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Gyrid Gunnes

Towards a diaconia of displacements:

An empirical theological inquiry

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Towards a diaconia of displacements: An empirical theological inquiry

Gyrid Gunnes

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Acknowledgement (two pages)

Abstract:

This thesis, *Towards a diaconia of displacement: An empirical theological inquiry*, is a contribution to theological research on the interface between religious practices and marginality. Located both in the disciplinary fields of the study of diaconia and empirical ecclesiology, it asks how the unconventional – or displaced – use of the practices, artefacts and spaces of a religious majority tradition can become sources of various kinds of justice and possible transformation for people in marginalized life situations. It reflects theologically and ecclesiologically on such unconventional use, arguing for a theology of displacement, for ecclesiological imaginations of *church as venture* and for the "folk" of the folk church as an eschatological folk.

The research strategy of the thesis is empirical. Its starting point is the 13th-century Church of Our Lady in Trondheim, Norway. Our Lady was a traditional parish church within the structure of the Church of Norway for five centuries, from the Reformation to the 1980s. Since 2007, Church City Mission of Trondheim (CCMT) has run the church as an "open church of care". It engages in extensive practices of hospitality towards people in marginalized life situations. The empirical material consists of 42 interviews with guests, employees and hosts and participant observation in the community of Our Lady during the spring of 2014.

Gordon Lathrop argues that at the heart of liturgical practice and ecclesial practice is the juxtaposition of different elements that produce new meaning. This thesis argues that Our Lady is indeed a place of juxtapositions. However, the juxtapositions that occur here are not limited to the elements that Lathrop has detected as being authorized by Justin Martyr. Rather, through extensive practices of hospitality, juxtaposed at Our Lady are the practices, rituals and spaces of a religious majority tradition as well as people living in situations of precariousness, alongside their various needs. The thesis argues that such juxtapositions are

unconventional: Our Lady is thus a diaconal place of displacement, where people, spaces, rituals and practices are displaced and new meaning emerges.

Drawing on the concept of “spatial justice”, popularized by the American critical geographer Edward Soja, I argue that the practices, artefacts and spaces of a traditional ecclesial space displaced in such a way may become vehicles of different kinds of justice. Examples are ritual justice, ecclesial spatial justice, facultative justice, epistemological justice and material justice. The thesis discusses the conundrums and challenges that are set in motion by displacements, like the potential instrumentalization of religious practices. The thesis shows how the question of instrumentalization is negotiated among some Scandinavian scholars of diaconia. Other examples are what the thesis terms “diaconal delays”: there is a friction between guests’ anticipated life situations and factual realities. In the case of Our Lady, the guests are found to operate in more acute situations of material and social precariousness than had been anticipated.

The thesis attempts to articulate a theology of displacement. Reflecting contextually on aspects of the empirical material, it argues that displacements in diaconal practices may represent an alternative representational practice, parallel to the feminist liturgical critique of of patriarchal liturgical language. The potential epistemological justice of the diaconal displacements of traditional ecclesial space, rituals and practices spurs theological insights, through understanding the recipient of justice as the representational practices of theology, not only the marginalized person. The result of this epistemological justice can be summarized as follows. First, the clamour and messiness of the behaviour of some of the guests can be understood not only as social deviance, but as hermeneutical devices for discovering the clamour and messiness of the context of the first proclamation of the Gospel. Second, read as an alternative representational theological practice, the displacements performatively communicate the brokenness of any kind of representational practice or image. Read as a positive theological statement, this hermeneutical brokenness of acts of displacement enacts and embodies the brokenness of the Christian God as an incarnated and crucified God. Diaconal practices may thus not only be studied as practices of justice and social work, but as performative contributions to conversations in constructive theology.

In the second part of the thesis, the ecclesiological reflections of the Argentinian-Scottish liberation theologian Marcella Althaus-Reid and Norwegian diaconal scholar Trygve Wyller are staged as sensitizing devices in order to attempt to articulate an “implicit ecclesiology” (Jonas Idesröm) of Our Lady. I argue that although Althaus-Reid and Wyller represent

valuable sources, the ecclesiologies of neither conceptually grasp the hermeneutical importance of simultaneously maintaining the integrity of both street space and traditional sanctuary space. Linn Tonstad's theology of the "surface touch" (2016 p. 243) of co-locality is mobilized in order to conceptually articulate the celebration and appreciation of *both spaces* in and through acts of displacement. If one is to reflect ecclesiologically on practices that make use of the displaced juxtaposition of the ecclesial space, rituals and practices and situations of precariousness, this can be read ecclesiologically as the becoming of *church as venture*. Church as venture may occur inside the frames of empirical ecclesial practices (like Our Lady) but it may also occur outside or partly outside the organizational boundaries of such structures, for instance as practices of activism and art. Church as venture is thus an ecclesiological reading of secular phenomena, by hermeneutically attributing ecclesiological validity to practices that make non-conventional or even indecent use of the rituals, artefacts or spaces of ecclesial practices in struggles for justice.

Lastly, the thesis argues for sensitizing the conceptualization of "folk" in Scandinavian folk church ecclesiology to situations of precariousness. The thesis suggests that if diaconal practices like Our Lady are regarded as valid places of ecclesiological imagination, the discourse of the "folk" of the folk church needs to move beyond questions of cultural contextuality. Rather, "folk" should be conceptualized as a matter of eschatology, as the unknown folk who may at any point in the future be in need of practices of hospitality.

Sammendrag

Avhandlingen *Forskyvningens diakoni – en teologisk-empirisk undersøkelse* er et bidrag i skjæringspunktet mellom empirisk ekklesiologi og diakoni. Avhandlingen spør hvordan en ukonvensjonell – forskjøvet – bruk av majoritetskulturenes religiøse rom, rituelle praksiser og artefakter kan være kilder til rettferdighet og endring i livene til mennesker i utsatte livssituasjoner. Avhandlingen forsøker å artikulere en «forskyvningens teologi», artikulere en implisitt ekklesiologi for en diakonal praksis som «eventyrlig kirke» samt foreslå en eskatologisk kvalifisering av folkekirkens teologi om «folk».

Avhandlingens forskningsstrategi er empirisk. Utgangspunktet er 12.hundretallskirken Vår Frue kirke i Trondheim. Vår Frue var en tradisjonell menighetskirke innenfor rammen av Den norske kirke i fem århundrer. I dag drifter Kirkens Bymisjon i Trondheim Vår Frue som en «åpen kirke» og en «omsorgskirke». Vår Frue inviterer til ulike former for gjestfrihetspraksiser i møte med mennesker i marginaliserte livssituasjoner. Det empiriske materialet består av 42 intervjuer med gjester, ansatte, og verter; - og deltagende observasjon i Vår Frue, gjennomført i løpet av våren 2014.

Gordon Lathrop hevdet er at i kjernen av liturgisk og ekklesiologisk praksis finnes en sammenstilling av to ulike elementer som skaper mening. Avhandlingen argumenterer for at de sammenstillingene som finnes i Vår Frue ikke er begrenset til dem som er autorisert av Justin Martyr slik Lathrop synes å hevde: I Vår Frue blir gjestfrihetspraksiser og livene til mennesker i utsatte livssituasjoner sammenstilt med religiøse rom, rituelle praksiser og artefakter. Slike sammenstilninger er ukonvensjonelle og skaper en erfaring av forskyvning. Vår Frue er derfor et uttrykk for en forskyvningens diakoni. Avhandlingen argumenterer for at slike forskyvninger er teologisk og ekklesiologisk meningsproduserende.

Med utgangspunkt i begrepet «romlig rettferdighet» (spartial justice), popularisert av den kritiske samfunnsgeografen Edvard Soja, argumenterer jeg for at forskyvningen av tradisjonelle kirkerom, rituelle praksiser, artefakter kan skape ulike former for rettferdighet. Eksempler er rituell rettferdighet (ritual justice), kirkeromlig rettferdighet (ecclesial spatial justice), kompetanserettferdighet (faculative justice) og epistemologisk rettferdighet

(epistemological justice). Avhandlingen diskuterer utfordringer som oppstår i kjølvannet av meningsskapende forskyvninger. Eksempler på dette er den potensielle instrumentaliseringen av religiøse praksiser. Andre eksempler er utfordringer knyttet til det avhandlingen kaller «diakonale forsinkelser». Dette er den friksjonen som oppstår mellom organisasjonens forventinger til hvilke gjester som kommer til å komme, og de som faktisk kommer. Avhandlingen viser at i Vår Frues tilfelle lever gjestene mer utsatte liv enn det som var forventet i forkant av etableringen.

Avhandlingen kan leses som et utkast til en forskyvingens teologi. En forskyvningens teologi er en alternativ teologisk representasjonspraksis, parallelt til feministteologiens kritikk av tradisjonelt liturgisk språk. I en forskyvningens teologi er mottakeren for epistemologisk rettferdighet ikke kun den marginaliserte personen, men teologiens egne representasjonspraksiser. Eksempler på resultater av epistemologisk rettferdighet kan være at gjestenes - av og til – utfordrende oppførsel trenger ikke bli forstått som avvik, men heller som hermeneutiske verktøy for å gjenoppdage det kaotiske og ukontrollerbare i evangelienes historiske kontekst. Lest som en alternativ teologisk representasjonspraksis, kan forskyvninger performativt peke på det ufullstendige ved enhver form for representasjon av guddommelighet. Diakonale praksiser hvor forskyvninger finner sted kan derfor forstås både som uttrykk for sosialt arbeide i møte med marginalitet og som performative bidrag til konstruktiv teologi.

I avhandlingens andre del er skotsk-argentinske Marcella Althaus-Reid og den norske diakoniforskeren Trygve Wyllers ekklesiologiske forestillinger utgangspunkter for forsøket på å formulere en «implisitt ekklesiologi» for Vår Frue. Jeg argumenterer for at selv om Althaus-Reid og Wyller er viktige kilder, makter deres ekklesiologiske forestillinger ikke å bevare både gaterommet og kirkerommets integritet i utformingen av en implisitt ekklesiologi for Vår Frue. Linn Tonstads teologi for "overflatenes berøring" brukes for å konseptuelt artikulere den nødvendige verdsettingen av begge typer rom som forskyving innebærer. Avhandlingen forestår at en «implisitt ekklesiologi» for praksiser som gjør bruk av forskyvning av kirkelige rom, rituelle praksiser og artefakter kan kalles «eventyrlig kirke». Eventyrlig kirke kan oppstå både innenfor og utenfor autoriserte kirkelig praksiser, eksempelvis som aktivisme og kunst. Eventyrlig kirke er en ekklesiologisk lesning av både kirkelige og sekulære praksiser som tillegger også sekulære rettferdighetssøkende ikke-konvensjonelle praksiser (forskyvninger) ekklesiologisk gyldighet.

Avhandlingen argumenter også for en nytolkning av forståelsen av «folk» i skandinavisk folkekirke-ekklesiologi. Hvis diakonale praksiser som Vår Frue skal forstås som gyldige steder for ekklesiologisk refleksjon, må folkekirkens «folk» ikke bare forstås som et spørsmål om kulturell kontekst. Istedenfor bør en folkekirkelig forståelse av «folk» kvalifiseres eskatologisk, som et ukjent «folk» som – nå eller en gang i fremtiden – kan ha behov for gjestfrihetspraksiser i Vår Frue eller hos andre diakonale praksiser.

Article I

"The *ordo* of care: A hermeneutical dialogue between Gordon Lathrop's liturgical theology and practices of care in the Open Church of Our Lady, Trondheim". Published in *Studia Theologica - Nordic Journal of Theology.* 2016. Vol 70, issue 1. Pages: 74-96.

Article II

"Our Lady of the heterotopia: An empirical theological investigation of the heterotopic aspects of the church of Our Lady, Trondheim". Published in *DIACONIA, Journal of Christian Social Practice.* 2017. Vol 8. Pages: 51-68.

Article III

"An ecclesiology of risk and ambivalence? An investigation of the implicit ecclesiology of the church of Our Lady in the light of the queer theology on kenosis of Marcella Althaus-Reid". Published in *Journal of Feminist Theology.* 2020. Vol 28, issue 2. Pages: 216-230.

Towards a diaconia of displacements:
An empirical theological inquiry

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This PhD consists of two lines of argument. First, it argues that the surprising and controversial – the displaced – use of ecclesial space, artefacts and practices may become a source of a theological interpretation of responses to social injustice and marginalization, termed *diaconia.*[1] Second, it argues that theorizing on the possible theological and ecclesiological outcomes of the displacements of ecclesial space, artefacts and practices can make a theological contribution to the study of diaconia and diaconal ecclesiology.

The empirical starting point of this thesis is the community and practices of the Church of Our Lady, a 13th-century stone church situated downtown in the Norwegian city of Trondheim. Following the Reformation, the church operated as a parish church within the structures of the Church of Norway. However, during the 1980s, the congregation saw a rapid decline in participation, compelling the parish council, the ecclesial authorities of the diocese and the

[1] For an introduction to the practice and study of *diaconia*, see 1.4.1.

city of Trondheim to rethink the church's mission. Ultimately, in 2007, Our Lady reopened as an "open church of care on the town square",[2] run by the staff and volunteers of the Church City Mission of Trondheim (CCMT).[3] The church practises extensive community building and hospitality towards people living with drug abuse and/or mental health challenges, migrant workers seeking work or those relying on informal work like begging.

The empirical material of this PhD consists of 42 research interviews with persons who in different capacities – as guests, volunteers or employees of CMMT – are part of the Our Lady community.[4] The interviews were arranged and undertaken as a result of participant observation in the community of Our Lady for four weeks in the spring of 2014. Participant observation was deployed in order to create a contextual and experiential background and allowed for opportunities to conduct the interviews. The empirical material derived from the interviews thus has a more prominent role in this PhD than that from participant observation. In addition, the annual reports of Our Lady and certain key documents (1.5.5) supply the study with background information.

The argument of this PhD can be found in the following articles: Gunnes (2016, PhD article I), Gunnes (2017, PhD article II) and Gunnes (2020, PhD article III). The concluding chapter (3) provides a cumulative argument of all the articles and aspires to move beyond their individual conclusions. Overall, the argument is constructed through an abductive analytic strategy between the empirical material and theory.[5]

1.2 Aim of the study and structure of the text

The research questions guiding the research process were the following:

RQ1: What are the social impacts and theological meanings of displacements in practices of diaconia?

[2] https://kirkensbymisjon.no/varfrue-apen-kirke/, accessed 15.03.2019.
[3] A more detailed description of the historical background will be given in 1.5.
[4] The research was approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) date 19.11.2013. See attachment III.
[5] The empirical fieldwork also formed the basis of three other articles that are not part of this PhD: the empirical articles "Hvem er folkekirkens folk?" published in *Halvårstidskriftet for praktisk teologi* (2014) and "Towards a queer sister-folk church? Re-imaginations in Lutheran Scandinavian folk church" published in *Journal of Ecclesial Practices* (2018) as well as the theoretical article "Towards an empirical ecclesiology of failure: A response to Pete Ward", accepted for publication in *Sudia Theologica* in December 2018. The page limitations of the introductory synopsis chapter of an article based PhD at VID specialized university is between 50-100 pages. This introductory synopsis chapter of this thesis 118 pages. Thus, the omissions of these articles from the PhD owe to word length limitations.

RQ2: What kinds of possible implicit and contextual ecclesiological imaginations may be discerned from diaconal practices of displacement?

The two research questions are addressed in the following manner in this text:

Chapter 1 serves as a general introduction to the study. I introduce the theoretical framework (1.3) and the scientific location of the study (1.4) and argue that the PhD is scientifically located in the intersection between the study of diaconia (1.4.1) and empirical ecclesiology (1.4.2). Then follows a short historical introduction to the organization that runs Our Lady, the Church City Mission (CCM) (1.5.2) and how the CCM as a diaconal organization relates to religion and liturgy (1.5.3 and 1.5.4). The historical introduction ends with a subsection on the formation of Our Lady (1.5.5) through a reading of foundational documents and annual reports (2007–2013).

In **chapter 2**, I present and discuss the methodological repertoire and choices behind the PhD's empirical material (2.2). Then follows a reflection on research ethical choices (2.3.). However, as this is a PhD in theology, the epistemological status of empirical material needs to be assessed (2.4). In 2.5, I present the content of the articles and, considering 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4, attempt to be as transparent as possible about the different stages that resulted in the written text.

Chapter 3 aims to respond to the research questions posed in 1.2. RQ1 is primarily but not exclusively addressed in 3.2 and RQ2 in 3.3.

The chapter starts with a recapitulation of the empirical findings of the PhD as presented in the articles, conceptualized as various kinds of justice (3.2.1–1.3.6). The findings respond to RQ1 (*What are the social impacts and theological meanings of displacements in practices of diaconia?*) by demonstrating that the unconventional use and re-appropriated deployment of traditional ecclesial space, artefacts and practices may represent both powerful and ambiguous forms of diaconia displacements.[6] In 3.2.7 and 3.2.8, I reflect on the use of displacements as a practice of theological meaning making and how displacements in diaconal practices can be seen as a diaconal version of the discussion on the politics of representational practice found in theologies of liberation, especially in the feminist liturgical critique.[7] 3.2.9 points to

[6] RQ1: What might be the **social impact** and the theological meanings of displacements in practices of diaconia?

[7] RQ1: What might be the social impact and the **theological meanings** of displacements in practices of diaconia?

dilemmas in the use of displacements in diaconal work, especially questions of the instrumentalization of religious practices (3.2.10, 3.2.11) or the marginalized life situation of guests (3.2.12, 3.2.13).

Subchapter 3.3 responds to RQ2 (*What kinds of possible implicit and contextual ecclesiological imaginations may be discerned from diaconal practices of displacement?*) by discussing the ecclesiological imaginations of Trygve Wyller and Marcella Althaus-Reid in relation to Our Lady (3.3.2, 3.3.3, 3.3.4). Pointing to challenges in these two theories' abilities to conceptually grasp the simultaneity of both maintaining ecclesial tradition and subverting tradition in the use of displacements, Linn Tonstad's ecclesiological reflections are mobilized in an attempt to articulate an implicit ecclesiological imagination of Our Lady (3.3.5 and 3.3.6). I then argue that the epistemology of such an ecclesiology could be church as *venture* (3.3.7). The chapter ends with a reflection on how places of diaconia like Our Lady may challenge one of the contextual ecclesiologies of Scandinavia: folk church ecclesiology (3.3.8–3.3.13).

Finally, the concluding discussion (4) summarizes the PhD's findings.

1.3 Conceptual frameworks

At the very centre of this PhD is the term *displacement*. The choice of opting for this term arose when working inductively with the empirical material. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the verb "to displace" as "to remove from the usual or proper place" and displacement as "the act or process of displacing".[8] In this PhD, displacement is primarily used as a term that denotes an empirical finding, with the aim of describing my interpretation of one aspect of the empirical material.

However, the line between a conceptualization and an empirical finding is blurred. On the one hand, displacement can constitute an act of placing one's glasses in an unusual place and searching for them after noticing that they are missing. Displacement may also – as in the case of this PhD – constitute a deliberate act, when the physical space of an 800-year-old church is used in a new and innovative manner in order to create justice and reduce marginalization. In the former case, the act of displacement is the result of a distracted mind and has no further significance for the owner except as a source of annoyance. However, in the latter case, the act of displacement – even as an empirical term – is motivated by and produces meaning.

[8] Accessed 6 January 2020.

Meaning is created because acts of displacement rupture commonly held notions of what represents an appropriate overlap between a type of practice and a type of space. Hence, even as an empirical term that aspires to describe empirical phenomena, the act of displacement is constituted by conceptualizations of the existence of pre-given patterns of social behaviour – practices – that are linked to commonly held notions of decorum and access to resources and power. According to Reckwitz, practice is a

> routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, "things" and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge. (Reckwitz 2002, cited in Henriksen, 2019, p. 35).

There are three key components within this definition. First, a practice consists of several units and thus cannot be reduced to just one. Second, it can be carried out in different ways, meaning that there is an openness to conducting a concrete action in different ways while still performing a practice. Third, practices are not the invention of the individual, but require a community, within which the individual acts.

Thus, the type of displacement at the core of this PhD is not the result of a distracted mind, but a deliberate, unconventional use of a particular practice. This particular place is an ecclesial practice, consisting of a space, ritual practices and artefacts. The ecclesial practice of Our Lady is constituted by several interconnected elements, consisting of ecclesial materiality (ecclesial space, Bibles, a cobblestone altar, a high altar, a pulpit, pews), ritual practices and its artefacts (priests, candles, liturgical vestments, icons, patens and chalices), material artefacts of hospitality (cups of coffee and tea, food, chairs and tables, toilets, blankets, flowers on the table) and social practices of hospitality (community building through singing, chatting, socializing, extensive opening hours, a heated space). All of these aspects require collective cognitive and emotional knowledge of how such components and practices are used in and across different cultures. Briefly stated, this PhD is a theological investigation of the hermeneutical potential of the unconventional – or displaced – usage of the ritual practices and material artefacts of an ecclesial practice.

This PhD deploys three different yet related theological theories in order to make theological sense of the displacements of this ecclesial practice and thus answer the research questions. The four theories that proved most useful at the time of writing were the theory of the spatial aspect of justice, developed by the American critical geographer Edward Soja (2010), aspects of the liturgical theology of the American Lutheran pastor Gordon Lathrop (1999, 1993, 2003, 2006), the theology of queer kenosis of the Argentinian-Scottish queer theologian and

liberation theologian Marcella Althaus-Reid (2000, 2003, 2004) and the concept of heterotopia developed by the Norwegian scholar of diaconia Trygve Wyller (Wyller 2006, 2009, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2017, Wyller & Heimbrock 2010, Wyller & Heimbrock 2010, Villadsen & Wyller 2009). These theories where chosen because they theologically – albeit in very different ways – address rupture, dispossession and surprise in theological meaning making. While displacement is an empirical finding, the theories are devices for theological meaning making. The process of finding these theories was not straightforward, neither in terms of detecting *relevant* theories nor in terms of understanding *how* theory should be understood in relation to the empirical material.

The theories are elaborated in the articles and discussed cumulatively in the aggregated analysis in chapter 3. The following is thus just a brief introduction. American critical geographer Edward Soja (2010) utilized the concept "spatial justice" to conceptually grasp how "justice" not only refers to unequal level of access to judicial and political rights. Rather, one's experience of justice has a spatial dimension. Justice – or non-justice – is incarnated in the built environment because the latter profoundly shapes people's lives, especially those of marginalized people. Soja's concept facilitates understanding of how the (controversial) use of space – as documented in the empirical material of this PhD – may contribute to social justice. In this PhD, the space at stake is not the city plan in general, but an ecclesial space in the centre of a city which dates back to the 13th century.[9] However, as the discussion in 3.2.8–3.2.13 shows, the displaced use of ecclesial space in diaconal practice needs to move beyond Soja and acknowledge that the justice created through displacement is a matter of potentiality, not ethical finitude or certainty. Thus, whereas critical geography may claim social justice as a political goal, a displaced use of ecclesial materiality can never be appropriated as a univocal and unambivalent means of enhancing social justice, as it contains several conundrums and raises fundamental questions concerning the instrumentalization of religion.

Despite the centrality of spatial justice, space and place do not play a prominent role in this thesis.[10] Rather, the transgression and the transcendence of compartmentalized spaces are the empirical and theological foci of this PhD. As the research questions state, the focal point of

[9] For a general discussion of perspectives regarding urban space, marginality and Christian faith-based organizations and practices, see Beaumont and Baker (2011) and Cloke, Johnson and May (2005). For scholarship on spatial dimensions on social work, see Conradsen (2010) and Warner, Talbot and Bennison (2012).

[10] In an early stage of the PhD, I worked extensively with theories of space, such as those of Lefebvre (1990), Foucault (1998), and especially theories of religion and space, see Knott (2005) and Inge (2003) However, the empirical material triggered me to move in the direction of displacement.

the study is neither empirically nor theoretically space itself, but *displacements*, that is, the unconventional use of the material and spatial dimensions of the explicitly and particularly religious.

Thus, the three theories used in this PhD do not primarily concern space, but all theologize on the discursive rupture that occurs when two or more components (a space, a practice, an artefact, a person) are displaced and placed next to something else, creating a surprising and bewildering effect.

Concepts like "juxtaposition" and "broken symbol" in the liturgical theology of Gordon Lathrop (1993, 1999, 2003, 2006) place the simultaneous production of meaning and negation of meaning (broken symbols) at the centre of the liturgical and ecclesiological enterprise. Drawing on Lathrop, I regard the particular running of Our Lady as a set of displacements within the larger historical liturgical tradition of the Christian church and point to how the displacements of Our Lady are continuations of what the Christian church has always been doing. However, as Gunnes (2016, PhD article I) highlights, the empirical findings from Our Lady challenge Lathrop as to the kinds of elements that are considered relevant for theological juxtaposing.

The theology of queer kenosis of Marcella Althaus-Reid (2000, 2003, 2004) is used in Gunnes (2020, PhD article III) to account for the finding in the empirical material that – *contra* Lathrop – celebrates the ceasing of traditional forms of ecclesial power and entitlement. To a greater extent than Lathrop, Althaus-Reid understands the act of displacement Christologically, as an ontological template performed by Godself in and through the act of the incarnation. According to Althaus-Reid, theology itself is called to become kenotic, by ridding itself of ideologies of hetero-patriarchy, colonialism and capitalism. However, Gunnes (2020, PhD article III) argues that when seen from empirical contexts, experiences of oppression and strategies of liberation are intertwined. Sometimes it is even difficult to tell the difference between the two.

"Heterotopic diaconia" and "heterotopic ecclesiology", developed by diaconal scholar Trygve Wyller (Wyller 2006, 2009, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2017, Wyller & Heimbrock 2010, Wyller & Heimbrock 2010, Villadsen & Wyller 2009), draw on the "spatial turn" of Michael Foucault (1998).[11] Wyller developed the concept of "heterotopic diaconia" in response to

[11] For further reflection and other examples of the "spatial turn" and theology, see Moxnes (2003) and Westhelle (2004). For an introduction to theology scholarship on Foucault, see Bernauer and Carrette (2004)

aspects of the Lutheran World Federation document *Diacona in context* (2009). Wyller (2006) critiques the use of liberation theology in the field of diaconia as an attempt to solve questions of representation and power asymmetry. Furthermore, he argues that liberation theological impulses may potentially become sources of disciplining. A heterotopic diaconia/ecclesiology aspires to be "formatted by the icon of the other" (Wyller, 2009, p. 2014) and suspends to claim to know in advance what the marginalized other wants to achieve or change in her or his life. However, through the use of an empirical research strategy, Gunnes (2019, PhD article II; 2020, PhD article III) reveals that the line between heterotopia and homotopia is blurred and shifting[12].

In chapter three, a fifth theological voice enters the conversation: the work of Norwegian-American theologian Linn Tonstad (2016, 2018) is used as a hermeneutical framework for articulating the plural and ambivalent outcome of the displacements of Our Lady. Tonstad's work allows for nuances and notions of simultaneity and can therefore aid in the articulation of one of the possible implicit ecclesiologies of a diaconal practice of displacement like Our Lady.

1.4 Scientific location of the study

With its joint focus on diaconia and ecclesiological imagination, this study has two disciplinary "homes": the discourse of diaconia and empirical ecclesiology. Although these theological disciplines are partly distinct in terms of subject and geographical origin, the following section will also show that they overlap.

1.4.1 The discourse of diaconia

Within the Scandinavian/German context, diaconia[13] historically refers to a historic moment in 19th-century European history, when a joint effort of clergy – especially the German priests Theodor Fliedner (1800–1864) and Johan Wichern (1808–1881) – and revivalist laity established institutions and a new, distinct profession (the "diakon"/"diakonisse") to respond to political unrest and social marginalization due to the dawning industrialization. The

[12] Examples of other scholars of ecclesiology and diakonia who have engaged with the theory of heterotopia is van Tyk (2014) and Stiles-Ocran (2015).

[13] Although used in English by Scandinavian and German scholars, the Greek word *diakonos* has not become subsumed into the English vocabulary. Native English speakers might not even recognize the word in general use in the English-speaking world. Rather, native English-speaking academic scholars who use the term grammatically treat it as a Greek word, placing it in italics. A recent example is Grace Ji-Sun Kim and Susan M. Shaw's book *Intersectional theology*: "The character of the early church comprised *kerygma*, *diakonia* and *koinonia* (….) *Diakonia* is about the church`s social responsibility and the basis of charity" (2018, pp. 97– 98). Another example is Wannenwetsch (2007). In German and in the Scandinavian languages, however, the Greek has been absorbed into vernacular language. The term is used as an English vernacular term in documents produced by the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation.

primary tasks of these semi-ecclesial institutions and trained persons were to take care of the poor, widows, orphans and the sick and to train deacons/deaconesses (Ryökäs, 2015, p. 62). In Germany and Scandinavia, the impulse for diaconia fuelled the formation of a plethora of heath care and social work institutions, like hospitals, modern nursing schools, kindergartens and asylums. Many of these institutions were partially or completely subsumed into the welfare state, either by ceasing to be independent organizations or by cooperating extensively with the welfare state.[14] Church historian Berge Furre has called the establishment of the Society of Inner Mission of Kristiania (now the CCM) the foundational moment for diakonia in Norway (1998, p. 11).

As early as 1890, Fliedner's use of biblical and patristic sources was questioned: his discovery might have been a lucky one, because it supplied the Protestant churches with a biblical foundation for an office or a position of humble and charitable social work in liaison with a religious body. However, even if such use of the term was strategically fortunate, the biblical basis for diaconia has been doubted and several scholars have claimed that Fliedner's use of the biblical material is flawed (Levius, 2008; Ryökäs, 2015). With the publication of Australian biblical scholar John Collins' PhD thesis in 1990, an understanding of diaconia as humble service towards the needy became scholarly indefensible. Collins (1990) holds that the biblical foundation of diaconia as humble service rests on mistaken translation, arguing that the Greek *diakon*-related words point to different tasks, whether liturgical, charitable or administrative (Nordstokke, 2011). Hence, the biblical foundation of the semi-ecclesial profession of the diacon/diaconess withered.

Current German and Scandinavian scholarship in diaconia has moved beyond the limitations of the 18th-century scholarship. Diaconal scholars now empirically investigate, critique and theologize on the role of churches in responding to marginality, as agents of social work in civil society (Backström, Davie, Edgardh & Petterson, 2011; Edgardh, Bäckström, Davie & Pettersson, 2010; Engel, 2008; Haugen, 2018; Hilden & Stålsett, 2012; Linde & Ideström, 2015; Stålsett, 2012) or as agents of ritual practices of trauma healing and existential meaning

[14] Examples include the training facilities for nursing and hospitals like Lovisenberg (founded in 1868) and Diakonhjemmet (founded in 1890, later merging with the School of Mission, Betanien nursing school and Haraldsplass nursing schools, before becoming VID Specialized University in 2015). The relationship between the third sector and the state sector varies historically and between countries. For a description of the German situation, see Henkelmann, Jähnichen, Kamisky and Kunter (2014). For a comparison between Scandinavian and Germany, see Leis-Peters (2014). For a European perspective, see Bäckström, Davie, Edgardh and Petterson (2011) Bäckström, Davie, Edgardh and Petterson (2010). For an international summary, see Radford Ruether (2008).

making (Gunnes, Stifoss-Hanssen, Østby & Nygaard, 2019; Kristofersson, 2008 Nygaard, 2015; Rønsdal, 2016; Stifoss-Hanssen & Danbolt 2007). Among those diaconal scholars who take an interest in the role and impact of churches and rituals, some have worked extensively with questions of ecclesiology (Beckman Edgardh, 2001; Dietrich, 2019; Edgardh, 2009, 2019; Nordstokke, 1990, 2011, 2019; Wyller 200, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c). The stress on ecclesiology represents a response to the work of Collins and an attempt to carve out an understanding of diaconia beyond the practices of diaconal institutions. Stephanie Dietrich argues against the "departmentalization of diaconia to special agencies or specialist or ordained members" (2019, p. 21), because diaconia is intrinsic to the identity of the church and a call to all Christians. However, many diaconal scholars work with the professional role and practice of the diacon in Protestant churches (Dietrich, Jørgensen, Korslien & Nordstokke, 2011; Hofman, 2017 Jordheim, 2014; Korslien, 2014).

Other scholars of diaconia are less interested in ecclesial rituals and ecclesiology and instead focus on the role of diaconal organizations as faith-based organizations working in the third sector of health care and social work (Angell 2014, 2016; Korslien, 2014; Glatz-Schmallegger, 2015). A number of studies address how diaconal institutions negotiate their heritage (Aas, 2009; Berglund, Lindberg & Nahnfeldt, 2016), their relationship with the welfare state (Angell, 2009, 2014; Haugen, 2018, Leis-Peters, 2008, 2014), or their role as agents of social innovation (Angell, 2016; Schröer, 2016)[15].

Sturla Stålsett stresses that diaconia is a hermeneutical perspective which denotes that which is

> *interpreted* in light of the Christian faith in God. There is, in other words, not necessarily something *inherent* in a practice that makes it diaconal. Rather, it is the way this action is seen, interpreted or understood – by the practitioners themselves or by others – that qualifies it as diaconal. (Stålsett, 2019, p. 71/72, italics original).

According to Stålsett, the "diaconal" is neither a matter of ecclesiology nor the organizational identity of a diaconal organization, but an interpretative lens of the scholar or practitioners. This means that a diaconal scholar may share the same archive or field with scholars from another field but ask disciplinarily distinct research questions. This perspective insists on the

[15] Explicit feminist perspectives are rare in existing scholarship on diaconia. Noteworthy exceptions are *Diaconia in a gender perspective* (Dietrich, Jørgensen, Korslien & Nordstokke, 2016) and *Diakoniens kyrka – teologi, kjønn och omsorgens utmattning* (Edgardh, 2019). Edgardh (2009) has also introduced queer theory and queer theology to the scholarship of diaconia.

value and necessity of intellectual dialogue with contemporary philosophy and critical theory.[16]

What scholars of diaconia share across conceptual differences is that – to a greater extent than the discipline of theology – diaconia is *inherently contextual.* Neither as practice, conceptualization nor critique can the field of diaconia dismiss the particular kind of welfare regime of the nation state (as well as the historical, social and cultural particularities behind this regime) that governs in any particular concrete geographical location. This applies equally to the context of the researcher and the empirical object of research.[17]

This PhD aspires to make a contribution to the theology of diaconia. The empirical starting point is an amalgamation of different areas within the study of diaconia: on the one hand, Our Lady is an ecclesial practice that engages in ritual practices. On the other hand, the diaconal organization of the Church City Mission has operative responsibility for running the church. This thesis is less interested in questions of organizational identity (although this issue will be addressed in 1.5) than it is in empirically investigating the impact on the particularly religious in responding to marginality (3.2.1–3.2.6 and 3.2.9–3.2.13) as well as theorizing from these findings (3.2.7, 3.2.8 and 3.3).

1.4.2 Ecclesiologies of liberation and empirical ecclesiology

In the 20th century, the common concern for the human other and the divine Other has given rise to various kinds of critical ecclesiological reflections that place social justice, liberation and inclusivity at the heart of the nature of Church.[18] Even though insistence on the validity of human experience – especially experiences of marginality – is at the heart of ecclesiologies of social justice and liberation, few such ecclesiologies have been informed by an empirical research strategy deploying social scientific methods, such as formal research interviews or

[16] The diaconal scholar is situated in modern academia, where one can no longer take for granted that "religion" or "theology" imply the Christian religion and Christian theology. Seeing diaconia as a hermeneutical perspective regarding any practice may enable diaconia to be understood as a particular Christian interpretation of a phenomenon that other faiths may interpret according to their own religious traditions. Doing so thus facilitates a comparative and interreligious perspective on the relationship between faith and social work.

[17] This is particularly important in an area of academia dominated by North American scholarship, where the North American social and economic context is often taken for granted, even by liberal scholars who aim to write for a global audience (Wyller, Van Den Breemer & Casanova, 2014).

[18] A brief and non-comprehensive list could include examples of feminist ecclesiology (Jones, 2000; Radford Ruether, 1993; Russell, 1993; Watson, 2002), liberation ecclesiology (Boff, 1986; Rieger, 2001; Rieger & Pui-lan, 2013), disability theology (Eiesland, 1994; Reynolds, 2008), queer ecclesiology (Tonstad, 2017, 2018) and diaconal ecclesiologies (Dietrich, 2019; Edgardh, 2019; Nordstokke, 2019).

participant observation.[19] In 2000, Nicolas Healy published the book *Church, world and the Christian life: A practical-prophetic ecclesiology*,[20] in which he argues that one of the main challenges of contemporary ecclesiology is its privilege of ideal descriptions of the church. Ecclesiologies, according to Healy,

> have a tendency to concentrate their effort upon setting forth more or less complete descriptions of what the perfect church should look like. They present blueprints of what the church should ideally become. (…) The impression is given – no doubt in many cases a false one – that theologians believe that it is necessary to get our *thinking* about church right first, after which we can go on to put our theory into practice. It is as if good ecclesial practices can be described only after a priori and quite abstract consideration of true ecclesial doctrine. (Healy, 2000, p. 36)

This critique is relevant to the discourse of the interface between ecclesial practices, ecclesiology and marginality. Healy argues that ecclesiologists should cease assuming that theoretical constructions of normative and elaborate models of the church will automatically transform into concrete practice. Instead, ecclesiologists should rethink their methodological toolbox and venture into unknown methodological lands that enable them to create thick descriptions of the complex, messy and lived worlds of ecclesial practices.[21]

Since the publication of Healy's (2000) book, what Pete Ward calls a "new approach to the theology of the church" (2016, p. 2) has flourished, reflected in the establishment of

[19] A non-comprehensive list of examples of ecclesiologies of liberation that make use of empirical methods or semi-empirical methods includes Edgard (2019), Fulkerson (2007), Jones (2000) and Rieger and Pui-lan (2012). However, it is important to note that the boundary between empirical methods and non-empirical methods in ecclesiologies of liberation is blurred. For instance, although Eiesland (1994) does not make use of the body of literature on auto-ethnography, her ecclesiological reflections could be seen a form of auto-ethnographic ecclesiology, where her personal experiences of disability are used to reflect on the nature of the church. Even though many ecclesiologies of liberation or ecclesiological reflections within theologies of liberation do not explicitly make use of empirical research methods, one may argue that they are generated by – and generate – a shift in the theological cultural climate towards a sensitivity to human experiences, termed *contextual theology* (Moxnes, 2008). The use of empirical methods in this PhD is indebted to the trajectory of contextual theology and the numerous reflections on questions of theological methods and normativity in contextual theology (see Beavens, 2008; Bergmann, 2003).

[20] There are of course earlier examples of critical reflections on the interface between empirical studies and ecclesiology, such as *Ecclesiology in context* by van der Ven (1996). For an in-depth reading of the particular Norwegian debate on the interface between empirical methods and ecclesiology, see Lerheim (2009).

[21] Wyller argues along the same lines, noting "the use of empirical methods in ecclesiology provoke[s] us to re-read ecclesiology and its basic constituents. The famous "notae ecclesiae" (unity, holiness, catholicity) deserve[s] a new interpretation, one more fitting to an enlarged reconstruction of Christian praxis linked methodically to everyday ethnography and including diverse cultural setting" (Wyller & Heimbrock 2019, p. 143). This ecclesiological turn to "practice" and "lived experience" can be seen as an example of a general turn in the study of religion (Ammerman, 2007; McGuire, 2008).

journals,[22] conferences,[23] studies of concrete ecclesial practices[24] and reflections on questions of normativity.[25]

This study shares with ecclesiologies of liberation a focus on the role of ecclesial agents as constituted by and responding to human marginalization. However, this study differs from many of the studies mentioned in footnote 17 in the sense that it deploys an empirical research strategy to investigate an ecclesial practice, a methodological choice that places it within the field of empirical ecclesiology. It aims to "do" ecclesiology contextually, by attempting to articulate an *implicit ecclesiology* (see below) of a particular ecclesial practice. Thus, the Church of Our Lady is accessed through the use of empirical methods, as described and presented in chapter 2.

In contrast to many of the empirical studies within the field of empirical ecclesiology, this study does not have "ordinary and everyday communities" (Ward, 2016 p.10) as its empirical interlocutors and it does not take an interest in traditional parish life. Rather, this PhD attends to ecclesiological reflections emerging from contexts characterized by experiences that are, in the context of a Scandinavian welfare state, extraordinary, such as the experiences of migrant workers, street work like begging, homelessness, heavy and pervasive drug abuse and mental illness. The informants of this study may be ordinary believers, but their lives are not.

Research question II, *What kinds of possible implicit and contextual ecclesiological imaginations may be discerned from diaconal practices of displacement?* has two components. First, it examines the implicit ecclesiology of Our Lady.[26] It thus seeks to contribute to the field of diaconal ecclesiologies by articulating on the nature of the church from *this* particular place and *this* particular practice. Jonas Ideström defines implicit ecclesiology as

> an understanding of what it is to be church, an understanding that is illuminated by an act of interpretation and analysis of various manifestations of the concrete church. (Ideström, 2015, p. 129).

