

# Political Diaconia in a New Multicultural and More Hidden Europe

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## Why Dignity is Only Fulfilled through Religion

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**Abstract:** This essay examines the ethical-political role of diaconia that is bound up in the way ethnic-resurgence is framed in the sociology of Dominique Schapper . In the essay I support Schnapper. She has conceded to diaconia and the minorities a historic role in forming ideas of democratization. In my own formulation, her position of “civic republicanism” contrasts with the position of cosmopolitan diaconia in a way that engenders new ideas of how to think of diaconia in the new Europe. My contention is that political diaconia generates a social influence in the sense that it is paradoxically both political and apolitical, and sometimes anti-political, in that it defends dignity through practicing goodness as its own distinct entity. Dignity can only be fulfilled through religion. An indispensable role for diaconia in the new Europe is to mediate the voices of various ethnicities and religions. This understanding also renders diaconia a multicultural position. Diaconia is cosmopolitan and therefore inter-religious and inter-ethnic at the same time. It is pluralistic in its essence.

**Keywords:** political and kosmopolitic diaconia, civic republicanism, citizenship, multiculturalism

## 1. 0. Introduction: The New Situation for Political Diaconia in Europe.

In European perspective, the “political” has been considered a realm of its own. It is the sphere in which symbolic programs, policies and subsequent interventions give disadvantaged people a new share in the social form of existence. Democratization is the process by which dignity is increased and equality is promoted by an “intervention state,” that is, a state that discerns between the prevalent order of distribution and what ought to be. If no willful agency interferes in the success or failure of our share taking in the political realm, then life in Europe will turn out to be a product of particularities of birth, wealth, ethnic or religious ties, with a hidden Europe beneath.

One aspect of democratization the manner in which the European nations were constructed with notions of “majority” and “minority,” ideas of civic representation and mechanisms of identity formation. The critique from proponents of multiculturalism has been that modern European nation-states were constructed with a negative relationship towards the ethnic and religious minorities in their midst. The modern political nations, in distinction from the ethnic nations that try to build ethnically homogenous political states, define their communities as consisting of values, beliefs, traditions and institutions.<sup>1</sup> In this regard the ‘people’ of the nation is a non-ethnic, political and legal concept, and it is in opposition to the sovereignty of ‘the King’. For this reason political discourse comes to address and reflect on two central terms of political sovereignty: ‘people’ and ‘the sovereign.’ Thus two aspects of constraints towards minorities are enacted. ‘People’ consists of majorities that will try to impose their style of life upon others. “The sovereign” represents temporal power versus spiritual power. Nevertheless, the sovereign also organizes the political body and the body politic, and personalizes the whole spectrum of social and juridical relations, in physical, metaphysical or (even) theological terms.<sup>2</sup> Here, religious minorities and ethnic groups are expected both to integrate and to conform. The minorities or diasporas that build their identities on non-judiciary relations or their own systems of education or care will experience pressure.

In this sense democratization is always adjusted to our conception of nations, states, people, the sovereign and religion, and in this way we designate *who has a part in the political*. Said, Valenta and Chakrabarty have demonstrated how property is distributed along historical lines of descent, and inheritance and ownership is embodied by national narratives.<sup>3</sup> Ethnic or religious minorities that did not integrate came to be thought of as the hidden underside of Europe, dissidents held to be controlled as poor and deviations from proper descent.

This is problematic for diaconia. In my estimation, diaconia cannot be exempted from this multiculturalist critique. The literature on political diaconia, especially the work of Meyer, has shown how ‘political diaconia’ shows close affinities to the national narrative of descent. The response to

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<sup>1</sup> Heckmann, F. (1994). Nation, nation-state and policy towards ethnic minorities. Muslims in Europe. B. L. D. Schnapper. London, New York, Pinter: 116-129. Esp.p. 120, 122,127

<sup>2</sup> de Vries, H. (2006). Introduction. Political Theologies Public Religions in a Post-Secular World. New York, Fordham University Press: 1-90.60.Cf.Asad, T. (2006). Trying to understand French Secularism. Political Theologies Public Religions in a Secular World. H. d. V. a. L. E. Sullivan. New York, Fordham University Press: 494-526.,

<sup>3</sup> Valenta, M. G. Ibid.How to recognize a Moslem When You See One: Western Secularism and the Politics of Conversion. H. d. V. a. L. E. Sullivan: 444-474.,461 Ref. is to Said, E. W. (1994). Culture and imperialism. New York, Vintage.,and Chakrabarty, D. (2008). Provincializing Europe : postcolonial thought and historical difference. Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press.

societal poverty is not the only constitutive aspect of the formation of 'political diaconia'. According to Meyer, (Germany) *diaconia* emerged through a tense fusion of national consciousness with a specific framing of social Protestant or Catholic religion.<sup>4</sup> The ethos of political diaconia of people and sovereignty is constructed by a metamorphosis of the kind of spirituality that is characterized by free and open practice, with ideas of professional summoning, and ideas of integration derived from policies. With the principle of democratization framed by the principle of integration and ties with the nation churches, political actors were often eager to develop a 'mechanism' of enacting discipline between the forms of diaconia, nation-building and minority policies. This may be a reason why the contemporary literature of diaconia tacitly resists the symbol of 'political diaconia'.

