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*ABSTRACT In this paper the mediation of the moral agency of a small church-based (Norwegian) welfare organisation is analysed and discussed in a media theoretical perspective. Main focus is put on the relationship between the welfare organisation and its leader on one hand and the local newspaper on the other. The relationship is conceived and analysed as a trust relationship and seen in the context of the local newspaper's agency manifesting the ideas of the public journalism movement. The paper discusses whether the agency of this particular type of welfare organisation as it is mediated in the (secular) newspaper may contribute to "boosting religion" or more specifically if it may indicate whether the church is still interesting as a source of moral authority.*

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# **Religion and the media: The cultural role of a church-based welfare agent in a Norwegian local community**

## **Introduction**

In one of his books Bryan Wilson some decades ago claimed the churches have lost moral authority and, as a consequence, that the “traditional institutions of religion increasingly lack public support” (21). Much research in the sociology of religion has since supported this view and it is compatible with more recent theories on religion in late modernity. Wilson’s view also seems to be compatible with recent research on popular religion in the Nordic countries in that the popular support of the churches’ welfare work was significantly higher than the support for activities more immediately associated with the ritual and faith aspects of the churches (Gustafsson).

Decline of religion has been connected with modernisation in the sociological tradition. But a linear association between modernisation and secularisation has increasingly been questioned. Eisenstadt argues that there are more than one trajectory in the modernisation process; not all modernisation processes follow the Western European model. Davie characterises Europe as the “exceptional case”. Casanova shows how various religious traditions began making their way during the 1980s into the public sphere also in modern societies, thereby criticising the traditional theory of secularisation. Martin argues, in his general theory of secularisation, that for the Christian religion in European history there has been a “dialectic of faith and nature”, that history, rather than being described as a unilateral secularisation process, may be conceived of as a process of successive Christianisations followed by recoils ( 3). Heelas and Woodhead explain the decline of religion – and the accompanying rise of spirituality – in terms of the “subjective” turn in western culture. In their analysis they distinguish religion and spirituality. Religion is characterised by a “transcendent sources of significance and authority”; spirituality is associated with an emphasis on inner sources ( 5-6).

The issue in this article is whether the church, in this situation, is still interesting as a source of moral authority, and if so, in what ways, and I will relate it to how this is reflected in the

media. The question is if the church still is an institution whose moral message is considered relevant, not as compelling or which requires obedience, but as a resource worth considering and listening to in people's own moral identity projects – as perceived by the media.

In a sense the article concerns mediatised religion and morality, more specifically the relationship between media and organised religion in a cultural and political context in late modern society and how the public role of religion may be grasped in terms of trust relationships. The case in question concerns the connections between the practical and symbolic role of a religious-based welfare agent in a Norwegian locality.

Media researchers have suggested that the media have taken the role that religion used to have as a primary source of social values and ideas (Gerbner, and Connolly). On the other hand, it is impossible now to understand religion as a social phenomenon without considering the interaction with the media. Media are ubiquitous, also when it comes to presenting and mediating religion (Hoover Media). As a starting point then religion may generally be seen as “a practice of mediation” as Meyer and Moors put it (7) and in that sense as communication.

We may distinguish between different paradigms in the study of media-in-the-social-world, the effects study paradigm whereby media are conceived as something external to daily life and a source of instrumental influence on this life, and the paradigm whereby media are perceived as an integral part people's daily lives, a source of texts and experiences out of which people make meaning more or less autonomously (Hoover Media). The two paradigms correspond to a more general shift of paradigm in the social sciences, from modernity to post-modernity. An early contribution in media research which may be called on to problematise a simple model of media influence, as conceived of in the effects paradigm is the classical study by Katz and Lazarsfeld on voting behaviour in the US, a study that coined the "two stage hypothesis" of political influence of the media, inspiring theoretical developments shifting the focus of research from effects to what people do with the media they make use of (Hoover Media).