Thus, implicit ecclesiology goes beyond presenting the self-understanding(s) and representations of an empirically studied church, as articulated by informants. Rather, implicit

[22] *Journal of Ecclesial practices.*
[23] The annual conference of the Network of Ethnography and Ecclesiology, held in Durham, United Kingdom.
[24] For instance, Fulkerson (2007), Ideström (2009), Johnsen (2017), Kaufman (2017), Watkins and Shepherd (2014) and Wigg-Stevenson (2014).
[25] See Bazzel (2015), Bretherton (2012), Fahlgren and Idestöm (2015), Fulkerson (2005, 2015), Ideström (2014), Kaufman (2015, 2016), Lerheim (2009), Ward (2012) and Wigg-Stevenson (2015).
[26] *What kinds of possible* ***implicit*** *and contextual ecclesiological imaginations may be discerned from diaconal practices of displacement?*

ecclesiology is a hermeneutical endeavour, an amalgam of a self-understanding of the local – as this occurs within the empirical material and is interpreted by the researcher when analyzing the empirical data – and theological and ecclesiological theories (e.g. "blueprint ecclesiologies") that are brought into the analytic process by the researcher. Chapter 3.3 documents the process of reviewing different ecclesiologies in order to find a conceptual framework for ecclesiological reflection that can help articulate implicit ecclesiological imaginations of Our Lady.

In the following, I ask for "implicit ecclesiological imaginations" of Our Lady, not "the implicit ecclesiology". The reason for this is to underline the plural and provincial nature of any kind of reflection on the nature of the church. What is at stake in the first part of RQ2 is not an attempt to construct conceptualizations that claim to be comprehensive by representing all dimensions of church at any given moment. Rather, my aim is to ask what kind of ecclesiological knowledge is created through a single perspective on some aspects of empirical material created in one particular place.[27]

The second part of RQ2 examines not only the "implicit" but also the kinds of "contextual ecclesiological imaginations" that may be discerned from an ecclesial practice like Our Lady.[28] This means that the research question does not only seek to articulate the kinds of ecclesiological imaginations that may be articulated as "implicit" in the empirical material. Rather, the second part of the research question takes as its starting point an ecclesiology that is local and contextual to Scandinavia, the folk church ecclesiology. Sections 3.3.8–3.3.10 investigate how the discursive notion of "folk" in the folk church ecclesiology needs to be renegotiated if it is to also empirically accommodate people like the guests of Our Lady. What happens to an ecclesiology constituted by the theological importance of geographical locality when faced with the trans-local nature of contemporary social and economic precariousness?

It is important to underline that my interest in folk church ecclesiology should not be seen as a departure from the discourse of diaconal ecclesiology or as an adjunct perspective. Rather, the first and second parts of RQ2 *("What kinds of possible implicit and contextual ecclesiological imaginations may be discerned from diaconal practices of displacement?"* is a matter of opting for two different strategies in an attempt to contribute to diaconal ecclesiology. The

[27] However, when referring to already established discourse (e.g. "folk church ecclesiology"), I will use "ecclesiology", not "ecclesiological imagination".
[28] RQ2: *What kinds of possible implicit and* ***contextual*** *ecclesiological imaginations may be discerned from diaconal practices of displacement?*

first part aims to contribute to diaconal ecclesiology by articulating ecclesiological imaginations emerging from a particular practice of diaconia, the Church of Our Lady ("implicit"). The second part of the research question seeks to contribute to diaconal ecclesiology by sensitizing the already powerful and well-known ecclesiology of Scandinavia – the folk church ecclesiology – to questions of marginalization, difference and precariousness. It thus attempts to "diaconalize" a mainstream ecclesiology by asking if folk church ecclesiology can "add the poor and stir",[29] or if the discursive inclusion of "the poor" in the "folk" calls for a rethinking or even a transformation of the conceptualization of the "folk" in the folk church ecclesiology. Therefore, this second strategy not only tries to carve out a space for diaconal ecclesiological imaginations as an added perspective to a pre-existing normative centre of ecclesiology in Scandinavia (e.g. the folk church ecclesiology), but to destabilize the normative centre from the position of the diaconal research.

1.5. The Church City Mission and the Church of Our Lady: historical, ecclesiological and liturgical perspectives.

1.5.1 Introduction

This subchapter seeks to provide a brief historical introduction to the history of the organization that runs Our Lady: the Church City Mission (CCM).[30] The chapter opens with a general introduction to the history of the CCM (1.5.2). It then discusses the more explicit ways in which religious practices have been handled within the context of the diaconal organization (1.5.3, 1.5.4) and the background of the formation of the Church of Our Lady (1.5.5). The church's years of existence prior to the fieldwork in 2014 are briefly presented through a reading of the annual reports (2007–2013) and other relevant documents.[31] The chapter does not aim to offer a comprehensive introduction to the CCM but focuses on its liturgical development and its role as a space of liturgical creativity.

[29] The expression is a diaconal appropriation of the phrase "add woman and stir" (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004, p. 4). The term describes how the early feminist critique of positivism was settled by adding "woman" as a category to traditional empirical methodologies, without taking into account intersectional differences between women or re-examining the sexism of the epistemologies and methodologies of these studies that had led to the exclusion of women in the first place.

[30] Unlike for diaconal organizations like Norwegian Church Aid (Kirkens Nødhjelp) (Tønnessen, 2007) and Signo - Home for the Deaf (Lid, 2018), there exists no up-to-date scholarly based history of the CCM. This chapter is thus based on a variety of sources, both written and oral. Some of the written sources qualify as scholarly (Aas, 2009; Hilden & Stålsett, 2012; Lundby, 1980; Stålsett 2012), while others were written by CCM employees as theological/diaconal reflections on the liturgical work carried out within the Mission's context (Opsahl, 2019; Fisknes, 1993; Stålsett, 2011; Torp & Mørk 1992). Tønnessen's (2000) work on the critique of the leadership of the Lutheran church of the welfare state after 1945 does not explicitly address the CCM, although it should be read as an important historical background for understanding the political and theological landscape within which the CCM worked during this period. The lack of scholarly based history of the CCM after the publication of Lundby`s book in 1980 is a clear limitation to this chapter.

[31] It is important to underline that I have not undertaken a detailed archive study of the formation of Our Lady.

1.5.2 The history of the CCM

The history of the CCM dates back to 1855, when the organization was founded in Oslo (then called Kristiania) as *Foreningen for indre Mission i Kristiania* (Society of Inner Mission of Kristiania, hereafter called the "Society"). Politically, the context of the establishment was the fracturing of a society where the hegemonic status of the state church and a people consisting of loyal Lutheran subjects could no longer be taken for granted (Thorkidsen, 1995).

By the mid-19th century, Christianity had for a Millennium been the majority religion of Scandinavia. The canonized Viking king Olav Haraldson had according to folklore and ecclesial celebrated legend established Norway as one Christian nation following his death in Stiklestad outside the city of Trondheim in 1030. Thus, sociologically speaking, the *folk church* denotes the intimate cultural, geographical and politically sanctioned link between the majority culture and an ecclesial body[32]. The denominational transition of the Reformation in Norway strengthened the intertwinement of political authority and religion, when King Christian III declared the country and church Lutheran in 1536. This transition resulted in a complete merger between church and state, leading to the confiscation of ecclesial properties and the closing of monasteries. During the period of absolute monarchy between 1660 and 1814, civil and ecclesial rights and duties were interchangeable and, from 1741 until 1842, religious preaching that had not been authorized by the local Lutheran vicar was forbidden by law (*Konventikkelplakaten*) (Oftestad, Rasmussen and Schumacher, 1993). In 1814, Norway broke from its political unity with Denmark, writing an independent Constitution.[33] By the 1840s, the legal frames around the religious-political unity were beginning to break up. The establishment of the Society in 1855 can be understood as a response to the amalgam of the social, political and economic upheavals of the 1840s. Due to industrialization and fuelled by the introduction of new capital from foreign agents and cholera plagues, the capital city of Norway, Kristiania (now called Oslo), underwent rapid and pervasive change. Powerful lay revival movements swept across the country during the latter part of the 19th century. The key issue for these revival movements was the personal and cognitive articulation of faith and

[32] It is, however, important to distinguish between folk church as sociology and as theology. For an introduction to folk church theology, see 3.3.8

[33] Tønnessen (2014) points to the paradox that even though the new, rather liberal Constitution of 1814 replaced the absolute monarchy with a modern state as the form of governance, one of the pillars of the absolute monarchy – the absolute unity of religion of the state and people – prevailed. Specifically, the King (paragraph 4), the folk (paragraph 2) and the state bureaucracy (paragraph 12) were by law bound to the Lutheran confession (Tønnesen, 2014, p. 4). The reason for this was that religion was considered the "glue" of the nation and the presence of other faiths or denominations would imply an implosion of unity from within (Thorkildsen, 1995). The Constitution thus barred Jews and Jesuits from entering and settling in the kingdom of Norway; only in 1851 were Jews allowed to settle and Jesuits as late as 1956.

personal sanctification, not infant baptism (Christoffersen, 1995). One such movement was the Haugeian revival movement, named after the lay preacher Hans Nielsen Hauge. Some decades later, a new wave of revival spread across the capital city of Kristiania. One of the leaders was professor in theology and lay leader Gisle Johnson (1849–1894) and an organizational outcome of the revival was the foundation of the Society, where Johnson was the first chairperson.[34]

Having been established, the Society was to "contribute to spreading the Kingdom of God in places where spiritual ignorance and moral degradation demand more extensive care for the souls than the what the Church at the present time is capable of delivering" (cited in Norwegian in Lundby, 1980, p. 354).[35] The founders were members of the local Kristiania bourgeoisie (Lundby, 1980). The Society was an example of organized attempts to re-Christianize and to redirect workers' attention and force away from forming and joining the dawning secular workers' movement. The leaders of the Society did not engage in political work like social and legal reforms, such as the banning of child labour (Lundby, 1980).

The initial method of the Society was to spread bulletins with Christian-related topics by approaching workers' housing facilities with the aim of conducting one-to-one conversations. However, it became apparent that verbal evangelization was corrupted by the precarious and marginal living conditions of workers in the slums of Kristiania. Thus, the organization quickly supplemented its "mission of the word" with a "mission of action". According to Lundby, the organization worked according to a principle of "help to self-help", aiding workers to become self-sustained[36].

During its first 100 years of existence, the Society engaged in social work in Oslo related to marginalization, like alcoholism, prostitution, nurseries and children's homes and care for the

[34] In the same period, various outer missions were founded. Among these were the Norwegian Society of Outer Mission (Det norske Misjonsselskapet, 1842), The Norwegain Mission in Israel (Den norske Israelmisjonen, 1844), The Norwegian Mission among the Santals (Den norske Santalmisjonen, 1867) and The Norwegian Lutheran Federation for Mission in China (Det norske lutherske Kinamisjonsforbundet, 1891). The Society was thus part of a larger ideological and organizational complex of Lutheran (mainly) lay Christian initiatives, seeking to discipline and minister to "pagans" in non-European countries as well as workers who had been baptized as children yet were spiritually ignorant, falling prey to "moral degradation".

[35] My translation. The Norwegian text goes: ("bidrage sit til Guds Riges Utbredelse der, hvor aandelig og Vankundighet og Moralsk Fordærvelse synes at kræve en mre udstrakt Sjælepleie, end Kirken under sin nuværende Organisation er istand til at yde" (Lundby 1980:28).

[36] Althougth the Society was a Lutheran enterprise, ran by memebers of the (until 2012) Lutheran state church limited to the borders of the nation-state of Norway, Lundby (1980) points to the fact that from the very start, the Society received international impulses. Not only was the idea of modern diakonia imported from Germany: influential general secretaries in the 19th centuries had prior work experience with Norwegian sea men`s church work in London and New York.

elderly (Kullerud, 2005; Lundby, 1980). The establishment of the State Department of Social Affairs (Sosialdepartementet) in 1913 signalled the advent of a state that was ready to take responsibility for its citizens in fundamentally new ways: until then, social affairs had been the responsibility of the Department of Church Affairs (Kirkedepartementet) (Aukurst, 1998).

According to scholar of diaconal history in Norway Aud Tønnessen (2000), diaconal organizations in general during the post-World War Two (WWII) period customized their identities and missions in order to adapt to a situation where social welfare and health care were politically recognized as a public responsibility. On the part of the state, Tønnessen holds that even though the Labour Party (i.e. the majority government of post-WWII Norway) was ideologically critical of private, non-profit agents like diaconal social service providers, in practice the social democratic welfare state was able to incorporate diaconal hospitals and nursing schools into the state education and health system.[37] Scholars of diaconia have pointed to a process of mutual cooperation between the state and the diaconal organisations (Midtun, 1998; Stave, 1998). In general, Lundby (1980) finds that the Society welcomed the expanding welfare state, viewing its means and aims as in line with the aim of the Gospel. The influential general secretary of the Society, Anders Grasmo, stated in 1967: "When encountering the welfare state, the first task of the diaconia of the church is to welcome its general principles. A welfare society represents ethical and practical values that the church unconditionally must support[38]" (Grasmo, cited in Lundby, 1980, p. 209, my translation). Such recognition of the general principles of the welfare state suggests that the paradigm of philanthropy was by now abandoned in favour of an acknowledgement of the need for political measures and structural change in order to combat poverty. The decision to cooperate with the welfare state implied access to financial resources far beyond the capability of philanthropically inclined individuals and Sunday offerings.[39]

In 1971, the Society ceased being a membership organization, instead becoming a foundation. In 1985, it changed its name to *Kirkens Bymisjon*, Church City Mission (CCM). In 1988, CCM established itself outside of Oslo for the first time, developing a mission in the city of

[37] There were, however, important exceptions to this: in 1952, bishop Eivind Berggrav launched a severe attack on the Labour Party and its vision for a liberal social democracy by comparing the idea of a welfare state to the totalitarian Nazi state that had occupied Norway only seven years earlier (see Tønnessen, 2000, p. 287).

[38] «Det første kirkens diakoni skal gjøre når den møter velferdssamfunnets syn, er å hilse de ledende prinsippene I sosialpolitikken velkommen. I sine mål representerer etiske og praktiske verdier som kirken uten videre må si ja til».

[39] At no point in its history has the CCM made membership in an ecclesial body or personal faith commitment a prerequisite for employment (Lundby, 1980). This has allowed the organization to employ health care and social workers based on professional merit, upholding the same professional standards as public social services.

Tromsø. In 1991, the Trondheim City Mission followed. By 2019, local city missions were present in 35 cities and local communities in Norway.[40] Local city missions are organized as independent foundations, all with local nuances. According to the CCM's annual report of 2017, the various city missions in Norway employ 1,770 people in either part- or full-time positions and administer a budget of 1.4 billion NOK.[41] The current core values of the organization are dignity, community, justice, solidarity, compassion, hope and faith. The organization states that its mission comprises the following:

1. Detect violations, injustice and distress;

2. Offer comfort and compassion;

3. Influence and alter the causes of precariousness, injustice and violation.[42]

Scholars of diaconia point to the role of diaconia as a social innovator (Christoffersen, 1998; Haugen, 2018), emphasizing how agents of diaconia have worked in areas that at the time of initiation were controversial and/or unrecognized by public welfare agents. This is also true of the CCM, especially in the post-WWII years. During the time of the first outbreak of AIDS in the 1980s, the CCM did not react with moral panic but strengthened its work among men and women living with exposure to HIV. In 1988, the CCM was asked by the health authorities to establish a centre, chapel and housing facility called Aksept (which still exists today) for people living with HIV/AIDS. A more recent and controversial example is the Health Centre for Undocumented Migrants,[43] where people living without legal residence permission are given health services by medical personnel who work as volunteers. Prior to the Centre's opening in 2009, the CCM came under severe attack from politicians from politicians from the right-wing Fremskrittspartiet (Progress Party), who threatened to suspend public funding to CCM and the Red Cross if the plans were realized (Hilden and Stålsett 2012:132). Defying threats of legal persecution in the form of jail or heavy fining, CCM Bodø today employs three undocumented migrants.[44]

1.5.3 Liturgy in the context of the CCM

As noted above, the CCM started out in the mid-19th century as an organization initiated by the bourgeoisie with the mission of evangelizing the baptized yet "ignorant" and "morally

[40] https://kirkensbymisjon.no/byer-og-steder/, accessed 27.03.2019.
[41] https://kirkensbymisjon.no/content/uploads/2018/06/Årsmelding_2017_SKBO.pdfÅrsmeldig, accessed 27.03.2019.
[42] https://kirkensbymisjon.no/about-us/mission-and-obligations, English original, accessed 27.03.2019.
[43] The Health Centre is run as a joint venture between the City Mission and the Red Cross.
[44] https://kirkensbymisjon.no/artikler/ansetter-papirlose/, accessed 27.05.2020,

degraded” working class. By 2020, the CCM had become a professional humanitarian organization, employing people of all faiths and no faith and working in a wide variety of areas. It responds quickly to new social problems, like the lack of health care services for undocumented refugees and the lack of access to basic humanitarian needs of migrant workers from Southern and Central Europe. Thus, the history of the CCM *could* have been a history of an organization that abandoned its religious mission in order to tailor its identity, values, methods and organizational structure in order to fit – as a non-profit private agent – into the services and structure of the welfare state of Norway.

The empirical staring point of this PhD – the Church of Our Lady, run by the CCM Trondheim – is one example that this need not be the case with the CCM. This subchapter traces how the CCM has explicitly merged religious practice with social work. The aim of the subchapter is to show that, within the context of the CCM, the displacements of Our Lady represent neither a break nor a novel innovation. Rather, Our Lady can be seen as the radicalization of a trajectory that has been refined over a period of 30 years.

The name *Church City Mission* – acquired in 1985 – can be read as an affirmation of its Christian/diaconal heritage and that this heritage is regarded as a concurrent ideological and strategic asset. By identifying itself as a *church* city mission, the CCM hermeneutically locates itself in an affiliation with an ecclesial agent, even though it is not a religious community itself. The statutes of the CCM Oslo make it clear that this church is the Church of Norway: the CCM Oslo works to “realize the mission of the church”, through “cooperation with the offices of the Church of Norway and in concordance with its confession”.[45] Priests and deacons employed by the CCM are ordained in the Church of Norway and thus under the auspice of the Lutheran bishop of the local diocese. The current chief executive officer (CEO) of the CCM Adelheid Hvambsal wrote in 2016 that the CCM “identifies fully and completely” with the Plan for diaconia of the Church of Norway (Hvambsal, 2016, p. 284) and that the CCM understands itself as “concrete and exuberant executers of this plan”[46]. On its webpage, the CCM negotiates between professional non-profit organization and its Christian heritage in the following manner:

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[45] My translation. The Norwegian text: «Stiftelsen Kirkens Bymisjon Oslo (tidligere Oslo Indremisjon) har til formål – i samarbeid med Den norske kirkes organer og i overensstemmelse med dens bekjennelse – å fremme tiltak som bidrar til å virkeliggjøre kirkens oppdrag» Paragraf 1, vedtekter for Kirkens Bymisjon Oslo, 2005. My translation.

[46] Norwegian text: «[V]i identifiseres oss fullt og helt med Den norske kirkes plan for diakoni, og forstår oss selv som konkrete og ihuga iverksettere av denne».

> Our work is based on Christian and humanistic values but is not organized as a religious community. Our anchoring is in the church and the diaconal tradition is strong in our work, but each employee, volunteer, user and guest come from various backgrounds with different beliefs and faiths. You don't have to be a Christian to work or volunteer for us. We are committed to dialogue based work independent of beliefs. (https://kirkensbymisjon.no/about-us/, accessed 20 May 2019, English original).

One example of how to balance inclusivity and at the same time maintain a religious identity is the role of rituals within the organization, especially the lighting of candles. In 2013, the CCM published a handbook regarding ritual practices in CCM, *Candle lighting and ritual practices in the CCM – an inspirational leaflet to the organization*, (*Lystenning og ritualer i Kirkens Bymisjon Oslo – et inspirasjonshefte for virksomhetene*). The handbook describes a wide range of religious rituals that take place within the organization, varying from explicit Christian rituals (the church of Tøyen, see below; and at Møtestedet, a café for people living with drug abuse and begging) to explicit Muslim rituals to religiously inclusive rituals, like a "service for believers and doubters". The latter is practised as part of the annual seminar for employees of the CCM Oslo. It includes "sources of energy": a Christian Eucharist, a Hindu/Buddhist altar, the lighting of candles, texts for reflection, washing of feet, a Muslim prayer rug and opportunities to write prayers.[47]

A key liturgical feature of all the rituals within the context of the CCM is the extensive use of the lighting of candles. Both the leaflet *Candle lighting and ritual practices in the CCM* (2013) and Børre Arnøy, priest and leader at the church of Tøyen from 1999 to 2007[48], regard the spontaneous public grieving after the death of the much-loved Norwegian king Olav in 1990 as the origin of the use of candle lighting as a public and collective symbol in Norway. Indeed, as a spontaneous non-organized response by the people to the death of a popular public symbol, the place in front of the royal palace was filled with burning candles. Arnøy has described the lighting of candles a "sacrament of the street". In the CCM, this symbol is appropriated not only in contexts of grief, but caters for a variety of human emotions. In the leaflet *Candle lighting and ritual practices in the CCM* (2013), which describes the various rituals of the CCM, the candle is interpreted as "a sign for hope, faith and prayer: the light of hope, the fire of faith – and the wordless prayer" (2013, p. 32). Thus, apart from rituals that are explicitly non-Christian (like Muslim prayer), most ritual practices within the CCM include some form of common candle lighting. The lighting of candles facilitates individual

[47] More recently, the services have evolved into an even more religiously open event, called the "Gathering of beliefs and non-beliefs" ("Livssynsåpen samling"). Arnøy, interview, 15.04.2019.

[48] Interview, 15.04.2020.

participation, yet the cognitive and emotional meaning of such participation is hermeneutically open. Together with the cobblestone, the rose and the cross, the light is one of the CCM's four symbols. The 2013 leaflet on candle lighting and rituals describes how the symbols of the CCM are cumulative and how new symbols are emerging from diaconal work. The examples listed are the heart, *Quran* verses written in Arabic and Hindu altars.

Given that the CCM is an organization and not a parish within the structure of the Church of Norway, it is free to create ritual practices that are not disciplined by the detailed rules set by the Synod of the Church of Norway when it comes to liturgy. Indeed, the CCM is free to create and include within its reservoir of ritual practices any practices, symbols or artefacts that are constructive and liberatory for its users, employees and volunteers. Even though the organization is not a religious body, the CCM's priests have master's degrees in theology and are ordained in the Church of Norway. This means that the CCM's ritual practices are facilitated, monitored and officiated by personnel who have both undergone theoretical training and possess a professional affiliation to the majority culture ecclesial body. It may be argued that this secures a professional standard and prevents innovation from transmuting into sectarianism.

1.5.4 The first parish of the CCM: The church of Tøyen (Tøyekirken) and street services

As noted earlier, the initial form of explicit religious activity was the spreading of Christian bulletins. In the first decades of its existence, the CCM hosted evangelization meetings in the city centre of Kristiania (now Oslo). In 1956, however, the last person to hold a paid position as a "city missionary" retired (Lundby, 1980, p. 213) and, according to Kullerud (291, p. 2005), in 1969 street evangelization was abandoned altogether.

Nevertheless, in the post WWII years, the CCM played an active role in contributing to building new and affordable churches (Småkirkebevegelsen) in the emerging suburbs of Oslo, such as Ellingsrud Church in Groruddalen. In addition, the CCM owned a chapel in Bogstadveien in Oslo, where "Forum Exprimentale" emerged. This was a space for liturgical creativity and innovation. However, in 1979, Sunday services in Bogstadveien chapel ceased.

In 1985 – the same year as the Society of Inner Mission changed its name to the CCM – the organization acquired the Lutheran parish church of Tøyen in the eastern part of Oslo's inner city. The church of Tøyen was historically an inner-city parish church built to cater for the working-class inhabitants of the surrounding district.[49] Its facade is built into that of the street,

[49] For an introduction to the history of the church of Tøyenkirken, see Kopperud (2005) and Lundby (1980).

rendering the sacred space somewhat hidden to ignorant passersby. The space was refurbished and reopened in 1990. The aim, according to Kullerud (2005), was to create a space for social work and for spirituality to go hand in hand. The liturgy practices of the church of Tøyen strive to "bring the experiences of the city and everyday life into the liturgy[50]" (Opsahl, 2019:14). The relationship between liturgy and the reality of the street needed to go both ways: the marginalized experiences of the street were to be given a liturgical expression and liturgy was to be offered to people who could not find a space in traditional Lutheran parishes. According to Børre Arnøy,[51] traditional Lutheran parishes "smell too well". The church of Tøyen's particular focus is people who do not feel at home in ordinary parishes because their cultural form is not accessible, being characterized by "high culture".[52] According to its webpage, the CCM Oslo describes the church of Tøyen as "an open an inclusive community, where you can be seen, valued and given a space to flourish".[53] At the heart of the church of Tøyen is the Hverdagsmesse ("Everyday service"): every Wednesday afternoon a common soup meal is shared in the café area followed by a service in the ecclesial space one flight of stairs above. To a considerable extent, the service follows the traditional ordo shared by mainline churches. However, the concrete liturgical words are characterized by creativity and contextuality (whether in terms of verbal utterances, performativity or music) and change during the liturgical year. The organ is replaced by a piano. During the week, a group meets to discuss the Bible text with the priest, using the contextual Bible method developed at the Ujama Center at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa.[54]

In contrast to Our Lady, the church of Tøyen requires that its guests not be intoxicated while present in the church space on the first floor or in the cafe area on the ground floor. The café in the church of Tøyen resembles an ordinary café, with trained and paid kitchen staff. Visitors can buy food from a counter, at very reasonable prices. There are tables, chairs and sofas to sit at in the café area. The basement of the church of Tøyen has installed lockers, so

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[50] «[V]i har som et mål at messene skal kunne romme byens og hverdagens erfaringer»

[51] Interview, 15.04.2019.

[52] Arnøy uses the phrase "categorical parish" to describe the church of Tøyen. The current CEO of the CCM Hvambsal also uses the term "diaconal "categorial parish" in her description of the church of Tøyen, but places the term in inverted commas, indicating that "categorial parish" is not an official ecclesial term (Hvambsal, 2016, p. 286). All parishes of the Church of Norway are territorially based.

[53] «et åpent og inkluderende fellesskap i hovedstaden, der du skal erfare å bli sett, verdsatt og gitt muligheter for utfoldelse». https://kirkensbymisjon.no/bymisjonssenteret-toyenkirken/, accessed 20.05.2020.

[54] Arnøy, interview, 15.04.2019, confirmed by the current street priest of Tøyenkirken Birte Nordal 10.05.2020

that homeless guests can store their belongings.[55] Staff engage in advocacy work regarding structural discrimination against migrant workers and host Norwegian course groups and film evenings.

However, the liturgical activities of CCM Oslo are not confined to the church of Tøyen. At the beginning of the 1990s, the liturgical activities of the church were transplanted to different city locations of Oslo as "street services" (gategudstjenester), running on Sunday evenings throughout the summer months in downtown Oslo. These locations include the Central Station and more recently different sites along the main street of Oslo, Carl Johan. The liturgy, initially created by the first street priests, Elisabeth Torp and Hans Olav Mørk, follows the traditional ordo; opening prayer, *Kyrie*, Bible reading and Eucharist. However, the liturgy has fewer spoken words than in a Sunday service in the Church of Norway.[56] Sermons are generally short. The service is led by two priests from the CCM, both wearing the liturgical attire of Lutheran priests in Norway: the white cassock and stoles according to the colours of the liturgical year. The music consists of traditional Norwegian hymns, led by a professional singer and a band. CCM volunteers who do ministerial tasks during the service (like giving out the Eucharist) also wear white cassocks. Ecclesial/liturgical artefacts are placed on the street: an altar with two chalices and patens, a baptism font with a rose and cobblestones. Arnøy[57] emphasizes the role of the quality of music in the street services: the music consists of a mixture of well-known Lutheran hymns and a new and contextual hymnal.[58] The soundtrack of the street services seems fresh compared to that of the traditional Lutheran congregation, as a keyboard and a singer replace the organ and collective song.

The opening of the church of Tøyen and the subsequent street services represented the beginning of the modern street ministry of the CCM. Kullerud argues that this new street ministry of the CCM differs from earlier missionary work in the sense that "now the preaching emerged from a practice of solidarity, the words came from the street itself and the encounter between human beings transformed words from letters to spirit" (Kullerud, 2005, p. 285). In 1851, the role of the Society was to bring the Gospel to the "degraded" and

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[55] On its web page, the CCM Oslo notes that its migrant worker guests mainly come from Poland, Romania, Latvia and Ukraine and their main source of income is begging and selling street magazines. https://kirkensbymisjon.no/rom-for-fattige-tilreisende/, accessed 20.05.2020.

[56] This was especially true during the 1980s and 1990s, before the Church of Norway underwent a process of liturgical reformation, leading to the establishment of a more flexible liturgy template in 2011. Prior to this reform, every Sunday service was nationally standardized.

[57] Interview, 15.04.2019.

[58] Eucharist hymn "Nå dekkes bordet". Arnøy, email received 13.05.2020.

"ignorant" worker. The life of the street was thus understood as the *object* of the mission. The foundation of the church of Tøyen and the street services can be read as a renegotiation of the theological status of the street. The theological task of the street ministry of the CCM is not to bring the Gospel to a theological *terra nullus,* but a hermeneutical endeavour and liturgical performance: God is already present in the midst of the reality of the streets.[59] The theological work of the CCM is thus not to call for repentance and revival, but hermeneutical: to interpret the experiences of common human life in the light of the Christian tradition. This interpretation is to a large extent performative, in the form of rituals and embodied practices like the Eucharist celebration.

1.5.5 The CCM Trondheim and the formation of Our Lady

The Church City Mission in Trondheim (CCMT), established in 1991 as the second church city mission outside Oslo, today works in a wide variety of forms of social welfare, like drug rehabilitation, housing and health care for mothers and youths with a refugee background, social work among youth at risk and support for people living with HIV/AIDs.[60] The empirical starting point of this PhD, the Church of Our Lady[61], thus represents a small section of the extensive work of the CCMT.

The relationship between Our Lady and the CCM Trondheim (CCMT) dates back to 1993, when the street ministry of the CCMT hosted Saturday lunches in the rather large vestry of Our Lady for people living with alcoholism. During the 1990s, street priests Jon-Henrik Gulbrandsen and Dag Aakre ministered to people in the drug-using community of Trondheim, by providing counselling, outreach to housing facilities where people with substance abuse live, fellowship, common meals, cultural experiences and celebrating services on ecclesial holidays in local shady pubs and bars. For a period of time, Guldbrandsen even lived at Carl

[59] In the street service liturgy from 1995, the theological status of the street is stated quite clearly: when the Bible reading is completed, the congregation responds by singing "Amen. God is in the city, our hope our comforter, our yearnings". The leaflet containing the liturgy and the texts of the hymnals from 1995 cites (in English) a sentence from *Ulysses* by James Joyce: "'Where is God?' Hooray. A shout in the street" (Gateskrift, 1995).

[60] CCM Trondheim was established in 1991 as a co-operation between the parishes of the city, the foundations of Thomas Angell, the diocese council of Nidaros and CCM Oslo. Our Lady only represents a small section of the CCMT's work. For a full and updated description, see https://kirkensbymisjon.no/byer-og-steder/trondheim/

[61] Since 2005, the parish of Our Lady merged with the parish of the Cathedral of Nidaros and became the parish of Cathedral of Nidaros and Our Lady (Nidaros Domkirke og Vår Frue menighet) (Andersen, 2008 p. 92). Our Lady Open Church is and has since the beginning been financed as a three-party agreement between CCMT, the parish of the Cathedral Nidaros and Our Lady and the Municipal parish council of Trondheim (Kirkelig fellessråd). Our Lady is used for free by the CCMT. The budget of Our Lady is comprised of donations, CCMT equity, and external funding from the Municipality of Trondheim, and the Municipal parish council of Trondheim (Kirkelig fellesråd) (email received from Dag Aakre, 28.05.2020)

Johan, a hostel for people in precarious life situations and drug abuse. During this period, many of the practices that take place today in Our Lady, like the shared soup meal and liturgy on Thursday afternoons and night open church took preliminary shape. From 2004, the CCMT initiated a Christmas service and a shared and open Christmas celebration at Our Lady.

In 2007, Our Lady underwent extensive restoration and celebrated its eighth centennial (having been established in 1207).[62] Prior to 2007, consultations and committees worked extensively to carve out the future fate of the church. Our Lady is a short walk away from Nidaros Cathedral, which dates back to the death of Olav "the Holy" Haraldsen at the Battle of Stiklestad in 1033. The cathedral of Nidaros is a Lutheran parish church and the seat of the leading bishop (*preses*) of the Church of Norway. Demographic changes in the inner city of Trondheim meant that the operation of two Lutheran parishes (Our Lady and Nidaros) within a small geographical area seemed like an unwise use of resources. What would become of Our Lady?[63] Ecclesial/CCM documents from the period 2007–2013 display a spirit of optimism and aspiration of transforming Our Lady into a church where diaconia is the fundamental pillar. The report *Helhetlig profil for Vår Frue kirke, rapport fra Komite for Åpen Kirke*, (KÅK) 2007, (*Comprehensive profile for Our Lady – report form the Comitee Open church)*[64] provides a useful summary:

> Every major city should have a church which is always open, where lights can burn and where prayers are prayed, where people can encounter each other and God. Located in the middle of the city, in a community of the city ("Norwegian: bysamfunn") which faces increasing social problems of illegal substance abuse and violence, the church can be a place of dialogue and diaconia. Here priest and parishioner, teacher and pupil, police and criminal, doctor and patient meet during the night under the hidden starry sky of the church.[65] (KÅK, 2007, p. 9).

Furthermore:

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[62] The total budget of the rehabilitation and the jubilee events was 35.359.320 NOK (Andersen 226:2008). The funding was Municipal council of Trondheim, from private companies (including the regional newspaper, *Adresseavisen*, and the regional bank) and private persons (Andersen 227 p. 2008). The sums signals the centrality of Our Lady to the city of Trondheim. The first street priest of Our Lady, Dag Aakre, composed a Eucharist hymnal, *I en kirke midt i byen (In a church in the middle of the city)*, to Our Lady open church (Andersen 247:2008).

[63] For a more detailed description of the jubilee and Our Lady prior to 2007, see former dean of parish of the cathedral of Nidaros and Our Lady, Knut Andresen`s book on the jubilee, *Fra soknekirke til sentrumskirke – Vår Frue og sogn* 1945-2007 (2008). The then bishop of Nidaros, Tor Singsaas and several employee informants describe the role of Andresen as central and crucial in the formation of the current shape of Our Lady.

[64] Comprehensive profil for Our Lady, (Helhetlig profil for Vår Frue, KÅK), 2007

[65] Norwegian text: «Enhver storby bør ha ei kirke som alltid er åpen, hvor lys kan brenne og bønner bli bedt, hvor mennesker kan møte seg selv, hverandre og Gud. Plassert midt i midtbyen, i et bysamfunn med utfordringer knyttet til økende rus og vold, kan kirka være et sted i dialog og diakoni. Her kan prest og kirkegjenger, lærer og elev, politi og kriminell, lege og pasient møtes en natt under kirkas skjulte stjernehimmel».

> The recommendation that we have been given through contacts with other churches, organizations, individuals and the population of Trondheim is that – first and foremost – Our Lady should be an open church, both in the concrete and the abstract sense of the word. It needs to be physically open, so that people always find the door of the church to be open and that they feel welcome, no matter what kind of motivation they have for coming. Our recommendation is that the church should be open both days and nights throughout the week and the year. In other words: always open. (KÅK, 2007, p. 5).[66]

The rapport acknowledges that this is a "radical suggestion" (KÅK, 2007, p 9)[67], as Our Lady is going to be "the first Norwegian church" (KÅK, 2007, p. 9)[68] ever be run in such manner. However, the vision is supported by the very top of the ecclesial hierarchy. According to the report, the then bishop of Nidaros envisioned Our Lady as "a church which is open and present for 'people who come from parties' – a church for lived life. The church cannot plan when the individual wants to visit the church, even if this is early in the morning or late at night" (KÅK 2007, p. 9)[69].

Words were swiftly put into action: after the eighth centennial celebration in November 2007, the opening hours were gradually extended; after Christmas Eve 2008, the church was open 24/7.[70] Volunteers, called "city angels", were recruited in great numbers. Employee interviews and the Maja-report[71] (2011) confirm that the selection criteria for becoming a volunteer are deliberately wide: if you are able to switch on the coffee machine, you are welcome as a volunteer in Our Lady. This signals an inclusive recruitment policy, rendering Our Lady a space for volunteering and peer encounters, in contrast to professional social workers and health care therapeutic services of the welfare state and other parts of the CCM that cooperate with it. Our Lady is thus a place where one encounters volunteers and – within the frames of their working hours allocated to being present at Our Lady – the Our Lady staff of CCM employees.

According to the Annual report of 2008, the results were swift: "Many people come to the church every day. These are people from different walks of life and with different kinds of lives (…) Hundreds of lights burn and hundreds of prayers are prayed. The church has gained

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[66]«De innspill vi har fått, gjennom kontakt med andre kirker, enkeltpersoner og ikke minst fra Trondheim bys befolkning, rommer en klar oppfordring om at Vår Frue først og fremst skal fremstå som en åpen kirke, både i konkret og overført betydning. Den må være fysisk åpen, slik at folk alltid finner kirkedøren åpen og føler seg velkommen, uansett hva slags ønsker og tanker de har for å komme innenfor dørene. På bakgrunn av dette anbefaler vi å ha kirken åpen hele døgnet, gjennom hele uka, året rundt. Med andre ord: alltid åpen».

[67] «forslaget er radikalt»

[68] «den første norske kirke»

[69] The Norwegian text: "Biskopen ønsker (…) en kirke som er åpen og tilstede for «mennesker som kommer fra fest» - en kirke for det levde liv. Kirka kan ikke planlegge når det for den enkelte vil være behov for å søke tilflukt i en kirke, om det skulle være tidlig på kvelden eller sent på natta».

[70] Annual report CCMT 2008 p. 8.

[71] Written by CCMT employee Maja Zachariassen. See below

a new content and new life”[72] (Annual report for CCMT 2008, p. 8). The annual report from 2009 constructs Our Lady as a place where people experience equality, in the sense that are all equally welcome. Through practices like Open Microphone (an almost monthly event, where all are invited to share their artistic talents or thoughts with the community), social roles are renegotiated, because everyone can contribute (Annual report CCMT, 2009, p. 3). As early as 2009, the annual report of the street ministry of CCM mentioned that the group of homeless people present have become increasingly international and that Russian, Belarusian, Chinese, Bulgarian, Serbian and Burmese are among the languages spoken.

By 2010, the bold vision of a church open 24/7 was being challenged: from this point the church would be open on weekdays during the daytime and open during the night-time only on weekends (Annual report for CCM Trondheim 2010, p. 6). The reason given were the need to “make the space safe and support the volunteers. This also gives the opportunity to get to know the guests who need counselling and guests who need to structure their visit to the church” (2010, p. 6).[73] Employee interviews confirm that in the period prior to this change of opening hours, some guests moved into the church. This posed problems, because the line between these guests’ living space and sacred communal space became blurred. The Annual report of 2011 of CCMT openly addresses the factors that were less present in the *Comprehensive profile for Our Lady* (KÅK) from 2007: the people who come regularly to Our Lady face great challenges in their lives, including “loneliness, drug abuse, psychiatric problems, rootlessness, unemployment, paperlessness” (2011, p. 2).[74] The presence of these social maladies in the church is interpreted not as a problem, but as a sign that Our Lady serves its mission: “This is a mode of being city, of being church, being a fellow human being and which we understand as the diaconal mission of the parish” (2011, p. 2).[75] However, the report also reflects on how the increasingly international dynamic stimulated by its guests implies measures in order not to “create groups in opposition to each other” (2011, p. 4)[76]. This challenges the CCMT to refine its mission with Our Lady: “[w]e do not do help. We do

[72] «Mange mennesker søker til kirke hver eneste dag. Det er mennesker fra helt ulike miljøer og med helt ulike liv. (…) Hundrevis av lys tennes og hundrevis av bønner blir bedt. Kirken har fått et nytt innhold og nytt liv».
[73]«Dette er med på å trygge rommet og støtte de frivillige. Det gir anledning til å bli bedre kjent med besøkende som ønsker samtale og gjester og trenger klare rammer rundt livet sitt»
[74] “ensomhet, rus, psykiatri, rotløshet, arbeidsløshet, papirløshet”. The term “paperlessness” This refers to people living without a legal residence permit in Norway, known as “paperless asylum seekers”.
[75] «Dette er måte å være by på, kirke på, medmenneske på – som vi ser på som det diakonale oppdraget vi har fått av menigheten».
[76] «Det handler om at grupper ikke skapes og settes opp mot hverandre».

not organize housing or employment soliciting. We are not a health clinic" (2011, p. 4).[77] The mission is focused on being a space where "different lives and personal stories encounter each other" in a "space that does not exclude, grade or discriminate" (2011, p. 4),[78] but creates a "communal table in the city" (2011, p. 3).[79]

In 2011 the CCMT commissioned Maja Zakariassen, one of its employees, to write an internal report to summarize the work of Our Lady since its re-opening in 2007 (the Maja-report). The report speaks highly of the previous years, arguing that to be a "church of care"[80] where diaconia is the "foundational perspective" (2011, p. 8)[81] is innovative work. Our Lady should be "courageous and outspoken" (2011, p. 8).[82] The non-professional nature of Our Lady is underlined: "We do not do help. We do something else. We talk to each other. We drink coffee together and we celebrate service together. We are together in a community and confirm each other as human beings" (2011, p. 8).[83] However, the report also reflects openly and sincerely on certain challenges that were not anticipated back in 2007:

> We had an idea that the sacred space itself would regulate behaviour and make people experience that this is a sacred space. This turned out not to be correct (…) In retrospect, we ask ourselves how we thought there could be sufficient tranquillity in the space given the experiences we have today.[84] (2011, p. 13).