For a theology that seeks to affirm the multiculturalist argument, it can be fruitful to recapitulate the idea of 'political diaconia.' Perhaps we can envision another kind of political diaconia? What I am positing is that political diaconia is, by principle, not to be identified with the idea of nation states and nation-building. Rather, in New Testament theology, 'political diaconia' refers to a service of sovereignty (people or the sovereign) that can take place everywhere irrespective of the type of political organization. This service may have a character somewhat resembling political acts. It is simply false to identify political diaconia with the conduct of a specified political service of ordering people, sovereignty, nation and minorities. The Greek noun 'polis' (city, the social), derived from 'politeumai,' (to live in a city), is used by Paul in Phil. 3:20 and has its semantic *horizon* set first and foremost by messianic Judaism and the understanding of faith that places people in relation to God's grace.<sup>5</sup>

In the socio-theology of Paul, 'polis' refers to the eschatological assembly *in* Christ. Diaconia is the practice of a Messianic cosmopolitanism that retains a pluralistic summoning, as exemplified in the early hymnologies, namely, the sapiential poetics and didactic texts of 2. Cor. 8:9-15, Phil. 2:1-11, 3:20, Col.1:15-20 and Mt. 25:31-46. The neighbor and thus partner of our caring is never the one we identify with national narratives. The theology and sociology of diaconia originate in the universal epiphanies of the other (God, neighbor), thus retaining a determinable indeterminacy. Suffering is a condition for which people and the sovereign are responsible, thus requiring that those held responsible for causing it are addressed and asked to turn towards recapitulating the good life. This citizenship involving a turn towards the other is to be lived in this world. The diasporas of Christ take service and the spending of gifts through works of love to be the sovereign utterances of the polis.<sup>6</sup> The range of this "third sovereignty" is unlimited. Encounter with the ethnic communities allows diaconic political imagination to stretch beyond boundaries. Borders become irrelevant for framing dignity and thinking politically.

The plurality that is claimed as central to cosmopolitan European ideas of citizenship and multiculturalism conjures up links to the discourse on the fulfillment of dignity and calls for the reevaluation of diaconia's summoning. Do we still need a mechanism of diaconia inside political nations, or should diaconia serve the ethnic-religious ties? Can the defense of dignity and equality be

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Especially Meyer, O. (1974). "Politische" und "Gesellschaftliche Diakonie" in der neueren Theologischen Diskussion. Göttingen, Vandenhock & Ruprech., 87-88. See the article Congar, Y. (1953). Jalons pour une théologie du laïcité. Paris. A range of essays on secularization and secularity emphasize how states apply policies to make institutional religions to integrate and cooperate. Churches exist through this cooperation.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Hartwich Wolf-Daniel; Assmann, A. A., Jan (2004). Afterword. The Political Theology of Paul A. Assman, Assman, Jan. Stanford Ca., Stanford University Press. 112,140.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.122, see also page 130.

fulfilled irrespective of the practice of diaconia, or is Christlike diaconia indispensable for fulfilling democratization? To reflect on these issues, we must clarify a new situation of diaconia.

## **2. 0. The Sociology of Dominique Schnapper, a Challenge to Diaconia?**

Developments in France pertain significantly to this discussion. They may be seen as exemplifying the route late modern European politics will take in the future. Due to increased immigration and a long history of secularization (Laïcité), France emerges as a laboratory and melting pot of change in framing nationality, regulating diaconia<sup>7</sup> and controlling ethnic resurgence (laïcité).<sup>8</sup> Here we concentrate on the work of Dominique Schnapper. Positioned as a sociologist and appointed director at the Haute d'études Sociales in Paris, she has conducted unique studies on nationality, secularity and religious and ethnic resurgences, as well as post-sociality and democratization.<sup>9</sup> Schnapper, however, departs from the principle of Laïcité. Like her father, Raymond Aron, she defends the centrality of a civic citizenship and the idea of civic republicanism.<sup>10</sup> Of particular significance and theological relevance is how she thinks the new development of Europe has been invigorated by secularism. Europe's recent experience of a loss of the idea of transcendence, has Europe deviating from its roots – there emerges a new *post-social Europe* with citizens that are less eager to let the state intervene and claim solidarity from its citizens. For Schnapper, this is the challenge of democratization that we all face. Without addressing this new type of citizen, we will not succeed in enhancing democracy. The new "democracy man" will not let himself/herself be thought of as a person with duties unto others. And this also calls the principle of redistribution into question. There is no guarantee that the future will allow for further democratization and the defense of dignity.

To continue defending democratization, Schnapper seeks to demonstrate the manner in which democratization must fit in with the multiculturalist stance. The post-social claims can best be met by developing 'ethnic neutral states,' which are organized in federal networks where 'ethnic' means not to betray the values claimed by centralized European citizenship.<sup>11</sup> Her thoughts regarding democratization and her stance towards multiculturalism are, here, consistent with the political philosophy of J. Rawls, J. Habermas and J-M. Ferry in that they see secularism as *neutral* independent ethics and enablers of religious and ethnic diversity.<sup>12</sup> Like these other thinkers, Schnapper sees national republicanism as relativized by infra-national and supra-national development. For her, however, civic republicanism implies the relevance of building a political mechanism for defending the values of community, provided by European citizenship, mobilized and effectuated by officials. Specific to her argument is the way in which she relativizes political nationhood. In order to give ethnic and religious minorities back their dignity, it is necessary that Europe reorganize into a federal community where minorities gain the same dignity through citizenship as every other citizens

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<sup>7</sup> Winninger, P. (1962). Die Gesichtspunkte für eine erneuerung des diakonats in Frankreich. Diaconia in Christo. K. R. a. h. Vorgrimler. Breisgau, Herder KG: 431-434. Winninger takes Laïcité to weaken diaconia.

