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Published in:
Mending the World?

2017

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Linde, S. (2017). Institutional Logics Perspective on Diaconia. I N. Blåder, & K. Helgesson Kjellin (Red.), *Mending the World?: Possibilities and Obstacles for Religion, Church, and Theology* (Vol. 14, s. 436-454). (Church of Sweden Research Series; Vol. 14). Pickwick Publications.

Total number of authors:

1

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Institutional Logics Perspective on Diaconia

STIG LINDE

WHAT IS THE NEED? Who is to be responsible to do something about the shortage of social support or capacity? Hence, what is our mission? In the ordinary diaconal and social work in parishes and city missions these questions are never ending since the society is ever changing.

One example is the delivery of economic help to needy families. Among parishes in the Church of Sweden there is a discussion and sometimes a lively debate. Some say that it is the Christian congregation's responsibility to help the poor who comes asking for assistance. Others say that it is the liability of the public authorities.¹

The mission of the local church is related to the historical identity of the congregation but must also take into account the influence of changes in the surrounding society, as the growing market orientation of societal institutions. In many parishes you can find a leaflet about "This is what You get for Your membership fee." In this list is, beside the free funeral service, the diaconal work high-ranked.

What models could contribute to understand these differences in interpretation of the congregational tasks and the organizational behavior? The purpose of this chapter is to use an ecclesiological description of the history of Diaconia to identify some sometimes contrasting and even competing institutional logics within the practice of diaconal work in Sweden.

1. Bodin, "Akuta behov är socialtjänstens ansvar," 421–22.

"Diaconia" can be defined as the social responsibility of the church and theories about this.² I will refer to five historically defined models, and then use the theoretical concept *Institutional logics* to demonstrate how historically determined practices and symbols are present in the church of today. Institutional logics both guide and constrain the practice and thinking of diaconal work. When logics compete this easily creates misunderstandings and tensions but can also provide diaconal agents and agencies with opportunities to develop the diaconal agency.

The aim to analyze the role and identity of a local church requires theoretical tools, both from theology and social sciences. Sven-Erik Brodd, professor in Ecclesiology, identifies a "need to broaden the scope of ecclesiological research in order to integrate into it theories and methods from the social and natural sciences."³ This chapter presents a conceptual framework from sociological organizational theory, providing tools for the study of organizational adaption and change.

INSTITUTIONAL THEORY

The long history of the Church raises questions. What is enduring? What happens when institutions in the surrounding society change? Can old ideas transform in new surroundings?

Institutional theory begins in the concept of institutions. To study institutions is to study that which is taken for granted. Institutions are carriers both of norms and patterns for action, where the former motivate the latter. And the latter reinforces the former. The organizational sociologist W. Richard Scott defines institutions as "multifaceted, durable social structures, made up of symbolic elements, social activities, and material resources."⁴ You could say that institutions are grounded in our human habit to develop habits. These habits, becoming institutionalized, generate predictability and reduce insecurity. Therefore, institutions have a regular aspect: They constrain and regularize behavior.⁵ Through its existence institutions, by including predetermined patterns for activity, control human action.

An institution relies heavily on its history, and is reproducing itself, time after time. However, even institutions can change. In crisis the transformation, or modification, can go faster, but mostly the moment of inertia is considerable.

2. Brodd, "Diaconia through Church History," 5.

3. Brodd, "Ecclesiological Research," 312–32.

4. Scott, *Institutions and Organizations*, 49.

5. *Ibid.*, 51.

The institutional theories of organization, or organizing,⁶ have opened the way of seeing organizations interacting with their environments. They relate, above all with the rules, norms and conventions that characterize the surroundings of the organizations.⁷ A significant concept for understanding this interaction is the concept of legitimacy. It builds on the thesis that "the values pursued by the organizations must be congruent with wider societal values if the organization is to receive legitimation and hence have an acknowledged claim on societal resources."⁸

But the question is: What gives organizations legitimacy? Organizations are not isolated islands or sealed boxes. They are embedded in exchange relations with other social actors, formed by but also pro-actively forming networks. To reach legitimacy it is important to show that the organization is "modern," "effective" or "rational." Or, rather, as some authors demonstrate: that the organizations are seen and perceived as the norms of today stipulate.⁹ The organization gets legitimacy by corresponding to the expectations and demands from the institutional environments.