The shift from modernity to post-modernity involves increased importance of focusing on social practice as connected to (personal) meaning, self and identity. This shift towards the self and the description of the self may be applied to media research in terms of media consumption and reception. Stewart Hoover in particular calls attention to Martín-Barbero's concept of “mediation”. In his analysis of fundamentalist churches in Latin America Martín-

Barbero conceives of the role of media as mediating between the individual and the culture: Through the use of media the individual is able to locate him-/herself in social and cultural space and time through a series of such mediations. Thus the role of media may be thought of in a way that makes media consumers, in their interactions with the media, relate to media practices and objects as resources, a “symbolic inventory” (Hoover Media), in the process of self-construction and self-representation. In this article both main perspectives (the effects perspective and the media use perspective) will be applied, but with an emphasis on the former, due to the nature of the data to be analysed.

The media consumption and reception perspective applied to morality or religion should be seen in the context of two main relationships, that of the source and the medium - in cases where the medium is not itself the primary source - and that of the medium and the consumer. This is particularly the case where the medium is a newspaper as in our case. In the article focus will be put on the source – medium relation, the question being: what makes a certain source relevant to the medium which mediates its message? The mediation process from a source of information to the media presentation comprises several selection processes. The primary selection process to be addressed in the article is the selection of source of information. It is my view that mediation of a certain message referring to a personal source of information requires a trust relationship between the medium and the source of information. To analyse this aspect of the communication I will draw on Niklas Luhmann’s analysis of trust.

The material presented in the article derives from the Norwegian case study in a research project on the role of majority churches in welfare provision in the social economy in Europe.<sup>1</sup> The case study was carried out in the town of Drammen, a middle-sized town south-west of the capital, Oslo. The church-based welfare agent to be studied is a local voluntary organisation called *Kirkens Bymisjon*, the Church City Mission (CCM), and the medium in focus is the local newspaper, *Drammens Tidende*.<sup>2</sup> Generally, the most important data for the article are information collected by interviewing representatives of the local church and the public sector in Drammen and information gathered from the local newspaper.

## **The local setting: The Norwegian welfare system and the local church as a welfare agent**

Religious and political history provides an important context for the understanding of today's welfare system. Many typologies exist to characterise such systems. By one of the most well known, that of Gösta Esping-Andersen, the Scandinavian countries are supposed to fit into the category of social democratic welfare regime (as opposed to conservative and liberal regimes) characterised by a large public sector, a system of "full employment" and a high labour market rate for women, a wide-embracing system of more or less universal rights, a residual system of social assistance, and a comparatively strong element of vertical re-distribution. Against this background it is to be expected that church-based welfare activities, as part of the voluntary sector, will be of little importance, quantitatively speaking (Kuhnle, and Selle; Salamon, and Anheier). Generally this is true also in Drammen (Angell, and Wyller).

We may distinguish two principle roles of church-based agents in the field of welfare, the provider role and the ideological or political and cultural role. The characterisation of the Norwegian welfare system and the role of the church as described in the previous paragraph primarily concern the provider role. There are two main types of collective agents acting as church-based providers of welfare services in Drammen, parishes and organisations and associations not formally linked to the parishes.<sup>3</sup> The ideological dimension of welfare refers to the role of the church in the public discourse on welfare. Normatively it may be related to the struggle for social justice.

Public authorities perceived the local church, with a few exceptions, to be relatively invisible in the public discourse and church representatives, especially parish priests, appeared to be sceptical of taking this kind of public role. On the other hand, there was an almost unanimous view among the public authorities that the church ought to be more active in public debates on welfare issues. The reasons given by the interviewees for their views tended to be related to the idea of participatory, political democracy. A typical statement would be:

The more participants holding an opinion {on matters of welfare}, the better for society. A public debate is important.<sup>4</sup>

Among public employees the view was stated that such public voices may serve as a corrective to the public welfare system in the sense that the professional welfare workers may well be blind to problems or restricted in their public participation on welfare issues, being part of an authority system which requires obedience and strict adherence to the regulations set for their activities.