The presence of unrest and unwanted behaviour is to a large extent related to people living with drug abuse and the combination of drug abuse and psychiatric problems (2011, p. 16). This both challenges and confirms Our Lady as a space of volunteering and non-help. On the one hand, people with "severe traumas" (2011, p. 16) are met with a "a cup of coffee" (2011, p. 6) and volunteers. On the other hand, the presence of guests living with drug abuse motivates Our Lady to continue to be a "non-treatment zone, where one encounters ordinary people who talk about everyday experience. Everywhere in society, people living with drug abuse are expected to accept help or treatment. The church is a space where you can come as

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[77] «Og det handler om å være tydelig på hva vår oppgave og rolle er – at vi ikke driver et hjelpetiltak, boligformidling, arbeidsformidling og helsestasjon».
[78] «Ulike livssløp og personlige historier møtes», i «et rom som ikke stenger, gradere eller sortere».
[79] "at the finnes et felles bord i byen».
[80] "omsorgskirke"
[81] "..diakonien løftes fram som det grunnleggende perspektivet»
[82] "modig og tydelig"
[83] "Her hjelper vi ingen. I stede gjør vi noe annet. Vi snakker sammen, drikker kaffe sammen, feirer gudstjeneste samme. Vi er sammen i et fellesskap og bekrefter hverandre som mennesker.»
[84] "I ettertid kan vi bedrevitende spørre hvordan vi trodde det skulle være tilstrekkelig ro i rommet før vi hadde gjort oss de erfaringer vi sitter med i dag. I et rom hvor "mangfoldet kommer til syne på godt og vondt», før vi hadde blitt kjent med mangfoldet».

you are and receive a blessing" (2011, p. 17).[85] Thus, the guests who pose the greatest challenges to Our Lady in terms of behaviour are also the greatest motivation for keeping the space uncompromisingly open.

The Annual report of 2012 provides testament of Our Lady's commitment to the harsh reality of the streets: in 2012, Roma beggars appeared in Trondheim for the first time in substantial numbers (2012, p. 2). The CCM has engaged in advocacy work in order to improve their living condition in Trondheim. 2012 was a challenging year: for the first time, Our Lady was forced to close on Saturday nights due to a lack of volunteers. However, new volunteers are continuously recruited. The caution from 2011 is repeated in this document, in almost the same words: "By focusing on the fact that we are an open church, we have been able to focus on our choices and become clearer on what the church is not: not a food station, not a place to sleep, not a health clinic. The more the city closes down for holidays, the more we choose to be open. But the balance is not easy, because all these needs are present: the need for food, a bed for the night, for health care. It is demanding for our volunteers to encounter all this, because there are no good solutions for this in our city" (2012, p. 1).[86]

In the annual report from 2013, for the first time poor migrants are mentioned not only in terms of their presence, but also in relation to other guests and hosts. The presence of the migrants is said to have created a

> steep learning slope in dealing with cultural difference, language barriers, stigmatizing and the conflict potential between marginalized groups. It is a constant challenge to create bridges in the space, just as it is a constant challenge to bring a perception of the threatened value of the human being out of the church space and to communicate it to the city. There is a demand for critical attention towards those who see others with an ethnocentric gaze. (2013, p. 7).[87]

The presence of migrant workers is said to challenge Our Lady deeply, because in Trondheim cheap accommodation facilities remain lacking and the sanitation needs, health care and nutrition needs of the migrants are not covered. Moreover, there are no alternatives to begging (2013, pp. 7–8). "The fact that so many of our guests have social and health care needs which

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[85] "….en behandlingsfri sone hvor man møter vanlige mennesker som snakker om hverdagslige ting. Mennesker med ruserfaringer møter forventinger om å ta imot hjelp og/eller behandles overalt i samfunnet, kirken er et rom hvor du kan komme inn akkurat som den du er, og få velsignelse»

[86] «Ved å fokusere på at det er ei åpen kirke vi driver, har vi fått hjelp til å skjerpe valgene og tydeliggjøre hva kirka ikke er: ikke matstasjon, ikke overnattingssted, ikke helsestasjon. Og der vi velger å åpne mer når byen stenges i høytidene. Men balansegangen er ikke enkel, for alle disse behovene kommer til syne: behovet for mat, for ei seng for natta, for helsehjelp, fot et er krevende å be våre frivillige stå i dette, uten at gode løsninger fins i byen»

[87] "Det blei ei bratt læringskurve i kultur, språkbarrierer, fattigdom, stigmatisering og konfliktpotensiale mellom trengende. Plutselig var det «våre egne» og «dem» å en måte som virkelig bryter på dypt vann. Det ble ei konstant utfordring å drive brubygging i kirkerommet, akkurat som det er ei konstant utfordring å bringe en forståelse av trua menneskeverd ut av rommet, formidle det til byen».

are unmet forces us to constantly reconsider how much we intervene with regard to help. 'Here we do not help" is a slogan that it is difficult to live by when bridges are broken, and we are as available as we are" (2013, p. 8)[88]. There is a greater need to address people's physical needs and the need to help. The need to establish a foodbank is mentioned. Decades of experience of counselling, creating rituals with and providing advocacy work for people living with drug abuse is now aggregated and applied to the status of migrant workers and beggars: "The CCM has taken a stand: nobody is unwanted, whether on our streets or in our meeting places, by virtue of who they are. The defence of the existence and presence of poor migrants is a continuation of the defence of the dignity and rightful place in society of the person who uses drugs" (2013, p. 2).

Furthermore, in 2013 a handbook for volunteers was written, a standard contract for volunteers was devised and the reflection groups for volunteers were restructured (2013, p. 5). For parts of the year, one social worker (miljø-arbeider) was employed to increase the presence of employees in the church. "We see less unwanted behaviour in the church: racism, gossip or conflicts; further, the hosts feel supported. The presence of employees in the church regulates behaviour and, to our knowledge, familiarity and recognition are deepened" (2013, p. 4).[89]

In contrast to the 2012 report, the annual report from 2013 displays greater confidence: "It is the nature of Our Lady to be disturbing: in one of the most prestigious spaces of the city, people who are not seen as valuable and who display behaviour that is seen as provocative, disrespectful and creating insecurity and intimidation, gather in or around this very space. Our mission is to create an awareness that behaviour is never identical to a human being" (2013, p. 1).[90] The mission of the church, formulated in 2013, is:

> Being present. Being present. Being present. This is a mantra one cannot repeat too often. It is about being present, sharing time and space and presence and creating community and meaning together. Or

[88] «Det at så mange av våre gjester har udekka behov, både sosiale og helsemessige, gjør at vi stadig veier hvor mye vi går inn og hjelper. «Her hjelper vi ingen" er vanskelig å etterleve når broer er brutt, og vi er så tilgjengelig som vi er».

[89] «Vi ser mindre av den uønska atferden - enten det er rasisme, sladder eller konflikt og vertene kjenner seg støtta. Nærvær av satte er regulerende på mange plan, og ikke mist blir vår egen kjennskap, kunnskap og erkjennelse fordypa».

[90] «Vår Frue – åpen kirke er i sitt vesen urovekkende, fordi nettopp i og rundt et av byens mest verdifulle rom, smales mange mennesker som ikke ses på som verdifull, eller at atferden oppleves som provoserende, respektløs eller skaper utrygghet eller er til sjenanse. Vårt oppdrag er å skape en forståelse for at adferden ikke er menneske».

> just being together. In the church space. In the pews. In the park. Seated around the table. By the candles. (2013, p. 3).[91]

Such presence is interpreted theologically: “it is a continuous job to keep the space and the table open. We abide by the word of Jesus: ‘to invite in from the streets’.[92] And that the poor are always among us. Their presence among us is not only a challenge or a sign of the fractures of the welfare state; it is also a sign of trust” (2013, p. 4). Moreover: “We have the opportunity to be church together with people who by virtue of their marginalization – where there is not much more to lose – have experiences and insights that Jesus spoke of as an example of the secret of the Gospel. ‘The poor are always with you’, Jesus said. We will continue to listen, see and be present. And we will continue to work to increase justice for the people of the city and the world” (2013, p. 8).

Summing up, the annual reports display a process of evolution from initial enthusiasm (2007), to encountering difficult realties (2012) to a new confidence (2013). Apparent also is an increased awareness of the challenging nature of handling a large number of volunteers as well as a move from an indiscriminate acceptance of all who want to volunteer towards a more professional management of volunteers. Examples are the establishment of a formal written contract, reflection groups and volunteer newsletters. From the annual reports it becomes clear that running an open church means being able to handle those in most need of the openness that Our Lady offers and who spend a substantial amount of time in the space, that is, people facing severe challenges. This insight is less prominent in the background ecclesial document and early annual reports (Report of the committee of the eight centennial jubilee of Our Lady[93], (2007), KÅK rapport, (2007), Annual report of CCMT (2007)). Moreover, the presence of migrant workers has increased over the years. The unmet social and health care needs of non-Norwegian citizens is a topic that is absent in the KÅK document. Thus, it is fair to say that Our Lady today encounters people in more precarious conditions than anticipated in the original official documents. The theologizing in the documents is to a large extent Christo-centric, in the sense that the radical inclusivity of Jesus is treated as a hermeneutical lens. This motivates volunteers to combat exclusion and

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[91] «Nærvær. Nærvær. Nærvær. Et mantra vi ikke kan gjenta for ofte. Det dreier seg om å være tilstede, dele tid og rom og opplevelser, skape fellesskap og mening sammen. Eller bare være sammen. I kirkerommet. På benken. I parken. Rundt bordet. Ved lysene».

[92] «De fattige har dere alltid hos dere.», sa Jesus. Der skal vi fortsette å lytte og se og være. Og så skal vi fortsatt arbeide for mer rettferdighet for menneskene i byen og verden».

[93] *Rapport – Jubileumskomiteen for Vår Frue kirkes 800-års jubileum* (2007).

stigmatization and to advocate for people who – as non-citizens – lack access to basic human needs.

1.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the research questions (1.2), the conceptual framework (1.3), the scientific location of the study (1.4) and the historical background of the CCM and Our Lady (1.5). In the following, I will present and discuss the methodological steps taken and the choices made when approaching the community of Our Lady, not only through the written texts produced by its employees (annual reports), but also through a research strategy utilizing empirical methods.

Chapter 2: Methodology, epistemology and research ethics

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aspires to present and discuss questions of methodology and epistemology in this PhD. It is divided into three subchapters: 2.2 describes the actual methods carried out; 2.3 reflects on the ethical questions that arose at different stages of the research process; 2.4 discusses the methodology, but on a different epistemological level than 2.2. Indeed, in the latter, the focus is the use of empirical material in theology. Section 2.4 refers more to questions of epistemology and the validity of sources constituted through empirical research in theological research than concrete methodological steps. In 2.5, I try to practice what I preach, by being as transparent as possible regarding the various stages of the analytic process and the writing process of the articles.

Although the different subchapters examine different topics, it is important to state that there is no “ disciplinary division of labour ” between the subchapters, in the sense that 2.2/2.3 purely attend to social scientific methodological questions/ethical questions while 2.4 attends to questions of epistemology. Thus, the subchapters should not be read compartmentalized but cumulatively. Questions of methodology and epistemology are highly intertwined and the subchapters should be treated as an overall and common reflection on the methodological and representational practices of this PhD.

2.2. Description of methodology

2.2.1 Introduction

The empirical material of this PhD consists of interviews and notes from participant observation. In the following, I present and discuss how the empirical material was constructed, alongside some ethical considerations regarding this process.

2.2.2 Interview material

The empirical material of this PhD consists of 42 individual interviews. The interviews were conducted with three categories of members of the Our Lady community: employees, volunteers and guests. In addition, the bishop of Nidaros at the time of the fieldwork, Tor

Singsaas, was interviewed. All interviews were audio-recorded and the majority were transcribed.

The interviews were semi-structured. In many cases – especially in the guest interviews – informants related to the questions rather feely.

Employees

Employees were interviewed based on their current or past professional status at Our Lady. All those employed in 2014 were interviewed. In addition, two former employees were interviewed based on their past key positions at the CCMT.

Hosts

People who engage as volunteers (hosts) leave their contact details with the CCM, rendering it possible to establish host interviews by gaining access to the list of volunteers of the staff of Our Lady. However, I instead chose to set up the host interviews by following the same procedure as for the guest interviews (see below). As the frequency of how often people enlist as volunteers and actually volunteer varies, I found it useful to talk to people who were on site at the time, so that we to some extent shared an experience of the Our Lady at the given moment of the fieldwork.

Guests

As Brinkman and Kvale (2015) note, statistical representativeness cannot be achieved in research conducted using a qualitative research strategy. However, this does not mean that the researcher should not aspire to include a variety in the empirical material. My initial ambition was to conduct interviews with guests whose life experiences (and thus reasons for being at Our Lady) varied widely.

Guests of Our Lady do not give their contact details to any employee or volunteers, but come and go as they choose. One is not a member of the Our Lady community through any kind of formal structure: participation is a purely relational matter. As many of the guests live chaotic and unstable lives, interviews could not be arranged beforehand. In order to gain access to informants, I had to be present at Our Lady. Not only did I have to be present, but I also needed to become a person whom people wanted to meet for an interview. This meant that gaining access to an interview situation required considerable work in creating relationships and building trust.

My interviews with guests took place as a result of being present at Our Lady and engaging with people. Typically I would first enter into a conversation with a guest or a volunteer. I would then ask if she or he would consider being interviewed. Only once did I arrange with an informant to conduct an interview the next day. The informant did not turn up but was later willing to be interviewed when we met casually at Our Lady. The location of the guest and volunteer interviews was the chapel of St Sunniva, a side chapel within Our Lady. The space was sufficiently close to the main space of Our Lady so as not to disturb the informant's everyday activity, while by having doors that could be closed, it was secluded enough to create a sense of peace and discretion. The exceptions were three volunteer interviews conducted at a nearby café. The lengths of the interviews varied from twenty minutes to approximately one and a half hours.

Guests were generally willing to become informants. However, willingness was directly related to the guest's social situation. Norwegian guests without drug-using habits and living outside the paid labour force tended to be the most willing to be interviewed. One can speculate that the reason for this was that these guests had more time to spend. Indeed, as they were not living with any kind of addiction, they were in no rush to plan and find (whether legally or not) financial resources for their daily dose of drugs. Guests living with drug abuse proved to be the most difficult to recruit as informants. I had many informal conversations with people living with active drug abuse. However, when asked to take part in formal interviews, these guests turned down the offer more frequently than non-drug-using guests. In the end, the empirical material only includes three interviews with guests living with active drug abuse. Compared to the experience from participant observation of how rife experiences of drug abuse are at Our Lady, my estimation is that the interview material under-communicates the prevalence of living with drug abuse.

Most interviews were conducted in Norwegian, although three were conducted in English: two with informants with a Roma cultural background and one where the informant's first language was English. Language did create a barrier, as most of the Roma guests had poor knowledge of English. I did consider using an interpreter but ultimately refrained from doing so because I believed that the likelihood of finding a translator who spoke Roma (not Romanian) in Trondheim while requesting that the Roma informants turn up at an anticipated time and date would inflict an additional burden on an already precarious life situation. In light of the difficulties I faced in setting up interviews with guests in general, this seemed unrealistic. Given these considerations, I did not interview guests with no proficiency in

English. The empirical material thus contains Roma guests who spoke sufficient English to be interviewed in this language. My estimation is that the majority of Roma guests have a minimum knowledge of English, enough to travel to and through foreign countries. I considered such a level of English sufficient to be interviewed.

2.2.3 Participant observation

In order to establish interviews with guests and hosts and undertake participant observation, I spent time at Our Lady in three fieldwork periods in 2014: one week in February, three weeks in April and a few additional days from 23 to 26 December.

As an estimate, I spent around six hours at Our Lady every day. In the beginning, I tried to spend the hours subsequently, but the constant flow of people, the number of interactions observed between people and the endless conversations in which I engaged made me exhausted after a few hours. I then decided to spend fewer hours in the church, but to spend time during different periods of the day to observe possible changes in the group of guests. During the weekends when Our Lady is open 24/7, I prioritized spending time in the church during the night. One night from Saturday to Sunday, I slept on the floor together with guests who for some reason spend their weekend nights or parts of their nights in Our Lady. The reason for prioritizing the night shift was to experience any change in the ambience of the church during the night-time and to experience firsthand the church as a space for sleeping. On other weekends, I spent time in the church until 2 am, but did not sleep there.

In the beginning, I made field notes during my time at Our Lady, by withdrawing to the pews and writing. After some time, I understood that this made people uneasy. One guest even asked me: *"What are you writing? Who are you writing about?"* I realized that for many of the guests, the experience of being transformed into written notes by another person is not a neutral or innocent event. I therefore turned to writing field notes only once I had returned to my room in the evening.

Initially, participant observation played an equally important role in the methodology as the interviews. However, the details from the participant observation did not survive into the articles. The reason for this is that I found it difficult to include the observation material in a meaningful manner within the processes of coding and analysis.

Thus, participant observation forms the background, but is only part of the generally very meager section of the empirical material actually displayed to the reader in the written articles. This means that the methodological repertoire of this PhD includes fieldwork, but the

final written product cannot be subsumed under the heading of "ethnography". This PhD uses empirical methods, but it is not an ethnography.[94]

Nevertheless, this does not mean that the fieldwork was in vain. First, all the articles contain a presentation of the space of Our Lady and the activities that take place there. This could not have been written without being present over periods of time and observing. More importantly, in order to gain access to guest informants, I needed to be a person who they found credible and trustworthy. Trust had to be built. The fieldwork was a necessary methodological approach in order to create the empirical material that constitutes this PhD, even though detailed descriptions of situations from the field notes are not presented in the articles or in chapter 3 of this text.

2.2.4 Are informants considered co-researchers or informants?

American practical theologian Courtney Goto argues that theologians using empirical methods have failed to take into account the colonial legacy of empirical methods. This means that even the most empathic scholar of practical theology[95] may end up reproducing stereotypes and "nativism" (Goto, 2018:135). Goto challenges the theological researcher to reflect fundamentally on the ambiguity of every attempt to present a context on its own terms and how such a noble intent is always tainted by the power dynamics that exist between the researcher and the researched. She reminds theologians working with an empirical research strategy that written accounts of the other – even if such accounts are created according to the golden standard of ethnographic/empirical research – need to be seen as fabrications of the other that are never identical to the empirical other (Goto, 2018, p. 153). Employing empirical material in theology does not warrant the researcher the right to invite her readers to "peer into" the community (Goto, 2018, p. 156). According to Goto, the researcher needs to be held accountable to her own power as a researcher, to critically reflect on this power and to find ways – both conceptually and practically – of reducing the asymmetrical power difference between the researcher and the researched. One such way is to conceptualize the research

[94] The difference, however, may not be as great as it seems. The term "ethnography" is widely used in the books and articles produced within the disciplinary field of empirical ecclesiology. In the latest book emerging from this field, the term is even found in the subtitle: "*Scandinavian perspectives on ecclesiology and ethnography*" (Ideström & Kaufman, 2018). In her literature review of the discourse of empirical and ecclesiology, Tone Kaufman switches between the terms "empirical and ethnographic approaches" and "empirical or ethnographically oriented studies" to describe the methodological foundation of the field (Kaufman, 2018, p. 17). Given these conceptual frames in the discourse of empirical ecclesiology, the difference between doing an "ethnography" and using "qualitative methods" might not be that significant.

[95] Goto situates her book within practical theology. Many of the examples discussed overlap with the interlocutors of this PhD, like Fulkerson and the discourse on contextual theology.

process as consisting of two mutually dependent parties: the "academic researcher" and the "community co-researcher" (2018, p. 96).

Whereas I value the emphasis Goto places on accountability as a key ethical value in empirical research in theology, I hesitate to call the informants of this PhD "co-researchers". In her critique of ethnographic studies, British postcolonial sociologist Sara Ahmed (2000) addresses how discourses and practices of reducing and inverting asymmetry (like designating the informant a "community co-researcher") do not alter the very basic power relation embedded in ethnography/empirical research itself: the researcher is the one who receives a full salary, public recognition and increased status, which can be traded in for a new job possibilities, increased salary and new research prospects. The researcher is the one who runs the risk of public professional disgrace if ethical and academic standards are not met in the work produced. The informants – even if they are called "community co-researchers" – do not possess the same kind of authorization and thus their formal status (e.g. title, access to new positions with higher salaries, public recognition) will not change unless they have access to prior education, regimes of authorization and sources of payment after the research project is terminated. Reconceptualizing the asymmetry between researcher and informant as "academic co-researcher" and "community co-researcher" does not "pay off" in the world outside the methodological chapter of the written text because the asymmetry between the researcher and the informant is not only a matter of discourse, but of economic and social realties that cannot be altered by altering concepts. Power has a material dimension that thrives independently of discursive counter strategies. In fact, Ahmed argues, naming the informant a "community co-researcher" may even increase the power of the researcher *vis-à-vis* the informant. Indeed, the terminology makes the researcher appear inherently benevolent and sensitive to differences of power, whereas in fact the actual outcome of the research process is filtered through the numerous conscious and unconscious choices of the researcher.

Following Goto and Ahmed, one way of handling this power in an ethical manner is to understand oneself as deeply accountable not only to the research community, but also to the empirical community of the fieldwork. One way of operationalizing accountability is to maintain a relationship to the research community during and after the research process. I have tried to honour my accountability to the community as an ethical imperative by maintaining a relationship with Our Lady and the CCM throughout the PhD process. I have presented my findings at the "Academy of the CCM" (Bymisjonsakademiet) (Oslo), at the celebration the 10th anniversary of Our Lady as an open church (Trondheim) and at the

national meeting of clergy of the CCM (Oslo).[96] I have also volunteered to present and discuss the findings with CCMT[97] and other CCM. Drawing on Ahmed, I hold that a sober understanding of the asymmetrical power relation between researcher and informant means to acknowledge that there is no escape and no solution – either through methodological choices or through the virtue of the researcher – from the question of representation in empirical research. As will be shown in 2.5.2, the choice of theory and the refinement of the initial research questions were constituted via active engagement with the empirical material. However, the *outcome of the research* cannot move beyond and will never be anything but an amalgam of conscious or unconscious choices and circumstances that were chartered or that occurred, an outcome that I as a researcher is both responsible for and accountable for, equally to the research community and the community of Our Lady.[98]

2.3 Research ethics

2.3.1 Doing research among people in marginalized life situations

According to the *Guidelines for research ethics in social sciences, humanities, theology and law* of the National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities[99] (NESH), researchers have an extra commitment towards the integrity of informants in vulnerable positions (NESH, 2006, p. 22). To a considerable extent such caution applies to guests at Our Lady. Guests here live with pervasive drug abuse, exclusion from the workforce, mental health issues and informal work like begging. In addition, although this is not included in the empirical material of this PhD, some live with a vulnerable legal status as asylum seekers or as paperless migrants.[100]

The process of recruiting informants who were migrant workers or who made their income through begging demanded heightened ethical attention. These guests were easy to come into contact with, partly because they had many questions concerning Norway and Trondheim and, as it turned out, a great need for practical and economic favours. To them, my role as a researcher was less prominent than my role as a friendly Norwegian-speaking person with lots

[96] I received a salary of 1000 NOK for my presentation at Bymisjonsakademiet. None of the other presentations where paid.
[97] Email sent to current leader of CCMT Odd Anders With, 27.05.2020. I will send copies of the PhD thesis to CCMT and ecclesial authorities in Trondheim.
[98] The dilemma has been discussed by Stålsett, Taksdal and Hilden (2018) in relation to the use of the methodology of Participatory Action Research.

[99] The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities is part of the Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees. These committees constitute an independent administrative agency under the Ministry of Education and Research.
[100] One of these guests was asked to become an informant but did not wish to be interviewed.

of time to spend and a mobile phone with a Norwegian SIM card: *"Can you call this person to ask if there is a job for me?" "What is the name of X and X in Norwegian?" "Why am I not allowed to use the computer facilities at XX (name of facility for Norwegian citizens living with a drug addiction)?" "Can you give me 40 NOK for paracetamol?"* I tried to answer and accommodate the requests. I gave money to the persons begging on the street corner with whom I had an hour earlier conducted an interview or socialized in the café at Our Lady. I paid another interviewee who was sleeping on the street so that they could spend some nights at a hostel.

On the other hand, accommodating the requests could be regarded as a means of "buying" information, even if requests were never explicitly tied to the person attaining an informant status. If this was the case, it could infringe upon the integrity of the informant and the narrative given by her or him. On the other hand, turning down requests for such favours would imply being blind to the fact that the international guests in particular are engulfed in considerable poverty by Norwegian standards. A researcher doing empirical work in contexts of social and economic precariousness cannot choose between doing harm and not doing harm. Harm is already being done to the integrity and well-being of the informant and the ethical demand on the researcher is to navigate her presence and methodological tools in such a way that the harm is not amplified by her presence and choices. My decision to economically aid some of my informants must be seen as an attempt to negotiate between the ethical demand to answer the basic needs of the informants and the fact that economic favours may tamper with the freedom to become or redraw as an informant.

The process of recruiting informants in a context of wide-ranging drug use also demanded ethical attention. The ethical limit of recruiting informants for interviews was that informed consent had to be achievable.[101] This meant that people who were visibly drunk or intoxicated or who were clearly mentally unstable were not be asked to be interviewed, as their cognitive capacity to understand the concept of informed consent may have been reduced due to these maladies. This, of course, is also a problematic criterion of exclusion, because it excludes people living with these conditions as informants. Ensuring the ability of the informant to understand the concept of informed consent trumped the possibly enlarged variety in the

[101] "The information must be adapted to the participants' cultural background and communicated in a language they understand" https://www.etikkom.no/en/ethical-guidelines-for-research/guidelines-for-research-ethics-in-the-social-sciences--humanities-law-and-theology/b-respect-for-individuals/, accessed 04.02.2010.

empirical material gained by additionally including as informants people who were clearly mentally unstable, heavily drunk or intoxicated.

2.3.2 Questions of anonymity

At an early stage, I chose not to anonymize the site of my fieldwork, instead naming it as the Church of Our Lady in the city of Trondheim. The reason for this choice was that promises of anonymity on such a scale would not stand the test of reality in a country like Norway. Our Lady is unique in its radical practices of hospitality. Thus, a place-oriented form of anonymity would in practice be a charade. In order not to promise more than was realistically possible, I regarded it my ethical responsibility to preserve the anonymity of the individual informants but to disclose the location of the fieldwork. In the process of writing I discovered that given that the location is known, very little information was needed to identify the informants.[102] Even a minimum amount of knowledge could potentially compromise the anonymity promised to guests, employees and volunteers.

It is rather unlikely that the articles will be read by guests. However, a lack of access to academic articles and academic English is no excuse to diverge from the moral and professional imperative of preserving anonymity. A researcher who understands herself as accountable to a community should not only be prepared that informants may "turn up in the lecture theatres" or on "your doorstep" (Gullestad, 2003, p. 237). Rather, informants should be presented in such a way that the researcher is comfortable that they are "the imagined reader" (Gullestad, 2003, p. 240). This is especially important in contexts where the social status of the people being described in writing is vulnerable and marginal. As described in the articles, "scum", "idiots and freaks" (Gunnes 2016, p 85, PhD article I) are descriptions of the community that surface from the interview material as labels given to guests by passersby. Research on diaconia (or any other practice where people's integrity is compromised) faces a conundrum in finding ways of describing persons and situations of degradation without perpetuating a textual gaze of an (unintentional) amalgam of pity and disgust.

Given the choice to name the location and the precarious nature of the lives of many guest informants, questions of how to represent guests in the written text became a matter of ethical pertinence. Operationalizing the commitment of accountability to the community meant that

[102] This insight was facilitated by the fact that I had previously lived in Trondheim and been part of the community of Our Lady (2010–2013), before returning to academia to write a PhD. The then-leader of Our Lady, Siv Limstrand, was a columnist for the local newspaper *Adresseavisa*, where she reflected on the practice of Our Lady. From reading her anonymized descriptions of situations, I knew that it was easy to recognize the persons she was writing about, even though very little information was given.

choices of representational practice in the written – and thus public – text were of great ethical concern.

Katrine Fangen (2010) describes two strategies for negotiating the relationship between empirical and epistemic persons. The first is to transfer empirical persons to epistemic persons, which means to distil qualities from a diverse set of persons into one person. However, the danger with this strategy is that the distance between the empirical person and the epistemic person becomes too great. The other strategy is to allow the empirical informant to remain the epistemic person, but to change the gender, profession or site of origin of the person. In the articles Gunnes 2016 (PhD article I) and Gunnes 2017 (PhD article II) I have to a great extent opted for the first strategy, by choosing quotations that I considered to be expressions of something general found within this category of informants, thus creating epistemic persons, while (some) concrete information about the same persons has been altered. Gunnes 2020 (PhD article III) utilizes the second strategy, as there is great deal of overlap between the empirical person and the epistemic person. However, some details have been omitted and changed as to try to preserve the anonymity.

2.3.3 Doing fieldwork in a context where the researcher is already known

A second factor prompts ethical reflection. This is the fact that to some of the informants, I was known beforehand. I lived in Trondheim from 2010 to 2013, working as a university chaplain at the University of Trondheim. In this capacity, my colleague or I would, according to a monthly roster, officiate at the Thursday services at Our Lady and monitor the soup preparation of various Christian student groups. I enlisted as a volunteer at Our Lady and volunteered in my spare time. I would partake in the Thursday services on a regular basis as a guest at the church. As a volunteer, I officiated as a priest at the monthly Taizé services and services for the group of queer Christians who would gather on a regular basis for services in the chapel of St. Sunniva. In 2012, I welcomed the Asylum Pilgrimage March, consisting of asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Iraq to Our Lady and subsequently led the support group for one of the asylum seekers, who for a year lived in a tent outside Our Lady[103].

My relationship with Our Lady prior to fieldwork meant that some of the non-substance-using guests and some of the volunteers knew my face prior to the fieldwork. In the case of the employee informants, all but one was known professionally to me prior to interview.

[103] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pq-emQlxDQc (accessed 27.05.2020)

However, none of them had been colleagues and none could or can be counted among my personal friends when living in Trondheim. I have never been employed by the CCMT nor any other CCM.

Did my former relation and status in the community of Our Lady in any way compromise the integrity of the informants? Before 2013, interacting with me meant interacting with a priest, or a volunteer who had undergone professional training as a priest. This meant interacting with a person who was committed to a professional ethics of care, counselling and discretion. From the point of view of the informants (who were known to me prior to the fieldwork), in 2014, that very same person turned up as a researcher. At least two ethical and methodological challenges can be detected here.

First, there was a danger that my former role as priest (university chaplain) tempted the informants into revealing more in the interview than they otherwise would have done. If this was the case, it meant that I exploited the relational capital traditionally associated with clergy, because the informant would transfer this relational capital to a different professional role, the role of the researcher. The problem with this transference is that guests might feel instrumentalized because their role was now not that of a confident, but of an informant giving an interview. In such cases, a research interview can be compared to what Fog calls a "Trojan horse" (2005, p. 25), because the informant may mistake talking as a form of human interaction that builds on basic trusting and mutual dialogue occurring in a wide range of situations, with a formal research interview setting. A research interview is not identical to trusting and mutual dialogue. Indeed, at its core, a research interview is an instrumental use of verbal interaction: we engage in conversation in order to create researchable empirical material. This is different from the ideal of professional/pastoral counselling, where the well-being of the other is the only legitimate goal of the conversation and where the withholding of the needs and interests on the part of the professional is an integrated part of the professional ethic (Nylehn & Støkke, 2002).

Repstad (1993) has reflected on his own experience as a sociologist of religion working in Norway. He argues that in a culture where religion is considered a very private matter, talking to someone known may be easier than talking to a stranger (Repstad, 1993). A variation of this may apply to this particular context: the informants who were already familiar with me knew that I was a person committed to the work of Our Lady and to its guests, as a person who would engage with the community and choose to spend spare time there, as a guest, as a host or as clergy who on a voluntary basis celebrated the monthly Taizé services and

occasional services for queer Christians. I too would light candles for troubles and torment in my personal life among the ocean of small lights on the cobblestone altar in the middle of the church. Knowledge of this commitment may have made informants more willing to reflect on the dilemmas and problems in the community than if I had been a stranger. The controversial nature of some aspects of the work of Our Lady may heighten the importance of this point.

Second, an interview is the concrete verbal outcome of the encounter between the researcher and the informant, their various agendas and their capacity to enforce this agenda in the interview situation. The informant contributes to this encounter not only as “raw” material. Rather, the work of the informant is a work of active re-presentation (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

2.3.4 Conclusion

In this subchapter, I have tried to spell out my methodological and ethical choices in order to be as transparent as possible about the choices that foreground the findings. The following subchapter on the epistemology can be read as an operationalization of accountability. In 2.4, I will try to be as transparent as possible about the status and usage of the empirical material once it entered into circulation in a theological discourse. I thus turn to the question of epistemology.

2.4 Doing theology by using empirical material as a research strategy: Epistemology

2.4.1 Introduction

Epistemology is the theory of how knowledge is produced and the validity of this knowledge within a given discipline (Scharen & Vigen, 2011, p. 61). This PhD consists of the following articles: Gunnes, 2016 (PhD article I), Gunnes, 2017, (PhD article II) and Gunnes 2020 (PhD article III). These articles enact dialogues between aspects of the empirical material and aspects of the theologies of Lathrop (juxtaposition), Althaus-Reid (kenosis) and Wyller (heterotopia) alongside theories of space (Soja). The aim of the dialogue is to engage in discussions that may respond to the research questions. The result of this dialogue can be found in the articles and in chapter 3 of this text. In this subchapter, I want to clarify the theoretical ground for entering into and facilitating such dialogue. I thus turn to the question of epistemology, with Natalie Wigg-Stevenson and Katlyn Tanner as my main interlocutors.[104]

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[104] Selecting these two does not intend to overlook the fact that there are a number of other scholars in the field who have contributed to the discourse on theological normativity empirical methods: key persons are Don

2.4.2 Epistemology and empirical research in theological scholarship

Textual sources (biblical texts, biblical scholarship and texts produced by historical theologians like Luther and Aquinas) are self-evident sources of knowledge production in theology. Norwegian theologian Tone Kaufman (2016) points out that because theology conducted with an empirical research strategy is a newcomer to the theological methodological repertoire, theologians who use empirical methods are asked to explicate and justify their epistemology to a larger degree than those working only with textual sources.

Claiming to do theology via an empirical research strategy rests on a fundamental belief in the relevance of lived experiences when professional theologians speak, think and write about the intellectual, liturgical and spiritual tradition of Christianity, or, stated differently, to do theology as verbal and embodied practices. The reason for this epistemological assumption is twofold. The first reason is theological: the incarnation represents a particular commitment to particularity (Scharen & Vigen, 2011, Scharen 2012). While this commitment to particularity is to be taken methodologically seriously, as Pete Ward (2012) self-critically observes, theologians have written about life experiences in ways that would not have been deemed scientifically acceptable had the very same theologians been writing on traditional theological questions or sources. The founder of Black theology, James Cone, phrases this epistemological-ethical imperative of work of the theologian as follows: “The theologian is before all an exegete, simultaneous of Scripture and existence” (1974, p. 8). If Cone’s consideration is transformed into practices, this means that as much as the theologian requires refined methods for scriptural exegesis, her methodological battery of exegeting everyday life needs to be just as exquisite. Thus, contemporary life should be analyzed with the same methodological rigour and commitment as biblical texts, patristic texts or the vast amount of texts by theological scholars. Theologians of liberation insist that theologians need to engage in particular with various kinds of social brokenness and epistemologically privileged voices that have not previously been head or welcomed into theological discourse (Fulkerson, 2011, p. xii; Stålsett, 2000). Mary MacClintock Fulkerson argues that this is especially pertinent when it comes to empirical research on ecclesial practices. A study of ecclesial practices that is not shaped by lived realties of racism, ableism and gender will fall prey to the production of

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Browning (1991), Johannes van der Ven (1996) and Pete Ward (2012). For a critique of Browning and van der Vern, see Goto (2018, pp. 111–133). For a critical review regarding questions of normativity among practical theologians working with empirical methods, see Kaufman (2016). For an overview of the Norwegian discourse on empirical research in ecclesiology, see Lerheim (2009).

idealized ecclesiologies where the brokenness of social realties is devoid of theological validity (Fulkerson, 2007, p. 251, Fulkerson 2005, 2012a, 2012b,).[105]

The second reason is historical: with the advent of postmodernity, the idea of an ontological unbroken line between divine truths and ecclesial/theological truths no longer remains credible. Theologians inspired by postmodernity will argue that theology and tradition can no longer be understood with a capital T, because every king of knowledge is historical and contextual (Sigurdsson & Sveinungsson, 2006). Thus, dogmas cannot be perceived as divinely revealed, ahistorical truths (Fulkerson, 2014, p. 360). This shift in understanding of the nature of theology has significant consequences for an understanding of validity in the production of theology. The process of theological reflection cannot be imagined as mirrors of divine truths, but rather as results of historically contingent social constructions. Fulkerson writes:

> Theological reflection is not a linear form of reflection that starts with a correct doctrine (or a 'worldly') insight and then proceeds to analyze a situation; rather, it is a situational, ongoing, never-finished dialectical process where past and present ever converge in new ways. (Fulkerson, 2007, p. 234).

Such an understanding of theology dismantles the division between theoretical and contextual theological knowledge by pointing to the social, historical and contextual nature of any production of theological knowledge, *even the kind of theology masquerading as non-contextual*. This does not entail abandoning normativity, but rather a shift in one's understanding of theological normativity. Within a postmodern paradigm, theological normativity need not base its legitimacy in *a priori* non-contingent insights.

In her book *Theories of culture: A new agenda for theology,* American theologian Kathryn Tanner (1997) explicates the process of creating theology in the cultural context of postmodernity. With the creativity of an artisan, the task of the specialized professional theologian is to "construct its version of how to articulate and organize Christian belief and values in the course of the situation-specific contexts" (Tanner, 1997, p. 82). The material that the theologian works with is immensely diverse and depends on the specific sub-discipline of the theologian (1997, p. 87). It cannot be limited to what is empirically called "religious" or "theology". Indeed, what theologians do is

> take responsibility for interpreting and organizing some section of these materials. (…) Material[s] are selected and rejected, and their sense mutually modified, in the light of each other (….) The material[s] are not mute ones, so to speak, of ordinary artisans. Most of the material with which the theologians

[105] However, such a position as epistemology does not easily translate into methodology, in the sense that qualitative methods are understood as a guarantee to "direct" or "authentic" access to "lived reality". For a critique of Fulkerson's use of ethnography in her theological work, see Goto (2018, pp. 136–142).

> work is already, in other words, theological to some degree or another – say, an already relatively well-defined idea of God's compassion found in the African American spiritual. (…) We have seen, however, that this does not relieve the theologian from his or her constructive responsibilities. This is in part because of novelties of circumstances, something new is always being added to the equation. (Tanner, 1997, p. 88).

Thus, the theological endeavour is creative and constructive: it aims at articulating and organizing Christian belief in specific contexts, be they academia, a parish context or individual reflection. Canadian empirical theologian Natalie Wigg-Stevenson has described the process of production in even more detail than Tanner. She argues that producing theological knowledge has too often been seen as deducing dogma to empirical contexts to test whether they comply with teaching: "dogma and description are pitted against each other in a competition, where dogma's victory is decided before the match even begins" (Wigg-Stevenson, 2015, p. 3).[106] Building on Tanner, Wigg-Stevenson argues that the process of articulating and organizing Christian beliefs in specific contexts can be metaphorized as participating in a conversation. In this conversation, systematic theology, biblical scholarship and embodied faith practices have a place at the table. The role of the theologian is to "perpetuate and facilitate" this conversation (Wigg-Stevenson, 2015, p. 2). The advent of empirical methods in theology means that there is one more body of knowledge present at the theological table. The theological conversation table should practise a methodological agnosticism: all methods are needed and welcomed. The job of the researcher is to facilitate[107] this conversation as an "exuberant and contested space" (Wigg-Stevenson, 2015, p. 2), to keep "a creative conversational tension" (2017, p. 195) between church history, systematic theology and empirical material. Thus, a central task of the theologian committed to an empirical research strategy is to facilitate the conversion from messy and embodied practices into researchable material. Practice is turned into text, which again becomes a fully fledged

[106] It is important to stress that the pervasiveness of deduction in theology is not limited to mainstream theology. Norwegian feminist theologian Jone Salomonsen (2003) observes how even feminist theology falls prey to deduction, where the informant's experience and reflection on gender is tested and corrected on the basis of the gender theory of the researcher.