In the institutional organizational analysis "Institutional logics" is one concept.¹⁰ Institutions can, as mentioned before, be defined as patterns of activity rooted in material practices and symbolic systems.¹¹ These institutional orders are all shaped in the history and each of them have a central logic that guides its organizing principles. "Institutional logics represent frames of reference that condition actors' choices for sensemaking, the vocabulary they use to motivate action, and their sense of self and identity."¹² In other words: a standard for what a certain organization has to do. How would an organization behave to be recognized as a school, a church or as a prison? A school without teachers, an association not including members or a prison without locks will lose its legitimacy.

In an often cited article the American sociologists Roger Friedland and Robert R. Alford point at central institutions of the contemporary capitalist West—"capitalist market, bureaucratic state, democracy, nuclear family, and Christian religion."¹³ But later researchers also focus on other levels than the societal, namely organizations, geographic communities, inter-

6. Ibid., 98.

7. Jönsson et al., *Institution*, 97.

8. Scott, *Organizations*, 169.

9. Meyer and Rowan, "Institutionalized Organizations," 51–62.

10. Thornton et al., *The Institutional Logics Perspective*, 2.

11. Friedland and Alford, "Bringing Society Back in," 232–63.

12. Thornton et al., *The Institutional Logics Perspective*, 2.

13. Friedland and Alford, "Bringing Society Back in," 232.

organizational networks and organizational fields.¹⁴ It is also possible to use institutional logics perspective to analyze the interaction between organizations, e.g. when studying official agencies collaborating to promote rehabilitation.¹⁵ Here you can see how the different authorities are guided by different institutional logics. The authority for health insurance has its juridical based logic, the healthcare rests on another logic built on scientific knowledge and proven experience, while the employer is directed by logic of production.

The *Institutional Logics Perspective* is a way to handle the duality of social structure and action. It will examine how individual and organizational actors are situated in and affected by different institutional orders. It is also a theory of change. Institutional logics can be replaced, or assimilated when one logic is combined with a prevalent logic.¹⁶ But they can also be elaborated, when actors create and modify elements of institutional logics, shaping both new practices and meanings.¹⁷ This could be the case when organizations seek new arenas, or internal reforms.¹⁸ The question of legitimacy is then crucial.

All organizations are situated in a certain environment and communicate with these settings. We can talk about "inter-dependency." And since the environment is not unvaried but consists of a number of different institutions, the organizations can relate to, and incorporate, diverse institutional logics.¹⁹ The actors are, to some degree, able to choose which institutions to adapt to. This is why "diaconia," as I shall demonstrate, can integrate different institutional logics.

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF DIACONIA, FIVE EPOCHS, FIVE MODELS

Brodd describes five ecclesiological models of Diaconia: 1. *Communio*—the church as a diaconal fellowship. 2. *Caritas*—the distributing church. 3. *Parochia*—the territorial church. 4. *Societas*—the church within the church. 5. *Sacramentum*—the church as sign and instrument of the kingdom of God.²⁰ The five models are all formed in relation to the surrounding society in differ-

14. Thornton and Ocasio, "Institutional Logics," 106.

15. Lindqvist, *Att sätta gränser*.

16. Thornton et al., *The Institutional Logics Perspective*, 164.

17. Maguire et al., "Institutional Entrepreneurship," 657–79.

18. Linde, "Konkurrerande logiker," 109–26.

19. Johansson, *Nyinstitutionalismen*, 134.

20. Brodd, "Diaconia through Church History," 5–25.

ent historical epochs. Of course these periods cannot be absolute—historical developments are never linear and differ in different parts of the world.²¹ This is mainly a European perspective with examples from Sweden and in most cases, from the context of the (Lutheran) Church of Sweden.

I will now present my interpretation of the five models Brodd describes, in a short form, and in the next section educe institutional logics for the analysis of the diaconal work of today.