<sup>8</sup> Barras, A. (2010). "Contemporary Laïcité: Setting the Terms of a New Social Contract? The Slow Exclusion of Women Wearing Headscarves." Totalitarian Movements & Political Religions 11(2): 229-248.

<sup>9</sup> See especially the core texts: Schnapper, D. (1993). "Ethnies et nations." Cahiers de recherche sociologique 20: 157-167, Schnapper, D. (1993). "Le sens de l'ethnique-religieux." Arch.de Sc.soc.des Rel. 81(janvier-mars): 149-163, Schnapper, D. (1998). Community of citizens : on the modern idea of nationality. New Brunswick, N.J., Transaction Publishers, Schnapper, D. (2009). Providential democracy. Paris, Transaction Publishers.

<sup>10</sup> Hacoen, M. H. (2009). ""The Strange Fact That the State of Israel Exists": The Cold War Liberals between Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism." Jewish Social Studies: History,Culture,Society 15(2 (Winter)): 37-81.38,40

<sup>11</sup> Schnapper, D. (2009). Providential democracy. Paris, Transaction Publishers. 145,148,154,161 Schnapper, D. (2002). "Citizenship and national identity in Europe." Nations and Nationalism 8(1): 1-14., 12-13

<sup>12</sup> Schnapper, D. (2009). Providential democracy. Paris, Transaction Publishers.159-160

situated in the states. This is the position of non-national civic republicanism. We will follow this argument successively in the pages that follow. In my own formulation, her position of “civic republicanism” contrasts with the position of cosmopolitan diaconia in a way that engenders new ideas of how to think of diaconia in the new Europe.

Her position is also theologically relevant. More than many other, she admits the historic centrality of a Protestant or Catholic calling, that is, how the ethos of neighborly love and diaconia /charity changed Europe. In her work she contends that individuals translated the political call of diaconia into the political initiative of democratic bureaucracy and institutional practices. Historically European policies emerged with a spiritual dimension. The idea of a comprehensive, universal and intervening welfare state is, or was, highly correlated with protestant and catholic religion as a cultural denominator.<sup>13</sup>

Of vital theological and critical importance is Schnapper’s thesis of a ‘weakening of transcendence.’ What is at stake in Europe, she says, is ‘the transcendent marker.’ Underlying the historical idea of political intervention mediated by nations was an ambition to create an abstract political society by transcending particularities. What defines a nation is the social form by the fact of citizenship.<sup>14</sup> This form, however, is not pure. The idea of a ‘nation’ presupposes a tie between myth-symbol complexes in the European nation, the institutional religions comprising a concept of the transcendent God and more down-to-earth concerns as well. This is why the European nations are singular, constructed by centralization and the relations amongst various religious entities.<sup>15</sup> The idea of an intervening state has been highly correlated with Western religion. Schnapper considers the influence of institutional religions on professions as one influence that sustained democratic intervention. In discourses concerning the influence of professions, religious connotations crop up frequently. Vocations use love of neighbor, reference to charity, prophetic or priestly calling, witness, spiritual adventure, devotion, meaning of existence and confession. Professional conduct was a form of the sacred.<sup>16</sup>

In an article on Judaism she also contrasts the diaconia imbued with political state sovereignty over against the service provided by minorities. Central to Schnapper’s multiculturalist position is her distinction between the service of officials imbued within the political nation and the solidaric network of the diasporas. The poor diasporas and proletarian populations--the Jews, the Greeks, the Armenians, and others--formed organizations of transnational and infra-national symbolic or material solidarity.<sup>17</sup> These associations were capable of forming professions and fostering an ethos of obligation. Populations that could refer to memory of tragedy, books or the religious ideas of their people had a greater chance of survival. If these could invest their identities with institutional networks and conduct a tacit ‘federalism’, they could be capable of flipping the meaning of exile “upside down and reversing their marginalization and lower status.” Cit:

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<sup>13</sup> Schnapper, D. (2009). Providential democracy. Paris. Esp. 99-126.

<sup>14</sup> Schnapper, D. (1998). Community of citizens : on the modern idea of nationality. New Brunswick, N.J., Transaction Publishers. 35, 65, especially 90-91, 101, 118

<sup>15</sup> Schnapper, D. (2009). Providential democracy. Paris, Transaction Publishers. 2, 12, Schnapper, D. (1998). Community of citizens : on the modern idea of nationality. New Brunswick, N.J., Transaction Publishers.

<sup>16</sup> Schnapper, D. (2009). Providential democracy. Paris, Transaction Publishers. 27, 36, 108-120

<sup>17</sup> Schnapper, D., Davis, Denise L. (1999). "From the Nation-State to the Transnational World: On the Meaning and Usefulness of Diaspora as a Concept." Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies 8(3). 225-6, 231-3, 9, 251

*“The culture of diaspora is founded on those institutions that endeavor to control everyday behavior, such as religious practices, the education of children, the conclusion of marriages within the transnational groups, celebrations and specific religious and/or national demonstrations, and so on. This also assumes the perpetuation of exchanges with other establishments of the diaspora.”<sup>18</sup>*

Since faith is an issue in the networks of the diasporas, Schnapper will also concede to “myth” as an objective reality that can be effective. People live in and by their imagination. . This fact has been demonstrated by the history of the formation of Israel. It was formed from populations, for properly religious reasons. Cit.;

*“That myth is an objective reality”, and that it can be effective, has been demonstrated by the history of the formation of the nation of Israel. It was formed from populations... who “went up” to Eretz Israel, for properly religious reasons in a messianic movement.”<sup>19</sup>*

For Schnapper, this influence can be explained as existing between the historical situation, self-definition and hetero-definition of the diaspora. The relations with the particular group and nations that make up the diaspora will manifest the patterns of exchange, solidarities and mobilizations.<sup>20</sup>

Here, Schnapper is close to conceding an idea of diaconia as federal or even cosmopolitan. In fact, this might have inspired her interest in arguing for a federal civic non-national state. Her argument for civic neutral, yet spiritual, republicanism can to some extent be interpreted as a secularized version of the networked community. Yet, this observation of diaspora or myth is not decisive for her way of conceptualizing the formation of the social. In the conflict between hetero-definition and self-definition that appears in diasporic situations, she concedes that the pressure of the states is dominant. Minorities, or ‘ethnies’ (her term) do not exist as entities isolated from politics.