The most notable exception from the invisibility of the church in the public discourse on welfare was said to be the CCM. In the following sections I will first describe the organisation in its roles as welfare agent and participant in the public discourse on welfare, and then analyse the latter in using the theoretical tools introduced in the introduction.

### **The social work agent**

The CCM runs a café and an activity centre, in total staffed by a few persons and with some thirty volunteers, i.e. much less activity than several of the parishes organise in their welfare work. The CCM has as its primary target group people who struggle - or have struggled - with substance use problems, with the stated goal to “make everyday life a little better for people in a difficult life situation” as they put it. About 45 percent of their running expenses are covered through grants from the municipality. Other sources are private grants, offerings, private foundations and associations.

Quantitatively the activities of the CCM are rather limited. Qualitatively, they are of some significance since little is done in the town to serve the needs of the visible substance abusers besides what the CCM organises. A sign of the trust and appreciation that the organisation enjoys in the local community is, that the local bank that provided the loan needed to finance the premises in which the organisation runs its activities, decided to relieve the organisation of its debt (€ 210,000) (Lervik). A summary of the views provided by the interviewees on the role of the CCM would be that the organisation in its activities demonstrates its solidarity with those at the bottom of society, and it speaks up for those at the margins of society through its role in the public discourse on welfare. No other church based agent, agency or activity is described and evaluated as favourably as the CCM.<sup>5</sup> It is tempting to interpret the statements of the interviewees as an expression of the organisation’s symbolic function in the town. A support of such an interpretation is the role the leader of the organisation plays in the local news media.

## **The contributor in the public discourse on welfare**

From analysis of local newspaper editions it seems that the leader of the CCM is the only person affiliated with the church that has taken or uses the opportunity to act politically, in the sense of trying to influence public opinion and political decision making. From the many statements presented in the newspaper,<sup>6</sup> an important part of his public message seems to be for people and the political system to acknowledge the dignity of all those who live in the community, be they “straight” citizens or poor substance abusers; a moral message aimed to remind people, and the politicians in particular, of the values on which the welfare system and the Christian religious tradition are based.

Opportunity, practice, and the role the church should take as a former of public opinion may be exemplified in the following citation from the leader of the CCM:

{W}e need to have two legs to stand on; we are obliged to help people in need; at the same time we must be outspoken about injustice. I am a columnist in the local paper every fourth week. We must confront the authorities. We must use the media and our political contacts.

It seems that what started the process in the media was the leader’s letter to the editor concerning the plans for the local town square. In an editorial in the local newspaper in 2002 concerning the reconstruction and future use of the town square the editor wrote:

To make {the development of the town square} a success – to make parents dare to send their children and youth to the {town} centre in the afternoon and at night a thorough housecleaning is required. In {plain English} addicts, pushers, beggars, taggers, troublemakers and other rabble must be chased away from the “town parlour”. (Aaraas)

The leader of the CCM responded to this and another editorial with the same content, that

To call somebody “rabble” is nothing but destructive. {...} If we choose to call people by that name it only reinforces in them an experience of powerlessness. It strengthens their hatred against society and “straight people” in Drammen. “If I am a garbage all I can do is just garbage”. I have seen the opposite. I have seen narcotic addicts taking responsibility



when met with trust. Of course, I have been cheated and had my moments of dejection. Nevertheless, I have seen people grow and become confident in themselves and their personal resources when praised for their good choices and the way they act {in life}. For rabble there is little hope. (Ruud)

This was neither the only nor the first response to the editorial. Representatives of the local labour movement and the Norwegian Humanist Association<sup>7</sup> had responded to the editorial in the form of letters to the editor. But it was the public expression of the values of the CCM and later confirmations in other contexts that primarily drew the attention of the local newspaper - despite the contradiction with the views espoused in the editorials being criticised. The editor quit shortly after the editorials had been published and with a new editor the editorial line of the newspaper changed. In an interview the new political editor explained the reason for their “appropriation” of the leader of the CCM that it was the deliberate intention of the newspaper and its editor to use the message of the leader of the CCM to influence the social atmosphere in Drammen, more specifically, to counteract the “tough climate” and the marginalisation processes at work in the town, as these were perceived by the newspaper. The voice of the CCM was likely to be perceived as trustworthy and authoritative because the activities organised by the CCM were seen to speak in congruence with their words.