COMMUNIO—THE CHURCH AS A FELLOWSHIP

In the early church, the local congregation consists of a minority of the population. Life develops in fellowships: *communio/koinonia*, with responsibility for each other. The diaconal task becomes the care for the weak and defenseless in the church so as to integrate them in the fellowship. The congregation becomes a *diaconia*, a fellowship of service with a joint responsibility. The liturgy and the diaconal task interact, in equalizing the social differences in the church—in this period the Eucharist is celebrated with the agape. Main principles are solidarity and equality. Also between congregations a financial support is a function and a sign of the catholicity of the church (2 Cor 8).

CARITAS—THE DISTRIBUTING CHURCH

As Christ sacrificed himself for the world, so the church provides care for the poor and sick and distributes necessities. The term *diaconia* is substituted by “works of charity” (*caritas*) which Brodd relates to the task of taking care of the world.²² The ecclesiology is affected by the division between giving out/distributing and receiving. The importance of the good deeds is emphasized in the sermons.

But in contrast with the early church *diaconia*, charitable work is now characterized by distributive efforts, by the work of institutions and benefactors. The responsibility for this rests with the church hierarchy, and the preaching ministry, encouraging good deeds.

What we see is a clericalization and an institutionalization in the era when Christianity became the compulsory state religion in the empire (fourth century). The clerics were given special privileges and the regulated

21. For a discussion of the notion and use of layering in analyzing historical welfare issues, see Kettunen and Petersen, *Beyond Welfare State*, 6.

22. Brodd, “Diaconia through Church History,” 12.

cult, the liturgy, was detached from the social components, the *diaconia*. Another dividing line was drawn between the clerics and the laity. The wealth of the church increased when it was permitted to receive inheritances and donations, and by the introduction of the compulsory tithing.

This growing wealth was the prerequisite for the charitable system. This work was built on institutions: monasteries, hospitals, inns, children’s homes and homes for the aged etc. In these institutions of course worships were arranged, but separated from the local congregation. So, the institutions became a kind of congregation, often supervised by the bishop.

Brodd also points at another characteristic of the church at this stage/time, beside the institutionalization: the individualization. When the practice of “*diaconia*” took place in the “monastery fellowship,” the individual was addressed by a social-political sermon to do the deeds of love. By the almsgiving and donations the giver would also be rewarded; in the last day saved.

PAROCHIA—THE TERRITORIAL CHURCH

The Greek word *parochia* denotes a geographical church area, and consequently another “model” than the fellowship model of “*Communio*.” The *parochia* could be described as “the area which by jurisdiction or canon law embraced all who had their domicile within given territorial boundaries.”²³

During the Middle Ages secularized charitable work emerged in the cities. The magistrates of the cities wanted to reform the poor relief, and sometimes in opposition to the church institutions, take the responsibility. The magistrates wanted a more rational, and therefore standardized, social care, and to control the beggars.²⁴ The financial responsibility lay upon the inhabitants of the territory. That meant, with the Reformation,²⁵ that the civil authorities in the cities took responsibility for the poor relief,²⁶ and outside the cities, the pastor/priest and the parish council, since the monasteries were closed down. The main burden, however, was carried by the households. But when the household was split up or people were left to themselves, they could

23. Ibid. 15; Lindberg, *Beyond Charity*.

24. Geremek, *Den europeiska fattigdomens betydelse*.

25. Martin Luther’s doctrine of the two kingdoms or two reigns of God teaches that God is the ruler of the whole world and that he rules in two ways, both by the law and by the gospel. God rules the earthly through secular government, by means of law and the sword. As creator God promotes social justice, and this is done through the political use of the law.

26. Oftestad, *Kirke, fellesskap, omsorg*, 95.

be the task for the local poor relief, in other words: a high degree of social control. The history of poor laws in Europe is a history of repression.²⁷

SOCIETAS—THE CHURCH WITHIN THE CHURCH

The Lutheran doctrine of the two regiments or two reigns put the social care on the agenda of the civic society. From 1862 the poor relief in Sweden is in the hand of the municipalities, not a church task any longer. The ministry was the ministry of the Word, while the social responsibility of the church was carried out by the worldly regiment: government and municipalities.

The state church system in the Protestant areas of Europe, which regulated almost all parts of life, began in the eighteenth century to be broken up by the enlightenment and pietism. The latter was a way of understanding and enacting the life of faith. The true church was that of the baptized believers (*ecclesiola in ecclesia*). These believers organized themselves in associations for foreign and inner mission, for morality and temperance.