As regards the churches, ‘the sacred dimension’ (her wording), which is made up of faith, situations of life and death and humanist or political values, and which the ecclesiastic agents and the professions of vocations sustained, is diminishing. The professions that generated collective values are affected by the erosion of collective transcendence.<sup>21</sup>

Religion and minorities are all in the melting pot. Some minorities may uphold an identity and a network of services (diaconia) by maintaining self-definition. But this is not the tendency.

It is decisive for her that the loss of transcendence not only changes modernity but changes the religions themselves. Modernity not only weakens religion, it also produces new forms of religion. Because of the fact that modernity is rationalistic and does not give place for the search for meaning, people will try to find meaning in small collectives. The individuals that are not recognized as persons can find a successful outlet in religious resurgences and ethnic affirmation. She contends that the need for meaning and the need to be recognized can be satisfied by the emotionality that is present in both religious and ethnic movements. Furthermore, for Schnapper, these movements make up a provisional culmination of secularization. Individuals improvise and recompose elements from ethnic or national memory to produce a new moral code based on religion and history, such that emotion and community now have a greater influence than reference to a personal God and to membership in churches.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid. Cit.234

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.Cit.234

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 233

<sup>21</sup> See Schnapper, D. (2009). *Providential democracy*. Paris, Transaction Publishers.124.

However, this need to give meaning is only provided on the individual level, not in churches or institutionalized congregations. Schnapper develops an ontology of the social phenomena of religion and the ethnic resurgences that emerge or appear in tense convergence and conflation with other forms, especially that of the new “user,” which now designates all sorts of relationships. These form a sense of disperse connections that give meaning to the development and the identification of the new democratic man. For the reason that the new democratic man will not bear responsibility and argue from a “post-social” situation, politics has to rethink how we conceptualize democratization and intervention.<sup>22</sup> How the author thinks of this dynamism as *irreversible* is decisive.<sup>23</sup> To address the challenge of a more divided multi-ethnic multi-religious Europe, Schnapper argues for an ‘ethnic neutral state,’ where the form of transcendence intrinsic within the idea of an intervening state still shall play a role, but now a more modest one.<sup>24</sup> In “Providential Democracy,” originally written in 2002, she suggests that Europe develops neutral providential states where all services are publicly established and differentiated. Schnapper argues for a new citizenship, created in a European project.<sup>25</sup> In another essay, she argues for the necessity of dismissing national citizenship by breaking the link to the nation-states as a political project.<sup>26</sup> This development would mean the construction of a European public space within which the members would recognize each other as citizens. This would be conveyed in a new spirituality that breaks the links between citizenship and nations. An ethnic intervention state, where the ethnic aspect retains a dimension of neutrality, means that services take into account the singularities of groups and fight racism and discrimination.<sup>27</sup> The state operates at an ethnic level, because it (the state)...

*“is induced to intervene ever more often in social, economic and family life, as well as to recognize ethnic particularism more or less symbolically, more or less directly”.*

*“The growing intervention of the state in all fields of social life tends to make ever less perceptible the distinction between the public and private realm, a distinction upon which the principles of both liberalism and French republicanism were founded”.*<sup>28</sup>

In Schnapper’s formulation, the new type of ethnic- religions, which she calls “elective communities,” may compensate for late modernity’s tendency to measure persons by the particularities of ability and merit, and to answer for our need to be recognized as persons. These associations form an emotional passion-oriented basis for group coherence, but they are not accorded as a generative influence on collective or supranational sociality.<sup>29</sup> The notion of a personal God, a transcendental reference, is superseded by a conception that is moral, humanitarian and secularistic in essence. Cit:

*“The sacred dimension – made up of religious belief, situations of life and death, humanist or political values - is diminishing. The professionals that gave an even indirect or modest shape to collective*

<sup>22</sup> Schnapper, D. (2003). "The Ethnoreligious Field in nation building." *International Journal of Sociology* 24(2/3): 61-80. Especially, 29,73-75,78-79.

<sup>23</sup> Schnapper, D. (2009). *Providential democracy*. Paris, Transaction Publishers.75, 162,

<sup>24</sup> See Ibid, 201: “The idea of transcendence...can only be the result of effort in the name of social justice values ... a form of transcendence inherited from the Judeo- Christian tradition and then secularized.”

<sup>25</sup> Schnapper, D. (2002). "Citizenship and national identity in Europe." *Nations and Nationalism* 8(1): 1-14.,esp. 12-13., Conf. Schnapper, D. (2009). *Providential democracy*. Paris, Transaction Publishers.

