, 2011. http://www.oikoumene.org/en/programmes/unity-mission-evangelism-and-spirituality/just-and-inclusive-communities/dalits.html.