The context was urbanization, poverty and mass emigration, and the way of thinking about man: education and spiritual renewal could improve people to take responsibility for their own life. Brodd writes that *caritas* and mission here were brought together.²⁸ It was the gospel, proclaimed and received, which worked also for the social improvement of man. Social work became part of the evangelization task. Here we have the born of city missions and rescue missions. Leaders in these associations were critical to the “dead” or “false” Christianity in the church institution, and also to the moral status of the society.²⁹

So, in the middle of the nineteenth century we see Christian believers who organize themselves in associations, taking up the word *diaconia*, an idea of a serving female community (fellowship), translated from Germany and Kaiserswerth into Sweden in the name of “Ersta diakonissanstalt.”³⁰ From a gender perspective we notice that women could not hold positions in the church or public office. To join the associations became some women’s opportunity to contribute to the society, besides the role as a mother and wife.³¹

27. Geremek, *Den europeiska fattigdomens betydelse*; Jütte, *Poverty and deviance*; Davidsson, *Understödet rationalitet*.

28. Brodd, “Diaconia through Church History,” 17.

29. Christiansson, *Kyrklig och social reform*, 92.

30. Elmund, *Den kvinnliga diakonin*.

31. Koivinen Bylund, *Frukta icke, allenast tro*; Wenell, “Pionjärer och pionjärinsatser.”

SACRAMENTUM—THE CHURCH AS SIGN AND INSTRUMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In the twentieth and twenty-first century, the identity of the church is related to diaconia, as a task for the world.³² Diaconia is not a voluntary sector of the church, but “is an essential expression of the life of the church.”³³ Diaconia becomes a characteristic of what the (global) church is. Together with Liturgy and Witness, Diaconia is “coherent and essential elements in ecclesiology.”³⁴ As considered a part of the witness of the church—in Greek Martyria—it is a way of interacting with the surrounding society. An ecumenical document states that the church is judged by people more by her deeds than by the spoken word.³⁵

Brodd refers to the World Councils of Churches assembly 1991 where the idea of the church as a sacrament, an effective sign and instrument of the kingdom of God, was espoused.³⁶ This is a language and a thought which are aligned with the pluralistic and post-Christian society. We sometimes talk about our time as a “communication society” and the welfare state replaced by welfare pluralism with many operators.

We can also see that the deacons are integrated among the ordained ministry in many churches.³⁷ In Sweden deacons were officially a part of the ordained ministry in the Church Order taken by the Church Assembly in 1999.

DIFFERENT INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS OF DIACONIA

Thus, which are the institutionalized orders, legitimizing “diaconia,” in the five epochs?

I understand the institutional logic in the early church, where the context is the life of a fellowship in a minority situation, as “Community.” The mutual responsibility is both on an organizational level, between congregations, and on an individual level, among the members of the local church. Of course it is an ideal type, but as that, it is a symbol and directs

32. Brodd, “Diaconia through Church History,” 21. See also the document from the Danish bishops in Nissen, *Diakoni—en integreret dimension i folkekirkens liv*, 253–69.

33. Brodd, “Diaconia through Church History,” 20.

34. *Ibid.*, 19, referring to the World Council of Churches.

35. *The Role of the “Diakonia,”* World Conference on Church and Society. Geneva, July 12–20, 1966.

36. Brodd, “Diaconia through Church History,” 19–22.

37. Andrén, *Diakoniet i världens kyrkor*.

and legitimizes a way of thinking—and therefore acting—in our practice today. A congregation is an archetype of a fellowship based on solidarity.

The next epoch gives us the institutional logic of “*Distribution*.” Here the context is a hierarchical society and, since the church is institutionalized as a compulsory state religion in the empire, a hierarchical church. In contrast from the “*Community*” the logic of “*Distribution*” is characterized by a societal asymmetry, manifested in the almsgiving and in the institutional care in monasteries and convents.

From the medieval and Reformation time the logic for the church concern for the inhabitants is “*Local Responsibility*.” The society is a unit, territorial distinct, under control of a prince or a town magistrate. In the construction of the nation the church becomes a part, and an instrument for (welfare-)state building in Northern Europe.³⁸

From the eighteenth century the individualization and liberal politics makes the coherent society crackle. Other institutions compete with the church. From this time the associations give people a possibility to organize their voices and actions. The committed “*Mission*” in the associations manifests a critical (though not necessary radical) stand towards both the society and the institutionalized church.