The church in Norway may have taken over some of the critical function which the labour movement traditionally had in the public debate on welfare.<sup>8</sup> The long-lasting tension between the social democratic movement, especially the Labour Party, and the church institution gradually waned. The Labour Party first came to acknowledge that the Christian religion represented a set of moral principles that were in congruence with those of the party (Midttun). A consequence was that in the Labour party a distinction was made between (a progressive) religion (i.e. Christianity) and the (more reactionary) institutionalised church. Gradually the distinction became obsolete; the party discovered that the church took a critical role in the political discourse and no longer criticised left wing radicalism. In this context it is interesting to note that a recent study on power elites in Norway concludes that the church elite appear to be the most radical elite in Norwegian society (Gulbrandsen et al.) based on, among other things, the values they espouse. The radical profile among the leaders may have to do with the value tradition of the church, the social background of the church elite and possibly their lack of power in society (Repstad). In such a context and with few vested interests related to their power position it will make it easier to maintain radical principles.

Analogous reasoning may be applied to the position of the CCM in Drammen (see Angell, and Wyller).

### **The role of the church in the logic of mass media**

The appraisal of the CCM in the community as reflected in the statements made by the public authorities and church representatives interviewed should be explained, at least in part, by the role of the local newspaper in mediating the organisation's activities and points of view of the leader. The previous reflections are to a large extent based on (interpretation of) information provided in the newspaper. This leads us to consider the role of mass media in a local context such as that of Drammen, especially the influences on media content. The newspaper has presented news on the situation of groups of people in the town with substance abuse problems, the activities of the CCM, editorials on relevant news items as well as transmitting (perceived) norms of society in different ways, expressing shifting values over time. The interesting question is how to explain the content of the newspaper on the relevant issues. Mass media theory identifies various levels of influence on media content (Shoemaker, and Reese). Evidence as it has been presented in this paper, shows the relevance of individual media workers, of influence of organisations outside of media and the role of ideology. I use the concept of ideology in a wide sense, as a system of values and beliefs underpinning social and political action. It is evident that the two political editors and their values influenced the whole process of creating the role of the CCM in the local media. But in addition to the differences between the journalists as individuals, their power position in the newspaper should be seen as a crucial factor.

A situational factor should also be taken into consideration. It is well known that publishers of newspapers, especially in small and medium sized communities, may use the newspapers in the service of "community boosting" (Case). Media research has most often been preoccupied with community boosting to help promote local economic development but we should not exclude the purpose of boosting community social cohesion and integration from our perspective. In the case of Drammen the content of the local newspaper is influenced by what is perceived as problems or challenges in the local social situation. Thus a different local situation may have produced different project data and made much of the analysis and a substantial part of the reflections on the situation irrelevant. This particular contribution of Drammens Tidende to boosting the community is not unique but rather part of a more general pattern.<sup>9</sup> What seems to be special about this case is that the newspaper's agency is an attempt

to increase social cohesion through reaffirming the values making up the moral foundation of the local community and of society.

The agency of the newspaper may also be understood in the wider context of communication science. White claims that this science developed normative theory as part of its foundation and that, as a consequence, communication theory has become committed to values like developing democracy and human rights as well as communitarian values, which in turn has implied that communication studies have engaged in debates on the performance of public media. One of its manifestations is the public journalism movement. A core idea in public journalism is that

local media should promote in local communities the issues and problems in those communities and develop a political life which serves community discussion and decision-making. (White 291)

The idea is in accordance with the view of the role of the local church in the public discourse on welfare issues as it was stated by the local public authorities and presented above. This direction in media agency represents an approach that takes as its starting point the issues that seem to be of interest to people in general and make them the agenda of the medium, in our case the local newspaper. In any case media, and also the local newspaper in Drammen, are through their content both influenced by and influence the symbolic environment; all those “things” that are signs that convey meaning.