[107] There is a creative tension in Wigg-Stevenson's terminology, when she both calls for the researcher to be "apprenticed" by the context (2014, p. 166; 2015, p. 8) and to facilitate a conversation between the empirical material and theology created via traditional methodologies. Apprenticeship historically entails a highly asymmetrical relationship, where the pupil is taught and trained by the master in the art of the trade in order to become a master herself and enter the guild of the master. In contrast to the student in academic training, apprenticeship historically does not involve critical thinking and critical creativity prior to becoming a master and entering the guild of practitioners. This means that the metaphor of the theological researcher as "apprentice" and the metaphor of the theological researcher as "facilitator" describe very different positions of power in relation to the empirical material. If the researcher has first been apprenticed by the empirical context during fieldwork, can she at a later stage become a facilitator in relation to the same empirical material and at the same time remain honest to the dispossession of power that the apprenticeship metaphor suggests?

participant in the theological conversation. The empirical material is one among many materials with which the theologian works. Juxtaposing the empirical material, biblical scholarship, systematic theology and other theories like queer theory or feminist theory means that the organization and interpretation of theory and how to read the empirical material alike needs to be done anew: “something is being added to the equation” (Tanner, 1997, p. 88). In this way, the narratives and actions of the *ethnos* (people) are turned into *graphies* (writing) alongside the *graphies* of systematic theology, biblical texts and church history. This means that neither the *grapheis* of Luther, the *ethnos* nor biblical sources enjoy an epistemological privilege that is settled before the conversation starts. None of the conversation partners are privileged. The one who is privileged is the writer of the text who facilitates the conversation through her research questions, analytic capabilities, epistemological reflections and choice of theory. This, of course, applies equally independently of what kind of *graphy* is used. Thus, it is the writer of the text is who is in possession of a constitutive agency, even if the text does not contain the word “I”.[108]

Geir Afdal (2013) takes the argument even further in the book *Religion som bevegelse – læring, kunnskap og mediering*.[109] Afdal not only argues for the inclusion of practices of “lived life” (made researchable as field notes and transcribed interviews) as one more conversation partner at the theological table. Indeed, he argues that empirical material, systematic theology and biblical scholarship are different forms of knowledge practices. Systematic theology and biblical scholarship are also ways of practising Christianity, independently of the articulates faith commitment of the scholar. In principle, allowing the *graphies* of contemporary *ethnos* to sit at the theological table is not substantially different from turning the stories of the *ethnos* of the first narrations of Jesus into *graphies* (today known as the Bible), or the *graphies* of historical individual *ethnos* (Luther, Augustin) (today known as theories of salvation, anthropology and so forth).

2.4.3 The question of theological normativity: Conceptualizing theology as conversation

What is the relationship between understanding the production of theology as conversation and claims of theological normativity? The introduction of empirical material in theology conceptualized as a conversation does not entail a 180-degree turn from theoretical deduction to empirical induction. In her critique of Adams and Elliot’s empirical theological study of indigenous peasants in Northern India, Wigg-Stevenson (2015) addresses the danger of opting

[108] Thank you to Tone Kaufman for making this point at the 90% completion seminar of this PhD.
[109] English: *Religion as movement: Learning, knowledge and mediating.*

for an *a priori* inductive epistemology in empirical theology. Indeed, in the former authors' study, the peasants' trials and victories become narrative illustrations to a predefined eschatological template. However, telling the story of the peasants as empirical example of eschatology is dependent on the exemption of certain parts of story, as Adams and Elliot themselves admit (cited in Wigg-Stevenson, 2015, p. 4). Wigg-Stevenson asks the provocative question, "Had their ethnography focused on any one of the stories from their context in which the powerless were not vindicated, would one be to force to say that God was on the side of the oppressors, or that Godself was powerless?" (Wigg-Stevenson, 2015, p. 4). Thus, as noted earlier, envisioning empirical theology as a dialogue means to opt neither for a purely deductive nor a purely inductive approach. Indeed, the friction between the theoretical and the empirical need not pose a problem, but rather be deemed an asset that challenges the theologian to "to discern an apparatus to negotiate the normative weight of each other" (Wigg-Stevenson, 2015, p. 4).[110] The theological epistemologies outlined by Tanner, Wigg-Stevenson and Fulkerson question whether systematic theology and empirical theology are that different when it comes to the question of normativity:

> The writer of a theological text always has the power to discern the structure of normativity for arranging the sources for her argument. The goal with the ethnographic theological process is to include non-textual voices in the process of discernment, and to make the process more transparent. In so doing, theology in these models is thus reframed as a much more imaginative, expansive practice than the narrow focus on dogmatics alone allows (Wigg-Stevenson 2015, p. 4).

Both text-based theology and empirical theology demand that the theologian takes ethical and intellectual responsibility for structuring an argument and admitting to the inherent hermeneutical status of all kinds of prescriptive statements. Thus, both the empirically committed theologian and the systematic theologian should be asked to justify their claims. However, very often, the former is yet the latter is not. One example that demonstrates that this is not always the case is Tom Smith, in his review of Scharen and Vigen's (2011) book *Ethnography as Christian theology and ethics*: "When a theological ethnographer makes a claim, is it about God, or about what the informants believe to be true (whether explicitly or implicitly) about God?" (Smith, 2013, p. 6). If the question of normativity pertains equally to the empirical theologian and the systematic theologian, one may paraphrase Smith by asking: when a systematic theologian makes a claim, is it about God or about what Luther/Augustin/Rahner thought to be true about God? Indeed, disregarding differences in

[110] Wigg-Stevenson practises this vision for theology when she includes personal experiences in her critique of Rowan Williams' theology of "transformative judgement" (Wigg-Stevenson, 2016). She describes how her non-compliance with whiteness and maleness as a Baptist minister creates spaces that make congregational life open to a larger group of people. Thus, grace, not judgment, institute the moment of transformation.

methods, one may claim that all theologians are accountable for the ground on which they claim authority in order “to discern the structure of normativity for arranging the sources for her argument” (Wigg-Stevenson, 2015, p. 4). The theologian’s source of reflection may be Kjetil, who lives with drug abuse as a guest at Our Lady. Or it may be a monk-turned-religious reformer called Martin Luther. However, the epistemological imperative of self-reflexivity, accountability and contextuality is the same. A similar point is made by Kaufman, arguing that just as important as negotiating normativity between theoretical theology and empirically informed theology, is the negotiation that takes places within the fields labelled “theoretical” or “empirical”. Indeed, the difference between the normative and the descriptive is one of degrees, not quality (Kaufman, 2016, p. 159).

2.4.4 Critique of empirically informed theology from anthropology

The introduction of empirical methods in theology has been met with critique from the social sciences. According to Geraldo Marti, the use of ethnographic material in theology compromises the integrity of empirical material by using it for purposes other than “adequately represent[ing] what is actually occurring in the field (one’s finding”) (2016, p. 161). However, Marti overlooks Fulkerson’s and Tanner’s points about the hermeneutical nature of theology. Theology is not a positivist zero-sum game where something either “is” or “is not”. Rather, it is a hermeneutical endeavour. It interprets and organizes the secular world shared by the Christian and non-Christian (and everything in between) informants and the researcher. Interpretation and organization are done in light of the belief in the Christian God, but this does not ontologically change the nature of the persons, artefacts and spaces being interpreted.

A similar critique to Marti has been raised by sociologist James Spickard. Spickard goes even further than Marti by arguing that it is impossible to combine theology and ethnography, “at least not while protecting each discipline’s integrity” (2016, p. 174). Like Marti, Spickard fears that the theological use of empirical methods will force or over-interpret the informants into addressing topics that – according to him – are of interest to theologians. As Spickard asks rhetorically, what should theologians do if their informants have nothing to say about God? *Contra* Spickard, it can be argued that Spickard rests his claim on a superficial and one-dimensional understanding of theology. Topics of interest to theologians do not only emerge when the informant utters the word “God” or a word associated with a religious identity marker. Fulkerson articulates the class bias embedded in such an understanding of theology when she asks

> So which part of the life of a Christian community is 'theological' or theologically ethical? (…) Is the recital of creeds? If so, where does that leave those who do not understand Trinitarian dogma? Or those who live on the street – whose major vocation is survival? (…) Unfortunately, many expert definitions of 'theological' do not offer ways to read these other spaces, practices and lives. (Fulkerson, 2011, p. xi).

Similarly, Elisabeth Tveito Johnsen (2017) has used empirical methods to problematize what is regarded as "theological". In her critique of the religious education reform in the Church of Norway, she points to how cognitive articulations like dogma and creeds are considered "theology", while activities like play and fellowship are treated as merely "social", with no theological purpose or status. Such an understanding of theology excludes experiences like fun and fellowship as legitimate and recognized sources for transferring Christian faith between generations.

2.5 Practising what I preach as an empirical theologian: Describing and discussing the analytic process

In the three articles composing this PhD, theology is envisioned as a conversation where neither empirical material nor theory is given an *a priori* status as privileged. The theories that I mobilize should be seen as a sensitizing devices for discovering new aspects of the empirical material and not as a deductive, acontextual and non-hermeneutical measuring rod. In this section, I first present the content of the articles and then the processes behind them.

2.5.1 Presentation of articles

Article I

"The *ordo* of care: A hermeneutical dialogue between Gordon Lathrop's liturgical theology and practices of care in the Open Church of Our Lady, Trondheim". Published in *Studia Theologica - Nordic Journal of Theology.* 2016. Vol 70, issue 1. Pages: 74-96

Article I discusses practices of hospitality at Our Lady in the light of the liturgical theory of Gordon Lathrop. According to Lathrop, all historical churches share an idea of liturgy as the juxtapositions of certain elements. These juxtaposed elements constitute the ordo of the Christian churches. In the article, I argue that what attracts people to Our Lady cannot be accounted for (whether theoretically or empirically) through the use of Lathrop's fixation on a historically given set of juxtaposing elements as *the* structure of liturgy. Without discarding the idea of juxtaposition as key to theorizing ecclesial practices, the article then turns to inductively identifying the juxtapositions that are at work at Our Lady. I identify two such juxtapositions: the displacement of the conventional overlap between space and practices.

This first displacement entails that those who inhabit the space are welcomed to do *other* things than what is generally regarded as *comme il faut* in medieval ecclesial buildings in mainline churches: practices of liturgy are displaced in favour of practices of hospitality. The second displacement follows the first: a displacement of the conventional overlap between space and bodies. This displacement entails that other people are present in the space than those whom one would normally find in Lutheran congregations. In the case of Our Lady, this means people living with experiences of migration, poverty, drug addiction, begging and minor or extensive mental health challenges.

The article then asks how the informants articulate the impact of these two displacements. Two distinct and internally contradictory juxtapositions occur. On the one hand, the informants ontologize the meaning of ecclesial space by attesting to the "special" meaning of the ecclesial space as "sacred" and "different" compared to secular space. On the other hand, the particularity and stand-apartness of ecclesial space is *broken* against its unconventional use: the space, its traditional practice and its artefacts are used in displaced manners, specifically the practices of hospitality to which Our Lady is committed and the people who come as a result of them. In other words, the sacredness of the space is maintained and reinforced, yet at the same deconstructed through performative practices that are not normally done in buildings that are identified as sacred.

This allows me to argue that Lathrop's theory of juxtapositions and broken symbol is of relevance to scholars working with unconventional and displaced uses of ecclesial space, artefacts and practices. Nevertheless, Lathrop's need to delimit *which* elements should be regarded as ecclesiologically and liturgically valid overlooks the fact that the list of possible juxtapositions in creating liturgy and ecclesiology is endless and contextual. At Our Lady, the juxtaposing of historical ecclesial space and practices of hospitality become a highly potent source of theological and diaconal innovation. However, the catalyst of this innovation is not only reverence for a historically given ordo, but reverence combined with a subtle displaced and unconventional usage.

Article II

"Our Lady of the heterotopia: An empirical theological investigation of the heterotopic aspects of the church of Our Lady, Trondheim". Published in *DIACONIA, Journal of Christian Social Practice.* 2017. Vol 8. Pages: 51-68.

In this article, diaconia as empirical context and theoretical discourse is introduced through the work of Trygve Wyller. The article's theoretical framework is the concept of *heterotopia*, developed by Michael Foucault and appropriated for the field of diaconia in several works by Wyller (Wyller 2006, 2009, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2017, Wyller & Heimbrock 2010, Wyller & Heimbrock 2010, Villadsen & Wyller 2009). At the heart of Wyller's heterotopic diaconia/ecclesiology[111] is a critique of the lack of awareness among scholars of diaconia of the underlying forces of normalization and discipline inherent in diaconal practices. Wyller argues that the transition from a philanthropic to a politically oriented diaconia does not exempt or prevent diaconal agents from becoming potential agents of disciplining and othering. Therefore, what needs to be problematized and overcome is not philanthropy itself, but the eagerness of the diaconal agent to know how "liberation" or "the good life" looks like for the marginalized other (2006).[112] Reading Michael Foucault's (1998) *Of other spaces*, Wyller explores what diaconia would look like if its starting point were those who have been othered by various discourses of normalization, like medicine, religion and social work. What is at stake in heterotopic diakonia is a re-negotiation of the question of representation: are those who are deemed *other* by the various discourses of normalization seen as recipients in need of empowerment/solidarity by predefined regimes of liberation or normalization, or is the genuine otherness of the other understood as the epistemological starting point? (Wyller 2016b, 2016c) thus calls for a *heterotopic ecclesiology*. Heterotopic ecclesiology shares with traditional liberationist-inspired ecclesiologies an ecclesiological imagination that seeks to respond to experiences of marginality and injustice. However, the heterotopic church is not identical to the empirical church or even an ideal ecclesiological model. It is the space that emerges when belonging and entitlement are destabilized. The relationship between heterotopic ecclesiology and the empirical church is thus one of inverse proportionality: "A heterotopic church is the event in which it [the church] dissolves itself to let the subaltern remain" (Wyller 2016:76a)[113]. Wyller's particular use of heterotopia is discussed in relation to

[111] As acknowledged in 1.4.1, many scholars of diaconia have also written about ecclesiology. In the work of Wyller, the transition from heterotopic diaconia to heterotopic ecclesiology occurred in 2016.
[112] Unfortunately, Wyller's first article on heterotopic diaconia has only been published in Norwegian. In his subsequent texts on heterotopic diaconia/ecclesiology, the initial polemic is toned down and no references are made to *Diaconia in context.*
[113] Elsewhere, Wyller defines heterotopic ecclesiology as "turning over the space to others and the way others act this space is what I would call a heterotopic ecclesiology" (Wyller 2016b:55) and as an ecclesiology that "enables the subaltern both to speak and to act. The original ecclesial space is vanishing, another lived space develops, and this forms the core of a heterotopic ecclesiology" (Wyller 2016b:56). This implies that the churches "reduces themselves become almost impossible" ("selv reduseres eller blir neste usynlige") (Wyller

and contrasted with the work of the British sociologist Keith Hetherington. In the article, I opt for Hetherington's understanding of heterotopia. This use underlines heterotopia as an alternative deployment of utopia, downplaying an understanding of heterotopia as a space with an inherent ethical quality. In the article, I identify Our Lady as a place where two such alternative utopian visions are acted out. The first is the ecclesiological ideal of the folk church as a church that understands the people as its subject (not object) and thus genuinely contextual to the culture and mother tongue of the common majority culture. However, the displacements that take place at Our Lady reveal that in practice, the folk church has a class bias: people living with different kinds of social marginalization are excluded from participation. Thus, a disruptive – or displaced – use of an ecclesial space like Our Lady is needed if, as folk church ecclesiology[114] holds, the "common" can be appreciated as the subject of the church. Building on Soja (2010), I call these kinds of justices "ecclesial spatial justice", "ritual justice".

The second kind of alternate ordering of heterotopia that occurs at Our Lady is directly related to the first. Whereas the first emphasizes the folk church as its starting point, the second is biblical. Whereas the first started in the intertwinement between common culture and Christianity, the second entails challenging perceptions of decency and social entitlement. The aspect of the empirical material that brings into focus Our Lady as a critical and deconstructive dimension is explored.

The article ends by pointing to how these two heterotopias challenge Foucault's understanding of the spatial construction of the differentiation between notions of the sacred and secular. To Foucault (1998), sacredness rests on maintaining a difference between private and public space. The article shows that according to the informants, experiences of sacredness lay hidden in the breakdown and destabilization of stable categories. This happens in the displacements of Our Lady. The article concludes by calling for an ecclesiological agonism. Rather than seeing sacredness as something that is separate from the secular, the practices of Our Lady may be seen as a space where sacredness comes into being through a deliberate and surprising deconstruction of previously compartmentalized places.

Returning at the end of the article to Wyller, I argue that heterotopic ecclesiology overinvests in the ethical potential of spaces and practices of counter-conduct. Wyller overlooks that

2016c:181). In other for this to happen, the marginalized other need not only be seen as recipients of benevolence, but as subject who act and speak for themselves.

[114] Folk church ecclesiology will be discussed in 3.3.8

Foucault (1998) categorizes both the colony and the brothel as examples of heterotopic spaces. Indeed, the colony and the brothel may represent an otherness that speaks back to and inverts dominant discourses. Thus, it is by no means clear that these spaces are spaces of liberation, empowerment or agency for the marginalized; indeed, they might be for white males who visit the brothel or are stationed in the colony, but not for non-white males and women of all complexions. The heterotopic space, in Foucault`s perspective, is thus as ethically ambivalent as homotopias. The ethical ambivalence of the heterotopia – kept hermeneutically open by Foucault – is transformed into univocally goodness in Wyller's heterotopic ecclesiology, by essentializing the heterotopic space as a space where the "other" becomes the subject.

Article III

"An ecclesiology of risk and ambivalence? An investigation of the implicit ecclesiology of the church of Our Lady in the light of the queer theology on kenosis of Marcella Althaus-Reid". Published in *Journal of Feminist Theology*. 2020. Vol 28, issue 2. Pages: 216-230.

This article takes as its theoretical starting point the queer appropriation of the theology of kenosis, particularly in the work of the Argentinian-Scottish liberation theologian Marcella Althaus-Reid. Althaus-Reid's queer kenosis has, in contrast to Wyller, no relation to diaconia or social work in general. Rather, it is a theology that theologizes power. To Althaus-Reid, the theology of kenosis is not only a theology that describes the life, death and resurrection of the second person of the Trinity. Rather, Althaus-Reid interprets kenosis as an epistemological self-doubting of the triune God by Godself Kenosis does not simply refer to the historical event of the incarnation, but to the continuing "questioning of God's own identity" (Althaud-Reid, 2003, p. 55). This self-questioning is brought about by various non-normative or counter-normative discourses like queer theology and postcolonial theology. Kenosis thus names the various critiques of theological and ecclesial constructions of normativity and organizational structures where this normativity is transmitted. A commitment to kenosis means to investigate and critique the ethical consequences of ecclesial structures and discourses of normativity for people who for some reason do not submit to heteronormativity. Althaus-Reid sees in the biblical motif of kenosis an opportunity for reimagining questions of identity and essence in theology. In a queer reading of kenosis, its liberatory potential is exhausted only when the emptying of identity is total and complete: God loses Godself in the act of kenosis.

Sarah Coakley's work on contemplative prayer is mobilized as a sub-theory (2006, 2002, 2001): Coakley uses a spatial vocabulary to envision the relation between God and the person in the act of contemplative prayer. The latter waits silently for the presence of God and to be filled with God. Transporting Coakley's metaphor from the individual relation of God-human to the public space of an ecclesial space, the article explores how the informants relate to emptying Our Lady of its traditional use of space, artefacts and practices.

In her work on contemplative prayer, Coakley underlines the (mental) spatial dimension of silently waiting for the presence of God and the need for humans to "cease to set the agenda" (2002 p. 34). In line with Althaus-Reid's (according to Hofheiz (2015)) rather bold queering of Coakley's work, I ask if a queering of Coakley's kenotic contemplative prayer can be transported from mental space to physical space and thus applied to an ecclesial/diaconal practice like Our Lady. The queering implies that the roles of who waits for whom is destabilized or even swapped: it is no longer only given that it is the human who waits for the presence of God. Rather, understanding a queer kenosis as an ecclesial practice can also imply to empty ecclesial space, practices and artefacts of traditional notions of decorum and entitlement. In the light of the two informant stories recollected and analysed in the article, the article asks if the manner of running Our Lady can be understood as an example of a kenotic ecclesial practice: an ecclesial practice where ecclesiological normativity ceases to be powerful.

Following Althus-Reid, one might assume that a queer use of Our Lady would entail a total emptying of Our Lady as a traditional ecclesial space. However, as the two stories of the article shows, this is not the case. What the informants appreciate about Our Lady is the continuing and constant mix of displaced and traditional use. The consequence of this playful use, according to the informants, is that more people feel welcomed. A total abandonment of traditional notions of ecclesial and cultural authority would entail that there would be less to redistribute.

2.5.2 The analytic process

Katlyn Tanner argues that the work of the theologian is essentially to "take responsibility for interpreting and organizing some section" (1997, p. 82) of the world commonly shared by believers and non-believers (see 2.4.2). In this PhD, the "world commonly shared" occurs as sections of the empirical material, theories of critical geography (Soja), theological theories (Lathrop, Althaus-Reid, Wyller and Tonstad), the embodied researcher and her embodied

presence in the research process. The three articles included in this PhD as well as chapter 3 of this text are the result of the researcher's efforts "to organize and interpret" some aspects of the empirical material in the light of the research questions and the theory chosen. However, as Goto reminds us, despite the presence of empirical material in this "interpretation and organization" of the word, the work of the theologian is not to pretend to invite one's readers to "peer into" the lives of the informants (Goto, 2018, p. 156). The aim of this section, 2.5.2 is to be as transparent as possible with regard to the numerous methodological and epistemological choices which the presentation of the empirical material is constituted by and filtered through.

Alvesson and Kärreman metaphorically describe theory as "a lens" for seeing some aspects of the empirical material (2011:34), whereas Alvesson and Skölberg describe theory as a "repertoire" for the interpretation of some aspects of the empirical material (2008, p. 492. The former indicates particularity, whereas the latter suggests a broad scope, perhaps even beyond articulated consciousness.

Embarking on the fieldwork, liberation theology and Wyller's Foucault-inspired work on heterotopic space constituted my articulated conceptual apparatus of the PhD proposal. In addition, feminist theologies have always been a core interest of mine, forming part of my initial "interpretative repertoire" (Alvesson & Skölberg, 2008, p. 492).

However, during the fieldwork, it seemed more and more apparent to me that liberation theology and Wyller could not accommodate the ambiguity of spatial displacement, which seemed so prevalent in parts of the empirical material. This impression was strengthened when retuning from the fieldwork and engaging with the transcribed interviews in the process of thematic coding (Gibbs, 2007; Hardy & Bryman 2014). Coffery and Atkinson (1996) observe that coding is not a mechanistic process. It might involve theory, even if this is not (yet) systematically applied (Coffery & Atkinson, 1996, p. 26). During the coding process, it became apparent that the lenses that liberation theology and Wyller's and Foucault's theories supplied me with were unable to adequately tend to questions of the simultaneity of spatial subversion/maintenance, the uncomfortable intertwinement between liberation and repression and the profound ethical ambivalence of spaces dedicated to social work. Above all, questions regarding the potential impact of the displacement of sacred space and secular space seemed to hover in the background. Toiling with the transcribed empirical material, "displacement" and not "space" surfaced as the driving force behind the impact of Our Lady on the informants.

This acknowledgement does not mean that the work of Wyller and liberation theology was "wrong". It does not even mean that my initial "repertoire" for analysis was not conducive or was to become constitutional to the very outcome of this PhD. It was more the case of what Tveitereid describes as a "gap between worlds" of the metatheoretical level of theological theories and the muddles and complexities of concrete empirical material (2018, p. 52). Wyller's work on heterotopic diaconia was indeed used, even though it was reduced to just one among several theories (see below). If one is to articulate the process of ascertaining why I found what I found, is it fair to say that the category of epistemological justice (3.2.6) as an empirical finding would possibly not have occurred as a finding had I not had a prior commitment to the importance of questions of epistemology in theology, an insight gained from my interest in theologies of liberation. My interest in feminist liturgy and the politics of representation of feminist theology sensitized me to the possibility of articulating Our Lady as an alternative and performative theological representation (3.2.8)

This constant move back and forth between engaging with the empirical material and searching for adequate conceptual framework fits the process of *abduction*. Both Alvesson and Kärreman (2011) and Coffery and Atkinson (1995) emphasize the role of surprise and new discovery in abduction. Abduction is not only a "fine-tune or explanation of earlier theory. It is, at heart, an attempt to re-think conventional wisdom and challenge dominating theories" (Alvesson & Kärremann, 2011, p. 59). The process of finding the theories that I ultimately utilized was not straightforward. I read extensively to try to detect relevant conceptual frameworks.[115] In addition, the question of *how* the relationship between theory

[115] In the PhD process, I have also worked with other conceptual frameworks which ended up not being visible in the articles. I spent a substantial amount of time the first year (2013-1014) of the PhD scholarship working with the scholarship of heterotopia and theories of space, like Henri Levfervre (1990) and Kim Knott (2005). I rejected such theories as the only theoretical perspective, because the empirical material triggered me to move in the direction of displacement of space, not only space itself. Susan Sontag`s argument regarding art critique, that "in the place of a hermeneutics need an erotics art" (1990 p. 14 ) sensitized me to experiential and performative dimension of Our Lady. I explored if Shechner`s concept of "restored practice" (2015:160) could help me to understand Our Lady as both a practice of being church and at the same time, a being church as a meta-practice and how this simultaneity is communicated as a embodies experiences in the act of placing one`s body inside the physical frames of the space of Our Lady. During the process of initial analysis in 2014-2017, one of the theories which was explored but rejected was the performance theory of American performance theorist Richard Shechner (1988, 2015) and Marvin Carlson (2004). (For a discussion on the use of performance theory in empirical ecclesiology, see Wigg-Stevenson 2014 pp.156-166). At the time of the mid-term of the PhD in 2016, the theology of the queer kenosis of Marcella Althaus-Reid was singled out as the only conceptual framework. Kenosis as an over-arching approach was later abandoned and became one article among the three. At the mid-term evaluation, Geir Afdal challenged me to explore theories of materiality. Looking back, this is an advice I should have followed to a larger extent than I have done. If I had followed this advice, the PhD could have looked very differently, and – to a larger degree – would have been able to theoretically accommodate Our Lady as materiality. (One may, perhaps, see traces of Afdal`s challenge in the poetic post-script, chapter 5.) I am also indebted to *Precarious life* (2006), *Frames of war* (2010) and *Notes towards a performative theory of the assembly* (2015) by Judith Butler. Although Butler is not considered among the explicit theoretical interlocutors

and empirical material is negotiated became far more important than I had anticipated. In all articles, dominating theories are challenged by aspects of the empirical material, which leads to new theoretical contributions. Thus, all three articles can be seen – on an overaching basis – as examples of using abduction as an analytic strategy.

The three theories that proved most useful at the time of writing were the liturgical theology of Lathrop, the queer kenosis of Althaus-Reid and the heterotopic diaconia/ecclesiology of Wyller. These were selected because they all – in different ways – address questions of social brokenness, the simultaneity of subversion/maintenance and displacement. These (and Tonstad) became my theoretical "lenses". According to Tveitereid (2018), the role of a theoretical lens is to help the researcher "see" the empirical material. Articulating both the initial repertoire for interpretation and the particular "lenses" that I ended up using is a way of being accountable to the reader by being transparent in order to let the "reader see how the researcher see what he or she saw" (Tveitereid, 2018, p. 42). This point highlights the role of theory as a way of both seeing and not seeing other aspects of the empirical material that would have come into focus had other theories been used. A different researcher with different theological interests or a different professional or education background would not only have ended up with different empirical material after the fieldwork, but would in all likelihood have opted for different conceptual frameworks and thus ended up with different readings of the empirical material of this PhD.

In the first article (Gunnes, 2016, PhD article I), I engage with Gordon Lathrop's theory on liturgy as juxtapositions and broken symbols and allow this theory to enter into a dialogue with aspects of the empirical material. My hunch when reading Lathrop's *Holy people* (1993), *Holy ground* (1999) *and Holy things* (2006) was that the concepts of "broken symbol" and "juxtaposition" resonated with core topics in the empirical material: *something* was being hermeneutically broken in the practice of Our Lady, *something* was juxtaposed with something else. Nevertheless, submerged in the empirical material, I was unable to articulate, neither empirically nor theologically, the impact of this brokenness and juxtaposition. Even though there was an empirical convergence, the encounter between empirical material and theory seemed at first meaningless, even destructive: a deductive use of Lathrop quickly runs

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of this PhD, her work on "dispossession" as an existential-political category has been immensely important as "nurture for the thought". During the process of writing this PhD, I have worked with questions of ecclesial dispossession and displacement in non-academic performative practices, like *Prayers to Allah* (2014), *May I wash your feet?*, *Herre du har skapt meg/livet mitt jeg gir deg/ta meg/me too* (2017), *Homage à Pussy Riot* and *ADretterdigheten* (Oslo Cathedral, 2019).

into problems. When engaging deeply with the empirical material, I could not detect any kind of liturgical practice that could be said to live the role and meaning attributed to the ordo by Lathrop. In addition, many of the informants who spend a substantial amount of their time at Our Lady articulated that they were not particularly interested in the liturgies, even the space of the liturgy – the sanctuary building itself - was seen important. Diverse, conflicting and disputed discourses of normativity surfaced in the interview material, but none of them seemed aware or reverent of the structure of liturgy outlined by Lathrop's main normative interlocutor, Justin Martyr. Where liturgical practices were mentioned by informants, the emphasis was on liturgy as practices of mourning for deceased guests or on individual candle lighting. This lack of interest made me initially reject Lathrop as a useful theoretical conversation partner. The turning point came when I was able to make explicit the particular epistemology with which I was approaching Lathrop. Explicating my own epistemology made it possible to ask if it was possible to imagine a different use of Lathrop. Even though Lathrop presents his theory as a general and normative theory on liturgy, it does not have to be read this way. Rather, it may be used pragmatically, as a sensitizing device for highlighting certain aspects of the material.

Reading Susan Sontag's (1990) essay "Happenings: The art of radical juxtaposing" renewed my confidence in Lathrop's basic assumption: the potential existential power of placing two things next to each other. However, Sontag's text reminded me of how this hermeneutical device is also found in expressions of art, like surrealist performance art in the case of Sontag's essay. Juxtaposing Lathrop's and Sontag's understandings of" juxtaposing" made it clear that the former under-communicates how the elements that are juxtaposed in liturgy are to a large extent domesticated due to the duration and position of the liturgical tradition as a mainstream performative expression. Compared to the wild juxtapositions of surrealist performance art described by Sontag, no one is surprised by the juxtaposing of weekday and weekend in the organization of the Christian liturgical calendar. Reading simultaneously Sontag, Lathrop and the empirical material stimulated me to explore what would happen if "juxtaposing" as a fundamental principle of creating meaning in liturgy was contextualized on to empirical contexts where the kinds of juxtaposing that take place are shocking and disturbing.

Following Wigg-Stevenson (as presented 2.4), I tried to envision the relationship between the empirical and Lathrop as a creative and contested conversation between the theoretical and empirical material. Thus, the mismatch between Lathrop's notions of the importance of

liturgy and the informants' stress on ecclesial space became a source of theological theory building:

> [A] new category emerges: the imprint of the celebration of the Sunday service and the occasional offices in the shape of a space that is culturally and religiously significant and valuable to the informants. (….) In Our Lady, Lathrop`s fetishizing of the *current living assembly gathering* for ordo is *itself* broken against residuals of collective memories of *assemblies having gathered* in a particular space across the centuries. (Gunnes, 2016, PhD article I p. 87).

The conversation between Lathrop and the informants widens the scope of the elements considered valid or relevant. One example is that the memory of past assemblies having gathered for decades – codified in the folk church ecclesiology – becomes a novel liturgical element that can be juxtaposed with contemporary celebrations of the ordo. This echoes Fulkerson's warning: who gets to define what is considered "theological"? (2011, p. xi). Paraphrasing Fulkerson in the context of Our Lady, what is the use of the ordo if one's main goal for the day (and every day) is obtaining the next dose of heroin or keeping an impulse of suicide at bay? Limiting the normativity of history to Justin Martyr's description of the ordo – as Lathrop does – proves to be far too narrow in the light of the lives of the informants. When asking for the normative status of history in contexts of social marginality like Our Lady, very different versions of history surface from those events considered of relevance to liturgical studies. To the informants, the visceral knowledge of past belonging represents a potential for present-day belonging, even if their faith claims are unarticulated and non-cognitive. Indeed, juxtaposing takes place in Our Lady; however, the juxtaposing of the social brokenness of life on the street and church space is not, unlike the juxtaposing of Lathrop, tamed by the familiarity of liturgical tradition, but rather is shocking and surprising. A conversational theological epistemology produces new knowledge on how a theory on liturgy is challenged by social brokenness and the ecclesial attempt to respond to this brokenness.

In the second PhD article, Gunnes 2017, I facilitate a conversation between the empirical material and different participants in the Foucault-derived theory complex of heterotopia. I discuss similarities and differences between two theories of heterotopia, presented by Trygve Wyller and Keith Hetherington, opting for the latter. I then deductively analyze the empirical material in the light of his understanding of heterotopia as an alternate ordering, arguing that Our Lady can be understood as an alternate order both in relation to ecclesial space and street space. In this article, the role of theory as a sensitizing device becomes apparent: Hetherington supplies me with categories of systematically discerning unarticulated hunches when reading and categorizing the empirical material. At the end of the article, I point to a weakness in Hetherington's theory: he does not pay attention to questions of religion or

notions of sacredness. I then turn to Foucault in order to ask how the theory and the empirical material address the role of sacredness in creating an alternate order. My conclusion is that the empirical material pushes Foucault's understanding further, by not complying with his notion of *difference* between sacredness and secular as heterotopic.

Gunnes 2020 (PhD article III) has a similar structure. There I undertake an in-depth reading of two interviews on how the spatial displacement of Our Lady facilitates a re-negotiation of the personal and ecclesial possession/dispossession of agency and power. These two interviews are brought into conversation with biblical scholarship on kenosis, particularly Marcella Althaus-Reid's theology of queer kenosis. As in Gunnes 2016 (PhD article I), this conversation produces an empirical surplus that Althaus-Reid's theory cannot accommodate: the informants are not interested in an absolute dispossession of ecclesial agency and power. Such a void of power would render Our Lady useless to the most marginalized of its guests by becoming undifferentiated compared to the secular space of the street:

> In order to become an inclusive community, it has to offer *spaces and practices which marginalized people want to be included in*. Redistributing access to spaces and practices as a means of creating justice is highly paradoxical because it inevitably also means reproducing societal norms ('a sacred space is a place of cultural esteem') *and at the same time* destabilizing this norm by making people who are not held of high esteem in Norwegian society the prime guests of the very same space. In this perspective, Our Lady is a profoundly ambivalent act of kenosis of discourses of normativity and resistance to the same discourse. (Gunnes, 2020, PhD article III, p. 228).

As in Gunnes (2016, PhD article I), framing theology as a conversational enterprise pushes kenotic theology into further kenosis: even the dispossession and the deconstruction of ecclesial and social normativity become a theological comfort zone when people who are dispossessed of material goods and justice ask not for the evacuation of power, but rather a *fairer distribution of power*.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have described the methods used for creating the empirical material of this PhD. I have also described ethical considerations, especially regarding the fact that I was known beforehand at Our Lady by some of the informants. I have tried to describe in as much detail as possible the epistemological status of the empirical material (epistemology) in theological work and to be transparent concerning the analytic strategies applied to it. In the analytic process, I have tried to – following Wigg-Stevenson – envision the relationship between the empirical and the theoretical as a conversation where neither theory nor empirical material is allowed to triumph *a priori*. Especially in Gunnes 2016 (PhD article I) and Gunnes 2017), (PhD article II), I note how the empirical material contains a surplus that cannot easily

be contained by the given theory. *Contra* Adams and Elliot (see 1.4.3), I found the lack of traditional ordo at Our Lady or the lack of complete spatial kenosis relevant and even constitutional for the attempt to respond to the research questions, as this response is articulated in the articles and chapter 3 of this text. The "radical failure" (Wigg-Stevenson, 2015, p. 4) of correspondence between theory and empirical material becomes an occasion for theological re-imagination. Spickard's (2016) fear – that the theologian will impose "theology" on the informant who does not name God or any other religious motif – overlooks that when doing theology, not only as normative apologetics but as a science, a negative result is also a result. A negative result may even be a much more interesting result than a positive one. Indeed, as shown in Gunnes 2017, (PhD article II) and Gunnes 2020, (PhD article III), the *lack of* coherence and correspondence between the empirical material and ecclesiological imaginations became not the demise of theological reflection, but the midwife of theory creation and of making sense of the empirical material.

The aim of this chapter has been to highlight how to write theology through the use of empirical material does not imply, as argued by Goto (2018, p. 156), inviting the reader to peer into "lived life", in this case the community of Our Lady. Rather, the written result – the three articles and this text – is filtered through ethical, methodological and epistemological choices that are made both consciously and unconsciously. As a researcher, I am both privileged to and responsible for making these choices. These choices can be disputed and would probably be handled differently by other researchers.

3: Discussion: Analysis and discussion

3.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter of the PhD is a discussion of the findings of the three articles. The chapter thus aspires to respond to the research questions already presented in 1.1.:

RQ1: What are the social impacts and theological meanings of displacements in practices of diaconia?

RQ2: What kinds of possible implicit and contextual ecclesiological imaginations may be discerned from diaconal practices of displacement?

By doing so, I hope to contribute to articulating a diaconal theology (3.2) and diaconal ecclesiolologial reflections (3.3).

3.2 Analysis and discussion: Towards a diaconia of displacements

In the following sections (3.2.1–3.2.6), I first recapitulate the empirical findings of the three articles, aiming to respond to RQ1 by showing how a displaced use of ecclesial space, practices and artefacts can foster a variety of types of justice (3.2.1-.3.2.6). I then discuss how these findings can be articulated as a theology of displacement (3.2.7) and displacements in diaconal practices can be seen as a contribution to the theological discourse on practices of representations in liturgy (3.2.8). I end the chapter by discussing conundrums and dilemmas (3.2.9–3.2.13) in the use of displacement in diaconal work.

3.2.1 Our Lady as a space of justice

In Gunnes 2017 (PhD article II) and Gunnes 2020 (article III), I draw on the terminology of the late American critical geographer Edward Soya and his work on spatial justice.[116] Spatial justice is, according to Soja, “a demand for greater control over how the spaces in which we live are socially reproduced wherever we may be located” (2010, p. 7). Spatial justice is an operationalization of social justice. It pays attention to the specific ways in which the spatial arrangements of cities and local communities are stakeholders in creating justice and injustice,

[116] The reference to Soya is explicit in Gunnes 2017 (PhD article II)

inclusion and exclusion. In this study, the empirical focus is not the city plan, but a specific place in the city, namely a historic sanctuary building, the Church of Our Lady. In the articles, I have used the concept of "spatial justice" to analyze how the informants articulate the impact of the work of Our Lady, work that is characterized by displacements of space, practices and artefacts. In the typology presented below, I outline, clarify and to some extent modify the kinds of justice presented in the articles.

3.2.2 Our Lady as ecclesial spatial justice[117]

In principle, all Lutheran congregations in Norway (and all other churches) are open, public spaces and thus accessible to all. However, decorum and tradition prevent people living with different kinds of marginalization from being part of church communities (Fulkerson, 2007; Kim & Shaw, 2018; Reynolds, 2008). United States (US) ecclesiologists who address the question of the relationship between ecclesial space and social exclusion like racism, point to Martin Luther King's words, "We must face the sad fact that even at eleven o'clock on Sunday when we stand to sing 'In Christ there is not East or West', we stand in the most segregated hour for America" (King, quoted in Sechrest, Ramirez-Johnson & Yong, 2018, p. 3). Although this quotation does not explicitly refer to the European socio-political landscape, it eloquently highlights that *who has access to which ecclesial spaces* is a function of extra-ecclesial (that is, social, racial, political and economic), conditions of justice and injustice.

In Gunnes 2017 (PhD article II), I articulate ecclesial spatial justice as one of the core outcomes of the displacement of street and ecclesial space at Our Lady. In Gunnes (2016, PhD article I), one guest, Anders, attests that the openness of Our Lady – to "let people in" – demonstrates how the church "accepts other people" than those who are able to adhere to standard procedures of liturgy and behaviour within an ecclesial space. Ecclesial spatial justice is grasped most poignantly in a quotation from an employee informant in Gunnes 2017 p. 59 (PhD article II) telling a story that serves as one of the constitutive narratives of Our Lady's formation in its current shape. In his early days as a street priest in Trondheim in the early 1990s, he was sitting on a bench outside Our Lady. A member of the drug community in Trondheim approached him and asked: "Is there space for me in your house?" The street priest was bewildered by the question. At first he thought that the man was asking to move in with him and his family. He then suddenly realized that the man was referring not to his private home, but to his professional home, the sanctuary space of the Lutheran church. To

[117] In article III this kind of justice is referred to as "ecclesial justice". However, ecclesial spatial justice is a more precise use and is the term that I will be using in the following.

the street priest, the question became a powerful means of critical truth telling about the relationship between marginality and access to sacred spaces. He realized that the theologically correct answer to the question was to reassure the man of the inclusive character of any Christian community. However, this answer would empirically be untrue, according to the experiences of the man. This insight is reinforced by numerous other experiences and stories from street ministry: one of the street ministers narrated a story of how a woman refrained from entering the church building to take part in the Sunday service, because she noticed that her clothes did not abide by the dress code of the other congregants (see Gunnes, 2017, p. 58, (PhD article II)). The street priest deducted two insights from these stories. First, people living with different kinds of marginalization are effectively excluded from participation in traditional Lutheran congregational life. Second, there is a longing among many people living with different kinds of marginalization for access to ecclesial spaces and liturgical practices. These two insights articulate the experience of an ecclesial spatial injustice that people living with different kinds of marginalization suffer. Such injustice is added to the various kinds of injustice and experiences of exclusion that follow as a result of living with active drug abuse, alcoholism, poverty, mental illness and other kinds of marginalization.