In our time I choose the notion *Legitimizing Sign* to reflect both the theological reflection about diaconia’s role for the character of the church and the context of contemporary marketization of the whole society.

In the figure below I put the models, and my interpretation of institutional logics in layers, the oldest in the bottom. In this way I will demonstrate that the church institution, 2000 years old, rests on—or rather, consists of—organizational layers or “sediments” more or less actual in each time.³⁹

Ecclesiological Models of Diaconia	Institutional Logic of “Diaconia”
5. Sacramentum—the church as sign and instrument of the kingdom of God	Legitimizing sign
4. Societas—the church within the church	Mission
3. Parochia—the territorial church	Local responsibility
2. Caritas—the distributing church	Distribution
1. Communio—the church as a diaconal fellowship	Community

38. Knudsen, *Den nordiske protestantisme*, 48, 60.

39. Of course, there are other institutional logics to identify. I am sure that in other national contexts we have institutional surroundings which form the diaconal task in other ways than in the north of Europe.

The next task of this chapter is to ask: In what way are these “sediments” actual for the situation of today? Is the “translation” of ecclesiological models to institutional logics relevant? Are the described logics identifiable in the actual diaconal practice? And if so, can they help us understand tensions and complications in the agencies of diaconia?

The logic of *Community* is a governing goal for many congregational activities: in social gatherings related to worships, in the youth meetings, in invitations to elderly people, the counseling groups for bereaved, the cafés, soup-lunches and other forms of community around the table, etc.⁴⁰ The fellowship, the mutual understanding, the common need of communication and relations is both a goal and also a basic resource. You see a lot of invitations—“Come to the church!”—for different forms of community in the parishes.⁴¹

The logic of *Distribution* is different. The tradition of almsgiving is still at hand, under the name of aid or assistance. There are two roles: a donor and one who receives. In every Sunday service money are given and collected, often to be distributed abroad as development aid, or to the local diaconal functions. In the parishes, most in the wealthy ones, the deacons can distribute money from foundations to the needy.⁴²

This is often, but not necessarily, related to the logic of *Local Responsibility*. The poor has to show that they are entitled, belonging to a poverty-stricken or in some other way underprivileged group and that they are living in the right parish. In the nineteenth century, the vicar could promulgate beggar-pass to the poor in his parish, not allowing beggars from other places to seek aid in this location. The parish council could expel beggars from other parishes.⁴³ Today we have a discussion in Sweden about begging people from Romania. Voices demand that each country should take care of their poor people, and some also want to forbid begging in Sweden.⁴⁴

When needs are not met by the societal institutions, or new ideas attract people, initiatives are taken. The well formulated *Mission* gather people and resources, as a challenge and/or a vocation. Often from a critical standpoint they challenge the established institutions. Every time has its missions. 1851 was a starting point for “*Svenska diakonissällskapet*” (The Swedish Deaconesses Association) and soon after the Stockholm City Mission.⁴⁵ 2013 started the “Asylum Relay,” a demonstration made by walk-

40. Yeung, *Churches in Europe*, 35–46.

41. Linde, “Forskaren har ordet,” 70–81.

42. Bodin, *Ekonomiskt stöd*.

43. Johansson, *Fattigvården i Gammalkil*.

44. “Förbjud gatutiggeriet.”

45. Elmund, *Den kvinnliga diakonin*.

ing from Malmö to Stockholm with asylum seeking youths as committed initiators, making people aware of the refugees tough situation.⁴⁶ During the winter 2014–2015 the local association “Help beggars in Lund” started, based on voluntary work.⁴⁷

In a chronicle in a paper the weeks after the Tsunami catastrophe in Thailand 2004 the journalist wrote about his wish to dedicate a marketing award. The beneficiary would be the one who delivered the t-shirts with the logotype “Church of Sweden” to the deacons and priests who flew to Thailand in the aid operation. Diaconia, or the aid action, here becomes a *Legitimizing Sign* for the church. You could also use the concept brand, containing both the logotype or symbols, and the implicated values, related to the symbol. The brand is seen as an asset in the commercial market discourse. This market orientation and transformation of the member to something more like a customer, is also seen in local churches. In many parishes you will find a handout with information about what you get for your member fee. This is a relevant question. From surveys we know that the members of the church expect social action directed to vulnerable people.⁴⁸

So far, I have argued for the presence of historically determined institutional logics in the church and I have identified examples from the diaconal praxis in the Church of Sweden. With the help of these institutional logics I will now problematize some of the manifestations of diaconia today and give examples of contemporary risks, problems and dilemmas.