If we take as the basic question in whose interests media “routines and organisations ultimately work” (Shoemaker, and Reese 224), we may interpret our case as an example of media content which both reaffirms basic societal values institutionalised in the welfare system and at the same time helps blur social distinctions and reduce social labelling as described and analysed above. The ideological elements promoted by the newspaper, if they are not explicitly demanded by the public, neither are they likely to be very controversial among the “consumers”. As the data illustrate, the role of the CCM may in part be understood as a consequence of the history of the welfare system, the local social situation, the newspaper’s definition of (one of) its roles in the local community and the personal values and interests of journalists. That the CCM is a church-based organisation did not seem to have been relevant in this case, at least according to the political editor (Angell "Church-based").

Even though church affiliation was not a reason for the local newspaper to “adopt” the leader of the CCM, it should not be concluded that the church is without importance in the lives of people in Drammen or in Norwegian society and in the media. But “importance” of religion and the church in the media is an ambiguous thing. Religion and church in the media may be characterised by well-informed articles, curiosity and a basically positive attitude, or by ignorance and superficiality, and a basically negatively biased attitude. Hoover has characterised journalism on the Christian religion in the US as indifferent, superficial and biased (News). A recent Master’s Thesis on Norwegian (secular) newspapers and their coverage of religious issues related to Christianity and Islam concludes that especially the local press is positive towards the Christian religion (and the church) (Storvoll). Overall, “signs of negativity” are found, but not hostility. The newspapers are more negative towards Islam.

In the Norwegian context religious change has been studied in various ways. In one of the studies changes in folk religiosity was measured as it was reflected through content analysis of popular weekly family magazines (Romarheim). Overall, during the period from 1967 to 1997 the number of text items with religious content increased considerably. In the first decade the number of items concerning the Christian religion decreased, while the number of items related to “alternative religiosity” (e.g. healing, spiritism, astrology, re-incarnation, New Religions) increased. From 1977 onwards there was a sharp decline in the latter and a corresponding rise in the former ( 107). The author states that the family magazines are powerful in the way they influence attitudes and behaviour (and exemplifies this influence through selected stories) and interprets the findings as expressing both current and future trends in folk religiosity. The findings run counter to the predictions implied by a general secularisation hypothesis. A reasonable interpretation is that media may be quite sensitive to changes in interest and preoccupation in parts of the population that are important to the magazines, in this case “families”. Recently, the broad public debate following the publication of the official report on the future relations between the state and the Church of Norway (Norway) is another indication that the church is important in the media – because it is important to people. A corresponding interest has been demonstrated in the media coverage of appointment of new bishops in recent years.

## **Media mediation as trust relationship**

The mediation in the local media of the statements made by the leader of the CCM must be based, not only on the fact that they agree with those of the local media editors, but also on trust in order for the message to carry weight. The trust the CCM and its leader enjoy may be analysed at three levels: personal, organisational and church level corresponding to micro, meso and macro level. In analysing and discussing trust I will make use of Niklas Luhmann's theory of trust. Regarding the CCM a question is how trust is conferred upon the leader as a person representing the organisation which (at least to some extent) enjoys trust in the local community and in the wider society. Another question is to what extent this trust in the organisation has to do with its integration in the church, or the extent to which this trust is generalised and conferred upon the church. In any case, since those who confer trust upon the organisation or the church may be expected to have only limited contact and experience with the organisation and institution, trust at this level must be based, at least partly, on mediated information where the actors will have to confide in the processing of information done by others.