<sup>26</sup> Schnapper, D. (2002). "Citizenship and national identity in Europe." *Nations and Nationalism* 8(1): 1-14.,9

<sup>27</sup> Schnapper, D. (2009). *Providential democracy*. Paris, Transaction Publishers. 161

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. Both citations, 161

<sup>29</sup> Schnapper, D. (2003). "The Ethnoreligious Field in nation building." *International Journal of Sociology* 24(2/3): 61-80.72

values, and thereby instituted them, are affected by the erosion of collective transcendence, be it religious or political.”<sup>30</sup>

### 3.0. Critique: Rethinking Civic Liberalism, Multiculturalism and Political Diaconia.

There is no doubt that Europe changes. The framing of diaconia as a social-political phenomenon that appears in Schnapper’s work is intriguing many reasons, not the least of which is it’s the way it conceptualizes a change in the attitude of the new democratic man towards the service of others. Nevertheless, there is also a change in the state. Who speaks for political diaconia? In the “polis,” the version of the social and the political that Schnapper deploys, *there exists no possibility that diaconia can emerge as a significant political force*. The centralist state, with its appointed services and limited ethos of transcendence, seems to be granted a monopoly of services. Diaconia can exist in small pockets and ties with small minorities or with churches that still do charity work. For democracy to be representative of the people, however, we need a new supranational and infranational mechanism for articulating and authorizing the power of the state to intervene and redistribute. Institutional religion does not have *the capacity* to form a pedagogy and to communicate an ethos of summoning responsibility and neighbor-love. In Schnapper’s formulation, only the state can do this kind of work. Political diaconia is a ghost from the past, never to resurrect and live again.

For theology it remains indispensable to conceive of diaconia by not being a prisoner of the heterological definition of diaconia that Schnapper deploys in her sociology. While secularization can be stated as a process with many faces, Ricoeur speaks in this regard of a ‘conflict of interpretations’. In Ricoeur’s opinion the danger of every political discussion is to frame (describe) political possibility within a thin description of actuality, allude to possibilities and exclude other possibilities. In my estimation, Schnapper falls into the danger of framing possibility by electing some sociological phenomena and allude to these as “constitutive” for explanation.<sup>31</sup> Like other interpretation, sociological understanding is projected towards possibilities, where the frame is guided and mediated by a blueprint of what has come before, in a hermeneutic circle. Otherwise one cannot employ meaningful political-social ontologies. The reflection of diaconia is subject to the same need for making interpretations and descriptions. The phenomenon of political possibility is yet more troublesome. For a social-political theology, like the apostle Paul’s, possibility is not to be extracted from actuality. The only situation where possibility coincides fully with actuality is in God. The *en Christo*, the diaconia in Christ, will concede that there are actualities that are not yet realized possibilities.<sup>32</sup> The sociological-political “posse” of tomorrow is not the possible of today. Reading Schnapper is to catch sight of several contrasting dynamics that occur in tense fusion. Her insight in how Europe has changed and may continue to change is insightful, but theology cannot force sociological possibility to embrace theological possibility.

Theological possibility points to the possibility that the Other also can appear as neighbor from the hidden underside of Europe, situated below the new democratic man. For this reason political diaconia has to employ a kind of “poetics of the possible” (Kearney). Like Paul that could concede to Christ’s presence in the neighbor, the ethnies of the world, and also develop a new notion of

<sup>30</sup> Schnapper, D. (2009). *Providential democracy*. Paris, Transaction Publishers. Cit,124.

<sup>31</sup> Fisher, L. (1997). *Mediaton, Mythos, and the Hermeneutic Circle in Ricoeur's narrative theory* Paul Ricoeur and Narrative. M. Joy. Calgary, University of Calgary Press.209

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Kearney, R. (2001). *The God who may be A Hermeneutics of Religion*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press. Cf also the commentary in Bloechl, J. (2006). *Christianity and possibility. After God*. New York, Fordham Univ Pr: 127-138. (on the possibility of love) , See references to Ricoeur in these books.

sovereignty, the sovereignty of love. Political diaconia of our time must try to re-imagine how the polis of God is erected among the nations, in the minorities, in and in between the states of the EU and ultimately in the world. To serve the political is to serve this polis in this world and to deploy its services by asking: Who is the neighbor, who is *possibly* the political subject that we, as a collective or as individuals, *are* to serve? To concede to the sovereignty of love is to concede to interventions that are apolitical and yet, at the same time, also political. It is to concede to weakness as a hidden power that yet “enthrones” and bring possibility.<sup>33</sup>

This conflict of interpretation is already present in the way Paul addressed the Roman federal state of his time. The Pauline ‘polis’ which was organized in diasporic networks and regarded itself as a cosmopolitan city in Christ, brought Paul into conflict with the Imperium Romanum, which embodied the same claim. The fight for giving and spending love and goodness for the sake of one’s neighbor was not granted the dignity of being equal. A facet of politics emerged as hetero-logical to the dominant political discourse of its time.

In the course of history this conflict has become vivid also in our time. It arises in our discussion too. Kant derived his notion of cosmopolitan citizenship from Paul’s text, but exhorted charity from it.<sup>34</sup> Kant could think of a summoning transcendence and related it to the moral law within us, thus individualizing the call and distancing it from its institutional origins, pedagogy and care. “We are in doubt whether it (the summoning) comes from man, from the perfect power of his own reason, or whether it comes from an other whose essence is unknown to us and speaks to man through his own reason.”<sup>35</sup> But by considering summoning within the confines of reason Kant saw no place for emotion and love in liberalism.