CONTRADICTIONS

A significant contradiction emerges when looking at the two logics *Community* and *Distribution*. These two logics have different directions of action.

- Sharing (resources, feelings, bread and wine) literally around a table, is a *horizontal* issue.
- Almsgiving and other forms of aid figuratively have a *vertical* direction.

The direction affects the actors’ roles. In a study of the diaconal work in Uppsala the professor in Social work Eva Jeppsson Grassman notes the difficulty to delimit and pinpoint the forms, and the users, in the voluntary sector: “In a community where the participants often are both the one who gives and the one who receives, it becomes unclear if you can talk about

performance or a production of services, or of service users.”⁴⁹ When distributing aid (alms, assistance, counseling, care etc.) the roles are clearer: one gives, one receives. There is an asymmetry in that relation.

The contrast appears when relating this to such paragraphs in church documents where you can read about an “ideal” relation in the context of diaconia: “mutual solidarity.”⁵⁰ In such texts we can discern the logic of Community. But is this institutional logic, or that ideal, in many diaconal situations at all realistic?⁵¹ The *Distributing* logic gives a certain role to the part that is to deliver. It is a powerful position. Hopefully, it is the power to make change, with the kind of resources the contributor has in his disposition.

The logic of *Distribution* might be too burdensome. Are the beneficiaries too many, the resources will not suffice. On the other hand, the fellowship can become too narrow, exclusive or even closed.⁵² An important task for the leadership is to keep the community open and inclusive.

A certain dilemma in the Swedish context is described by Anders Bäckström, researcher of religion and welfare. The role of the Nordic majority churches in the society is defined *both* by its historical relation to the state, and the contemporary position in the civil society. In the former relation the majority churches fulfill welfare functions by creating feelings of solidarity and trust.⁵³ In the latter the church is one of many, different, idea-carriers in a pluralistic and multi-cultural society. In a country with widespread secular values Bäckström identifies a tension between the Church of Sweden as a part of the societal structure which secures trust, and the practiced religion as something private, unsure and sometimes unwanted.⁵⁴ Here we can find the church legitimized by, on the one hand, the logic of *Local Responsibility*, for *all* in the local community. On the other hand, the role of welfare actor is supported by the logic of *Mission*, the profiled, ideological and committed actor in the welfare pluralism. In the latter case, the target group is not all, but *some* beneficiaries (those who want or accept an ideologically profiled service provider).

This is not necessarily seen as a contradiction or a problem. In another context, the Lutheran mission in Tanzania, it is possible to combine the *Local Responsibility* Logic and the logic of *Mission*. “The Health Charter of the

46. “Asylstafetten.”

47. “Föreningen hjälp tiggare i Lund.”

48. Bromander, *Svenska kyrkans medlemmar*, 113–19.

49. Jeppsson Grassman, *Socialt arbete*, 180; my translation.

50. “Kyrkans sociala arbete–diakoni.”

51. Blennberger, “Omsorg och livsideal,” 74.

52. Engel, *Borta bra*, 20.

53. Bäckström, *Välfärdsinsatser på religiös grund*, 107.

54. *Ibid.*, 108.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania” begins with a perspective on witness.⁵⁵ “To witness and glorify God through provision of holistic affordable and accessible quality care supported by community and other stakeholders.”⁵⁶ This mission statement is followed by goals, where the first is that care is to be provided “to all people irrespective to creed, status or social inclination.”⁵⁷

The Finnish theologian Ville Päivänsalo notes in his study of Lutheran perspectives on health work that such straightforward references to *witness* about *God* and *Christ* in introductions to health work “might seem peculiar to Western observers.”⁵⁸ But in the context of the Lutheran church in Tanzania the logics of *Local Responsibility* for health care “to all” and the logic of *Mission* is connected and complementary in the concept of “Holistic evangelism.” Bishop Munga regards holistic evangelism as spreading the good news both in word and practice and a mandatory task for the church to provide social services.⁵⁹ This “evangelism” is distinguished from proselytism, i.e. not attempting to convert people to the Lutheran faith. So, a contradiction between institutional logics in one context is declared a possibility in another setting.