But first, how do we explain that the leader's letter to the editor made such a difference? Would any other person writing a letter with the same content be subject to the same attention of the newspaper? Probably there existed already a kind of trust in the leader of the CCM as a person or in his capacity as the representative of the organisation which influenced the interpretation of the letter and its significance. The letter may be interpreted as an action which, using Luhmann's terms, is institutionalised as "free" in the sense that it is interpreted as reflecting the personality of the writer. If the letter was perceived differently, its content may be taken to be interesting and relevant, but representing the organisation as such, more than the person. But in a media context it may be fruitful to distinguish the person (representing the organisation) and the organisation itself. The organisation is anonymous and the logic of the mass media demands personification, someone not only presenting the organisation but re-presenting it through a personality on the assumption that there is (sufficient) congruence between the values of the representative and the organisation.

Trust is something which may be defined but which is hard to explain. Luhmann relates trust basically to the question of the order of society and conceives of trust in terms of a mechanism to reduce societal complexity. More specifically, as a starting point, he sees trust

as a person's confidence in his/her own expectations, what Luhmann calls personal trust. The problem of complexity arises primarily when other human beings are conceived as "free" to interpret the world and act in it, just like the primary subject ("I"), something which introduces an unlimited unpredictability or complexity in what regards possible alternatives that the primary subject has to take into consideration in his/her orientation. Trust is a way of reducing this complexity by anticipating that "the other" will act according to "his/her personality", that previous experiences, familiarity, may be "overdrawn"<sup>10</sup> bridging the past and the future. In this way trust is a risk investment problem. Luhmann is less occupied with what trust is than what it does, i.e. the functions of trust in society. According to Luhmann trust reduces complexity through two forms of overdrawing: one form is characterised as overdrawing of information, which is based on the fact that trust is created on the basis of the information at hand, which is always less than required to make a well motivated choice.<sup>11</sup> The other form is characterised as an overdrawing of normativity in the sense that it is based on actions (by the object of trust) performed, but not prescribed, of a quality that is considered meritorious and esteemed. The other level of trust in Luhmann's theory is the system level. Modern society consists of complex systems, each with a high degree of autonomy which makes personal trust a too limited basis for the necessary reduction of complexity. In line with Giddens Luhmann claims that another level of trust is required which means that people must rely on a variety of systems in society to solve their problems.

In analysing trust in organisations in this connection I find it most fruitful to continue using perspectives from the theory of personal trust. But generally, trust in an organisation like the CCM is not based on personal relations and experiences, but on an abstract relation grounded in observation at a distance (through mediation) of the organisation's self-presentations as has been indicated above. For instance, knowledge of its social work, expressing basic societal values, and knowledge of ideological platform and statements on social policy issues are obtained through mediation of self-presentations, particularly by the news media. In our case this applies to media themselves as their sources of information and objects of trust are to a large extent other media. Thus mediation by media may in such cases be conceived as a second order mediation. This mediation may be reinforced or modified by other sources of information, e.g. the social network.

In the case of the CCM it may be appropriate to say that the (potential) trust giver has access to information involving a complex set of (mediated) self-presentations referring to social

work activities, how they are presented by the organisation and evaluated by the users at different levels, and the way these presentations are mediated through the mass media; and on the other hand self-presentations referring to the mediation of how the organisation (through its representatives) participates in the public discourse. This provides an opportunity for others to (to some extent) control the trust invested in the organisation and, consequently, reduce trust – which does not mean increasing distrust. Here mass media take the role of mediating the messages conveyed in the public discourse. At the same time (but probably not simultaneously) the general public confides in the media that they keep an eye on the operations of the organisation on which public trust is based.

Another potential source of information and evaluation is the social network. Lack of personal knowledge and experience with the organisation may be compensated for through contacts with others who have such experiences; a friend who works for the organisation, who has been a client – or who knows someone who has been in that position, or some one who has visited the organisation in another capacity. This may make up the premises on which trust in the CCM and its leader is based.