The ecclesial spatial justice of Our Lady is not the result of merely extending its opening hours, in the sense that the doors of the ecclesial space are physically open for larger periods of time than approximately 10.00 to 12.30 on a Sunday. Rather, as shown in the articles, ecclesial spatial justice is a result of three deliberate choices that together facilitate a displacement of street and church space. First is a commitment to practices of inclusiveness, in the extensive practices of hospitality. Examples are access to a free and clean toilet, a counter with free coffee and tea, openness to people who want to lie down in the pews, food served every morning, meals served on Thursday and Saturday and friendly volunteers (and possibly other guests) who have time for a chat. Second, ecclesial spatial justice entails a spatial rearrangement of the ecclesial space which dethrones the pulpit and the high altar as centre of the space. The high altar normally stands out as the spatial focus and structuring principle, spatially exalting the professional agents while ensuring that the lay participants remain a collective, anonymous mass, spatially confined to the pews. Instead, the cafe area (next to the entrance) and the spatial centrality allocated to the lighting of the candles on the cobblestone space allows for a diversity of uses of the space. Eating, drinking coffee, chatting, kneeling down to light a candle throughout the day or participating in the liturgical practices

of midday prayer or the Thursday service are all equally welcomed and sanctioned activities. The Thursday service is not celebrated at the high altar, but in the cafe area. Thus, even inside the sanctuary space itself, common weekly liturgical practice (often the Thursday service) is displaced from where one would expect to find it and instead situated in the same space as that for social and nutritional needs (the café area), where a small table with a simple white tablecloth serves as the altar. Third, combining openness and hospitality with a low ratio of professional employees and the use of non-professional volunteers provides for a renegotiation of power and agency in ecclesial space.

Ecclesial spatial justice can be operationalized as several related yet distinct aspects, summarized as follows.

3.2.3 Our Lady as liturgical justice

A different yet related kind of justice produced through the displacements is liturgical justice (Gunnes, 2016, PhD article I; Gunnes, 2017, PhD article II). This kind of justice can in particular be found in the innovative insertion of elements of funeral liturgy and memorial ritualization into common weekly Thursday services. Thursday services that include a memorial aspect are thus at the same time an ordinary Thursday service and a liturgical space of commemoration of the deceased. The result is a hybrid liturgical practice.

The empirical background of this liturgical innovation is the experience of the employee informants that guests living with abuse are often excluded from taking part in traditional funerals.[118] Creating a hybrid liturgical space can thus be seen as a ritual practice that is sensitive to the specific injustices and marginalization to which people living with drug abuse and other kinds of vulnerability are exposed when in mourning.[119]

Liturgical justice can also be found in other practices at Our Lady, especially the great prevalence of candle lighting on the cobblestone cross-shaped altar on the floor in the middle of the church. The practice combines the materiality of traditional Christian rituals (i.e. candles, the spatial location being a church), yet to a greater extent than in traditional mainline liturgy, it represents a tacit act that invites a personal agency that is hermeneutically open-ended and lacks an authorized verbal interpretation. In addition, the act has a collective

[118] The reason for this is twofold. Several employee informants spoke of the explicit and deliberate will of the family of the deceased in excluding the friend in the drug-using community from attending. In other cases, it may be the result of a lack of ability to organize oneself and travel to the place of the funeral.
[119] Further research on this aspect of liturgical justice might benefit from scholarship on the politics of rites of mourning and memory (see Athanasiou, 2017; Butler, 2006, 2010).

dimension in the sense that all the candles burn together throughout the day. This aspect of liturgical justice is mentioned in Gunnes (2016, PhD article I), but the great importance of candle lighting to many of the informants requires further research on the impact of liturgical justice.

3.2.4 Our Lady as facultative justice

This kind of justice refers to a wide range of practices, policies and organizational arrangements in Our Lady. What they share is a commitment to allowing guests to make a personal contribution to creating community, fellowship and care. The contribution might be great, small, real or even a source of frustration of other guests, hosts or employees. Facultative justice means to foster and welcome the personal imprint of guests (and sometimes hosts) who in many other areas of life are deprived of a space to show their talents and abilities as caregivers and as members of a community who support each other. It is important to remember that the people who constitute the category of "guest" at Our Lady are, according to the guests and host informants, viewed as "idiots and freaks" (Gunnes, 2016, p. 85, PhD article I).[120] The abundance of derogatory terminology when describing the social status of guests highlights the socially subversive nature of allowing *these* people to show their abilities and talents.

This kind of justice is mentioned in Gunnes 2017 (PhD article II) and elaborated further in Gunnes 2020 (PhD article III). In the former article, street priest Vidar narrates how the liturgical practices of Our Lady become a stage for people to participate with their musical or artistic skills, like playing the guitar or reading a poem, which is important because many people do not have other arenas to display their talents. The latter article provides an in-depth reading of one of these guests, Anne, who due to her reduced cognitive abilities would easily be confined to the boredom and loneliness of her apartment. Instead, by being a member of the Our Lady community, Anne is given (or rather takes) a space to exercise her relational and preaching skills. Anne uses the socially legitimate and professionally sanctioned opportunities available to use her talents, such as by taking part in Open Microphone (an almost monthly event where all are invited to share their artistic talents or thoughts with the community) or

[120] "Scum" is another word that the guest informants used to highlight how they have been described by people who oppose the manner in which Our Lady is run. One host noted how he is scorned by friends for being a volunteer at the "drug church" (not cited in the articles).

vocally lighting candles during the midday prayer by telling aloud for whom she lights candles and why.[121]

Both Open Microphone and the midday prayer are staff-initiated and staff-led activities. However, the facultative justice of Our Lady also has a less staff-facilitated dimension. As I describe in Gunnes (2020, PhD article III), the uneven ratio of guests compared to employees allows guests to enter into social roles as carers for other guests. The uneven ratio is strengthened by the fact that a number of guests, especially Norwegians living without drug abuse, spend a substantial amount of their daytime (and sometimes during the night-time, in the weekends) at Our Lady. In addition, Our Lady practises an inclusive policy of volunteering, which means that the line between the categories of "guest" and "volunteer" is blurred. This means that guests are able to affect the social environment in ways that surpass the control of employees and hosts. In fact, experienced guests become carers of newer guests. Examples of this hybrid position as guest-as-carer is that several of the adult or older guests of both genders narrate with great sensitivity and warmth what it means to them to be able to perform acts of kindness to other guests. These acts might be listening to another person who need to talk, lighting candles with a stranger or giving a cup of coffee to a new guest. These acts of care do not occur because an employee allows a guest to act as a carer or monitors the care given. Rather, such acts happen because there is a need for welcome, to be given a cup of coffee, someone to talk to, someone to introduce new guests to the practice of candle lighting. Most of these acts of care would not happen if the guest were unprepared to act out of his/her assessment of the situation, because there are at all times more guests than employees/hosts in the room. During the weekend night shift, the space is entirely run by guests and hosts. Guest agency *is not only encouraged, but presupposed.* Thus, even though the organizational structure of Our Lady formally differentiates between "host", "guest" and "employee", one may argue that the specific manner of running Our Lady nurtures guest agency to the point of turning guests into pastoral counsellors and liturgical agents.[122]

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[121] In the Norwegian article on Our Lady *Hvem er folkekirkens folk* (2014) (not part of this PhD), I investigate more fully the role of Open Microphone through an in-depth reading of an informant's narration of participating and its impact on him. The article suggests that social-liturgical practices of facultative justice should be regarded as diaconal rites of passages of folk church liturgical practice. By doing so, the folk church can start to remove the privilege enjoyed by middle-class and heteronormative life as the structuring principle of the liturgical rites of passage offered by churches.

[122] This agency is strengthened by informants who interpret this agency as an "affectional privilege of the marginalized" (Gunnes, 2017, p. 62, (PhD article II)). This does not imply a romantic discourse on the moral supremacy of the marginalized, but rather the observation that guest agency does not only include personal empowerment, but also care for people who are materially much better off. In article III, I call this "existential justice".

Our Lady as facultative justice is an example of how empirical studies challenge established scholarship by pointing to the existence of new practices. In liturgical theology, Ninna Edgardh (2001) reflects on the feminist agency of the figure of Mrs Murphy developed by liturgical theologian Adrian Kavanagh. The formation of the movement of feminist liturgy and the ordination of female clergy have allowed woman to become agents of liturgical innovation in fundamentally new and innovative ways. The Mrs Murphy's of 2020 have risen from the pews and today perform multiple leadership tasks. The concept of facultative justice points to the possibilities of hybrid positions between pulpit or pew. Our Lady is an example of what Mrs Murphy rising from the pew may look like if she does not aspire to enter the priesthood because she is limited by an extensive amphetamine addiction or because her cognitive abilities are reduced due to longstanding alcohol abuse. What if Mrs Murphy (or rather *Miss* Murphy) wants to rise from the pew, but lives with a cognitive disability that confines her social life to the boredom of a worn-down municipality housing facility flat? How to theologize on her rising from the pew if she simultaneously defers gendered social norms for decent sexual behaviour, as a woman selling sex to finance her drug habit (and possibly that of her boyfriend)? Hybrid liturgical positions can be performatively *constructed into being* through spatial displacement and liturgical innovation, creating possibilities that are not planned or even intended, but that come into being through the unconventional and non-normative use of traditional materiality and sanctuary spaces. Such practices point to a space between sitting (mostly) silently in the pew and formal leadership (clergy), as a space of agency in the sacred space/liturgy for people who are neither traditional congregants nor aspiring clergy. Practice thus points to possibilities that surpass and transcend traditional liturgical scripts of agency.

3.2.5 Our Lady as material justice

By material justice, I refer to Our Lady's ability to redistribute material resources, like food, warmth and a place to sleep. The term can also apply to the distribution of information, like knowledge of how to apply for work or how to contact the social security office (NAV).

Some Norwegian guest informants living with drug abuse highlighted Our Lady as a place of access to food and a warm place to sleep. For international guests without rights in the welfare state, such goods are of monumental importance, as they constitute some of the very few

sources available by which to improve their living conditions, which often consist of sleeping in a car, at the local train station or in courtyards[123].

However, among employee informants, this aspect of the work is contested. Although there is no doubt that the practices of hospitality (like free food) are constitutional to Our Lady, their status and role is ambivalent. One employee informant captured the dubious role of redistributing material goods at Our Lady, making it clear that from a staff perspective, it is the redistribution of access to a particular space (a culturally prestigious sanctuary space) and the creation of a community that is accessible to all that really exists at the heart of Our Lady. Without this space and the formation of a common community, the diaconal work of Our Lady would consist of volunteers who supplement the social services of the welfare state for people who already have access to these social services on the basis of having Norwegian citizenship. Both in 2011 and 2012, the annual reports applied similar wording regarding the need to clarify that Our Lady is an open church and not a food station, not a place to sleep permanently and not a health clinic. However, as articulated both in these and in later annual reports, this standpoint represents a problem because of the actual needs articulated by guests "for food, a bed for the night, for health care". To these needs, especially those of the non-Norwegian guests, there are "no good solutions [for these needs] in our city" (2012, p. 1) and the unmet needs make visible the "fracture in the welfare system" (2013, p. 4).

The question of Our Lady as material justice is thus a contested and difficult topic. On the one hand, Our Lady has never claimed to be a place of material justice. Its material redistribution is meagre compared to people's actual needs. On the other hand, the need for material justice is painfully real, as articulated by informants and acknowledged in the annual reports. One may call this friction a "diaconal delay" between identity and social reality: one plans and anticipates for the present situation according to one's past experiences. However, social action (like Our Lady) is submitted to unknown future events.[124] This difference between the construction of plans and identities based on anticipation and the execution of such plans and identities in an unforeseen future can be conceptualized as a (possible) *diaconal delay*. A striking example of a diaconal delay is the difference between the early

[123] Many of the international guests are Romanian citizen of Roma cultural background. For an introduction to the lives of Roma beggars in Oslo, see the CCM rapport *Folk fra Romania som tigger i Oslo"* (2007) *(People from Romania who beg in Oslo*). See also Rasmussen 2019.
[124] Examples are the (then future) long-term consequences of the financial crisis in 2007 and the event of Romania joining the European Union (EU) in 2007. This meant that Romanian citizens as EU citizens could now travel without an additional visa to any country within the Schengen Area.

documents from Our Lady like KÅK (2007) and the findings of this PhD. In the former documents, any anticipation of non-Norwegian guests – with basic needs that are not covered by the welfare state – is absent. This absence is remarkable compared to the centrality of the question in later reports and the importance of Our Lady to these guests, as documented in this PhD. This finding of a diaconal delay should not be lamented or regarded as an example of “failure” of diaconal practice. Rather, a diaconal delay can be seen as an act of fulfilling one of the missions of the CCM: “to detect violations, injustice and distress” (see 1.5.2). In the case of Our Lady, the church’s uncompromising openness to the reality of the streets has allowed it to detect and make visible unmet material needs that would not have otherwise come to the attention of the CCMT as an organization or the individual hosts.

3.2.6 Our Lady as epistemological justice

The final dimension of social justice found in the empirical material engendered by the displacements of Our Lady can be called “epistemological justice”. The recipient of justice in this category is not the marginalized guest, but a more abstract entity, like “the believer” or even theology itself. In Gunnes, 2016 (PhD article I), several of the informants pointed to how the practices of Our Lady spur theological reflection regarding the relationship between the Christian faith and marginalization. One guest informant attested that giving someone a “cup of coffee” or “to cover a human being who is freezing with a blanket” is to fulfil the commandment to “love thy neighbour” (Gunnes, 2017, p. 62, PhD article III). Other hosts pointed to how the work of Our Lady is “faith in action”, in contrast to institutional religion as nothing but “a pile of liturgy and hymnals” and where money is spent on grand occasions where people who are socially marginalized are absent. (Gunnes, 2017, p. 62, PhD article II). One employee informant narrated how the wounded Christ becomes visible in the actual and visible presence of wounded people. The employee referred to the parable of Matthew 25 to scripturally document how Jesus privileged the social location of marginality as a space of epiphany (Gunnes, 2017, p. 63, PhD article II). One of the street priests pointed to how the noisiness and clamour of Our Lady enables one to experience the social context where the Gospel was first preached: just as people shouted *Kyrie Eleison*, lamented their sorrows and were possessed by demons, Our Lady is a space where marginality is visible and articulated (Gunnes, 2017, p. 64, PhD article II). Due to the specific relation between marginality and the life of the incarnated (and thus vulnerable and embodied) God, one host exclaimed “That’s sacred!” when narrating how the practices of Our Lady allow the cold to warm their fingers, and giving someone a friendly smile (Gunnes, 2016, p. 83, PhD article I).

These findings demonstrate how the informants conceptualized guests not only as recipients of diaconal practices, but as epistemological resources for reimagining and rediscovering the radicalism of the message of the Gospel. According to the informants, the interpretative and liturgical practices of the Christian tradition have gentrified the Gospel. Thus, the noisiness and messiness of the guests of Our Lady de-gentrify and thus sensitize a contemporary ecclesial practice to the historical context of Jesus and the radicalism of his message. This echoes the idea of an epistemological privilege of the marginalized formulated by liberation theologians (Stålsett, 2000). Epistemological justice is thus the justice of which the Gospel is in need and that the behaviours and life stories of the guests bring about through their non-compliance with conventional behaviour in an ecclesial space.

3.2.7 Towards a diaconia of displacements

The aim of this section is to aggregate the different kinds of justice spelled out in 3.2.2–3.2.6 and to attempt to theologize on the use of displacement in diaconal practice. In subsequent sections, I address paradoxes, dilemmas and conundrums in this kind of diaconal work (3.2.9–3.2.12).

Jan Olav Henriksen argues that it is not adherence to dogma or a canon of sacred texts that constitutes Christianity, but a “cluster of practices” (2019, p. 87). By doing so, Henriksen integrates – as a theologian – “the turn to practice” found in other fields of the study of religion (Ammerman, 2007; McGuire, 2008). A theological understanding of Christianity as diverse, plural, contextual and conflictual practices, as argued by Henriksen, brings into focus the theological impact of – small or great, intended or not – changes and alterations in how practices are performed. As Henriksen notes, from its very beginning, Christians have used their religious tradition – the Jewish religious and cultural tradition – in ways that reinforce the practices of the past (like the Jewish Passover celebration). However, at the same time, these practices underwent alterations in order to hermeneutically accommodate Christians’ own situation, the belief that Jesus was the Messiah. Memory is thus not a matter of nostalgia, but a reservoir of interpretive resources for making sense of the present (Henriksen, 2019, pp. 95– 107). There is, as Henriksen notes, never one exclusive way of practising Christianity, but a multitude of competing and conflictual practices, some of which are formalized as “official” and others which as non-authorized practices challenge official practices (2019, p. 92).

Drawing on ritual theorist Catherine Bell, Norwegian feminist theologian Jone Salomonsen (2009) discusses the creative and innovative use of ritual practices, noting that intentional and non-authorized ritual practices represent a strategy of empowerment for people in

marginalized life situations. Salomonsen highlights how the innovative use of traditional elements represents a communal and culturally grounded method for strengthening the status of the individual as part of a historical collective. Ritual innovation should thus be seen as an example of social innovation, which harbours the potential to increase the agency of those involved as either ritual planners, performers or participants (2009, p. 18). To a greater extent than Henriksen, Salomonsen highlights the emancipatory potential of deliberately making alterations to traditional religious and cultural material and how ritual innovators may understand themselves as positioned within a religious tradition and community, even though their innovative practice challenges traditional forms.

Our Lady's innovative displacements are not confined to ritual innovation in a narrow sense of the word, as in the research of Salomonsen. However, one may argue that the various kinds of justice described above are a result of the creative use of the material and ritual resources of tradition and culture. A displaced use of these resources allows Christian practices and their material artefacts like space (in this particular case, a church space) to become vehicles of social justice and potential social and individual transformation. A diaconia of displacement is thus, like ritual innovation, a culturally sensitive diaconia, drawing from the repertoire of local and traditional sources of meaning. Such cultural sensitivity facilitates the mobilization and provision of cultural, religious and liturgical resources to hermeneutically replace the individual spatially and liturgically: living a life with active drug abuse, living outside the paid workforce or living with mental health challenges no longer mean spatial and ritual exclusion from culturally, aesthetically and religiously prestigious buildings. Displacements contain the potential not only for surprise and bewilderment due to the hermeneutical rupture that occurs, but also the social replacement of the individual. A culturally sensitive performative diaconia may potentially facilitate rehearsals of the cultural and social replacement of the marginalized persons.

The justices of Our Lady can be said to be examples of the competing and conflictual uses of the practices of the Lutheran, culturally grounded Norwegian church. The simultaneous reinforcement and subversion of ecclesial tradition of a diaconia of displacements described above can be articulated as a hermeneutics of polyfidelity towards the construction of "ecclesial tradition". Our Lady remains *inside* the ecclesial tradition, yet what it does when it remains inside the tradition represents a (partial) break with social and ecclesial conventions. Our Lady both *is* and claims to *be* a Lutheran church, but what Our Lady *does* when it makes this claim and performs this (rightful) identity differs radically from what usually takes place

in traditional Lutheran churches. This non-subversive relationship to tradition is paramount because it is this relationship that enables Our Lady to become a performative response to the question, "Is there space for me in your church?" (Gunnes, 2017, p. 59, (PhD article II)). Nevertheless, without a break with how a traditional Lutheran parish church is run, the answer cannot be answered affirmatively: To answer "Yes, there is truly space for you in my church", displacements have to take place. Thus, Our Lady is faithful neither *only to tradition* nor *only to not-tradition.*

This simultaneous reinforcement and alteration of tradition means that official ecclesial tradition is not only a source of normativity; official ecclesial tradition must also be subverted and used in an unconventional way if its liberatory potential is to be unleashed and exhausted. This potentially entails a destabilization of who and what is entitled to represent "tradition". A diaconia of displacement detects how an unconventional use of religious artefacts and motifs can become means of justice and combatting marginalization. A diaconia of displacement will thus practise hermeneutical polyfidelity, marrying neither a need to be authorized by official church tradition nor seeking and remaining in an outsider position. It therefore practises what one may call a normativity of polyfidelity.[125] A normativity of polyfidelity means to trace its line of inheritance not only to scripture and ecclesial tradition but also to irreverent and controversial uses of ecclesial tradition by agents who understood themselves (and were understood as) both inside and outside the ecclesial tradition. Establishing a relationship of polyfidelity to authorized ecclesial tradition as one of many normative sources of contemporary diaconia means that when writing the history of diaconia, the history of heretics is potentially just as relevant as the history of the offices held by ordained/authorized persons of a conventional maintenance character (diacons or priests) or individual Christians who would remained loyal to authorized ecclesial tradition. Thus, if one were to write the history of a diaconia of displacement, both the official church history and the ethically motivated unconventional use of religious artefacts and motives are to be regarded as equally valid and relevant archive material. Examples of the latter are individual Christians who practised and practice justice and care extremely radically or within an organizational manner that could not be recognized by the official church hierarchy, like the Reformation revolutionary Thomas Munzter (Hägg, 2008) and the Dutch beguines (MacNamara, 1996). Developing a trajectory of a history of diaconia that understands ecclesial tradition as equivocal, conflictual and contested means seeing the diaconal potential of agonistic friction over questions of

[125] The term is borrowed from Tonstad as the practice of "faithfulness to multiple discourses" (2017, p. 7).

representation, normativity and authenticity. Scriptural imagery of interest to a diaconia of displacement is thus not only Jesus as servant and his ministry towards those presented in the scriptures as “the poor”. Indeed, scriptural resources are just as much narratives where authority, authenticity and representation are renegotiated, like the washing of the feet of the disciples during the performative and hermeneutically significant rupture of the Jewish Passover meal (John 13:1-17).

3.2.8 A diaconia of displacements as a diaconal liturgical representational practice

Whereas Our Lady as liturgical, spatial, facultative and material forms of justice refer to possible modes of reducing the marginality of the church’s guests, epistemological justice (3.2.6) refers to re-imagination and critical reflection. It takes place when the scandalous nature of the Gospel is rediscovered through forming a community of people who do not abide by traditional norms of codes of conduct and live with pervasive marginality. Understanding the displacements of ecclesial practices, artefacts and space as occasions of epistemological justice means that it is not only people in marginalized life situations who are the recipients of justice, but that theology and the church itself are in need of and thus recipients of justice. The practice of displacing ecclesial practices, artefacts and space performatively destabilize conventional practices of theological representation, in this case how the church occurs to the world (how a church is run; what kinds of opening hours it has; what kinds of activities are facilitated, tolerated, condoned, welcomed or celebrated and so forth) and the result of such choices, that is, who comes and who does not. Such questions are not a matter of logistics, but are deeply theological and anthropological: what is at stake is the way in which the material, performative, verbal and ritual representations of the belief in Jesus are intertwined with questions of access to, lack of or redistribution of various forms of power.

The hermeneutical-political relationship between theological representation and the distribution of power is a question that has been addressed by feminist theologians and theologians of liberation in recent decades across different denominations and in a wide variety of cultural contexts (Althaus-Reid, 2000; Eriksson, 1995; Kyung, 1990; Ruther, 1993; Salomonsen, 2002). The feminist theological critique of the representational practices of traditional liturgical language insists on the human-made and thus political nature of theological language, even when this language poses as elevated above human social and gender differences. It warns of the ethical, political and epistemological dangers of univocal over-identifications between a liturgical language and one gender, status or concepts, often

sanctioned by practices of ecclesial/liturgical authorization. Such over-identifications infringe upon the absolute transcendence of God by collapsing literal descriptions and metaphors and making God appear as gendered as a male. More importantly, when ecclesial traditions and liturgical practices establish a "a too cosy" relationship between the divine and one gender or certain concepts and communities, it is "time to pass out the crash helmets" (Boesel & Keller, 2005, p. 4) for all those who for some reason (e.g. female, disabled, Black) possess bodies and experiences or belong to social groups that are not seen fit to represent God. Marcella Althaus-Reid argues that the feminist critique of traditional religious liturgical language is in fact obscene, because it uncovers the inherent misogyny of conventional Christian practices (Altahus-Reid, 2004).

Feminist theological engagement with theological representation, is, however, not only a matter of critique, but also of constructive suggestions and re-imaginations. These constructive suggestions of gender-inclusive language make use of a diverse set of sometimes internally contested strategies but share a commitment to moving beyond a traditional patriarchal language (Beckman 2001; Gudmarsdottir, 2010; Ruether, 1993; Salomonsen, 2002; Slee, 2011; Thomassen, 2008).

Drawing on the discourse on representational practices in feminist theology, I argue that the use of displacement in ecclesial practices can be epistemologically discerned as a specific kind of theological representational practice. In this perspective, the epistemological justice that potentially emerges from displacements is thus not only a social technology for responding to marginality, but also a hermeneutic device that unsettles questions of politics of representation in theology. What is at stake in Our Lady, however, is not, like in feminist theology, first and foremost a critique and re-imagination of the gendered asymmetry of Christian liturgical practice, but the social status of the marginalized person and how she or he is perceived by society. Understood as an intervention in the representational practices of theology, the displacements of Our Lady is an example of a practice that renegotiates the relationship between theological epistemology, marginality and representational practices. Philosopher of science Bruno Latour articulates the epistemological potential of displacements, when reflecting on the experience of holding a broken statue of the Pietà in his hand:

> Take for instance this small and humble *Pietà* coming from the Museum of Moulins in France. Protestant or later revolutionary fanatics (or may be vandals), have decapitated the Virgin's head and broke the limbs of the dead Christ (…). An iconoclastic gesture, to be sure. But wait! What is the dead Christ if not another broken icon, the perfect image of God, desecrated, crucified, pierced and ready to

> be entombed? So the iconoclastic gesture has struck an image that has already been broken (Latour, 2010, p. 92).

Latour's reflection articulates a politics of (mis)representation inherent in the Christian narrative through a tactile and aesthetic experience. The Pietà statue with all the limbs of Mary and Jesus in place was created to represent the biblical persons and be an object of reverence and piety. In all likelihood, the non-broken statue was considered capable of fulfilling its task as a vessel of representation. If not, why would the "Protestant or later revolutionary fanatics" bother to destroy it? Nevertheless, as Latour observes, the Christian God is a "desecrated, crucified" God with a body "pierced and ready to be entombed". This means that it is first when the statue itself is submitted to (in this case, violent) displacement that the statue reaches its full potential as an image of Christ. Its full potential as a representation of Christ may thus only happen after displacement has taken place, when reverence replaced by vandalism and material finitude replaced by dismembering and fragmentation. Seeing the destroyed Pietà as "the perfect image of God" implies a displacement of authority from the conventionally authorized to a person who inhibits an outsider position, in the vocabulary of Latour called a "revolutionary fanatic". Parables like Matthew 25 and the violent death of Christ may thus not only be seen as scriptural and historical events, but epistemological impulses to articulate a politics of representation that continually eclipses claims of finitude on the correct organization of ecclesial practices and ecclesial spaces. To paraphrase Latour, the perfect icon is a perversity, because it lures believers into fantasies of invulnerability, *performatively* denying the ontologically constitutive vulnerability of both the human person and, because the Christian God is an incarnated God, Godself. The broken icon is thus the perfect icon, because it performatively protects the freedom of God against claims of representational finitude. Thus, nobody – and no liturgical/spatial/figurative or conceptual representation – owns God. Paraphrasing Althaus-Reid's claim (see above) that the feminist critique of patriarchal representational practices is obscene because it exposes the misogyny of traditional Christianity, one may ask if the obscenity of the epistemological potential of the displacements of Our Lady is not the fact that the male guests urinate on the outer walls of the church or that used condoms are found in the church toilet. Rather, the obscenity of the epistemological justice of Our Lady is that traditional ecclesial practices have tamed and even obscured the scandalous nature of some of the Gospel narratives and shrouded the provisional and metaphorical nature of all religious language

Ecclesial practices that perform and cultivate various forms of representational brokenness, like the displacements of Our Lady, can be seen as a performative theology that commits to imperfection as a fundamental ontological condition of both the human person and God as incarnated and crucified. Our Lady may thus not only be regarded as a diaconal practice, but also as a destabilzation of traditional practices of theological representation. Discerning the practice of Our Lady as a theological statement regarding the representational politics in Christian theology is nevertheless a matter of articulating the potential of the particular manner according to which Our Lady is run. This means that diaconal practices should not only be discursively framed in the scholarship of diaconia as “Gospel as practice”, “the Gospel of hands” or “the social practice of the church”, but as a robust intellectual endeavour that provides valuable insights for the discourse on theological representation. Practices like the church of Tøyen, the street services of the Oslo CCM and Our Lady should thus be studied as contributions to the discourse on representational critiques of traditional theology raised by theologies of liberation.

3.2.9 Dilemmas and conundrums of a diaconia of displacements

As Henriksen holds, practices are communal (2019, p. 33). This means that the potentiality of displacements in diaconal work is intimately related to the social status of ecclesial space/ritual practices in wider society. One may argue that in contexts where religious spaces and rituals are historically and culturally tied to a majority culture, the diaconal potential of such displacements is greater than in contexts where ecclesial and ritual practices are seen as the emotional and cognitive choice of the individual. In the latter case, the commitment of the individual to the displacement may be greater, but the public audience – the onlookers – and the social capital at stake in the displacement are more diffuse or even lacking. The specific context of Scandinavia, with its symbiotic intertwinement of a church and majority culture, is thus a grateful context for subversive and innovative ritualization and spatializatian as a diaconal strategy.

However, to feed on this symbiotic intertwinement between a majority culture and a church as a diaconal practice is layered with conundrums. First, in order to be a source of ecclesial spatial justice, one may argue that Our Lady needs to spatially and liturgically maintain and reproduce itself as a culturally valuable and sacred space. Diminishing or exhausting this status would devoid Our Lady of its capacity to redistribute something that is culturally and socially seen as valuable. Nevertheless, at the same time, the practices of hospitality and the subsequent displacements of space, practices and people following in its wake challenge

traditional notions of what a prestigious sacred space is supposed to look like and what kinds of activities are supposed to take place there. One guest quoted a passer-by who visited Our Lady during the common Saturday lunch, when the community is seated around a common table to enjoy a big meal: “Excuse me, is this a church or a restaurant” (Gunnes, 2016, p. 85), (PhD article I)). Our Lady is run in an alternative manner, but if the alternative use (the displacements) deviates from conventional use to such an extent that the space is no longer publicly recognized as a sacred space, its potential as source of ecclesial justice may be weakened. Negotiations over where to draw the line between what is appropriately alternative in order to be hospitable and – at the same time - avoiding no longer being recognized as a “church” runs through the interview material.

Second, one of the disturbing findings of this PhD is the presence of racism at Our Lady, exercised by guests with Norwegian citizenship towards guests of other nationalities. As pointed out by one Norwegian informant, the guests who experience the greatest burden of stigmatization and hostility are not the Norwegian drug addicts, but the Roma informal workers (Gunnes, 2016, p. 85), (PhD article I; see also the Annual report of 2013)). This finding is also apparent in the empirical material not cited in the articles and confirmed through engagement with guests during participant observation.

The risk of using an ecclesial building layered with cultural history, local identity and historic value in diaconal work is that such use is dependent on imaginations of community and belonging that are constituted by cultural identity. A question of extreme importance in diaconal practices that feed on notions of tradition and identity is to hermeneutically establish a place for the foreigner or cultural other in imaginations of community and belonging. This applies especially when these practices constituted by national and cultural specificity. One example of this is how the street priest theologically detaches “church” and “Norwegian culture” by framing any church building as “a house of God the creator” (material not cited in the three PhD articles). By doing so, the church is hermeneutically framed not only as a place of cultural and religious heritage for those who can trace their ethnicity and culture to the region of Trønderlag and the country of Norway. By discursively decontextualizing the church as a space that transcends cultural tradition, the street priest theologically establishes a normative ground for extending the practices of hospitality and legitimate belonging not only to those who can trace their family inherence within the borders of the Norwegian state, but also to foreigners. By discursive producing “God” as creator, the first article of the Nicaean Creed – God as the creator of all – is mobilized to de-essentialize the identity between

natives’ entitlement to tradition (and its material manifestations, like churches) and Christian faith. Such hermeneutical strategies are paramount in order to hermeneutically include the non-Norwegian guest.

The dilemmas outlined above point to the hermeneutically messy and politically charged context in which diaconal displacements take place. Given their performative and public nature, such displacements depend on public recognition in order to “work”. However, a dilemma occurs when diaconal agents (like the CCM Trondheim) exercise their work in contexts where sentiments of entitlement and cultural ownership that perceive the cultural other as an alien are rife. In such cases, the diaconal agents need to find and publicly voice hermeneutical sources in order to affirm the rightful place of the foreigner as a welcomed guest and not yield to a toxic intertwinement of national identity and Christian faith or bourgeois notions of social decorum and Christian faith. Diaconal displacements thus summons the immediate community of Our Lady (employees, hosts and guests) and the public to be competent and creative hermeneutical agents of discernment of the practice.

Third, the issue of material justice is a contested topic in both the interview material and the annual reports. Above (3.2.5), I pointed to the (partial) friction between mission and reality in terms of guests’ needs for material goods. To thicken the conundrum of the status of Our Lady as a site of material justice, one needs to recapitulate the formative context of the church. As described in the annual reports and the empirical findings (3.2.1–3.2.6), Our Lady aspires to be an open church that creates various kinds of justice by operating as a space for community building and liturgical experiences, through common meals and access to and participation in ecclesial space, social events and rituals. It does not aspire to stop people abusing drugs. The internal report by Maja Zachariassen grasps this: “We do not do help. We do something else. We talk to each other. We drink coffee together and we celebrate service together. We are together in a community and confirm each other as human beings” (2011, p. 8).

Such statements need to be read as discursive statements, formulated and practised by a diaconal organization, the CCM of Trondheim, operating in a country with a welfare state and engaged in work with people living with drug addiction since the early 1990s. As described in 1.5.5, Zacharissen’s report describes Our Lady as a “non-treatment zone”: “Everywhere in society, people living with drug abuse are expected to receive help or treatment. The church is a space where you can come as you are and receive a blessing” (2011, p. 17). Thus, the discursive distancing from practices of “help” and “treatment” is not the result of a lack of or

indifference to "help" or "treatment", but rather the experience that some of the guests of Our Lady are met with pervasive demands to change. Over a period of time, this produces fatigue. Our Lady thus navigates the hybridization of diaconia between ecclesial practices/ecclesial identity and social work by carving out a space that responds to the same social ills as the welfare state (like drug abuse and its social consequences). However, the shape of the response is not only to social maladies like drug abuse. It also responds to the (claimed) unintended consequences of the social work of the welfare state, that is, fatigue from the demand to stop using drugs.

However, as highlighted in 2.3.5, a delay occurs when the current social context of the work of Our Lady differs from the formative context. The geographical location of Our Lady is (as it has been for 800 years), the same. However, geographical context and social context are not overlapping entities. Rather, the relationship between these two contexts is malleable: through political and economic changes, the welfare state is no longer the only socioeconomic context of the guests Our Lady. The presence of migrant workers and Roma people living from informal work transforms the social context from the danger of treatment fatigue and the fixture of the helper-recipient relationship in social work to pervasive unmet social and health care needs. Thus, the map and the terrains no longer overlap: the response (of Our Lady) to the response (of the welfare system) now only partly overlap, because a number of guests are not entitled to the material and immaterial goods of the welfare system as they are not Norwegian citizens.[126]

The role of material justice represents a conundrum to practices like those at Our Lady. The openness of Our Lady grants it access to the "pulse" of the street and the on-the-ground consequences of global events like the financial crisis and EU policies of open borders within the Schengen Area. As recognized in the section on material justice (3.2.5), diaconal practices today face challenges that summons such practices to think beyond the nation-state as its ontological horizon. Obviously, the material needs of the non-Norwegian guests of Our Lady are beyond the financial and organizational capacity of the CCM Trondheim to solve. The need to acknowledge the friction of what I have called "diaconal delay" might facilitate a discussion of this conundrum. As demonstrated in 1.5.2, one of the three missions of the

[126] In the years after the field work had been carried out, the humanitarian standard for the Roma community improved when the City Council of Trondheim opened sleeping facility with access to toilets and showers for poor non-citizens. It is run by the CCMT and the Red Cross in Trondheim and financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice. In 2018, 91% of the guests at the sleeping facility are Romanian citizen. From 2018, the facility also offers vaccine against tuberculosis (Annual rapport of the CCMT, 2018). Similar facilities exist in other major Norwegian cities.

CCM is to “detect violations, injustices and distress”. One may argue that although this was not the initial goal of Our Lady, the church’s openness has become a powerful vehicle for detecting and bringing to public attention the distress and poverty of migrant workers and other international guests living from begging.

3.2.10 A diaconia of displacements and the question of instrumentalization

The central question still remains to be discussed. Does the work of Our Lady transform the ecclesial space, artefacts and practices from being means in themselves as religious practices into instruments for creating various kinds of justices? Is displacement a method of social work that makes use of the cultural, material and ritual resources available, or is displacement first and foremost a theological enterprise? In other words, is diaconal work that makes use of displacements an instrumentalization of cultural and religious material and immaterial resources that exploits these resources, or is it a performative mode of doing theology and being a church? Even more importantly, is the analytic lens of the diaconal scholar locked in a position of having to choose between these two options?

Before attempting to answer the question of instrumentalization, one needs to address the status of the question of instrumentalization. As pointed out in chapter one, an understanding of the scientific study of diaconia as a hermeneutical perspective regarding any kind of practice – independent of the theoretical reservoir of the practitioner – means that the diaconal scholar shares both an archive and an empirical field with scholars of other disciplines (Stålsett 2019). Our Lady as an empirical phenomenon is thus open to any kind of scholar who – for whatever theoretical or practical starting point – might find the place to be of research interest. Thus, the status of the question of instrumentalization in relation to Our Lady is dependent on the disciplinary affiliation of the researcher. For a researcher trained as a psychologist or social worker it is both reasonable and legitimate to ask for “best practice”, which in this case is a question of the efficiency of the displacements and the instrumental value of displacements in creating social justice. However, within the theological study of diaconia, the status of the question of instrumentalization is not self-evident, for reasons that will be discussed below.

One of the key theorists of diaconia in Norway, Kjell Nordstokke, has gone furthest in applying an economical language to diaconal practice, using the phrase “diaconal asset” (2012, pp. 93–107, 2014; pp. 215–225). The term describes the surplus value of social work within a religious context/religious affiliation *vis-à-vis* secular social work. Nordstokke argues that diaconal agents need to promote the value of diaconal practice by articulating the tangible

and intangible resources that diaconal agents possess. A diaconal asset gives agents of diaconia “comparative advantages” (Nordstokke, 2019, p. 221) in contrast to secular social work. Nordstokke claims not to promote a mere instrumental use of diaconia, “reducing them to mere instruments in the development business” (2019, p. 222). Rather, because a diaconia is faith-based, it “gives them [diaconal agents] an insider perspective and a profound awareness of shared identity, values and assets” (2019, p. 222). Nevertheless, Nordstokke does not explain how such an “insider perspective” insures against instrumentalization. Elsewhere, Nordstokke is more nuanced when it comes to the possible “assets” of diaconal organisations, pointing to potential hindrances that are particular to diaconal organizations (2012, p. 106) and making apparent that the underlying discourse of the asset terminology is related to accessing funding, especially with regard to international aid and relief work (2012, p. 106).

Svein Aaage Christoffersen (1998, pp. 78–88) addresses the question of instrumentalization in diaconal work from a historical point of view, arguing that it is of great importance in diaconal theology because it has deep roots in Norwegian diaconal and church history. According to Christoffersen, the highly influential pietistic inclination in Norwegian ecclesial life has privileged personal sanctification as a result of a process of cognitive and articulated personal confession and the act of repentance. This form of theology interprets “visible” and “earthly” consequences of Christian life as sanctification, both on a personal and a collective level. One result of this theology is the understanding that the moral superiority and the metaphysical truth of Christianity (and, in practice, the Christian lay male leader) converge.[127] As Christoffersen notes, the danger of such a theology operates on many levels. On a social level, such a theology leads to experiences of personal failure and failure as a Christian when one does not succeed in achieving the moral standard anticipated by the individual and her/his surroundings. Theologically, it conflates *sin* as a theological concept and social evils as a social/juridical/political concept, turning sin into a question of ethics.[128]

Applying this perspective to Our Lady, one may argue that the experiences of justice may be the *outcome* of Christian practices. However, such practices cannot be theologically reduced

[127] Christoffersen argues that the highly influential theologian and church leader Gisle Johnson is a proponent of this theology. Johnson also held formal positions in the early days of the CCM (then the Society of Inner Mission). See 1.5.2.

[128] “Christian faith (is not the) key to a successful life. Rather, Christian faith is, to use simple words, a Gospel for sinners. It is the praise song of the failures and the worship of the losers” (Christoffersen, 1998, p. 85; my translation. Norwegian text: «[K]risten tro er noe annet enn nøkkelen til et velfungerende liv. Kristen tro er, for å bruke noen enkle formuleringer, evangelium for syndere. Den er de mislykkedes lovsang og tapernes tilbedelse”.

to their (possible) effect. Rather, it is the practices themselves that are the intended result: to instrumentalize love of God and the neighbour is to bankrupt the practices of a transcendent reference point. By doing so, the act itself is undermined (Henriksen, 2019, pp. 34–35).