Political theology, the secular form or the theological, oscillates between seeing the political as embodied by divine sovereignty, on the one hand, and embodied in the earthly sovereign, or the people, on the other hand. The political has a horizontal meaning and a vertical meaning, it accentuates transcendence and immanence.<sup>36</sup> Whoever uses “political theology” risks sanctioning policies and programs that accentuate either of these coordinates over against the other. Political theology that, like Paul’s, imbues diaconia with political acts, will cross constellations, deconstruct and try to retrieve what is in between, silenced or hidden in discourses.<sup>37</sup> Political theology will deauthorize the structuring of the idea of the political when composite with a mobile army of anthropomorphisms and metaphors (sovereign/people, nation/ethnic, public/private, or religious/secular) as binding political truths. It will question the *usages* of description, and will practice Christ like possibility by emptying individuals of objective security and attempt to

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<sup>33</sup> Ricoeur, P. (2004). Memory, History and Forgetting. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press. 468

<sup>34</sup> Kant, I. (2006). Towards perpetual peace (Zum Ewigen Frieden). Toward perpetual peace and other writings on politics, peace and history. K. P. New Haven & London, Yale University Press. In “the Groundwork of Morals”, Kant derived a duty of charity from the categorical imperative. The argument therefore got no validity in political philosophy since political philosophy does not consider internal states of wills or aims. Cf.: Waldron, J. (1986). “Welfare and the Images of Charity.” The Philosophical Quarterly 36(145): 463-482.,466

<sup>35</sup> See Valenta, M. G. (2006). How to recognize a Moslem When You See One: Western Secularism and the Politics of Conversion. Political Theologies Public Religions in a Secular World. H. d. V. a. L. E. Sullivan. New York, Fordham University Press: 444-474. Ref. to Kant 472.

<sup>36</sup> Hartwich Wolf-Daniel; Assmann, A. A., Jan (2004). Afterword. The Political Theology of Paul A. Assman, Assman, Jan. Stanford Ca., Stanford University Press. 140

<sup>37</sup> See especially Kearney, R. (1988). The Wake of Imagination. London and New York, Routledge, Kearney, R. (2010). Anatheism. New York, Columbia University Press.

recapitulate the usages hidden under certain contenders of what is now described as 'a polis'. There is a Hidden Europe that addresses and summons us to response.

This conflict appears frequently in Schnapper's various works too. Taken as a whole, her political philosophy and sociology is highly congruent with liberalism in its core assumptions. In my assessment, Schnapper too easily concedes identification of the new man with the democratic man. The providential state becomes ethnic and neutral by affirming the values of modern democracies, and acknowledges how the modern man is post-social in his inclination towards the other, and yet transcends particularities.<sup>38</sup> A critical point, I suggest, is the matter of how one isolate "the neighbor"? What is a neighbor? How do we group neighbors? Schnapper does not see the ethnic or religious resurgences capable of engendering a serving responsibility towards neighbors. Either does she discuss these new resurgences in a wider framework of religion. Dignity is encapsulated within citizenship. Since citizenship becomes the central category, this category will trump every attempt to relate citizenship more direct to the phenomena of cosmopolitan dignity and the discourse of the religions. The subject that politics is to serve is, in its core, the new democratic 'users', under which several persons of minorities and religions are granted rights and citizenship.

Churches are useful inasmuch as they still maintain an ethos of transcendence, albeit in a limited way. Reading Schnapper is to catch sight of several contrasting dynamisms of political consciousness and summoning, which have now been modified into two coordinates for the sake of forming singularities: The first of these coordinates, and the most important, is utilitarian or instrumental rationality that fuses with the economic, user-oriented 'man' that claims to fulfill desires. And the second coordinate, placed under the first, is a romantic legacy that sees emotions and passion fused with types of ethnic and religious consciousness that claim rights, institutions or more, but yet do not play a dominant role in authorizing political power. If Europe shall exist as a network, there must be a political form of the social that gives significance to the way in which the democratic man claims to fulfill desires and drives. This typifying of contrasting dynamism can also be classified as political subjectivation, or, more disputably, universalization. By characterizing singularities and then typifying them one is in danger of constructing political identities that become historical and therefore normative. This is because they become "entities" of a reality that politicians must reorder and address, thus dividing between those that have a part in the polis and those that have not.<sup>39</sup>

Positing a mechanism of principles in the symbolic and programmatic policies of bureaucracies will function in the same way. The discourse on dignity and equality in intervention policies exists in fluid relation to these functions. Schnapper's discussion, which addresses the policy of neutrality provided by state officials and terms it a variation of 'ethnic', is not an exception.

It is noticeable that while the ethnic factor puts the religious factor to use by reinforcing the passions and emotions, "religion" is, in Schnapper's model, never capable of relocating a political sociality that is self-defined by the minorities. The individualized religion that occurs in suburbs, diasporas or elective associations does not engender a social impulse strong enough to recycle an idea of collective responsibility and transcendence of the particular allegiances. Myths may constitute an objective reality. They can be effective, but the force of myths also reveals its limits. Ethnies generate

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<sup>38</sup> Schnapper, D. (2009). *Providential democracy*. Paris, Transaction Publishers.21

<sup>39</sup> See 6, 10-11,29,esp, 35-42, Ranciere, J. (1995). *Disagreement Politics and Philosophy*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, Zizek, S. (2009). The Lesson of Rancière (Afterword). *The Politics of Aesthetics*. London New York, Continuum: 69-79.

recognition of individuals, but Schnapper seems to think of these as psychological effects. Diaconia, as far as it's institutions deploy an idea of a transcendent God, does not engender social births, institutions or a new ethos of the vocations. Vocation resides within state officials as they employ a new spirituality. However, there is no information regarding how officials are to construct an ethos of responsibility from this spirituality. There are some core values to defend, but other than that there is no information on how these values are to be regenerated or upheld by institutions.