COMPLEMENTARY AND COMPETING LOGICS

The logic of *Community* and the logic of *Mission* have a close friendship. The *Mission* is often born in the milieu of a common thinking and common values. The *Community* “feeds” or underline the *Mission*, and vice versa. But when the mission, as in many diaconal institutions and city missions, becomes a task by the mandate of others, for example the municipality or the town office, something changes. The authorities and funders call for the logic of *Distribution*. It could be shelters for homeless people, hospice care, home for elderly etc.

The distribution of goods, services and other aid resources demands knowledge. Sometime that is what is distributed: knowledge, as in counseling for example. The people who deliver these resources are to a high degree professionals. The professions neither are trained to nor recruited for being bearer of the mission task. They are hired because of their professional skills. With the language of institutional theory I say that we here have a

55. Päivänsalo, “Lutheran Perspectives,” 53.

56. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, *The Health Charter*, 4, cited in Päivänsalo, “Lutheran Perspectives,” 53.

57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid.*, 55.

59. *Ibid.*

tension, or a rivalry, between two institutional logics: the *Mission* and the *Distribution*. When all the caring personnel at Ersta hospital were deaconesses the diaconal *Mission* was visible. Today, when the hospital has most of its mandate and reimbursement from the authorities, and the nurses no longer are deaconesses, the *Mission* is more difficult to grasp.

The conflict can be described as a tension between the *religious authority* and the *agency organization*.⁶⁰ With Weber’s word the legitimate base for the religious authority is the charismatic and traditional authority. The legitimizing foundation for the agency organization, with administrators and other secular professions, rests on the legal and rational authority. The task, and interest, for the religious authority is the control of the members of the organization. The agency “officers,” often professionals of different kinds, handle the material resources. The model of two parallel configurations in religious organizations is not merely an ideal type; it also “structures intraorganizational competition and conflict in identifiable ways.”⁶¹

In other words: the logic of *Mission* competes with the logic of *Distribution* by the demand from the external funders which requires professionalized efforts with internal secularization as a consequence. The impact of the logic of *Mission* diminishes.

If the logics of *Community* and *Mission* are related, it is the same for the logic of *Distribution* and *Local Responsibility*. The latter has to deal with the distribution of scarce resources. From the history we see that the parish’s local responsibility for the poor often is taken over by the secular authorities.⁶² When the need increases the authorities have commanded a more rationalized and standardized poor relief. That means also more repressive. When the logic of community is replaced by the logic of local responsibility it drives by the demand for control. Who are the worthy poor? Who are the neediest?

When the refugees from the Middle East and Africa come to Europe, then troubled and sometimes critical voices are heard: “They are too many! We can’t take responsibility for all these migrants!” The maintenance and enforcement of borders is a crucial factor in the logic of *Local Responsibility*.

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC RESOURCES—AND RISKS

The institutional logic I call *Legitimizing Sign* is a common phenomenon in the society of communication we live in today. Every organization has a logo-type and is aware of “how it looks.” In the late modern society we can identify

60. Chaves, “Intraorganizational Power.”

61. *Ibid.*, 12.

62. Geremek, *Den europeiska fattigdomen*.

an intensified focus on possible reactions to and perceptions of organizational conduct. Power et al. call this “reputational risks” which affects the management in organizations.⁶³ Information officers are an expanding career occupation, now with their own professional ethics. The positions for information/communication professionals increase also in the Church of Sweden.⁶⁴

The deacon shall be a sign of mercy, is said in the ordination liturgy in the Church of Sweden. This is a signal from the church, and also an indication of the integration of diaconia in the church. But researchers demonstrate that organizations do not always do what they say they do.⁶⁵ Charlotte Engel has in her research focused a gap between what is said and what is done in the parishes she has studied. “According to the Church’s own self-understanding and the expectations of the Swedish public, diaconal work should be directed to persons in especially disadvantaged and/or marginalized life situations.”⁶⁶