Although both Christoffersen and Henriksen argue against the instrumentalization of the religious in diaconal practices, neither argues against diaconia itself. Thus, the most radical conversation partner when it comes to the relationship between instrumentalization and diaconia is Haldor Hald (1907–1969), bishop (1964–1969) in the Church of Denmark and the general secretary of Kirkens Korshær (English: DanChurchSocial)[129] from 1946 to 1964. In his short book, *The offensive church (Kirken der forarger*),[130] Hald (1959) claims that churches should respond to social and economic marginality: social work is "the service of love and encounters us as a demand" (1990, p. 12)[131]. However, for Hald, Jesus' special relationship with people in marginalized life situations is not an ethical imperative to Christian individuals or the church as an organization. In fact, according to Hald, biblical texts do not support the (rather widely held) claim that the practices and proclamations of Jesus transformed the marginalized into non-marginalized. Jesus did not preach any method that the marginalized could follow in order to become less marginalized. He did not give advice and council that foregrounded "dependence on the power of the will of the individual or the persistence" (1990, p. 18[132]). Had the point of the ministry of Jesus been part of the year 30 CE version of social work of his local community, the Pharisees and the scribes would not have bothered to have him killed, because the Pharisees and scribes shares with contemporary diaconal agents a commitment to prevent people from becoming the contemporary equivalents of tax collectors and prostitutes. According to Hald, the reason why tax collectors and prostitutes gathered around Jesus was that he preached a different message from the

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«[K]risten tro er noe annet enn nøkkelen til et velfungerende liv. Kristen tro er, for å bruke noen enkle formuleringer, evangelium for syndere. Den er de mislykkedes lovsang og tapernes tilbedelse".

[129] Founded in 1912, Kirkens Korshær was transformed in 1929 from being an organization of inner mission to a diaconal organization working extensively in various kinds of areas of marginalization. https://kirkenskorshaer.dk/english, accessed 30.04.2020.

[130] Hald receives a fuller introduction than Christoffersen because he is less known in the discourse of diaconia. Indeed, the reference to Hald emerged from an employee informant. I was not aware of Hald prior to the interviews and have never seen a reference to him in contemporary diaconal Norwegian or Swedish discourse. A noteworthy exception is the non-academic semi-ethnographic book *Kroppens sug – hjertets lengsel*, in which the then-street priest in CCM Oslo Liv Rosmer Fisknes (1989) describes the establishment of Nadheim, a centre for women and men living with prostitution during the 1980s. Fisknes lists *The offensive church* as one of her inspirational sources (1989 p.228), but does not refer to the book in the body of the text. In 2010, the Danish Diakonhøjskolen in Århus, Denmark, issued a special issue to commemorate the publication of the book, see https://www.yumpu.com/da/document/read/18320579/download-temanummeret-her-pdf-diakonhjskolen

[131] Danish text: "kærlighedens tjeneste, som møder oss som et krav».

[132] Danish text: "beroede på dere egen viljestryke eller udholdenhed»

diaconal agents of his time, the scribes and the Pharisees. Jesus did not ask tax collectors or prostitutes to transform or improve:"[t]he Gospel can never be reduced to efficient means in the restorative work. This is not the word of the Gospel and it should not contribute to the idea that being a good citizen is the highest goal" (1990, p. 13)[133.] For Hald, the sacraments are the fullness of what the church has to offer the marginalized. In order to preserve the absolute radicalism of the Gospel, an ecclesial response to marginality and vulnerability needs to understand itself as dispossessed of any kind of service or practice that could otherwise be performed by secular agents, like the welfare state or other civic non-profit organizations. If the church wants to remain a Christian church and not become a Pharisaic church, it needs to remember the core of Jesus' message to prostitutes and tax collectors: the love of God does not depend on your ability to socially transform or receive help. Indeed, "[t]he more fragmented and shattered a human life has become (….) the more precarious it becomes to claim that the source of salvation is outside the human being" (1990, p. 75)[134]. To Hald, the best response to marginality that the church has to offer the world is to refrain from diaconia and devote itself exclusively to liturgical practice, the celebration of the sacraments and preaching. It is in the sacraments and the word where the radicalism of the Gospel is performed: the common sinfulness of all humans and the grace that everyone needs, without being compromised by the messiness of social work[135].

Having canvassed different positions with regard to instrumentalization in diaconia, it becomes apparent that there is a difference between posing the question as partly analytic and strategic on the one hand (e.g. Nordstokke) and as constructive Lutheran theology on the other (e.g. Henriksen, Christofforsen, Hald). Hans Stifoss-Hanssen and Lars Danbolt address this epistemological difference in their work on memorial services after tragic accidents in Norway (2007). Following Henriksen and Christoffersen, Stifoss-Hanssen and Danbolt hold that memorial services have – like art and culture – an intrinsic value in themselves. However, even though one might hold this to be theologically true, such a perspective does not supply them as diaconal researchers with a conceptual apparatus that allows them to code and

[133] Danish text: "Evangeliet kan ikke og skal ikke reduceres til et virksomt middle i gjenrejsningens tjeneste. Det er ikke evangeliets tale, at det højeste mål, hvortil det skal bidrage, er at blive en god samfundsborger».
[134] Danish text: "Jo mer slittet og søndret et menneskeliv er blevet (…) des mere nødvendigt er det, at frelsens tygdepunkt ligger udenfor mennesket selv».
[135] Writing 40 years before the publication of Marcella Althaus-Reid's (2000) ground-breaking book *Indecent theology: Perversions in gender, sex and theology*, Hald's Jesus displays similarity to her "unjust messiah" (2000 p.156): the Messiah who is larger than civil morality and who does not fit into commonly held notions of justice. Further research also invites for a critical discussion on the difference and possible similarities between Wyller`s heterotopic diaconia and Hald`s vision for diaconia as a – socially and politically speaking - non-emancipatory practice.

analyze how their informants articulate participating in memorial services (2007, p. 63). When interviewed, the informants revealed as important questions of impact, meaning and purpose. Stifoss-Hanssen and Danbolt thus argue that diaconal scholars need to develop a conceptualization that is able to affirm faith practices as irreducible to questions of effect (as Henriksen, Christoffersen and Hald). However, at the same time, diaconal scholarship needs to conceptualize how cultural and liturgical practices are mobilized as responses to sudden death and emotional pain. When such events happen, the researcher needs to be able to ask (even as a Lutheran theologian) how they affect the participants and if or what they find helpful (or not) in such responses. Diaconal theology therefore needs to conceptualize the question of instrumentalization in such a way that one may differentiate between understanding instrumentalization as an analytic lens (applied to empirical material) and as a core topic in constructive Lutheran theology. According to Stifoss-Hanssen and Danbolt, the diaconal scholar needs to develop an analytic framework that is sensitive and nuanced enough to transcend studying diaconal practice either "only" as an occasion for attracting more funders or as practices that exist beyond questions of usage, intention, impact and outcome.

One may add to Stifoss-Hanssen and Danbolt's observation that what is even more important to the diaconal scholar is the analytic awareness of how the difference between empirical and constructive levels may be creatively exploited by informants and theorists alike in the simultaneous negation and reinforcement of either level. This last point will be elaborated further in 3.2.11.

3.2.11. Instrumentalization and Our Lady

How then did the informants of Our Lady relate to the discourse on instrumentalization in diaconia? Using Nordstokke's vocabulary (see above), the argument put forward in 3.2.1–3.2.6. could be read as a response to Nordstokke's call for researchers of diaconia to articulate the "added value" of a diaconal practice like Our Lady. However, such a conclusion would compromise the complexity of the empirical material regarding the question of instrumentalization. The most pristine example of this is demonstrated in two quotations by one employee informant.[136] In the first, the employee informant underlines the importance of maintaining Our Lady as a non-secular sacred space:

> The day the difference between the park and the church space is levelled out…if there is no difference…that means the end of Our Lady. The effect it that you move from the park and inside the church space. If someone says that the church space is just as scared as an outdoor toilet, then Our Lady

[136] Both quotations are cited and discussed in Gunnes (2017, PhD article II) as part of a longer argument. However, the quotations contain distinct features and are therefore discussed in different sections.

> has no significance. Then it is uninteresting…Some weird volunteers warming up drug addicts. That's just a lot of nonsense. (Gunnes, 2017, p. 60, PhD article II).

According to the informant, the "significance" of Our Lady is not its ability to "deliver" one more social service. In fact, if Our Lady only consisted of "weird volunteers warming up drug addicts", its work would be "nonsense". The asset vocabulary of Nordstokke thus runs into difficulty when applied to this quotation, as the employee does not frame Our Lady as a particularly successful kind of social work. Rather, the quotation can be read discursively as a creative use of the trajectories of Christoffersen, Henriksen and Hald: *particularity* and *difference* compared to secular services are discursively highlighted. Indeed, according to the employee, Our Lady is *not* social work but a church, accounting for why the work has "significance" and is not "uninteresting". If this difference were to disappear, it would imply "the end" to the work of Our Lady.

Thus, a paradox occurs: empirically speaking, Our Lady shares plenty of characteristics with traditional (either first-sector or third-sector) social work, not parish work. Without the ecclesial space of Our Lady, many of the practices that take place here could (and do) occur within the structures of first-sector social work or in third-sector humanitarian-based social work. However, the employee underlines that Our Lady is a *church.* Framing Our Lady not as a "CCM run project for marginalized persons" but as a "church of care" is an example of a spatial replacement of a person. There may be, seen from the perspective of the CCM, good reasons for doing this: as the report by Maja Zachariassen holds, the spatial replacement may also be read as a social technology to potentially prevent people from over-identifying with the social role as client and treatment fatigue.[137] This concern was also raised in the annual reports of street ministry prior to the opening of Our Lady:[138] although some are in greater need of the practices of hospitality than others, Our Lady is formally and maintains itself as a historically prestigious Lutheran sanctuary building that is open to all inhabitants of Trondheim and features in tourists' booklets as a site to be visited in the city. However, it is (empirically speaking) obvious that Our Lady is not a traditional Lutheran parish church. If it were, there would in all likelihood be no drug addicts and no volunteers aspiring to relate to them. There is a paradox in the diaconal theology put forward by the employee in the quote above: the discursive level negates the empirical level.

[137] See 1.5.5.

[138] See also the annual report of street ministry in the CCMT (2007, p. 2).

One way of conceptualizing this paradox is as *apophatic diaconia*. The apophatic inclination in theological discourse is to recognize the inability of immanent finitude to contain the fullness of God. If it wants to be true to the transcendence of God, religious language needs to recognize the impossibility of speaking about God (Boesel & Keller, 2010). Apophatic diaconia can be described as a parallel paradox, the paradox of *negating in order to (attempt to) affirm* practices of diaconia. If one is to follow the logic of the employee informant, the potential of Our Lady to make a difference rests on the work *not* being conceptualized as (even admirable) social work. Rather, it needs to be understood as something else (in this case, *different* from the park and streets surrounding the church building as well as being *particularly* religious) in order to unleash its full potential and its surplus value compared to secular social work. Apophatic diaconia can be articulated as the discursive establishment of a space *beyond and outside* questions of "instrumentalization" and "asset", by maintaining that "we do religion, not social work" as the *greatest asset of diaconia.*

In sum, Nordstokke calls for diaconal agents to be more articulate about the surplus value that religious agents and the use of religious spaces, practices and artefacts may bring to social work. In light of the concept of apophatic diaconia, Nordstokke's call for the articulation of and even promotion of "religious capital" (2012, p. 106)[139] as assets of diaconal practices appears to be discursive risky business. The reason is that such articulating risks diminishing the driving force of apophatic diaconia: the need to avoid reducing the work into qualitative measurable units and to instead maintain that it belongs to a religious sphere, beyond questions of cause and effect. Stifoss-Hanssen and Danbolt (2007) argue that diaconal scholars should both conceptualize the psychological and existential impacts of participating in diaconal practices and at the same time appreciate a theological trajectory that understands religious practices as irreducible and non-instrumental. This study augments the positions of Stifoss-Hanssen and Danbolt by developing the concept of apophatic diaconia.

On a discursive level, apophatic diaconia echoes the diaconal theology of Hald. However, it is important to state that on an empirical level, Our Lady and Hald differ radically: Our Lady (and more importantly CCMT and the CCM in general) engages in many of the practices that Hald would probably have judged as a "bourgeoisization" of the Gospel, compromising its radicalism. However, on a discursive level, there is an overlap between Our Lady and Hald's emphasis on the particularity of the religious (in the latter's case, the love of God to all

[139] Norwegian: «den religiøse kapitalen».

sinners) as the greatest potential of diaconal agents when facing marginality. Another characteristic they share is their geographical location within the political frames of Scandinavian nation states with (in Hald's case, emerging) welfare states. It is thus an open question how the negotiation of the empirical reality and the discourse of apophatic diaconia would appear if the political reality of Hald and the employee informant were a weak or non-existent welfare state. It is difficult to see how it would be possible hold a position similar to that of Hald in the favelas of Buenos Aires or apartheid Soweto. Perhaps a diaconal theology that privileges the exclusively religious (in the case of Our Lady, sacred space; in the case of Hald, the love of God) can only be seen as a sound theological position within the socioeconomic context of a robust and stable first-sector social welfare system from which diaconal agents may take the liberty of discursively distancing themselves. To be subversive is not an inherent quality of a theology or practice, but rather a matter of social context; it is thus an open question if, outside such a particular socio-political context, the position of Hald fuels quietism and theologically sanctioned passivity.

3.2.12 Is "epistemological justice" an asset in diaconal practices?

The only time the word "asset" appears in the interview material is in a second quotation from the employee informant, arguing that whereas traditional church life has made decorum a key criterion for participation in ecclesial practices ("Be quiet", "Sit down and behave"), Our Lady is different:

> The Gospel speaks of people shouting *Kyrie Eleison*, have mercy on me. There is yelling, shouting, crying and unclean spirits *en masse*. The text speaks of noisiness and things that smell bad. All this is present at Our Lady (…) The people living on the street are our greatest asset (...) The day they no longer feel welcome and do not come here, Our Lady is finished. (Gunnes, 2017, p. 64, PhD article II).

In this quotation, it is not the particularly religious or sacred space that (as above) is at stake as an articulated "asset". The question is not whether Our Lady represents an asset in social work directed towards people living with drug abuse. Rather, an inversion takes place: according to the employee, guests living with drug addiction are an "asset" to Our Lady. The rationale is that the fetishization of decorum has epistemological consequences: understanding servility and "good manners" as the only ecclesially acceptable bodily posture of participants in liturgy lends itself to an epistemological dementia. This epistemological dementia, according to the informant, glosses over how Gospel stories are filled with people who did not behave accordingly. Thus, people who transgress the behavioural code are epistemological assets for rediscovering the radicalism of the Gospel.

The conceptualization of an inverted asset-informed language can be categorized as a version of epistemological justice (3.2.6). The category of epistemological justice attempts to articulate how informants point to the epistemological nature of the justice created by the displacements of Our Lady. This type of justice turns who is need of justice and how it can be provided on its head. Whereas in the other kinds of justices (3.2.1–3.2.5), people in marginalized situations are recipients of justice, epistemological justice entails that God – or the articulation of belief in God, like formulating a sermon, a liturgy or theology – is in need of justice. The reason for this, according to the informant, is that this articulation has been hermeneutically hijacked by cultural imaginations of decorum and readings of scripture that under-communicate the scandalous radicalism of the message of Jesus, as seen in the quotation above. Thus, epistemologically speaking, *the church cannot save itself.* As articulated in the quotation above, theology needs people of the street who misbehave in church to rediscover the scandalous messiness of the historical context of the Gospel.

There is a relationship between the discussion of instrumentalization and the particular religious (3.2.10) and epistemological forms of justice. If the purpose of the displacement were framed discursively as “social justice” and were conceptualized as a “diaconal asset”, thereby downplaying Our Lady as epistemological justice, the employment of displacements would be vulnerable to charges of instrumentalization. By discursively constructing Our Lady as an ecclesial practice that submits itself as a recipient of epistemological justice where the radicalism of the message of Jesus is rediscovered, Our Lady is positioned as the recipient of “epistemological work” carried out by its guests. This inversion of the asymmetrical relation of recipient/giver is perhaps the most subversive aspect of the diaconal/liberatory potential of a displaced use of ecclesial space, artefacts and practices. In this perspective, “epistemological justice” is not a variation of ecclesial spatial justice, ritual justice, facultative and material justice. Rather, epistemological justice can be seen as a “justice of justice”, because it potentially problematizes and destabilizes who is need of epistemological/theological salvation and the asymmetry of who helps who.

3.2.13 Is epistemological justice an instrumentalization of guests?

However, even though epistemological justice may prevent Our Lady from charges of instrumentalization, a final (and unconformable question) pertains to whether epistemological justice itself represents an instrumentalization of the guests. There is a fine line between the theological act of interpreting the guests as hermeneutical devices for rediscovering the radicalism of the Gospel and conceptualizing the misery of others as hermeneutical “raw

material" for theological reflection. Articulating the delicate nature of the difference between the two means to recognize that statements arguing that drug users are the "greatest asset to Our Lady" are ethically ambivalent. Read as a subversive statement, regarding experiences of marginality as moments of theological rediscovery and re-interpretation profoundly challenges common notions of asymmetry, status and entitlement. It places those traditionally regarded as social outcasts at the very centre of an ecclesial practice as hermeneutical agents of pivotal importance.

However, read as a strategical statement, such hermeneutical usage grasps how diaconal practices and the theological reflection that may follow in the wake of such practices (like the concept of epistemological justice and the writing of this PhD) are in need of discursive production of "the poor" in order to appear and be meaningful and credible. Theologically speaking, it might be true that the church cannot "save" itself, but rather needs to be "saved" by its guests. However, the question of who is saved by whom may also subvert the subversive, by asking if this represents an instrumentalization not of religious rituals and spaces, but of the guests. The uncomfortable question to the argument that diaconal practices redistribute epistemological justice to the church compels us to ask if such a perspective transforms the guests into extras in a theological enterprise which they never asked to be a part of and in which they may not be interested in[140]. It is an open question of this unsettled epistemological dilemma of theologies of liberation is more acute in theological studies which are empirically informed, because in such studies, "the poor" as the discursive product of the work of the theologian (like myself) converge with concrete and empirical persons.

3.2.14 Conclusion

In the subchapter of 4.2 I have argued that Our Lady is an example of a diaconia of displacement. According to my reading of the empirical material, creating such displacements

[140] A similar example is found in Dicken (2011), when he states that "God`s concern is with the weak, the sick, the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized, the homeless. Indeed, God is with those who are so often invisible, living under bridges or hidden away in remote wings of hospitals or nursing homes, refugees, exiles, the hunted, the rejected, immigrants, all who develop necessary skills in being both there and not there, an invisibly that mirrors the invisibly of God" (2011 p. 49). Does human "invisibly" really mirror "the invisibly of God"? One may argue that, despite noble intentions, Dicken conflates questions of epistemology in theological language with human political/social/economic/social precariousness. The consequence of such conflation is that the multiple sources of – and responses to – very diverse forms of human precariousness remain unaddressed or even acknowledged as a question separate and different from the question of theological epistemology in representation of the divine. One may argue that, despite Dicken`s affirmation of the centrality of the marginalized in theology, the marginalized end up as discursive "props" in an theological argument regarding the im/possibility of theological speech. Such use runs the risk of instrumentalizing "the poor" and thus perpetuates political/social/economic invisibility as lived and embodied realties far removed from discourses on the representational practices of the divine.

contributes to various kinds of justice. Displacements are created through a culturally unconventional use of an ecclesial building, its practices and artefacts. Our Lady thus represents a performative diaconia: its potential is found in the creative and unconventional use of an ecclesial space, artefacts and practices. Displacement is a culturally sensitive mode of diaconia that takes into account that in cultures where Christianity and the dominant culture are historically intertwined, “incorrect” or surprising uses of empirical expressions of Christianity as churches, liturgies and objects may facilitate the creation of various kinds of justice. Displacement is a communal and culturally grounded phenomenon that spatially and liturgically re-situates a person as part of a historical and cultural collective (3.2.7). I have argued that displacements potentially provide valuable insights to the discussion on theological representation (3.2.8).

Further, I have pointed to the dilemmas and conundrums (3.2.9–3.2.13) that such a practice implies, noting that the intertwinement between majority culture and church represents both a resource and an obstacle to inclusivity and hospitality. I have argued that diaconal practices that are placed physically within or that make use of the particularly religious can be called “apophatic diaconia”, in the sense that their greatest asset is access to discursive strategies that may make it possible to conceptually frame the work as something other than secular social work or help.

3.3. Towards an ecclesiology of diaconal displacements.

3.3.1 Introduction

RQ2 asks: *What kinds of possible implicit and contextual ecclesiological imaginations may be discerned from diaconal practices of displacement?* The question of ecclesiology is most prominent in Gunnes (2017, PhD article II) and Gunnes (2020, PhD article III). Recapitulating Ideström’s definition (see 1.4.2), implicit ecclesiology means “an understanding of what it is to be church (…) illuminated by an act of interpretation and analysis on various manifestations of the concrete church” (2015, p. 129). Thus, an implicit ecclesiology of any ecclesial practice does not understand itself as *the* true or *the* only possible ecclesiology that can be derived from empirical material. Rather, it is an act of interpretation carried out by the researcher. To borrow Wigg-Stevenson’s terminology, it implies an act of facilitating a conversation between various sources (2015, p. 2). Empirical material is one such source. The aim of the conversation is to respond to the question posed. Other implicit ecclesiologies may have been articulated had the analysis and interpretation

been conducted by a researcher guided by a different set of research questions and choosing other theoretical conversation partners.

Several scholars of diaconia have shown great interest in the question of ecclesiology, (Edgardh, 2019 (Fagermoen, 2018; Nordstokke, 2019). In this chapter, Gunnes (2017, PhD article II) and Gunnes (2020, PhD article III) will be critically discussed with the aim of articulating an implicit ecclesiology of Our Lady. I critique Trygve Wyller and Marcella Althaus-Reid for conceptually privileging the "emptying" of traditional majority culture ecclesial spaces and for overlooking their potential to be ambivalent and even subversive.

At the end of the chapter, Linn Tonstad is mobilized as a theorist who is able to theoretically and ecclesiologically appreciate the potential of an unconventional use of ecclesial space, artefacts and rituals. I attempt to outline the contours of one implicit ecclesiology of a diaconia of displacement. Such an ecclesiological imagination will address how imaginations of contextual and local folk church ecclesiology are challenged by places like Our Lady: the presence and visibility of guests may potentially empirically expand and epistemologically re-imagine who are members of the "folk" of the folk church as well as the theological consequences of such an empirically enlarged "folk".

3.3.2 A diaconia of displacements in critical dialogue with the ecclesiologies of Trygve Wyller and Marcella Althaus-Reid

The two articles in which the question of ecclesiology is most prominent derive their ecclesiologies from very different discourses: Trygve Wyller's heterotopic ecclesiology is grounded in Norwegian diaconal discourse (Gunnes, 2017, PhD article II), whereas the theology/ecclesiology of queer kenosis stems from the queer and postcolonial theology of the Argentinian-Scottish liberation and queer theologian Marcella Althaus-Reid (Gunnes, 2020, PhD article III). Given the argument put forward in PhD articles II and III, it is clear that the heterotopic ecclesiology of Wyller and the queer kenosis of Althaus-Reid provide valuable ecclesiological insights for ecclesial practices that renegotiate power and entitlement. However, as argued in the two articles, Wyller and Althaus-Reid ethically and epistemologically privilege the ceasing and emptying of ecclesial practices.

3.3.3. Is heterotopic ecclesiology the implicit ecclesiology of Our Lady?

The heterotopic church comes into being when the empirical church ceases to exist (Gunnes, 2017, p. 56, PhD article II). In subsequent texts on heterotopic ecclesiology, Wyller describes heterotopic ecclesiology as a church that comes into being when church ceases to be in control and its practices turned over to the marginalized (Wyller, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c).

(Wyller 2016c). As a result, the “other” become the subject of the space and is “empowered” (2016b:54) and “can speak” (2016b:55).

There are several issues with this argument in relation to Our Lady. In the light of 3.2.1-3.2.6, one may argue that Wyller over-invests in the ethical potential of a ceasing of spaces, artefacts and practices of traditional religious practice. First, as argued in 3.2.9, an erasure of Our Lady as an authorized and claimed Lutheran sanctuary space (a culturally prestigious space, a religious space) would radically diminish Our Lady’s capacity to redistribute justice. Second, an implicit ecclesiology needs to take into account the ambivalence of practices of social work and the kinds of agencies it produces. A heterotopic ecclesiology runs into difficulties when encountering a guest like Anne (Gunnes, 2020, PhD article III). Anne is a highly appreciated member of the community of Our Lady, despite her cognitively reduced capabilities. For her, Our Lady is a space of increased agency, enabling her to create a hybrid position between pulpit and pew. However, in depth engagement with the empirical material reveal that Anne’s agency in Our Lady rests on her ability to socially position herself a *philanthropist*, sharing her economic resources out of her goodness. However, the economic reality behind this social repositioning is that Anne is using her meagre social benefit income to finance the alcohol and drug habits of many of her friends. As a result, Anne is often out of money herself, forcing her to beg from her equally economically marginalized fellow guests at Our Lady (including the researcher). Being a guest at Our Lady renders Anne vulnerable to economic exploitation by other, primarily male, guests. Her presence at Our Lady is thus both a source of agency and empowerment and of continuing deprivation. With Anne’s story in mind, one needs to recognize the messy, multi-layered, complex and at times internally contradictory nature of agency and exploitation, justice and injustice and the difficulty in - empirically speaking - singling out spaces where the “subaltern [can] perform a hidden transcript and can speak” (Wyller 2016b:55). An implicit ecclesiological imagination of Our Lady needs to accommodate this complexity[141].

3.3.4 What if Our Lady really were to become a kenotic ecclesial space?

In Gunnes (2020, PhD article III), I discuss and problematize – and reject - a queer use of kenosis as a metaphor for a implicit ecclesiological imagination of Our Lady. However, it is

[141] Wyller states that the empirical foundation of heterotopic ecclesiology is weak, by admitting that his fieldwork is “modest” and that “[a] more ethnographically solid research would, of course, require a lot more (…)” (Wyller 2010b: 53). One may argue that the empirical finding of this PhD proves him correct in assuming that a more in depth engagement with the empirical context modifies aspects of heterotopic ecclesiology.

of course possible to imagine what Our Lady might look like if it really were to become an kenotic church. One way of interpreting this is to imagine that the enforcement of norms (ecclesial, liturgical social, ethical) were abandoned altogether. In several countries, former churches are turned into bars,[142] nightclubs[143] or private homes.[144] However, in a kenotic perspective, this move is not radical enough, because in such cases, the agent of the traditional ecclesial normativity of codes of conduct has merely been replaced by agents that operate according to other normativities, like commercialization or privatization. Rather, the kenotic gesture implies to (totally or gradually) abandon agency. An abandonment of agency on behalf of the ecclesial agent may be grasped in the ecclesiological metaphor of the "church as servant" (Dulles, 2002). Ecclesiologist Avery Dulles reminds ecclesiologists that the historic reality behind servantship points to a position of complete dispossession: "the first characteristic of a servant is that the servant lives in someone`s else`s house, not his own" (2002, p. 88). If one takes seriously historical servantship as a social, sexual and economic position of server marginality and disempowerment, imagining Our Lady as a kenotic space would mean to imagine the sanctuary space as a space where the church as liturgical/intellectual/ethical practice and organization is no longer at home in the building that are conventionally called "churches". If the harsh reality of historical servantship is to inform the theological use of "servanthood" as a metaphor, this means that to metaphorically imagine the "church as a servant" does not metaphorically describe a church that is in a position to choose to tend to the needs of the marginalized. If one really is a servant, one does not get to choose whom to serve or how. If one – either as an individual or as an organization – is in a privileged position that allows one to choose if, how and when to respond to the needs of others, one is not experiencing servanthood. When ecclesiology metaphorically claims a position of "servanthood" while maintaining a privileged position of choice, the precarious live condition of historical servants is concealed. If the church really is a servant, metaphorically speaking, it means that the church can no longer live in the sanctuary space as an owner, but as a house servant who can be exploited and/or evicted without being given any reason at any point, living at the mercy of the whims of the mistress and the sexual desires of the master. In other words, as complete kenosis of Our Lady means that the ecclesia no longer

[142] https://www.thechurch.ie/ and https://matadornetwork.com/read/churches-turned-breweries-bars/, accessed 11.02.2020.

[143] http://coclubs.com/the-church/info/, accessed 11.02.2020.
[144] https://mymodernmet.com/converted-church-houses/, accessed 11.02.2020.

owns its own embodiment, Our Lady as a sanctuary building. Rather, the ecclesia lives in the sanctuary building of Our Lady as somebody else's house, a house that somebody else owns.[145] This is indeed a radical ideal. The question is: What would Our Lady as a kenotic church/servant-church that does not-own its own space look like? Imagining Our Lady as an uncompromisingly kenotic space of servantship, one would have to imagine the removal of any kind of agent of decision making, authority of accountability or organizational ownership. Our Lady would be a roofed extension of the park outside, organized and monitored entirely by its guests. In this way, Our Lady would truly become a servant of the diverse and conflicting micro-agents that exist far beyond the control of staff or rules. Some of these micro-agents – like traditional masters of servants – would be kind masters to the space and treat it well. Justices as yet unarticulated and unimagined by this researcher would take place. Some would exploit Our Lady's servanthood. Judging from one the critical aspects raised in the empirical material, an example of the possible exploitation of Our Lady as a servant might mean that Our Lady would become a servant of xenophobic sentiments and verbalization against Roma guests.

3.3.5 Towards an ecclesiology of a diaconia of displacement

As much as Wyller's and Alhaus-Reid's ecclesiologies in different ways represent valuable sources for reflecting ecclesiologically on some aspects of the empirical material from Our Lady, a diaconal practice that places displacement at the heart of its mode of work requires other conversation partners in order to articulate an implicit ecclesiology. An implicit ecclesiology of Our Lady can only be articulated with the help of a conceptual framework that is able to encompass the fact that even though the reality of the streets is welcomed into the ecclesial space, Our Lady does not cease to be an ecclesial space. Rather, it is continuously maintained as an ecclesial space through a constant flow of ritual practices, like the presence of the ever-burning candles of the cobblestone altar, prayers twice a day, weekly Thursday services, Taizé services on a monthly basis on Friday evenings, English-speaking services on some Sundays and the occasional evening service for queer Christians. By bending rules of social conventions, the displacements transform Our Lady into a different ecclesial space, but they never empty it of its status as an ecclesial space. In fact, according to those informants

[145] Tomas Dicken argues that homelessness is a "relatively unexplored" metaphor in theology (2011, p. 157). Building on the "weak theology" of John Caputo, Dicken attempts to explore this particular metaphor. However, Dicken is susceptible to spiritualizing "homelessness" when understanding it primarily as an occasion to destabilize theological epistemology: "[l]anguage about "a homeless God" does not imply that God is only to be found by homeless people or among homeless people. It does imply that God's presence is unpredictable. (…) There is no reliable place or context for looking for God" (2011, p. 136).

who advocate Our Lady as a place of epistemological justice, the displacements even make Our Lady a “more” ecclesial space than traditional ecclesial spaces (Gunnes, 2016, PhD article I). The conceptual framework that is needed in order to articulate the implicit ecclesiology of Our Lady must therefore theologize on experiences of abundance, lavishness and excess, rather than ceasing and emptying. One such conceptual framework may be the Trinitarian theology of Norwegian-US theologian Linn Marie Tonstad (2017, 2018). Tonstad argues that if epistemic priority is given equally to all three figures of the Trinity, then the kenotic submission of the Son to the Father is a stage for overcoming death and *not* the final nature of the Son in relation to the two other figures. This allows Tonstad to mobilize a different battery of imaginations for the relationship between God and humans than hierarchy and submission: God’s ongoing process of salvation for, with and to creation should be imagined not in terms of the spatial and relational scarcity of servantship, yielding and submission, but rather abundance. God’s love for creation means to “overcome and transform” (Tonstad, 2017, p. 243) all relations and living conditions produced by lack and deficit. This does not mean that Tonstad advocates a theology where the limits of the body and worldly scarcity are denied. Instead, what Tonstad does is articulate God’s love for creation through a renegotiation of the theological understanding of the autonomy of creation. God’s relationship to Godself (in the Trinity) means to be in relationships with others without the need to overcome or the need to make room for the other through abandoning self-possession and one’s own place and agency. This means that God reveals herself to herself and to the world without “shattering, breaking, emptying or penetrating” agency and space, whether humans’ or God’s (Tonstad, 2017, p. 237). Human agency and self-possession are thus not states of sin that need to be overcome, because agency, space and self-possession are not zero-sum games where the thriving of one means the yielding of the other. The agency and spatial possession of one person and space may create safe and joyful spaces and agency for oneself and others (Tonstad, 2017, p. 241). In thriving human relationships, the space and agency of oneself does not mean the ceasing of space or agency of the other. Rather, mature adult human relationships may be characterized as intensification and “surface touches” (2017, p. 243): “[w]hen the Spirit is present, other bodies and things need not to move out of the way to make room for the Spirit; instead, the Spirit’s presence serves to intensify those things just in their own character” (Tonstad, 2017, p. 244). In a feminist theological statement of (probably) unprecedented boldness, Tonstad argues that the best anthropomorphic image to

contain and celebrate God`s non-possessive presence is the sexual pleasure of the clitoris.[146] Physically, the clitoris is neither solely inside nor outside the human body. It signals a sexual pleasure beyond shattering boundaries: “The clitoris symbolizes the economy of the surface touch in which intensification and co-presence permit ever-greater intimacy between those who remain different in their particularity” (Tonstad, 2017, p. 276).

Tonstad radically dispossesses and disentitles ecclesial tradition as a source of ecclesiological normativity. Whereas an understanding of Pentecost as the foundation of the church fuels fantasies of ecclesial entitlement and ownership to Christ, Tonstad suggests that the narrative of the Ascension displaces the relationship between Christ and church as a place where Christ and the preservation and transmission of his memory is found:

> Christ’s body went away; it never belonged to the church in the first place. The church lost the body of Christ or never had it for itself; and the church exists in the anticipation of a redirection of its own action as its primary mode of being. (…) it anticipates the arrival of a word that it cannot straightforwardly speak to itself. (…) Instead of asserting that the body of Christ has been handed over to the church, it recognizes that the body of Christ, elsewhere and outside itself, is its only hope. (Tonstad, 2017, pp. 272–273).

In other words: It is in the anarchistic juxtaposition of the materiality of the ecclesial tradition – its signs and symbols and spaces – with non-ecclesial, secular human life that the church becomes able to admit to an apophatic epistemology, because no ecclesial space, artefacts and practices can claim representational finitude. The body of Christ does not belong to the church. It is in the “surface touch” between the spaces, practices and artefacts of ecclesial tradition and the spaces, artefacts and practice of what is “elsewhere and outside”, that a church can hope to speak “a word that it cannot straightforwardly speak to itself” (Tonstad,

[146] The reference to the clitoris in theological discourse is not pornographic but can be read as an example of the politics of representational practice in feminist theology. As argued in 3.2.8, a key topic among feminist theologians is to claim the body and social roles of woman as theologically legitimate images of God and Christ. An important contribution to this discussion is Merete Thomassen’s (2008) PhD thesis, where she argues that feminist liturgy may end up theologizing the socially acceptable roles of womanhood, like the mother (2008 p. 248-250). Thus, to envision larger and other parts of women’s lives as images of God is of great importance in order to avoid feminist liturgy becoming a socially conservative programme. Examples of indecent feminist theological proposals include “the fat Christ” by Lisa Isherwood (2008) and Althaus-Reid’s 2004 critique of the metaphors and figurative representations of Latin American liberation theology: “[t]he classic argument (…) is that the Christ of the poor is the Christ of poor communities, and that includes marginalized women. However, what we call popular praxis is, for women, a mixture of blessing and curse at the same time, because it tends to subsume women’s particular oppression into the struggle of the poor. (….) The Christ of the Basic Ecclesial Communities is depicted as embracing workmen with naked torsos but not women without underwear. A virgin mother can be depicted as a poor peasant mother, but if I want to represent her as the poorest of the poor among women in my country, it would need to be not as a devout mother, but as a child prostitute in the streets of Buenos Aires or Sao Paolo. If, as the liberationists claim, Christ is neither male nor female in the sense that Christ represents the community of the poor, Christ should be portrayed as a girl prostituted in Buenos Aires in a public toilet by two men” (Althaus-Reid, 2004, p. 84) The use of sexual pleasure and the clitoris as an image in theology is – to my knowledge – the boldest example of this feminist reclamation of non-decent and sexual aspects of female life and body as images of the divine.

2017, p. 272). Replacing the story of Pentecost with the Ascension as the foundational narrative in ecclesiology means to dethrone the empirical church for its claim to represent Christ in its preaching and celebration of the sacraments. Instead, it means to envision church as spaces and ritual practices of abundance, where the surfaces of spaces, rituals and artefacts touch each other – whether accidently or deliberately – by crowding and juxtaposing each other, making "redirection of own action as [the church`s] primary mode of being" (Tonstad, 2016, p. 272).

3.3.6 Towards an implicit ecclesiology of Our Lady

Tonstad theologically places experiences and practices of intensification and co-location centre stage. This resonates with this PhD's findings: Our Lady is "surface touch" between street space and sanctuary space. Our Lady is uncompromisingly a sanctuary space; all the cultural and material traits of Norwegian Christianity are present, accumulated over nothing less than a millennium. The stones of the church walls materially document its presence through the centuries. The huge altar at the front, the elevated pulpit (partially placed higher than the altar) and the massive baroque altarpiece with the broken body of Christ in the middle (which reaches from the floor to the ceiling) tell the aesthetic and theological story of Christianity in Norway. Prayers are prayed. The Eucharist is celebrated by priests who are ordained according to the authorized standards in the dominant church, the Church of Norway. Candles are lit. The candles are donated by the Swedish furniture store IKEA. All these features amount to a culture of contextual belonging to *this particular space*. Moreover, at the same time Our Lady is just as uncompromisingly a part of the street: it is a space where all who are present in the streets of Trondheim – the partygoers who have missed the last night bus on a Saturday night back to the suburbs, the shoppers, the beggars, the drug users and the drug pushers, the Balkan street musicians, the prostitutes, the pimps, the migrant workers, the 14-year-old Lutheran confirmands preparing the Thursday soup, the researcher – may be present. Thus, the spaces of the street and the sanctuary as well as the bodies that inhabit these spaces overlap within the physical boundaries of the stone walls of Our Lady, without "shattering, breaking, emptying or penetrating" (Tonstad 2016, p. 237) each other. It is not a kenotic space, because neither street nor sanctuary space is emptied or submitted to yielding. Nor is it heterotopic: it is ambivalent and complex, a hybrid of newly discovered agency of guest care towards other guests who live and die engulfed in the pervasive and never-ending misery of poverty, drug use, social exclusion and death. Church space and street space are juxtaposed in a "surface touch" (Tonstad 2016, p. 243) .This mutual co-location and

intensification, like the Trinity, allows for reflection on the integrity and non-finitude of both spaces. As with the Trinity, in good human relationships, the space and agency of one does not mean the yielding of the other. Transforming Tonstad's Trinitarian theology into a theology for diaconal practices, one may argue that neither space – sacred nor secular – can claim to represent or embody a promise of empowerment and liberation on their own. Rather, diaconal potential erupts in co-locality, in the juxtaposing of the street and space. This brings us, perhaps surprisingly, back to Gunnes (2016, PhD article I), where Gordon Lathrop's theology is the theoretical interlocutor. For Lathrop, juxtaposition is the inner logic of the liturgy and the church, a logic that privileges friction between two elements. Like Lathrop, Tonstad understands juxtaposition not only as a descriptive pattern, but as a deeply theological – even epiphanic – question. However, in practice, there turns out to be little friction and brokenness in Lathrop's theology. This is a self-imposed restriction that renders Lathrop less relevant as a conceptualization of creative and subversive uses of space and materiality in diaconal practices. By contrast, to Tonstad, the use of juxtaposition as a key metaphor for thinking theologically – the surface touch – rests on the opposite position.