In my model, on the other hand, it is possible to reverse her argument. By seeing secularization as a process that empties us of ideas of the sacred, yet remains tacitly present in the circulation of images and patterns for subjectivation, the process of subjectivation that politics is to serve is *labile*. It is open for different positions to intrude upon and contribute to in the interest of evoking a fruitful dissensus. In what follows, this will not be a priority for another political ontology. Rather it is conceded for the sake of an anarchic cosmopolitan spirituality (from an-archic, = non-foundational, without principle) of the political, inscribed in the idea of democracy, as suggested by Hanna Arendt.<sup>40</sup> In this idea of the political no citizens are privileged to occupy the space of the political for a long time and define its consistency of values of citizenship. Everybody is supposed to appear as "neighbor." No specific type of democratic man emerges as the man that politics is to serve.

Further, a strange notion in Schnapper's model is how she conceptualizes the emotions and passions as vigorously coming to the surface through the revival of the repressed, modified by persons who are involved in the search for meaning. In Paul's political vision the observance of sociological resurgence of new psychological sensibilities could be interpreted as 'the new man', which Paul isolates as "political." Religion is here not a private reference, but rather a mode of representing a 'polis' in between state and minorities. The possibility is that this polis can appear in a new form, designating new forms of beings together in a widened "assembly." In the New Testament, and the political tradition of theology, we find this Pauline distinction echoed in the differentiation and, at times, separation of the polis of God from actual politics, that is, the distinction between the law of sin and the New Testament law of love. Love has reason of its own.

Our suspicion towards Schnapper is that she thinks emotions are empty and destined to a fate of introspective narcissistic subjectivation. This may be the tacit reason why she concedes to new resurgences as not effecting a social generative influence. However, A way to reframe this is, following Nussbaum and Ricoeur, to see the emotions and passions as composites of belief, feeling and visions that promote human imagination and engender an ethical responsibility.<sup>41</sup> There is no hiatus between thought, emotion and action. Emotions prosper with narration, love and care.<sup>42</sup> Consequently, a life in and through institutions, and for others, can never be extracted from the horizon and the wills of the new ethnic and religious resurgences. Their lack of institutions can, rather, be attributed to the lack of the political means to fund institutions and, through this, proceed to an ethos of transcendence and care of the neighbor. And is this not what multiculturalists actually claim?

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<sup>40</sup> See especially. Herzog, A. (2004). "Political itineraries and anarchic cosmopolitanism in the thought of Hannah Arendt." *Inquiry* 47(1): 20-41.,21,31-35

<sup>41</sup> Nussbaum, M. C. (1990). *Love's Knowledge Essays on Philosophy and Nature*. New York Oxford, Oxford University Press.78,79 Cit. 78 "They can lead or guide..."marking off" in a concretely imagined situation", see p. 251, Ricoeur, P. (1966). *Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary*. Evanston Northwestern University Press, Ricoeur, P. (1994). *Oneself as Another*. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press.162, 310

In the formulation I am positing, diaconia's effort to give content to emotions and passions and in so doing to enable individuals to care for themselves and others in the political process, cannot take place irrespective of an understanding of how the minorities and the diverse religious groups take care and define a way of life and redefine neighbors. The contemporary work of a political diaconal on furthering democratization and dignity can be done more effectively in dialogue with the religions and resurgent ethnies. By strengthening the ties to the minorities and the resurgent religions, it will be easier to address the states and engage in dialogue on the subject politics are intended to serve. The support of enhancing dignity cannot be fulfilled without the cooperation of the religious and ethnic resurgences of our time.

By seeing political subjectivation as invested with the circulation of images and patterns, it becomes necessary to recount as many narratives of the political as possible and to retrieve new meaning from them. We will argue that an anarchic spirituality that tries to deconstruct and reconstruct subjectivation will best retain the idea of the political in diaconia. Political diaconia has the responsibility to sort out how the imagination projected in ethnic-religious revivals form world-views and proposals for the caretaking of life. As far as it is, institutions (pedagogy, care, institutions of memory, the ones they often lack) that re-circulate and give perspective to these world-views, political diaconia becomes uncivil if it does not appeal to invest democracies with multicultural policies. It is necessary that diaconia relinquishes its tight allegiance with national religion.

To proceed further we will try to reflect on some other dimensions in Schnapper's work.

Significant in Schnapper's theory is how, in actuality, the actions of men proceed from a dynamism of people's needs, passions, private aims and substitutions. This takes place by means of the conflict between hetero-definition and self-definition, in a play between the repressed other and dominant process. In a way similar to the manner in which the neutral state puts pressure on minorities to integrate, the ethnic, providential, neutral state must turn "ethnic" itself and resolve questions of ethnicity by becoming federal, if it is to defend some values. Latent in her understanding is a thesis that sees the EU as a secularization and modification of the civic ideals that lay latent in the Christological cosmopolitanism of the NT. To identify both of them as federal would be the same as to say that we can do without one of them. Thus we see again the same conflict that Paul accentuated. The tacit idea behind her notion of a providential democracy is that there cannot exist several federal collectives of political services at the same time. There cannot exist two or more mechanisms for providing social dignity by interventions. Or can there?

That being said, multiculturalism also includes the idea that there can exist collectives in a pluralistic order. To thematize the collectives and concede them to their own care of self-definition and hetero-definition by giving them institutions and funds, is to allow them to flourish. This would mean that collectives are also attributed a right to develop and practice. If one entitles the minorities and religious assemblies to have the right to employ and develop networks and have them funded (they are taxpayers), it implies a transition of European states to a pluralism where forms of service of the Other are expected to flourish in an open work (*ana-archival*) of redefinition. This is a utopian Europe for which we do not know the code. It is a form of federal democracy not statured.