To what extent can trust in the organisation be connected with its integration in the church, or to what extent is the trust in the CCM generalised and conferred upon the church? The question is difficult to answer and my arguments will be indirect. In the Nordic value study on “folk churches and religious pluralism” (Gustafsson, and Pettersson) most people both in Norway and in the other Nordic countries grant a high degree of legitimacy to church-based social welfare work (Gustafsson; cf. Sundback). The support for this kind of work is significantly higher than for work more directly related to the attention to specifically religious functions. If people associate the CCM with the church, it is reasonable to infer that the legitimacy accorded to “church-based” social welfare work also encompasses the CCM and its activities.

Data in support of a perceived association between the CCM and the church in our project are responses to a question posed to representatives of the public authorities (and the representatives of the church) in Drammen about the role of the (local) church in welfare matters. It turned out that a majority of the interviewees, on their own, independent initiative, mentioned the role of the CCM as an illustration of the positive contribution of the church in its commitment to social welfare in Drammen (Angell, and Wyller). In the absence of relevant

data collected from the population at large, we may take the findings as an indication that the CCM is associated with the church in the minds of people. A question like “Can anything good come out of the church?” may possibly be answered “Yes, look to the CCM”. Association of the CCM with the church may benefit the CCM through the trust that the church may enjoy in the population, and/or the trust people place in the CCM may benefit the church.

## **Religion, church, morality and the media**

This article concerns “religion and the media”. The focus has been on morality in a sense that is more general than morality as an aspect of religion. It means that the relevant media texts treated may serve other functions than religious. They may be interpreted as not dealing with religion at all. On the other hand, in case of the CCM in Drammen, the source of the texts is a religious person, representing a church-based (welfare) organisation, and therefore, to the readers, the texts may easily have religious connotations, even though there is no explicit reference to religion, religious faith, dogmas or rituals in the texts. The reasons given by the editor for “adopting” the leader of the CCM as the newspaper’s voice did not include any reference to religion. What is interesting about this case is that the symbolic significance of the leader of the CCM is closely connected with the media and consonant with the ethos of the public journalism movement and the “boosting” of the local community. By the newspaper the CCM and its leader are interesting as a source of moral authority. The association of the organisation with the church in people’s minds may allow us to conclude that the case is an example that the church is still interesting as a source of moral authority.

## **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> The official name of the project is *Welfare and religion in a European perspective - A comparative study of the role of the churches as welfare providers within the social economy*, see Bäckström.

<sup>2</sup> The CCM in Drammen is a member of a national family or network of city missions based on more or less common religious and social ideology. Until the early 1990s there were local newspapers, Drammens Tidende being characterised as politically conservative, the other more left wing oriented.

<sup>3</sup> A more detailed description and analysis of the role of the local church in welfare provision is provided in Angell and Wyller.

<sup>4</sup> All interview and newspaper quotations are translated by the author.

<sup>5</sup> The organisation that came closest to the CCM in its positive reputation in the field of welfare work is (naturally) the Salvation Army.



<sup>6</sup> We counted more than 70 hits in the electronic archive of the newspaper on the CCM in Drammen or its leader over the past five years.

<sup>7</sup> The Norwegian Humanist Association is a relatively strong movement in Norway. For further details see Angell; Angell and Wyller.

<sup>8</sup> This function may be associated with Casanova's analysis of public religion in modern society. For obvious reasons the role of the church and the CCM in welfare may also be related to the wider question of the role of religion in contemporary society. This aspect of the role of the CCM will not be pursued in this article.

<sup>9</sup> A systematic analysis of the editorials over the past two years demonstrates this role clearly. See also Aagedal; Kristoffersen.

<sup>10</sup> The original verb is "überziehen" which refers to the economic term "overdraw" (an account).

<sup>11</sup> Luhmann's concept of trust as founded in the question of the order of society differs in this way from e.g. the Danish philosopher Løgstrup's conception of trust. For a comparison of the two see Grimen.

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