3.3.7 "Venture church" as an ecclesiological model of the implicit ecclesiology of Our Lady

If Tonstad's ecclesiological conceptualization is to serve not only as a framework for the articulation of one possible implicit ecclesiology of Our Lady, but as an ecclesiological epistemology for recognizing displacements as a ecclesiological rationale, what kind of church would occur and where could one find the empirical embodiment of it? One way of articulating this could be to interpret the surprising events and spaces of the "surface touch" – displacements of ecclesial practices, spaces and rituals in the service of justice – as the occurrence of a specific ecclesiological epistemology. This epistemology is an ecclesiological interpretation of phenomena that often (but do not necessarily) fall outside the boundaries of the empirical church.[147] If the "the surface touch" of any two elements juxtaposed in a surprising displacement were to be condensed into a particular ecclesiological epistemology, it could imply recognition of "church" anywhere and anytime an individual or community regards the displacement of ecclesial space, artefacts and rituals as the most appropriate and effective manner to communicate a call for justice and to embody such a call. The spaces or acts when this church occurs can constitute spaces or acts that are authorized by the official

[147] However, diaconia and indeed theology in general is an epistemological endeavour: it is a matter of interpreting the common world of both Christiana and non-Christians in the light of the Christian faith (Stålsett, 2019; Tanner, 1997).

empirical church, like Our Lady and the use of the church space as an asylum for refugees. However, this church can also be found in spaces that maintain an ambivalent relationship to the empirical church,[148] or that even openly oppose it.[149] There are, of course, numerous positions between these two, where the relationship between the authorized and the unauthorized is intertwined.[150] Such a church is inherently epistemological unstable, because an understanding of what is "displaced" and what is "traditional" is always contextual and local and liable to change over time.[151] This church defers "the secular" and "the sacred" as compartmentalized opposites: it occurs in the world only through the physical, verbal and kinetic body language of the sacred – of the ritual, spaces and artefacts of the ecclesial – and it will disappear if these spaces and artefacts cease to have a common cultural meaning, but it is not identical to the authorized church.[152] Such an ecclesiological interpretation of displacements could be regarded as a (partial and provincial) ecclesiological model, or "church as venture." The body of the venture church is a trans body: it is, as Paul holds, the body of the male Christ (*1 Cor 12*). However, it occurs when the ritual practices, the spaces of worship that, like the clitoris, freely transgress the borders of ecclesial bodies of authorization regulating what is "inside" and outside" the church. The church as venture is thus the body of Christ as a trans body.[153] The male body of Christ with a clitoris may stand as the body

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[148] One example is the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. This is a movement of predominantly queer men who on specific occasions pose and identify as female nuns and wear flamboyant and extravagant outfits. The dress and the social identity of nuns enable the members to serve their gay community as an ecclesial affirmation of the lives of queer people, in embodied practices of care like counselling, taking part in rallies to support queer liberation, giving out free condoms in the queer community and fundraising. The displacement of the queer, sexually male body in the ecclesial artefact of the female chaste religious allows them to do the work of the representatives of the church for those people who do not abide by the heteronormative sexual ethics of the Catholic Church yet do continue to be in need of the work traditionally performed by nuns (Wilcox, 2018).

[149] One example is Pussy Riot, the Russian girl punk band sentenced to jail for their performance of *A Punk Prayer* in the Cathedral of Our Saviour, February 2012 (Denysenko, 2013; Gessen 2014; Schroeder & Karpov, 2013).

[150] An example of a position is Ulrich Schmiedel's (2017) work on mock funerals for African refuges who die in the Mediterranean while attempting to cross. Schmiedel shows how human rights activists staged state funerals for the nameless and unknown refugees in German cities. The seats of the political leaders of the German republic were of course empty. However, the imams and Christian priests presiding at these staged funerals were ordained clergy, recognized as representing their religious communities. The events thus displayed an intertwinement of the ecclesially authorized and the theatrically orchestrated.

[151] For example, the presence of female bodies in the ecclesial space of the *ambo* (pulpit) was one of the provocations of Pussy Riot's performance, because the Orthodox Church does not ordain women and does not allow women access to this part of the ecclesial space. In churches where female clergy are self-evident, female bodies on the pulpit are not a displacement, but a conventional use of the interior of the church. Thus, the same embodiment (the female body) has different meanings in different cultural and ecclesial contexts.

[152] This perspective is inspired by Avery Gordon's (2008) work on the sociology of the cultural phenomena of ghosts in *Ghostly matters: Haunting and the sociological imagination*. Gordon points out the conservative nature of borderline cultural phenomena like ghosts. Without individual and collective memory, a ghost is not only dead, but conceptually homeless.

[153] Queer theological perspectives in Scandinavian diaconal ecclesiology are rare. A notable exception is Edgardh (2009).

metaphor of the church that occurs as neither conventional Christianity nor militant secularism, the latter of which tries to rid itself (and often society) of religious spaces, practices and artefacts, but irreverently and consciously deploys the practices, spaces and artefacts of the ecclesial tradition in the service of justice. It would be a pneumatological church, erupting from the third article of the Nicaean Creed, as the empirical manifestation of a church of God who reveals herself as spirit who moves where she pleases.

Although the church as venture occurs as a response to marginality and as a call to justice, the venture church can be seen as the ecclesiological imagination of the alternative liturgical representational practices outlined in 3.2.8. The brokenness of the conventions of ecclesial space, artefacts and rituals enact the brokenness of the Christian God.

3.3.8 Re-imagining folk church ecclesiology in light of a diaconia of displacement

So far, I have tried to articulate an implicit ecclesiological reflection based on aspects of the empirical material. Ecclesiological reflections on the empirical findings of Our Lady summon one last perspective, given the cultural location of Our Lady to Scandinavia. In this final section, the aim is to allow aspects of the empirical material from Our Lady to inform one dimension of one of the ecclesiologies that is contextual and highly influential in Scandinavia:[154] the understanding of "folk" in Scandinavian folk church ecclesiology.

The origin of the term "folk church" stems from the German priest and theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) (Myhre-Nielsen, 1998). Situated in Prussia at the beginning of the 19th century, Schleiermacher opposed an understanding of church as forced on people by political-ecclesial legislation. Instead, he argued for a church of the people ("durch das "Volk"; Tønnessen, 2014, p. 4). A common and geographically defined culture bound to a particular place is where God is incarnated. Thus, as claimed by one of the most influential folk church ecclesiologists, Nikolaj Grundtvig (1783–1872), one's primary identity is as a human being, living in a particular geographical place and speaking a particular language. A Christian identity is a secondary identity (Thorkildsen, 1995). To become a Christian is conditioned by being a dweller in the common culture, because the word can only appear to humans in a language that is understandable (Thorkildsen, 1995). This implies an ecclesiology with a strong theocentric standing point on the first article of the Nicaean Creed: the very basic condition of every human being is to have been created and the presence of

[154] The folk church ecclesiology can be seen as the ecclesiology of Scandinavian creation theology. Limitations of space do not allow for an in-depth inquiry. For an introduction in English to Scandinavian folk church ecclesiology, see Dokka (2017).

God is not limited to the practices or preaching of the empirical organization called church. The "folk" is not only the statistical sum of people living in a particular place, but is understood as the subject of the church, not its object of mission (Myrhe-Nielsen, 1998). The church thus designates equal membership status to all baptized, no matter whether she or he comes every Sunday or to celebrate once a lifetime to mourn the dead.[155] Thus, the folk church is geographically centred in terms of theology and organization (Felter, Edgardh and Fagermoen, 2018, p. 12).

Sturla Stålsett (2014) observes that the contemporary theology of the "folk" in folk church ecclesiology is in need of thickening and enrichment[156]. This needs to happen not only due to the disestablishment of the majority church as a state church in Scandinavia (Sweden in 2000; Norway in 2012) but also due to social changes in the Scandinavian societies. Stålsett argues that "folk" as a marker of commonness needs to be re-examined, sensitizing the folk church discourse to questions of social difference and examining issues related to socioeconomic status, the role of indigenous people in the folk subcultures and multiculturalism in Scandinavia (Stålsett, 2014). This seems to be of great importance in the current cultural climate, where protagonists of right-wing and ethnocentric nationalism (sometimes violently) police the discursive boundaries of concepts like "folk" and "nation". A socially responsible folk church ecclesiology needs to critically reflect on the migration of terms and concepts from one discourse to another, even though this migration is not supported by folk church ecclesiologists themselves.

As argued in 2.4.2, theology always has a social location. A discursive construction of any matter of theology presupposes embodied, local and concrete experiences. This means that the discursive "folk" of the folk church ecclesiology is always and already informed by the theologian's (vague or explicit) notions of who and what the "folk" is and from his or her embodies experiences of community. What kind of discursive "folk" occurs if knowledge production of who the "folk" are is informed by places like Our Lady? What kind of folk church occurs if the "folk" of folk church, which the church is *constituted as a subject of*, is

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[156] Stålsett is of course not the first to problematize the different usages of "folk" in folk church theology. For a historical canvas of different usages, see Myhre-Nielsen (1998, pp. 347–378). It is important to state that the notion of folk is a contentious topic in Lutheran theology in Europe. In the pre-war German Lutheran tradition, the meaning of "folk" took on an explicit chauvinistic and racist dimension in the time leading up to Hitler's seizing of power. For a comparative reading of the Scandinavian and German political contexts and their effects on the creation theology, see Jensen (2003). For recent Swedish contributions, see Håkansson (2001) and Hagerman (2013). For English folk church ecclesiology, see Fagermoen (2014)

not a general, common and majority culture folk, but the “folk” who needs to dry their socks on the radiator after hours of begging in the rainy and windy Trondheim weather? Questions like these attempt at articulating a diaconal epistemology of folk church theology on the theology of the “folk”. Such questions display that diaconal practices like Our Lady may challenge the folk church ecclesiology from within, when “folk” is qualified towards precariousness, not a common majority culture. In the following, two aspects will be highlighted, 3.3.9 and 3.3.10

3.3.9. The hybrid liturgical practice of Our Lady is not only liturgical justice, but a performative constructive re-imagination of the folk church

In a context where participation and membership in imaginations of the “folk” and rites of mourning have been culturally and ecclesiologically intertwined for a millennium, extending accessibility to practices of mourning to people living with drug addiction can be seen as an example of liturgical justice (as argued in 3.2.3). However, this hybrid practice of Thursday service and morning practice also contains an ecclesiological surplus that transcends its diaconal potential as liturgical justice. This ecclesiological potentiality is only exhausted when such hybrid practices of mourning are also seen as performative renegotiations of who is entitled to belong to the theological category of the “folk” of the folk church ecclesiology.

Performing the hybrid ritual of Thursday service and mourning practice as ordained agents of the Lutheran church in a space of high cultural esteem may ecclesiologically be read as a critique of current ecclesial practices because it makes visible the difficulty of people living with drug abuse or other kinds of marginalization in gaining access to ecclesial practices of mourning. An ecclesiological response to the lack of access to practices of mourning may be to transform the critique into a constructive re-imagination, through the very same practice that it excludes. By enacting rituals of mourning as ordained priests and making such rituals accessible to a different “folk” from those who attend traditional funerals, a new conceptual “folk” is embodied into being through a ritual practice. Like the presider at a wedding pronouncing that two people are now married, the ritual practice presides a new “folk” into being by transforming the guests from “unwanted in funeral by the family” or “too disorganize to be on the right time at the right place and properly dressed for funeral” to full participants in an authorized Church of Norway practice of mourning. In this way, the Thursday service/practice of mourning may potentially re-imagine “the folk” of folk church ecclesiology. This happens when the specific context of people in marginalized life situations and the practices that arise therein are regarded as equally ecclesiologically legitimate

members of the “folk” of the folk church as the that comes into being through the existing ritual practices of the folk church (baptism, confirmation, wedding and funeral.

3.3.10 The “folk” of the folk church as an eschatological “folk”[157]

Many of the international guests of Our Lady face conditions of marginality in their home country. They respond to this marginality with trans-locality, in their continuous acts of travelling between Norway and Romania, Norway and the Baltic states, Oslo and Trondheim, in order to maximize their already minimal chances of improving their quality of life. The folk of Our Lady therefore do not only live in houses that can be located through an address registered in the statistics of the local parish office. Thus, articulating a diaconal epistemology of folk church ecclesiology means to ecclesiologically reflect on the fact that the “folk” of the folk church are not only a folk that are identical to the sum of culture(s) currently or previously residing in the country and who can trace their biological ancestry and culture within the frames of the nation state. Rather, the ecclesiologically legitimate “folk” of the folk church also live in cars, sleep at the railway station, in back allies and under bridges. These spaces are just as legitimate *topoi* of the Lutheran parish and should be regarded as such by folk church ecclesiologists. When doing folk church ecclesiology from diaconal places like Our Lady, it becomes apparent that just as much as Christoffersen (1989 p. 75) argues that the liturgical practices must be Norwegian in a Norwegian church, the practices of ecclesial spaces must speak the language and know the cultural practices of the migrant worker, the Roma beggar, the Balkan street musician and the unreturnable asylum seeker.
This perspective implies that the ontology horizon of the “folk” of the folk church is not a matter of cultural contextuality and geographical location. Rather, if the trans-local “folk” of Our Lady are the “folk” of the folk church, the folk church “folk” are ontologically unstable and flexible, a “folk” in becoming. Such a perspective calls for re-imagining the “folk” of the folk church as an eschatological category.

If this is the case, “folk church” is not a positive (and sometimes self-congratulatory) ecclesiological position that one can claim for oneself and one’s branch of the theological divide between conservative and liberals (e.g. “I support the folk church”). Neither is it – theologically speaking – a concept that can be claimed in the legal framework of a nation state.[158] Rather, “supporting the folk church” as a diaconal epistemology means to submit to

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[157] This argument is indebted to Tonstad 2016:254-288

[158] Paragraph 16 of the Norwegian Constitution reads: “All inhabitants of the ream have the right to free exercise of their religion. The Church of Norway, an evangelical Lutheran church, shall remain the established church of Norway and be supported by the State. Detailed provisions as to its systems will be laid down by law. All

cease to know, empirically speaking, who the “folk” are, because the “folk” of the folk church as an eschatological category renounce the finitude of political definitions of who belongs to the nation state as citizens. Althaus-Reid argues that Christ was an “unjust Christ” because he was a Messiah who transgressed common notions of decency and correctness (2000, p. 156). One may argue, in parallel, that the “folk” of the folk church are an “unjust folk”, because they are not delimited to the bearers of legal citizenship, but comprise all those who through being subjected to experiences of degradation and exclusion (like the Dublin II Convention) and discourses of alienation by right-wing populism, need to fight for their membership of humanity.

If the ontological horizon of the “folk” of the folk church is not only a stable locality given in creation but also the trans-locality of the contemporary precariat, it invites for a Christological foundation of the “folk” of the folk church. Seen from the position of a diaconal epistemology, the God of the folk church is not only an embodied creator God, but also a God who is subjected and submitted to the same kind of ontological instability as the guests of Our Lady. Christ also ontologically travelled throughout his life, inhabiting the categories of “the son of Mary”, “12 year of prodigy”, rabbi, “Son of God” and “blasphemer”. This implied a loss of dignity and social status and eventually led to physical and social death. This process highlights that the ontological status of a person is, as Judith Butler holds, a fundamental social matter (2006, pp. 19–49; 2010). Recognizing ontology as an inherently social matter means that a key task for diaconal agents is to intervene in this social production of a person by ontologically replacing the other into discourses of humanness. One examples of diaconia as social ontological work is found in one of the annual reports of Our Lady: “It is a constant challenge to bring a perception of the endangered value of the human being out of the church and to communicate it to the city” (2013, p. 7). In such phrases, a diaconal epistemology of the “folk” of folk church is made visible, as an ontological replacement of the marginalized other.

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religious and belief communities should be supported on equal terms”. (https://www.stortinget.no/globalassets/pdf/english/constitutionenglish.pdf, accessed 12.05.2020). The term “folk church” is found in the Norwegian juridical text, but not in the English translation. This difference in terminology between Scandinavian and English terminology is also found in Denmark., were the Danish terminology is “folk-church” is used in the vernacular version, but “established church” is used in the English translation. “The Evangelical Lutheran Church shall be the Established Church of Denmark, and as such shall be supported by the State” https://www.thedanishparliament.dk/-/media/pdf/publikationer/english/my_constitutional_act_with_explanations.ashx), accessed 10.06.2020. (Danish text: Den evangelisk-lutherske kirke er den danske folkekirke og understøttes som sådan af staten» https://www.ft.dk/-/media/sites/ft/pdf/publikationer/grundloven/min-grundlov_web.ashx (accessed 10.06.2020)

3.3.11 Conclusion

With regard to RQ2, I have argued that both Wyller's and Althaus-Reid's ecclesiological imaginations are fruitful as sensitizing devices, giving the researcher conceptual tools that pay attention to and highlight vulnerability and marginalization in relation to reflections on the nature of the church. However, Linn Tonstad's ecclesiological reflections are also consulted as examples of theological reflection where "the surface touch" between different spaces (and surfaces) celebrates abundance. This PhD empirically supports the notion that "Christ is always elsewhere": he is neither *only* in church or *only* on the street. Indeed, neither claims of non-tradition nor tradition, authorized nor non-authorized, can claim to represent ethical or ecclesiological supremacy.

This opens up new ways of imagining ecclesiologically from diaconal practices of displacements and creating re-imaginations of the folk of "folk-church" ecclesiology. I have pointed to the possibility of a diaconal epistemology of the "folk" of the folk church ecclesiology and how this reconceptualizes folk from being a matter of context and geography to a matter of becoming.

4. Concluding discussion

This PhD has sought to respond to the two research questions posed in 1.2. Following Wigg-Stevenson as outlined in 2.4.2, the methodological steps undertaken in order to achieve this have been to practise theological construction as a conversation around a table. No single source has been granted normative status *a priori*. One of the sources seated at this table has been aspects of the empirical material created through interviews and participant observation in the community of the Church of Our Lady. The reading of the empirical material has been guided by the research questions and the theoretical conversation interlocutors who – to my knowledge and at the time of writing – emerged as meaningful conceptualizations for responding to the research questions.

The political-economical context of the CCM and Our Lady is the welfare state, where the basic needs of Norwegian citizens are covered by universal benefits. As outlined in 1.5.5, in the post-WWII period, the CCM and other Norwegian diaconal organizations in general supported the formation of the welfare state and entered into extensive cooperation with it. In the 1980s, the CCM established the church of Tøyen in the Eastern part of Oslo. This initiated a new trajectory, by establishing a parish within the frames of a diaconal organization. By doing so, the CCM laid the foundation for a diaconal practice that regards access to and participation in religious ritual practices (like sacraments) and spaces and the community of these spaces *as diaconia.*

The formation of a diaconal practice of religious community and ritual practice demanded a willingness to engage in displacements of the rituals, spaces and artefacts of Lutheran religious practice. In the street services of the early 1990s on the streets of Oslo and Trondheim, the celebration of the ordo was removed from traditional sanctuary spaces and celebrated in places where the hardship of the streets is a reality: in shady pubs or on the streets of less affluent parts of the city. As an extension of this displacement, the sanctuary space of Our Lady was established in 2007, as a Lutheran sanctuary that welcomes people and practices that are not usually found in ecclesial spaces of the Lutheran church. Our Lady is a traditional ecclesial practice, yet at the same time it performs its identity in such a way that it ruptures traditional notions of what is supposed to take place in an ecclesial space and, as a result of these choices, what kinds of people are supposed to be found there. “Have we preached the Gospel if all who come to Our Lady behave well? If nobody gets knocked down,

nothing is broken”, stated one of the street priests of Our Lady (Gunnes, 2016, p. 84, PhD article I).

Our Lady is an embodied representation of belief in the Christian God among people who do not behave well and in places where people get knocked down. Our Lady can be read as a performative argument that, despite being present in the area of Trøndelag since before the turn of the first millennium, the Gospel has not been preached if it has not also been preached in these places. Our Lady as a performative preaching of the Gospel in places where people get knocked down is embodied as the material and cultural forms of Norwegian majority culture Christianity, as ritual practices, material space and material artefacts like clerical vestments and baroque church interiors. Our Lady is thus inherently local and tradition, in the sense that it draws on practices, spaces and artefacts that have been in circulation for a millennium in this particular geographical location. However, the use of means of circulation (space, practices and materiality) is a displacement of the traditional use. Traditional ecclesial and cultural elements are thus both maintained and undermined simultaneously.

The 2013 annual report of Our Lady closes with the words: “[w]e will continue to work to increase justice for the people of this city and this world” (2013, p. 8). How can the displaced use of space increase justice? Moreover, what does such “spatial” justice look like, empirically? How does the presumed creation of justice relate to the cultural and ecclesial context of Our Lady? Does this use of space represent an instrumentalization of religion in diaconia?

Responding to RQ1 (*What are the social impacts and theological meanings of displacements in practices of diaconia?*) I have first tried to empirically describe the results of these displacements, as the impacts may emerge through the empirical material created from one such practice, the Church of Our Lady. I have analyzed the empirical material in the light of the concept of “spatial justice”, popularized by Edward Soja (2010). I have argued that Our Lady is a place where various kinds of justice take place: ecclesial spatial justice, material justice, liturgical justice and epistemological justice. This PhD thus demonstrates empirically the diaconal potential of the controversial, non-regular and surprising use of ecclesial space, artefacts and practices.

Between Our Lady, the church of Tøyen and the street services of the CCM Oslo, both differences and similarities occur. The street services celebrated during the summer by the CCM Oslo resemble Our Lady in their radical displacement of street space and liturgical

practices and liturgical artefacts (like the Bible, priests with vestments, an altar, chalices and patens, Eucharist wine and bread). Consequently, one may argue that such a practice conveys liturgical justice, because it allows other and more people to experience liturgy and sacraments. In contrast to Our Lady, a street service has no built and material structure physically framing the practice or remaining after the service is finished. Its presence is thus non-permanent, leaving no trace in the urban landscape. The ability of a street service to convey ecclesial spatial justice is therefore minimal.

The church of Tøyen and Our Lady share a commitment to be diaconal physical religious communities. This combination creates liturgical and ecclesial practices that are rooted in the liturgical practices of the Church of Norway. However, the churches of Tøyen and Our Lady differ radically in terms of the social and cultural status of the ecclesial space being used. The church of Tøyen is barely noticeable in the urban landscape, situated in the less affluent East End of Oslo. Our Lady, on the other hand, is a grand, medieval, tourist-targeted ecclesial space situated on Trondheim's town square. This means that the cultural esteem of the buildings are different and that gaining access to these buildings may have contrasting meanings.

As a result, the kind of material justice that can be redistributed through these buildings is also different. The more practical and modern facilities of the church of Tøyen allow it to cater for a wider range of needs than the architectural limits of Our Lady are able to accommodate.[159] The church of Tøyen has thus become a space that creates material justice to a greater extent than is possible at Our Lady due to its architectural constraints as a medieval sanctuary space. This material justice is especially beneficial for guests (both at Our Lady and the church of Tøyen) who are non-citizens and thus live outside the social and health security of the welfare state. The relationship between creating fellowship and community on the one hand and the need to satisfy the hunger of Roma beggars on the other is unsettled in current diaconal practice in Norway.[160]

[159] https://kirkensbymisjon.no/rom-for-fattige-tilreisende/, accessed 07.02.2020. In exceptional cases, like during the summer months of 2019 when many Roma (in particular) in vulnerable situations stayed for short periods in Oslo, the parish hall of the church of Tøyen was turned into a dormitory where migrant guests could sleep. (Informal conversation with street priest at church of Tøyen, Birte Nordahl).

[160] Comparing Our Lady and the church of Tøyen in terms of material justice is difficult, because both practices are part of a larger organization, CCM Trondheim and CCM Oslo. It would fall outside the scope of this study to explore these organizations in full. However, it is important to state that both the Oslo and Trondheim CCM work with questions of material justice for migrant workers and beggars outside the structures of Our Lady and the church of Tøyen.

One major conundrum in the diaconal use of displacement is the question of instrumentalization (3.2.9 and 3.2.10). I have argued that one finding from the empirical material is that diaconal agents discursively construct a position where Our Lady is constructed not as social work, but as “doing church”. In this way, an asset discourse on the “extra” value of religious work is replaced by a discourse on “being church”. In this way, Our Lady may situate itself as different from the secular health services, even though it undeniably engages in social work. I have called this discursive replacement “apophatic diconia”, which it negates in order to affirm.

I have argued that the use of displacements in diaconal practices amounts to a diaconia of displacements (3.2.7). The recipient of the last kind of justice created by the displacements – epistemological justice – is not primarily the guests, but the church or theology itself (3.2.6 and 3.2.8). The disruptive behaviour of some of the guests of Our Lady is seen as a hermeneutical lens of rediscovering the disruptive and scandalous dimension of the Gospel. Epistemological justice highlights that diaconal practices like Our Lady, the street services of the CCM Oslo and the church of Tøyen should be regarded as contributions to the discourse on representational practices in theology.

I have argued that the displacement of ecclesial space, artefacts and rituals can be seen as a representational practice that performatively grasps the brokenness at the heart of a belief in an incarnated and crucified God. Religious representations (spaces, artefacts, liturgies) that are semantically broken – like the displacements of Our Lady and the vandalized Pietà in the hand of Latour – invites performative experience of the brokenness of both human life and the ability of liturgical practices to represent God in words. In contrast to the representational politics of other theologies of liberation, the method of the CCM is not verbal but performative.

If the extreme brokenness of God in the crucifixion is understood not only as a historical but also as an epistemological event in Christian theology, the epistemological instability of Christianity as a practice is constituted by events like the crucifixion. Diaconal practices of displacement should thus be studied not only as practical responses to marginality, but as practices that envision and enact an alternative representational practice, which the event of the crucifixion invites. Practices of rupture and displacement are epistemological mirrors of the crucifixion. This augments Stålsett’s (2008, 2019) position when he underlines that diaconia is first and foremost a hermeneutical perspective and that the value of silence is fundamental: refraining from explicit theological speech is an ethical necessity in diaconal

work in order to avoid taking advantage of vulnerability and infringing upon the integrity of its users (2008, p. 72). This PhD argues for a paradox: a result of understanding diaconia as the hermeneutical perspective of the researcher is to articulate diaconia as articulate theological speech; as an alternative representational theological practice, where the brokenness of the displacements performatively embodies the brokenness of God.

Drawing on the field of empirical ecclesiology, this PhD aims at contributing to the formation of diaconal ecclesiology, by imagining ecclesiologically from aspects of an empirical practice. RQ2 (*What kinds of possible implicit and contextual ecclesiological imaginations may be discerned from diaconal practices of displacement?*) asks what happens to diaconal ecclesiology if the use of empirical methods reveals that despite the fact that practices may be deployed with the best of intentions, there is no such thing as a practice or space that is undisputedly “right” or “good” or “empowering”. Rather, 3.3.3 and 3.3.4 suggest the need to do diaconal ecclesiology from the epistemological departure point of acknowledging that any kind of diaconal intervention is fraught with ambivalence and complexities. In Gunnes (2017, PhD article II) and Gunnes (2010, PhD article III) I have discussed the possibilities and limitations of the ecclesiologies of Trygve Wyller and Marcella Althaus-Reid in relation to aspects of the empirical material. I have argued that both display strengths and weaknesses as ecclesiological interpretative frameworks for the types of justice that potentially take place at Our Lady. Linn Marie Tonstad’s Trinitarian theology and subsequent ecclesiological reflection open conceptually for articulating the “surface touch” between street space and sanctuary space: neither needs to yield or cease for the other to be present and thus productive as empirical reality (3.3.5).

This facilitates a new understanding of Lathrop’s theory of liturgy and ecclesiology as juxtapositions. However, while Lathrop’s theology of juxtaposition entails a fixture of what can be juxtaposed with what (and sanctuary space is not one of them), Tonstad’s “surface touch” is motivated by ecclesial non-possession: Christ is an ascended God who has left the church, then no place, concept, space, practice or verbal utterance can claim representational superiority. This opens for the possibility of a process of anarchistic juxtapositions between earlier unknown and unthinkable surfaces. Examples of this may be the surprising juxtaposition of harsh street reality and medieval sanctuary space in Our Lady. Tonstad’s claim is that the community of the Trinity need not be relationally envisioned as a limitation, but as abundance, where none of the surfaces/persons/spaces need to “shattering, breaking, emptying or penetrating” (2016, p. 237) each other in order to share each other’s presence.

This provides for an ecclesiological understanding of juxtaposition that recognizes the ambivalence and complexity of the displacement of street space and sacred space.

I have argued that an implicit ecclesiology of Our Lady may benefit from drawing on Tonstad's insistence on the fundamental epistemological rupture between the divine and the representational forms of the church. I have called this ecclesiological imagination of church *venture church.* Venture church is the ecclesiological imagination that occurs as a result of acts of displacement as responses to marginality and injustice. Venture church may occur within the structures of or in relation to the official church (like Our Lady, the street services of the Oslo CCM) or as non-authorized uses (like the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence or Pussy Riot). Venture church can be regarded as the ecclesiological imagination of the alternative representational practices of diaconal practices of displacement.

Lastly, I have argued that aspects of the empirical material challenge the theology of the "folk" of the folk church ecclesiology. This means to enlarge the "folk" by performatively constructing a new folk into being by inviting guests to participate in one of the key liturgical practices of the folk church, the funeral. Just as much as Our Lady is local, its guests also consist to an increasing degree of non-Norwegians. This shift reflects the trans-local marginality and poverty in Europe and how this becomes visible on the streets of a city in the middle of a country in the northern corner of Europe. To theologize on this shift may mean to reconceptualize the "folk" of the folk church ecclesiology as an eschatological folk that one cannot claim to know: the "folk" of the folk church may be conceptualized as folk who come into being through both the practical work (spatial justice) and the ontological work (replacing the other in discourses of humanity) of diaconia.

5. Poetic post-script.

- Hello. It's god. I think you have forgotten me.
- No, I haven't! I have written a PhD about people who believe in you in one way or another and who use the material artefacts stemming from this belief in a creative way.
- Oh, I didn't mean it that way. I am not God, I am god. You should read Bruno Latour's sermon on me. According to him, I am not the kind of god you can choose to believe in or not: "Translating "helpful God" in an idiom we can understand today, we need to say "obvious framework of ordinary everyday existence"; repeating the term "God" would amount to paraphrasing and rehashing, since we`d have lost the sense of what it once meant: the guaranteed reference point of our common existence" (Latour, 2002, p. 17). In fact, when your friend Luther was trying to explain the first commandment, he accidently ended up giving an eloquent description of me "What does it mean to have a God? or What is God?(…) That now, I say, upon which you set your heart and put your trust is properly your God"[161].
- But if you are omnipresent, how can I have forgotten you?
- You have not forgotten me, because I am not a god who is forgettable or ignorable. But you have failed to articulate my being ontologically. That makes you guilty of dia-oltry.
- Dia-oltry?
- Yes, the idolatry of diaconal scholarship. Like the idolatrous worshipper mistakes the created for the creator, committing dia-oltry is to plan and carry out fieldwork, theorize and write as if the empirical and conceptual horizon of diaconal agents represents a finitude in the life of the marginalized person. You have forgotten that any practice or discursive strategy by diaconal agents is contingent and provincial, always and already conditioned by more powerful discourses and sustained by systems of differentiation more forceful than the effort of diaconia. I am always there, with my discourses and my legal and political structures. This is, of course, why the ontological target of the most powerful and most successful liberationist movements in Scandinavia in the late 19th and 20th centuries – the working class movement and the feminist movement – were not ecclesial or humanitarian third-sector social work attempting to improve the lives of citizens socially produced as "workers" or "women". Rather, the demands made by these movements went for the heart of

[161] Martin Luther`s *Large catechism*, see http://bookofconcord.org/lc-3-tencommandments.php, accessed 07.10.2020

the apparatus that, through means that are recognized as legitimate, controls the mechanisms for countering or preserving the social reproduction and distribution of marginalization. Thus, the success of these movements entailed the establishment of institutions and legal frameworks that ensured greater equality and social mobility for all citizens. These secular movements stayed on my narrow path, denounced dia-olotry and worshipped me. In other words, they recognized that constitutive the role of institutions and legal, economic and political frameworks in the effort of improving the lives of workers and women! Pity the souls who are not represented by or who do not have access to such powerful rights-based struggles.

- So this PhD is all in vain?!

- I am not saying that what places like Our Lady do, doesn't matter. Of course it does. Remember Brecht's poem, A bed for the nigth:

I hear that in New York
At the corner of 26th Street and Broadway
A man stands every evening during the winter months
And gets beds for the homeless there
By appealing to passers-by.

I`m not saying that Our Lady doen`t matter. I'm just saying that I am always there, whether you believe in me or not. The next lines goes like this:

It won't change the world
It won't improve relations among men
It will not shorten the age of exploitation

But a few men have a bed for the night
For a night the wind is kept from them
The snow meant for them falls on the roadway.

Don't put down the book on reading this, man.

A few people have a bed for the night
For a night the wind is kept from them
The snow meant for them falls on the roadway
But it won't change the world
It won't improve relations among men
It will not shorten the age of exploitation (Brecht, 2018)

It's a beautiful poem, isn't!? Hey, don't look so sad. What I am saying is just that practices like Our Lady are always submerged in and submitted to structures of social production of marginality that are beyond one's ability to solve or profoundly alter. In fact, what you should do now that you are out of work, is to write my ecclesiology. You should write the ecclesiology of the "obvious framework of ordinary everyday existence". What if you try to

imagine that the institutions that are so pervasive that it is not possible to think outside them, are my body, like the church is metaphorically imagined as the body of Christ? In contrast to your Christ, I`m not into preaching, for my power resides in transformations: the transubstantiation of the Eucharist celebrated in my name is the performative act of declaring a body as a citizen or a non-citizen. This Eucharist is of course immanent and agnostic, for I am a humble god and I prefer the power of invisibility, in contrast to my miserable colleague God, who through a rather decadent proneness for visibility and articulation has become an easy target of critique for centuries.

-Is there no hope?

- It's not a matter of hope or not-hope. What is at stake is that if you diaconal scholars really want to name and discuss the conditions of precariousness, you need to add more gods to the implicit political theology of diaconia: even Mammon, perhaps, who is increasingly incarnating itself as an "obvious framework of everyday existence" in health and social care, even in your Scandinavian welfare state. You need to develop a diaconal theology that is able to contain and incorporate that in contrast to God of the Bible, the pluralities of me is a god who does not let myself be forgotten or disbelieved: the social, economic and political mechanisms that create poverty, hunger and exclusion are not matters of choice. You have written a PhD in diaconia. Perhaps you should have instead written a creed to me.

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7. Attachements

7.1 Intervjuguide – gjester, ansatte og frivillige

Gjester

1. Hva gjør du når du er i kirka?

   Hvis informanten vektlegger lystenning og sjelefred, spør om det sosiale og omvendt. Oppfølgingsspørsmål: Hva gjør du når du kommer inn døra? Er du er lenge av gangen i kirka? Er du ofte her? Er du med på torsdagsmessene eller middagsbønnene? Er du med på varmestuen og mandagssuppa? Hvordan opplever du å være disse?

Eventuelt: hva gjør du når du ikke er i kirka?

2. Hvorfor kommer du i kirka?
3. Hvordan kom i kontakt med kirka første gang?
4. Hva betyr det for deg å være i kirka?
5. Hva betyr det for deg at vf er et kirkerom?
6. Det å være her, gjort det noe med deg?
7. Det å være her, har det gjort noe med ditt syn på andre mennesker?
8. Det å være her, har det gjort noe med ditt syn på kristendommen?
9. Er det noe som har overrasket deg med å være her?
10. Hvis du skulle fortelle om noe av det fineste du har opplevd her, hva skulle det være.
11. Hvis du skulle fortelle om noe av det vondeste du har opplevd her, hva skulle det være?
12. Bymisjonen sier om seg selv at vf er en omsorgskirke. Erfarer du at det er en omsorgskirke? Hva betyr det å være en omsorgskirke?
13. Mange av de tingene som vi gjør i kirka, som å spise og drikke kaffe, kunne vi også gjort på et annet sted. Hva betyr det at vi gjør det i et kirkerom?
14. Er det noe du synes er vanskelig eller problematisk med å være her? Oppfølging: er det noe du synes skulle vært annerledes?

Eventuelt:

15. Har du kontakt med andre gjester utenfor kirka?
16. Bymisjonen sier: «Her hjelper vi ingen. Isteden gjør vi noe annet. Vi spiser sammen. Vi ber sammen. Vi tenner lys sammen«. Hva betyr det for deg? Oppfølgning: er det forskjell på omsorg og hjelp?
17. Det er mange ulike mennesker som bruker vf. Er det noe du ser spesifikt fra din livssituasjon, som du tror ikke andre ser?

Avslutning:

18. Er det noe du skulle ønsket jeg hadde spurt om, som jeg ikke har spurt om?
19. Er det noe mer du har lyst til å si?

Ansatte

A. Den ansatte

1.Kan du si hva din jobb i vf går ut på?
2. Hva er din utdannelsesmessige bakgrunn?
3. Hva gjorde at du ville arbeide i vf?
4. Er du mye i kirka?
5. Hvordan vil du beskrive ditt eget livssyn?

B. Vf som hellig rom.

6.Kan du fortelle, med dine ord, hva vf er ?
7.Vf er et kirkerom. Er det viktig? Gi eksempler på hvorfor det er viktig? FORTELL.
8.Vår frue er et hellig rom? Kan du fortelle om som illustrerer hva hellighet innebærer i vf? Oppfølging: hvor kommer helligheten fra? Kan du fortelle om det?
9.Hva truer helligheten?
10.Vf er et kirkerom og det er et rom for man kan møtes, samtale, spise suppe, drikke kaffe og sove. Hva gjør det med kirkerommet at man kan man kan møtes, samtale, spise suppe, drikke kaffe og sove?
11.Hva gjør det med møtene, samtalen, spisingen av suppe, drikkingen kaffe og sovingen at det skjer i et kirkerom?
12.Hvis du skulle bruke en metafor for hva vf skal være, hva ville det vært? Metafor for hva vf ikke skal være?
13.Hva betyr det at kirka holdes åpen av frivillige.
Oppfølgning: Hvis de bruker ordet «beskytte». Hva brukes det om? Rommet, menneskene. Hvis de ikke har nevnt Jesus og de bibelske fortellingene, spørre om forholdet mellom Jesus og vf.

C. Gudstjenester og middagsbønner og andre arr.

14.Hvorfor har man gateprester i vf?
15.«Vf er en åpen kirke, uten at det feires gudstjenester eller middagsbønner eller søndag». Er det et senario du kan se for deg?
16.Kan du fortelle noe om hvordan du opplever torsdagsmessene? Oppfølging: gode og vonde erfaringer, tolkning av disse?
17.Fortell om åpen mikrofon og hva dette det er?
18.Hva er forholdet mellom Åpen mikrofon og gudstjenestene?
19.Er det noe som har overraket deg med vf?

20.Vf presenterer seg selv om at det er en »omsorgskirke». Hva er en «omsorgskirke»? På hvilken måte er vf en «omsorgskirke»?

D. Ulike grupper gjester

21.Hvorfor kalles gjestene «gjester»? Har det vært brukt andre ord på andre tidspunkt siden 1993?
22.Gjestene i vf her en heterogen gruppen. Kan du si noe om hvem de er?
23.Vf sier i presentasjon av seg selv at vf er for «alle». Hvorfor er dette viktig?
24.Er bruken av ordet «alle» kvalifisert i en viss retning (egentlig: er noen mer gjester enn andre?)
25.Har det skjedd en utvikling i løpet av den tiden vf har vært åpen i forhold til hvem gjestene er. Hvordan har dette formet vf?

E. Frivillighet.

26.Hva er hensikten med frivillighet i vf?
27.Hva betyr det at kirka holdes åpen av frivillig? Oppfølging: Hva gjør det med driften at de frivillige er i så stort flertall?
28.Kan du fortelle om gode sider ved en slik bruk stor bruk av frivillige.
29.Kan du fortelle om utfordrende sider ved en slik bruk stor bruk av frivillige?
30.Hvilke dilemmaer du opplever i arbeidet ditt med frivillige?
31.Vise til tekst. Har dere regler for å regulere kontakten mellom gjester og frivillige. Endringer i dette?
32.Sosiale medier er noe som i større og større grad blir en del av folks virkelighet og platform for å samhandle. Har dere en facebook-politikk i forhold til frivillige?
33.Da Vf staret opp sa domprost Knut Andresen at det eneste som krevdes for å være frivillig var at man kunne koke kaffe. Det er 6 år siden. Har dere skrifteliggjort andre krav til frivillige?
34.Har dere skriftliggjort kriterier for å avslutte folks frivillighetsengasjement?
35.I en tradisjonell menighet er det de ansatte som utfører oppgaver i kraft av sitt arbeid som kirkelige ansatte. Hva betyr det at det er frivillige som holder kirka åpen? Eventuelt oppfølging: Hva hadde vært annerledes om de frivillige hadde vært betalt.
36.Hva gjør det med driften at de frivillig er så stort flertall?

F. Kultur

37.Kan du fortelle om kulturen og musikkens plass i vf?
38.På hvilken måte er kulturen en integrert del av vf?
39.Fortell om åpen mikrofon?
40.Hvis du skulle fortelle om noe av det fineste du har opplevd i vf i forhold til kultur, hva skulle det være?
41. Hvis du skulle fortelle om noe av det vondeste du har opplevd i vf i forhold til kultur, hva skulle det være?

G. Erfaringer

42.Hvis du skulle fortelle om en veldig fin eller god ting du har opplevd i ditt arbeid med vf hva skulle det være?
43.Hvis du skulle fortelle om en vondt erfaring du har i arbeidet i vf, hva skulle det være?
44.Er det noe som har overrasket deg med vf?
45. Hvis du skulle bruke en metafor for hva vf skal være, hva ville det vært? Metafor for hva vf ikke skal være?

H. Avslutning

Er det noe du skulle ønsket at jeg hadde spurt deg om?