There remains a model for rethinking constellations. In the civic cosmopolitic republicanism that pertains to Jaspers and Arendt, and has already been implied. Politics is a rupture to the prevailing

order. It is an an-archic apolitical political spirituality.<sup>43</sup> Religion is not political in the sense that it claims to possess power that retains the internalization of transcendence with what the states effect. Specific for religion is the way in which its gestures can find expression in between and at the margins of the institutions. For Arendt, Jaspers and Ricoeur, a significant asymmetry exists between serving others and forming political order. What is at issue here is the power of the good to unbind itself from any political mechanism. The good is apolitical or even anti-political.<sup>44</sup> Arendt was also able to bring the theory of minority rights and statelessness of refugees and deported peoples into her perspective on civic republicanism. For Arendt there is no such thing as a human being described by political allegiance, a “democratic man.”. By biology and birth the neighbor manifests his dignity in ever new constellations, Cits:

*“Only man can express this distinction and distinguish himself, and only he can communicate himself and not merely something – thirst or hunger, affection or hostility or fear. In man otherness, which he shares with everything that is, a distinctness which he shares with everything alive, become uniqueness, and human plurality is the paradoxical plurality of unique beings.”*<sup>45</sup>

*“Love, by its very nature, is unworldly, and it is for this reason rather than its rarity that it is not only antipolitical, perhaps the most powerful of all antipolitical human forces.”*<sup>46</sup>

My contention is that political religious diaconia, in some of its forms, can be thought of as a child of such anarchic thinking. Diaconia, in its pragmatic, spontaneous, open forms, can be thought of as an-archic. Human beings desire the social to be a form of the open, because they intuitively feel the impetus of the infinite invisible Good inside them reorienting and inviting the Other. The emotions and passions in ethics and in religious resurgences can be interpreted as invocations to an apolitical goodness. This becomes meaningful by the infinite that addresses them. Diaconia is cosmopolitan. This last notion is also a necessary corrective to construing diaconia as a European phenomenon. The Christ of diaconia is not western. The theology of religions shows that diaconic thought and practice have emerged in most of the great religions.<sup>47</sup> The Christ also has people belonging to other ‘paths.’ Diaconia is inter-religious and inter-ethnic.

#### 4. Conclusion

A problem in Schnapper’s work is the way in which she frames diaconia to be intrinsically confined to the historic institutional religions, while at the same time she does not attribute any social generative role to the new ethnic and religious resurgences. This is due to the fact that she considers the weakening of transcendence to be an irreversible process. In this essay I have refuted this notion. Instead I advocate for diaconia as an an-archic (non- foundational, a-political) practice of

<sup>43</sup> Herzog, A. (2004). "Political itineraries and anarchic cosmopolitanism in the thought of Hannah Arendt." *Inquiry* 47(1): 20-41.: Also the previous note on Herzog’s text.

<sup>44</sup> Arendt, H. (1989). *The Human Condition*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. , 242, Also Gregory, E. (2001). "Augustine and Arendt on Love: New Dimensions in the Religion and Liberalism Debates." *Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics* 21(1): 155 ff., 156,161-162,

<sup>45</sup> Cit. Arendt, H. (1989). *The Human Condition*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. *Arendt, 1964*. Cit.160.

<sup>46</sup> Cit. Arendt , *ibid.*,242

<sup>47</sup> Benad.Matthias;Weber, E., Ed. (1996). *Diakonie Der Religionen 1*. Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lanf, Benad, M. W., Edmund; Beinhard Kähler, (2005). *Diakonie der Religionen*. Frankfurt am Main, P. Lang. Confer. Also: Inaba, K. (2006). Altruism in new religions in Japan. *The Practice of Altruism: Caring and Religion in Global Perspective*. R. L. F. H. a. K. Inaba. NewCastle, Cambridge Scholars Press.cf also the text Kearney, R. (2008). "A Pilgrimage to the Heart." *Religion & the Arts* 12(1-3): 3-33., esp. «Introduction» Alterman, J. B. and K. von Hippel (2007). *Understanding Islamic charities*. Washington, D.C., Center for Strategic and International Studies.

cosmopolitan consciousness of our time. Diaconia is apolitical and political, sometimes even anti-political, in that it defends goodness as a third sovereignty operating in between, with or opposed to the two political sovereignties of our time, namely, ruler and peoples. The weakness of Schnapper's construction of the social ontology she employs is in how she does not permit the religions to invigorate a vivid social resurgence.

Schnapper's accentuating of a contemporary diasporic diaconia, and the resurgences of the ethnic, can however be rendered otherwise, as argued in the previous section of this essay. There is something unique about goodness and social birth in the new ethnic and religious resurgences.

My argument has been that political diaconia emerges as the potentiality to listen to peoples "other voice," their needs, aspirations, and desire for the good. Its summoning is to listen to the imaginations and wishes, hidden under certain contenders of democratic man. My thesis is that political diaconia must intervene for the state and the peoples by providing as many different narratives of political life as possible. There is a profound need for love's work, a work of new social birth and political autobiography *with* the ethnies and religious resurgences, in between and between states. This appeal requires closer ties with the hidden Europe than is now often the case. Democratization, the enhancing of dignity, cannot be fulfilled without the mutual cooperation of the religious and ethnic resurgences of our time.

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