However, Engel argues, that is not the case. Diaconal work directed towards disadvantaged and/or marginalized persons “is seldom practiced in Church of Sweden parishes.”⁶⁷ In a later study Engel writes about the question of trustworthiness when describing a diaconal agency in a parish which gives the whole of the congregational work legitimacy.⁶⁸ There is also an awareness of this dilemma reflected in an interview: “We shall not engage in diaconia for the sake of the church—to get the organization to survive. In that case vulnerable people become instruments for us.”⁶⁹

When the welfare state is converted to welfare pluralism with market driven service providers, the situation for churches and faith-based organizations as welfare producers raises new questions. The Australian researcher Beth R. Crisp raises questions if the state can ensure “that the rights of service users are not violated if the state enters into arrangements with faith-based organizations to provide services on its behalf.”⁷⁰ In the privatization of welfare services the faith-based organizations have other questions to answer. Is there any added value in a service provided from a Christian church? Can faith-based organizations demonstrate that they are equally effective compared to other organizations when delivering social

63. Power, et al., “Reputational Risk,” 301–24.

64. “Church of Sweden—employer.”

65. Meyer and Rowan, “Institutionalized Organizations,” 51–62.

66. Engel, *Svenska kyrkans sociala arbete*, 264.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid., 63.

69. Engel, *Borta bra*, 33; my translation.

70. Crisp, *Social Work and Faith-Based Organizations*, 46.

services?⁷¹ Maybe they can mobilize volunteers? Can a church have another social capital, “a faith capital,” in relation to different marginalized groups?⁷² What can we learn if we analyze the interaction between the logic of *Distribution* and the logic of *Legitimizing Sign* when Diaconia finds itself on the market place of welfare services?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

This chapter has demonstrated that the concept institutional logics can be used for interpretative analysis for understanding the meaning(s) in which diaconal actions are embedded. The strategy to identify institutional logics from church history has its weaknesses. It gives expressive but sometimes rather rough or undifferentiated results. Still, the Institutional Logics Perspective contributes to formulate meaningful research questions, as:

- Which logics compete?
- Is it possible to identify complementary logics?
- Which institutional logics are used to construct or deconstruct legitimacy?
- Who is acting—connecting values, symbols and practices—in solving the actual problem?
- Is it possible to see opportunities using rivalry and/or complementary logics?

In discussing current development of ecclesial social agency the perspective of institutional theory shows the organizational dependence of both the institutional surroundings and the organization’s own tradition. By tracing institutional logics we can identify tensions and conflicts. By making this visible and explicit the opportunities for constructive dialogue and problem solving might increase.

Hopefully, the Institutional Logics Perspective might also give inspiration to go the other way round, to “make theology” of the diaconal practice.

71. Furness and Gilligan, “Faith-based Organizations,” 601–12.

72. Lowndes and Chapman, *Faith, Hope and Clarity*; Furbey et al., *Faith as Social Capital*.

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Inclusion in the Sunday Worship *A Matter of Knowledge?*

CAROLINE GUSTAVSSON

IN SWEDEN ONE CAN observe changes in the population with regard to religious socialization during the last fifty years. For example, fewer young adults share religious life-views with their own families. Lars Ahlin has explained this against the background that fewer parents talk with their own children about faith, a tendency that has also been confirmed in international studies.¹

A study by Mia Lövheim and Anders Sjöborg has shown that when Church of Sweden meets young people (for example in confirmation classes) many of the youths are inexperienced in relation to how the church expresses religious belief and commitment.² The same study shows that few younger people are socialized into the life of the church through the Sunday worship. Primarily this socialization takes place through confirmation, youth groups and leadership training.³ Even in those kinds of groups it is still not certain that children and young people perceive "faith" as a central topic in the activities. It was, as one of Lövheim and Sjöborg's informants puts it, something they talked about during confirmation, "[b]ut after that nothing has happened."⁴ In relation to that one might conclude that the

1. Ahlin, *Pilgrim*, 72–73; Voas, *Explaining*, 29.

2. Lövheim and Sjöborg, *Varför*, 90.

3. *Ibid.*, 46.

4. *Ibid.*, 65.