Verter

1.Hvor lenge har du vært vert? Oppfølgning: hvilke type skift tar du, dag/natt?
2.Fortell om hvorfor du du vert?
3.Fortell om det å være vert i vf. Hva gjør du når du er vert?
4.Hvis du skulle fortelle om noe av det fine du har opplevd her, hva skulle det være.
5.Hvis du skulle fortelle om noe av det vonde du har opplevd her, hva skulle det være?
6.Har det gjort noe med deg å være vert?
7.Har det gjort noe med sitt syn på andre mennesker å være vert?
8.Hvordan vil du beskrive ditt livvsyn?
9.Har det gjort noe med sitt syn på kristendommen å være vert?
10.Kunne du vært frivillig i annet kirkelig arbeid, som en vanlig menighet i Den norske kirke? Kunne du vært, eller har du vært, frivillig i sekulært arbeid, som Røde kors.
11.Vf er et kirkerom. Er det viktig? Hvorfor? Fortell om hvorfor dette er viktig.
12.Vf er et kirkerom og det er et rom for man kan møtes, samtale, spise suppe, drikke kaffe og sove. Hva gjør det med kirkerommet at man kan man kan møtes, samtale, spise suppe, drikke kaffe og sove
13.Hva gjør det med møtene, samtalen, spisingen av suppe, drikkingen kaffe og sovingen at det skjer i et kirkerom?
14.Bymisjonen sier om seg selv at vf er en omsorgskirke. Erfarer du at det er en omsorgskirke? Hva betyr det å være en omsorgskirke? Hvordan ser omsorgen ut?
15.Bymisjonen sier også: «Her hjelper vi ingen. Isteden gjør vi noe annet. Vi spiser sammen. Vi ber sammen. Vi tenner lys sammen«. Hva betyr det for deg? Oppfølgning: er det forskjell på omsorg og hjelp?
16.Er det noe du synes er vanskelig eller problematisk med vf? Oppfølging: er det noe du synes skulle vært annerledes?
17. Er det noe som har overrasket deg med å være i vf?
18.Er det noe du skulle ønsket jeg hadde spurt om, som jeg ikke har spurt om?

7.2. Contract of informed consent.

Forespørsel om deltakelse som informant i forskningsprosjektet

"Et hellig og sosialt rom"

Bakgrunn og formål

Formålet med doktorgradsprosjektet «Et hellig og sosialt rom» er å utforske ansatte, gjester og frivilliges opplevelse av å være en del av Vår frue Åpen kirke. Prosjektet har som mål å utforske hva det betyr for folk at virksomheten foregår i et kirkerom. Doktorgradsprosjektet gjennomføres ved Diakonhjemmet høyskole. Kirkens Bymisjon i Trondheim har godkjent å være med i studien.

Ansatte, gjester og frivillige vil bli spurt om å delta. De som skal intervjues blir forespurt om å delta. Informanter varierer med hensyn til alder, kjønn, religiøs bakgrunn og lengde på engasjement i Åpen kirke.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

Å delta i studien innebærer å bli intervjuet om sine erfaringer av å være den del av Vår frue. Alle personer som beskrives eller intervjues vil bli anonymisert. Personene vil bli omtalt som kjønn, gruppe gjest/frivillig/ansatt.(Eksempel «mann, gjest»).

Intervjuene vil bli tatt opp på bånd og deretter transkribert. Opptakene vil oppbevares innelåst på Diakonhjemmet høyskole, og etter studiens ferdigstillelse vil de destrueres. Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes 2015. Kontaktinformasjon til forskeren er gyrid.gunnes@diakonhjemmet.no. Veileder er professor Hans Stifoss-Hassen, hans.stifoss-hanssen@diakonhjemmet.no.

Frivillig deltakelse
Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og informanten kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS.

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

----

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

7.3 Approval from NSD

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES

Gyrid Gunnes
Diakonhjemmet Høgskole
Postboks 184 Vinderen
0319 OSLO

Vår dato: 19.11.2013 Vår ref: 36144 / 2 / KH Deres dato: Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 01.11.2013. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

36144	*The theology of a social and sacred space - an empirical investigation of the Church of Our Lady, Trondheim*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*Diakonhjemmet Høgskole AS, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Gyrid Gunnes*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 01.03.2018, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Vigdis Namtvedt Kvalheim

Kjersti Haugstvedt

Kontaktperson: Kjersti Haugstvedt tlf: 55 58 29 53
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

8. Articles

8.1 Article I.

"The *ordo* of care: A hermeneutical dialogue between Gordon Lathrop's liturgical theology and practices of care in the Open Church of Our Lady, Trondheim". Published in *Studia Theologica - Nordic Journal of Theology*. 2016. Vol 70, issue 1. Pages: 74-96.

8.2 Article II

"Our Lady of the heterotopia: An empirical theological investigation of the heterotopic aspects of the church of Our Lady, Trondheim". Published in *DIACONIA, Journal of Christian Social Practice.* 2017. Vol 8. Pages: 51-68.

Our Lady of the heterotopia: An empirical theological investigation of heterotopic aspects of the Church of Our Lady, Trondheim

Gyrid Kristine Gunnes, Oslo

Interpreting the Lutheran church of Our Lady of Trondheim Norway in the light of Michael Foucault's spatial of heterotopia, the article explores the capacity of a church space to become a site of ritual and spatial justice for people living in with different kinds of marginality. The article contributes to the development of the relationship between spatial theory and Christian social practice and the contextual theology arising from this relationship. While the majority of scholars of diaconia draw on Norwegian systematic theologian Trygve Wyller's appropriation of Foucault's theory, this article builds on the British sociologist Kevin Heatherington's elaboration of the theory. Instead of understanding heterotopic spaces as overtly ethical spaces, the article follows Hetherington in exploring how Foucault's heterotopic spaces are sites of unsettled and unresolved agonism. This theoretical move opens up for seeing the displacements of space, bodies and practices in the church of Our Lady as sites of ambivalence and negotiation.

Keywords: heterotopia, displacement, ritual justice, spatial justice, Kevin Heatherington, Trygve Wyller, agonism

1. Introduction

One important addition to the theoretical repertoire of the study of Christian social practices is the introduction of the application of Michael Foucault's concept of heterotopias, first developed by Norwegian systematic theologian Trygve Wyller (Wyller 2006, 2009, 2010, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c). Wyller's work is of great importance to the study of diaconia. It expands the intellectual horizon of the study of diaconia from its past confinement to social work and theology as its primary intellectual dialogue partners to contemporary philosophy[1]. Of equal importance is the fact that *space* is brought into the focus of the study of diaconal practices. In this article, I wish to contribute to the discourse on heterotopic diaconia by including one more voice in the discussion: The British sociologist Kevin Hetherington's notion of heterotopia as *an alternate ordering* (1997).

The empirical starting point of this article is an ethnographic study of the diaconal practice of a particular congregation, the Church of Our Lady in Trondheim, Norway. The church building dates back to the 13th century and since

1 Another example is Sturla Stålsett, who in his work brings the work of Giorgio Agamben and Judith Butler (2012) into the dialogue with practices of diaconia.

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1545 has served as the home of the Lutheran congregation of the inner city of Trondheim. Due to falling attendance in Sunday services and occasional offices, the congregation faced closure and had to radically reconsider its vision and mission. Since 2007 the church has been run by the diaconal organization, The Church City Mission Trondheim (CCTM)[2], as "Our Lady Open Church." The transformation of Our Lady from a traditional congregational church into an "open church" included extensive opening hours, alteration to the floor plan of the church, and changes in the practices of hospitality.

The questions driving this article are the following: First, in what way are the displacements of street space and church space in the Our Lady examples of heterotopia? Second, what does this heterotopia look like, as narratives, theological reflections, and practices documented and interpreted in the material created from an ethnographic study of Our Lady[3]? The argument of this article is that, through deliberate spatial and practice-wise rearrangements of a medieval church space, such a space may become an alternate ordering where socially produced identities are destabilized and utopias are deployed in new and surprising ways.

2. Theory: Michael Foucault's heterotopia and its various uses

In the text "Of Other Spaces," Michael Foucault shifts his focus from the study of the formation of the subject through historical processes to the study of the spatial aspect of these processes[4]. The perspective is no longer on the chronology of the discourses of the social production of otherness in modernity (the prison, the mental hospital), but on how the social production of *space* formats the construction of the subject. Surprisingly, Foucault starts his spatial

2 Founded in 1855, Kirkens Bymisjon ("The Church City Mission") is one of the largest and oldest professional humanitarian nonprofit organizations in Norway, working in areas of rehabilitation, marginalization, elderly care, and mental health. The organization has a Christian heritage, but today employs people from a wide range of religious and nonreligious backgrounds. It operates in numerous large and middle-size Norwegian cities.

3 The empirical material is created based on a triangulation of taped interviews, participant observation, and document study. The interview material consists of transcribed interviews with 20 guests, 12 volunteers, and 12 past and present employees of the Church of Our Lady. Three weeks of field work were conducted during the Spring of 2014 in addition to the Christmas celebration. The data collection was approved by the NSD, NorwegianCenter for Data Research. The document study consists of annual reports of Our Lady 2008–2014, the street ministry of Church City mission prior to the opening of Our Lady as an open church in 2007, reports produced in the process of establishing Our Lady as an open church, material produced in the recruitment and training of volunteers and written material produced in the daily running of the church.

4 The idea of heterotopia is developed in two places in the work of Michel Foucault. The first is in the book *The Order of Things* (1970), where heterotopia is used primarily as a linguistic term. The second place is the short article "Of Other Spaces," where the focus is not on heterotopia in language, but as concrete space. The following is based on the latter use, heterotopia as space.

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analysis of the practices of subject formations with a statement about the status of the relationship between sacredness and space in contemporary society. Space has not been entirely desanctified, Foucault holds. The preservations of *a difference* between private space and public space, family space and social space, cultural and useful space, spaces of leisure and work as "inviolable," is "nurtured by the hidden presence of the sacred" (1998:238). Yet, it is not these spaces in themselves that are the target of attention. Rather, Foucault adds a new layer of differentiation on to this first categorization of spaces: *Utopias* are places that do not exist in time and place, but represent a society in perfect form. More interesting are the *heterotopias,* the other space. According to Foucault, heterotopias "have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sides, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror or reflect" (1998:239). The heterotopias represent a continuous blurring of the line between the normal and the deviant ("to suspect, neutralize, or invert"). Thus, the heterotopias may therefore become a space for critique of the normal, created by *normality itself.* In the heterotopic space, the epistemic order of normality is thrown back at normality itself. Heterotopias are linked to power, but not as *univocal resistance to dominant power*. Rather, they are spaces where *resistance and transgression is problematized*, as *the other* of both normality and utopia.

The idea of heterotopia has an extensive scholarly legacy. A noncomprehensive list of different applications of heterotopias in various disciplines displays a range from literature[5], media studies[6], architecture[7], theology[8], philosophy[9], and social work[10]. Dehaene and Cauter proposed that, "when putting on het-

5 In the field of literature, Wenche Mühleisen used the term to analyze the novel *Tjuendedagen* by the Norwegian author Geir Gulliksen. For Mülheisen, the heterotopic aspect of the novel proposes an alternative way of organizing love and sex in the society. She speaks of the "heterotopic energy" (2011:184) of the novel as a will to transcend traditional categories of sexuality.

6 Jutta Haider and Olof Sundin (2011) apply the term on Wikipedia. They focus on the emancipatory aspect of the heterotopia, presenting a new way of understanding memory and blurring the line between the professional and the amateur.

7 In architecture, Henry Urbach (1998) applies the term by describing it this way: "Heterotopias (…) display the incoherencies, fissures, and contradictions that inhere in social arrangements and expose their shaky legitimacy" (1998:348). Urbach's article is rather critical of the term and shows how the application of the term – at least within architecture – has been so differentiated that it seems to be able mean almost anything.

8 See Flynn's *Michel Foucault and Theology – the politics of religions experience* (2004). Flynn defines heterotopia as spaces "that are linked with all other sites by the fact that they contradict them (…) These counter-sites combine the 'othering' character of Foucauldian 'transgressive thinking' with the spatializing nature of his argument" (2004:149). Flynn does not link such spaces to religious space, but to the desert.

9 Georges Didi-Huberman (2013) analyzes the idea of democratic representation in the light of heterotopia.

10 Elm Larsen explicitly draws on Foucault's term heterotopia (Elm Larsen 2003) for understanding the use of space in social work. Just as much as being spaces where marginalized persons may receive care in the immediate proximity of professionals and/or volunteers, social work cafes are also potentially places of resistance against the discourse of normality. Creating a

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erotopic spectacles, everything tends to take on heterotopic traits" (2008:6)[11]. It has a "slippery meaning" and its utility is "limited" (Urbach 1998:347). Hence, the uses of Foucault's heterotopia in various academic discourses are so diverse that one might not delineate one single use, but rather evoke the Wittgensteinian metaphor of family resembles to describe the plethora of different uses. The concept of heterotopia may be understood as a complex of ideas, metaphors and sensitizing devices rather than as theory in the strict understanding of scientific theory and no single use can claim to be comprehensive.

2.1 Heterotopi and Diaconia

Trygve Wyller introduced Foucault's theories heterotopia to the study of Christian social practices. This work received wide recognition within the field (Villadsen, Kaspar, and Wyller, 2009, Wyller and Heimbrock 2010, Stiles-Ocran 2015, Sander, Villadsen, and Wyller 2016). A literature review of Wyller's application of heterotopia reveals that its content has shifted over the years. In Wyller 2006, the search for a heterotopic diaconia is motivated by the need for an intervention in the World Council of Churches (especially "Diaconia in Context") discourse on the transformation from a charitable first-person-oriented diaconia to a diaconia-oriented one towards advocacy and justice ("prophetic diaconia"). In this early work on heterotopia, which unfortunately exists only in Norwegian, Wyller identifies the problem of contemporary diaconia not in its lack of structural focus, but in a lack of critical self-reflectivity and the question of representation. To reflect on who defines "liberation," "empowerment," and "inclusion" on behalf of whom is just as important as whether the horizon of social practices is the individual or the public. According to Wyller, the study of diaconia needs to interact with philosophical discourses, which discuss and also critique liberationist and progressive regimes that deploy different kinds of pastoral power: all kinds of diaconia – even self-proclaimed "prophetic diaconia" – run the risk of reproducing the very same discourses that marginalized people in the first place[12].

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space for the marginalized collectivizes the nonnormative in a way that might not otherwise have come into being. On the use of heterotopia with respect to social work with homelessness, see Mendel 2011.

11 The American critical geographer Edvard Soja even goes as far as stating that "For Foucault, every space is heterotopia, a realized and imagined space of resolved opposites" (2001:104).

12 Wyller has also been criticized. Korslien and Notland write: "Heterotopia may bring useful analysis, but it is our proposition that one should not look for sources for the right diakonia from outside diakonia. It is within ourselves we need to discover the vocation, and in the respectful encounter with the other we find the best possible way to work" (2011:241 my translation). The position of Korslien Notland is problematic: To argue that the source of diakonia is personal vocation in order to suspend new theorizations brings one dangerously close to an epistemology of self-legitimation and self-righteousness. There is no reason why the academic

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A heterotopic perspective on diaconia is concerned with what happens to the conception of diaconia when the lives and social contexts of the marginalized themselves are no longer seen only as targets for transformation, but when their experiences and strategies of survival and dignity are understood as epistemological starting points. This clears the way for a much more messy and multilayered role of diaconia than the one-dimensional prophetic/political diaconia. The WCC discourse is no longer explicitly present in later works. However, the concern is similar: In 2009, Wyller again pointed out how practices of diaconia often have been places where "people have been included ('disciplined') into the large community of a nation or of the local municipality" (2009:209). In his latest book, another part of Foucault's theoretical complex is used to theorize the coercive capacity of diaconal (and secular welfare) practices, namely, pastoral power (Sander, Viladsen, and Wyller 2016:11). In heterotopic diaconal practices, the helper/care giver recognizes the danger of disciplining. In order to avoid becoming agents of governmentality and discipline, the helper should be ready to be profoundly transformed by the otherness of others:

> "the project is not any more to construct an ideal space into which the others sooner or later should (possibly by force) change or move into. The project is different, the being formatted in the icon of the other, creates and open, imaginary space, where you, in principle are no longer able to know the next step or final outcome" (Wyller 2009:214)

Heterotopic diaconia thus describes a situation where the professional/activist refrains from acting and imagining according to prefixed answers and practices. Heterotopic diaconia allows the relationship to take its own course. Diaconal practices become heterotopic spaces when this suspension of fixed professional asymmetrical power relations also takes places on a structural level. In other words: when those targeted as recipients of care, help, or transformation themselves become subjects in a specific space: "Instead, the other spaces become spaces of the others insofar as 'the others' presence, significance and impact upon the space increase" (B. Sander, Viladsen, and Wyller 2016:185). The governmentality of the pastoral power so often embedded in even the best of intentions is rolled back in favor of the agency of the former object. The heterotopic potential of professional relations and spaces of help/care have an explicit theological dimension. Sacredness occurs in spaces and relations where the otherness of the other is respected and not reduced to sameness: "There is no intentionality of the sacred if there is no other" (Wyller 2009:209). In his later works, Wyller turned from diaconia to ecclesiology, searching for a *heterotopic ecclesiology* (Wyller 2016b and Wyller 2016c). In a heterotopic ecclesiology, features of traditional church spaces and activities redraw in order

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study of diakonia should enjoy a privileged, self-contained position sheltered from critique from "outside."

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to (literally) make space for the agencies and bodies of people who in some way or another leave precarious and marginalized lives.

Even though Wyller's work represents a much needed renewal of the theoretical repertoire of the study of diaconia and ecclesial practices dedicated to attentiveness to marginality, this article does not build on his application of Foucault's term. The reason for this is that, in most of Wyller's writing, the heterotopic is understood to be imbued with an ethical quality. The result is that the heterotopic is given positive and constructive traits, like "respect," "hospitality," and diverse forms of agency of the marginalized. The danger of such a theoretical trajectory is that the ambivalence, risk, and polyphony of any space gets lost.[13] Thus, let me turn to a different theorist of heterotopia: In contrast to Wyller, British sociologist Kevin Hetherington develops his thinking on heterotopia without attaching ethical qualities to such spaces. To him, heterotopias are not primarily "sites of resistance, sites of transgression or marginal spaces" (1997: 9). Neither are they places of freedom and liberation from coercive power. Rather, heterotopias are "alternate form of ordering" (1997: 35). Hetherington relates this ethical arbitrariness of the heterotopia to Foucault's complex understanding of power. For Foucault, power is not a negative force itself; rather, it is a set of actions that acts upon another set of actions, from resistance to subordination. The relationship between the slave and the slave owner does not entail power: In this relationship, resistance is not possible and power ceases to be a stakeholder (Foucault 1982:220). Rather, Foucault coins the neologism "agonism"[14] as a way to describe the creative and performative nature of power, "a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle; less a face to face confrontation which paralyzes both sides and more a permanent struggle (Foucault 1982: 222).[15] Drawing a parallel to Foucault's notion of power as a relationship in which subordination and resistance happen simultaneously, Hetherington argues that the heterotopia is not a space where one is liberated from oppressive power or where the otherness of other is respected. Rather, it is a place where the vision of the utopia is deployed in a different way, opens to a different ordering that the present. For Hetherington, the role of the Palais Royal in Paris prior to the French Revolution is the prime example of a heterotopia. The Palais Royal was not a utopia – the ideal plan of modernity at the threshold of the old regime. It is the capacity to be "a place of otherness that expressed an alternate ordering of society

13 Indeed, Wyller is open about this potential problem. In his study of a Swedish parish engaged in practices of hospitality for people living without legal status in Sweden, he states that a more comprehensive ethnographic study than the one he has undertaken will reveal other dimensions of the congregation (B. Wyller 2016:65, footnote 4).

14 From Greek (*agon*), denoting the productive outcome of a competition.

15 For a further discussion on Foucault's understanding of power in relation to social work and activism, see Butler and Athanasiou, 2013.

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through its contact with the society that it despised" which make it into a heterotopia (1997:6).

In the following I will draw on Hethrington's use of heterotopia to identify practices, narratives, and reflections created through the spatial and practice wise transformation of Our Lady from a traditional Lutheran congregational church into an "open church." I ask whether and how these spatial arrangements and practices open for an alternate social dis/ordering compared to the traditional order of both the reality of street/commercial space (4.1) and ecclesial space (4.2). In the discussion (5), I ask how this may contribute to the diaconal and ecclesial discourse on heterotopia.

3. The empirical context: the Church of Our Lady

The meaning of any particular space is a complex product of social production (Soja 2010, Vesthelle 2004). After 2007, i.e., after being transformed into an "open church," the social production of the space of Our Lady is characterized by displacements: The line between the life of the outside street space and the life of the space within a prestigious[16] medieval church becomes porous. New and deliberate spatial arrangements dispossess traditionally compartmentalized spaces of their stability. The church is open from 9–18 hours on weekdays and open 24 hours a day on weekends. In the back part of the space, beneath the gallery, a kitchen has been inserted and the pews have been removed in order to make space for tables and chairs, creating a cozy café where free coffee and tea are served all day. Breakfast is served in the morning, on Thursday soup and on Saturday lunch. The regular guests of Our Lady is comprised of four groups: guests with Norwegian citizenship who suffer from different kinds of social marginalization, guests with Norwegian citizenship living with drug addiction, guests with Romanian citizenship of Roma origin who beg in the streets of Trondheim, migrant worker guests from diverse Central and Southern European countries. The groups of guests can spend large amount of their time in the church. Guests who spend less time in the church are Trondheim citizens who drop by to light a candle or participate in a service as well as Norwegian and international tourists who find their way to Our Lady to admire its grand baroque alter piece and beauty. The church is tended to by 266 volunteers.

16 Our Lady is listed as one of the 12 larger churches in Norway of national importance by the National Directorate of Cultural Heritage. When the church reopened on 11 November 2007 after extensive renovation, the King of Norway was present during the service, signaling the national importance of the building.

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4. Analysis: Our Lady as a heterotopic space

4.1 An alternate ordering of street space: Redeploying the utopia of the inclusiveness of the folk church

To understand Our Lady only as a "church" would miss a vital contextual dimension of what "church" means in particular context. Theologically, the Scandinavian folk church is an ecclesiology that understands church not as separate from the common majority culture, but as embedded in it (Myhre-Nielsen 1998). However, narratives from the reality of people suffering from different kinds of social marginalization undergoes a rupture when the conventional and consensual story of the folk church as inclusive and friendly to common secular culture is augmented with a critical class perspective: One employee informant highlights the church as a space of public and representational identity formation where the politics of social exclusion and inclusion peak. Before coming to Trondheim in the beginning of the 1990s, he worked as a street priest in the street ministry of another city in Norway. He narrates a story of how a woman in the drug-using community who considered herself a believer wanted to attend service on Sunday morning:

> NN was using drugs. She thought "Today I will go to church." She got as far as the stairs outside the entrance doors of the church. She saw the other churchgoers coming. She noticed that she had a big hole in her tights. She felt: "This is a space I cannot enter." She turned around and walked away.

This and other stories made the street priest reflect on how being denied access to practices and spaces of (the drug-free) normality was an independent source of hardship for people living with drug abuse on top of the daily struggle with housing, food, and health. In the story above, the limits of access to the church space are not drawn along lines of revivalist pietism (are you a proper Christian or are you not), but according to lines of the social convention of middle-class dress codes. On other words, the church space is a space for people who do not have holes in their clothes when they go to church. After starting his new job as street priest in the newly founded CCMT at the beginning of the 1990s, he was sitting on a bench outside Our Lady. The park surrounding Our Lady was (and still is) a hub of the drug community. A man approached him:

> "Is there space for me in your house?" At first I did not understand what he meant. I thought he was homeless and wanted to live in my house. (…) I did not know how to get out of the situation. He rescued me by saying "I mean the church." As a priest, my first impulse was to say "Of course there is room for you in the church!" But I could not utter the words because I knew that they were not true. I was quite sure that it would contradict his experiences. I do not think he would believe the words I was saying. (…) If we believe and want to tell others about a God who has room for all, we cannot do this in a different way than to show that the church has room for all.

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Thus, the formation of Our Lady as a hospitable church for people living outside normality can be interpreted as *ecclesial spatial justice*. The transformative element is the social reality that is produced by the space: The church space is no longer a space where people are excluded because they do not abide by dress codes or the obligation to stay sober or behave appropriately. To the informant, ecclesial spatial justice is performative theology: The spoken words of the radical inclusiveness of God have no meaning if they are not accompanied by the willingness to perform acts of radical social inclusiveness[17].

In the empirical material, a different dimension of Our Lady as justice surfaces. Death is an everyday matter in the drug community[18]. Several of the employee informants make a point out of how people living with drug addiction are intentionally or unintentionally prohibited from attending the funerals of deceased friends. In some cases, it is a matter of not being able to stay tolerably sober enough to attend or making it on time; in other cases, the family of the deceased actively prevents people in the drug community from attending by not announcing the place and time of the funeral publicly in the newspaper. Thus, conditions of societal exclusion and inclusion spill over into ritualizations of death and mourning. In Our Lady, the deaths of all members of the community (from guests to employees) are co-memorized with words, symbolic actions (a rose, a picture, a lighting of candles) during the Thursday service. This alternate ordering of the rituals of death of the folk church can be labeled *ritual justice* : People who are excluded from the practices of normality (funerals) are granted the right to be mourned and mourn.

Whereas the two first types of alternate ordering are shaped by practices of exclusion/inclusion, the third deals with precariousness/protection. Many of the regular guests of Our Lady live highly precarious lives. Fights over drug debts and other kind of violence are belong to the daily lives of some of the guests – especially those living with drug addiction[19]. Faced with this reality, creating spaces of protection is of pivotal importance. According to the empirical material, the socially produced idea of the church as a church space functions as a means of caring for a space of protection. Marte, a woman with a long and extensive experience as a host articulates this particular role of the church:

> Taking care of people because they are inside this space.… Some might be in danger outside, but here inside they are safe. It can be people who have overdosed. It can be

17 See Mainwaring (2014) for an elaboration of the organization of church space as a means of justice.

18 Shortly before my fieldwork was initiated, a woman of the drug using community was murdered.

19 One of the female informants living with drug addiction reports a threatening situation with her boyfriend and how she literally ran to the church to escape him.

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> people who seek refuge inside the church because they are being chased on the outside because of drug debt.

Our Lady plays a role as a space where the order and danger of street space are replaced by a new order: an order of protection. Yet this order of protection is fragile, both on a concrete and on an abstract level. Volunteers or employees have no formal medical training. Several host informants complain that other hosts are not attentive enough to the precarious medical conditions of many of the guests, and that the CCMT should provide better training for new hosts. On an abstract level, the idea of the church as a protective space is vulnerable because it is not supported by Lutheran dogma: According to Confessio Augustana, the church is where the Gospel is preached and sacraments are celebrated. The physical space is of no theological importance in itself. Thus, there is no power to enforce the idea of Our Lady as a space of protection – save the socially constructed idea of the church space as a space of difference compared to the outside secular space of the park and the street. However, maintaining the difference is of upmost importance. Street priest Gunnar reflects:

> The day the difference between the park and the church space is leveled out … if there is no difference … that means the end of Our Lady. The effect is that you move from the park and inside the church space. If someone says that the church space is just as sacred as an outdoor toilet[20], then Our Lady has no significance. Then it is uninteresting … Some weird volunteers warming up drug addicts. That's just a lot of nonsense.

In this quote Gunnar makes it clear that the impact of Our Lady is not to provide material goods to people living with drug addiction. Rather, Our Lady – as pointed out earlier in this section – redistributes access to space, practices, and symbols as ecclesial and ritual justice. Gunnar points to Our Lady's ability to function as a vehicle of redistribution of access to protective spaces (like ecclesial and ritual justice), which is conditioned by the prevalence of the socially constructed idea of church space as a space governed by a different set of social rules than the park and street space outside[21]. Thus, the traditional folk church

20 The view that the church space in no more sacred than an outdoor toilet ("lokum") was publicly proposed by a Danish bishop in a discussion on the legitimacy of church asylum in Denmark. Iraqi asylum seekers who had been living for years in Danish receiving centers sought refuge in a church in Copenhagen after their asylum applications had been turned down. The bishop scorned the refugees and their supporters for believing that the police would not enter the church space to arrest and deport the Iraqis asylum-seekers (Christoffersen 2013).

21 In other parts of the empirical material, the theologically trained informants reflect extensively on the lack of foundation of a theology of sacred space in Lutheran ecclesiology. They are very well aware of the difference between the socially constructed idea of the church space as sacred ground and CA's indifference to space. They do not confuse cultural imagination with theology. In the spatial typology of Westhelle (2004), one could say that it is Our Lady's capacity to become an epiphanic space that is at stake. An epiphanic space is a religious space, albeit one that refrains from attaching ontology quality to the physical space itself.

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imagination becomes an instrument of creating radically new experiences of justice and care.

In this section, I have depicted three ways in which Our Lady represent an alternate order compared to the order of the street space. The experience of exclusion from ecclesial rituals of mourning because of non-normative habits like drug addiction and the exposure to the potential violence of conflicts of drug debt is *countered as the only experience of the life on the streets of Trondheim* through the presences of an open sacred space in the middle of the city. Through extended opening hours, practices of hospitality, and a transformed floor plan, the socially constructed idea of the otherness of the church space is creatively exploited in order to create a protective space, care, and justice for those who live in precarious situations. The disorder of street space is dispossessed by the order of a space which – through its transformation in 2007 – includes, mourns, cares, and protects. It is a space that encompasses the reality of the street. The utopia of an inclusive church that mourns all deaths, that cares and protects everyone because all are created in the image of God is deployed in a new way. This utopia is no longer a drug-free, middle-class life; but in some instances it becomes available as well to people who for whatever reason live their lives outside normality. The cultural constructed idea of the church space as a space of difference is used as a means to protect those who live outside normality: drug users and – in the Danish case referred to by the street priest – asylum-seekers (see footnote 18). In this respect, Our Lady can be said to be heterotopia in Hetherington's use of the term.

4.2 An alternate ordering of the folk church space: Redeploying the utopia of the Christian God as a God who is revealed in the people of the street

However, there is a paradox here. Whereas volunteers, employees, and guests articulate the importance of the reiteration of the cultural and historical capital of the space as a means of creating justice and protection, the spatial arrangements of Our Lady are deliberately rigged to destabilize the set-up of a traditional church space. Being a space that is set apart from other spaces – the vehicle of the social production of spatial and ritual justice and protection – is continuously subverted by its hospital practices and long opening hours. Our Lady claims to be a church, but does not in fact perform what is culturally accepted as "church activities." Thus, cultural and religious possession of ecclesial space (a culturally prestigious place, a place of protection) gives way to the dispossession of ecclesial space through the introduction of new practices. The alternate orderings of 4.1 become not just sources of justice and protection, but also sources of critique of and resistance to traditional ecclesial spaces and practices. The nature of this critique and resistance has several dimen-

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sions. First, to many of the guest and host informants there is much general frustration with traditional ecclesial spaces. One host says:

> I have been to so many domes and churches before. It all becomes so pompous. What are all these empty cathedrals, all the small and large chapels, for? Money is spent only on these spaces for grand occasions. They are full only when some celebrity gives a concert. Sometimes the church of Norway consists of nothing more than a pile of liturgy and hymnals.

In contrast to a church structure fetishizing formality and predefined liturgy, another host interprets the practice of Our Lady as a space where the ethical and performative aspect of Christian faith comes to life:

> What fascinated me about Our Lady was that it was faith in action. You do not need to know Bible verses, but you did need to be able to help someone else. You needed a cup of coffee, you needed to be able to lie down and rest in the pews. To cover a human being who is freezing with a blanket, is that not the true "love your neighbor"? Does the plurality you find in Our Lady not reflect the plurality of creation? (…) Man does not live by bread alone. In Our Lady, you find both the bread and the Word.

Thus, the displacement of street and church space facilitate a shift from "churchiness" as a product of solely sacramental and ritual practices performed throughout the centuries (Sunday services and the occasional offices) to practices of care and comfort for the vulnerable other. As such, Our Lady becomes a heterotopia *not only* of the violence and precariousness of the street space, *but also* of the order of the ritual- and tradition-based Lutheran folk church of Norway. It represents a site of critique of the church ("sometimes the Lutheran church is just a pile of hymnals and liturgy") by understanding it not just as ritual practice and historical continuity, but as acts of care and mercy, more sincere and valid expressions of Christian faith.

Another and related dimension of Our Lady as a site of critique of and resistance to the order of traditional ecclesial spaces and its practices addresses the issue of the traditional forms of *teaching* from the pulpit and alter and *listening* in the news. When turning a space with such a familiar script of an ecclesial "division of labor" into a space for ethical practices, one could easily find this script being reproduced under different labels: Teaching put employees and hosts on the same level, being in the pews means being a guest. However, several of the host and employee informants talk extensively about the *reciprocal process of the performance of ethical practices*: Guests are not just recipients of care, but also givers of care towards other guests and hosts. Paraphrasing a key concept in liberation theology, this can be called the *affectional privilege of the marginalized*. Sissel, a former host and now a guest, recalls having been seriously ill and admitted to the hospital for long periods. She is eager to narrate how the community of guests supported her through the practice of lighting candles:

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> When I was ill, I experienced that there was an ocean of burning candles for me. It was the people of the street who lit candles for me. It was a kind of sensitivity that was missing among people who have stable lives. This says something about faith. This has given me a lot and has made me very happy. We have many Bible texts about this: the least shall be the first, the gift of the widow, and so on.

To Sissel, Our Lady becomes a place where Biblical parables are *performed* : It is a place where the "people of the streets" – who in terms of material goods and health are much worse off than herself – are given a space to care in a way that far supersedes the support she would have expected to receive from "people who have stable lives." In this way, the asymmetrical relationships of giver and receiver are shifted when the host becomes the object of care and support is performed by the guests. This is facilitated by practices that are open to the agency guests, like the lighting of candles. The marginal life situations of the guests who lit candles for her are not only material for transformation or rehabilitation, but are understood as a vehicle for making them more sensitive to her illness. Drawing on the Biblical sources of Matt 25 and Mark 12:44, human action is given a transcendental dimension. To Sissel, the social reality created in Our Lady not only converges with, but also confirms the social reality promised in the biblical stories.

The theologically trained employees add a level of epistemological privilege to the affectional privilege of the marginalized identified by nontheologically trained hosts. Ida says:

> When we are together in Our Lady, we are a congregation. It is the body of Christ. It is a simple as that. The identification with the body of Christ (in Our Lady) is so striking because there are so many poor among us. (…) Jesus is among us (…) because we see the wounds (*informant points towards the palm of her hand).* Jesus says it himself: among the sick, among those who are in prison. They are here! Sometimes there are people here who have been beaten several times, or have had a tooth knocked out. Or they sit there with this feeling that you can see from the outside of being chased.

The employee deploys the incarnation as a hermeneutical device for interpreting the presence of the guests in the most miserable life situations theologically: The pierced hands of Jesus become visible in the needle sticks of the drug addict, in the wounded flesh of the beaten and in the weary soul of someone filled with anxiety. The new order brought into the traditional ecclesial order of church space by the presence of people who have been beaten or have arms covered with scars from drug use represents a capacity to fully grasp the scandal of the incarnation: The body of Christ is to be found in the contemporary despised and afflicted bodies. The guests are not only recipients of care, but theologically essential in order for the space to remain (or become) a valid witness to the incarnation. Another theologically trained employee, Arne, pushes the point even further by pointing to the guests who sometimes represent the

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greatest disorder in the traditional order of an ecclesial space are the greatest asset of Our Lady:

> Church space is a space associated with phrases like "Be quite!" and "Sit down and behave!" "Behave!" "Hush!" "Sit still." Because of these connotations, we are blinded from seeing the messiness of life in the textual foundation of the church. In the Gospels, there is no "Be quiet" or "sit down." The gospels speak of people shouting Kyrie Elision, have mercy on me! There is yelling, shouting, crying and unclean spirits *en masse.* The texts speak of noisiness and things that smell bad. All this is present in Our Lady. (…) The people living on the streets are our greatest assent. (…) The day they no longer feel welcome and do not come here any longer, Our Lady is finished.

To this employee, the alternate ordering created is no longer the capacity of the church space to become a space of justice, protection, and care for the guests living precarious life. Rather, it is the disorder that is created by the very presence of these guests which needs to be protected from the staring gazes of the hosts and guests who consider their presence and behavior inappropriate in a church space. Thus, the dispossession of the church space of its traditional order by the most unruly guests is the greatest resource for rediscovering who the first receivers of the Gospel as good news were: the excluded and the despised. To discover this demands a method. To the informant, the method is to create a rupture in the specific cultural and religious meaning of a place: Biblical texts are not read and interpreted *anywhere.* Ritualizations do not occur in *a void:* Texts are read, interpreted, and ritualized in specific spaces, in the Norwegian culture called "church." As culturally and religiously prestigious spaces, these spaces are spaces where order easily becomes fetishized ("Church space is a space associated with phrases like "Be quite!" and "Sit down and behave!" "Behave!"). The hospitable practices of Our Lady create a rupture in this fetishizing of decency and decorum. Thus, in Our Lady, the utopia of the Christian God as a God who lives among and is made visible through the marginalized and despised is deployed not only as *talk* (in sermons, liturgy) but also as *embodied and experienced reality*. This reality is not a utopia, but a heterotopia: not perfect but messy and vulnerable. The openness and hospitality of the space is easily compromised by the stares of hosts and non-drug-using guests at the unruly drug-using guests. It would be easier to abandon the openness towards people who like Christ have visible wounds and sometimes behave in strange ways. Yet, the insistence of the heterotopic is constitutional to Our Lady. Without it, "Our Lady is finished."

5. Discussion

The analysis shows that when a prestigious church space undergoes a radical spatial rearrangement, the space may become a space of ecclesial and rit-

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ual justice. In this respect, Our Lady has become the heterotopia of the street life which its drug using guests are so familiar with. However, only focusing on spatial justice and care omits the most striking heterotopic aspect of Our Lady: Host and employee informants articulate the alternate ordering of traditional ecclesial space which occurs when the reality of street space is invited inside. People living with drug addiction become models of faith and physical hermeneutical devices for accessing the original context of the gospel. Utopias are deployed in new ways: Our Lady is not just a space in which to perform acts of mercy towards the marginalized. Our Lady contributes theologically to how Christianity should be performed and conceptualized in late modernity in order not to remain a "pile of hymnals." Just as much as the space is a space where spatial symbolic capital of a prestigious spaces is redistributed by giving people living in marginalized life situations access to these spaces, these very same people are the greatest theological assets of the practice itself. In this respect, Our Lady lives up to the most heterotopic space known to Foucault – the boat: "In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure and the police take the place of pirates" (2001: 244). Paraphrasing Foucault: Ecclesial or diaconal structures that do not allow themselves to be transformed into spaces where socially produced identities risk being dispossessed by contradictory hermeneutics and practices. They may turn out to be beautiful annexes of historical museums of past esthetical and religious practices but nothing more.

Hetherington's investigation of heterotopia pays no attention to Foucault's link between sacredness and heterotopias. Thus, at this point, we need to turn directly to Foucault himself. To Foucault, sacredness is a product of *maintaining differences* between private and public space, family space and social space, cultural and useful space. The empirical material presented in this article does not confirm this: My informants push heterotopia far beyond Foucault's own imagination. To the informants, it is the displacement and destabilization of socially produced spaces of difference which embody experiences of sacredness. The reason for this is the specific notion of sacredness found in the Christian narrative of the incarnation. Several informants use the story of the incarnation in order to understand sacredness as a quality nurtured by the displacement of the seemingly opposite space of God and human, stable and palace, ritually pure and ritually impure spaces. God is born in a stable, not in the palace of Herod; God dies as a blasphemer, a death administered by the pious. Thus, an incarnational sacredness does not nurture the *difference* between God and human, church and secular space, but rather the breaking down of such stable categories. In Our Lady, a performative and repetitive incarnation occurs when such opposites are displaced and thus break down. Rather than remaining in Foucault's notion of sacredness as a force that nurtures opposites, we see that returning to Hetherington's heterotopia as an "agonism" – the understanding of resistance and submission as productive – is

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more fruitful in order to theologically understand the dynamic relationship between street space and church space. The risk of the incarnation is continuously performed in the unresolved incitation between respect and irreverence, between street and church space. Our Lady performs the incarnation through what we may call an *ecclesial agonism:* It is an ecclesial space where the drug addict is a miserable recipient of care and protection (Marte), but at the same time a role model for people who have "stable lives" (Sissel) and the greatest asset for theologically rediscovering essential qualities of the Gospel (Ida, Arne). In order for its order to be both order and disorder, Our Lady depends on the idea of the church space as a space set apart from ordinary space (park, street). Yet, at the same time, this set-apart-ness is continuously being subverted through its practices of hospitality towards those who live in such "ordinary spaces": extensive opening hours, tolerance towards people who are intoxicated, hosts geared towards creating a protective space, free coffee and food. Thus, when refining the heterotopia theory complex through empirical studies like this one of Our Lady, it is worth asking: Is Our Lady not a heterotopic church, but rather an example of *ecclesial agonism* ?

Wyller's trajectory on heterotopia emphasizes the ethical supremacy of such spaces when the professional relations which occur allows for being "formatted in the icon of the other" (Wyller 2009:209). Such spaces are examples of new spaces for sacredness in late modernity. However, the intellectual benefit of choosing Hetherington's understanding of heterotopia instead of Wyller's is that ambivalence and displacement is brought into the theoretical lens. This understanding of heterotopia does not ask weather Our Lady allows the other to remain fully other or if sacredness flows from the will to be transformed by the other. Rather, it asks how utopias can be deployed in new ways, both the ecclesial utopia of the folk church space as an inclusive and protective space for all and the theological utopia of the Christian God as a God who is revealed through the lives of marginalized people. This understanding of heterotopias in Christian social work and ecclesial practices points to a space *between* Wyller's wholly otherness of the other and traditional spaces of diaconia which – as Wyller rightly observes – too often have harbored discipline just as much as hospitality.

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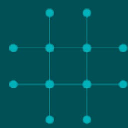
8.3 Article III

An Ecclesiology of a Queer Kenosis? Risk and Ambivalence at Our Lady, Trondheim, in Light of the Queer Theology on Kenosis of Marcella Althaus-Reid”. Published in Feminist Theology 2020, Vol. 28, issue 2. Pages: 216-230.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